

GRADE 6

Early Cultures to 1600

Social studies in grade six develops and enhances the student's understanding of history through the study of people and events from earliest man to the era of European exploration. This course focuses on the significance of geography, economics, and government in the development of the human story, including the conflicts and accomplishments of the people and their roles in developing the social, economic, and political structures of the major civilizations.

Instruction should utilize the social studies literacy skills for the twenty-first century that are enunciated in chart format in Appendix A. These statements represent a continuum of tools, strategies, and perspectives that are necessary for the student's understanding of social studies material that is taught at each grade level. Beginning at kindergarten and progressing to graduation, each statement is a developmentally appropriate iteration of the same skill as it is being further honed at each grade band (K–3, 4–5, 6–8, and high school). While most of these skills can be utilized in the teaching of every standard, the most *appropriate* skills for each standard are repeated in a bulleted list at the bottom of the page for that particular standard.

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Early Cultures to 1600

Standard 6-1: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the development of the cradles of civilization as people moved from a nomadic existence to a settled life.

Enduring Understanding

The first humans were nomads who continually traveled in search of food. As these hunter-gatherers developed better ways of doing things, they began to develop into the world's earliest civilizations. Civilized societies have established written languages, permanent structures, forms of government, dependence on agriculture, and specializations of labor. These societies have also developed customs such as formal religions and traditions in family structure, food, and clothing that have endured. To understand how early civilizations evolved, the student will utilize the knowledge and skills set forth in the following indicators:

Indicators

- 6-1.1 Explain the characteristics of hunter-gatherer groups and their relationship to the natural environment.
- 6-1.2 Explain the emergence of agriculture and its effect on early human communities, including the domestication of plants and animals, the impact of irrigation techniques, and subsequent food surpluses.
- 6-1.3 Compare the river valley civilizations of the Tigris and Euphrates (Mesopotamia), the Nile (Egypt), the Indus (India), and the Huang He (China), including the evolution of written language, government, trade systems, architecture, and forms of social order.
- 6-1.4 Explain the origins, fundamental beliefs, and spread of Eastern religions, including Hinduism (India), Judaism (Mesopotamia), Buddhism (India), and Confucianism and Taoism (China).

Social Studies Literacy Skills for the Twenty-First Century

- Explain change and continuity over time and across **cultures**.
- Interpret parallel time lines from different places and **cultures**.
- Identify and explain multiple causation and multiple effects.
- Compare the locations of places, the conditions at places, and the connections between places.

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Standard 6-2: The student will demonstrate an understanding of life in ancient civilizations and their contributions to the modern world.

Enduring Understanding

The foundations of government, science, technology, and the arts are legacies of ancient civilizations. To understand that the contributions of these ancient civilizations have endured and are evident in our society today, the student will utilize the knowledge and skills set forth in the following indicators:

Indicators

- 6-2.1 Describe the development of ancient Greek **culture** (the Hellenic period), including the concept of citizenship and the early forms of **democracy** in Athens.
- 6-2.2 Analyze the role of Alexander the Great (Hellenistic period), Socrates, Plato, Archimedes, Aristotle, and others in the creation and spread of Greek governance, literature, philosophy, the arts, math, and science.
- 6-2.3 Describe the development of Roman civilization, including language, government, architecture, and engineering.
- 6-2.4 Describe the expansion and transition of the Roman government from **monarchy** to republic to empire, including the roles of Julius Caesar and Augustus Caesar (Octavius).
- 6-2.5 Explain the decline and collapse of the Roman Empire and the impact of the Byzantine Empire, including the Justinian Code and the preservation of ancient Greek and Roman learning, architecture, and government.
- 6-2.6 Compare the polytheistic belief systems of the Greeks and the Romans with the origins, foundational beliefs, and spread of Christianity.

Social Studies Literacy Skills for the Twenty-First Century

- Explain change and continuity over time and across **cultures**.
- Interpret parallel time lines from different places and **cultures**.
- Identify and explain the relationships among multiple causes and multiple effects.
- Compare the locations of places, the conditions at places, and the connections between places.
- Explain how political, social, and economic institutions are similar or different across time and/or throughout the world.

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Early Cultures to 1600

Standard 6-3: The student will demonstrate an understanding of changing political, social, and economic **cultures** in Asia.

Enduring Understanding

Asian **cultures** were developing in ways both similar to and different from those in other parts of the world. The **cultures** of China, India, Japan, and the Middle East influenced each other's growth and development as well as that of the rest of the world. To understand the contributions of Asian societies that have endured and are evident in our society today, the student will utilize the knowledge and skills set forth in the following indicators:

Indicators

- 6-3.1 Summarize the major contributions of the Chinese civilization from the Qing dynasty through the Ming dynasty, including the golden age of art and literature, the invention of gunpowder and woodblock printing, and the rise of trade via the Silk Road.
- 6-3.2 Summarize the major contributions of the Japanese civilization, including the Japanese **feudal system**, the Shinto traditions, and works of art and literature.
- 6-3.3 Summarize the major contributions of India, including those of the Gupta dynasty in mathematics, literature, religion, and science.
- 6-3.4 Explain the origin and fundamental beliefs of Islam and the geographic and economic aspects of its expansion.

