



3rd Grade
Social Studies



UNITED STATES HISTORY – Year 1: American Indian Cultures through Colonization

In third grade, students begin a three-year study of United States history in which all four strands (history, geography, civics/government, and economics) are integrated. Students learn about American Indian cultures and the exploration and colonization of North America. The geography strand emphasizes the influence of geography on early U.S. history. In the civics/government strand, students learn about the elements of our representative democracy and their rights and responsibilities as good citizens. Students will extend and apply their understanding of basic economic concepts.

CONNECTING THEMES AND ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

The following connecting themes and enduring understandings will feature prominently in the course and help students increase their understanding and retention of knowledge.

1. **BELIEFS AND IDEALS:** The student will understand that people’s ideas and feelings influence their decisions.
2. **CONFLICT AND CHANGE:** The student will understand that conflict causes change.
3. **DISTRIBUTION OF POWER:** The student will understand that laws and people’s beliefs help decide who gets to make choices in government.
4. **INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, INSTITUTIONS:** The student will understand that what people, groups, and institutions say and do can help or harm others whether they mean to or not.
5. **LOCATION:** The student will understand that where people live matters.
6. **PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION, CONSUMPTION:** The student will understand that the ways people make, get, and use goods and services may be different from how people in other places make, get, and use goods and services.

INFORMATION PROCESSING SKILLS

The student will be able to locate, analyze, and synthesize information related to social studies topics and apply this information to solve problems and make decisions.

1. Compare similarities and differences
2. Organize items chronologically
3. Identify issues and/or problems and alternative solutions
4. Distinguish between fact and opinion
5. Identify main idea, detail, sequence of events, and cause and effect in a social studies context
6. Identify and use primary and secondary sources
7. Interpret timelines
8. Identify social studies reference resources to use for a specific purpose
9. Construct charts and tables
10. Analyze artifacts
11. Draw conclusions and make generalizations
12. Analyze graphs and diagrams
13. Translate dates into centuries, eras, or ages



MAP AND GLOBE SKILLS

The student will use maps and globes to retrieve social studies information.

1. Use a compass rose to identify cardinal directions
2. Use intermediate directions
3. Use a letter/number grid system to determine location
4. Compare and contrast the categories of natural, cultural, and political features found on maps
5. Use graphic scales to determine distances on a map
6. Use map key/legend to acquire information from historical, physical, political, resource, product and economic maps
7. Use a map to explain impact of geography on historical and current events
8. Draw conclusions and make generalizations based on information from maps
9. Use latitude and longitude to determine location

HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDINGS

SS3H1 Describe early American Indian cultures and their development in North America.

- a. Locate the regions where American Indians settled in North America: Arctic, Northwest Southwest, Plains, Northeast, and Southeast.
- b. Compare and contrast how American Indians in each region used their environment to obtain food, clothing, and shelter.
- c. Discuss how American Indians continue to contribute to American life (e.g., arts, literature).

SS3H2 Describe European exploration in North America.

- a. Describe the reasons for and obstacles to the exploration of North America.
- b. Describe the accomplishments of: John Cabot (England), Vasco Núñez de Balboa (Spain), Hernando de Soto (Spain), Christopher Columbus (Spain), Henry Hudson (The Netherlands), and Jacques Cartier (France).
- c. Describe examples of cooperation and conflict between European explorers and American Indians.

SS3H3 Explain the factors that shaped British Colonial America.

- a. Identify key reasons why the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and Southern colonies were founded (religious freedom and profit).
- b. Compare and contrast colonial life in the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and Southern colonies (education, economy, and religion).
- c. Describe colonial life in America from the perspectives of various people: large landowners, farmers, artisans, women, children, indentured servants, slaves, and American Indians.



GEOGRAPHIC UNDERSTANDINGS

SS3G1 Locate major topographical features on a physical map of the United States.

- a. Locate major rivers of the United States of America: Mississippi, Ohio, Rio Grande, Colorado, Hudson, and St. Lawrence.
- b. Locate major mountain ranges of the United States of America: Appalachian, Rocky.

SS3G2 Locate and describe the equator, prime meridian, and lines of latitude and longitude on a globe.

SS3G3 Describe how physical systems affect human systems.

- a. Explain why American Indian groups occupied the areas they did (SS3H1a), with emphasis on why some developed permanent villages and others did not.
- b. Describe how the early explorers (SS3H2a) adapted, or failed to adapt, to the various physical environments in which they traveled.
- c. Explain how the physical geography of the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and Southern colonies helped determine economic activities.

GOVERNMENT/CIVICS UNDERSTANDINGS

SS3CG1 Describe the elements of representative democracy/republic in the United States.

- a. Describe the three branches of national government: executive (president), legislative (Congress), and judicial (Supreme Court of the United States).
- b. Describe the three branches of state government: executive (governor), legislative (Georgia General Assembly), and judicial (Supreme Court of Georgia).
- c. State the main responsibility of each branch: executive (enforcing laws), legislative (making laws), judicial (determining if laws are fair).

SS3CG2 Explain the importance of Americans sharing certain central democratic beliefs and principles, both personal and civic.

- a. Explain the necessity of respecting the rights of others and promoting the common good.
- b. Explain the necessity of obeying reasonable laws/rules voluntarily, and explain why it is important for citizens in a democratic society to participate in public (civic) life (staying informed, voting, volunteering, and communicating with public officials).

ECONOMIC UNDERSTANDINGS

SS3E1 Define and give examples of the four types of productive resources.

- a. Natural (land)
- b. Human (labor)
- c. Capital (capital goods)
- d. Entrepreneurship (risk-taking and combining natural, human, and capital resources in an attempt to make a profit)



ECONOMIC UNDERSTANDINGS (continued)

SS3E2 Explain that governments provide certain types of goods and services in a market economy (schools, libraries, roads, police/fire protection, and military) and pay for these through taxes.

SS3E3 Give examples of interdependence and trade and explain the benefits of voluntary exchange.

- a. Describe the interdependence of consumers and producers.
- b. Describe how goods and services are allocated by price in the marketplace.
- c. Explain that some goods are made locally, some elsewhere in the country, and some in other countries.
- d. Explain that most countries create their own currency for use as money.

SS3E4 Explain the concept of opportunity cost as it relates to making a saving or spending choice.