

Social Studies- Grade 8 Essential Curriculum

Introductory Mini-Unit: Historiography

Note: The lessons plans and materials for this unit are available on the Document Repository

Goal. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the skills and thought processes involved in being an historian.

Objectives – the student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Interpret, organize, and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information.
- b. Understand that history can have multiple and complex definitions.
- c. Distinguish fact from interpretation.

UNIT I: The Road To Independence

Essential Question:

What factors influenced the original thirteen American colonies to sever ties with the British Empire?

Goal 1. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the historical background as well as the political and social changes that led to the American Revolution. 850.00

Objectives - The student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Identify the original thirteen colonies and describe their regional differences. 850.01
- b. Explain how the geography of these regions led to economic and cultural differences. 850.02
- c. Cite ways in which events in Europe precipitated the struggle for empire in North America. 850.03
- d. Describe how the French and Indian War changed the relationship between Great Britain and the colonies. 850.04
- e. Analyze the British economic and political policies toward the colonies during this period. 850.05
- f. Describe the different viewpoints toward and responses to British colonial policies after reading primary source selections. (*Reading to be Informed -- Developing Interpretation*) 850.06
Analyze the various motives of the colonists in their quest for independence. G/T 850.06
- g. Examine the Declaration of Independence as a rationale for revolution and a statement of American principles of government. 850.07

G/T Inquiry - In what ways were the motives of the colonists in their quest for independence similar to those of citizens in countries experiencing revolution and/or civil war in recent times? (See Foreword)

UNIT II: Forging a New Nation

Essential Question:

Was the American Revolution truly revolutionary?

Goal 1. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the major events and identify significant people of the American Revolution. 851.00

Objectives - The student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Explain the contributions of military and political leaders in the Revolutionary War effort. 851.01
- b. Describe the contributions of Native Americans, African Americans, and women to the Revolutionary War. 851.02
- c. Explain the significance of important battles of the American Revolution. 851.03
- d. Identify the results of the Treaty of Paris. 851.04
Analyze the outcomes of the war in relation to colonial and British preparedness at the onset. G/T 851.04

G/T Inquiry - How is the spirit of the American Revolution alive today in the United States and other parts of the world? (See Foreword)

Goal 2. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the development of the federal government as a result of the United States Constitution during the Federalist Period. 852.00

Objectives - The student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation. 852.01
Determine the reasons for the initial experimentation with a confederal form of government. G/T 852.01
- b. Identify and explain several key compromises that were necessary in order for the Constitution to receive approval. 852.02
- c. Interpret the content of the Preamble to the Constitution. (*Reading to be Informed -- Developing Interpretation*). 852.03
- d. Summarize the content and structure of the Constitution including the Preamble, the Articles, and the Bill of Rights. 852.04
- e. Explain the principles of government incorporated in the Constitution. 852.05

- f. Analyze the Federalist and Anti-Federalist arguments for and against the ratification of the Constitution. 852.06
- g. Contrast the basic differences between strict and loose interpretation of the Constitution. 852.07
Analyze the motivating factors of Hamilton and Jefferson based on the outcomes of a government run on a loose or strict interpretation of the Constitution. G/T 852.07
- h. Investigate and analyze contemporary issues which demonstrate the evolutionary nature of the Constitution. 852.08

G/T Inquiry -How have the rights of American citizens evolved over time? Investigate the evolution of rights as reflected in judicial and legislative actions over the last 200 years. The focus of this investigation is on segments of society whose rights were not originally addressed in The Constitution and Bill Of Rights. (See Foreword) *Note: A complete model of this inquiry has been distributed to all middle schools and is available from the Social Studies Office.*

Goal 3. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the philosophy of government that emerged during the Federalist Era. 853.00

Objectives - The student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Identify the major accomplishments of the Washington Administration. 853.01
- b. Trace the development of foreign policy during the Federalist Era. 853.02
- c. Summarize a chart containing political and economic issues that illustrate the differences between Federalists and Republicans. (*Reading to be Informed -- Global Understanding*) 853.03
- d. Trace the roots of nullification as exemplified in the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions. 853.04

G/T Inquiry - How has the two-party system developed from the early national days? See how the central issues faced by the Federalists and Republicans are still faced by contemporary politicians - states' rights and the role of the central government. (See Foreword)

UNIT III: Growth of a Nation

Essential Questions:

What factors led to the evolution of American democracy?

