
Social Studies: Grade 6

World History: Ancient Civilizations

Students in grade six expand their understanding of history by studying the people and events that ushered in the dawn of the major Western and non-Western ancient civilizations. Geography is of special significance in the development of the human story. Continued emphasis is placed on the everyday lives, problems, and accomplishments of people. Their role in developing social, economic, and political structures, as well as establishing and spreading ideas that helped transform the world forever. Students develop higher levels of critical thinking by considering why civilizations developed where and when they did, why they became dominant, and why they declined. Students analyze the interactions among the various cultures, emphasizing their enduring contributions and the link, despite time, between the contemporary and ancient worlds.

Social Studies Content Standards (SS):

Statements of what students should know and be able to do in a specific social studies grade level course. The standards provide a clear outline of content so that teachers can develop and align curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Components under each standard describe knowledge or skills and serve as progress indicators for gauging student's achievement of each standard.

Standard: 6SS1: Students describe what is known through archaeological studies of the early physical and cultural development of humankind from the Paleolithic era to the agricultural revolution.

Components: 6SS1.a: Evaluate the hunter-gatherer societies, including the development of tools and the use of fire.

6SS1.b: Compare and contrast the locations of human communities that populated the major regions of the world and describe how humans adapted to a variety of environments.

6SS1.c: Appraise the climatic and human modification of the physical environment that gave rise to the domestication of plants and animals and new sources of clothing and shelter.

Standard: 6SS2: Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush.

Components: 6SS2.a: Locate and compare the major river systems and discuss the physical settings that supported permanent settlement and early civilizations.

6SS2.b: Trace the development of agricultural techniques that permitted the production of economic surplus and the emergence of cities as centers of culture and power.

6SS2.c: Explain the relationship between religion and the social and political systems in Mesopotamia and Egypt.

6SS2.d: Explain the significance of Hammurabi's Code.

6SS2.e: Examine the main features of Egyptian art and architecture.

6SS2.f: Describe the role of Egyptian trade in the eastern Mediterranean and the

Social Studies: Grade 6

Nile valley.

6SS2.g: Explain the significance of Queen Hatshepsut and Ramses the Great.

8SS2.h: Identify the location of the Kush civilization and describe its political, commercial, and cultural relations with Egypt.

6SS2.i: Trace the evolution of language and its written forms.

6SS2.j: Examine the enduring contributions that Ancient Egypt has given our modern world.

Examples: architecture, irrigation systems, burial rites

Standard: **6SS3: Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of Ancient Greece.**

Components: **6SS3.a:** Discuss the connections between geography and the development of city-states in the region of the Aegean Sea and patterns of trade and commerce among Greek city-states and within the wider Mediterranean region.

6SS3.b: Identify the transition from tyranny and oligarchy to early democratic forms of government and back to dictatorship in ancient Greece, including the significance of the invention of the ideas of citizenship.

Example: Pericles' Funeral Oration

6SS3.c: Explain the key differences between Athenian, or direct, democracy and representative democracy.

6SS3.d: Examine the significance of Greek mythology to the everyday life of people in the region and how Greek literature continues to permeate our literature and language today, drawing from Greek mythology and epics, such as Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and from *Aesop's Fables*.

6SS3.e: Outline the founding, expansion, and political organization of the Persian Empire.

6SS3.f: Compare and contrast life in Athens and Sparta, with emphasis on their roles in the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars.

6SS3.g: Trace the rise of Alexander the Great and the spread of Greek culture eastward and into Egypt.

6SS3.h: Describe the enduring contributions of important Greek figures in the arts and sciences.

Examples: Aristotle, Euclid, Euripedes, Herodotus, Hypatia, Plato, Socrates, Sophocles, and Thucydides

Standard: **6SS4: Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of India.**

Components: **6SS4.a:** Locate and describe the major river system of India and discuss the

Social Studies: Grade 6

physical setting that supported the rise of this civilization.

