GRADE SIX WORLD GEOGRAPHY AND CULTURES - YEAR 1

Grades 6 and 7 form a two-year sequence in which students study regions of the world by examining physical geography, nations in the region today, and selected ancient and classical societies before 1000 CE. Regions for grade 6 are: Western Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East; Sub-Saharan Africa; and North America, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America. Students investigate guiding questions such as:

- ***How does geography affect how societies develop and interact?***
- ***How have human societies differed from one another across time and regions?***

Additional supporting questions appear under each topic. The questions are included to stimulate teachers' and students' own questions for discussion and research.

Core Concepts (4 weeks):

1. Tools of Geography
2. Tools of History
3. Human-Environment Interaction
4. Population and Movement
5. Culture and Geography

Key Content:

Topic 1. Studying complex societies past and present (1 week)

What do the social sciences contribute to our understanding of the world?

Topic 2. Human origins, the Neolithic and Paleolithic Eras (1 week)

How did life on Earth begin and why did humans form complex societies?

Topic 3. The Middle East and North Africa (8 weeks)

What are the best explanations for why writing developed in Mesopotamia?
How did Ancient Egypt's rigid class structure affect its social and cultural development?
Why were traders and merchants important in ancient societies?
What were the consequences of the unification of tribes for ancient Israel?
Why is the belief in one God significant to Islam, Judaism, and Christianity?
How did ideas spread across ancient societies in this region?

Topic 4. Sub-Saharan Africa (6 weeks)

How did long-distance trade influence the development of early sub-Saharan African states and societies?

Topic 5. Central America, the Caribbean, and South America (13 weeks)

What are the most important contributions of ancient societies in the Americas to the modern world?

Topic 6. North America (7 weeks)

How do archaeologists develop theories about ancient migrations?

Points to examine for each topic:

1. Physical geography
2. Ancient and classical societies before 1000 A.D.
3. Nations in the region today