

## Social Studies - Grade 6 Essential Curriculum

*Note: The last objectives in units II through IV deal with contemporary issues. These objectives are discretionary, and may be covered through other objectives in the unit.*

### UNIT I: Our Earth: The Study of Physical and Human Geography

#### *Social Studies Skills Focus Topics*

Interpret, evaluate, and organize primary and secondary sources of information including pictures, graphics (circle graph, line graph, and bar graph), maps, and atlases.

**Goal 1.** Students will demonstrate the ability to understand and use selected geographic terms and concepts and the elements of culture. 650.00

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Define the term *geography* and give examples how it is used to understand the world around us. 650.01
  - b. Define, locate, and compare major landforms and water bodies on the earth. 650.02  
Describe why Maryland's place names for cultural features, its political boundaries, and the location of industry are related to its geographic features. G/T 650.02
  - c. Identify the purposes of maps. 650.03
  - d. After reading an article, students will explain why a globe is a better representation of the Earth than a map. (*Reading to be Informed – Developing Interpretation*) 650.04
  - e. Explain selected geographic terms and concepts associated with maps and their necessary components. 650.05
  - f. Construct, interpret information, solve problems, and recognize associations using maps, globes, and other geographic resources. 650.06  
Describe ways in which maps can be used to solve societal problems. G/T 650.06
  - g. Compare and contrast regions and places on a global basis and describe their interrelationships. 650.07
  - h. Describe how the Earth's rotation causes night and day and the Earth's revolution causes the change in seasons. 650.08
  - i. Explain why there are 24 time zones, give examples why time zones are useful, and be able to calculate time differences. 650.09
  - j. Identify and describe the factors that affect climate. 650.10
  - k. Describe the earth's climatic zones and climatic regions/biomes. 650.11
  - l. Identify and analyze elements of culture. 650.12
  - m. Analyze and explain how the natural environment promotes or limits human activity in different places. 650.13

- n. Identify specific characteristics within the student’s culture such as family, nationality, and ethnic heritage. 650.14

**Possible G/T Inquiries:**

1. After gathering and interpreting real data, construct and compare two thematic maps. For example, construct a map on the world’s rainforest prior to 1950 and a map of the world’s rainforest in present time. Compare the two maps and describe the impact of deforestation.
2. After researching the characteristics of the Earth’s biomes, students will construct and present to the class a dwelling based on one type of biome. In their presentation, the student must justify their selection of materials and the design of their dwelling.
3. How can concepts of culture be seen in the everyday world? Analyze the “culture” of the school. List the rules of the cafeteria, the hallways, and the classrooms. What patterns of behavior are demonstrated? What are the “unwritten rules” of the school? Describe how these various school rules relate to the customs and beliefs of our society. Is there a need to adapt or change these rules based on this investigation? Develop a proposal for these changes and validate the ideas with evidence and examples.

**UNIT II: North Africa and The Middle East**

***Social Studies Skills Focus Topics***

Interpret, evaluate, and organize primary and secondary sources of information including pictures, graphics (circle graph, line graph, bar graph, and charts), maps, atlases, timelines, and political cartoons.

**Goal 1.** Students will demonstrate the ability to identify the geographic characteristics of North Africa and the Middle East. 651.00.

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Identify the relative location of the Middle East and North Africa in the world, and describe the characteristics that make it a region. 651.01
  - b. Describe how its geographic location has affected the history and culture of this region and has led to its label as the “crossroads of the world” 651.02
  - c. Describe the major geographic and climatic features of North Africa and the Middle East. 651.03
  - d. Identify selected countries and major cities of North Africa and the Middle East. 651.04

