

Grade Six

Content Overview

Mesopotamia

- Geography of an ancient river civilization
- Sumerian beliefs and values
- Government and economics
- Development of language and writing
- Inventions and innovations

Ancient Egypt

- Geography
- Egyptian beliefs and values
- Government and economics
- Old, middle and new kingdoms
- Hieroglyphics Accomplishments

Ancient China

- Geography
- Chinese beliefs and values
- Confucianism
- Government and economics
- Dynasties and their effects
- Accomplishments

Ancient Greece

- Geography
- Greek beliefs and values
- Government and economics
- Citizenship and democracy
- Macedonia and the spread of
- Hellenistic culture Accomplishments

Ancient Rome

- Geography
- Roman beliefs and values
- Government and economics
- Roles of emperors
- Collapse of the Republic
- Decline of the empire
- Accomplishments

Current Events

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

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

Grade Six

Draft

Mesopotamia

Focus Questions

1. How did physical geography affect the Sumerian civilization?
2. How did the beliefs and values of the Sumerians affect the lives of their members?
3. How did the Sumerians develop a government and an economic system?
4. What accomplishments are the Sumerians known for?

Essential Understandings

1. Civilization developed in Sumer, on the Mesopotamian plain, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.
2. Sumerians interacted with their environment and made advances in religion, education, and technology.
3. Polytheism was the religion of Sumer and the people believed that the god in each city-State gave the king his power.
4. The Sumerians invented a writing system.
5. Three rulers built their empires in Mesopotamia: Sargon of Akkad, Sham Shiadad of Assyria, Hammurabi of Babylonia.
6. Each empire falls because of patterns of abuse and mismanagement of its people.

Suggested Activities

- Read and illustrate a passage in the Story "Luring of Enkidu."
- Invent a dictionary of pictographs and write a letter to the other class using pictographs.
- Create a topographical map of land around the school.
- View slides of the cave paintings of France and Spain.

Suggested Resources

- Houghton Mifflin's [A Message of Ancient Days](#)

State Content and Performance Standards

Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking

- Formulate historical questions based on primary and secondary sources, including documents, eyewitness accounts, letters and diaries, artifacts, real or simulated historical sites, charts, graphs, diagrams and written texts.
- Gather information from multiple sources, including archives or electronic databases, to have experience with historical sources and to appreciate the need for multiple perspectives.
- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
- Interpret data in historical maps, photographs, artworks and other artifacts.
- Examine data to determine the adequacy and sufficiency of evidence, point of view, historical context, bias, distortion and propaganda, and to distinguish fact from opinion.
- Analyze data in order to see persons and events in their historical context, understand causal factors and appreciate change over time.
- Examine current concepts, issues, events and themes from historical perspectives and identify principles conflicting ideas between competing narratives or interpretations of historical events.

Content Standard 2: United States and World History

- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of selected events representing major trends of world history (e.g. emergence of new centers of agrarian society in the 3rd and 2nd millennia BCE, the Black Death, the Columbian Voyages, the French Revolution, World War II).
- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of major events and trends in local history (e.g. The Pequot War, establishment of self-government, disestablishment of the Puritan church, industrialization, waves of in-and-out migration, suburbanization, racial tensions).
- 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.
- Explain the relationships among the events and trends studied in local, state, national and World history.

Content Standard 3: Historical Themes

- Explain how roles and status of people have differed and changed throughout history based on gender, age, class, racial, and ethnic identity, wealth, and/or Social position.
- Describe the emergence of select governmental systems, principles and institutions.
- Describe some of the more common forms of government found in the past, giving examples of societies that have practiced them (e.g. monarchy, oligarchy, clan/tribal, autocracy, dynasty, theocracy, republic, democracy).
- Describe examples of how societies throughout history have used various forms of visual arts, dance, theater, myths, literature and music to express their beliefs, sense of identity and philosophical ideas.
- Explain reasons for conflict and the ways conflicts have been resolved. Identify and analyze the various causes and effects of movements of groups of people.
- Explain the significance of the achievements of selected individual scientists and inventors from around the world and from various periods.
- Describe, explain and analyze the impact of the exchange of ideas on Societies, politics, religion, etc.

