Understanding BCE/CE
Key Notes

DATE & TIMELINES:

➢ Used to determine when things occurred in chronological order

➢ Help us figure out when things happened and how long ago specific events occurred

➢ Help us compare events to each other so to determine how much time passed between two (or we can look at an event in comparison to today)

➢ Like all measurements, NEED TO HAVE LABELS

THERE ARE 2 DIFFERENT SETS OF LABELING SYSTEMS BUT WE WILL ONLY USE BCE/CE IN THIS CLASS:

BC / AD

✓ Signifies *Before Christ* and Anno Domini ("the year of our lord")

✓ A calendar/timeline based on the birth of Jesus Christ

✓ The label "BC" comes after the number of the year. The label "AD" comes before the number of the year.

► Not all people accept BC/AD because of personal religious beliefs

BCE / CE

✓ Secular = nonreligious

✓ Signifies *Before Common Era* and *Common Era*

✓ We live in the "common era"

✓ Both labels, BCE and CE, come after the number of the year

OTHER KEY DETAILS TO REMEMBER:

➢ The year ZERO does not exist!

➢ In BCE the higher the number the earlier the even happened (1000 BCE happened BEFORE 500 BCE)

➢ In CE, the higher the number the later the event happened (500 CE happened before 2009 CE)

➢ When talking about "modern" dates you will most likely not see the label "CE," it is just assumed

➢ A timeline is set up very similar to a number line in math

HOW TO DETERMINE AGE / FIND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YEARS:

SAME SIDE – SUBTRACT / OPPOSITE SIDES – ADD

IF BOTH EVENTS ARE IN BCE:

➢ Take the number of the older event (the larger number) and SUBTRACT the more recent event (the smaller number)

Example: If someone was born in 545 BCE and they died in 445 BCE, they lived to be 100 years old

IF BOTH EVENTS ARE IN CE:

➢ Take the number of the more recent event (the larger number) and SUBTRACT the older event (the smaller number)

Example: If someone was born in 1910 CE and they died in 2010 CE, they lived to be 100 years old

IF ONE EVENT IS IN BCE AND THE OTHER IS IN CE:

➢ This is the most difficult to understand, but the easiest to do.

➢ All you need to do is ADD the two numbers together:

Example: If someone was born in 50 BCE and they died in 50 CE, they lived to be 100 years old