

**Grade Level / Content Area: Grade 4 Social Studies**  
**Curriculum**  
**Unit 1**

**Course Description:**

In this unit, students will be presented with the following task:

The principal of \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary school is extremely busy and overwhelmed with the requests from parents, teachers, and students and is seeking for assistance from students. He has asked a group of students to create a “student government” to make decisions about issues related to \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary School. To ensure that decisions are fair and everyone’s voice is heard, he has asked that the students analyze the United States Government (specifically its system of “checks and balances”) and create their own government based upon the elements of the United States government that they see most fit. After creating their governments, students (“citizens”) will then task each government with a specific issue that they will then resolve. Finally, each government will reflect on their experience, identifying what they would change/modify about their system.

**Big Ideas:**

- Rules and laws are developed to protect people’s rights and the security and welfare of society.
- The United States Constitution and Bill of Rights guarantee certain fundamental rights for citizens.
- American constitutional government is based on principles of limited government, shared authority, fairness, and equality.
- There are different branches within the United States government, each with its own structure, leaders, and processes, and each designed to address specific issues and concerns.
- In a representative democracy, individuals elect representatives to act on the behalf of the people.
- The examination of individual experiences, historical narratives, and events promotes an understanding of individual and community responses to the violation of fundamental rights.
- The United States democratic system requires active participation of its citizens.

<b>Essential Questions</b> 1. How does “fairness”, “equality”, and “the common good” play a role in the United States government? 2. How can people or groups bring about changes in the government, policies, and laws? 3. How can you compare and contrast the different means that people have used to bring about change in the United States government over time? 4. How can your voice be heard?	<b>Enduring Understandings</b> Students will understand that:  Knowledge of the past helps one understand the present and make decisions about the future.  People develop systems to manage conflict and create order.  People respond to and resolve conflicts in a variety of ways.  People and groups of people can bring about changes in government.  Collaboration is necessary in order to be an effective learner and citizen.

**Areas of Focus:**

6.1.4.A.2 Explain how fundamental rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights (i.e., freedom of expression, freedom of religion, the right to vote, and the right to due process) contribute to the continuation and improvement of American democracy.

6.1.4.A.3 Determine how “fairness,” “equality,” and the “common good” have influenced new laws and policies over time at the local and national levels of United States government.

6.1.4.A.4 Explain how the United States government is organized and how the United States Constitution defines and checks the power of government.

6.1.4.A.5 Distinguish the roles and responsibilities of the three branches of the national government.

6.1.4.A.6 Explain how national and state governments share power in the federal system of government.

6.1.4.A.9 Compare and contrast responses of individuals and groups, past and present, to violations of fundamental rights (e.g., fairness, civil rights, human rights).

6.1.4.A.10 Describe how the actions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and other civil rights leaders served as catalysts for social change and inspired social activism in subsequent generations.

6.1.4.A.12 Explain the process of creating change at the local, state, or national level.

**Suggested Activities:**

[\(see weekly planning guide\)](#)

Week 1: Inquiry (Yurtle the Turtle, U.S. government, Cartoons,) and Background Information (Brainpop/Newsela)

Week 2: Bill of Rights & The Constitution

Week 3: Organization of Government and Checks and Balances

Week 4: Civil Rights

Week 5: Making a Change

Week 6: Governing System Planning

**Examples, Outcomes, Assessments**

(see [note](#) below about the content of this section)

**Instructional Focus:**

- Classroom rules/routines
- Parts of local communities that help/provide a service
- Different types of communities
- Rules and laws
- Parts of a community

**Sample Assessments:**

- Exit tickets
- Journal activities
- Quizzes
- Discussion answers
- Write long/essay
- Compare/contrast on Venn diagram
- Answer essential questions

**Instructional Strategies:**

- KWL chart
- Video research
- Read and research
- Partnership discussions
- Map skills and planning

**Interdisciplinary Connections**

	Technology Integration Global Perspectives
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NOTE re: Examples, Outcomes and Assessments

*The following skills and themes should be reflected in the design of units and lessons for this course or content area.*

21st Century Skills:

- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication and Collaboration
- Information Literacy
- Media Literacy
- Life and Career Skills

21st Century Themes (as applies to content area):

- Financial, Economic, Business, and
- Entrepreneurial Literacy
- Civic Literacy
- Health Literacy

## Curriculum

### Unit 2

#### Course Description:

In this unit, students will be presented with the following task:

McGraw Hill is insisting that the new edition of their history textbook doesn't have enough room to teach about how New Jersey's involvement in the Revolutionary War. In order to convince them, you need to design an appealing, informative chapter that they can include in their textbook so that people remember the importance of our small, but powerful state.

