

Information Book Award 2019: Category 12–16

The silk roads: a new history of the world by Peter Frankopan

English

- Debate from opposing viewpoints: What have been the benefits of two thousand years of globalisation? What have been the negative aspects?
- Diary extract – choose from a voyage of discovery, the impact of the Black Death or being sold into slavery.
- Persuasive language – Is colonisation ever acceptable?
- Write a defence of an anti-hero – a crusader, Genghis Khan, Attila the Hun etc.
- Write a newspaper report on Alexander the Great's victory in Persia, incorporating different standpoints.
- Write a biography of a significant individual who had a positive impact on world history.
- Looking at examples of war poetry (The Charge of the Light Brigade, poetry of World War I & World War II), write a poem about a specific conflict.

History/Geography

- Each group to choose an ancient civilisation to study in detail. Compare against set criteria and decide which was the most enlightened, which was the most commercially astute, which had the most effective rulers etc. What is their status today?
- Geographical features, trade and religion forged the first links between the continents: what links them now?
- Routes to war: chart the origin of a 21st century conflict – war in Afghanistan or the Palestinian conflict.
- Compare and contrast educational and social development between the east and west in the first millennium.
- How did climate change and/or large-scale movement affect the world order? Look at the Black Death and today's environmental concerns.
- Compare the map of 'The ancient world' on pages 12-13 with the map of 'The world today' on pages 6-7. How are they different, why has the map of the world changed?
- Has your view of world history and Britain's role in it been altered by your knowledge of the Silk Roads? If so, in what way?

Economics

- What were the Silk Road trade networks? Where were they?
- How was trade conducted 2,000 years ago, and what were the challenges faced? How do they differ to those we face today?

- What commodities were traded/exchanged along the Silk Roads? Choose one commodity and expand on its importance to trade links.

RE

- Which religions were shared along the Silk Roads? How did they spread, and what were the repercussions?
- Chart the rise of the Islamic faith, its origins and its impact on the world today.
- Debate: Is organised religion a force for good? Is religious tolerance dependent on a stable political base and prosperity – discuss.

Art

- Look at how different information is conveyed by the maps in the book: create your own map charting geographical, social or human features from a given period.
- Investigate different art styles that flourished at different periods: the Dutch masters, Byzantine Art, Mosaic art etc.
- Who were the supreme architects? Look at architectural styles from the three continents.

Literature

- Look at poetry from different cultures and examples of classical literature
- Look at how characters from different ethnicities are portrayed in Shakespeare's plays: the Moor in Othello, Shylock in The Merchant of Venice etc. How has a Eurocentric literature shaped us?