

# Grade Four Content Overview

## Our Country: Geography and Regions

- Physical features
- Regions
- Contributions of the states

## Connecticut

- Coastal and inland communities
- Famous landmarks
- Physical and human characteristics

## United States Government

- Local, State, and national
- Three branches of government
- Citizens role in government
- Washington D.C.

## Current Events

- Connections to personal life
- Role of the United States in global community

- \* **Map Skills will be woven into the fourth grade Social Studies curriculum.**
- \* **Researched-based learning will be included within the fourth grade Social Studies curriculum.**
- \* **Study Skills will be integrated within the fourth grade Social Studies curriculum.**

# Grade Four

## Our Country: Geography and Regions

### Focus Questions

1. What are the major physical features of the United States?
2. What are the ways that the United States can be divided into regions?
3. How do the physical/natural features of the land affect the way people live in the United States?
4. What roles do the states play in our country?
5. What makes each state unique?

### Essential Understandings

1. The United States has various physical features.
2. Physical features affect the way people live in the United States.
3. The United States is divided into regions.
4. Human environmental interaction shapes the United States.
5. The United States is made up of 50 states.
6. Each State makes unique contributions to our country.

### Suggested Activities

- Identify and label the 50 states and their capitals on a blank map of the United States
- Spelling Bee of names of states and capitals
- Identify and label the major physical features on a blank United States map
- Research a specific state and create a final project that includes a written and visual component
- Compare and contrast different regions
- Read various texts describing life in different regions of the United States
- Create study cards that picture and define different types of landforms specific to each region
- Create trivia questions based on facts about the fifty states

## Suggested Resources

- Blank United States maps
- Pull down maps
- Maps: Political, product, resource, landform, climate, population, etc.
- Various novels and nonfiction texts
- Various State Websites
- Almanacs and atlases
- America the Beautiful State book Series (Sherman LMC)
- [www.50States.com](http://www.50States.com)

## **State Content and Performance Standards**

### **Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking**

- Gather historical data from multiple sources.
- Engage in reading challenging primary and secondary historical source materials, some of which is contradictory and requires questioning of validity.
- Describe sources of historical information. Identify the main idea in a source of historical information.
- Write short narratives and statements of historical ideas and create other appropriate presentations from investigations of source materials.

### **Content Standard 2: Local, United States and World History**

- Locate the events, peoples and places they have studied in time and place (e.g., on a timeline and map) relative to their own location.
- Demonstrate knowledge of major trends in state and local history, including history of original peoples, early settlements and selected changes over the past two centuries.
- Place the history of their own families in the context of local, state, national and world history.

### **Content Standard 3: Historical Themes**

- Describe and explain some of the reasons people have moved and relate these reasons to some historic movements of large groups of people.
- Describe Some goods, products and ideas which were exchanged as the result of movement.
- Describe the impact of various technological developments on the local community and on the nation.
- Identify individual achievements of scientists and inventors from many cultures and different historical periods and describe their achievements.

### **Content Standard 4: Applying History**

- Be active learners at cultural institutions, such as museums and historical exhibitions.
- Recognize relationships between events and people of the past and present circumstances, concerns and developments.

### **Content Standard 5: United States Constitution and Government**

- Identify the location of seats of government at the local, state and national levels.

### **Content Standard 8: International Relations**

- Explain how communities and nations interact with one another.
- Describe ways in which communities and nations influence each other.

#### Content Standard 9: Places and Regions

- Define and identify natural and human characteristics of places.
- Explain how human and natural processes shape places.
- Provide reasons why and describe how places and regions are identified, defined and bounded.
- Locate places within their own and nearby communities in Connecticut.
- Locate major physical and human features in the New England region and the United States.

#### Content Standard 10: Physical Systems

- Identify the types of physical systems and their characteristics that affect the Earth's Surface. Demonstrate how Earth-Sun relationships shape climate and vegetation patterns.
- Explain the factors that affect the location, distribution and associations of features of the physical environment.
- Define local environmental features.
- Draw a simple map of continents and oceans.
- Locate Earth's major physical and human features (including cities, countries, bodies of water, etc.)