#### Big Ideas:

New Jersey in The Revolutionary War

<b>Essential Questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why did New Jersey have a vital role in the American Revolution?</li><li>• How did the battles in New Jersey influence the war as a whole?</li><li>• Was fighting for independence the right move for New Jersey?</li><li>• How might New Jersey's geography have influenced the Revolutionary War?</li></ul>	<b>Enduring Understandings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New Jersey is the site of a number of critically important battles during the Revolutionary War.</li><li>• George Washington was the general of the American revolutionary forces and the first president of the United States.</li><li>• New Jersey's geography was crucial to the war</li></ul>
<b>Areas of Focus:</b> <p>6.1.8.B.3.d Explain why New Jersey's location played an integral role in the American Revolution.</p> <p>6.1.8.B.3.c Use maps and other geographic tools to evaluate the impact of geography on the execution and outcome of the American Revolutionary War.</p> <p>6.1.8.D.3.c Analyze the impact of George Washington as general of the American revolutionary forces and as the first president of the United States.</p> <p>6.1.8.D.3.d Analyze how prominent individuals and other nations contributed to the causes, execution, and outcomes of the American Revolution.</p>	<b>Suggested Activities:</b> <p><a href="#">(see weekly planner)</a></p> <p>Week 1: Inquiry of textbooks and Planning for chapter Week 2: People Week 3: Battles and Geography Week 4: Political Propaganda Week 5: Finishing Chapter and Presentations</p> <b>Examples, Outcomes, Assessments</b> <p><i>(see <a href="#">note</a> below about the content of this section)</i></p> <p>Instructional Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classroom rules/routines</li><li>• Parts of local communities that help/provide a service</li><li>• Different types of communities</li><li>• Rules and laws</li></ul>

<p>6.1.4.A.9 Compare and contrast responses of individuals and groups, past and present, to violations of fundamental rights (e.g., fairness, civil rights, human rights).</p> <p>6.1.4.B.1 Compare and contrast information that can be found on different types of maps and determine how the information may be useful.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parts of a community</li> </ul> <p>Sample Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exit tickets</li> <li>• Journal activities</li> <li>• Quizzes</li> <li>• Discussion answers</li> <li>• Write long/essay</li> <li>• Compare/contrast on Venn diagram</li> <li>• Answer essential questions</li> </ul> <p>Instructional Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KWL chart</li> <li>• Video research</li> <li>• Read and research</li> <li>• Partnership discussions</li> <li>• Map skills and planning</li> </ul> <p>Interdisciplinary Connections Technology Integration Global Perspectives</p>
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- Health Literacy

## Grade 4 Social Studies Curriculum

### Unit 3

#### Course Description:

In this unit, students will be presented with the following task:

As people are planning their vacations, they immediately think about going outside of the United States and visiting other continents, nearby islands, etc. People don't know or realize what's in their own backyard or a short plane/train/car ride away. You have been hired by the United States Department of Tourism to convince people to plan vacations within the 5 regions of the United States.

**Big Ideas:** Regions of the USA

<b>Essential Questions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What makes places unique and different?</li><li>• Why do people choose to settle in a different area?</li><li>• How does each region of the USA maintain its own identity while being a part of a larger configuration?</li><li>• How does where people live influence how they live?</li></ul>	<b>Enduring Understandings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The availability of resources affects people across the world differently.</li><li>• Compare and Contrast major regions of the USA</li><li>• Explain how people value different locations for a variety of reasons.</li></ul>
<b>Areas of Focus:</b> <p>6.1.4.B.2 Use physical and political maps to explain how the location and spatial relationship of places in New Jersey, the United States, and other areas, worldwide, have contributed to cultural diffusion and economic interdependence.</p>	<b>Suggested Activities:</b> <p>Week 1: Inquiry using current state tourism commercials &amp; Planning for what goes into their own videos for assigned region</p> <p>Week 2: Mail Race</p> <p>Week 3: Geography, Climate</p> <p>Week 4: Something for everyone (Restaurants, Beaches, Aquariums, Historic Sites, Recreation)</p>

6.1.4.B.6 Compare and contrast characteristics of regions in the United States based on culture, economics, and physical environment to understand the concept of regionalism.

6.1.4.B.10 Identify major cities in New Jersey, as well as in the United States, and the world, and explain how geographic and demographic tools (e.g., maps, globes, data visualizations) can be used to understand cultural differences).

6.1.4.C.9 Compare and contrast how the availability of resources affects people across the world differently.

6.1.4.C.14 Compare different regions of New Jersey to determine the role that geography, natural resources, climate, transportation, technology, and/or the labor force play in economic opportunities.

6.1.4.C.15 Describe how the development of different transportation systems impacted the economies of New Jersey and the United States.

Week 5: Creating Video and supporting resources/visuals

Week 6: Presentations

[Use this link](#)

**Examples, Outcomes, Assessments**  
(see [note](#) below about the content of this section)

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Instructional Strategies:

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Interdisciplinary Connections  
Technology Integration  
Global Perspectives

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- Health Literacy



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Curriculum**

**Unit 4**

**Course Description:**

In this unit, students will be presented with the following task:

**Big Ideas:**

<b>Essential Questions:</b>	<b>Enduring Understandings:</b>
<b>Areas of Focus:</b>	<b>Suggested Activities:</b>  <b>Examples, Outcomes, Assessments</b> <i>(see <a href="#">note</a> below about the content of this section)</i>  Instructional Focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classroom rules/routines</li><li>• Parts of local communities that help/provide a service</li><li>• Different types of communities</li><li>• Rules and laws</li><li>• Parts of a community</li></ul> Sample Assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exit tickets</li><li>• Journal activities</li><li>• Quizzes</li><li>• Discussion answers</li><li>• Write long/essay</li><li>• Compare/contrast on Venn diagram</li><li>• Answer essential questions</li></ul> Instructional Strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• KWL chart</li><li>• Video research</li><li>• Read and research</li><li>• Partnership discussions</li><li>• Map skills and planning</li></ul>

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