

Fairfield Public Schools Social Studies Curriculum

A More Perfect Union Grade 8



A More Perfect Union: Description

In eighth grade, students engage in the study of events, movements, people, and documents in United States History from the Revolutionary Era to the present with a focus on inquiry into defining the American Dream and the evolution of American values. The course focuses on eight themes (four primary themes: Cultural Diversity and a Uniquely American Identity; Government, Politics, and Civic Participation; The Struggle for Freedom, Equality, and Social Justice; and The Role of the United States in World Affairs, and four supporting themes: The Impact of Science and Technology on Society; Economic Prosperity and Equity; The Impact of Geography on United States History; and The Role of Connecticut in United States History). These eight themes are woven throughout eight eras of study. Throughout the year, students will continually evaluate and revise the definition of the American identity and assess how each era has brought the nation closer or further away from the evolving American Dream.

Objectives and Standards:

Historical Understandings: Shown as content objectives, these goals define what students should know about United States history upon completion of each unit. These understandings are drawn from the *Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks* (2015), with input from various other state frameworks, as well as the *National Standards for History* developed by the National Center for History in the Schools. These understandings represent the record of American aspirations, accomplishments, and failures in the themes described above. They also provide students with the historical perspectives required to analyze contemporary issues and problems confronting citizens today.

Historical Thinking / Inquiry Skills: These standards center on four dimensions driven by the use of questions to spark curiosity, guide instruction, deepen investigation, acquire rigorous content, and enable students to apply knowledge and ideas in real world settings so they can become active and engaged citizens. Drawn from the *Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks* (2015) and the *C3 Social Studies for the Next Generation National Framework* (2013), these standards enable students to evaluate evidence, develop comparative and causal analyses, interpret the historical record, and construct sound historical arguments and perspectives.

A More Perfect Union: Overview

Central Understandings

- Identify the fundamental and unique characteristics that define America’s past and how they have influenced the development of American society.
- Analyze the development of American values, explaining how events, ideas, beliefs, and traditions have evolved over time.
- Identify and interpret different types of primary and secondary sources of fundamental importance and relevance to topical inquiry.
- Interpret timelines of key historical events, people, and periods; locate significant historical places on maps.
- Analyze the importance of context and point of view in historical interpretation.
- Analyze and evaluate historical sources and interpretations (e.g. credibility, perspective, bias, and authenticity; verifiable or unverifiable; fact or interpretation).
- Utilize research strategies, methods, and sources to obtain, organize, and interpret historical data.
- Compose arguments / positions, and participate in debates on different interpretations of the same historical events; synthesize primary and secondary sources to justify position.
- Identify, analyze, and understand elements of historical cause and effect; recognize and understand patterns of change and continuity.
- Develop open-ended historical questions that can be addressed through historical research and interpretation.

Primary Course Themes

- **CUL:** Cultural Diversity and a Uniquely American Identity
- **CIV:** Government, Politics, and Civic Participation
- **EQ:** The Struggle for Freedom, Equality, and Social Justice
- **FOR:** The Role of the United States in World Affairs

Supporting Course Themes

- **TECH:** The Impact of Science and Technology on Society
- **ECON:** Economic Prosperity and Equity
- **GEO:** The Impact of Geography on United States History
- **CT:** The Role of Connecticut in United States History

Primary Course Compelling Questions

- **CUL:** Is there an American national identity? How has that identity changed and evolved over time?
- **CIV:** Does the American political system provide for choice and opportunities for participation?
- **EQ:** How do Americans define freedom and equality and how have American conceptions of equality changed over time?
- **FOR:** How have American values impacted the nation’s relationship with the world?

Supporting Course Compelling Questions

- **TECH:** How have technological invention and innovation impacted American economics and culture?
- **ECON:** Can political freedom exist without an economic foundation?
- **GEO:** How has geography impacted historical trends and events?
CT: How have Connecticut’s people, groups, and places impacted the nation’s history?

A More Perfect Union: Year-at-a Glance

Unit	Title	Unit Compelling Questions
1	The Roots of American Values: Revolution and the New Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the American Revolution inevitable? • How did the early American experience and the founding documents shape and define American values and the American Dream? • How did the colonial economy and the relationship with Great Britain evolve and change over time? • What was Connecticut’s role in the American Revolution and the early Republic?
2	Expansion and Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was territorial and economic expansion justified by Americans and what impact did it have on various groups? • How was democracy both expanded and restricted in this era? • How did the institution of slavery develop and evolve; in what ways was it challenged? • How did technological innovation impact the American economy and culture during the early industrial period?
3	Civil War and Reconstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How were the north and south different economically, culturally, and politically? • Was Slavery the primary cause of the Civil War? • What were the turning points of the Civil War? • How did the Civil War and Reconstruction fundamentally alter the United States economically, culturally, and politically? • How did new technology impact the course of the Civil War? • What was Connecticut’s role in the Civil War Era?
4	The Development of Industrial America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the expansion of industrialism impact American society and the individual? • Did America fulfill the dreams of immigrants during this era? • What were the push / pull factors that led to increased immigration during this era? • How did Connecticut contribute to the age of industrialization?
5	The Emergence of Modern America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the successes and failures of the Progressive movement? • What factors led to increased American involvement in foreign affairs during this era? • How did the cultural, economic, and technological changes of this era impact American society? • What factors contributed to the growth of the American city?
6	The Great Depression and World War II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the causes of the Great Depression and how did it affect different groups in America? • What was the impact of the New Deal on the Great Depression and how did it change the role of government? • How did World War II shape America’s role in the world? • How did World War II impact the United States on the homefront? • What was the impact of the Great Depression and World War II on Connecticut and on Fairfield? • How did World War II lead to the development of new technologies?