**Goal 2.** Students will demonstrate the ability to examine the history of North Africa and the Middle East. 652.00

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Using the Middle East and North Africa as a model, Identify the kinds of evidence that allows us to learn about the past, including primary and secondary sources, government documents, artifacts and pictures. 652.01
  - b. Using the Middle East and North Africa as a model, distinguish between past, present, and future time and explain how major events are inter-related through the use of timelines. 652.02
  - c. Explain how geographic factors influence the development of civilizations in the Nile River Valley, along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, and the eastern region of the Mediterranean Sea. 652.03
  - d. Recognize the chief characteristics of a civilization. 652.04
  - e. Describe and analyze the cultural development and the major achievements of the Nile River Valley civilizations, the civilizations along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, and the Phoenicians. 652.05  
Relate how the religious beliefs of ancient Mesopotamian societies were linked to the natural environment of this geographic region. G/T 652.05
  - f. Compare and contrast the three monotheistic religions that developed in the Middle Eastern region. 652.06
  - g. Analyze the relationship between modern conflicts and the history of this region of the world. 652.07

**Goal 3.** Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the cultural heritage of North Africa and the Middle East. 653.00

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Describe ways in which people of this region have adapted to varied environmental conditions. 653.01
  - b. Compare the patterns of life of various groups of people in this region. 653.02
  - c. Contrast the economic characteristics of countries within this region and describe their role in global interdependence. 653.03  
Examine the economic future of the various nations of the Middle East and North Africa whose income is based upon the export of nonrenewable resources. G/T 653.03
  - d. Summarize the influence of religion on the daily life of the people of this region using information from a text on the “Five Pillars of Islamic Faith.” (*Reading to be Informed -- Global Understanding*) 653.04

- Compare and contrast the effects of religion on various countries of the region. G/T 653.04
- e. Identify a selected contemporary issue and predict possible future trends in the Middle East and North Africa. 653.05

**Possible G/T Inquiry:**

What factors contribute to political instability and stability in North Africa and the Middle East? Why is political stability important to American interests in this part of the world?

**UNIT III: Sub-Saharan Africa**

***Social Studies Skills Focus Topics***

- Interpret, evaluate, and organize primary and secondary sources of information including pictures, graphics (circle graph, line graph, bar graph, and charts), maps, atlases, timelines, and political cartoons.
- Construct various timelines of key events, people, and periods of historical eras studied and explain how major events are related to each other

**Goal 1.** Students will demonstrate the ability to identify the geographic characteristics of Sub-Saharan Africa. 654.00

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Identify Africa's relative location in the world. 654.01
  - b. Identify the various geographic regions within Sub-Saharan Africa and describe the characteristics that make them distinct regions. 654.02
  - c. Describe the major geographic and climatic features of Sub-Saharan Africa. 654.03
  - d. Identify selected countries and major cities of Sub-Saharan Africa. 654.04

**Goal 2.** Students will demonstrate the ability to examine the history of Sub-Saharan Africa. 655.00

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Describe and analyze the cultural development of powerful kingdoms in West Africa. 655.01  
Explain how human settlement patterns in West African kingdoms related to physical geography and climate. G/T 655.01
  - b. Describe the kingdoms of East Africa and explain their connection to the Upper Nile River Valley. 655.02
  - c. Describe the impact of the European slave trade on Africa. 655.03
  - d. Identify the motives of European imperialism in Africa. 655.04

Explain how physical geography and environmental factors impeded the exploration of Africa's interior by Europeans. G/T 655.04

- e. Interpret the impact of European imperialism evident in the culture of an African country described in a selected text. (*Reading to be Informed -- Developing Interpretation*) 655.05
- f. Using one country as a case study, describe the process of African independence from European countries. 655.06

**Goal 3.** Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the cultural heritage of Sub-Saharan Africa. 656.00

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Using Africa as a model, analyze the consequences of changing the physical environment to fulfill human needs. 656.01
  - b. Identify the characteristics of selected Sub-Saharan African cultures. 656.02
  - c. Analyze the moral conflict between ethnic loyalties and nationalism. 656.03
  - d. Identify and compare the characteristics of an agrarian economy to an industrial economy. 656.04
  - e. Compare the characteristics of developing and developed economies. 656.05  
Compare the level of economic development of several different African nations. G/T 656.05
  - f. Describe the effects of urbanization on traditional life in African societies. 656.06
  - g. Identify a contemporary issue facing Sub-Saharan Africa and predict possible future trends. 656.07

**Possible G/T Inquiry:**

How can African countries balance the need to foster economic growth with international pressures to preserve the natural environment?