How did the United States establish its national identity in the first half of the 19th Century?

Goal 1. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the significant events and forces that shaped the new republic during Jefferson's presidency. 854.00

Objectives - The student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Explain how the Election of 1800 marked the beginning of peaceful transitions of power. 854.01
- b. Assess how John Marshall's precedent setting decisions strengthened the role of the judiciary by reading a summary of the Supreme Court decision of Marbury versus Madison. (*Reading to be Informed -- Critical Analysis*) 854.02
Justify the need for the development of a strong judiciary in the new federal government of the United States. G/T 854.02
- c. Assess the constitutionality and impact of the Louisiana Purchase. 854.03
- d. Analyze the steps taken by the Jefferson Administration and Congress to enforce American neutrality. 854.04
- e. Identify the unintended economic consequences of the Embargo Act of 1807. 854.05

G/T Inquiry - Investigate several current controversial laws. Based upon the Constitution, determine whether these laws should be subject to judicial review. (See Foreword)

Goal 2. Students will demonstrate the ability to examine the causes and consequences of the War of 1812, the growth of nationalism, and changing American economy. 855.00

Objectives - The student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Explain the causes and results of the War of 1812. 855.01
- b. Examine the involvement of individuals including Native Americans, African Americans, and women in the War of 1812. 855.02
- c. Analyze the impact of the Monroe Doctrine on U.S. foreign policy. 855.04
Analyze the factors that brought about the Monroe Doctrine, and resulting effects on foreign relations. G/T 855.04

- d. Describe the government policies of a protective tariff, a national bank, and internal improvements that fostered an Industrial Revolution. 855.05
- e. Analyze the social, political, and geographic factors that fostered the Industrial Revolution in the North. 855.06
- f. Identify the benefits of several major industrial developments and inventions in America during the first half of the 19th century. 855.07
- g. Explain how the Industrial Revolution sparked the growth of the cities and also created benefits for farming. 855.08
- h. Analyze ways in which the factory system helped broaden economic democracy and created a higher standard of living. 855.09

G/T Inquiry - What factors led to the vastly different economies that developed in the Northern and Southern states? (See Foreword)

Goal 3. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the significant events, forces, and people that shaped American history during the Jacksonian Era (1820 -1840). 856.00

Objectives - The student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Evaluate factors that contributed to the growing sectionalism in the early 19th century. 856.01
- b. Identify the changes in the American political system during the Jacksonian Era. 856.02
Examine the impact of Jackson’s presidency on the American political system. G/T 856.02
- c. Assess the impact of Jacksonian policies on Native Americans found in primary source documents when reading to be informed. (*Reading to be Informed -- Critical Analysis*) 856.03
- d. Explain some of the ways that Jackson contributed to the development of a strong presidency. 856.04
- e. Discuss Jackson's economic policy. 856.05

G/T Inquiry -How did the circumstances of "common people" of the United States improve under Andrew Jackson's presidency? Evaluate Jackson’s status as a representative of the “common man.” (See Foreword)

Goal 4. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the causes and consequences of territorial expansion prior to the Civil War. 857.00

Objectives - The student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Explain the concept of Manifest Destiny and assess its impact on the territorial expansion of the United States. 857.01
Analyze the racial, social, and economic attitudes that promoted Manifest Destiny. G/T 857.01
- b. Identify the major causes of conflict between the American settlers in Texas and the Mexican government. 857.02
- c. Trace the main events and list the major results of the Mexican War. 857.03
- d. Explain how the controversy over slavery was addressed temporarily by the Missouri Compromise (1820) and the Compromise of 1850. 857.04
- e. Describe the impact of the development of rail systems and water transportation on American expansion and economic development. 857.05
- f. Analyze the push-pull factors that led to increased immigration, and how this contributed to increased cultural conflict. 857.06
- g. Explain how various art forms reflected societal needs and contributed to a national identity. 857.07
- h. Contrast the causes and character of rapid settlement of California and Oregon in the late 1840's and 1850's. 857.08

UNIT IV: A Union in Disunion

Essential Question:

Did the Civil War and Reconstruction accomplish the goals established by the Lincoln administration?

