**Helpful Tools in History**

1. In history, you have probably seen the initials “B.C.” or “A.D.” cited after a specific year. For example, “300 BC” or “1200 AD”. The term “BC” literally means “Before Christ”, referring to the number of years *before* Jesus Christ was born (assuming he was born in the year “0”). The term “AD” stands for “Anno Domini”, which in Latin means “Year of Our Lord”, and refers to the number of years *after* Christ’s birth. This is because the Western calendar is Christian-based, which is a tradition that goes back to the days of the late Roman Empire. However, historians today use more secular (non-religious) terms to refer to time, and your textbook uses these newer terms as well. Instead of “BC”, the authors use “BCE”, which stands for “Before the Common Era” and instead of “AD” they use “CE” which stands for “Common Era”. Feel free to use these terms interchangeably.
2. You must know the designated terms for centuries as well. Below is a helpful list:

Before the Common Era (“BCE” or B.C.):

2000-1901 BCE = 20th century BCE

1900-1801 BCE = 19th century BCE

1800-1701 BCE = 18th century BCE

1700-1601 BCE = 17th century BCE

1600-1501 BCE = 16th century BCE

1500-1401 BCE = 15th century BCE

1400-1301 BCE = 14th century BCE

1300-1201 BCE = 13th century BCE

1200-1101 BCE = 12th century BCE

1100-1001 BCE = 11th century BCE

1000-901 BCE = 10th century BCE

900-801 BCE = 9th century BCE

800-701 BCE = 8th century BCE

700-601 BCE = 7th century BCE

600-501 BCE = 6th century BCE

500-401 BCE = 5th century BCE

400-301 BCE = 4th century BCE

300-201 BCE = 3rd century BCE

200-101 BCE = 2nd century BCE

100-1 BCE = 1st century BCE

Common Era (“CE” or A.D.):

0-99 CE= 1st century CE

100’s = 2nd century CE

200’s = 3rd century CE

300’s = 4th century CE

400’s = 5th century CE

500’s = 6th century CE

600’s = 7th century CE

700’s = 8th century CE

800’s = 9th century CE

900’s = 10th century CE

1000’s = 11th century CE

1100’s = 12th century CE

1200’s = 13th century CE

1300’s = 14th century CE

1400’s = 15th century CE

1500’s = 16th century CE

1600’s = 17th century CE

1700’s = 18th century CE

1800’s = 19th century CE

1900’s = 20th century CE

2000’s = 21st century CE

*You will notice that the years Before the Common Era go backwards. That is because they are counting down towards the year “0”. Even though we use secular terms now, our Western calendar is still based on the Christian calendar.*