7	Postwar United States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did economic and social conditions impact Americans in the postwar era? • What was the impact of the Cold War on domestic and international politics as well as on American society? • To what extent were the methods used by civil rights activists in the 1950s and 1960s successful in advancing the goals of the Civil Rights Movement? • What was the impact of other social reform movements since the 1950s including those dealing with the rights and opportunities of women, racial and ethnic minorities, the disabled, and other underrepresented groups?
8	Contemporary United States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have developments in foreign and domestic politics since 1968 shaped modern America? • How should the United States respond to terrorism and other global issues? • How has the information technology revolution impacted America and the world?

Monitoring Student Progress

Students' progress in relation to the content and skill standards will be measured with teacher-generated, as well as district-wide, formative and summative assessments in the following areas:

1. Determine the central ideas or information of historical content; provide an accurate summary of content distinct from prior knowledge or opinions (INQ DIM 1-3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH6-8.2).
2. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to social studies (INQ DIM 1-3; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH6-8.4).
3. Produce arguments (written or presented) focused on discipline-specific content (INQ DIM 3-4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.1).
4. Produce informative / explanatory interpretations (written or presented) focused on discipline-specific content (INQ DIM 3-4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2).
5. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience (INQ DIM 4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.4).
6. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH6-8.1).
7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts. (INQ DIM 1-4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH6-8.7).
8. Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic. (INQ DIM 1-4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH6-8.9).
9. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation (INQ DIM 1-4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.7).
10. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. (INQ DIM 1-4; CSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.8).
11. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences (INQ DIM 3-4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.10).

The Roots of American Values: Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1824)

Overview

In this unit, students will explore the roots of American values and the American dream focusing on the period from approximately 1754 through 1824. In understanding the causes of the American Revolution, students will investigate the consequences of the French and Indian War, and analyze the political, ideological, and economic origins of the Revolution by comparing various perspectives on British colonial policy, including the legitimacy of asking the colonies to pay a share of the costs of empire. In thinking about the course of the Revolutionary War, it is essential to study the fundamental principles of the Declaration of Independence, the main stages of the war, and the reasons for American victory. Students will also investigate the diversity of interests in American society in the postwar era by exploring how the Constitution was created, ratified, and amended with the Bill of Rights after dramatic debate in every state. In studying the post-Revolutionary era, students will understand how the institutions and practices of government were implemented and revised between 1787 and 1824 to create the foundation of the American political system.

Unit Content Objectives

At the conclusion of this unit, students will be able to:

- Analyze the causes of the American Revolution and the ideas and interests involved in forging the revolutionary movement.
- Analyze the reasons for the American victory in the Revolutionary War.
- Evaluate the impact of the American Revolution on politics, economics, and society.
- Analyze the institutions and practices of government created during the Revolutionary era and how they were revised between 1787-1824 to create the foundation of the American political system based on the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Themes Emphasized and Unit Compelling Questions

Primary Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **FOR:** Was the American Revolution inevitable?
- **CIV:** How did the early American experience and the founding documents shape and define American values and the American Dream?

Supporting Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **ECON:** How did the colonial economy and the relationship with Great Britain evolve and change over time?
- **CT:** What was Connecticut's role in the American Revolution and the early Republic?

Standards Emphasized in the Unit: Inquiry in the Social Studies

DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRY

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.1 Explain how a question represents key ideas in the field.

INQ 6-8.2 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a

compelling question.

INQ 6-8.3 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question.

INQ 6-8.4 Explain how a relationship between supporting questions and compelling questions is mutually reinforcing.

INQ 6-8.5 Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy, RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7

Key academic vocabulary: *questioning, argument, explanation, point of view*

DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS AND TOOLS

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

Change, Continuity and Context

HIST 8.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in historical contexts.

HIST 8.2 Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

Perspectives

HIST 8.3 Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

HIST 8.4 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.

HIST 8.5 Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.

Historical Sources and Evidence

HIST 8.6 Detect possible limitations in the historical record based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources.

HIST 8.7 Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.

HIST 8.8 Evaluate the relevance and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.

Causation and Argumentation

HIST 8.9 Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.

HIST 8.10 Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.

Civic and Political Institutions

CIV 8.1 Explain the origins, functions, and structures of government with reference to the U.S. Constitution, state constitutions, and selected other systems of government.