Goal 1. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the issues that ultimately led the nation to separation and the Civil War. 858.00

Objectives - The student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Describe the experiences of African Americans during the Middle Passage. 858.01
- b. Identify the cultural and political contributions of free African Americans and of enslaved persons. 858.02
Note: These two previous objectives may be taught during earlier units based upon the teacher's discretion.
- c. Examine and describe why the cotton-dominated economy of the South contributed to sectionalism. 858.03
Relate how the sectionalism of the 1850's is rooted in events occurring in the previous century. G/T 858.03

- d. Explain the differences in points of view as expressed by abolitionists and by the defenders of slavery in primary source documents. (*Reading to be Informed -- Critical Analysis*) 858.04
- e. Explain how the Kansas-Nebraska Act led to virtual civil war in Kansas. 858.05
- f. Describe how the slavery issue gave rise to the formation of several new political parties. 858.06
- g. Identify economic conditions that supported a continuation of the practice of slavery in the South. 858.07
- h. Describe the effect of the Dred Scott decision on northern and southern positions on slavery. 858.08
- i. Explain how Lincoln's election prompted secession by southern states. 858.09

G/T Inquiry - In what ways can the American Civil War be considered as the turning point in American history? Investigate the causes of the Civil War. Which were resolved? Which remain unresolved to this day? Include: slavery, sectionalism, the supremacy of the national government, and states' rights. (See Foreword)

Goal 2. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the effects of the Civil War on the American people. 859.00

Objectives - The student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of the North and South during the Civil War. 859.01
- b. Evaluate political, social, economic, and geographic factors as chief causes of the Civil War. 859.02
- c. Identify prominent military and political leaders of the Civil War and discuss their impact during this period. 859.03
- d. Describe various military strategies employed during the war, including the impact of geography. 859.04
- e. Assess the roles of African Americans and women during the Civil War. 859.05
- f. Identify key Civil War battles and explain their outcomes. 859.06
- g. Describe the purposes and effects of the Emancipation Proclamation. 859.07
Examine the military and political circumstances at the end of 1862 that led to the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. G/T 859.07

G/T Inquiry - Should Abraham Lincoln be considered as America's greatest president? Critics of Abraham Lincoln complain that he does not deserve the title "the Great Emancipator." Analyze Lincoln's attitudes toward slavery and African Americans through

his writings and speeches to determine the validity of this complaint, keeping in mind the historical and political context of his words.

Goal 3. Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the significant economic, social, and political consequences of the Civil War. 860.00

Objectives - The student will demonstrate the ability to:

- a. Describe Lincoln's and Johnson's plans for Reconstruction. 860.01
 - b. State the provisions of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. 860.02
 - c. Discuss why the Radical Republicans attempted to remove Johnson from office. 860.03
 - d. Assess the general conditions of the South following the Civil War. 860.04
 - e. Analyze the participation of African-Americans who were elected to public office in the South. 860.05
 - f. Identify the strategies used by white Southerners to impede the integration of African Americans in the mainstream of southern society as evident in the writings of abolitionists.) 860.06
 - g. Explain why the Election of 1876 marked the end of the Reconstruction Era. 860.07
- Evaluate the effects of Reconstruction on the various social and ethnic groups in the South. G/T 860.07

G/T Inquiry - Is the American Civil War over? Examine the struggles of African Americans after the Civil War. Draw comparisons with the struggles faced by minorities in the U.S. or in other countries today.