

Course Name: Grade 7 United States Civics and History

Course Description:

This course is meant to engage students in the study of US Civics and History to help them understand how to be active, engaged and informed citizens. Beginning with the study of philosophical foundations of government and key issues facing government and the citizenry, this course aims to engage students in critically thinking about the purpose and function of government as well as the role of the citizen. Students will develop a practical understanding of how the government works and the ways that citizens can participate in and influence government, but they will also consider the difficult questions that underlie the reasons why our government is shaped as it is. Students will also learn about the earliest period of US History to understand how the Constitution and Bill of Rights impacted the way diverse groups of people have lived in the United States, and how that experience has changed over time. The ways that laws and the interpretation of the laws have changed will be explored to understand how power, rights, and responsibilities have been restricted or expanded in different time periods and for different groups of people. The course will cover the scope of history from the Constitutional Convention up to the Civil War Era. In reflecting on the nation's foundational visions, the course emphasizes student-constructed knowledge, informed decision-making in connection to the development of one's roles and responsibilities as a citizen in a fluid, participatory republic, and active self-awareness of one's place in a multicultural and increasingly interdependent global society.

Course Proficiencies: The following is a list of the proficiencies that describe what the students are expected to know, and be able to do as a result of successfully completing this course. The proficiencies are the basis of assessment of student achievement. The learner will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Constitution over time in fulfilling its fundamental principles, including consent of the governed, limited government, separation of powers and individual rights. (6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b, 6.3.8.CivicsPR.2, 6.3.8.CivicsPI.2)
2. Analyze the ways in which the ideals of the Declaration of Independence have been achieved for diverse groups of people in the United States including African-Americans, women, indigenous people and others, both in the past and present. (6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a, 6.3.8.CivicsDP.1, 6.3.8.CivicsPI.2)
3. Explain the ways that diverse interests, perspectives and demographics influenced the development of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, and how compromise played a role in the final documents. (6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.d, 6.1.8.CivicsPD.3.a, 6.1.8.HistoryCC.3.b)

4. Articulate a reasoned position on why government is necessary, the purposes government should serve and the role of the citizenry in a democratic government. (6.3.8.CivicsPI.1, 6.3.8.CivicsPI.3)
5. Evaluate why it is important for democracy that individuals are informed by facts, aware of diverse viewpoints, and willing to take action on public issues. (6.3.8.CivicsPD.3)
6. Identify the ways that individual rights have been limited by government action in various time periods, and evaluate the legitimacy of the arguments that defended those actions. (6.3.8.CivicsDP.2, 6.3.8.CivicsDP.3, 6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.a)
7. Describe the role of individuals and organizations (both governmental and non-governmental) in fulfilling and supporting the rights and responsibilities of people in a diverse nation. (6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.c)
8. Analyze the impact of the institution of slavery on individuals and groups, over time, in economic, political and social realms. (6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.b)
9. Construct an argument to explain how the expansion of slavery violated human rights and contradicted American ideals. (6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.c)
10. Identify the role of economics, politics, and geography in the outcome of the American Revolution and its impact of varied groups of people. (6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.EconET.3.a, 6.1.8.HistoryCC.3.a, 6.1.8.HistoryCC.3.c)
11. Explore the ways that voting rights have been expanded and restricted during various time periods in the United States and make an argument regarding the importance of voting rights in a democratic society. (6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.a)
12. Describe the people, events and institutions that have contributed to the expansion of human rights to varied groups of people in the United States, both in the past and present. (6.1.8.CivicsHR.4.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.a)
13. Analyze the impact of the slave trade and the institution of slavery on early American history, including the resistance to slavery and lasting impact of slavery on cultural, economic and political aspects of American society. 6.1.8.HistoryCC.4.b, 6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.b, 6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.a, 6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.c)
14. Describe challenges that early presidents faced when implementing the Constitution and evaluate their decision-making abilities in response to these obstacles. (6.1.8.EconET.4.a)
15. Explain how our nation's events, issues, and phenomena are intertwined with those of other nations in North America, the Western Hemisphere and other world regions. 6.1.8.HistoryCC.4.a, 6.1.8.HistoryCC.4.d)
16. Trace the roots of the first Industrial Revolution and analyze the impact that manufacturing and urbanization had on the U.S. economy, migration, land, government, and society. (6.1.8.EconNE.4.b)
17. Consider the political, geographic, environmental, social, and cultural causes and effects of westward expansion. (6.1.8.GeoSV.4.a, 6.1.8.EconET.4.a, 6.1.8.EconNE.4.a, 6.1.8.EconNE.4.b, 6.1.8.HistoryCC.4.c)

18. Investigate causes and decisions of the Civil War through various regional and global perspectives. (6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.a, 6.1.8.HistoryCC5.b, 6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.c, 6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.a, 6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.b)
19. Investigate, critique, and evaluate information published on the Internet for credibility, authorship, and bias. (RH6-8.1, 2, 6, 8, 10)
20. Distinguish between primary and secondary sources, and accurately interpret and apply ideas from such documents in developing understandings of course content and themes. (RH6-8.1-10)
21. Utilize a variety of strategies to critically read and interpret a variety of non-fiction and fictional texts to explore course content and themes. (RH6-8.1-10)
22. Apply developmentally-appropriate strategies and techniques in the creation of a variety of written products including argument-based essays that utilize relevant evidence and support (WHST6-8.1-10)
23. Participate in discussions about global issues appropriately, utilizing evidence to support an argument, listening to understand other perspectives, and integrating new ideas into one's understanding of a topic or issue. (9.4.8.GCA.2)

Assessments:

1. Tests and quizzes
2. Individual and group projects
3. Multimedia presentations
4. Interpretations of maps, databases, and primary and secondary sources
5. Classroom discussion and debate
6. Research projects and essays
7. Performance-based assessments

Board Adopted Materials

Text:

History Alive: The United States Through Industrialism
Teachers Curriculum Institute, 2011