Participation and Deliberation

CIV 8.2 Analyze ideas and principles contained in the founding documents of the United States, and explain how they influence the social and political system.

Processes, Rules, and Laws

CIV 8.3 Analyze the purposes, implementation, and consequences of public policies in multiple settings.

CIV 8.4 Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.

Economic Decision-Making

ECO 8.1 Explain how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals, businesses, and society.

Exchange and Markets

ECO 8.3 Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.

The National Economy

ECO 8.4 Explain how inflation, deflation, and unemployment affect different groups.

ECO 8.5 Explain why standards of living increase as productivity improves.

The Global Economy

ECO 8.6 Explain the benefits and the costs of trade policies to individuals, businesses, and society.

Geographic Representations: Spatial Views of the World

GEO 8.1 Construct maps to represent and explain the spatial patterns of cultural and environmental characteristics.

Human-Environmental Interaction: Places, Regions, and Culture

GEO 8.2 Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.

Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movement

GEO 8.3 Explain how changes in transportation and communication technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.

Global Connections

GEO 8.4 Explain how the relationship between the environmental characteristics of places and production of goods influences the spatial patterns of world trade.

DIMENSION 3: EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.6 Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

INQ 6-8.7 Evaluate the credibility of a source by determining its relevance and intended use.

INQ 6-8.8 Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations.

INQ 6-8.9 Develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1-10; CCSS.ELA-WHST.6-8.1-2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7-10

Key academic vocabulary: *argument, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims*

DIMENSION 4: COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6–8.10 Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments

INQ 6.8.11 Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequences, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.

INQ 6–8.12 Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

INQ 6–8.13 Critique arguments for credibility.

INQ 6–8.14 Critique the structure of explanations.

INQ 6–8.15 Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

INQ 6–8.16 Assess their individual and collective capacities to take action to address local, regional, and global problems, taking into account a range of possible levels of power, strategies, and potential outcomes.

INQ 6–8.17 Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms and schools, and in out-of-school civic contexts.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1-8

Key academic vocabulary: *argument, explanation, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims, visually / visualize, credibility*

Expansion and Reform (1801-1861)

Overview

The new American republic prior to the Civil War experienced dramatic territorial expansion, immigration, economic growth, and industrialization. The increasing complexity of American society and the growth of the competing forces of nationalism and sectionalism put incredible pressure on the evolution of American values. One focus of this era is the vast territorial expansion between 1801 and 1861, as restless Americans pushed westward across the Appalachians, then across the Mississippi, and finally on to the Pacific Ocean. Students should study how Americans, driven by the ideology of “Manifest Destiny”, and American optimism, innovation, and imagination flocked to the western frontier. While studying how the frontier experience permanently stamped the American character, students should explore its controversial aspects: the removal of many Indian nations, acquisition of a large part of Mexico through the Mexican-American War, and the abrasive encounters with various groups in the west. A second focus of this unit is exploring how the industrial revolution, increased immigration, the rapid extension of slavery, and the westward movement changed the lives Americans and increased sectional conflict.

Unit Content Objectives

At the conclusion of this unit, students will be able to:

- Analyze United States territorial expansion between 1801 and 1861, and how it affected relations with external powers and Native Americans.
- Examine how the industrial revolution, increasing immigration, the rapid expansion of slavery, and the westward movement changed the lives of Americans and led toward regional tensions.
- Assess the competing forces of expansionism, nationalism, and sectionalism.
- Assess the extension, restriction, and reorganization of political democracy after 1800.
- Evaluate the cultural and social reform movements in the antebellum period.

Themes Emphasized and Unit Compelling Questions

Primary Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **FOR / ECON / EQ:** How was territorial and economic expansion justified by Americans and what impact did it have on various groups?
- **CIV:** How was democracy both expanded and restricted in the United States during this era?
- **EQ:** How did the institution of slavery evolve, and in what ways was it challenged?

Supporting Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **TECH:** How did technological invention and innovation impact the American economy and culture during the early industrial period?

Standards Emphasized in the Unit: Inquiry in the Social Studies

DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRY

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.1 Explain how a question represents key ideas in the field.

INQ 6-8.2 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a compelling question.

INQ 6-8.3 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question.

INQ 6-8.4 Explain how a relationship between supporting questions and compelling questions is mutually reinforcing.

INQ 6-8.5 Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy, RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7

Key academic vocabulary: *questioning, argument, explanation, point of view*

DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS AND TOOLS

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

Change, Continuity and Context

HIST 8.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in historical contexts.

HIST 8.2 Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

Perspectives

HIST 8.3 Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

HIST 8.4 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.

HIST 8.5 Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.

Historical Sources and Evidence

HIST 8.6 Detect possible limitations in the historical record based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources.

HIST 8.7 Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.

HIST 8.8 Evaluate the relevance and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.

Causation and Argumentation

HIST 8.9 Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.

HIST 8.10 Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.

Civic and Political Institutions

CIV 8.1 Explain the origins, functions, and structures of government with reference to the U.S. Constitution, state constitutions, and selected other systems of government.

