

Social Studies – 8th Grade

(1) In Grade 8, students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period through Reconstruction. The knowledge and skills in subsection (b) of this section comprise the first part of a two-year study of U.S. history. The second part, comprising U.S. history since Reconstruction to the present, is provided in §113.32 of this title (relating to United States History Studies Since Reconstruction (One Credit)). The content builds upon that from Grade 5 but provides more depth and breadth. Historical content focuses on the political, economic, and social events and issues related to the colonial and revolutionary eras, the creation and ratification of the U.S. Constitution, challenges of the early Republic, westward expansion, sectionalism, Civil War, and Reconstruction. Students describe the physical characteristics of the United States and their impact on population distribution and settlement patterns in the past and present. Students analyze the various economic factors that influenced the development of colonial America and the early years of the Republic and identify the origins of the free enterprise system. Students examine the American beliefs and principles, including limited government, checks and balances, federalism, separation of powers, and individual rights, reflected in the U.S. Constitution and other historical documents. Students evaluate the impact of Supreme Court cases and major reform movements of the 19th century and examine the rights and responsibilities of citizens of the United States as well as the importance of effective leadership in a democratic society. Students evaluate the impact of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on the development of the United States. Students use critical-thinking skills, including the identification of bias in written, oral, and visual material.

(2) To support the teaching of the essential knowledge and skills, the use of a variety of rich primary and secondary source material such as the complete text of the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence; landmark cases of the U.S. Supreme Court; biographies and autobiographies; novels; speeches, letters, and diaries; and poetry, songs, and artworks is encouraged. Selections may include excerpts from the letters of John and Abigail Adams, an excerpt from the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions, and poems of the Civil War era. Motivating resources are also available from museums, historical sites, presidential libraries, and local and state preservation societies.

(3) The eight strands of the essential knowledge and skills for social studies are intended to be integrated for instructional purposes with the history and geography strands establishing a sense of time and a sense of place. Skills listed in the geography and social studies skills strands in subsection (b) of this section should be incorporated into the teaching of all essential knowledge and skills for social studies. A greater depth of understanding of complex content material can be attained when integrated social studies content from the various disciplines and critical-thinking skills are taught together.

(4) Throughout social studies in Kindergarten-Grade 12, students build a foundation in history; geography; economics; government; citizenship; culture; science, technology, and society; and social studies skills. The content, as appropriate for the grade level or course, enables students to understand the importance of patriotism, function in a free enterprise society, and appreciate the basic democratic values of our state and nation as referenced in the Texas Education Code, §28.002(h).

(8.1) History. The student understands traditional historical points of reference in U.S. history through 1877. The student is expected to:

(A) identify the major eras in U.S. history through 1877 and describe their defining characteristics;

(B) apply absolute and relative chronology through the sequencing of significant individuals, events, and time periods; and

(C) explain the significance of the following dates: 1607, 1776, 1787, 1803, and 1861-1865.

(8.2) History. The student understands the causes of exploration and colonization eras. The student is expected to:

(A) identify reasons for European exploration and colonization of North America; and

(B) compare political, economic, and social reasons for establishment of the 13 colonies.

(8.3) History. The student understands the foundations of representative government in the United States. The student is expected to:

(A) explain the reasons for the growth of representative government and institutions during the colonial period;

(B) evaluate the importance of the Mayflower Compact, the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, and the Virginia House of Burgesses to the growth of representative government; and

(C) describe how religion contributed to the growth of representative government in the American colonies.

(8.4) History. The student understands significant political and economic issues of the revolutionary era. The student is expected to:

(A) analyze causes of the American Revolution, including mercantilism and British economic policies following the French and Indian War;

(B) explain the roles played by significant individuals during the American Revolution, including Samuel Adams, Benjamin Franklin, King George III, Thomas Jefferson, the Marquis de Lafayette, Thomas Paine,