#### Content Standard 11: Human Systems

- Explain the patterns, distributions and relocations of people.
- Identify the political, social and economic units of an area.
- Understand the elements of culture and how they change.
- Locate Earth's major physical and human features (including cities, countries, bodies of water, etc.)
- Explain locations and characteristics of human settlements and how they have changed over time.
- Describe the characteristics of a physical and a human system.
- Locate places within their own and nearby communities in Connecticut.
- Locate major physical and human features in the New England region and the United States.

#### Content Standard 12: Human and Environment Interaction

- Explain the characteristics and purposes of maps, globes and other geographical tools and technologies.
- Create information from maps, globes and geographic models in graphs, diagrams

and charts. Use maps, globes, graphs, models, computer programs and texts as appropriate.

- Explain how human and natural processes shape places.
- Explain ways in which humans use and interact with environments.
- Identify locations of various economic activities and understand how physical and human factors influence them.
- Describe how and why physical and human systems function and interact and the consequences of these interactions.

#### Content Standard 13: Limited Resources

- Define scarcity and abundance.
- Identify goods and services and give an example of each.
- Identify and give examples of resources: human, natural and capital, and explain how they are used.
- Identify alternative uses of resources found in their home. School or neighborhood.

#### Content Standard 4: Economic Systems

- Identify the three basic questions all economic systems must answer: What will be produced? How will it be produced? For whom will it be produced?
- Explain that there are different economic systems in the world and that these systems use different means to produce, distribute and exchange goods and services.
- Define a consumer and a producer and their roles in a market system.
- Describe how the price of a good or service in a market is related to how much of it there is and how many people want it.
- Explain that some goods and services are provided by the government.
- Explain that government raises money by taxing and borrowing to pay for the goods and services it provides.

#### Content Standard 15: Economic Interdependence

- Recognize that money is a generally accepted medium of exchange and that different countries use different currencies.

# Grade Four Connecticut

## Focus Questions

1. How do the physical characteristics of Connecticut impact life and economics?
2. What makes Connecticut unique?

## Essential Understandings

1. Connecticut has many significant physical and human characteristics. (i.e., Hartford, Sherman, Candlewood Lake, the Connecticut River, Long Island Sound, etc.)
2. Connecticut has both coastal and inland communities that have determined the location of cities and towns.
3. Connecticut has many famous places. (i.e., Charter Oak, Mark Twain House, Mystic Seaport, Yale University, Groton Naval Base, etc.)

## Suggested Activities

- Locate Specific physical and human features on a blank map of Connecticut
- Visit historical sites, State capitol and museums
- Read various fiction and nonfiction texts about Connecticut
- Various writing assignments: journal entries, expository eSSayS, poetry, travel poster/brochure

## Suggested Resources

- Connecticut map and travel brochures
- Connecticut text
- A Journey into Connecticut Powerpoint
- Connecticut State websites
- [A Historical Album of Connecticut](#), by Charles A. Wills
- [From Sea to Shining Sea. Connecticut](#), by Dennis Brindell Fradin and Judith Bloom Fradin
- [America the Beautiful: Connecticut](#), by Deborah Kent
- [The Connecticut Adventure](#), by John W. Ifkovic

## State Content and Performance Standards

### Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking

- Gather historical data from multiple sources.
- Engage in reading challenging primary and secondary historical source materials, some of which is contradictory and requires questioning of validity.
- Describe sources of historical information.
- Identify the main idea in a source of historical information.
- Write short narratives and Statements of historical ideas and create other appropriate presentations from investigations of Source materials.

### Content Standard 2: Local, United States and World History

- Locate the events, peoples and places they have studied in time and place (e.g., on a timeline and map) relative to their own location.
- Demonstrate knowledge of major trends in state and local history, including history of original peoples, early settlements and selected changes over the past two centuries.
- Place the history of their own families in the context of local, state, national and world history.

### Content Standard 3: Historical Themes

- Describe the impact of various technological developments on the local community and on the nation.
- Identify individual achievements of scientists and inventors from many cultures and different historical periods and describe their achievements.

### Content Standard 4: Applying History

- Exhibit curiosity and pose questions about the past when presented with artifacts, records or other evidence of the past.
- Seek historical background when confronted with problems and issues of the past, as well as of today's world and their own lives.
- Be active learners at cultural institutions, such as museums and historical exhibitions.
- Display empathy for people who have lived in the past.
- Recognize relationships between events and people of the past and present circumstances, concerns and developments.

### Content Standard 5: United States Constitution and Government

- Identify Services provided by national, state, and local governments and how we pay for them through taxation.



- Apply the process of how leaders are selected and how people monitor and influence decisions of their government.
- Identify the location of seats of government at the local, state and national levels.

#### Content Standard 9: Places and Regions

- Define and identify natural and human characteristics of places.
- Explain how human and natural processes shape places.
- Provide reasons why and describe how places and regions are identified, defined and bounded. Locate places within their own and nearby communities in Connecticut.
- Locate major physical and human features in the New England region and the United States.

#### Content Standard 10: Physical Systems

- Explain the factors that affect the location, distribution and associations of features of the physical environment. Define local environmental features.

#### Content Standard 11 : Human Systems

- Explain the patterns, distributions and relocations of people.
- Identify the political, social and economic units of an area.
- Explain locations and characteristics of human settlements and how they have changed over time.
- Describe the characteristics of a physical and a human system.
- Locate places within their own and nearby communities in Connecticut.
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#### Content Standard 12: Human and Environment Interaction

- Explain the characteristics and purposes of maps, globes and other geographical tools and technologies.
- Create information from maps, globes and geographic models in graphs, diagrams and charts. Use maps, globes, graphs, models, computer programs and texts as appropriate.
- Explain how human and natural processes shape places.
- Explain ways in which humans use and interact with environments.
- Identify locations of various economic activities and understand how physical and human factors influence them.
- Describe how and why physical and human systems function and interact and the consequences of these interactions.

### Content Standard 13: Limited Resources

- Define scarcity and abundance.
- Identify goods and Services and give an example of each.
- Identify and give examples of resources: human, natural and capital, and explain how they are used.
- Identify alternative uses of resources found in their home, school or neighborhood.

### Content Standard 14: Economic Systems

- Identify the three basic questions all economic systems must answer: What will be produced? How will it be produced? For whom will it be produced?
- Describe how the price of a good or service in a market is related to how much of it there is and how many people want it.
- Explain that some goods and services are provided by the government.

# Grade Four United States Government

## Focus Questions

1. What is government?
2. What are the similarities and differences between government at the local, State and national level?

## Essential Understandings

1. The United States is a democracy in which there is an election process to elect leaders of government.
2. There are three branches of government at the state, local, and national level.
3. There are leaders at the local, State, and national levels. Each has a distinct role and a job description.
4. Washington D.C. is the capital of the United States. Many historic sites, buildings, and monuments are located there.
5. Each citizen plays a role in the government.

## Suggested Activities

- Participate in a mock election
- Discuss the branches of government
- Compare and contrast the three branches of government
- Research a monument or seat of government and create a written report and visual presentation.
- Visit state and federal Capitol buildings
- Create flow chart demonstrating levels of government

## Suggested Resources

- Web Sites
- [Geography: Our Country and Our World](#)

## State Content and Performance Standards

### Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking

- Gather historical data from multiple sources.
- Engage in reading challenging primary and Secondary historical source materials, some of which is contradictory and requires questioning of validity.
- Describe sources of historical information.
- Identify the main idea in a source of historical information.
- Write short narratives and Statements of historical ideas and create other appropriate presentations from investigations of Source materials.

### Content Standard 2: Local, United States and World History

- Locate the events, peoples and places they have studied in time and place (e.g., on a timeline and map) relative to their own location.
- Demonstrate knowledge of major trends in state and local history, including history of original peoples, early settlements and selected changes over the past two centuries.
- Place the history of their own families in the context of local, state, national and world history.

### Content Standard 3: Historical Themes

- Recognize that people develop traditions that transmit their beliefs and ideals.
- Explain different types of conflict, different ways in which conflicts have been resolved, and different ways that conflicts and their resolutions have affected people.

