

The 6th-8th grade social studies curriculum in LPS blends the standards relating to history, geography, civics, economics, and culture. The Massachusetts History and Social Studies Framework is used to help students develop the skills to participate in and perhaps lead a society that will be more demographically and culturally diverse than any democracy.” This requires students to communicate and collaborate across diverse perspectives.

At 6th and 7th grade, LPS blends the standards relating to history, geography, civics, economics, and culture. Teachers use a variety of instructional methods to engage students in the learning process. This may include lectures, discussions, group activities, role-playing, and multimedia presentations. Emphasis is placed on analyzing primary sources such as historical documents, maps, artifacts, and multimedia resources. Students learn how to interpret these sources to develop a deeper understanding of historical events and concepts. Projects and assignments are often incorporated into the curriculum to encourage critical thinking, research skills, and creativity.

8th grade Civics class is focused on developing civic competency and civic mindedness. This learning experience has students engaged in local government and initiatives to enhance their community. The delivery of middle school social studies in Massachusetts aims to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of historical events, geographical concepts, cultural diversity, civic engagement, and economic principles, preparing them to be informed and active citizens. The project design should support the active, collaborative, inquiry-driven, project-based approach to middle school history and social studies.

Social Studies 6

Grade 6

Full Year

In grade 6, students explore the world and the long history of human achievements. Through the study of geography, cultures, and historical developments, students learn about different societies and what it means to be part of a global community. These lessons help students think about how people live together, how cultures develop, and how communities and nations work to interact respectfully and ethically.

Through this course, students will explore the physical and political landscapes of our world, moving beyond simple identification to understand why location and geography fundamentally matter. By examining Earth's physical features such as mountains, rivers, and climate alongside the evolution of countries and political boundaries, students develop map-reading skills necessary to navigate the modern world. This process is driven by an inquiry-based approach where students practice asking critical questions, conducting research, and using evidence to uncover the stories of the world's most significant ancient and early civilizations.

The curriculum provides a deep dive into global history and culture by focusing on seven major geographic regions. Specifically, students will engage in a concentrated study of North Africa, the Middle East, and Western Asia, as well as the diverse landscapes of Sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, the course examines the unique achievements and regional dynamics of Central America, the Caribbean, and South America, allowing students to draw connections between the ancient world and the global societies of today.

Resources & Tools: Primary Text: *World Geography and Ancient Civilizations 1-Massachusetts Edition (McGraw Hill)*

Assessment and Grading: Students are assessed during each unit of study by a variety of means, including tests and short and long term projects, quizzes, classwork and homework.

Grade 7 Social Studies

Grade 7

Full Year

Seventh grade Social Studies examines the development of major world civilizations and the ways geography, culture, and historical events have shaped societies over time. Students begin by developing geographic literacy, including the use of maps, globes, and other geographic tools to understand how physical features, climate, natural resources, and location influence human settlement and interaction. The course then explores key civilizations in Central and South Asia, East Asia, and Ancient Europe. Students study the social structures, belief systems, cultural achievements, and political developments of these regions, including the origins and influence of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, the impact of trade networks such as the Silk Road, and the enduring contributions of ancient Greece and Rome to modern law, government, and culture.

Throughout the course, students develop historical thinking and inquiry skills. They analyze historical events, examine cause-and-effect relationships, and evaluate both primary and secondary sources, including documents, maps, and visual materials. Students organize and communicate their understanding through writing, discussion, and visual

presentations while making connections between past civilizations and contemporary global issues.

Resources and Tools: World Geography: Ancient Civilizations II, Junior Scholastic Magazine and other current events publications, digital platforms such as Edpuzzle, as well as various educational websites including Encyclopedia Britannica for Kids.

Assessment and Learning Experiences: Students' learning is measured through a combination of projects, written work, discussions, presentations, and quizzes. Classroom activities emphasize hands-on learning, collaborative projects, and opportunities to explore topics that connect history to students' lives today.

Grade 8 Civics

Grade 8

Full Year

8th grade Civics class is focused on developing civic competency and civic mindedness. Topics during the year include philosophical foundations of the United States political system, the development of the United States government from the American Revolution to the Constitutional Convention, and the institutions of United States government, which examines the three branches of government in detail. We also thoroughly examine the Constitution, emphasizing its articles and amendments, along with relevant Supreme Court cases that address constitutional issues. Other topics include the structure of Massachusetts state and local government and rights and responsibilities of citizens. Students also complete a year-long action civics project, allowing them to engage with local government. This project supports an active, collaborative, inquiry-driven, project-based approach to middle school civics. By the end of the school year, students should be more aware of the role they can play as an American citizen in a culturally diverse, democratic society.

Resources and Tools: US and Massachusetts Government and Civic Life textbook, iCivics readings, the U.S. Constitution, Supreme Court case briefs, and selected educational websites.

Assessment & Grading: During each unit, students will be assessed on classwork, quizzes, smaller visual projects, and reading/writing based tasks. There are also end of unit assessments for each unit. These assessments may take the form of a traditional test, choice-based project, or writing assignment.