and George Washington;
(C) explain the issues surrounding important events of the American Revolution, including declaring independence; writing the Articles of Confederation; fighting the battles of Lexington, Concord, Saratoga, and Yorktown; and signing the Treaty of Paris; and
(D) analyze the issues of the Philadelphia Convention of 1787, including major compromises and arguments for and against ratification.
(8.5) History. The student understands the challenges confronted by the government and its leaders in the early years of the Republic. The student is expected to:
(A) describe major domestic problems faced by the leaders of the new Republic such as maintaining national security, creating a stable economic system, setting up the court system, and defining the authority of the central government;
(B) summarize arguments regarding protective tariffs, taxation, and the banking system;
(C) explain the origin and development of American political parties;
(D) explain the causes of and issues surrounding important events of the War of 1812;
(E) trace the foreign policies of Presidents Washington through Monroe and explain the impact of Washington's Farewell Address and the Monroe Doctrine;
(F) explain the impact of the election of Andrew Jackson, including the beginning of the modern Democratic Party; and
(G) analyze federal and state Indian policies and the removal and resettlement of Cherokee Indians during the Jacksonian era.
(8.6) History. The student understands westward expansion and its effects on the political, economic, and social development of the nation. The student is expected to:
(A) explain how the Northwest Ordinance established principles and procedures for orderly expansion of the United States;
(B) explain the political, economic, and social roots of Manifest Destiny;
(C) analyze the relationship between the concept of Manifest Destiny and the westward growth of the nation;
(D) explain the major issues and events of the Mexican War and their impact on the United States; and
(E) identify areas that were acquired to form the United States.
(8.7) History. The student understands how political, economic, and social factors led to the growth of sectionalism and the Civil War. The student is expected to:
(A) analyze the impact of tariff policies on sections of the United States before the Civil War;
(B) compare the effects of political, economic, and social factors on slaves and free blacks;
(C) analyze the impact of slavery on different sections of the United States; and
(D) compare the provisions and effects of congressional conflicts and compromises prior to the Civil War, including the roles of John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, and Daniel Webster.
(8.8) History. The student understands individuals, issues, and events of the Civil War. The student is expected to:
(A) explain the roles played by significant individuals during the Civil War, including Jefferson Davis, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and Abraham Lincoln;
(B) explain the issues surrounding significant events of the Civil War, including the firing on Fort Sumter, the battles of Gettysburg and Vicksburg, the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation, the assassination of Lincoln, and Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House; and
(C) analyze Abraham Lincoln's ideas about liberty, equality, union, and government as contained in his first and second inaugural addresses and the Gettysburg Address.
(8.9) History. The student understands the effects of Reconstruction on the political, economic, and social life of the nation. The student is expected to:
(A) evaluate legislative reform programs of the Radical Reconstruction Congress and reconstructed state governments;
(B) describe the economic difficulties faced by the United States during Reconstruction; and
(C) explain the social problems that faced the South during Reconstruction and evaluate their impact on different groups.
(8.10) Geography. The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data. The student is expected to:
(A) create thematic maps, graphs, charts, models, and databases representing various aspects of the United States; and
(B) pose and answer questions about geographic distributions and patterns shown on maps, graphs, charts, models, and databases.

(8.11) Geography. The student understands the location and characteristics of places and regions of the United States, past and present. The student is expected to:
(A) locate places and regions of importance in the United States during the 18th and 19th centuries;
(B) compare places and regions of the United States in terms of physical and human characteristics; and
(C) analyze the effects of physical and human geographic factors on major historical and contemporary events in the United States
(8.12) Geography. The student understands the physical characteristics of the United States during the 18th and 19th centuries and how humans adapted to and modified the environment. The student is expected to:
(A) analyze how physical characteristics of the environment influenced population distribution, settlement patterns, and economic activities in the United States during the 18th and 19th centuries;
(B) describe the consequences of human modification of the physical environment of the United States;
(C) describe how different immigrant groups interacted with the environment in the United States during the 18th and 19th centuries.
(8.13) Economics. The student understands why various sections of the United States developed different patterns of economic activity. The student is expected to:
(A) identify economic differences among different regions of the United States;
(B) explain reasons for the development of the plantation system, the growth of the slave trade, and the spread of slavery; and
(C) analyze the causes and effects of economic differences among different regions of the United States at selected times in U.S. history.
(8.14) Economics. The student understands how various economic forces resulted in the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century. The student is expected to:
(A) analyze the War of 1812 as a cause of economic changes in the nation; and
(B) identify the economic factors that brought about rapid industrialization and urbanization.
(8.15) Economics. The student understands the origins and development of the free enterprise system in the United States. The student is expected to:
(A) explain why a free enterprise system of economics developed in the new nation; and
(B) describe the characteristics and the benefits of the U.S. free enterprise system during the 18th and 19th centuries.
(8.16) Government. The student understands the American beliefs and principles reflected in the U.S. Constitution and other important historic documents. The student is expected to:
(A) identify the influence of ideas from historic documents including the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights, the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist Papers, and selected anti-federalist writings on the U.S. system of government;
(B) summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation;
(C) identify colonial grievances listed in the Declaration of Independence and explain how those grievances were addressed in the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights; and
(D) analyze how the U.S. Constitution reflects the principles of limited government, republicanism, checks and balances, federalism, separation of powers, popular sovereignty, and individual rights.
(8.17) Government. The student understands the process of changing the U.S. Constitution and the impact of amendments on American society. The student is expected to:
(A) summarize the purposes for and processes of changing the U.S. Constitution;
(B) describe the impact of 19th-century amendments including the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments on life in the United States; and
(C) identify the origin of judicial review and analyze examples of congressional and presidential responses.
(8.18) Government. The student understands the dynamic nature of the powers of the national government and state governments in a federal system. The student is expected to:
(A) analyze the arguments of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists, including those of Alexander Hamilton, Patrick Henry, James Madison, and George Mason; and
(B) describe historical conflicts arising over the issue of states' rights, including the Nullification Crisis and the Civil War.
(8.19) Government. The student understands the impact of landmark Supreme Court cases. The student is expected to:
(A) summarize the issues, decisions, and significance of landmark Supreme Court cases including Marbury v. Madison, McCulloch v. Maryland, and Gibbons v. Ogden; and
(B) evaluate the impact of selected landmark Supreme Court decisions including Dred Scott v. Sandford on life in the United States.