Content Standard 4: Applying History

- Initiate questions and hypotheses about historic events being studied.
- Describe and analyze, using historical data and understandings, the options which are available to parties involved in contemporary conflicts or decision making.
- Be active learners at cultural institutions such as museums and historical exhibitions.
- Display empathy for people who have lived in the past.
- Describe relationships between historical subject matter and other subjects they study, current issues, and personal concerns.

Content Standard 7: Political Systems

- Describe and compare unlimited and limited government.
- Explain the meaning of civic life, politics and government.
- Compare and evaluate forms of government found outside the United States.

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 9: Places and Regions

- Describe human and natural characteristics of places and how they shape or place identity.
- Describe the process and impact of regional change.
- Examine ways in which regions are interconnected.
- Identify and evaluate various perspectives associated with places and regions.
- Explain and assess how culture affects perception of places and regions.
- Use latitude and longitude to locate places and calculate differences between places.
- Locate natural and cultural features in their own and nearby communities, in the United States and in other regions of the world as needed, to answer geographic questions.
- Demonstrate how personal knowledge and experiences influence an individual's perception of places.

Content Standard 10: Physical Systems

- Understand how concepts of physical geography can be applied to explain processes.
- Understand and apply how natural processes influence the formation and location of resources.
- Use basic climatic and other physical data to understand how natural processes shape environmental patterns.

Content Standard 11: Human Systems

- Explain the patterns and characteristics of human migrations at various levels.
- Explain how patterns of international trade change technology, transportation and communication, and affect economic activities and human migration.
- Identify processes that divide Earth's surface into different political and economic units from local to international levels.

Content Standard 12: Human and Environment Interaction

- Make maps, globes, models, charts and geographic problems.
- Use maps, globes, models, graphs, charts and databases to analyze distributions and patterns.
- Describe human and natural characteristics of places and how they shape or place identity.
- Draw a freehand map from memory of increasing and appropriate complexity to display geographic information and answer geographic questions.
- Demonstrate and explain ways that humans depend on, adapt to and alter the physical environment.
- Identify the ways ecosystems are transformed through physical and human activities, and can predict the consequences of these activities.

Content Standard 13: Limited Resources

- Compare the resources used by various cultures, countries and/or regions throughout the world.
- Explain that households, businesses, governments and Societies face scarcity just as individuals do.
- Illustrate how resources can be used in a variety of ways.

Content Standard 14: Economic Systems

- Explain how different economic systems (traditional, market and command) use different means to produce, distribute and exchange goods and services.
- Explain that all countries economies reflect a mix of market, command and traditional elements,
- Describe the relationships among demand, supply and price and their roles in a market system.

Content Standard 15: Economic Interdependence

- Explain how specialization leads to more efficient use of economic resources and economic growth.
- Explain why trade encourages specialization.
- Explain how specialization increases interdependence among producers, consumers and nations and consequently leads to a higher standard of living.

Grade Six

Ancient Egypt

Focus Questions

1. How did physical geography affect the Egyptian civilization"?
2. How did the beliefs and values of the Egyptians affect the lives of their members?
3. How did the Egyptians develop a government and an economic system"?
4. What accomplishments are the Egyptians known for?

Essential Understandings

1. The Nile River runs through ancient Egypt and Nubia.
2. The Nile affected trade and the ways of life of the ancient Egyptians in 3,000 B.C.
3. Egyptian pharaohs unified their country.
4. The pharaohs were powerful political and religious leaders.
5. The Egyptians believed in an afterlife and provided for it through the use of mummies and pyramids.
6. Egyptian art is a rich source of information about the everyday lives of Egyptians of all classes.
7. Egypt's achievements include writing, mathematics, astronomy, and medicine.
8. Hieroglyphics was a writing system using pictures to stand for objects, ideas, and Sounds.
9. Egypt became a world power by conquering other nations and building an empire during the New Kingdom.
10. Egypt conquered Kush, part of an area known as Nubia.
Kush conquered Egypt and developed a strong culture based on the Egyptian civilization.