Participation and Deliberation

CIV 8.2 Analyze ideas and principles contained in the founding documents of the United States, and explain how they influence the social and political system.

Processes, Rules, and Laws

CIV 8.3 Analyze the purposes, implementation, and consequences of public policies in multiple settings.

CIV 8.4 Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.

Economic Decision-Making

ECO 8.1 Explain how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals, businesses, and society.

Exchange and Markets

ECO 8.2 Describe the role of competition in the determination of prices and wages in a market economy.

ECO 8.3 Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.

The National Economy

ECO 8.4 Explain how inflation, deflation, and unemployment affect different groups.

ECO 8.5 Explain why standards of living increase as productivity improves.

Geographic Representations: Spatial Views of the World

GEO 8.1 Construct maps to represent and explain the spatial patterns of cultural and environmental characteristics.

Human-Environmental Interaction: Places, Regions, and Culture

GEO 8.2 Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.

Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movement

GEO 8.3 Explain how changes in transportation and communication technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.

Global Connections

GEO 8.4 Explain how the relationship between the environmental characteristics of places and production of goods influences the spatial patterns of world trade.

DIMENSION 3: EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.6 Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

INQ 6-8.7 Evaluate the credibility of a source by determining its relevance and intended use.

INQ 6-8.8 Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations.

INQ 6-8.9 Develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1-10; CCSS.ELA-WHST.6-8.1-2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7-10

Key academic vocabulary: *argument, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims*

DIMENSION 4: COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.10 Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments

INQ 6.8.11 Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequences, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.

INQ 6-8.12 Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

INQ 6-8.13 Critique arguments for credibility.

INQ 6-8.14 Critique the structure of explanations.

INQ 6-8.15 Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

INQ 6-8.16 Assess their individual and collective capacities to take action to address local, regional, and global problems, taking into account a range of possible levels of power, strategies, and potential outcomes.

INQ 6-8.17 Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms and schools, and in out-of-school civic contexts.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1-8

Key academic vocabulary: *argument, explanation, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims, visually / visualize, credibility*

Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1877)

Overview

In this unit, students will explore perhaps the most severe test to the American ideals of liberty, equality, justice, and human dignity. In studying the causes of the Civil War, students will focus on how the North and South differed and how politics and ideologies led to the conflict. The course of the war will be covered as students compare how resources and strategies of the Union and Confederacy, and analyze the major turning points of the war with particular attention given to the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address. Students will also explore the political controversies of Reconstruction and understand the programs meant to transform society in the South with particular focus on the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.

Unit Content Objectives

At the conclusion of this unit, students will be able to:

- Analyze the economic, social, and cultural differences between the North and the South.
- Identify and analyze the issues that led to the Civil War.
- Evaluate the course and character of the Civil War and its effects on the American people.
- Analyze the impact of Reconstruction on the nation.

Themes Emphasized and Unit Compelling Questions

Primary Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **CIV / ECON / CUL / GEO:** How were the north and south different economically, culturally, and politically?
- **EQ:** Was slavery the primary cause of the Civil War?
- **CIV:** What were the turning points of the Civil War?
- **CIV / CUL:** How did the Civil War and Reconstruction fundamentally alter the United States economically, culturally, and politically?

Supporting Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **TECH:** How did new technology impact the course of the Civil War?
- **CT:** What was Connecticut's role in the Civil War Era?

Standards Emphasized in the Unit: Inquiry in the Social Studies

DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRY

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.1 Explain how a question represents key ideas in the field.

INQ 6-8.2 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a compelling question.

INQ 6-8.3 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question.

INQ 6-8.4 Explain how a relationship between supporting questions and compelling questions is mutually reinforcing.

INQ 6-8.5 Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy, RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7

Key academic vocabulary: *questioning, argument, explanation, point of view*

DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS AND TOOLS

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

Change, Continuity and Context

HIST 8.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in historical contexts.

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HIST 8.4 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.

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Historical Sources and Evidence

HIST 8.6 Detect possible limitations in the historical record based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources.

HIST 8.7 Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.

HIST 8.8 Evaluate the relevance and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.

Causation and Argumentation

HIST 8.9 Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.

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CIV 8.4 Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.

Economic Decision-Making

ECO 8.1 Explain how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals, businesses, and society.

Exchange and Markets

ECO 8.2 Describe the role of competition in the determination of prices and wages in a market economy.

ECO 8.3 Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.

The National Economy

ECO 8.4 Explain how inflation, deflation, and unemployment affect different groups.

ECO 8.5 Explain why standards of living increase as productivity improves.

The Global Economy

ECO 8.6 Explain the benefits and the costs of trade policies to individuals, businesses, and society.

Geographic Representations: Spatial Views of the World

GEO 8.1 Construct maps to represent and explain the spatial patterns of cultural and environmental characteristics.

Human-Environmental Interaction: Places, Regions, and Culture

GEO 8.2 Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.

Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movement

GEO 8.3 Explain how changes in transportation and communication technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.

Global Connections

GEO 8.4 Explain how the relationship between the environmental characteristics of places and production of goods influences the spatial patterns of world trade.

