

History and Social Sciences
Curriculum Overview

*Course Description:
World Geography*

World Geography is a compulsory yearlong course of study for all students in the Seventh Grade. Students in this course will acquire a greater understanding of how today's complex world has been and continues to be shaped by its physical geography, how the varied geographies impact politics, culture, economics, and how this impact has played a role throughout history. The broad focus of this course is to enable students to synthesize the themes of geography (location [relative and absolute], place, human interaction with the environment, movement, and regions) with the standard fields of history by incorporating PRIMES into the geographic themes and to demonstrate how the past continues to impact today's world and people throughout time have faced similar issues and geographic/environmental issues.

Instruction in this course will encourage students to develop their own set of individual values. To this end, students will be challenged to explore a variety of timeless global issues and present a variety of opinions across time and place. The geography themes will focus on physical and political geography of the world's regions, but economic and cultural geography will also play a significant role in the study for the year. Themes may be modified to suit the research interests of individual students. All students will conduct a minimum of two research projects (one of which must be a written paper).

Specific topics of study include an introduction to geography (its definition, identification of its themes, etc.) and the study of the regions of Middle East & North Africa, Europe, Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Australia/Oceania, and North America. The order of study is designed to serve as a bridge between the Grade Six study of Ancient Civilizations (which were centered in the Middle East and Mediterranean region) and the Grade Eight study of United States History.

*Major Course Objectives:
When students have completed World Geography, they will better understand and be able to:*

1. use map and globe skills learned through grade 6 to interpret different kinds of projections, as well as topographic, landform, political, population, and climate maps
2. use *geographic* terms correctly
3. interpret geographic information from a chart or graph and construct a chart or graph that conveys geographic information (for example: rainfall, temperatures, or population data)
4. explain the difference between absolute and relative location and give examples of different ways to indicate relative location for countries and cities across the world
5. identify how current world atlases are organized and the kind of information they provide for each continent and country
6. identify what time zones are, when and how precise measurement of longitude was scientifically and historically determined, the function and location of the international dateline, and the function of the Prime Meridian, and give examples of differences in time in countries in different parts of the world
7. use *demographic* terms correctly
8. define what a nation is and give examples of the different ways nations are formed
9. give examples of several well-known international organizations (NATO, UN, World Bank, etc.) and explain their purpose and function
10. provide examples of currencies and explain why international trade requires a system of exchanging currency between nations
11. give examples of goods/products that are traded between nations, and examples of barriers to such trade
12. define supply and demand and its impact
13. define key elements of a market economy
14. describe how different economic systems try to answer the basic economic issues of what to produce, how to produce it, and for whom to produce
15. compare the standard of living in various countries today using GNP as an indicator

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Relationship to Massachusetts Frameworks for History and Social Sciences

Students enrolled in World Geography engage in information gathering, problem solving, communicating and presenting their findings (in written, visual, or oral formats) as they:

1. describe the general level of education in selected countries in the Middle East and North Africa and its relation to the economy (G,H,E)
2. describe the political and social status of women in selected countries in the Middle East and North Africa (G,H,E)
3. describe major ethnic and religious groups in various countries of the Middle East and North Africa (G,H,E)
4. compare the form and structure of government for various nations in the Middle East and North Africa, particularly Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq, Iran, and Israel (C)
5. identify the methods used to compensate for the scarcity of water in this region (E)
6. identify and locate where Kurds, Arabs and other ethnic groups live and what their political aspirations are (H)
7. discuss the reasons for and the effects of the UN's attempt in 1947 to partition the remainder of the Palestinian Mandate, including the migration of European Jews to Palestine; the flight of many Arabs from Israel during its War of Independence (1948); and the flight of Jews from other Arab nations after that 1948 war (H,G)
8. describe the general level of education in selected countries in Europe and its relation to the economy (G,H,E)
9. describe the political and social status of women in selected countries in Europe (G,H,E)
10. describe major ethnic and religious groups in various countries of Europe (G,H,E)
11. explain why Europe has a highly developed network of highways, waterways, railroads, and airline connections (G,H,E)
12. describe the purposes and achievements of the European Union (H,E)
13. identify the European nations that were once part of the Soviet Union and compare the size and population of the former Soviet Union with that of present day Russia (H,G)
14. explain the sources and effects of massive pollution of air, water, and land in Russia, its former European territories, and the former satellite nations of Europe (H,G,E)
15. describe major ethnic and religious groups various countries of Central and South Asia (G,H,E)
16. explain the reasons for and the effects of the partition of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan in 1947 and the exchange of Hindus and Muslims (H,G,C)
17. identify the historical factors that created a stable democracy in India and the roles of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Indira Gandhi in its development (H,C)
18. explain why the Indian government seeks to control population growth and the methods it uses to control such growth (H,G)
19. describe the political, cultural, and religious differences between the countries in Central and South Asia (H,G)
20. describe the political and social status of women in selected countries in Central and South Asia (G,H,E)
21. describe major ethnic and religious groups in various countries of Central and South Asia (G,H,E)
22. locate the Khyber Pass in Afghanistan and explain its strategic importance as a gateway from the north into the Indian subcontinent (H,G)
23. describe the general level of education in selected countries in Central and South Asia and its relation to the economy (G,H,E)
24. describe the general level of education in selected countries in East Asia and its relation to the economy (G,H,E)
25. describe the political and social status of women in selected countries in East Asia (G,H,E)
26. describe major ethnic and religious groups in various countries of East Asia (G,H,E)
27. explain why China's geographical boundaries served to limit its interaction with other regions and cultures for many centuries (G,H)
28. locate Tibet on a map and explain why its location may have influenced China's decision to take it over and colonize it (H,G)

