

Grade Eight History-Social Science Content Standards

United States History and Geography: Growth and Conflict

Students in grade eight study the ideas, issues, and events from the framing of the Constitution up to about 1900. After reviewing the development of America's democratic institutions founded on the Judeo-Christian heritage and English parliamentary traditions, particularly the shaping of the Constitution, students trace the development of American politics, society, culture, and economy and relate them to the emergence of major regional differences. They learn about the challenges facing the new nation, with an emphasis on the causes, course, and consequences of the Civil War. They make connections between the rise of industrialization and contemporary social and economic conditions.

8.1 Students understand the major events preceding the founding of the nation and relate their significance to the development of American constitutional democracy.

1. Analyze the philosophy of government expressed in the Declaration of Independence, with an emphasis on government as a means of securing individual rights (e.g., key phrases such as "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights").
2. Analyze how the American Revolution affected other nations, especially France.

8.2 Students analyze the political principles underlying the U.S. Constitution and compare the enumerated and implied powers of the federal government.

1. Discuss the significance of the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights, and the May-flower Compact.
2. Analyze the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution and the success of each in implementing the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.
3. Evaluate the major debates that occurred during the development of the Constitution and their ultimate resolutions in such areas as shared power among institutions, divided state-federal power, slavery, the rights of individuals and states (later addressed by the addition of the Bill of Rights), and the status of American Indian nations under the commerce clause.
4. Describe the political philosophy underpinning the Constitution as specified in the *Federalist Papers* (authored by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay) and the role of such leaders as Madison, George Washington, Roger Sherman, Gouverneur Morris, and James Wilson in the writing and ratification of the Constitution.
5. Understand the significance of Jefferson's Statute for Religious Freedom as a forerunner of the First Amendment.

6. Enumerate the powers of government set forth in the Constitution and the fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights.
7. Describe the principles of federalism, dual sovereignty, separation of powers, checks and balances, the nature and purpose of majority rule, and the ways in which the American idea of constitutionalism preserves individual rights.

8.3 Students understand the foundation of the American political system and the ways in which citizens participate in it.

1. Enumerate the advantages of a common market among the states as foreseen in and protected by the Constitution's clauses on interstate commerce, common coinage, and full-faith and credit.
2. Understand how the conflicts between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton resulted in the emergence of two political parties (e.g., view of foreign policy, Alien and Sedition Acts, economic policy, National Bank, funding and assumption of the revolutionary debt).
3. Know the significance of domestic resistance movements and ways in which the central government responded to such movements (e.g., Shays' Rebellion, the Whiskey Rebellion).
4. Describe the basic law-making process and how the Constitution provides numerous opportunities for citizens to participate in the political process and to monitor and influence government (e.g., function of elections, political parties, interest groups).
5. Understand the functions and responsibilities of a free press.

8.4 Students analyze the aspirations and ideals of the people of the new nation.

1. Describe the country's physical landscapes, political divisions, and territorial expansion during the terms of the first four presidents.
2. Analyze the rise of capitalism and the economic problems and conflicts that accompanied it.
3. Discuss daily life, including traditions in art, music, and literature, of early national America.

8.5 Students analyze U.S. foreign policy in the early Republic.

1. Know the changing boundaries of the United States and describe the relationships the country had with its neighbors (current Mexico and Canada) and Europe, including the influence of the Monroe Doctrine, and how those relationships influenced westward expansion and the Mexican-American War.
2. Outline the major treaties with American Indian nations during the administrations of the first four presidents and the varying outcomes of those treaties.

8.6 Students analyze the divergent paths of the American people from 1800 to the mid-1800s and the challenges they faced.

1. Discuss the influence of industrialization and technological developments on the regions, including human modification of the landscape and how physical geography shaped human actions (e.g., growth of cities, deforestation, farming, and mineral extraction).
2. Outline the physical obstacles to and the economic and political factors involved in building a network of roads, canals, and railroads.
3. List the reasons for the wave of immigration from Northern Europe to the United States and describe the growth in the number, size, and spatial arrangements of cities (e.g., Irish immigrants and the Great Irish Famine).
4. Study the lives of black Americans who gained freedom in the North and founded schools and churches to advance their rights and communities.
5. Trace the development of the American education system from its earliest roots, including the roles of religious and private schools and Horace Mann's campaign for free public education and its assimilating role in American culture.
6. Examine the women's suffrage movement.
7. Identify common themes in American art as well as transcendentalism and individualism (e.g., writings about and by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Herman Melville, Louisa May Alcott, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow).

8.7 Students analyze the divergent paths of the American people in the South from 1800 to the mid-1800s and the challenges they faced.