**UNIT IV: Asia**

***Social Studies Skills Focus Topics***

- Interpret, evaluate, and organize primary and secondary sources of information including pictures, graphics (circle graph, line graph, bar graph, charts, climograph, and pictograph), maps, atlases, timelines, and political cartoons.
- Construct various timelines of key events, people, and periods of historical eras studied and explain how major events are related to each other

**Goal 1.** Students will demonstrate the ability to identify the geographic characteristics of Asia. 657.00

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Identify Asia's relative location in the world. 657.01
  - b. Identify the various geographic regions within Asia and describe the characteristics that make them distinct regions. 657.02
  - c. Describe the major geographic and climatic characteristics for a selected region in Asia. 657.03  
Determine the positive and negative effects of seasonal monsoons on Asian cultures. G/T 657.03
  - d. Identify selected countries and major cities of Asia. 657.04

**Goal 2.** Students will demonstrate the ability to examine the ancient history of the Indian Sub-Continent. 658.00

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Describe and analyze the cultural characteristics and achievements of the Indus Valley civilizations. 658.01
  - b. Analyze how the development of civilizations in the Indian Sub-Continent was impacted by the interaction of varied cultural groups. 658.02
  - c. Describe and compare the development of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam on the Indian Sub-Continent. 658.03  
Compare the monotheistic religions of the Middle East to the religions found on the Indian Sub-Continent. G/T 658.03
  - d. Compare and contrast the Maurya, Gupta, and Moghal Empires. 658.04

**Goal 3.** Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the cultural heritage of the Indian Sub-Continent. 659.00

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Describe how India's economy is influenced by its geographic location, its physical features, and its rapidly growing population. 659.01
  - b. Describe how British colonialism has affected social, economic, and political systems. 659.02
  - c. Contrast village and urban life in the countries of the Indian Sub-Continent. 659.03
  - d. Describe how the Caste System in India has affected the social, educational, and economic growth in that country. 659.04
  - e. Examine the religious diversity of the countries of the Indian Sub-Continent. 659.05  
Examine the development and political stability of Pakistan and Bangladesh. G/T 659.05
  - f. Identify a selected contemporary issue and predict possible future trends in this region. 659.06

**Goal 4.** Students will demonstrate the ability to examine the ancient history of East and Southeast Asia. 660.00

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Identify and explain the development and the achievements of the Chinese dynasties from the Shang to the Han including the significance of the trans-Eurasian “silk road.” 660.01
  - b. Determine the influence of the teachings of Confucius on Chinese culture. 660.02
  - c. Describe the effects of the conquests of the Mongol Empire. 660.03
  - d. Explain the influence of Chinese culture on Japanese and Korean society, while understanding the individuality of each culture. 660.04

**Goal 5.** Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the cultural heritage of East and Southeast Asia. 661.00

- Objectives** The student will demonstrate the ability to:
- a. Describe how geographic location, physical features, and natural resources influence the economic development of Eastern and Southeastern Asian nations. 661.01
  - b. Explain and give examples how the Japanese adapt to the high population density of their country. 661.02  
Compare the population control policies of selected Asian nations. G/T 661.02
  - c. Compare and contrast the political and economic systems of China and Japan. 661.03  
Analyze the impact of technological change (factories, machinery, transportation, communication, new technology) and resources use in promoting economic growth. G/T 661.03
  - d. Identify a selected contemporary issue and predict possible future trends in East, Southeast, and South Asia. 661.04
  - e. Compare the characteristics of developing and developed countries in East, Southeast, and South Asia by reading and classifying information from charts and graphs. (*Reading to be Informed -- Critical Analysis*) 661.05

**Possible G/T Inquiry:**

How have mono-culturalism and multiculturalism contributed to and detracted from national development and identity? Japan and South Korea have largely mono-cultural societies with few ethnic groups. What are the implications of a mono-cultural society on education, nationalism, economics, government, etc.? Compare the demographic make-up of one of these countries to that of a multicultural society like the United States.