The Simple AP® European History Unit 1 Cheat Sheet

1.1–1.2 Context & Italian Renaissance

Why Italy, Why Now

Context: after the Black Death, fewer workers & more wealth in fewer hands; the Church was weakened by the Great Schism.
Italian city-states (Florence, Venice): rich from trade & banking (Medici) → paid for art & learning.
Fall of Constantinople (1453): Greek scholars flee to Italy, bringing ancient Greek texts.

Humanism

Humanism: study of classical Greek & Roman texts (grammar, rhetoric, history, ethics).
Petrarch: "father of humanism"; revived Cicero & classical Latin; praised ancient Rome.
Civic humanism: educated citizens should serve their city through an active public life.
Lorenzo Valla: proved the Donation of Constantine was a forgery → hurt papal claims.
Pico della Mirandola: humans can shape their own nature → celebrates the individual.

Politics & Society

Figure	Work	Big idea
Machiavelli	The Prince	Power first
Castiglione	The Courtier	Ideal courtier
Pizan	City of Ladies	Women's worth

Women: some elite women were patrons (Isabella d'Este), but most had little power.

⚠ Humanism ≠ anti-religious. Most humanists were devout Christians who also loved classics.

1.2 Italian Renaissance Art

New Techniques

Linear perspective (Brunelleschi): a vanishing point gives depth on a flat surface.
Realism: study of anatomy, light & shadow (**chiaroscuro**) & real emotion in faces.
Classical revival: columns, domes & figures copied from Greek & Roman art.

Artist	Known for
Brunelleschi	Florence dome
Masaccio	Holy Trinity
Leonardo	Last Supper, Mona Lisa
Michelangelo	Sistine Chapel, David
Raphael	School of Athens

Patronage & Purpose

Patrons: the Medici, popes & rich merchants paid for art to show their power & faith.
Subjects: religious scenes stayed central, but portraits, myths & daily life grew.
Artists: went from unknown craftsmen to famous individual geniuses who signed their work.

Later Styles

Mannerism (after 1520): stretched, tense figures reflect a time of crisis & Reformation.

⚠ Art questions are about context: who paid, why & what values the work shows.

✓ Image question? Point to perspective or realism, then link it to humanism or patrons.

1.3–1.4 Northern Renaissance & Printing

Christian Humanism

Christian humanism: used classical study to read the Bible closely & reform the Church.
Erasmus: *In Praise of Folly* mocked corrupt clergy; printed a Greek New Testament.
Thomas More: *Utopia* (1516) imagined an ideal society to criticize greed in England.

Northern Art

Feature	Italian	Northern
Subjects	Classical, myth	Daily life
Style	Idealized	Detailed
Medium	Fresco	Oil paint

Jan van Eyck: oil painting pioneer. **Dürer**: woodcuts spread widely by printing.
Bruegel: scenes of peasant life & the countryside.
Northern focus: more on religious reform & everyday life than Italy's classical themes.

The Printing Press

Gutenberg (c. 1450): movable metal type → books became faster & cheaper to make.
Effects: more literacy, standard texts, ideas spread fast, more books in local languages.
Reformation link: Luther's pamphlets spread across Germany fast thanks to print (1517+).
Science: printed diagrams & data let scholars check & build on each other's work.

✓ Printing press = key cause: humanism → Reformation → Scientific Revolution.

1.5 New Monarchies

Centralizing Power

New monarchs: gained power over nobles & the Church w/ armies, taxes & officials.
Tools: loyal middle-class officials, standing armies w/ guns & cannons, direct taxes.
Sovereignty: idea that a ruler has supreme power inside fixed borders, replacing feudal ties.

State	Ruler(s)	Key moves
France	Louis XI	Taxes, Concordat
Spain	Ferdinand & Isabella	Reconquista
England	Henry VII	Star Chamber
HRE	Habsburgs	Stayed divided

Country Details

France: **Concordat of Bologna** (1516) let the king pick French bishops, not the pope.
Spain: Ferdinand & Isabella united Spain; **Inquisition** (1478) enforced Catholicism.
1492: Granada conquered, Jews expelled, Columbus sails → unity & empire.
Machiavelli: *The Prince* (1513) advised rulers to put power & stability before morality.
England: Henry VII ended the Wars of the Roses (1485) & tamed the nobles (Star Chamber).
Holy Roman Empire: hundreds of small states & an elected emperor who stayed weak.

⚠ New Monarchies ≠ absolutism. Absolutism (Louis XIV) comes later, in Unit 3.

