

6th Grade Social Studies

Course Syllabus

Updated 7/26/18

Course Description: Sixth grade students will study the beginning of early civilizations through the fall of the Roman Empire. Students will study the geographical, social, economic, and political foundations for early civilizations progressing through the Roman Empire. They will analyze the shift from nomadic societies to agricultural societies. Students will study the development of civilizations, including the areas of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Israel, India, China, Greece, and Rome. The study of these civilizations will include the impact of geography, early history, cultural development, and economic change. The geographic focus will include the study of physical and political features, economic development and resources, and migration patterns. The sixth grade will conclude with the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. This course will be the first concentrated study of world history and geography and will utilize appropriate informational texts and primary sources.

1st 9 Weeks

Human Origins in Africa through the Neolithic Age:

Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, and social structures of early Africa through the Neolithic Age which led to the development of civilizations.

6.1 Identify sites in Africa where archaeologists and historians have found evidence of the origins of modern human beings and describe what the archaeologists found. (G, H)

6.2 Provide textual evidence that characterizes the nomadic hunter-gatherer societies of the Paleolithic Age (their use of tools and fire, basic hunting weapons, beads and other jewelry). (C, H)

6.3 Explain the importance of the discovery of metallurgy and agriculture. (E, H)

6.4 Evaluate the climatic changes and human modifications of the physical environment that gave rise to the domestication of plants and animals and new sources of clothing and shelter. (C, G, H)

6.5 Summarize the impact of agriculture related to settlement, population growth, and the emergence of civilization. (C, G, H)

6.6 Identify and explain the importance of the characteristics of civilizations, including: (C, E, G, H, P)

- the presence of geographic boundaries and political institutions
- an economy that produces food surpluses
- a concentration of population in distinct areas or cities
- the existence of social classes
- developed systems of religion, learning, art, and architecture
- a system of record keeping
- technology

6.7 Recognize time designations and the abbreviations, including: (H)

- · B.C.
- · B.C.E.
- · A.D.
- · C.E.
- · circa (c. or ca), decades, centuries, prehistoric, historic

Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read: Digital collections of early African art and tools, including cave paintings and spears

Mesopotamia: c. 3500-1200 BC/BCE

Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, social, and religious structures of the civilizations of Mesopotamia.

6.8 On a historical map, locate and describe the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, Zagros and Caucasus Mountains, Persian Gulf, Caspian and Black Sea, Dead Sea and Sea of Galilee and explain why the region is referred to as the Fertile Crescent. (G)

6.9 Summarize Sumer, Babylon, and Assyria as successive civilizations and empires and explain the development of city-states, identify Kish, Akkad, Ur, and Nineveh, and the significance of Sargon and Hammurabi. (G, H)

6.10 Trace the development of agricultural techniques that permitted economic surplus and the emergence of cities as centers of culture and power. (C, E, H)

6.11 Explain the significance of polytheism (the belief that there are many gods) as the religious belief of the people in Mesopotamian civilizations. (C, H)

6.12 Explain the effects of how irrigation, metal-smithing, slavery, the domestication of animals, and inventions such as the wheel, the sail, and the plow on the growth of Mesopotamian civilizations. (C, E, H)

6.13 Analyze the important achievements of Mesopotamian civilization, including its system of writing (and its importance in record keeping and tax collection), literature (Epic of Gilgamesh), monumental architecture (the ziggurat), and art (large relief sculpture, mosaics, and cylinder seals). (C, E, G, H)

6.14 Write an informative piece explaining the significant contributions of Mesopotamian leaders, including Hammurabi and Sargon, and explain the basic principle of justice in Hammurabi's Code ("an eye for an eye"). (C, E, H, P)

Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read: excerpts from the Epic of Gilgamesh; digital collections of the ancient Mesopotamian plow, wheel, sailboat, cuneiform tablets, and the stylus

2nd 9 Weeks

Ancient Egypt: c. 3000-1200 BC/BCE

Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, social, and religious structures of the civilizations of Ancient Egypt.

6.15 On a historical map locate the Mediterranean and Red Seas, the Nile River and Delta, and the areas of ancient Nubia and Egypt. Identify the locations of ancient Upper and Lower Egypt and explain what the terms mean. On a modern map, identify the modern countries of Egypt and the Sudan. (G, H)

6.16 Investigate the kinds of evidence used by archaeologists and historians to draw conclusions about the social and economic characteristics of Ancient Nubia (the Kingdom of Kush) and their relationship to the social and economic characteristics of Ancient Egypt. (C, E, G, H, P)

6.17 Develop a visual representation of the structure of Egyptian society including the role of the pharaoh as god/king, the concept of dynasties, the importance of at least one Egyptian ruler, the relationship of pharaohs to peasants, and the role of slaves in ancient Egypt. (C, E, H, P)

6.18 Site evidence from informational texts to explain the polytheistic religion of ancient Egypt with respect to beliefs about death, the afterlife, mummification, and the roles of different deities. (C, H)

6.19 Summarize important achievements of Egyptian civilization, including: (C, E, H)

- · the agricultural and irrigation systems
- · the invention of a calendar
- · main features of the monumental architecture and art, such as the Pyramids and Sphinx at Giza
- · evolution of writing- hieroglyphics
- · the invention of papyrus

6.20 Identify the Old, Middle, and New Kingdom time periods and evaluate the significance of the following: (C, H, P)

- · Menes
- · Khufu
- · Hyksos invasion
- · Ahmose
- · King Tut
- · Queen Hatshepsut
- · Ramses the Great

6.21 Identify the location of the Kush civilization and describe its political, commercial, and cultural relationship with Egypt. (C, E, G, H, P)

6.22 Compare and contrast the religious, social, and political structures in Mesopotamia and Egypt. (C, H, P)

Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read: Digital collections of Egyptian Pyramids, including the Pyramids and Sphinx at Giza; digital collections of the Pyramid Texts on the wall of the burial chamber of the Pyramid of Teti, Saqqara; digital collections of documents written on papyri

Ancient Israel, c. 2000 BC/BCE-70 AD/CE

Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, social, and religious structures of the civilizations of Ancient Israel.

6.39 On a historical map of the Mediterranean Sea, Jordan River, Sinai Peninsula, locate Asia Minor, the kingdoms of the Hittites and Phoenicians, ancient Israel, and Egypt. (G)

6.40 Examine the development of the ancient Israelites, tracing their migrations from Mesopotamia to Canaan, later called Israel, and explain the significant roles of Abraham and Moses in their history. (C, H, G)

6.41 Describe the monotheistic religion of the Israelites, including: (C, H) · the belief in one God (monotheism)

- · the Ten Commandments
- · the emphasis on individual worth and personal responsibility
- · the belief that all people must adhere to the same moral obligations, whether ruler or ruled
- · the Torah and the Hebrew Bible as part of the history of early Israel

6.42 Describe the unification of the tribes of Israel under Kings Saul, David, and Solomon, including David's founding of Jerusalem as his capital city in 1000 BC/BCE and the building of the first temple by Solomon. (G, H, P)

6.43 Summarize the four major events after the rule of King Solomon in the history of Israel, including the breakup of the Kingdom of Israel, destruction of the Northern Kingdom, Babylonian captivity under Nebuchadnezzar, and the return of the Jews to their homeland under the Persian Empire. (H)

6.44 Conduct a short research piece with supporting details of Second Babylonian, Persian, and Median Empires, including Nebuchadnezzar, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, Cyrus the Great, Darius the Great, and Xerxes. (H)

6.45 Explain how Judaism survived the expulsion/dispersion of the Jews to other lands (the Diaspora) after the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem in 70 AD/CE, and the renaming of the country by the Romans. (C, H)

Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read: excerpts from the Tanach, Hebrew Bible, the Torah, and the Dead Sea Scrolls

3rd 9 Weeks

Ancient India:

Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, social, and religious structures of the civilizations of Ancient India.

6.23 Locate and describe the Himalayas and the major river systems, including Indus and Ganges and evaluate the importance of each. (E, G, H)

6.24 Analyze the impact of the Aryan invasions. (C, H, P)

6.25 Explain how the major beliefs and practices of Brahmanism in India evolved into early Hinduism. (C, H)

6.26 Outline the social structure of the caste system and explain its effect on everyday life in Indian society. (C, E, H, P)

6.27 Write a narrative text describing how Siddhartha Gautama's (Buddha) life experiences influenced his moral teachings and how those teachings became a new religion that spread throughout India and Central Asia as a new religion. (C, H, G)

6.28 Describe the growth of the Maurya Empire and the political and moral achievements of the Emperor Asoka. (C, H, P)

6.29 Identify the important aesthetic and intellectual traditions, including: (C, E, H)

- · Sanskrit literature, including the Bhagavad-Gita, Ramayana, and the Mahabharata
- · medicine
- · metallurgy
- · mathematics, including Hindu-Arabic numerals and the zero

Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read: excerpts from the epic Hindu literature Bhagavad Gita; excerpts from Ramayana; excerpts from Mahabharata

Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read: excerpts from Hindu Search for Divine Reality; excerpts from The Upanishads; excerpts from the Buddha's Two Lessons

Ancient China:

Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, social, and religious structures of the civilizations of Ancient China.

6.30 Identify and locate on a map the geographical features of China, including the Huang He (Yellow) River, Plateau of Tibet, and Gobi Desert. (G)

6.31 Locate and describe the origins of Chinese civilization in the Huang-He Valley during the era of the Shang Dynasty. (C, G, H)

6.32 Explain how the regions of China are isolated by geographic features, making governance and the spread of ideas and goods difficult, and served to isolate the country from the rest of the world. (G, H)

6.33 Analyze the structure of the Zhou Dynasty and the emergence of Taoism, Confucianism, and Legalism. (C, H)

6.34 Identify the political and cultural problems prevalent in the time of Confucius and how he sought to solve them. (C, H, P)

6.35 List the policies and achievements of the emperor Shi Huang and explain how these contributed to the unification of northern China under the Qin Dynasty and the construction of the Great Wall of China. (H, P)

6.36 Detail the political contributions of the Han Dynasty and determine how they contributed to the development of the imperial bureaucratic state and the expansion of the empire. (H, P)

6.37 Cite the significance of the trans-Eurasian “silk roads” in the period of the Han Dynasty and Roman Empire and their locations. (E, G, H)

6.38 Describe the diffusion of Buddhism northward to China during the Han Dynasty. (C, G, H)

Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read: excerpts from The Mandate of Heaven: The Classic of History; excerpts from Confucius’ The Analects, excerpts from The Lament of the Nomad Flute by Lady Wenji

4th 9 Weeks

Ancient Greece, c. 800-300 BC/BCE

Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, social, and religious structures of the civilizations of Ancient Greece.

6.46 On a historical map of the ancient Mediterranean area, locate Greece and trace the boundaries of its influence to 300 BC/BCE. On a contemporary map trace the current boundaries of Greece. Compare and contrast the sphere of influence of Greece in those two different eras. (G, H)

6.47 Explain how the geographical location of ancient Athens and other city-states contributed to their role in maritime trade, their colonies in the Mediterranean, and the expansion of their cultural influence. (C, E, G, H)

6.48 Trace the transition from tyranny and oligarchy to early democratic forms of government and back to dictatorship in ancient Greece, including the significance of the development of the idea of citizenship. (C, H, P)

6.49 Explain how the development of democratic political concepts in ancient Greece lead to the origins of direct Democracy and representative Democracy, including: (C, H, P)

- the “polis” or city-state
- civic participation and voting rights

- · legislative bodies
- · constitution writing
- · rule of law

6.50 Compare and contrast life in Athens and Sparta. (C, H)

6.51 Compare and contrast the status of women and slaves between Athens and Sparta.(C, H)

6.52 Analyze the causes, course, and consequences of the Persian Wars. (C, H, G)

6.53 Analyze the causes, course, and consequences of the Peloponnesian Wars between Athens and Sparta. (H, P)

6.54 Explain the rise of Alexander the Great and the spread of Greek culture. (C, G, H, P)

6.55 Analyze the causes and effects of the Hellenistic culture of Greece. (C, E, G, H, P)

6.56 Describe the myths and stories of classical Greece; give examples of Greek gods, goddesses, and heroes (Zeus, Hermes, Aphrodite, Athena, Poseidon, Artemis, Hades, Apollo), and events, and where and how we see their names used today. (C, H)

6.57 Compare and contrast the Titans with the Olympian gods and explain the surrounding Greek mythology. (C, H)

6.58 Explain why the city-states of Greece instituted a tradition of athletic competitions and describe the sports they featured. (C, H)

6.59 Describe the purposes and functions of the lyceum, the gymnasium, and the Library of Alexandria, and identify the major accomplishments of the ancient Greeks. (C, H)

- · Thales (science)
- · Pythagoras and Euclid (mathematics)
- · Hippocrates (medicine)
- · Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle (philosophy)
- · Herodotus, Thucydides, Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Aristophanes, and Euripides (history, poetry, and drama)
- · the Parthenon, the Acropolis, and the Temple of Apollo (architecture)
- · the development of the first complete alphabet, with symbols representing both consonants and vowels

Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read: excerpts from Homer's Iliad and the Odyssey; excerpts from Pericles' Funeral Oration; excerpts from Alexander by Plutarch; excerpts from Aesop's Fables (or the Aesopica); excerpts from Aristotle's The Athenian Constitution; excerpts from The Battle of Marathon; excerpts from Everyday Life in Ancient Greece (4th Century BC)

Ancient Rome, c. 500 BC/BCE-500 AD/CE

Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, social, and religious structures of the civilizations of Ancient Rome.

6.60 On a historical map, identify ancient Rome and trace the extent of the Roman Empire to 500 AD/CE. (G, H)

6.61 Explain how the geographical location of ancient Rome contributed to the shaping of Roman society and the expansion of its political power in the Mediterranean region and beyond. (E, G, P)

6.62 Explain the rise of the Roman Republic and the role of mythical and historical figures in Roman history, including Romulus and Remus, Hannibal and the Carthaginian Wars, Cicero, Julius Caesar, Augustus, Hadrian, Aeneas, and Cincinnatus. (C, G, H, P)

6.63 Describe the government of the Roman Republic and its contribution to the development of democratic principles, including the rule of law (a written constitution), separation of powers, checks and balances, representative government, and civic duty. (C, H, P)

6.64 Describe the influence of Julius Caesar and Augustus in Rome's transition from a republic to an empire and explain the reasons for the growth and long life of the Roman Empire. (C, E, G, H, P)

- · Military organization, tactics, and conquests and decentralized administration
- · the purpose and functions of taxes
- · the promotion of economic growth through the use of a standard currency, road construction, and the protection of trade routes
- · the benefits of a Pax Romana

6.65 Reflect on the impact of the lives of Cleopatra, Marc Anthony, Nero, Diocletian, and Constantine, city of Constantinople on the Roman Empire. (H, P)

6.66 Identify the location of, and the political and geographic reasons for, the growth of Roman territories and expansion of the empire, including how the empire fostered economic growth through the use of currency and trade routes. (C, E, G, H, P)

6.67 Describe the characteristics of slavery under the Romans and explain the slave revolt led by Spartacus. (C, E, H)

6.68 Describe the origins and central features of Christianity. (C, G, H, P)

- · monotheism
- · the belief in Jesus as the Messiah and God's Son
- · the concept of resurrection
- · the concept of salvation
- · belief in the Old and New Testaments
- · the lives, teachings and contributions of Jesus and Paul
- · the relationship of early Christians to officials of the Roman Empire

6.69 Analyze how internal and external forces caused the disintegration of the Roman Empire: including the rise of autonomous military powers, political corruption, economic and political instability, shrinking trade, invasions, and attacks by Germanic tribes. (E, G, H, P)

6.70 Describe the contribution of Roman civilization to law, literature, poetry, art, architecture, engineering, and technology. Include the significance of Coliseum, Circus Maximus, roads, bridges, arches, arenas, baths, aqueducts, central heating, plumbing, and sanitation. (C, H, P)

6.71 Explain the spread and influence of the Roman alphabet and the Latin language, the use of Latin as the language of education for more than 1,000 years, and the role of Latin and Greek in scientific and academic vocabulary. (C, H, G)

6.72 Compare and contrast the Roman gods and goddesses to the Greek gods and goddesses, including Jupiter, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Neptune, Saturn, Pluto, and Hera and their inclusion in modern society.

Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read: excerpts from Roman Literature, including Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, excerpts from the Dead Sea Scrolls, excerpts from The Essenes' *Manual of Discipline*, excerpts from Plutarch's *The Assassination of Julius Caesar*, (44 BC), excerpts from Plutarch's writings on Spartacus and Seneca's descriptions of gladiators; excerpts from the New Testament; Items to view: art sculptures depicting Romulus and Remus, Ancient bust of Julius Caesar, discovered by French archaeologist divers scouring the bottom of the Rhône in the southern town of Arles, which Caesar founded in 46 B.C., digital collections of authentic ancient Roman Art and Architecture, including: the Colosseum, arches, arenas, aqueducts, baths, and bridges