

Grades 6-12 Social Studies Curriculum Overview



In the Social Studies Department, teachers and students do what historians, psychologists, geographers, sociologists, lawyers, economists, anthropologists, and archeologists do. We analyze, investigate, speculate, argue, classify, compare, generalize, hypothesize, question, and debate. While most of our courses are historical in nature, they all incorporate key ideas of the other social sciences, including economics, geography, sociology, and anthropology. Being a student in the Social Studies Department means asking questions, answering questions, and testing and revising our answers in an ongoing attempt to know who we are and to understand how we got here.

Genuine understanding of the world around us – past and present – comes from seeing events in the context of the times, through the various lenses available to us. Getting into the minds of historical figures and contemporary individuals, asking questions about what happened and why things happened, carefully weighing the evidence, critically examining sources, confronting and working to reconcile divergent viewpoints, wrestling with issues — all of these are key to being responsible citizens of our community, our country, and our world, and are skills that we develop throughout our courses. In addition, the Social Studies department works to develop key skills – research, reading and analyzing primary sources, using evidence to support written and oral arguments, determining cause and effect – throughout our program from grade 6 through 12.

The following is an overview of what students will encounter throughout their experience at Sharon Middle School and Sharon High School:

Grade/Course	Topics and Themes
Sixth Grade – Ancient World History	Archaeology and Rise of Civilization; the “GREATS” and the role of geography; Mesopotamia; Egypt; Greece; Rome; Mediterranean Cultures in general
Seventh Grade – World Geography	Five themes of Geography; Geographic Terminology; Geographic tools such as maps and globes; Fundamental Political and Economic Systems; Examining Regions of the World Today – Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America
Eighth Grade – U.S. History I	Colonization; Road to Revolution; Revolutionary War and Founding Documents; Tests to the New Republic; Westward Expansion; Industrialization; Civil War
Ninth Grade – World History I or Foundations of World History	Review of Civilizations and GREATS; World Religion; World History to ~1500: China and East Asia; Mongol Empire; India; Islamic Empires of Eurasia and Africa; Sub-Saharan African Civilizations; Europe from Rome to the Enlightenment
Tenth Grade – World History II (Honors and Standard levels)	Industrialism, Liberalism and Conservatism, Nationalism, Imperialism, Militarism, and Totalitarianism from 1700 to today, specifically looking at Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and Europe.
Eleventh Grade – US History (Advanced Placement, Honors, or Standard) or American Studies (Honors or Standard) <i>**In addition, students may take one or more electives; see next box for details)</i>	United States history primarily from Reconstruction to today, with a twin focus on foreign and domestic policy, as well as the people and movements that have shaped this country over time
Twelfth Grade – Electives	Students may choose any of our electives – AP Psychology, AP European History, AP Government, Humanities, Psychology, Economics, Current Events, World Religions, Since JFK, Since Reagan, Debate, Ethics, Hidden Histories, Media Awareness, Genocide, or American Legal System – some which run for a full year and others for a semester.