**Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Per:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Why Study History – Close Reading**

**1. Read the passage, circling unfamiliar words as you come across them.  
2. Use your device to find the definitions of your circled words.  
3. REREAD the passage, underlining the main idea of each paragraph.**

**4. Read the accompanying questions you were given and highlight the answer or related information where it appears in the text.**

**5. Write your answers in COMPLETE SENTENCES that restate the question. Don’t forget to CITE the source.**

Source

Definitions:

Why Study History?  
*By Peter Stearns*  
People live in the present. They plan for and worry about the future. History, however, is the study of the past. Given all the demands of living in the present and anticipating what is yet to come, why bother with what has been?

Historians do not perform heart transplants, improve highway design, or arrest criminals. In a society that expects education to serve useful purposes, the functions of history can seem more difficult to define than those of engineering or medicine.   
  
History is in fact very useful, actually indispensable, but the products of historical study are less tangible, sometimes less immediate, than those that stem from some other disciplines. History offers the only extensive evidential base for the understanding and analysis of how societies function, and people need to have some sense of how societies function simply to run their own lives.  
  
The past causes the present, and so the future. Any time we try to know why something happened-whether a shift in political party dominance in American Congress or a war in the Balkans or the Middle East-we have to look for factors that took shape earlier. Sometimes fairly recent history will suffice to explain a major development, but often we need to look further back to identify the causes of change. Only through studying history can we grasp how things change; only through history can we begin to comprehend the factors that cause change; and only through history can we understand what elements of a society have carried on from one generation to the next.

**Answer the following questions in COMPLETE sentences and CITE the source.  
1. Why might someone say history is NOT important?  
  
  
  
  
2. What do people need to know in order to run their own lives?  
  
  
  
  
3. Why might someone say history is important?**