DIMENSION 3: EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.6 Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

INQ 6-8.7 Evaluate the credibility of a source by determining its relevance and intended use.

INQ 6-8.8 Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations.

INQ 6-8.9 Develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1-10; CCSS.ELA-WHST.6-8.1-2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7-10

Key academic vocabulary: *argument, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims*

DIMENSION 4: COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.10 Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments

INQ 6.8.11 Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequences, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.

INQ 6-8.12 Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

INQ 6-8.13 Critique arguments for credibility.

INQ 6-8.14 Critique the structure of explanations.

INQ 6-8.15 Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

INQ 6-8.16 Assess their individual and collective capacities to take action to address local, regional, and global problems, taking into account a range of possible levels of power, strategies, and potential outcomes.

INQ 6-8.17 Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms and schools, and in out-of-school civic contexts.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1-8

Key academic vocabulary: *argument, explanation, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims, visually / visualize, credibility*

The Development of Industrial America (1870-1900)

Overview

From the era of Reconstruction to the end of the 19th century, the United States underwent an economic transformation that involved the maturing of the industrial economy, the rapid expansion of big business, and the rise of national labor unions. During this unit, students can begin to see a resemblance to the possibilities and problems that our society faces today. This period also witnessed unprecedented immigration and urbanization, both of which were indispensable to industrial expansion. American society became even more diverse as immigrants entered in massive numbers from southern and eastern Europe, and also from Asia, Mexico, and Central America. Related to this continuing theme of immigration, students will explore the search for national unity and tolerance.

Unit Content Objectives

At the conclusion of this unit, students will be able to:

- Describe the innovations in technology and business practices during this era and assess their impact on economic, political, and social life in America.
- Analyze how massive immigration after 1870 led to new social patterns, conflicts, and ideas of national unity.

Themes Emphasized and Unit Compelling Questions

Primary Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **CUL / ECON / TECH:** How did the expansion of industrialism impact American society and the individual?
- **CUL / EQ / ECON:** Did America fulfill the dreams of immigrants during this era?

Supporting Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **GEO:** What were the push / pull factors that led to increased immigration during this era?
- **CT:** How did Connecticut contribute to the age of industrialization?

Standards Emphasized in the Unit: Inquiry in the Social Studies

DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRY

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.1 Explain how a question represents key ideas in the field.

INQ 6-8.2 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a compelling question.

INQ 6-8.3 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question.

INQ 6-8.4 Explain how a relationship between supporting questions and compelling questions is mutually reinforcing.

INQ 6-8.5 Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy, RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7

Key academic vocabulary: *questioning, argument, explanation, point of view*

DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS AND TOOLS

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

Change, Continuity and Context

HIST 8.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in historical contexts.

HIST 8.2 Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

Perspectives

HIST 8.3 Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

HIST 8.4 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.

HIST 8.5 Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.

Historical Sources and Evidence

HIST 8.6 Detect possible limitations in the historical record based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources.

HIST 8.7 Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.

HIST 8.8 Evaluate the relevance and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.

Causation and Argumentation

HIST 8.9 Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.

HIST 8.10 Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.

Participation and Deliberation

CIV 8.2 Analyze ideas and principles contained in the founding documents of the United States, and explain how they influence the social and political system.

Processes, Rules, and Laws

CIV 8.3 Analyze the purposes, implementation, and consequences of public policies in multiple settings.

CIV 8.4 Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.

Economic Decision-Making

ECO 8.1 Explain how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals, businesses, and society.

Exchange and Markets

ECO 8.2 Describe the role of competition in the determination of prices and wages in a market economy.

ECO 8.3 Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.

The National Economy

ECO 8.4 Explain how inflation, deflation, and unemployment affect different groups.

ECO 8.5 Explain why standards of living increase as productivity improves.

Geographic Representations: Spatial Views of the World

GEO 8.1 Construct maps to represent and explain the spatial patterns of cultural and environmental characteristics.

Human-Environmental Interaction: Places, Regions, and Culture

GEO 8.2 Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.

Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movement

GEO 8.3 Explain how changes in transportation and communication technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.

Global Connections

GEO 8.4 Explain how the relationship between the environmental characteristics of places and production of goods influences the spatial patterns of world trade.

DIMENSION 3: EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.6 Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

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Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1-10; CCSS.ELA-WHST.6-8.1-2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7-10

Key academic vocabulary: *argument, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims*

DIMENSION 4: COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6–8.10 Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments

INQ 6.8.11 Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequences, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.

INQ 6–8.12 Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

INQ 6–8.13 Critique arguments for credibility.

INQ 6–8.14 Critique the structure of explanations.

INQ 6–8.15 Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

INQ 6–8.16 Assess their individual and collective capacities to take action to address local, regional, and global problems, taking into account a range of possible levels of power, strategies, and potential outcomes.

