

Civics

Instructor: Ann Heaslip

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

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, students will examine the roles citizens play in the political, governmental, and economic systems of the United States. They will also research and compare various governmental structures present 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.

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 Civics studies as much as possible.

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

We will focus on the following topics throughout the year:

<p>Fall Trimester</p> <p>Unit I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities of Citizens <p>Unit II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of Government • Types of Government <p>Unit III</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origins of the United States Constitution 	<p>Spring Trimester</p> <p>Unit VI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaigns and Elections • Media Influence <p>Unit VII</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparative Systems of Government
<p>Winter Trimester</p> <p>Unit IV</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bill of Rights • Branches of Government • State and Local Government Roles <p>Unit V</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting 	<p>National History Day Research Project</p> <p>Throughout the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic choice and narrowed focus • Research using multiple secondary sources • Research using primary sources • Organization of research notes • Critical analysis of information: essay • Creation of NHD project conforming to rules • Presentation of NHD project (competition optional)

World Studies Skills Focus

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

- analyze and interpret historical and current documents
- consider and share different perspectives and opinions when discussing current and historical events
- develop geographic knowledge of the world 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%