

Ms. Holcombe's 6th Grade World Geography Syllabus

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→Overview of Class Concepts:

Sixth grade is the first year of a two-year World Area Studies course. Sixth grade students study Latin America, Canada, Europe, and Australia. The goal of this two-year course is to acquaint middle school students with the world in which they live. The geography domain includes both physical and human geography. The intent of the geography domain is for students to begin to grasp the importance geography plays in their everyday lives. The government/civics domain focuses on selected types of government found in the various areas so as to help students begin to understand the variety of governments in the world. The economics domain builds on the K-5 economics; however, the focus shifts from the United States to how other countries answer the basic questions of economics. The history domain focuses on major events in each region during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. – www.GeorgiaStandards.org

→Units of Study:

The geography, government, economics, and history will be explored for Europe, Latin America, Canada, and Australia. Details of the content to be learned in each unit is available at www.georgiastandards.org.

→Homework:

Homework consists of anything that was not completed in class, as well as regular short online activities through Canvas (our class website) or USA Test Prep. Adequate time is given in class to at least get a good start on or even fully complete most assignments. Exceptions would be preparing for tests, MyOn reading assignments, and online assigned homework. (If it is to be done completely at home, it is likely that multiple days have been allotted before it is due.) Students should take 15 minutes or so each evening to review new information, study for assessments, and ensure that they are organized and ready for the next class day. It is highly recommended that students consistently maintain a daily agenda/ calendar for recording the class agenda, homework, and due dates.

→Grading:

Tests, projects, and some large quizzes will be calculated as Summative grades at 60%. Classwork, homework, notebook quizzes, and mini-assessments will be calculated as Formative grades at 40%. Progress Reports will go home every 4 ½ weeks on a given date, and serve to show the student's currently fluid success. Term Report Cards will go home every 9 weeks on a given date, and are final to be put towards the student's yearly average for the class. It is greatly encouraged that all parents/ guardians attain access to Parent Portal through the AMS office so that grades can be viewed anytime online.

→Quizzes and Tests:

Students will be given varied assessments and quizzes throughout each unit to be completed both at school as well as at home online. Assessments given at school may or may not be announced in advance, so students should remain prepared. Tests will be given at the end of each unit, and will always be announced in advance. Some units may have projects. Typically, in class assessments will given on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the first semester and Wednesdays and Fridays during the second semester. Once a week there will be vocabulary/ content quiz. Students may take the opportunity to recover any failing test grade one time only (no retakes will be allowed for formative grades). Typically, an assignment completed online in advance will be a prerequisite for any recovery to occur, and recovery will happen during tutoring hours each week. Recovery is the student's responsibility, and he or she must stay in communication with the teacher to make arrangements in advance.

→Late Work Policy:

A small point penalty will be deducted for each day that an assignment is late. An "M" indicating that the grade is "missing" will be placed in the online grade book until the work is turned in, and it will calculate as a zero temporarily lowering the grade average. This is done as a reminder to get in the work immediately, and is completely removed once the assignment is turned in. (*If a grade is blank, it is likely it has just not been graded yet. Some assignments will take longer than others to be processed.)

→ Communication:

There are 3 main ways to stay informed about my class, the daily assignments, and your student's progress: *Parent Portal's* online grade book and my classroom website are tools that should be used at minimum a one to two times a week. (It works very well to have a once a week apt. with your student at the computer to review these sites and teach them accountability for success.) Anytime you have questions or concerns, I encourage you to contact me. Email is the best and most efficient method, but calling the school and leaving a message with the office is fine too. I will do all I can to respond as quickly as I can during regular business days.

→ Technology:

Our classroom will run on a foundation of technology-based instruction that encourages student creation and interactivity through online forums. With our Paulding County website system of Canvas, students will have each element of the class assigned to them through modules online. Parents and students will have logins that will allow for 24/7 access, and these logins will need to be kept in secure locations at home and at school. Our county and school's B.Y.O.T. (Bring Your Own Technology) policies will be utilized regularly; therefore, it is encouraged for students to bring their own tablets, laptops, or smart phones to class to be used only during teacher guided instruction on the school's wifi. (If the student fails to follow the rules and procedures for personal technology use in class, the student will face behavior consequences.) *It is highly suggested that the student's name be shown on the device (even in the off mode), and that locating software be uploaded onto the device in advance of bringing it to school.*

→ Discipline:

It is the student's responsibility to assist the teacher in maintaining a healthy learning environment for everyone in this class by controlling their own behaviors and using positive judgment in their words and actions. Both school and classroom discipline plans will be adhered to throughout the year. (Please see the student handbook from the PCSD and AMS websites for details.)

