

Advanced MERIT Social Studies Syllabus ~ 7th Grade

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aim of this course is to enable students to become independent thinkers with respect to geography, economy, government, and history of the global community. This course will refine and extend concepts learned in the 6th grade curriculum specifically in the areas of Southwest Asia, Africa, and South/East Asia. Students will not memorize facts and dates; they will explore and connect global concepts to the world around them. Students will learn “why” and “how”. They will be encouraged to create their own opinions based on the information they are presented. Additionally, students will be expected to connect this information to current events around their city, state, country, and world. Most importantly, students will begin to see they play an important part in a global community and will impact the world around them.

Throughout the year, it is also our intention to explore the content of this class using different means of sharing information and through the reading of content related literature. When possible, guest speakers and field trips will be taken to deepen student understanding of learning standards. Technology will also be used in this course and encouraged at home. Student classrooms are equipped with computers and may be used with teacher permission during homeroom, bus loads, and class time per teacher discretion. Students will also be encouraged to participate in **History Day** - a project of their choosing which focuses on the National History Day theme. Further information on this can be found at <http://nhd.org/AnnualTheme.htm> and <http://nhd.org/images/uploads/2010rulebook.pdf>.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCIES

1. To use a variety of maps to locate geographical and historical information.
2. To understand how geographical features impact the development of society.
3. To explain how environmental issues impact the global community.
4. To recognize the basic components of culture and the differences between various cultural groups.

5. To recognize key ethnic groups of the focus area and the diversity among these groups.
6. To compare and contrast major religions and systems of beliefs of the area and their influence on history and current events.
7. To describe the fundamental principles of government systems and the effect of these government systems on societies.
8. To explain the relationship between literacy rate and standard of living.
9. To understand and describe various factors that influence literacy rate and its relationship to government and economics.
10. To understand economic systems, economic factors, and the importance of these on the development of societies and their connection to governments.
11. To describe fundamental historically significant events of the area of focus leading to the 21st century global community.
12. To understand the U.S. role in the global community in the past, present, and future.
13. To interpret graphs, charts, and other means of displaying information that illustrate trends in historical contexts.
14. To identify conclusions about world historical events using primary and secondary sources.
15. To draw inferences from resources and cite ample reasons explaining various viewpoints in historical contexts.
16. To create student awareness of their role in the global community.
17. To create greater student awareness of current events impacting his/her world.

Course Requirements:

Students will

- Maintain a Social Studies notebook with daily notes, vocabulary, study guides, writing assignments, assessments, and research.
- Complete a project as assigned by the teacher in a timely manner following guidelines provided by the teacher and complete a project for National History Day.

Homework Expectation:

- Homework assignments will be assigned randomly during the week and the homework should be turned in on the teacher assigned due date.

- If a homework assignment is not completed the student will be assigned an after school detention; after the third failure to complete the homework assignment in a nine weeks the parents will be requested to come in for a conference.

Behavioral Expectations:

Students will:

- Attend class with all supplies needed for the class: notebook, notebook paper, pencil, red pen, and colored pencils.
- Enter the classroom quietly, sharpen pencil as needed, be seated, be prepared for class to begin.
- Follow classroom expectations as posted and all behavioral expectations of the school as outlined in the student handbook.

7th GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES UNITS

Each area of study is divided into four areas of focus:

1. Geographical Factors (*maps, physical features, environmental issues, ethnic groups, religions, literacy*)
2. Economics
3. Government
4. Historical Understanding

We will study three areas of the world throughout the year in the following order:

1. Southwest Asia (Middle East) ~ 1st and 2nd Nine weeks
2. Africa~ 2nd and 3rd Nine weeks
3. South/East Asia~ 3rd and 4th Nine weeks

Projects will be assigned throughout the year in correspondence with the current learning focus.

**“There is nothing impossible to those willing to try.”-
(356-323 BC) Alexander the Great.**