INQ 6–8.17 Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms and schools, and in out-of-school civic contexts.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1-8

Key academic vocabulary: *argument, explanation, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims, visually / visualize, credibility*

The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)

Overview

This unit focuses on the evolution of American values from approximately 1890 to the eve of the Great Depression. Students will explore how the progressive movement attempted to deal with the problems of industrialization, urbanization, and political corruption and develop a political process that would be more responsive to the distinctive needs of an industrial society. During this era, the United States became much more involved global affairs and sought territorial expansion throughout the world for economic, political, and military reasons. All issues of American foreign policy have their origins in the emergence of United States as a world power in the Spanish American War at the end of the 19th century and the involvement of the United States in World War I. Students will explore the complexities of foreign policy today by studying the difficulties of maintaining neutrality while acquiring the role of an economic power with global interests and wishing to foster democracy around the world. In the postwar period the prosperity of the 1920s and the domination of big business will be explored, as well as the social tensions, cultural movements, and political developments of the era.

Unit Content Objectives

At the conclusion of this unit, students will be able to:

- Analyze how Progressives and others addressed problems of industrialization, urbanization, and political corruption.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the development of American expansionism and imperialism.
- Evaluate the changing role of the United States in world affairs through World War I.
- Analyze the extent of prosperity and opportunity for different segments of society from the end of World War I to the eve of the Great Depression (1920s).

Themes Emphasized and Unit Compelling Questions

Primary Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **CIV / CUL / EQ:** What were the successes and failures of the Progressive movement?
- **FOR:** What factors led to increased American involvement in foreign affairs during this era?
- **CUL / ECON / TECH:** How did the cultural, economic, and technological changes of this era impact American society?

Supporting Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **GEO:** What factors contributed to the growth of the American city?

Standards Emphasized in the Unit: Inquiry in the Social Studies

DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRY

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.1 Explain how a question represents key ideas in the field.

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INQ 6-8.3 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question.

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INQ 6-8.5 Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.

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Key academic vocabulary: *questioning, argument, explanation, point of view*

DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS AND TOOLS

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

Change, Continuity and Context

HIST 8.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in historical contexts.

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Historical Sources and Evidence

HIST 8.6 Detect possible limitations in the historical record based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources.

HIST 8.7 Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.

HIST 8.8 Evaluate the relevance and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.

Causation and Argumentation

HIST 8.9 Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.

HIST 8.10 Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.

Civic and Political Institutions

CIV 8.1 Explain the origins, functions, and structures of government with reference to the U.S. Constitution, state constitutions, and selected other systems of government.

Participation and Deliberation

CIV 8.2 Analyze ideas and principles contained in the founding documents of the United States, and explain how they influence the social and political system.

Processes, Rules, and Laws

CIV 8.3 Analyze the purposes, implementation, and consequences of public policies in multiple settings.

CIV 8.4 Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.

Economic Decision-Making

ECO 8.1 Explain how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals, businesses, and society.

Exchange and Markets

ECO 8.2 Describe the role of competition in the determination of prices and wages in a market economy.

ECO 8.3 Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.

The National Economy

ECO 8.4 Explain how inflation, deflation, and unemployment affect different groups.

ECO 8.5 Explain why standards of living increase as productivity improves.

The Global Economy

ECO 8.6 Explain the benefits and the costs of trade policies to individuals, businesses, and society.

Geographic Representations: Spatial Views of the World

GEO 8.1 Construct maps to represent and explain the spatial patterns of cultural and environmental characteristics.

Human-Environmental Interaction: Places, Regions, and Culture

GEO 8.2 Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.

Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movement

GEO 8.3 Explain how changes in transportation and communication technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.

Global Connections

GEO 8.4 Explain how the relationship between the environmental characteristics of places and production of goods influences the spatial patterns of world trade.

DIMENSION 3: EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

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DIMENSION 4: COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.10 Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments

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Key academic vocabulary: *argument, explanation, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims, visually / visualize, credibility*

The Great Depression and World War II (1929-1945)

Overview

This unit focuses on the ways in which American society was forever altered by the massive crises of the Great Depression and World War II. The Great Depression and the New Deal deserve careful analysis by students for many reasons. Americans in the 1930s endured, and eventually conquered, the greatest economic crisis in American history. The depression brought deep changes in people's attitudes toward government's responsibilities and the New Deal set in place legislation that reshaped modern American capitalism. World War II also demands careful attention. The war solidified the nation's role as a global power and brought about social changes that established reform agendas that would last for the remainder of the 20th century. Students will assess carefully the causes of the war and reason for American involvement, the course of the war, and the collapse of the Grand Alliance in the postwar period. Students will also evaluate the social effects of war on the homefront, such as internal migration to war production centers, the massive influx of women into previously male job roles, and the attempts of African Americans and others for social equality.

Unit Content Objectives

At the conclusion of this unit, students will be able to:

- Analyze the causes of the Great Depression and how it affected American society.
- Evaluate how the New Deal addressed the Great Depression, transformed American federalism, and expanded the role of government.
- Examine and assess the causes of World War II and the reasons for American involvement in the war.
- Analyze the course of World War II, including the major turning points and significant events, along with its reshaping of the U.S. role in world affairs.
- Examine the character of the war at home including mobilization, gender roles, the impact on science and technology, and the implications on civil liberties.

