

WALLINGFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Social Studies
K-12 Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions
 October 2007

Content	
Enduring Understandings	Essential Questions
Students will understand that:	
Government	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People develop systems to manage conflict and create order. • Conflict resolution can involve aggression, compromise, cooperation, and change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is power? • How is power gained, used, and justified? • How do competing interests influence how power is distributed and exercised? • How are governments created, structured maintained, and changed? • What happens in the absence of government? • Why do we have rules & laws; and what would happen if we didn't?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic societies must balance the rights and responsibilities of individuals with the common good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the roles and responsibilities of citizens and government in a democratic society? • What effect does a democratic government have on society?
Economics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions concerning the allocation and use of economic resources impact individuals and groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do we have money? • What does it mean to make a living? • How does something acquire a value? • What effect does the economy have on society? • How do economic systems affect your life and the lives of others? • How are economic resources distributed? • What impact does scarcity have on the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local, national, and international relationships are affected by economic transactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does trade affect local, national, & international relationships? • What impact does trade have on a society?
Geography	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography influences needs, culture, opportunities, choices, interests, and skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does geography influence lifestyle and point of view? • How do geography, climate, and natural resources affect the way people live and work? • What story do maps and globes tell? • What makes places unique and different? • How do maps and globes reflect history, politics, and economics?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a relationship between the consumption and conservation of natural resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What effect do people have on their environment?

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Students will understand that:	
Culture & Sociology	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture is a way of life of a group of people who share similar beliefs and customs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is culture? • What can we learn about a culture through its art forms?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global societies are diverse, creating varied perspectives, contributions, and challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the benefits and challenges of a diverse society? • Why should we study other cultures and what does it teach us?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are affected by environmental, economic, social, cultural, and civic concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the beliefs and values of a diverse culture affect individuals and society?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture is both a unifying and divisive force in human relations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens when cultures collide? • Why do people live together and form societies?
History	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study of the continuum of human civilization reveals the ideals, beliefs, values, and institutions of its people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does it mean to be civilized? • Are modern civilizations more "civilized" than ancient ones? • What are the significant symbols and icons of civilizations/cultures?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study of political, social and economic patterns reveals continuity and change over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What causes change over time?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the past helps one understand the present and make decisions about the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the evaluation of past events help us to make future decisions? • How can we know if we weren't there? • How am I connected to those in the past?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People respond to and resolve conflicts in a variety of ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can an individual make a difference in history? • Why do people fight? • Is conflict inevitable? desirable? avoidable? • What is worth fighting for? • What is revolution?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History involves interpretation; historians can and do disagree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the interpretation of history changed? • What should we do when primary sources disagree? • Whom do we believe & why?
Technology & Progress	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific and technological developments affect people's lives, the environment and transform societies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is new technology always better than that which it will replace? • How do new technologies result in broader social change?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress is defined by cultural interpretation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does who you are help determine your perception of progress? • How do the various levels of technological development affect different cultures?

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Skills	
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Students will understand that:	
Acquiring Information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analytical questioning creates a purpose for research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do I research?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information can be acquired from various sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do I do when my immediate resources are not adequate? What are the benefits of using multiple media to locate information? How do I know which resources fit my needs?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The research process requires the use of a variety of resources to ensure validity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do I know my information is reliable (accurate, unbiased, current, and appropriate)?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpreting and analyzing research results will answer a variety of questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does explaining my process help me to strengthen my research skills? How do I know when I have enough information to answer my question thoroughly?
Organizing Information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization is critical to the acquisition, application, and evaluation of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What organizational strategy best suits this research? How does organizing the results of my research help me to use it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The data being presented determines the organizational format. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the organization of information impact the effectiveness of its communication?
Analyzing, Interpreting & Applying Information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective communication relies on the purposeful use of information in a format appropriate to the task and the audience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do I determine the appropriate presentation format for my task and audience?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical examination and evaluation of data is essential to making informed decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does new information influence how I think and act?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various types of materials enhance understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does one analyze, evaluate & utilize various types of materials?
Developing Social & Political Participation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examining social and civic issues helps to expand one's understanding of the world, its people, and themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the consequences if I do not accept my personal responsibilities to my community? How do my actions impact others in my community? How can I impact social change?

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Students will understand that:	
Developing Personal & Group Interaction	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration is necessary in order to be an effective learner and citizen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do individuals choose to work together? • What role does conflict play in collaboration? • How do my personal decisions and actions affect others?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing a diversity of viewpoints benefits all. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the consideration of different viewpoints influence how one thinks and acts?
Reading	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text and organizational tools communicate different kinds of information. • Authors write for different purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the purpose of using both primary and secondary sources? • How does reading fiction help to acquire factual information?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readers use strategies to construct meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact do reading strategies have? • Why do we need to evaluate what we read?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language reflects historical changes and cultural differences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does time and place in history influence language?
Writing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing is a process. • The writing process is consistent across disciplines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does each step in the process impact your writing?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writers have a purpose for writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the audience influence the format of your writing? • How is your style of writing influenced by your purpose?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of proper formats results in effective communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What am I trying to achieve through my writing?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing is a tool used for thinking, learning and communicating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we use evaluation and reflection to improve our writing?
Technology	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology is a tool that can be used for collecting, organizing, creating, and presenting information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the impact of technology on research and communication? • What are the benefits and limitations of using technology?