

Overview of Middle School Social Studies Curriculum

The St. Michael's Middle School Social Studies Curriculum follows the the History-Social Science Framework adopted by the State of California. Content knowledge as well as Current Events and Geography are included in the learning goals. Students utilize technology, reference primary and secondary sources, and engage in debate and Socratic Seminar to expand their knowledge and understanding of concepts presented.

Grade 6: World History and Geography (A Message of Ancient Days; Houghton Mifflin)

Early Humankind and the Development of Human Societies

Describe how the environment influenced the migration of early humans

Explain how people maintained a hunting and gathering lifestyle

Compare and contrast the development of agricultural villages and pastoral nomadism

The Early Civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush

Identify the environmental factors that helped civilizations grow, and the impact on the surrounding areas

Explain the changes that took place in people's lives as states and empires took over

Describe how contact, trade, and other links grew among these urban societies

The Ancient Israelites

Explain the beliefs and religious practices of the Ancient Israelites

Describe how the environment, history, and interaction with other societies shaped their religion

Discuss the ways early Judaism supported individuals, rulers, and societies

Ancient Greece

Explain how the environment of Greece affected the development of Greek societies

Discuss the difference between the Persians and the Greeks, and between the Athenians and the Spartans

Describe the political forms adopted by Greek societies

Discuss the impact of mythology, art, & the emphasis on reason/intellectual development on Greek society

Describe how the conquests of Alexander the Great helped spread Hellenistic culture

The Early Civilizations of India

Discuss how the environment influenced the emergence and decline of the Indus civilization

Explain how the religions of Ancient India (Hinduism, Buddhism) supported individuals, rulers, & societies

Describe the connections between the Indian subcontinent and other regions of Afroeurasia

The Early Civilization of China

Describe how the environment influenced the development of civilization in China

Identify the factors that helped China unify into a single state under the Han Dynasty

Discuss the philosophical system of Confucianism

Explain how the establishment of the Silk Road increased trade and the spread of Buddhism

The Development of Rome

Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Roman Republic

Explain how Romans advanced the concept of citizenship

Describe how the environment influenced the expansion of Rome and its trade network

Identify the influence of other societies on the Romans

Current Events

Summarize articles that connect with the unit of study

Discuss the societal advancements that have taken place over the years

Geography

Locate cities, rivers, and bodies of water relevant to the unit of study

Compare and contrast physical and political maps

Project-Based Learning: Walk Through the Ancient World

Students relive the civilizations of Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome by portraying historical figures, creating skits, and demonstrating expertise in vocabulary, maps, and timelines through games & activities

Grade 7 - World History and Geography: Medieval and Early Modern Times (*Across the Centuries; HM*)

Rome and Christendom

Explain how the environment and technological innovations affected the growth/contraction of the RE

Describe how the Roman Empire gained and maintained power over people and territories

Identify the reasons the Roman Empire failed

Discuss how Christianity developed and changed over time

Explain how the decentralized system of feudalism controlled people but weakened state power

Southwestern Asia, 300 to 1200: Persia and the World of Islam

Explain how the environment affected the development and expansion of the Persian Empire

Discuss how Islam developed and changed over time, and spread to other cultures

Describe how people of other cultures interacted at the sites of encounter

Discuss Norman Sicily as a site of encounter

Identify the effects of the exchanges at Cairo

Explain how the Muslim empire helped different regions become more interconnected

South Asia, 300 to 1200

Explain how the environment, cultural and religious changes, and technology affected the people of India

Describe how Indian monks, nuns, merchants, and travelers spread religious ideas and practices

Discuss how the religions of Hinduism and Buddhism spread and changed over time

East Asia, 300 to 1300: China and Japan

Discuss how the Tang and Song Dynasties gained and maintained power

Explain how environmental conditions/technological innovations caused the medieval economic revolution

Explain the importance of Quanzhou

Describe how Chinese culture, ideas, and technologies, and Buddhism influenced Korea and Japan

Discuss the influence of Samurai customs on the government of medieval Japan

The Americas, 300 to 1490

Explain how the environment affected the expansion of agriculture/population in Mesoamerica/Andes

Discuss why the Mayan civilization, and the Aztec & Inca Empires gained power over people/territories

Discuss the ways Mesoamerican religion developed and changed over time

Explain the importance of Tenochtitlan under the Aztecs

West Africa, 900 to 1400

Explain how the environment affected the expansion of the Ghana & Mali empires, and the trade network

Discuss the effects of the exchanges at Mali

Explain how Arab/North African and West African perspectives differed on West African kingdoms

Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World

Explain how the Mongol Empire destroyed states and increased the interconnection of Afroeurasia

Describe the effects of the exchanges at Majorca and Calicut

Discuss how trade, competition, and technological innovation led to voyages of exploration

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Interfaith Dialogue: Monsignor Dennis Mikulanis, Pastor of San Rafael Parish and founding member of the Interreligious Council of San Diego, and Imam Taha Hassane, Director of the Islamic Center of San Diego, speak to seventh graders in the Spring and answer questions about Christianity and Islam.

Grade 8: United States History and Geography: (Growth and Conflict A More Perfect Union; HM)

The Development of American Constitutional Democracy

Explain the causes of the American Revolution

Discuss how the American Revolution developed the concept of natural rights

Describe the legacies of the American Revolution

Envisioning a New America

Discuss how much power the federal government should have and what it should do

Describe life in the early Republic and explain how the government changed

Explore the constitutionality of the Louisiana Purchase

The Divergent Paths of the American People: 1800 to 1850

Explain how the individual regions became more similar & more different; describe families in each region

Discuss how work changed between 1800 and 1850

Describe the impact of slavery on American politics, regional economies, family life, and culture

The Causes, Course of, and Consequences of the Civil War

Discuss the causes of the Civil War and explain how the U.S. changed throughout the course of the war

Explain how the Civil War was conducted militarily, politically, economically, and culturally

Describe how slavery was abolished through the Civil War

The Rise of Industrial America

Explain how America's economy, industries, and population grew after the Civil War

Discuss the role of the federal government in the nation's growth after the Civil War

Explain who came to America at the end of the 19th century/beginning of the 20th century and why

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Eighth Grade Field Trips:

Ronald Reagan Library in Simi Valley: Students explore the impact of our 40th president on our nation

Riley's Farm: Students experience The Civil War through displays, demonstrations, & a battle reenactment