Themes Emphasized and Unit Compelling Questions

Primary Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **ECON:** What were the causes of the Great Depression and how did it affect different groups in America?
- **ECON / CIV:** What was the impact of the New Deal on the Great Depression and how did it change the role of government?
- **FOR:** How did World War II reshape America's role in the world?
- **CUL / ECON:** How did World War II impact the United States on the homefront?

Supporting Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **CT:** What was the impact of the Great Depression and World War II on Connecticut?
- **TECH:** How did World War II lead to the development of new technologies?

Standards Emphasized in the Unit: Inquiry in the Social Studies

DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRY

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INQ 6-8.5 Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy, RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7

Key academic vocabulary: *questioning, argument, explanation, point of view*

DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS AND TOOLS

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

Change, Continuity and Context

HIST 8.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in historical contexts.

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Historical Sources and Evidence

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HIST 8.7 Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.

HIST 8.8 Evaluate the relevance and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.

Causation and Argumentation

HIST 8.9 Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.

HIST 8.10 Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.

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CIV 8.1 Explain the origins, functions, and structures of government with reference to the U.S. Constitution, state constitutions, and selected other systems of government.

Participation and Deliberation

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Processes, Rules, and Laws

CIV 8.3 Analyze the purposes, implementation, and consequences of public policies in multiple settings.

CIV 8.4 Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.

Economic Decision-Making

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ECO 8.3 Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.

The National Economy

ECO 8.4 Explain how inflation, deflation, and unemployment affect different groups.

ECO 8.5 Explain why standards of living increase as productivity improves.

The Global Economy

ECO 8.6 Explain the benefits and the costs of trade policies to individuals, businesses, and society.

Geographic Representations: Spatial Views of the World

GEO 8.1 Construct maps to represent and explain the spatial patterns of cultural and environmental characteristics.

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Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movement

GEO 8.3 Explain how changes in transportation and communication technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.

Global Connections

GEO 8.4 Explain how the relationship between the environmental characteristics of places and production of goods influences the spatial patterns of world trade.

DIMENSION 3: EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.6 Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

INQ 6-8.7 Evaluate the credibility of a source by determining its relevance and intended use.

INQ 6-8.8 Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations.

INQ 6-8.9 Develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.

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Key academic vocabulary: *argument, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims*

DIMENSION 4: COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.10 Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments

INQ 6-8.11 Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequences, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.

INQ 6-8.12 Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

INQ 6-8.13 Critique arguments for credibility.

INQ 6-8.14 Critique the structure of explanations.

INQ 6-8.15 Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

INQ 6-8.16 Assess their individual and collective capacities to take action to address local, regional, and global problems, taking into account a range of possible levels of power, strategies, and potential outcomes.

INQ 6-8.17 Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms and schools, and in out-of-school civic contexts.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1-8

Key academic vocabulary: *argument, explanation, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims, visually / visualize, credibility*

Postwar United States (1945-1973)

Overview

This unit focuses on postwar America from 1945 to approximately 1973. This era witnessed an economic boom and social transformation that was unprecedented in American history. Students will explore how the postwar boom and new technologies produced grand changes in consumer culture, American education, suburbanization, the return to domesticity for many women, the character of corporate life, and cultural mores. The Cold War set the framework for global politics for 45 years after the end of World War II. The Cold War so strongly influenced domestic politics, the conduct of foreign affairs, and the role of government in the economy after 1945 that is essential for students to examine its origins and the forces behind its continuation into the late 20th century. Students will also focus attention on the U.S. government's anti-Communist strategy of containment in Asia and the circumstances that would involve the United States in the bloody, costly wars in Korea and Vietnam. This era also witnessed the monumental struggle for racial and gender equality and for the extension of civil liberties. Students will assess the strategies of the civil rights movement and evaluate the results for various groups.

Unit Content Objectives

At the conclusion of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain how World War II led to a postwar economic boom and to a social transformation within the United States.
- Analyze how the Cold War and conflicts in Korea and Vietnam influenced economic, political, and social life in America.
- Examine the Civil Rights Movement and the struggle for racial and gender equality and for the extension of civil liberties.
- Evaluate the reasons for demands for social and political change in the United States in the 1960s and early 1970s and assess the effectiveness various movements.

Themes Emphasized and Unit Compelling Questions

Primary Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **ECON / CUL:** How did economic and social conditions impact Americans in the postwar era?
- **FOR / CIV / CUL:** What was the impact of the Cold War on domestic and international politics as well as on American society?
- **EQ / CIV:** To what extent were the methods used by civil rights activists in the 1950s and 1960s successful in advancing the goals of the Civil Rights Movement?

Supporting Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **EQ / CUL:** What was the impact of other social reform movements since the 1950s including those dealing with the rights and opportunities of women, racial and ethnic minorities, the disabled, and other underrepresented groups?

Standards Emphasized in the Unit: Inquiry in the Social Studies

DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRY

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.1 Explain how a question represents key ideas in the field.

INQ 6-8.2 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a compelling question.

