



Social Studies

Building on the social studies skills developed in the elementary grades, students in the middle school years begin with a study of people, cultures, and ideas in the Western Hemisphere and move from there to explorations of the Eastern Hemisphere, ending with the early history of the United States. In each grade, students investigate historical events, examine geographic features and resources, consider economic decision-making processes, and understand types of governments and civic responsibility.

Expectations for 6th Grade Students:

- **History:** Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources (original documents, maps, artifacts) to ask and research questions about the historical eras, individuals, groups, and ideas in various regions throughout the Western Hemisphere.
- **Geography:** Use geographic tools and resources to research regional differences and perspectives and make geographic inferences. Students investigate human and environmental interactions in the Western Hemisphere.
- **Economics:** Identify and explain the different types of economic systems including market, command and mixed economies. **Personal Financial Literacy:** Investigate the role of consumers within the Western Hemisphere.
- **Civics:** Analyze the relationships of different nations in the Western Hemisphere and their systems of government.

Throughout 6th Grade You May Find Students:

- Analyzing primary and secondary sources such as documents, photos, maps and artifacts to research and answer questions about the Western Hemisphere; exploring the key people, ideas and events from different perspectives and points of view to frame the “story” of history (the Aztecs, Maya, Inuit, Native American Cultures, colonizers of the Western Hemisphere, and the Columbian Exchange).
- Examining places and regions in the Western Hemisphere through maps, charts, and geospatial technologies (geographic information systems, Google Earth, global positioning systems); analyzing the positive and negative interactions between humans and the physical world (landforms, resources, climate); presenting potential solutions to problems surrounding issues of resource distribution, migration patterns, and population growth.
- Defining economic systems (traditional, command, market, and mixed economies); use economic reasoning to explain how specialization of production can result in more interdependence of examining how economic systems interact in an interdependent global economy. **Personal Financial Literacy:** investigating the role of consumers in

the Western Hemisphere.

- Analyzing the relationships of different nations in the Western Hemisphere; describing systems of government in the Western Hemisphere.

Expectations for 7th Grade Students:

- **History:** Locate and evaluate multiple historical sources with different points of view to investigate a historical question and to formulate and defend an argument; examine the historical eras, individuals, groups, ideas and themes in regions of the Eastern Hemisphere and their relationships with one another.
- **Geography:** Use different types of geographic tools such as maps, globes, diagrams, charts, and geographic data and technologies to make inferences and predictions about the differing perspectives and issues within regions in the Eastern Hemisphere.
- **Economics:** Explain how economic systems address the problems of scarcity. **Personal Financial Literacy:** Investigate the role of consumers within the Eastern Hemisphere.
- **Civics:** Analyze the relationships of different nations in the Eastern Hemisphere and their systems of government.

Expectations for 8th Grade Students:

- **History:** Examine and interpret a variety of primary and secondary sources, from different perspectives, to

Throughout 7th Grade You May Find Students:

- Gathering and analyzing primary and secondary sources (documents, photos, letters, diaries) from different perspectives to develop and defend an historical thesis about the significant eras and current events in the Eastern Hemisphere; explaining the interconnectedness of the political, cultural, economic and technological development of early civilizations in the Eastern Hemisphere (Ancient Greece, Rome, China, Africa, the Medieval world, and the Crusades); tracing the movement of ideas and people over time.
- Using maps and other geographic tools to explain and predict how the physical environment of a place influences a society's culture, economy, and trade patterns; asking and answering geographic questions related to environmental issues and the spread of cultural influences.
- Identifying the factors in local, national, and global economies that impact scarcity of resources and trade agreements; using economic reasoning to explain how individual choices in purchasing and investing can impact global markets.
- Describing and comparing the opportunities and limitations of civic participation; discussing how various government structures interact.

Throughout 8th Grade You May Find Students:

- Gathering and analyzing primary and secondary sources (art, documents, photos, letters, diaries, propaganda,

formulate a hypothesis and construct a written historical argument about a topic in American history (origins of the American Revolution through Reconstruction).

- **Geography:** Use different geographic tools and data such as maps, globes, diagrams, charts such as population pyramids and climate graphs, geospatial technologies (geographic information systems, Google Earth, global positioning systems) to analyze human and physical systems; explain both conflict and cooperation over space and resources in the United States from the origins of the American Revolution through Reconstruction.
- **Economics:** Provide examples of how economic freedom and free trade are important for economic growth; explain why it is important to manage personal credit and debt.
Personal Financial Literacy: Examine the role of consumer decisions and taxes within the market economies of early American history.
- **Civics:** Analyze the elements of continuity and change in the United States' constitutional system; summarize the role of law and the rights, roles, and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

artifacts) from multiple perspectives to develop and defend an historical thesis; constructing a written argument either for or against an ideal expressed or action taken by the United States during the period of time from the Revolution to Reconstruction; analyzing the causes and effects of major historical events such as the American Revolution, slavery, abolition, and states' rights.

- Using different types of maps and other geographic tools to explain and interpret significant events in U.S history from the American Revolution through Reconstruction (Westward Expansion, Gold Rush, population growth); addressing issues of land ownership and security from a geographic perspective; making inferences about how the location of and access to resources may lead to cooperation or conflict.
- Discussing the economic policies of the U.S. between the Revolution and Reconstruction; analyzing how policies, tariffs, taxation, and availability of resources affected the growth of the nation; analyzing the benefits and costs of credit and debt.
- Analyzing foundational documents (the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights); discussing how the U.S. constitutional system of government evolved between the American Revolution and Reconstruction, paying particular attention to the changing definition and rights of citizens; examining the changes to the U.S. Constitution and the tensions between individual rights, state law, and national law; explaining the rule of law and the role of judicial review in the U.S. judicial system.