

6th Grade Social Studies

5th Period: 12:10-1:00pm, Mon.-Fri.

6th Period: 1:50-2:40pm, Mon.-Fri.

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Texts:

McDougal/Littell: *Ancient Civilizations*

Course Overview

The sixth grade social studies course covers early civilizations in the ancient world. Students will learn about the origins of human civilization and will study early civilizations across the globe. Students will learn how geography, economics, politics and culture influenced the rise and fall of ancient civilizations. Students will work to understand how historical trends relate to our lives today and how to be responsible and active citizens in the world and their communities.

Topics of study include:

- The Tools of History: How archeologists study the past, how historians study the past.
- The Earliest Human Societies: Hunters and gatherers; learning to farm and raise animals; the first communities
- Ancient Mesopotamia: Geography; the first civilization; life in Sumer
- Early Empires: Mesopotamian empires; Assyria rules the Fertile Crescent; Persia controls southwest Asia
- Ancient Egypt: Gift of the Nile; life in ancient Egypt; the pyramid builders; the new kingdom
- Ancient China: Geography shapes life in Ancient China; China's ancient philosophies; the Qin and the Han; the legacy of ancient China
- Ancient Greece: Geography; beliefs and customs; the City State and Democracy; Sparta and Athens
- The Rise of Rome: Geography; the Roman Republic; Rome becomes an empire; the daily life of Romans

In addition to topics covered, students will learn to think critically about topics in history by analyzing and evaluating sources and coming to reasoned conclusions about historical issues. Students in this course will be expected to work as historians, meaning they will not always be 'told' history but will learn how historians use sources and construct arguments. Students will be expected to gather their own information and construct their own historical arguments. The skills they will develop include:

- How to interpret and understand different sources of information, including maps, graphs, charts and other visuals
- How to recognize and use primary and secondary sources to make an argument about history
- How to evaluate a source for bias and accuracy
- How to analyze and synthesize information about a historical time period
- How to write or otherwise provide an interpretation of history based on sound evaluation of sources and synthesis of materials

Tests, Homework and Assignments

For every unit of study during the year, students will have an exam that covers the skills and material covered in the unit. Students will be assigned class work and homework throughout the unit that will prepare them for each exam. Typically, this work will include readings from their textbooks and other sources, as well as graphic organizers and questions to help them better understand and apply their readings. Students will often have short quizzes to assess their knowledge through a unit/chapter. Students will also do a variety of activities during class time to help them understand and think critically about course material. These include working with primary sources to do historical investigations, interpreting history through writing and drama, and participating in class discussions and debates about key issues in the unit.

Students will have homework every night, and will record homework assignments daily in their student planners. Homework assignments will also be posted on my website at:

<http://msdolansclassroomwebsite.weebly.com>

Grades/Assessment

Students will always be assessed on all their work and will receive timely feedback, through daily homework and assignments on their progress in the course. Assignments and tests will be assigned points based on their importance in the course. For all work, including tests, students will receive clear guidelines as to what is expected and for major projects they will be provided with rubrics that outline the expectations for their work. Points are calculated into grades based on the percentage scale outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook. Grades are weighted as follows:

Unit Tests: 50%

Daily Work/Homework/Quizzes: 30%

Participation: 20%

A participation grade is given to each student daily. Students will receive full points for their participation grade if they come to class on time, come prepared with all their materials and participate actively in the classroom activities.

Materials:

Students are required to bring the following materials to class every day so that they can participate fully in classroom activities. Failure to bring the required materials to class results in a lower participation grade.

1. Textbook for the course
2. Blue or Black pen
3. Pencil
4. Student planner and binder
5. Notebook paper

Absences/Missed Work

This course follows the guidelines outlined in the Student/Parent Handbook. When a student has an absence, they must arrange for make-up work on the day they return. In general, the student will have the same number of days to complete missed work as the number of days they were absent. Students may check the class website, with peers and in the absent bin to obtain missed work, and come to me

for any additional work missed that they need. All assignments/tests/projects assigned before the absence are due on the day of the student's return. Similarly, students are still expected to take tests and turn in major projects on the day they return from an absence (if you are absent the day of a test or when a major assignment is due, it is due the day you return). If a student knows about an absence ahead of time, they should make arrangements with me prior to the absence.

Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to do their own work, in and out of class. Cheating and plagiarizing includes: copying or borrowing assignments, communicating during tests and plagiarizing papers or information from the Internet. Cheating is a serious offense and will immediately result in a conduct referral.

Classroom Expectations

1. Come to class prepared with all required materials.
2. Follow instructions the first time.
3. Raise your hand and wait to be called on during whole class instruction. During individual / group work, flip your desk sign to show you need help.
4. Be respectful of yourself, your classmates and your classroom.

Come to class prepared with all required materials:

1. Bring all required materials to class everyday. This includes all pertinent notes and materials we have been using in our current unit of study. When we switch to a new unit or focus, we will clean out our binders together in class. Leave all notes and handouts in your binders until we clean them out in class in preparation for a new unit.
2. Have homework for the day ready and on your desk at the start of class. Homework not out at the start of class will be marked as late (all late assignments receive 60% credit).
3. Make up missed assignments promptly. (See Parent-Student handbook and this syllabus for my policy on missed work.)
4. Use the restrooms during passing times, lunch and break. Each student will receive only 3 free bathroom passes per trimester (they will sign out on the sign-out sheet). At the end of the trimester, students will receive 10 pts extra credit for each bathroom pass that is unused.

Be respectful of yourself, your classmates and your classroom:

1. Dispose of food or gum before class.
2. Do not write on yourself, desks or walls.
3. Keep an organized cubby.
4. Leave all cell phones, MP3 players and other electronic devices in your backpack turned off or at home.
5. Enter class quietly and immediately begin the 'Do Now' task for the day.

Discipline Policy will follow the guidelines in the Parent/Student Handbook.

Teacher-Parent-Student Agreement

Please return this sheet signed to indicate that you have read and understand the information and expectations in this course syllabus.

Parent Signature _____

Student Signature _____

Please cover all your textbooks with heavy paper (grocery bags work great).

I am looking forward to an amazing year!