Social Studies Literacy Skills for the Twenty-First Century

- Explain change and continuity over time and across **cultures**.
- Interpret parallel time lines from different places and **cultures**.
- Identify and explain the relationships among multiple causes and multiple effects.
- Compare the locations of places, the conditions at places, and the connections between places.
- Explain how political, social, and economic institutions are similar or different across time and/or throughout the world.

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Standard 6-4: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the changing political, social, and economic **cultures** in Africa and the Americas.

Enduring Understanding

African and American **cultures** were developing independently in ways similar to and different from those in other parts of the world. These **cultures** also influenced the development of the rest of the world. To understand that the contributions of African and American **cultures** have endured and are evident in our society today, the student will utilize the knowledge and skills set forth in the following indicators:

Indicators

- 6.4.1 Compare the major contributions of the African civilizations of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai, including the impact of Islam on the **cultures** of these kingdoms.
- 6-4.2 Describe the influence of geography on trade in the African kingdoms, including the salt and gold trades.
- 6-4.3 Compare the contributions and the decline of the Maya, Aztec, and Inca civilizations in Central and South America, including their forms of government and their contributions in mathematics, astronomy, and architecture.
- 6-4.4 Explain the contributions, features, and rise and fall of the North American ancestors of the numerous Native American tribes, including the Adena, Hopewell, Pueblo, and Mississippian **cultures**.

Social Studies Literacy Skills for the Twenty-First Century

- Compare the locations of places, the conditions at places, and the connections between places.
- Explain change and continuity over time and across **cultures**.
- Interpret parallel time lines from different places and **cultures**.
- Select or design appropriate forms of social studies resources* to organize and evaluate social studies information.

* Social studies resources include the following: texts, calendars, timelines, maps, mental maps, charts, tables, graphs, flow charts, diagrams, photographs, illustrations, paintings, cartoons, architectural drawings, documents, letters, censuses, artifacts, models, geographic models, aerial photographs, satellite-produced images, and geographic information systems.

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Standard 6-5: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the Middle Ages and the emergence of **nation-states** in Europe.

Enduring Understanding

Political systems are made up of the people, practices, and institutions that use power to make and enforce decisions. Feudalism during the Middle Ages in Europe was a political and economic system in which control of land was the main source of power. To understand feudalism and its relationship to the development of the European **nation-states**, the student will utilize the knowledge and skills set forth in the following indicators:

Indicators

- 6-5.1 Explain feudalism and its relationship to the development of European monarchies and **nation-states**, including feudal relationships, the daily lives of peasants and serfs, and the economy under the manorial system.
- 6-5.2 Explain the effects of the Magna Carta on European society, its effect on the **feudal system**, and its contribution to the development of representative government in England.
- 6-5.3 Summarize the course of the **Crusades** and explain their effects on feudalism and their role in spreading Christianity.
- 6-5.4 Explain the role and influence of the Roman Catholic Church in medieval Europe.
- 6-5.5 Summarize the origins and impact of the bubonic plague (Black Death) on feudalism.

Social Studies Literacy Skills for the Twenty-First Century

- Compare the locations of places, the conditions at places, and the connections between places.
- Analyze evidence, arguments, claims, and beliefs.
- Explain change and continuity over time and across **cultures**.
- Identify and explain the relationships among multiple causes and multiple effects.

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Early Cultures to 1600

Standard 6-6: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the impact of the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Age of Exploration on Europe and the rest of the world.

Enduring Understanding

The Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Age of Exploration were times of great discovery and learning that affected the way individuals viewed themselves and the world around them. To understand the connections among the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the exploration of the world, the student will utilize the knowledge and skills set forth in the following indicators:

Indicators

- 6-6.1 Summarize the contributions of the Italian Renaissance, including the importance of Florence, the influence of **humanism** and the accomplishments of the Italians in art, music, literature, and architecture.
- 6-6.2 Identify key figures of the Renaissance and the Reformation and their contributions (e.g., Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Johannes Gutenberg, John Calvin, and Martin Luther).
- 6-6.3 Explain the causes, events, and points of contention and denominational affiliations (of nations) of the Reformation and the Catholic Reformation (Counter Reformation).
- 6-6.4 Compare the economic, political, and religious incentives of the various European countries to explore and settle new lands.
- 6-6.5 Identify the origin and destinations of the voyages of major European explorers.
- 6-6.6 Explain the effects of the exchange of plants, animals, diseases, and technology throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas (known as the Columbian Exchange).

Social Studies Literacy Skills for the Twenty-First Century

- Compare the locations of places, the conditions at places, and the connections between places.
- Analyze evidence, arguments, claims, and beliefs.
- Explain change and continuity over time and across **cultures**.
- Identify and explain the relationships among multiple causes and multiple effects.
- Apply economic decision making to understand how limited resources necessitate choices.