1. Describe the development of the agrarian economy in the South, identify the locations of the cotton-producing states, and discuss the significance of cotton and the cotton gin.
2. Trace the origins and development of slavery; its effects on black Americans and on the region's political, social, religious, economic, and cultural development; and identify the strategies that were tried to both overturn and preserve it (e.g., through the writings and historical documents on Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey).
3. Examine the characteristics of white Southern society and how the physical environment influenced events and conditions prior to the Civil War.

8.8 Students analyze the divergent paths of the American people in the West from 1800 to the mid-1800s and the challenges they faced.

1. Discuss the election of Andrew Jackson as president in 1828, the importance of Jacksonian democracy, and his actions as president (e.g., the spoils system, veto of the National Bank, policy of Indian removal, and opposition to the Supreme Court).
2. Describe the purpose, challenges, and economic incentives associated with westward expansion, including the concept of Manifest Destiny and the territorial acquisitions that spanned numerous decades.
3. Describe the role of pioneer women and the new status that western women achieved.

4. Examine the importance of the great rivers and the struggle over water rights.
5. Describe the Texas War for Independence and the Mexican-American War, including territorial settlements, the aftermath of the wars, and the effects the wars had on the lives of Americans, including Mexican Americans today.

8.9 Students analyze the early and steady attempts to abolish slavery and to realize the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.

1. Describe the leaders of the movement to abolish slavery.
2. Describe the significance of the Northwest Ordinance in education and in the banning of slavery in new states north of the Ohio River.
3. Discuss the importance of the slavery issue as raised by the annexation of Texas and California's admission to the union as a free state under the Compromise of 1850.
4. Analyze the significance of the States' Rights Doctrine, the Missouri Compromise (1820), the Wilmot Proviso (1846), the Compromise of 1850, Henry Clay's role in the Missouri Compromise and the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854), the *Dred Scott v. Sandford* decision (1857), and the Lincoln-Douglas debates (1858).
5. Describe the lives of free blacks and the laws that limited their freedom and economic opportunities.

8.10 Students analyze the multiple causes, key events, and complex consequences of the Civil War.

1. Trace the boundaries constituting the North and the South, the geographical differences between the two regions, and the differences between agrarians and industrialists.
2. Identify the constitutional issues posed by the doctrine of nullification and secession and the earliest origins of that doctrine.
3. Discuss Abraham Lincoln's presidency and his significant writings and speeches and their relationship to the Declaration of Independence, such as his "House Divided" speech (1858), Gettysburg Address (1863), Emancipation Proclamation (1863), and inaugural addresses (1861 and 1865).
4. Study the views and lives of leaders (e.g., Ulysses S. Grant, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee) and soldiers on both sides of the war, including those of black soldiers and regiments.
5. Describe critical developments and events in the war, including the major battles, geographical advantages and obstacles, technological advances, and General Lee's surrender at Appomattox.
6. Explain how the war affected combatants, civilians, the physical environment, and future warfare.

8.11 Students analyze the character and lasting consequences of Reconstruction.

1. List the original aims of Reconstruction and describe its effects on the political and social structures of different regions.
2. Understand the effects of the Freedmen's Bureau and the restrictions placed on the rights and opportunities of freedmen, including racial segregation and "Jim Crow" laws.
3. Trace the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and describe the Klan's effects.
4. Understand the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution and analyze their connection to Reconstruction.

8.12 Students analyze the transformation of the American economy and the changing social and political conditions in the United States in response to the Industrial Revolution.

1. Trace patterns of agricultural and industrial development as they relate to climate, use of natural resources, markets, and trade and locate such development on a map.
2. Identify the reasons for the development of federal Indian policy and the wars with American Indians and their relationship to agricultural development and industrialization.
3. Explain how states and the federal government encouraged business expansion through tariffs, banking, land grants, and subsidies.
4. Discuss entrepreneurs, industrialists, and bankers in politics, commerce, and industry.
5. Examine the location and effects of urbanization, renewed immigration, and industrialization.
6. Discuss child labor, working conditions, and laissez-faire policies toward big business and examine the labor movement, including its leaders (e.g., Samuel Gompers), its demand for collective bargaining, and its strikes and protests over labor conditions.
7. Identify the new sources of large-scale immigration and the contributions of immigrants to the building of cities and the economy.
8. Identify the characteristics and impact of Grangerism and Populism.
9. Name the significant inventors and their inventions and identify how they improved the quality of life (e.g., Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, Orville and Wilbur Wright).
10. Explain the concepts of Isolationism and imperialism in America at the beginning of the 20th Century.
11. Trace the causes and results of the Spanish –American War
12. Discus world relations at the beginning of the 20th Century.