

## Grade 8 Social Studies

Grade 8 students explore societies of the past and make connections between the past and present. They examine the origins of human societies from early hunter-gatherer ways of life to societies of the nineteenth century. They study significant people, ideas, and events of historical periods that have shaped the modern world and consider the implications of contact between diverse societies.

**The year focusses on World History: Societies of the Past and is broken into five learning clusters.**

### ❖ **Understanding Societies Past and Present**

Students explore concepts related to society, civilization, and world view. This includes a focus on stories and theories of the origin and development of human life and the transition from hunter-gatherer to agrarian ways of life. Students study various sources of historical knowledge and consider the importance of knowing and understanding the past.

### ❖ **Early Societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt, or the Indus Valley**

This unit begins with a brief world overview, focusing on Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, and China, from about 3500 to 500 BCE. Students then explore life in one early society, including a focus on the physical environment and the social, political, technological, and cultural aspects of the selected society.

### ❖ **Ancient Societies of Greece and Rome**

This unit begins with a brief world overview, focusing on China, Greece, Rome, Persia, and the Mayas and Incas, from about 500 BCE to 500 CE. Students then explore life in ancient societies of both Greece and Rome.

- Greece: rise and decline, social organization, citizenship and democracy, life in Sparta and Athens, Greek myths, technology, and achievements.
- Rome: rise and decline, governance, trade, empire building, war and territorial expansion, technology, and achievements.

### ❖ **Transition to the Modern World (Circa 500 to 1400)**

This study includes a focus on the impact of the fall of Rome, the rise of Islam, Arab conquests and Viking invasions, life in medieval Europe, and the expansion of the Mongol and Ottoman Empires. Students examine the significance and impact of technological development and the spread of ideas during this period.

### ❖ **Shaping the Modern World (Circa 1400 to 1850)**

Students explore individuals, ideas, and events related to the Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, global exploration, and the Industrial Revolution. Students focus on the impact of changing social and political ideas and advances in science and technology. They examine the motivations for global exploration and territorial expansion and their impact on diverse groups, including indigenous peoples.