



Geography 6 Curriculum

Board Approved: 05/21/2026

Course Information

**Middle School
Full Year**

Course Description:

This year-long Grade 6 Geography course introduces students to the foundational tools, concepts, and skills necessary for understanding the relationship between people and their environment. Students will develop map-reading skills to interpret spatial information, recognize patterns, and describe locations in both absolute and relative terms. The curriculum explores global population dynamics, emphasizing that access to water, land, and stability often determine where people settle, and analyzing how migration changes the identity of places. Additionally, the course investigates globalization, examining how the use of resources and economic systems affects the quality of life, and analyzing how human actions modify the physical environment, resulting in both positive and negative consequences across various world regions.

Transfer Goals:

- Apply spatial analysis and interpretation of data to make sense of relationships between people, places, and environments.
- Cite evidence to predict potential outcomes and assess impact.
- Integrate information from multiple sources, identify key insights, and interpret patterns to understand complex issues.
- Analyze patterns and processes and explain change over time.
- Analyze issues through cultural, historical, and environmental lenses to recognize context and perspective.
- Formulate and support arguments using evidence.
- Communicate information and ideas through writing, speaking, and illustrations for a target audience using appropriate vocabulary.

Curriculum Standards: [DESE Social Studies Standards 6-12](#)

Curriculum Resource(s): National Geographic World Cultures and Geography Survey, 3rd Student Edition Update + MindTap 6-year access published by Cengage Learning

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Family Notification Procedures

Social Studies

Core Instructional Materials

- Core instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, articles, primary/secondary sources, maps, and videos) used in class will be listed on Canvas and in course syllabi. Families will be notified if materials change.

Library and Research Resources

- Students may check out social studies-related nonfiction books or reference materials from the school library to support class learning. Families may contact their school's library media specialist to sign up for email notifications through Destiny to monitor materials checked out from district libraries.
- [How Parents/Guardians Can Monitor Student Resource Use](#)
- When a unit includes student-selected research materials or inquiry-based exploration, teachers will notify families and encourage them to discuss selected resources with their students. For units involving student-selected research using multiple resources, teachers will notify families and encourage ongoing conversations about materials used.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 1: Foundations of Geography

Timeframe: 8 Weeks

Unit Description: In this unit, students are introduced to the foundations of geography. This unit introduces students to the tools, concepts, and skills of geography that they will use throughout social studies. This unit teaches students the map-reading skills needed to analyze a variety of thematic maps. Students will build a foundation in geography by learning physical features of the world, the five themes of geography, and basic map skills to better understand the relationship between people and their environment.

Region(s) of Emphasis: North & South America

Enduring Understandings:

- Maps are tools that communicate information about the physical and human world, revealing patterns, relationships, and changes over time.
- Map skills allow us to analyze spatial information, recognize relationships, and make informed decisions, providing a lens for understanding culture, environment, and history.
- Locations can be described in both absolute terms (coordinates) and relative terms (relationships to other places).
- Every place has physical and human characteristics that distinguish it from others.

Essential Questions:

- What can maps tell us?
- How do map skills help us interpret the world?
- How do you find and describe the location of a place?
- What makes a place unique?

Unit 1 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
6-8.GEO.1.CC.A	• I can create and use historical maps and timelines in order to represent continuity and change within and among regions over time.
6-8.GEO.1.CC.C	• With assistance, I can develop a research plan, identify appropriate resources for investigating social studies topics, and create a research product that applies an aspect of geography to a contemporary issue.
6-8.GEO.1.CC.D	• I can, using an inquiry lens, develop compelling geographic questions, determine helpful resources, and consider multiple points of view represented in the resources.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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<u>6-8.GEO.1.CC.E</u>	• I can analyze the causes and consequences of a current geographic issue as well as the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.
6-8.GEO.2.CC.A	• I can explain how regions of the world change over time in relation to historical events and trends, and the human characteristics of a place.
6-8.GEO.1.GS.B	• I can analyze current human environmental issues using relevant geographic sources to propose solutions.
6-8.GEO.1.G.A	• I can create and use maps, graphs, statistics, and geospatial technology in order to explain relationships and reveal spatial patterns or trends.
6-8.GEO.1.G.B	• I can analyze how the physical and human characteristics of current world regions are connected to changing identity and culture.
6-8.GEO.1.G.C	• I can locate the states of the United States and the corresponding regions.
6-8.GEO.1.G.D	• I can locate the cities of Missouri, the United States, and the world.
6-8.GEO.1.G.E	• I can locate the major nations of the world.
6-8.GEO.1.G.F	• I can locate the major landforms of the world.
6-8.GEO.2.G.B	• I can describe a variety of ecosystems and explain where they may be found.
6-8.GEO.2.EC.C	• I can use economic concepts such as GDP, scarcity, inflation to describe and compare places and regions.
6-8.GEO.1.PC.A	• I can analyze material culture to explain a people's perspective and use of place.
6-8.GEO.1.PC.C	• I can compare and contrast the human characteristics within and among contemporary and historic regions over time.
6-8.GEO.2.PC.A	• I can compare and contrast the human characteristics within and among regions.
6-8.GEO.2.PC.B	• I can explain how groups and institutions of a place develop to meet people's needs.
6-8.GEO.2.PC.C	• I can analyze the relationship between the physical environments and cultural traditions to determine their impact on individuals, groups, and institutions.
6-8.GEO.2.PC.D	• I can analyze the religion and belief systems of a place to determine their impact on people, groups, and cultures.
6-8.GEO.2.PC.E	• I can describe how a people's culture is expressed through their art, architecture, and literature.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 2: Population and Migration