Suggested Activities

- Interdisciplinary unit
- Read "The Secret Chamber" and "Revealing the Mysteries of Mummies" (Stories in SBG Literature Works).
- Build a mummy
- Design a death mask
- Study scarab designs
- Design posters for Egyptian vocabulary words

Suggested Resources

- Houghton Mifflin's A Message of Ancient Days
- Silver Burdett Ginn's Literature Works: Uncovering the Past: Ancient Egypt
- Pyramid, by David Macauley
- Discovery Channel videos

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Content Standard 1 : Human Systems

- Explain the patterns and characteristics of human migrations at various levels.
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Content Standard 3: Limited Resources

- Compare the resources used by various cultures, countries and/or regions throughout the world.
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- Explain how specialization leads to more efficient use of economic resources and economic growth.
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Grade Six

Ancient China

Focus Questions

1. What is the definition of culture and what are its elements?
2. How did physical geography affect the Chinese civilization?
3. How did the beliefs and values of the Chinese affect the lives of their members?
4. How did the Chinese develop a government and an economic system"?
5. What accomplishments are the Chinese known for?

Essential Understandings

1. Physical geography is important in the development of Chinese civilization.
2. The ideas of Confucius emphasize the values of family, tradition, and mutual respect,
3. Confucianism and Legalism continue to influence Chinese politics today.
4. The Zhou dynasty was a time of chaos and China's greatest leaders tried to keep China in order.
5. Qin Shihuangdi, as its first emperor, unified China.
6. Qin made major changes as emperor. (i.e., bureaucracy, censorship, standards of measurement, currency, writing)
7. Legalism and Confucianism were combined to lead China during the Han dynasty.
8. There were remarkable advances and achievements during the Han dynasty.
9. The Silk Road trading benefited Chinese civilization.

Suggested Activities

- Chinese writing workshop
- Celebrate Chinese New Year
- Investigate Chinese Zodiac
- Create a brochure for the Silk Road (alternatives include the Lost Cities of Kublai Khan, The Great Wall of China, or the travels of Marco Polo)
- Contact speakers Sub-unit on festivals and dragon lore using online resources

Suggested Resources

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- Various Discovery Channel videos

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Content Standard 15: Economic Interdependence

- Explain how specialization leads to more efficient use of economic resources and economic growth.
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Grade Six

Ancient Greece

Focus Questions

1. How did physical geography affect the Greek civilization?
2. How did the beliefs and values of the Greeks affect the lives of their members?
3. How did the Greeks develop a government and an economic system?
4. The Greek civilization is known for what accomplishments?

Essential Understandings

1. The geography of Greece is important to its development as a civilization.
2. Greek myths were important in keeping in Greek history alive during the Dark Ages.
3. Different forms of government developed in Greek city-states.
4. Democracy in Athens evolved from monarchies over several centuries.
5. All Greeks shared religious beliefs and customs.
6. Athenian society was structured around citizenship.
7. The economy of Athens was supported by farming and trade through barter.
8. The cultures of Athens and Sparta differed in their government, economy, education, and values.
9. Greek victory over the Persians was important because Athens and Sparta joined forces,
10. Pericles led Athens during its Golden Age because he set major goals for Athens.
11. A citizen-family of Athens enjoyed a pleasant life during the Golden Age.
12. Slavery was important during the Golden Age because slaves, as non citizens, did most of the work.
13. The Peloponnesian War had many causes. Athens lost the war, but refused to surrender.
14. Socrates was one of the great Greek philosophers who challenged the authority of the government,
15. The Golden Age came to an end because of the Peloponnesian War and the Plague and eventually, the spread of anti-democratic attitudes.
16. Alexander the Great spread Greek culture by introducing it throughout the countries he conquered.
17. Hellenistic achievements were made in architecture, Mathematics, and Science.
18. The legacy of the culture of ancient Greece still influences our lives today.