### Content Standard 4: Applying History

- Exhibit curiosity and pose questions about the past when presented with artifacts, records or other evidence of the past.
- Be active learners at cultural institutions, such as museums and historical exhibitions.
- Display empathy for people who have lived in the past.
- Recognize relationships between events and people of the past and present circumstances, concerns and developments.

### Content Standard 5: United States Constitution and Government

- Explain the purposes of laws and the ideas and principles that make just laws.
- Explain that individuals have rights and responsibilities to follow the law.
- Recognize the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, as an important document that guides our country and limits the power of the government.

- Identify services provided by national, state, and local governments and how we pay for them through taxation.
- Apply the process of how leaders are selected and how people monitor and influence decisions of their government.
- Identify the location of seats of government at the local, state and national levels.
- Apply the concepts of liberty, tolerance and majority rule and how they relate to individual rights.

#### Content Standard 6: Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens

- Explain the meaning and important characteristics of citizenship in the United States.
- Identify the rights of citizens in a democratic Society and explain why certain responsibilities are important to themselves their families, community, state, nation.
- Establish, explain and apply criteria useful in evaluating rules and laws for solving problems and resolving conflicts between people.
- Explain the importance of taking an active role in political leadership and public Service in their community.
- Exercise political participation by discussing public issues, building consensus and becoming involved in politics.

#### Content Standard 7: Political Systems

- Define power and authority and how they evolve into government.
- Describe the need for a limited government so that people can be treated fairly.
- Define and describe government in terms of people and groups who apply and enforce rules and laws.
- Identify what governments can and cannot do.
- Explain that it is important to limit government so that individual rights can be protected.

#### Content Standard 8: International Relations

- Describe ways in which communities and nations influence each other.

#### Content Standard 9: Places and Regions

- Define and identify natural and human characteristics of places. Explain how human and natural processes shape places.

#### Content Standard 10 : Human Systems

- Identify the political, social and economic units of an area.

- Explain locations and characteristics of human settlements and how they have changed over time.

#### Content Standard 14: Economic Systems

- Explain that some goods and services are provided by the government.
- Explain that government raises money by taxing and borrowing to pay for the goods and Services it provides.

#### Content Standard i5: Economic Interdependence

- Recognize that money is a generally accepted medium of exchange and that different countries use different currencies,

# Current Events

## Focus Questions

1. What connections do world and national news events have on our personal lives?
2. What is the role of the United States in the global community?

## Essential Understanding

1. There is a relationship between local, state, national, and world events and trends.
2. Current events can be synthesized and related to historical events and the students own world.

## Suggested Activity

- Class discussion and interpretation

## Suggested Resources

- Scholastic News
- Time for Kids
- "Newscurrents"
- Internet resources
- Newspapers and periodicals
- Television and radio newscasts

## **State Content and Performance Standards**

### Content Standard 2: Local, United States, and World History

- Explain the relationships among the events and trends studies in local, state, national, and world history.

### Content Standard 8: International Relations

- Describe the organization of the world into nation states and describe some ways that nation-states interact with one another.

### Content Standard 1 : Human Systems

- Identify processes that divide Earth's surface into different political and economic units from local to international levels.



# Research-Based Learning

## Focus

1. Synthesize information to create an Original work focusing on a topic.

## Essential Understanding

- Topic will be determined by teacher and/or student.

## Suggested Activity

- Written report
- Oral presentation
- Informational poster or 3-D model
- Multimedia presentation
- Interview

## Suggested Resources

- Media Center resources
- Encyclopedia
- Internet resources
- Newspapers and periodicals
- Atlases and almanacs

## **State Content and Performance Standards**

### Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking

- Be able to gather information from multiple sources and appreciate the need for multiple perspectives.
- Be able to distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
- Be able to develop written narratives and short interpretive essays, as well as other investigations of source materials.

## Teacher Notes

Additional Focus Questions:

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Additional Essential Understandings:

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Additional Suggested Activities:

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Additional Resources:

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