

Ancient Civilizations

Description

The social studies curriculum for sixth grade introduces students to the study of the world's ancient civilizations. In addition to opportunities for content-area integration, the global nature of the ancient civilizations curriculum affords students the chance to explore the development of many diverse cultures. By exploring how ancient people lived day-to-day, governed themselves and solved problems related to environmental and other issues, students begin to see how the past informs our current way of life.

Course Overview

Course Objectives

Students should:

- understand the impact of geography on civilizations.
- understand how the elements of culture – attitude, beliefs, customs and behaviors – affect the development of civilizations.
- understand how the foundations of civilization – government, religion, social levels, specialized labor and the arts – overlap and vary among ancient civilizations.

Essential Questions

- How do we define a civilization?
- How do the elements of culture affect the development of civilization?
- How does geography affect the development of a civilization?

Assessments

Common Assessments/Cornerstone Assessment

Skill Assessments

Content Outline

- I. [Early Humans](#)
- II. [Near East](#)
- III. [India & China](#)
- IV. [Greece](#)
- V. [Rome](#)
- VI. [Optional Civilization](#)

Standards

[Connecticut SDE - Social Studies Framework 2008](#)

Connecticut State Standards are met in the following areas:

- CSSF1: Content Knowledge**
- CSSF2: History/Social Studies Literacy**
- CSSF3: Application**

Grade Level Skills

Students will be able to:

- write a description.
- read for a variety of purposes: to answer a question and skim for facts.
- place events in proper sequence.

Pacing Guide

1st Marking Period		2nd Marking Period		3rd Marking Period		4th Marking Period				
September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	
Unit I		Unit 2		Unit 3		Unit 4		Unit 5		Unit 6
Early Man		Near East		India & China		Greece		Rome		Optional Civilization
6 weeks		8 weeks		5 weeks		6 weeks		6 weeks		4 weeks

Unit I - Early Man & Ancient Civilizations, 6 weeks [top](#)

Standards

Students will:

- CSSF1.3 – Grade 6: demonstrate an understanding of significant events and themes in world history.
- CSSF1.5 – Grade 6: describe the interaction of humans and the environment.
- CSSF2.2 – Grade 6: interpret information from a variety of primary and secondary sources.
- CSSF3.3 – Grade 6: apply appropriate historical, geographic, political, economic and cultural concepts and methods in proposing and evaluating solutions to contemporary problems.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- explore cultural links between the past and present; for example, daily life, the family, the arts, government, technology and the environment and the historian’s use of oral traditions and primary sources.
- explore archeological evidence of human ancestors (hominids).
- investigate the characteristics of hunter-gatherer societies -- tools, burial sites, cave art — and the historian’s use of artifacts.
- explain the emergence of agriculture and its impact on human societies — food surplus, division of labor, beginnings of towns and cities, trade.
- identify the technological and social advancements that gave rise to civilizations – stable food supply, specialized labor, government, social levels and highly developed culture.

Essential Question

- How did geography affect early human ancestors?

Focus Questions

- How do we connect to the past?
- What are the elements of culture?
- How did hunter-gather societies express their culture?
- How did hunter-gatherer societies develop into stable communities?
- What are the components of a civilization?

Assessments

- Timeline
- Cause and Effect
- Early Human Tool Assessment
- Unit Test
- Writing Task
- Mapmaking

Skill Objectives

- Reading Non-Fiction
- How to use a textbook
- Geography/Map skills
- Organization of presented information/data
- Test Preparation

Unit II – Near East, 6 weeks [top](#)

Standards

Students will:

- CSSF1.4 – Grade 6: analyze geographic factors that help explain historical events or contemporary issues.
- CSSF2.5 – Grade 6: create accurate maps of an area, region or nation providing relevant information.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- recognize the role of geography – landforms, climate, vegetation – in irrigation farming within the Fertile Crescent.
- identify the contributions of the Sumerians – city-states, epic poetry (Gilgamesh), kingship, cuneiform writing; Assyria – empire and warfare; and the Babylonians – empire and Hammurabi’s code.
- explain the role of the Nile River in Egyptian technology and culture – flooding cycle, papyrus, hieroglyphics, the arts and religious development (mummification and pyramids).

Essential Question

- How did geography impact civilizations in the Near East?

Focus Questions

- How did the ancient peoples of the Near East and Egypt demonstrate the characteristics of civilization?
- How did dependence on river systems impact life in the ancient Near East and Egypt?
- What technology and inventions developed in the Near East and Egypt?
- What were the religious beliefs of people in Mesopotamia and Egypt?

Assessments

- Unit Test
- Writing Task
- Mapmaking
- Oral Presentation
- Expository Response

Skill Objectives

- Reading Non-fiction
- Research Skills
 - Note taking
 - Citations
- Textbook Use
- Geography Skills
- Oral Presentations
- Test Preparation

Unit III - India & China, 6 weeks [top](#)

Standards

Students will:

- CSSF1.13 – Grade 6: compare similarities and differences of cultural groups in different regions of the world.
- CSSF2.3 – Grade 6: compose an expository essay using evidence to describe a social studies event or issue.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- explore the development of the Indus Valley civilizations, the impact of geography and the influence of the Aryan arrival, for example, caste system, nature in religion.
- identify the key components of the major religions of Buddhism and Hinduism.
- describe the development of early civilizations and dynasties in China, and the role played by geography that divided and isolated people.
- examine the teachings of Confucius with respect to the political and social problems in China, respect for parents, good government.

Essential Question

- How did geography impact the civilizations of India and China?

Focus Questions

- How did the ancient peoples of India and China demonstrate the characteristics of civilization?
- How did dependence on the river systems impact life in India and China?
- What technology and inventions developed in ancient China?
- What are the key beliefs of Buddhism?
- What are the key beliefs of Hinduism?
- How did the teachings of Confucius influence the history of China?

Assessments

- Unit Test
- Writing Task
- Mapmaking
- Oral Presentation
- Expository Response
- Compare/Contrast Paper

Skill Objectives

- Reading Non-fiction
- Research Skills
 - Note taking
 - Citations
- Textbook Use
- Geography Skills
- Oral Presentations
- Test Preparation
- Compare/Contrast

Unit IV - The Greeks, 6 weeks [top](#)

Standards

Students will:

CSSF1.13 – Grade 6: analyze the relationship between culture, government and social systems in various countries.

CSSF3.2 – Grade 6: compare and contrast how two or more groups or nations might view an historical or contemporary issue.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- explain the development of city-states in ancient Greece and differentiate forms of Greek government from kingship to democracy.
- compare and contrast the city-states of Sparta and Athens.
- describe the impact of Greek culture and its relevance today, for example, mythology, fables, dramas, architecture, philosophy, sculpture, the Olympics and mathematics.
- explore the conflicts of the Greek civilization -- Persian wars, Peloponnesian War, Alexander the Great and the spread of Hellenistic culture.

Essential Question

- How did Greek thinking and culture impact the ancient world and our world today?

Focus Questions

- How did the ancient Greeks demonstrate the aspects of a civilization?
- What forms of government were used by Greek city-states?
- What were the political and social differences between Athens and Sparta?
- What aspects of culture were shared by all Greeks?
- What were the causes and impacts of the Persian and Peloponnesian wars?
- How did the conquests of Alexander the Great spread Greek culture?
- How is the world today influenced by ancient Greece?

Assessments

- Unit Test
- Writing Task
- Mapmaking
- Oral Presentation
- Expository Response
- Critical Stance

Skill Objectives

- Reading Non-fiction
- Research Skills
 - Note taking
 - Citations
- Textbook Use
- Geography Skills
- Oral Presentations
- Test Preparation
- Critical Stance

Unit V - Ancient Rome, 6 weeks [top](#)

Standards

Students will:

CSSF1.7 – Grade 6: compare and contrast different forms of government past and present.

CSSF2.2 – Grade 6: interpret information from a variety of primary and secondary sources.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- investigate the origins of the Roman Republic – geographic factors; patricians and plebeians; government forms; conquests.
- explore the Roman empire, for example, expanding citizenship, end of the republic and rise of dictators and emperors, technology and engineering, daily life, Pax Romana.
- discuss the spread of Christianity in Roman territory.
- identify the circumstances that led to Rome's decline – threats from barbarians, corrupt rule, divided empire.

Essential Question

- Do all empires fall?

Focus Questions

- How did the ancient Romans demonstrate the aspects of a civilization?
- What was the conflict between patricians and plebeians in early Rome?
- How was the government of the Roman republic organized?
- How did Rome expand its power through conquest?
- What factors led to the rise of the Roman Empire?
- How was daily life similar and different for rich and poor Romans?
- How did Christianity develop in the Roman Empire?
- What factors led to the decline of the Roman Empire?

Assessments

- Unit Test
- Writing Task
- Mapmaking
- Oral Presentation
- Expository Response
- Critical Stance

Skill Objectives

- Reading Non-fiction
- Research Skills
 - Note taking
 - Citations
- Textbook Use
- Geography Skills
- Oral Presentations
- Test Preparation
- Critical Stance

Unit VI - Optional Unit, 4 weeks, [top](#)

Standards

Students will:

CSSF2.5 – Grade 6: create a descriptive report on a social studies topic using visual forms of evidence.

Unit Objectives

Students will be able to:

- explain the development of the civilization.
- identify the characteristics that make it a civilization.
- compare and contrast the identified civilizations to others previously studied.

Essential Questions

- How did geography impact this civilization?
- Which of the previously studied civilizations is most similar/different to this one?

Focus Questions

- How did this civilization begin?
- What are the key characteristics of this civilization?
- What were the major cultural aspects of this civilization?

Assessments

- Common Assessment Project

Skill Objectives

- Reading Non-fiction
- Research Skills
- Textbook Use
- Geography Skills
- Oral Presentations
- Test Preparation
- Critical Stance
- Project Presentation