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29. explain how location has made the Korean peninsula both a battleground and a cultural bridge between China and Japan (G,H)
30. explain why the Chinese government seeks to control population growth and the methods it uses to control such growth (H,G)
31. describe and explain the status of Taiwan
32. identify the number of time zones the Asiatic portion of Russia spans and identify the routes used by Russian explorers, traders, & religious dissidents to cross into what is now Alaska (H,G)
33. describe the general level of education in selected countries in Southeast Asia and its relation to the economy (G,H,E)
34. describe the political and social status of women in selected countries in Southeast Asia (G,H,E)
35. describe major ethnic and religious groups in various countries of Southeast Asia (G,H,E)
36. explain how levels of education and work traditions contributed to post-WW II growth of East Asian and Southeast Asian economies (E, G, H)
37. identify the refugees who left Southeast Asia over the past several decades, the countries they fled, and why they are refugees (H, G, C)
38. identify and describe the major social features of the indigenous peoples in Southeast Asia (G)
39. describe the general level of education in selected countries in sub-Saharan Africa and its relation to the economy (G,H,E)
40. describe the political and social status of women in selected countries in sub-Saharan Africa (G,H,E)
41. describe major ethnic and religious groups in various countries of sub-Saharan Africa (G,H,E)
42. explain how drought and desertification have affected parts of sub-Saharan Africa (G,E)
43. explain how the physical features of sub-Saharan Africa have affected transportation and communication networks (G,E)
44. describe the major obstacles to economic development in many sub-Saharan African nations, including linguistic, tribal, and religious diversity; corrupt government; the lack of widespread education; and the political boundaries established in the 19th century by European nations and the legacy of their rule (G,H,E,C)
45. identify the locations and time periods of the sub-Saharan African empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhay (H,G)
46. describe the general level of education in selected countries in Latin America and its relation to the economy (G,H,E)
47. describe the political and social status of women in selected countries in Latin America (G,H,E)
48. describe major ethnic and religious groups in various countries of Latin America (G,H,E)
49. describe the major obstacles to economic development in many Latin American nations, including the political influence of the military, corrupt government, the lack of widespread education, and the absence of stable governments (G,H,E,C)
50. explain the relation of Latin America with the United States (H,E,G)
51. describe the general level of education in selected countries in Australia and Oceania and its relation to the economy (G,H,E)
52. describe the political and social status of women in selected countries in Australia and Oceania (G,H,E)
53. describe major ethnic and religious groups in various countries of Australia and Oceania (G,H,E)
54. identify and describe the major social features of the indigenous people of Australia (the Aborigines) and New Zealand (the Maoris) and other island regions of Oceania (G)
55. explain how Australia and New Zealand's population size and location affect their capacity to engage in international trade (G,E)
56. describe the general level of education in the countries in North America and its relation to the economy of the region (G,H,E)
57. describe the political and social status of women in the countries in North America (G,H,E)
58. describe major ethnic and religious groups in the countries of North America (G,H,E)
59. explain how the location and physical features of North America have contributed to the major industrial and agricultural development of the region (G,E)
60. compare the form and structure of government for the nations of North America (H,C)
61. explain the role of the physical features of this region in its settlement and population distribution (G,H,E)
62. explain why the systems of transportation and communication are vital to the peoples and economies of this region (H,E,G)

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Assessment Tools

Success in World Geography will be assessed by the following methods:

1. Outside assignments will be graded and homework will be assessed for completeness, accuracy, and understanding
2. Class work will be evaluated by the instructor and by class members for cooperative learning activities
3. Tests are primarily summative, and will consist ordinarily of multiple choice and essay questions
4. Research papers and research projects that may be long and/or short term assignments; each student must be assigned and must complete a minimum of 1 research project in this course, and create appropriate bibliographies for all tasks/assignments involving the seeking of information.
5. Outside readings and their application to class study; all students will complete outside readings as assigned in this course and report these in a variety of media, but at least one must be a written review of the reading if more than one reading is assigned
6. Emphasis is to be placed on organization, accuracy, thoroughness, and proficiency of student work. Such work will result in successful understanding and correct answers
7. Rubrics will be incorporated for all research and outside reading assignments, as well as for a final assessment of the student performance and progress
8. If a final exam is used, it will consist of primarily multiple choice and open response essays; a final project may be substituted with the approval of the department chair

Materials and Resources:

World Studies: Foundations of Geography; Prentice Hall, 2003. This is the primary textbook for this course.

World Atlas. Nystrom. 2000

World Discovery Atlas. Hammond. 2002

Our World Today. Nystrom, 2003

North America. InspirEd.

Middle East. InspirEd.

Europe. InspirEd.

Asia, InspirEd.

Africa, InspirEd.

Oceania. InspirEd.

Latin America. InspirEd.

These are the foundation materials for this curriculum. As this curriculum was instituted during the 2004-2005 academic year, this list will be revised over the first three years of the curriculum on a consistent basis.

Relationship to Scituate Public School Student Expectations

Scituate Grade Seven students will have the opportunity in *World Geography* to become:

- effective readers
- effective writers
- effective presenters (written, oral, visual) of their research, their interpretations, and solutions to historical problems
- effective problem solvers
- effective information gatherers/researchers