Timeframe: 8 Weeks

Unit Description: In this unit, students explore major patterns of population distribution, demographics & migrations in the world and analyze the impact of those patterns. They will understand the causes and effects of urbanization, overpopulation, and population density. Students will be able to investigate ways countries and cities have dealt with these challenges and how it may affect their settlement patterns and movement. Students will assess how countries and cities deal with these challenges and how these patterns affect regions.

Region(s) of Emphasis: Europe/Oceania

Enduring Understandings:

- People adapt to their environment while also modifying it to meet their needs, develop culture, and organize daily life.
- Movement of people changes the identity of places by influencing demographics, economy, and cultural traditions.
- Access to water, fertile land, economic opportunities, and political stability often determine where populations concentrate.
- People migrate because of push factors (conflict, poverty, natural disasters) and pull factors (jobs, safety, opportunity).
- Birth rates, death rates, and migration patterns influence how quickly populations grow or decline.

Essential Questions:

- How does where you live influence how you live?
- How does migration affect the lives of people and the character of places?
- How is the world's population distributed and why?
- What are the major causes and consequences of human migration?
- What are the causes and effects of different rates of population growth?

Unit 2 Standards	
STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
Unit 1 Standards	Including standards from Unit 1: 6-8.GEO.1.CC.A , 6-8.GEO.1.CC.C , 6-8.GEO.1.CC.D , 6-8.GEO.1.CC.E , 6-8.GEO.2.CC.A, 6-8.GEO.1.GS.B , 6-8.GEO.1.G.A , 6-8.GEO.1.G.B , 6-8.GEO.1.G.E, 6-8.GEO.1.G.F, 6-8.GEO.1.PC.A , 6-8.GEO.1.PC.C , 6-8.GEO.2.PC.A
6-8.GEO.1.CC.B	• I can evaluate historical solutions to problems within and among world regions in order to draw conclusions about current and future decisions.
6-8.GEO.2.CC.A	• I can explain how regions of the world change over time in relation to historical events and trends, and the human characteristics of place.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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6-8.GEO.2.CC.D	I can debate the development of and issues surrounding modern border disputes.
6-8.GEO.2.CC.B	I can explain how forces of nature impact historic and current conflicts and cooperation.
6-8.GEO.2.G.D	I can explain how the movement of people, goods, and ideas impacts world regions.
6-8.GEO.1.EC.A	I can, using a geographic lens, evaluate economic decisions to determine costs and benefits on contemporary society
6-8.GEO.2.EC.D	I can analyze economic systems to explain their impact on people's behavior and choices.
6-8.GEO.1.PC.B	I can explain how the physical and human characteristics of places and regions are connected to human identities and cultures

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 3: Globalization

Timeframe: 8 Weeks

Unit Description: In this unit, students will learn how the movement of ideas, people, and objects across the globe leads to cultural diffusion and interdependence. Students will analyze data to evaluate how a country's resources and its economy impact their standard of living in developed and developing nations.

Region(s) of Emphasis: Asia/ Middle East

Enduring Understandings:

- The way a society organizes work, trade, and resources affects the opportunities, challenges, and choices people face in their everyday lives.
- The wealth of resources, the way they are used, and the strength of an economy determine the quality of life and access to goods and services in different countries.
- Human lives, cultures, and environments are interconnected across the world through trade, communication, migration, and shared challenges.
- While globalization can bring growth and new opportunities, it can also increase inequalities by benefiting some groups and regions more than others.
- Increased global connections influence traditions, values, and identities, both by blending cultures and by encouraging the preservation of diversity.

Essential Questions:

- How do economic systems affect your life and the lives of others?
- How do the economy and resources of a country affect the standard of living?
- How are people part of a global community that shapes the lives, cultures, & the environment around the world?
- How does globalization affect economic inequality?
- How does globalization impact cultural diversity and identity?

Unit 3 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
Unit 1 Standards	Including standards from Unit 1: 6-8.GEO.1.CC.A , 6-8.GEO.1.CC.C , 6-8.GEO.1.CC.D , 6-8.GEO.1.CC.E , 6-8.GEO.2.CC.A, 6-8.GEO.1.GS.B , 6-8.GEO.1.G.A , 6-8.GEO.1.G.B , 6-8.GEO.1.G.E, 6-8.GEO.1.G.F, 6-8.GEO.1.PC.A , 6-8.GEO.1.PC.C , 6-8.GEO.2.PC.A
Unit 2 Standards	Including standards from Unit 2: 6-8.GEO.1.CC.B , 6-8.GEO.2.CC.A, 6-8.GEO.2.CC.D, 6-8.GEO.2.G.D, 6-8.GEO.1.EC.A , 6-8.GEO.2.EC.D, 6-8.GEO.1.PC.B

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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6-8.GEO.2.CC.D	I can debate the development of and issues surrounding modern border disputes.
6-8.GEO.1.GS.A	I can, using a geographic lens, analyze the laws and governmental systems of a place in order to determine their effect on individuals and groups in society.
6-8.GEO.2.GS.B	I can draw conclusions about how laws impact the development of a place and how a place impacts the development of laws.
6-8.GEO.2.G.C	I can explain how human-environmental interactions shape people and places.
6-8.GEO.2.EC.A	I can analyze resource availability to explain its causes and impacts on conflict or cooperation.
6-8.GEO.2.EC.B	I can analyze patterns of resource distribution to explain the consequences of personal and public economic decisions.

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Unit 4: Human-Environment Interaction

Timeframe: 8 Weeks

Unit Description: In this unit, students explore ways people adapt, modify, and depend on various physical environments and the effects of natural forces upon human activities. They will also analyze the environmental consequences of how people use or misuse natural resources.

Region(s) of Emphasis: Africa/Antarctica

Enduring Understandings:

- Humans have developed a variety of strategies, technologies, and cultural practices to survive and thrive in diverse environments.
- Human actions, such as farming, building, and industry, reshape the land, water, and atmosphere in lasting ways.
- Natural features and processes, like climate, landforms, and natural hazards, shape where and how people live.
- Human activity can create both positive and negative effects on ecosystems, from resource renewal to environmental degradation.
- The relationship between people and their environment varies across regions, shaped by local needs, traditions, and available resources.
- Individual and collective decisions influence sustainability and the health of the planet, requiring an awareness, responsibility, and consideration of both human needs and environmental limits.

Essential Questions:

- How have humans adapted to their environment?
- What are some ways humans influence their environment?
- What are the ways the environment impacts humans?
- What are the major environmental consequences of human actions?
- How do people interact with the environment in a specific place?
- How do our choices affect the balance of the human world and the natural world?

Unit 4 Standards

STANDARD CODE

STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:

Unit 1 Standards

Including standards from Unit 1: **6-8.GEO.1.CC.A**, **6-8.GEO.1.CC.C**, **6-8.GEO.1.CC.D**, **6-8.GEO.1.CC.E**, 6-8.GEO.2.CC.A, **6-8.GEO.1.GS.B**, **6-8.GEO.1.G.A**, **6-8.GEO.1.G.B**, 6-8.GEO.1.G.E, 6-8.GEO.1.G.F, **6-8.GEO.1.PC.A**, **6-8.GEO.1.PC.C**, 6-8.GEO.2.PC.A

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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Unit 2 Standards	Including standards from Unit 2: 6-8.GEO.1.CC.B , 6-8.GEO.2.CC.A, 6-8.GEO.2.CC.D, 6-8.GEO.2.G.D, 6-8.GEO.1.EC.A , 6-8.GEO.2.EC.D, 6-8.GEO.1.PC.B
Unit 3 Standards	Including standards from Unit 3: 6-8.GEO.1.GS.A , 6-8.GEO.2.G.C, 6-8.GEO.2.EC.A,
6-8.GEO.2.CC.B	• I can explain how forces of nature impact historic and current conflicts and cooperation.
6-8.GEO.2.CC.C	• I can evaluate the impact of human settlement activities on the environmental and cultural characteristics of specific places and regions.
6-8.GEO.2.CC.C	• I can evaluate the impact of human settlement activities on the environmental and cultural characteristics of specific places and regions.
6-8.GEO.2.G.A	• I can describe how physical processes shape the environment of a place.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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