

At-home School Activities for Social Studies

Listed below are ten activities appropriate for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. Current events, geography challenges, and student selected articles from Scholastic News can be done on a daily basis.

1) CURRENT EVENTS

Obtain up-to-the-minute news by watching television, listening to a radio broadcast, or visiting one of the following websites. Chose from one of the topics below, and then create a summarization of the news event. Current Events may be done daily. Simply choose a different topic each day.

Topics: Local/State, National, International, Weather/Environmental, Sports, Culture/Arts and Literature.

Websites:

<http://www.pbs.org/>

<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/todayspaper/index.html>

<http://www.cnn.com/>

<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/kids>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/>

<http://abcnews.go.com/>

<http://www.usatoday.com/>

Summary: Use the current events guide sheet and template to help organize and summarize your news article. http://www.lifestreamcenter.net/DrB/Lessons/current_event/guide.htm

2) SCHOLASTIC NEWS

Visit the Scholastic News site and find the publication to match your grade level. From here, you can connect to the current issue or an archived issue related to a specific topic. There are also reproducible activities for most articles you can download or print off and complete.

http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/scholasticNews.jsp?FromBrowseMod=true&Ns=Pub_Date_Sort1&CurrPage=scholasticNews.jsp&TopicValue=Scholastic%20News

3) GEOGRAPHY CHALLENGES

This game is a perfect challenge to see how much geography you've learned about so far in school. Ideal for grades 6 and 7.

<http://www.eduplace.com/geonet/>

Take the daily National Geography Bee challenge! (grades6,7,8)

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geobee/>

Quiz games by a social studies teacher on various topics relating to the socials studies. Choose topics based on what you're learning about in class and test your knowledge.

<http://www.quia.com/pages/all.html> (grades 6,7,8)

Visit this website to learn how you can make a global difference and become involved in all things geography. Try some of these online quizzes. (grades 6,7,8)

http://mywonderfulworld.org/kidsteens_welcome.html

Take the world heritage quiz. Check your global geography knowledge. (grades 6,7,8)
<http://www.friendsofworldheritage.org/get-involved/travel-pod-game.html>

Test your knowledge on current world geography topics. (grade 6,7,8)
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/roper2006/>

4) HISTORY DETECTIVE

Use the following link to see if you have the skills it takes to solve historical mysteries. You may even want to check out the TV show!

“On the Case” Game Assignment: Record your history mystery, team, and results. Email your information to your social studies teacher.

<http://www.pbs.org/teachers/connect/resources/7203/preview/>

5) NEW JERSEY HISTORY

Use this website to learn about Thomas Edison, master inventor. Navigate through the website to find information to answer the three questions below.

<http://www.nps.gov/edis/forkids/index.htm>

- 1) Thomas Edison invented and patented over one thousand items. Of his inventions, which one do you think had the greatest influence on our life today? Support your answer.
- 2) Based on your knowledge of Thomas Edison, write three sentences that best summarize his character and personality.
- 3) Did Thomas Edison experiment with an electric car battery? Write down the specific name of his wife’s favorite car to drive.

6) ECONOMICS

Why is it that your parents and grandparents always reminisce about how (seemingly) inexpensive things were “way back when?” Use this activity and the provided links to help gain a better understanding of economics and how costs rise with changing times.

First, reflect on these questions and then read Step Right Up to see how people 150 years ago may have been entertained.

- 1) What are some cultural activities we have today?
- 2) Which ones of these are cheap enough for ordinary people to afford regularly?
- 3) Which are too expensive?
- 4) What makes the activities so expensive?

<http://pbskids.org/bigapplehistory/arts/topic7.html> (Step Right Up)

- 5) What type of entertainment options did people 150 years ago have?

Now, you can complete the economics activity page.

http://pbskids.org/bigapplehistory/activities/a_arts/activity3/index.html

7) CIVIL RIGHTS

Consider how the life of Dr. Martin Luther King was instrumental in the progression of the Civil Rights movement. Choose one question from the study guide link to research and respond. Email your teacher your answers. Your answer should be approximately one page in length.

<http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/special/mlk/king/studyguide.html>
<http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/special/mlk/>

8) THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/index.html>

Learn about Anti-Railroad propaganda through analysis of a poster. After reading the short article, enlarge the picture and complete the photograph analysis worksheet.

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/anti-rail/>
http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo_analysis_worksheet.pdf

Alaska, the largest state in the Union. Learn about how this frontier was settled and eventually became the 49th state in the United States. Complete 3 the photograph analyses from this unit. (Modes of Transportation and Statehood are interesting.)

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/alaska/index.html>

9) OUR NATIONAL DOCUMENTS

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/charters/>

Our National Charters have not always been as secure as they are today. Learn about how these documents have been stored, damaged and then preserved for the last 200 years.

Choose one of the two Interview and Inquiry links to read and review. Answer the following questions:

- 1) How was the Declaration of Independence stored over the past 200 years?
- 2) Why is it so important to preserve America's historic documents?

Choose Case Closed from the Interactive & Overview links to read and review. Answer the following question:

- 1) What part of the construction of the cases for the National Charters do you think is most important to their preservation? Why?

10) WONDERS OF THE WORLD

Compare the seven new wonders of the world with the seven ancient wonders of the world. Use the links below to see pictures and learn a little about each of the wonders.

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2007/07/photogalleries/seven-wonders/photo3.html>

Consider these questions:

- 1) What do you notice about the structures? Record your observations.
- 2) What do these structures have in common?
- 3) What criteria do you think is used to place a structure on a list as a wonder of the world?
- 4) Can you think of other structures that could be considered on a future list of wonders of the world? Explain your answer.

Use this website to see what wonders of the world you can vote on as new wonders!

<http://www.new7wonders.com/>

What do you notice about these wonders compared to the National Geographic wonders photo gallery?

Use this website as a link to see virtual tours of the new wonders of the world.
http://www.tburg.k12.ny.us/ms/new_7_wonders_of_the_world.htm