✓ Link new monarchs to exploration: strong states could tax & pay for voyages.

1.6 Technology & the Age of Exploration

Motives: God, Gold, Glory

God: spread Christianity. **Gold**: reach Asian spices w/o Ottoman & Venetian middlemen.
Glory: fame for explorers, new land & power for their kings & queens, rivalry w/ others.

Technology

Tool	Use
Caravel	Fast, small ship
Lateen sail	Sail into the wind
Astrolabe	Find latitude
Compass	Find direction

Guns & cannons: armed ships & soldiers overpowered local forces overseas.

Key Voyages

Portugal: Henry the Navigator funded voyages; **Da Gama** reached India by sea (1498).
Spain: **Columbus** (1492); Magellan's crew sailed all the way around the world (1519–22).
Conquistadors: Cortés defeated the Aztecs (1521); Pizarro defeated the Incas (1532).
Treaty of Tordesillas (1494): split new lands between Spain (west) & Portugal (east).
Others: England, France & the Dutch explored N. America later, seeking a Northwest Passage.

⚠ Much "European" tech was borrowed (compass, lateen sail). Mention it for complexity.

✓ LEQ: pair a motive (gold) w/ a tool (caravel) & a cause (state funding from new monarchs).

1.7 Rise of Mercantilism

Mercantilist Theory

Mercantilism: a nation's wealth = gold & silver; 1 state gains only if another loses.
Balance of trade: export more than you import; use tariffs to protect home industry.
Colonies: send raw materials home & buy the home country's goods; trade w/ rivals banned.

Commercial Revolution

Institution	Date	Role
English EIC	1600	Asian trade
Dutch VOC	1602	Spice trade
Bank of Amst.	1609	Credit

Joint-stock companies: many investors share the cost, risk & profit of a voyage (VOC).
Trade shift: trade moves from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic (Amsterdam, London).
Banking: Medici & Fugger loans paid for kings' wars; new banks offered credit.

Price Revolution

Price Revolution: American silver + population growth → long inflation in the 1500s.
Winners: merchants gain; wage earners lose.
Spain: lots of silver but little industry → inflation, debt & repeated royal bankruptcies.

✓ Compare: Spain got silver but declined; the Dutch built trade & finance & grew rich.

⚠ Mercantilism ≠ free trade. The state controls trade; Adam Smith criticized it later.

1.8 The Columbian Exchange

What Moved

Americas → Europe	Europe → Americas
Maize, potato	Wheat, sugar
Tomato, cacao	Horses, cattle
Tobacco, silver	Smallpox, measles

Columbian Exchange: plants, animals, diseases & people moved between hemispheres after 1492.

Effects on the Americas

Disease: smallpox killed up to 90% of some Native groups, who had no immunity to it.
Labor shortage: as Native people died, Europeans brought enslaved Africans to work.
Plantations: sugar farms in Brazil & the Caribbean depended on enslaved African labor.
Environment: new livestock & cash crops changed the land; forests were cleared for farms.

Effects on Europe

New crops: potatoes & maize improved European diets → population grew over time.
New goods: sugar, tobacco & cacao became popular → plantation economies grew.
Ideas: new lands showed ancient authors like Ptolemy were wrong → more questioning.
Silver: American silver paid for Spain's wars & helped cause inflation across Europe.

⚠ Disease, not just weapons, explains most Native deaths. Mention both in essays.

✓ Potato → more food → bigger population → more workers for industry later on.

1.9–1.10 Maritime Empires & Causation

Empire Models

Empire	Model
Portuguese	Trading posts
Spanish	Conquest & mines
Dutch	Trade companies
French/English	Settlers, furs

Spain: **encomienda** gave colonists Native labor in return for teaching Christianity.
Portugal: forts & trading posts along coasts of Africa & Asia, not big colonies; Brazil grew sugar.
Dutch: VOC took the Spice Islands from Portugal; cared about profit more than settlers.

Slavery & Debate

Atlantic slave trade: ~12 million Africans shipped; **Middle Passage** = deadly crossing.
Triangular trade: goods → Africa; enslaved people → Americas; sugar & tobacco → Europe.
Las Casas: Spanish priest who condemned abuse of Native peoples (debate of 1550).
Missionaries: Jesuits & friars spread Catholicism in the colonies, often by force or pressure.

Causation

Causes: Renaissance curiosity, printing, strong states & new tech → exploration.
Effects: an Atlantic economy, power shifts west, global trade & rivalry between empires.

⚠ Don't give just 1 cause. Explain several causes & tie each one to specific evidence.