

Syllabus for **The Big History Project**

Year-long, Thursdays 11:00-12:30 A.M.

Educator: Jenni Buchanan, jenni@onesparkacademy.com

[Google Class](#) Code: **sp2dev6**

Description: ASKING BIG QUESTIONS, MAKING CONNECTIONS, AND SHARING THOUGHTS. This science-based history class takes on big questions that originate with the dawn of time and gives students a framework to understand the story of humanity's place in the Universe. It weaves insights from many disciplines to form a single story that helps students develop a historical framework to organize and connect what they're learning both in and out of school. Using primary sources and the tools required for problem-solving and critical thinking, in this class students will not only learn about history from many different angles, but also consider where we came from, what causes change, and where we are heading. In this class students will be doing a lot of reading, writing, analyzing, group discussions and debates, and fun project-based learning, culminating in a final "Little Big History" research project and presentation and the end of the school year.

Materials Needed:

- 3-Ring Binder (or portion of a large binder) dedicated to this class. We will have a lot of materials students will be expected to keep and use up to the final days of class.
- Spiral-bound (or other sturdily bound) notebook for note-taking. Proper note-taking is part of what students will be learning in this class, and their notebooks will be checked weekly

Expectations:

- * **Attendance.** If an absence cannot be avoided the student can arrange to get the notes from me and do makeup work during a study session, although it may not be possible to make up group projects and debates.
- * **Learning and Participation.** We have a lot of ground to cover! Students will be expected to come to class on time, ready to listen and learn, ask questions and discuss!
- * **Note-taking.** Students will be expected to take notes and to keep those notes and other handout materials neatly in their binder or folder. They must have their class binders/notes & materials with them at every class.
- * **Homework.** About an hour of homework per week can be expected.
- * **"Little Big History" final research project and presentation** at the end of the year.

Grading

- 20% Attendance & Possession of Binder/Notes & Materials
- 30% Participation in class: learning readiness, listening, and discussion
- 30% Notetaking Notebook (will be checked weekly)
- 20% Homework, final project and presentation

Course Outline

Session 1: Units 1-3 — What is Big History?, The Big Bang, Formation of Stars and the Elements

Session 2: Units 4-6 — Our Solar System & Earth, Life Begins to Form, Early Humans

Session 3: Units 7-8 — Agriculture & Complex Societies, Expansion & Interconnection

Session 4: Units 9-10 — Acceleration, Looking into the Future