

7th Grade Social Studies Syllabus

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Room Number: A1

Scope of Content

As a result of seventh grade Social Studies, students will understand the elements of culture through an exploration of the diverse continents of Africa, Latin America and Europe. Students will utilize reading, writing and thinking processes to make sense of this new information.



Students will work in cooperative, inquiry-based teams to learn about the terrain, population, similarities/differences, the economic and political systems, the religion, and food of their countries. They will use appropriate non-fiction resources to read for information on each of these topics. While reading for information, students will think critically, make and defend conclusions and judgments, and report their findings in a variety of ways. The ability to synthesize this information into coherent and clear written and oral summaries will be a part of summative assessments.

Enduring Understandings

Students will understand that:



- There are elements that can be found in all world cultures, some are the same and others are different from our own.
- Physical geography impacts culture.
- Understanding geography provides a frame of reference for understanding global issues.
- People organize systems to promote stable, productive, and safe communities.
- Having accurate information about world religions fosters understanding, acceptance, and peace.
- Understanding the past helps us to understand the present and plan for the future.
- All countries face economic, social, and environmental problems.
- The artifacts, everyday objects, art, and documents of a culture reveal something about their values and way of life.
- Good readers engage in a variety of ways in order to comprehend text.
- Sharing work opens up the possibility for deeper and broader meaning.

- Learning something new is a process that involves locating appropriate resources, taking notes, thinking critically, and making the information your own.

SVS Learner Habits:

- *Perseverance*
- *Responsibility*
- *Self-Awareness*
- *Engagement*

Students will reflect on and be graded on their ability to demonstrate these habits of mind.

Required Materials

In order to complete the various classroom and homework activities, this course requires that students have the following with them each day:

- Social Studies Notebook and paper
- 2 pocket folder
- Charged Chromebook
- Pencil, Pen, Highlighters

Grading Policy

Formative Assignments (Homework/Classwork): 20%

Interim Assignments (Quizzes): 50%

Summative Assignments (Tests/Projects/Research Papers): 30%

Late Assignment Policy**Interim and Summative Assignments:**

Students are expected to complete all assigned work so that learning can be properly assessed and teaching can be properly adjusted. When everyone submits assignments on time, it helps the class learn together, and teachers can go over answers and ideas fairly. If an assignment (not including homework) is turned in late, points will be taken off for each day it is late, up to five school days. For example, work that is one day late can only earn up to an A-, two days late a B, and so on. After five days, the work will not be accepted. The acceptance of late homework is at the teacher's discretion. Since teachers often review the homework answers in class, it is not possible to accept

homework after answers are given. **To pass a class for the quarter, students must turn in all major (summative) assignments and show a good effort on them.**

Please note: Late arrival or early dismissal is not an acceptable excuse for late submission of a pre-assigned project./assignment. If a student is in the building on a specific day, he/she has an obligation to submit a pre-assigned project/assignment to the appropriate teacher(s). In addition, if a student reports to the nurse instead of a class, he/she has an obligation to submit any pre-assigned project/assignment to the appropriate teacher. **If a student arrives late to school, leaves early, or reports to the nurse instead of a class, he/she must submit pre-assigned projects/assignments to the appropriate teacher(s) or the late work policy will apply.**

Formative:

Each homework assignment is given a Letter Grade Value. Late or incomplete homework will not result in full credit. In some cases, late homework cannot be accepted, for example, if the teacher has reviewed the work and given answers in class.

Absences

You have one day to complete make-up work for every day absent. Students are expected to promptly make-up missed work/gather materials/get notes from a classmate. In the case of extended absences, it is an expectation that the student will meet with teachers to create a plan for any missed/late work.

Extra Help

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your coursework, materials, etc., be sure to contact teachers to create a plan.

Unit One: African Studies

Content

The Continent of Africa

- Apply the elements of a cultural analysis. Study the religion, geography, natural resources, population, economic and political systems, food, arts and social norms of specific cultures and countries.
- Compare and contrast regions and countries.
- Study the concept of Ethnocentrism: causes, facts or opinions, implications of an ethnocentric perspective when studying social studies and making informed decisions.



Geography and Map Skills

Guiding Questions:

- What are the main physical features of the continent?
- How does geography and climate influence the way of life?
- What is unique about the geography of the continent?
- What factors influence the ways in which Africans make a living?

Colonialism and Conquest in Africa

- Use a timeline and follow a chronology.
- Study industrialization in Europe and the need for raw material from Africa.
- Analyze the natural and human resources in Africa and how these resources attracted Europeans.
- Study nationalism in Europe and the competition for conquest.
- Analyze the *Scramble for Africa* 1885-1910 and the process of colonization in 25 years.
- Study the changing borders due to colonialism and the lasting impacts and legacy of slavery.

Contemporary Africa - Cultural Analysis

- Analyze African art, music, and literature; proverbs, adinkra symbols, masks

South Africa

- Study Apartheid from the 1950s to today
- Explore how racism and discrimination impacts society and discover ways in which people have the power to change it.
- Trace the Impact of significant individuals: Nelson Mandela; Steve Biko.

Sudan

- Analyze how the geography and resources of Sudan impact all other aspects of life in the country.
- Study the Civil War; separation of North and South Sudan.
- Learn about *Water for Sudan* organization.



Reading and Research Skills

- Apply effective methods for reading informative text
- Throughout the unit of study, work in a small group to conduct research focused on current issues on the African continent.
- Identify similarities and differences among countries studied in the unit.
- Read Narratives – *No More Strangers Now*; analyze the purpose and power of the narrative.
- Study the purpose and structure of historical fiction – read *Long Walk to Water*.
- Separate fact from opinion, determine main and supporting ideas, draw logical, evidenced-based conclusions, cite text evidence to support conclusions and generalizations

Writing

1. Write objective summaries.
2. Learn the structure of the argumentative essay; write an argumentative essay focused on Nelson Mandela or Steven Biko.
3. Write a persuasive letter focused on *Water for Sudan* using similar skills as those used for the argumentative essay, but write for a specific audience, purpose and task
4. Write a Bio Poem using a specific structure.
5. Learn the concepts of connotation and tone and apply to the persuasive letter and poem.

Viewing Skills

- Watch informational videos and interviews focused on African history and culture.
- Determine main ideas and supporting details, separate fact from opinion, and take notes from a documentary.
- Use critical thinking skills to draw logical, evidence-based conclusions based on relevant evidence.