→ Other Classroom Procedures:

Once a student enters the classroom, he/ she will need to complete the following tasks before the warm-up time ends (approximately 10 minutes): copy agenda & homework, if returning from an absence-- copy any missed work down in the agenda and get missing handouts from the "While You Were Out" section of the room, sharpen pencils if needed, have any homework out on the desk ready to be turned in, and complete the warm-up activity in their composition book. If the student does not have their assignment/ homework ready when it is due, he/ she will complete a missing work form and turn it in place of their assignment on the due date (see "late work" above). Anytime the teacher or another student has the attention of the class, there will be absolutely no use of the electric pencil sharpener or getting out of their seat without purpose and permission. Other procedures will be discussed as they need to be addressed.

→ Supply List for Ms. Holcombe's SS Classes:

- **One 3 or 5 subject spiral notebook to be used only Social Studies (We keep this folder all year, so it needs to be sturdy!)**
- **1 composition or spiral notebook for openings and closings each day (Again, this will be kept all year, so sturdiness is important.)**
- Highlighters
- Colored pencils
- Pens/Pencils (IF you prefer mechanical pencils, have LOTS of back up lead.)
- Glue Sticks &/or clear scotch tape for personal use on a daily basis

IF you are able, and would like to contribute to the year-long classroom expenses...

- Boxes of tissues
- Glue Sticks
- Post-its (2x2 size is best)
- Loose-leaf notebook paper
- Individually wrapped candies
(Mints, Starbursts, Jolly Ranchers...etc.)

What is [Canvas](#), and why should I use it?

What is Canvas, and what can it do?

Canvas is our classroom's interactive website and the home for all of our classroom content. It can be accessed directly from the [Paulding County School District webpage](#). Canvas is known for its user-friendly online environment and ability to easily connect instructors and students both in and out of the classroom. Canvas includes basic Learning Management System functionality for managing lessons, sharing documents, submitting assignments, and assigning grades, as well as personalized features for individual students.

What sets Canvas apart?

- A clean, user-friendly interface
- A dashboard page that quickly summarizes assignments, announcements and other relevant information across course sites
- Customizable notifications – students can get alerts via email, text message or social media at the frequency they desire
- A working calendar that can be added to Google Calendar, iCal or other popular calendar tools
- Support for media content
- The power of the cloud to save work
- Free downloadable App for mobile devices

How do I sign up for a Canvas account as a Parent? ([video link](#))

Parents (Observers) can link their Canvas account to their student's account so they can see assignment dues dates, announcements, and other course content. If an institution that is a Canvas client wants parents to observe a student via linked accounts, that institution must create user accounts for parents or guardians, or they will provide self-registration on their Canvas URL login page. Remember, Observers can view the course content but cannot participate in the course.

- Observers will create a Canvas account using the institution's Canvas URL. These steps are relevant to any institution that allows the self-registration banner on their Canvas URL login page.
- To observe a student, you must know the student's Canvas username and password.
- The student must be enrolled in the course and must accept the course invitation before you can sign up to observe the student. If you receive an *invalid username or password* message during the signup process and the student's credentials are correct, check with the student to verify that he or she has received and accepted the course invitation.
- These steps must be completed through the web version of Canvas. The observer signup process cannot be done through the mobile app.

What is [USATestPrep](#) and why should I use it?

All students at Austin Middle School have access to the valuable online tool *USATestprep*. Students are able to use this product from any computer or smart phone with Internet access. *USATestprep* is easy to use and provides many features that will help students succeed. Students will be able to access a variety of tests and practice activities designed to keep them actively learning and preparing for the ACT English, Reading, Math and Science subtests; and all activities are directly aligned to our Georgia Standards curriculum. In our classroom, *USATestPrep* will be our primary tool for re-teaching, reviewing, and assessing student mastery of content. If a student wishes to recover a low test grade, he/ she will need to communicate this with the teacher and will be assigned a remediation activity or set of activities to complete before test recovery. Students should also use *USATestPrep* independently to test themselves over content and review class standards that they may need refreshers in.

What is [Quizlet](#) and why should I use it?

Quizlet is a free online study program that is managed by your teacher. Of those surveyed by Quizlet staff, 90% of learners say Quizlet motivates them more; 95% feel it improves their grades. It is free and easy to use on any, computer, tablet, or smartphone. Teacher assigns the vocabulary to study, and then students choose from the 10 different gaming and study modes and learn collaboratively or as individuals. This will be a vital resource for studying for weekly vocab assessments. Creating a free account is not required, but is encouraged so that the student can collaborate with other students in their class. All of Ms. Holcombe's 6th S.S. content will be found by searching "HolcombeSS" and only pulling from sets with that name.