

## Bridging History: LEARNING PLAN/UNIT TWO, Beginnings 6 Oct – 7 Nov

**Theme 2, “Early Economies”** This unit explores the basic problem of how people made a living in the past. How did people distribute the goods they produced, and how did they gain access to what they needed to survive? How did societies establish systems of exchange based on differing concepts of value? What kinds of things were considered valuable: land, labor, or commodities such as gold and salt? How did some people accumulate wealth? How did different political systems structure the distribution of goods and services through taxation and tribute? How was money used? And finally, how did markets work? The answers to these questions illustrate the diverse ways and means people secured food and shelter and accumulated wealth — however that wealth was defined. They also show how ways of making a living were embedded in political structures and were shaped by historical forces of change.

**Big Ideas:** **1.** Early economic systems were able to integrate smaller local and household economies into larger units. **2.** Early economic systems were built on difference, as goods and services were allocated unequally according to different levels of political power and social status. **3.** Political structures such as empires and feudal systems shape the ways that goods and services are produced, distributed, and consumed. This relationship between political structures and the management of economies is referred to as “political economy,” and is important for understanding how early economies developed. **4.** Economic systems were not static or stable. Instead, they evolved over time in response to historical events and changes in political organization. **5.** The concepts of money and of economic value were not uniform over time or across space. Different locations placed economic value on different things — whether it was on coins, silver, paper certificates, agricultural products, or human labor. Also, concepts of money and economic value changed over time, even within the same societies.

**Questions to Consider:** **1.** How did early economies work to meet the basic needs of people? **2.** What kinds of circumstances caused economic growth and change in early economies? **3.** The term “political economy” refers to the relationship between political structures and the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. How did the early histories of England, Japan, China, and the Andean highlands shape the types of political economies that developed in each place? **4.** How did the differing political structures of early economies such as empires and feudal systems shape economic life?

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Objective(s)</b>
Early Economies	Watch, study & take notes on each of the three video segments.	<p><i>Describe</i> the ways some early economies were self sufficient.</p> <p><i>Explain</i> the impacts of new rice strains &amp; the expansion of arable land led to changes in 11<sup>th</sup> century Chinese markets &amp; society..</p> <p><i>Describe</i> the characteristics of economies that do not have markets or money.</p>
Labor Organization and Taxation	Document Analysis	<p><i>Explain</i> how did the four state systems control labor? How did governmental requirements for labor seem to affect the economies?</p> <p><i>Imagine</i> what other kinds of evidence do you need to assess the ways the economies were affected?</p>
Manors, Shoen, & Peasant Revolts	Read and research the handout	<p><i>Communicate</i> the difference between manors &amp; shoen.</p> <p><i>Analyze</i> the sources to compare the causes and methods of peasant revolts in Medieval England and Kamakura Japan.</p>