- 6SS4.b:** Discuss the significance of the Aryan invasions.
- 6SS4.c:** Explain the major beliefs and practices of Brahmanism in India and how they evolved into early Hinduism.
- 6SS4.d:** Explain the social structure of the caste system.
- 6SS4.e:** Describe the life and moral teachings of Buddha and how Buddhism spread in India, Ceylon, and Central Asia.
- 6SS4.f:** Describe the growth of the Maurya Empire and the political and moral achievements of the emperor Asoka.
- 6SS4.g:** Evaluate important aesthetic and intellectual traditions.
Examples: Sanskrit literature, including the Bhagavad Gita; medicine; metallurgy; and mathematics, including Hindu-Arabic numerals and the zero.
- 6SS4.h:** Examine the enduring contributions that Ancient India has given our modern world.
Examples: architecture, mathematics, religion

Standard: **6SS5: Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of China.**

- Components:** **6SS5.a:** Locate and describe the origins of Chinese civilization in the Huang-He Valley during the Shang Dynasty.
- 6SS5.b:** Explain the geographic features of China that made governance and the spread of ideas and goods difficult and served to isolate the country from the rest of the world.
- 6SS5.c:** Evaluate the life of Confucius and the fundamental teachings of Confucianism and Taoism.
- 6SS5.d:** Explain the political and cultural problems prevalent in the time of Confucius and how he sought to solve them.
- 6SS5.e:** Describe the policies and achievements of the emperor Shi Huangdi that unified northern China under the Qin Dynasty.
- 6SS5.f:** Explain the significance of the trans-Eurasian "silk roads" in the period of the Han Dynasty and Roman Empire and their locations.
- 6SS1.g:** Describe the diffusion of Buddhism northward to China during the Han Dynasty.
- 6SS5.h:** Examine the enduring contributions that Ancient China has given our modern world.
Examples: architecture, gun powder, medicine

Social Studies: Grade 6

- Standard:** **6SS6:** **Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures during the development of Rome.**
- Component:** **6SS6.a:** Identify the location and describe the rise of the Roman Republic, including the importance of such mythical and historical figures as Aeneas, Romulus and Remus, Cincinnatus, Julius Caesar, and Cicero.
- 6SS6.b:** Describe the government of the Roman Republic and its significance.
 Examples: written constitution and tripartite government, checks and balances, and civic duty
- 6SS6.c:** Identify the location of the political and geographic reasons for the growth of Roman territories and expansion of the empire, including how the empire fostered economic growth through the use of currency and trade routes.
- 6SS6.d:** Discuss the influence of Julius Caesar and Augustus in Rome's transition from republic to empire.
- 6SS6.e:** Trace the migration of Jews around the Mediterranean region and the effects of their conflict with the Romans, including the Romans' restrictions on their right to live in Jerusalem.
- 6SS6.f:** Discuss the origins of Christianity in the Jewish Messianic prophecies, the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth as described in the New Testament, and the contribution of St. Paul the Apostle to the definition and spread of Christian beliefs.
 Examples: belief in the Trinity, resurrection, and salvation
- 6SS6.g:** Examine the circumstances that led to the spread of Christianity in Europe and other Roman territories.
- 6SS6.h:** Discuss the legacies of Roman art and architecture, technology and science, literature, language, and law.

Social Studies Skills (SSK):

The intellectual skills noted below are to be learned through, and applied to, the content standards for grade six. They are to be assessed only in conjunction with these content standards. Students demonstrate the following intellectual reasoning, reflection, and research skills:

Chronological and Spatial Thinking

- Skills:** **6SSK1:** Students explain how major events are related to one another in time.
- 6SSK2:** Students construct various time lines of key events, people, and periods of the historical era they are studying.
- 6SSK3:** Students use a variety of maps and documents to identify physical and cultural features of neighborhoods, cities, states, and countries and to explain the historical migration of people, expansion and disintegration of empires, and the growth of economic system.

Social Studies: Grade 6

Research, Evidence, and Point of View

- skills:**
- 6SSK4:** Students frame questions that can be answered by historical study and research.
 - 6SSK5:** Students distinguish fact from opinion in historical narratives and stories.
 - 6SSK6:** Students distinguish relevant from irrelevant information, essential from incidental information, and verifiable from unverifiable information in historical narratives and stories.
 - 6SSK7:** Students assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources and draw sound conclusions from them.
 - 6SSK8:** Students detect the different historical points of view on historical events and determine the context in which the historical statements were made (the questions asked, sources used, author's perspectives).

Historical Interpretation

- skills:**
- 6SSK9:** Students explain the central issues and problems from the past, placing people and events in a matrix of time and place.
 - 6SSK10:** Students understand and distinguish cause, effect, sequence, and correlation in historical events, including the long-and short-term causal relations.
 - 6SSK11:** Students explain the sources of historical continuity and how the combination of ideas and events explains the emergence of new patterns.
 - 6SSK12:** Students recognize the role of chance, oversight, and error in history.
 - 6SSK13:** Students recognize that interpretations of history are subject to change as new information is uncovered.
 - 6SSK14:** Students interpret basic indicators of economic performance and conduct cost-benefit analysis of economic and political issues.