

6th Grade Social Studies Syllabus

Sixth grade Social Studies is a study of people and places in the contemporary world. Students identify the geographic characteristics of regions/societies and describe the economic and government systems of these regions/societies. Students will use this information to explain and compare cultures of the past and present.

Cultural Geography



In this unit, students will understand the concepts of geography and how it has impacted the development of cultures. The Middle East/North Africa region, as all other world regions, is defined by cultural characteristics. In this unit, students will learn what those characteristics are, which are more powerful in defining this part of the world as a region, and how relationships developed among cultures.

Cultural Diffusion



The Cultural Diffusion unit is a logical one to follow the first unit, the Middle East. Students will look at how cultures have borrowed from each other. This period serves as a useful example of what happens when cultural diffusion takes place. The highlighted civilizations in this unit are Greece and Rome, followed by the time periods of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The Renaissance is a classic example of an era borrowing from and improving upon previous civilizations, such as Greece and Rome.

Cultures in Transition



In this unit, students will be introduced to the Latin American and African regions. These regions have been hindered by struggling economies and unstable governments. Students will discover that these regions' development can largely be attributed to a history of European colonialism and imperialism. Students will understand how the spread of nationalism in the 20th century resulted in widespread independence movements; however, these regions continue to face challenges in the modern era.

Conflict and Cooperation



In this unit, students learn about the challenges of the 20th Century, including World War I, World War II, the Russian Revolution, and the Cold War. They also learn that compromise is essential for creating and maintaining a balance of power among nations and the role of global organizations such as the European Union and United Nations. Students will also compare the economic systems of communism and free enterprise, as well as their impact on human rights.

Global Interdependence



The Global Interdependence unit concludes the 6th grade study of people of places in the contemporary world. China and Japan receive the most emphasis in this unit of study but other major countries from the Pacific Rim are also discussed. This concluding unit demonstrates that cultures are now more globally connected than in the past. The contact that results from this interdependence spreads cultural traits from one group to another. Modern communication technologies have blurred many of the differences among world cultures decrease political, economic, social, and geographic barriers.