

# Middle School Social Studies Curriculum 2021-2022

## **World History: Human Origins and Ancient Civilizations**

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The BNS middle school social studies curriculum reflects a three year rotation between U.S. History: post-Civil War Reconstruction to present, Ancient Civilizations, and Civics. This year’s topics focus on human origins and ancient civilizations around the world. The content and terminology of the program is based on both Virginia’s Standards of Learning (S.O.L.) and the National Council for the Social Studies Curriculum Standards.

The goal in social studies is to support the civic competence of the students through knowledge, critical thinking, and multiple perspectives.

Students will use historical and geographical analysis as they explore the historical development of people, places, and patterns of life from pre-history and many ancient civilizations, empires and cultures in terms of impact on the modern world, particularly Western Civilization. We do not cover all civilizations, but I try to choose a sensible, impactful, and diverse range from around the world.

In addition, students will learn world geography and focus on current events, occurring both around the world and within the U.S. Geography studies will correlate with our Ancient Civilization studies as much as possible.

There will be a focus on National History Day projects from September–March. This year’s theme is *Debate and Diplomacy in History*. Every student is expected to create a History Day project, though he/she may choose whether to compete in the competition.

We will focus on the following topics throughout the year:

<p>Introduction to Historical Thinking</p> <p><b>Fall Trimester</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thinking like a Historian</li> <li>• Approaching History as a Mystery</li> </ul> <p>Early Humans for Civilizations</p> <p><b>Fall Trimester:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concept of “Civilizations”</li> <li>• Human Origins</li> <li>• Formation of Early Civilizations</li> </ul>	<p>Development of Religion</p> <p><b>Spring Trimester:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five main world religions</li> </ul> <p>Regional Interactions</p> <p><b>Spring Trimester:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Japan and China</li> <li>• African Civilizations</li> <li>• Mayan, Aztec, and Incan Civilizations</li> </ul>
<p>Classical Civilizations and Empire Building</p> <p><b>Fall/Winter Trimester:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ancient Persia</li> <li>• Ancient Egypt</li> <li>• Ancient India</li> <li>• Ancient China</li> </ul> <p><b>Winter Trimester:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ancient Greece</li> <li>• Ancient Rome</li> </ul>	<p>National History Day Research Project</p> <p><b>Throughout the year:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic choice and narrowed focus</li> <li>• Research using multiple secondary sources</li> <li>• Research using primary sources</li> <li>• Organization of research notes</li> <li>• Critical analysis of information: essay</li> <li>• Creation of NHD project conforming to rules</li> <li>• Presentation of NHD project (competition optional)</li> </ul>

## World Studies Skills Focus

The students will study and practice the following skills during the course of the year:

- analyze and interpret historical documents
- consider and share different perspectives and opinions when discussing current and historical events
- develop geographic knowledge of the world – ancient and current – including shifting political boundaries
- develop an understanding of the current events that shape the political, social, scientific, and economic climate of the world today
- take notes from class lectures, peer presentations, and readings
- present information in a variety of forms including posters, power-point presentations, essays, research papers, oral presentations, dramatizations, and other creative projects that will be evaluated
- recall and analyze course content for assessments
- study for and take quizzes and tests that have a variety of formats including multiple choice, matching, fill- in, short answer, essay, and true / false

## Writing in World Studies

Students will be doing a variety of writing throughout the year. There will be research assignments where the students write short expository essays on their findings as well as persuasive essays. Students will be expected to use MLA format and will be graded on standard grammar, organization, spelling, word choice, as well as accurate and informative content. There will be short answer and essay questions on tests as well.

## World Studies Grading Policy

The following shows the break-down used to generate trimester and year-end grades for students:

Organization/Participation	15%
Homework/Classwork	20%
Quiz and Minor Project Performance	30%
Test and Major Project Performance	35%