Suggested Activities

- Design and create pottery depicting everyday life
- Research based reports and projects
- Fashion Show
- Speeches to defend democracy
- Various map activities
- Crossword puzzles

Suggested Resources

- Houghton Mifflin's [A Message of Ancient Days Various](#)
- Discovery Channel videos

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Grade Six

Ancient Rome

Focus Questions

1. How did physical geography affect the Roman civilization?
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3. How did the Romans develop a government and an economic system?
4. The Roman civilization is known for what accomplishments?

Essential Understandings

1. The geography of Rome is important to its development as a civilization.
2. Early Roman kings influenced the development of Roman society.
3. Legends reveal the value of a culture. (Romulus and Remus)
4. The Etruscans influenced early Roman history.
5. The Senate was the most powerful group in the government of the early Roman Republic.
6. Romans expanded the empire to control the Mediterranean world through the Punic wars.
7. Rome gained and ruled its empire by creating a balanced government, treating its conquered peoples as allies, having great pride in the republic, maintaining a highly disciplined army, and valuing military success.
8. Greek culture influenced Roman culture in art, literature, religion, and architecture.
9. Rome developed great military, engineering, and law skills.
10. The Roman Republic falls because of rapid expansion, greedy leadership, and conflict between the rich and poor.
11. Julius Caesar declared himself dictator for life.
12. The Roman Empire began upon his assassination.
13. Pax Romana marked the unification of the Roman Empire.
14. The emperor's unified the Empire by building cities, giving conquered peoples citizenship and involving them in government.
15. There were three Social classes in the Roman Empire which determined the quality of everyday life.
16. Daily life in ancient Rome revolved around the home, School, religion, and entertainment.
17. Roman agriculture was the backbone of the economy. It was supplemented by trade.
18. After Pax Romana, many problems faced the Empire, which lead to its decline.

Suggested Activities

- Create timelines depicting various emperors, etc.
- Create paper mosaics
- Make calendars using Roman festivals
- Design buildings using Roman architectural elements
- Write skits using comedy and tragedy as a basis Field trip to Metropolitan Museum of Art

Suggested Resources

- Houghton Mifflin's [A Message of Ancient Days](#)
- Various Discovery Channel videos

State Content and Performance Standards

Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking

- Formulate historical questions based on primary and secondary sources, including documents, eyewitness accounts, letters and diaries, artifacts, real or simulated historical sites, charts, graphs, diagrams and written texts.
- Gather information from multiple sources, including archives or electronic databases, to have experience with historical sources and to appreciate the need for multiple perspectives,
- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
- Interpret data in historical maps, photographs, artworks and other artifacts.
- Examine data to determine the adequacy and sufficiency of evidence, point of view, historical context, bias, distortion and propaganda, and to distinguish fact from opinion.
- Analyze data in order to see persons and events in their historical context, understand causal factors and appreciate change over time.
- Examine current concepts, issues, events and themes from historical perspectives and identify principles conflicting ideas between competing narratives or interpretations of historical events.

Content Standard 2: United States and World History

- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of selected events representing major trends of world history (e.g. emergence of new centers of agrarian Society in the 3rd and 2nd millennia BCE, the Black Death, the Columbian Voyages, the French Revolution, World War II).
- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of major events and trends in local history (e.g. The Pequot War, establishment of self-government, disestablishment of the Puritan church, industrialization, waves of in-and-out migration, Suburbanization, racial tensions).
- 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.
- Explain the relationships among the events and trends studied in local, state, national and world history.