INQ 6-8.3 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question.

INQ 6-8.4 Explain how a relationship between supporting questions and compelling questions is mutually reinforcing.

INQ 6-8.5 Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy, RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7

Key academic vocabulary: *questioning, argument, explanation, point of view*

DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS AND TOOLS

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

Change, Continuity and Context

HIST 8.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in historical contexts.

HIST 8.2 Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

Perspectives

HIST 8.3 Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

HIST 8.4 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.

HIST 8.5 Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.

Historical Sources and Evidence

HIST 8.6 Detect possible limitations in the historical record based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources.

HIST 8.7 Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.

HIST 8.8 Evaluate the relevance and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.

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HIST 8.9 Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.

HIST 8.10 Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.

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CIV 8.1 Explain the origins, functions, and structures of government with reference to the U.S. Constitution, state constitutions, and selected other systems of government.

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CIV 8.2 Analyze ideas and principles contained in the founding documents of the United States, and explain how they influence the social and political system.

Processes, Rules, and Laws

CIV 8.3 Analyze the purposes, implementation, and consequences of public policies in multiple settings.

CIV 8.4 Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.

Economic Decision-Making

ECO 8.1 Explain how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals, businesses, and society.

Exchange and Markets

ECO 8.2 Describe the role of competition in the determination of prices and wages in a market economy.

ECO 8.3 Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.

The National Economy

ECO 8.4 Explain how inflation, deflation, and unemployment affect different groups.

ECO 8.5 Explain why standards of living increase as productivity improves.

The Global Economy

ECO 8.6 Explain the benefits and the costs of trade policies to individuals, businesses, and society.

Geographic Representations: Spatial Views of the World

GEO 8.1 Construct maps to represent and explain the spatial patterns of cultural and environmental characteristics.

Human-Environmental Interaction: Places, Regions, and Culture

GEO 8.2 Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.

Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movement

GEO 8.3 Explain how changes in transportation and communication technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.

Global Connections

GEO 8.4 Explain how the relationship between the environmental characteristics of places and production of goods influences the spatial patterns of world trade.

DIMENSION 3: EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.6 Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

INQ 6-8.7 Evaluate the credibility of a source by determining its relevance and intended use.

INQ 6-8.8 Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations.

INQ 6-8.9 Develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1-10; CCSS.ELA-WHST.6-8.1-2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7-10

Key academic vocabulary: *argument, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims*

DIMENSION 4: COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.10 Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments

INQ 6-8.11 Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequences, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.

INQ 6-8.12 Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

INQ 6-8.13 Critique arguments for credibility.

INQ 6-8.14 Critique the structure of explanations.

INQ 6-8.15 Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

INQ 6-8.16 Assess their individual and collective capacities to take action to address local, regional, and global problems, taking into account a range of possible levels of power, strategies, and potential outcomes.

INQ 6-8.17 Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms and schools, and in out-of-school civic contexts.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1-8

Key academic vocabulary: *argument, explanation, sources, evidence, claims, counterclaims, visually / visualize, credibility*

Contemporary United States (1968-Present)

Overview

This unit focuses on American history since 1968. Students will evaluate modern developments in foreign policy and domestic politics with a clear focus on the impact of the Watergate scandal, the “Regan Revolution”, and the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. Students will also explore how scientific advances and technological changes have impacted the economy, as well as the nature of work of leisure. The theme of immigration again becomes extremely important as a new wave of immigrants leads to demographic shifts. Finally, students will assess the impact of twenty first century global terrorism with a clear focus on the events of September 11, 2001 and the changes in American society that came as a result.

Unit Content Objectives

At the conclusion of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain and assess developments in American foreign policy since the Vietnam War.
- Identify and assess the impact of contemporary economic, technological, and environmental changes in the United States.
- Identify and assess the impact of contemporary social, political, and cultural changes in the United States.
- Assess the impact of growing racial and ethnic diversity in American society.
- Assess the impact of twenty-first century terrorist activity on American society.

Themes Emphasized and Unit Compelling Questions

Primary Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **FOR / CIV:** How have developments in foreign and domestic politics since 1968 shaped modern America?
- **FOR / CIV:** How should the United States respond to terrorism and other global issues?

Supporting Themes: Students will apply disciplinary concepts to investigate compelling questions such as:

- **ECON / CUL / TECH:** How has the information technology revolution impacted America and the world?

Standards Emphasized in the Unit: Inquiry in the Social Studies

DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRY

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

INQ 6-8.1 Explain how a question represents key ideas in the field.

INQ 6-8.2 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a compelling question.

INQ 6-8.3 Explain points of agreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question.

INQ 6-8.4 Explain how a relationship between supporting questions and compelling questions is mutually reinforcing.

INQ 6-8.5 Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.

Corresponding CT Core Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy, RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7

Key academic vocabulary: *questioning, argument, explanation, point of view*

DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS AND TOOLS

It is expected that students in eighth-grade U.S. History will individually and with others:

Change, Continuity and Context

HIST 8.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in historical contexts.

HIST 8.2 Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

Perspectives

HIST 8.3 Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

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