

Grade 8

THEME: U.S. STUDIES FROM 1492 TO 1877: EXPLORATION THROUGH RECONSTRUCTION

The historical focus continues in the eighth grade with the study of European exploration and the early years of the United States. This study incorporates all four social studies strands into a chronologic view of the development of the United States. Students examine how historic events are shaped by geographic, social, cultural, economic and political factors.

HISTORY STRAND	HISTORICAL THINKING AND SKILLS	COLONIZATION TO INDEPENDENCE
	Content Statements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Primary and secondary sources are used to examine events from multiple perspectives and to present and defend a position. 	Content Statements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. North America, originally inhabited by American Indians, was explored and colonized by Europeans for economic and religious reasons. 3. Competition for control of territory and resources in North America led to conflicts among colonizing powers. 4. The practice of race-based slavery led to the forced migration of Africans to the American colonies and contributed to colonial economic development. Their knowledge, skills and traditions were essential to the development of the colonies. 5. The ideas of the Enlightenment and dissatisfaction with colonial rule led English colonists to write the Declaration of Independence and launch the American Revolution. 6. Key events and significant figures in American history influenced the course and outcome of the American Revolution.
	A NEW NATION	EXPANSION
	Content Statements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. The outcome of the American Revolution was national independence and new political, social and economic relationships for the American people. 8. Problems arising under the Articles of Confederation led to debate over the adoption of the U.S. Constitution. 9. Actions of early presidential administrations established a strong federal government, provided peaceful transitions of power and repelled a foreign invasion. 	Content Statements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. The United States added to its territory through treaties and purchases. 11. Westward expansion contributed to economic and industrial development, debates over sectional issues, war with Mexico and the displacement of American Indians.

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HISTORY STRAND, CONTINUED	CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION	
	<p>Content Statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Disputes over the nature of federalism, complicated by economic developments in the United States, resulted in sectional issues, including slavery, which led to the American Civil War. 13. Key events and significant figures in American history influenced the course and outcome of the Civil War. 14. The Reconstruction period resulted in changes to the U.S. Constitution, an affirmation of federal authority and lingering social and political differences. 	
GEOGRAPHY STRAND	SPATIAL THINKING AND SKILLS	HUMAN SYSTEMS
	<p>Content Statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Modern and historical maps and other geographic tools are used to analyze how historic events are shaped by geography. 	<p>Content Statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16. The availability of natural resources contributed to the geographic and economic expansion of the United States, sometimes resulting in unintended environmental consequences. 17. The movement of people, products and ideas resulted in new patterns of settlement and land use that influenced the political and economic development of the United States. 18. Cultural biases, stereotypes and prejudices had social, political and economic consequences for minority groups and the population as a whole. 19. Americans began to develop a unique national identity among diverse regional and cultural populations based on democratic ideals.
GOVERNMENT STRAND	CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND SKILLS	ROLES AND SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT
	<p>Content Statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20. Active participation in social and civic groups can lead to the attainment of individual and public goals. 21. Informed citizens understand how media and communication technology influence public opinion. 	<p>Content Statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22. The U.S. Constitution established a federal republic, providing a framework for a national government with elected representatives, separation of powers, and checks and balances. 23. The U.S. Constitution protects citizens' rights by limiting the powers of government.

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ECONOMICS STRAND	ECONOMIC DECISION MAKING AND SKILLS	PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION
	Content Statements: 24. Choices made by individuals, businesses and governments have both present and future consequences.	Content Statements: 25. The Industrial Revolution fundamentally changed the means of production as a result of improvements in technology, use of new power resources, the advent of interchangeable parts and the shift from craftwork to factory work.
	MARKETS	
	Content Statements: 26. Governments can impact markets by means of spending, regulations, taxes and trade barriers.	