



### Grade 6 Overview: World Geography and Ancient Civilizations I

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 Central America, the Caribbean, and South America. The topics within this two-year sequence offer rich opportunities for students to inquire about their world and humanity's very long history of achievements. The topics also lend themselves to exploration of what it means to be human and part of a human community, and the concepts that have arisen in societies to guide ethical interactions among individuals, communities, and nations. Students develop an understanding that ancient societies left lasting contributions to our understanding of what makes up a civilization, natural resources and trading routes helped determine political power and cultural influence, and ideas developed by ancient societies have effects on our social and cultural identities today.

### Grade 6 Standards for History & Social Sciences

Topic	Description of Standards + Topic Covered
<p><b>Topic 1</b> Studying complex societies past and present</p>	<p><i>What do the social sciences contribute to our understanding of the world?</i></p> <p>Sixth grade students examine how different academic fields in the social sciences concentrate on different means of studying societies in the past and present and learn about examples of ways in which a current historical interpretation might build on, extend, or reject an interpretation of the past. Students study how archeologists, historians, geographers, economists, and political scientists work as teams to analyze evidence, develop hypotheses, and construct interpretations of ancient and classical civilizations.</p>
<p><b>Topic 2</b> Human origins, the Neolithic and Paleolithic Eras</p>	<p><i>Why did most Native Peoples side with the French against the British in the French and Indian Wars? Were the colonists justified in rebelling against Great Britain in the American Revolution?</i></p> <p>Sixth graders study the great climatic and environmental changes that shaped the earth and eventually permitted the growth of human life. They explore sites where archeologists have found evidence of the origins of modern human beings and explain current theories of how human groups moved from Africa over time into the continents. They study how ongoing archeological research adds new data that changes interpretations of how migrations and habitation sites are dated. Students learn about the Paleolithic and the Neolithic Eras. Students learn how complex societies that practice agriculture differ, some developing into permanently settled communities, some being nomadic, and some cultivating land temporarily. Six graders examine the ways in which complex societies interact and spread from one region to another, and build timelines that show some of the key periods in the development of human societies in the Paleolithic and Neolithic Eras, using words or abbreviations for identifying time periods or dates in historical narratives.</p>
<p><b>Topic 3</b> The Middle East and North Africa</p>	<p>Sixth grade students learn about the physical and political geography of modern Western Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa, including locating these physical features on a map and explaining how absolute and relative locations, major physical characteristics, climate and natural resources in this region have influenced settlement patterns, population size, and economies of the countries. They then study the following regions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Western Asia, the Middle East and North Africa (Mesopotamia): What are the best explanations for why writing developed in Mesopotamia?</li> <li>• Ancient Egypt: How did Ancient Egypt's rigid class structure affect its social and cultural development?</li> <li>• Ancient Phoenicia: Why were traders and merchants important in ancient societies?</li> <li>• Ancient Israel, Palestine: What were the consequences of the unification of tribes for ancient Israel?</li> <li>• The ancient Arabian Peninsula: Why is the belief in one God significant to Islam, Judaism, and Christianity?</li> <li>• Interactions among ancient societies in Western Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East: How did ideas spread across ancient societies in this region?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Topic 4</b> Sub-Saharan Africa</p>	<p>Students begin by studying the physical and political geography of Sub-Saharan Africa, before exploring selected Sub-Saharan African states and societies to learn how long-distance trade influenced the development of early sub-Saharan African states and societies. Students explore the location, sources of wealth, and importance of the Kingdom of Axum, the role it played in the adoption of Christianity in Ethiopia and the role east African societies played in the spread of Islam to South Asia. They examine the pivotal role Swahili coastal societies along the Indian Ocean played in linking trade networks between interior Africa and maritime routes along the coasts of Central and South Asia, and connecting to China. They learn the locations, sources of wealth and importance of West African cities and empires and the pivotal role these societies played in the trans-Saharan trade, the spread of Islam, and trade with North Africa, Europe, West Asia in gold, ivory, and slaves and the contributions of these societies to the modern world.</p>
<p><b>Topic 5</b> Central America, the Caribbean, &amp; South America</p>	<p>Sixth grade students learn the physical and political geography and indigenous populations of Central America and the Caribbean Islands and South America. They explore the major ancient societies in Central America and South America to examine the most important contributions of ancient societies in the Americas to the modern world. Students conduct research on one of the major ancient societies that existed in Central America.</p>

# Pentucket Regional School District

## History & Social Sciences Curriculum Guide

Grade 6



**Textbook:** World Geography and Ancient Civilizations I - McGraw Hill 2020

[Sixth grade history and social science standards](#)

### Standards for History & Social Science Practice

1. Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.
2. Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries.
3. Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources.
4. Analyze the purpose and point of view of each source; distinguish opinion from fact.
5. Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and relevance of each source.
6. Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence.
7. Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate.



### GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE HISTORY & SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION

**1** **Teach** students about the legacy of democratic government.

**2** **Incorporate** diverse perspectives & acknowledges that perceptions of events are affected by race, ethnicity, culture, religion, education, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and personal experience.

**3** Every student **deserves** to study history & social science every year, from pre-K-12.

**4** **Teach** students to think historically.

**5** **Integrate** knowledge from many fields of study.

**6** **Build** students' capacities for research, reasoning, making logical arguments, & thinking for themselves.

**7** **Improve** reading Comprehension by increasing students' content knowledge

**8** **Incorporate** the study of current events and news/media literacy

**9** **Teach** students about using data analysis and digital tools as research and presentation techniques in the social sciences.

**10** **Develop** social and emotional skills.