(8.20) Citizenship. The student understands the rights and responsibilities of citizens of the United States. The student is expected to:
(A) define and give examples of unalienable rights;
(B) summarize rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights;
(C) explain the importance of personal responsibilities such as accepting responsibility for one's behavior and supporting one's family;
(D) identify examples of responsible citizenship, including obeying rules and laws, voting, and serving on juries;
(E) summarize the criteria and explain the process for becoming a naturalized citizen of the United States;
(F) explain how the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens reflect our national identity.
(8.21) Citizenship. The student understands the importance of voluntary individual participation in the democratic process. The student is expected to:
(A) explain the role of significant individuals such as William Penn in the development of self-government in colonial America;
(B) evaluate the contributions of the Founding Fathers as models of civic virtue; and
(C) identify reasons for and the impact of selected examples of civil disobedience in U.S. history such as Henry David Thoreau's refusal to pay a tax.
(8.22) Citizenship. The student understands the importance of the expression of different points of view in a democratic society. The student is expected to:
(A) identify different points of view of political parties and interest groups on important historical and contemporary issues;
(B) describe the importance of free speech and press in a democratic society; and
(C) summarize a historical event in which compromise resulted in a peaceful resolution.
(8.23) Citizenship. The student understands the importance of effective leadership in a democratic society. The student is expected to:
(A) analyze the leadership qualities of elected and appointed leaders of the United States such as Abraham Lincoln, John Marshall, and George Washington; and
(B) describe the contributions of significant political, social, and military leaders of the United States such as Frederick Douglass, John Paul Jones, James Monroe, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.
(8.24) Culture. The student understands the relationships between and among people from various groups, including racial, ethnic, and religious groups, during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. The student is expected to:
(A) identify selected racial, ethnic, and religious groups that settled in the United States and their reasons for immigration;
(B) explain the relationship between urbanization and conflicts resulting from differences in religion, social class, and political beliefs;
(C) identify ways conflicts between people from various racial, ethnic, and religious groups were resolved;
(D) analyze the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to our national identity; and
(E) identify the political, social, and economic contributions of women to American society.
(8.25) Culture. The student understands the major reform movements of the 19th century. The student is expected to:
(A) describe the historical development of the abolitionist movement; and
(B) evaluate the impact of reform movements including public education, temperance, women's rights, prison reform, and care of the disabled.
(8.26) Culture. The student understands the impact of religion on the American way of life. The student is expected to:
(A) trace the development of religious freedom in the United States;
(B) describe religious influences on immigration and on social movements, including the impact of the first and second Great Awakenings; and
(C) analyze the impact of the first amendment guarantees of religious freedom on the American way of life.
(8.27) Culture. The student understands the relationship between the arts and the times during which they were created. The student is expected to:
(A) describe developments in art, music, literature, drama, and other cultural activities in the history of the United States;
(B) analyze the relationship between fine arts and continuity and change in the American way of life; and
(C) identify examples of American art, music, and literature that transcend American culture and convey universal themes.

(8.28) Science, technology, and society. The student understands the impact of science and technology on the economic development of the United States. The student is expected to:

(A) explain the effects of technological and scientific innovations such as the steamboat, the cotton gin, and the Bessemer steel process;

(B) analyze the impact of transportation systems on the growth, development, and urbanization of the United States;

(C) analyze how technological innovations changed the way goods were manufactured and marketed, nationally and internationally; and

(D) explain how technological innovations led to rapid industrialization.

(8.29) Science, technology, and society. The student understands the impact of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on daily life in the United States. The student is expected to:

(A) compare the effects of scientific discoveries and technological innovations that have influenced daily life in different periods in U.S. history;

(B) describe how scientific ideas influenced technological developments during different periods in U.S. history; and

(C) identify examples of how industrialization changed life in the United States.

(8.30) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

(A) differentiate between, locate, and use primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about the United States;

(B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;

(C) organize and interpret information from outlines, reports, databases, and visuals including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps;

(D) identify points of view from the historical context surrounding an event and the frame of reference which influenced the participants;

(E) support a point of view on a social studies issue or event;

(F) identify bias in written, oral, and visual material;

(G) evaluate the validity of a source based on language, corroboration with other sources, and information about the author; and

(H) use appropriate mathematical skills to interpret social studies information such as maps and graphs.

(I) keep abreast of current news events through periodicals

(J) apply knowledge of current events to past events and predict future changes (downfall of current stock market to stock market crash leading to the Great Depression)

(8.31) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:

(A) use social studies terminology correctly;

(B) use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation;

(C) transfer information from one medium to another, including written to visual and statistical to written or visual, using computer software as appropriate; and

(D) create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information.

(8.32) Social studies skills. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings. The student is expected to:

(A) use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and

(B) use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision.