



Social Studies Instruction in the West Shore School District

This course is an introductory study of United States History from the Colonial Period to 1865. Social Studies instructions in the West Shore School District is aligned to the PA Core Standards, Civics and Government, Economics, Geography, History, C3 Framework and identified best practices. We utilize a variety of strategies and differentiate our instruction to meet the needs of all learners. Technology and 21st Century Skills are thoughtfully woven into our lessons and units of instruction. This document is meant to offer an overview of important concepts at each grade level and within each discipline.

Best Practices in 8th Grade US History:

- Activate and build on prior knowledge and promote higher level thinking skills.
- Provide students with a variety of active, student centered, and multi-sensory learning opportunities.
- Provide relevant and meaningful experiences that offer opportunities for students to make connections to their own lives using a variety of instructional strategies.
- Provide the opportunities for students to understand that the present connects to the past and affects the future.
- Develop student understanding of diverse cultures that honor equality and human dignity.
- Provide multiple authentic assessment tools.
- Use the rich history and ethnic diversity of our community to enhance learning.

Students read, understand, and respond to informational text in the content area with an emphasis on comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and making connections among ideas and between texts with a focus on textual evidence. Areas of focus include Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, and Range and Level of Complex Texts.

Students write for different purposes and audiences. Students write clear and focused text to convey a well-defined perspective and appropriate content. Areas of focus include: Text Types and Purposes, Production and Distribution of Writing, Research to Build and Present Knowledge, and Range of Writing.

Skills and Concepts:

- Colonial Period and Revolutionary War
- Challenges of the New Republic
- Jefferson Era and the Age of Jackson
- Industrial Revolution and the Age of Reform
- The Civil War

Standards for 8th Grade US History:

[Pennsylvania Department of Education Standards](#)
[SAS](#)
[C3 Framework](#)

Assessments:

WSSD utilizes a variety of assessments to monitor student growth and achievement. Our teachers engage in daily informal formative assessments to make timely decision about whether a student understands the material and concepts being presented. We also utilize several summative assessments to determine if a student has mastered grade level skills and standards.

Some of the assessment utilized are:

tests and quizzes, research projects, classwork, homework, and journal writing.

Materials and Resources:

WSSD utilizes a variety of resources to meet all learners' needs.

Parent Resources:

Teacher Websites: [WSSD](#)

Schoology: [Schoology](#)