Content Standard 3: Historical Themes

- Explain how roles and status of people have differed and changed throughout history based on gender, age, class, racial, and ethnic identity, wealth, and/or social position.
- Describe the emergence of select governmental systems, principles and institutions.
- Describe some of the more common forms of government found in the past, giving examples of societies that have practiced them (e.g. monarchy, oligarchy, clans tribal, autocracy, dynasty, theocracy, republic, democracy).
- Describe examples of how societies throughout history have used various forms of visual arts, dance, theater, myths, literature and music to express their beliefs, sense of identity and philosophical ideas.
- Explain reasons for conflict and the ways conflicts have been resolved.
- Identify and analyze the various causes and effects of movements of groups of people.
- Explain the significance of the achievements of selected individual scientists and inventors from around the world and from various periods.
- Describe, explain and analyze the impact of the exchange of ideas on Societies, politics, religion, etc.

Content Standard 4: Applying History

- Initiate questions and hypotheses about historic events being studied.
- Describe and analyze, using historical data and understandings, the options which are available to parties involved in contemporary conflicts or decision making.
- Be active learners at cultural institutions such as museums and historical exhibitions.
- Display empathy for people who have lived in the past.
- Describe relationships between historical subject matter and other subjects they study, current issues, and personal concerns.

Content Standard 7: Political Systems

- Describe and compare unlimited and limited government.
- Explain the meaning of civic life, politics and government.
- Compare and evaluate forms of government found outside the United States.

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 9: Places and Regions

- Describe human and natural characteristics of places and how they shape or place identity.
- Describe the process and impact of regional change.
- Examine ways in which regions are interconnected. identify and evaluate various perspectives associated with places and regions.
- Explain and assess how culture affects perception of places and regions.
- Use latitude and longitude to locate places and calculate differences between places.
- Locate natural and cultural features in their own and nearby communities, in the United States and in other regions of the world as needed, to answer geographic questions.
- Demonstrate how personal knowledge and experiences influence an individual's perception of places.

Content Standard 10: Physical Systems

- Understand how concepts of physical geography can be applied to explain processes.
- Understand and apply how natural processes influence the formation and location of resources.
- Use basic climatic and other physical data to understand how natural processes shape environmental patterns.

Content Standard 11: Human Systems

- Explain the patterns and characteristics of human migrations at various levels.
- Explain how patterns of international trade change technology, transportation and communication, and affect economic activities and human migration.
- Identify processes that divide Earth's surface into different political and economic units from local to international levels.

Content Standard 12: Human and Environment Interaction

- Make maps, globes, models, charts and geographic problems.
- Use maps, globes, models, graphs, charts and databases to analyze distributions and patterns.
- Describe human and natural characteristics of places and how they shape or place identity.
- Draw a freehand map from memory of increasing and appropriate complexity to display geographic information and answer geographic questions.
- Demonstrate and explain ways that humans depend on, adapt to and alter the physical environment. Identify the ways ecosystems are transformed through physical and human activities, and can predict the consequences of these activities.

Content Standard 13: Limited Resources

- Compare the resources used by various cultures, countries and/or regions throughout the world.
- Explain that households, businesses, governments and societies face scarcity just as individuals do.
- Illustrate how resources can be used in a variety of ways.

Content Standard 14: Economic Systems

- Explain how different economic systems (traditional, market and command) use different means to produce, distribute and exchange goods and Services.
- Explain that all countries' economies reflect a mix of market, command and traditional elements.
- Describe the relationships among demand, supply and price and their roles in a market system.

Content Standard 15: Economic Interdependence

- Explain how specialization leads to more efficient use of economic resources and economic growth.
- Explain why trade encourages specialization
- Explain how specialization increases interdependence among producers, consumers and nations and consequently leads to a higher standard of living.

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 11: 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

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

Suggested Activity

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

Additional Essential Understandings:

Additional Suggested Activities:

Additional Resources:
