



Curriculum Overview

Subject: Social Studies

Grade: 8

By the end of the year, you can expect your child to:

- Differentiate between various environments
- Analyze how environment can influence where, why, and how people live
- Identify and describe the main cities of the Harappan civilization
- Interpret diagrams, identify Aryans, and compare Aryan civilization to Harappan civilization
- Explain how migration of Aryans effected the civilization of India and how Indian society divided into distinct groups under the Aryans
- Understand that Hinduism developed out of Brahmanism and influenced other cultures
- Name the four varnas, describe rules of the sutras, explain the importance of following the rules in Indian society
- Explain how civilization began in China and how the first dynasties helped Chinese society develop
- Explain how the Zhou dynasty expanded China but then declined
- Explain the ideas of Confucianism, Laozi, and Legalism
- Describe government and society under Han Dynasty and think critically about the importance of family under Han Dynasty
- Evaluate the achievements under the Han Dynasty
- Recognize how geography shaped the lives of the early Maya in Mesoamerica and recognize the importance of the cities and trade in the Maya Empire
- Learn how the Aztecs built a powerful empire in central Mexico and what life was like in the Aztec Empire and explain why the Aztec Empire was defeated by the Spanish
- Understand the creation of an Incan Empire with a strong central government in South America and learn how life in the Incan Empire was influenced by social structure, religion, and the Incas' cultural achievements

- Understand that the central ideas and laws of Judaism are contained in sacred text such as the Torah
- Explain how Islam, founded by the prophet Muhammad, was spread throughout Arabia in the 600s
- Identify how the Quran and the Sunnah guides Muslims' lives and examine how Islamic law is based on the Quran and the Sunnah
- Identify how Muslim scholars and artists made important contributions to science, art, and literature
- Learn that Macedonia conquered Greece in the 300s BCE and that Alexander the Great built an empire that united much of Europe, Asia and Egypt
- Recognize that disorder in the Roman Republic created an opportunity for Julius Caesar to gain power
- Discuss how the Roman Empire grew to control the entire Mediterranean world
- Recognize that the Romans accomplished great things in science, engineering, architecture, art, literature, and law
- Learn that Ghana built a strong empire by controlling trade in western Africa in the early 300s
- Learn that Islam had a great influence in both the Mali and Songhai empires and recognize that several of western Africa's greatest early leaders came from these two empires including Sundiata, Mansa Musa and Askia
- Learn about the Great Zimbabwe kingdom in southern Africa, that was developed in the 12th and 13th centuries
- Recognize that West Africans have expressed their creativity through storytelling and through the written accounts of others
- Understand the importance of the Nile River to the development of Egyptian Civilization
- Describe the importance of religion to Egyptian society
- Describe how the geography of early Nubia helped civilization develop there and analyze the relationship between Kush and Egypt
- Describe the characteristics that made Kush unique
- Explain the factors that led to the decline of Kush