MIDDLE LEVEL
SOCIAL STUDIES
Kentucky Core Academic Standards – Social Studies – Sixth Grade

Social studies at the middle level has a different level/grade context each year. For example, grade six includes world geography through an integrated social studies perspective. Grade seven focuses on an integrated study of world history from the earliest civilizations to 1500 A.D. Grade eight covers the history of the United States from the early inhabitants to Reconstruction. Regardless of the level/grade context, students incorporate each of the five areas of social studies in an integrated fashion to explore the content.

The primary purpose of social studies is to help students develop the ability to make informed decisions as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. The skills and concepts found throughout this document reflect this purpose by promoting the belief that students must develop more than an understanding of social studies content. They must also be able to apply the content perspectives of several academic fields of the social studies to personal and public experiences. By stressing the importance of both content knowledge and its application, the social studies curriculum in Kentucky provides a framework that prepares students to become productive citizens.

The social studies content standards at the middle level are directly aligned with Kentucky’s Academic Expectations. Social Studies standards are organized around five “Big Ideas” that are important to the discipline of social studies. The five Big Ideas in social studies are: Government and Civics, Cultures and Societies, Economics, Geography and Historical Perspective. The Big Ideas, which are more thoroughly explained in the pages that follow, are conceptual organizers that are the same at each grade level. This consistency ensures students have multiple opportunities throughout their school careers to develop skills and concepts linked to the Big Ideas.

Under each Big Idea are statements of Enduring Knowledge/Understandings that represent overarching generalizations linked to the Big Ideas of social studies. The understandings represent the desired results - what learning will focus upon and what knowledge students will be able to explain or apply. Understandings can be used to frame development of units of study and lesson plans.

Skills and concepts describe ways that students demonstrate their learning and are specific to each grade level. The skills and concepts for social studies are fundamental to social studies literacy and build on prior learning.

The social studies program includes strong literacy connections, active hands-on work with concrete materials, and appropriate technologies. The social studies curriculum includes and depends on a number of different types of materials such as textbooks, non-fiction texts, biographies, autobiographies, journals, maps, newspapers, photographs and primary documents. Higher order thinking skills, such as compare, explain, analyze, predict, construct and interpret, are all heavily dependent on a variety of literacy skills and processes. For example, in social studies students must be able to understand specialized vocabulary, identify and comprehend key pieces of information within texts, determine what is fact and what is opinion, relate information across texts, connect new information to prior knowledge and synthesize the information to make meaning.
Big Idea: Government and Civics
The study of government and civics equips students to understand the nature of government and the unique characteristics of American representative democracy, including its fundamental principles, structure, and the role of citizens. Understanding the historical development of structures of power, authority, and governance and their evolving functions in contemporary U.S. society and other parts of the world is essential for developing civic competence. An understanding of civic ideals and practices of citizenship is critical to full participation in society and is a central purpose of the social studies.

Academic Expectations
2.14 Students understand the democratic principles of justice, equality, responsibility, and freedom and apply them to real-life situations.
2.15 Students can accurately describe various forms of government and analyze issues that relate to the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

Grade 6 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that
- the purposes and sources of power in present day governments vary, each reflecting and impacting the culture(s) of the people governed.
- individual rights of people vary under different forms of government.
- democratic governments of the present day function to protect the rights, liberty and property of their citizens while promoting the common good.
- the United States does not exist in isolation; its democratic form of government has played and continues to play a role in our interconnected society.

Grade 6 Skills and Concepts
Students will
- demonstrate an understanding (e.g., speak, draw, write, projects, present) of the nature of government:
  - describe different forms of government in the present day
  - compare purposes and sources of power in the most common forms of government (e.g., monarchy, democracy, republic, dictatorship) in the present day
  - explain how democratic governments of the present day function to preserve and protect the rights (e.g., voting), liberty, and property of their citizens by making, enacting and enforcing appropriate rules and laws
  - analyze information found in current events/news (e.g., TV, radio, Internet, articles) about different present day governments and how they may reflect/impact culture
- describe/give examples of similarities and differences between rights and responsibilities of individuals living in countries with different forms of government
- analyze information from a variety of print and non-print sources (e.g., books, documents, articles, observations, interviews) to investigate, explain and answer questions about different forms of government in the present day
Big Idea: Cultures and Societies
Culture is the way of life shared by a group of people, including their ideas and traditions. Cultures reflect the values and beliefs of groups in different ways (e.g., art, music, literature, religion); however, there are universals (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, communication) connecting all cultures. Culture influences viewpoints, rules and institutions in a global society. Students should understand that people form cultural groups throughout the United States and the World, and that issues and challenges unite and divide them.

Academic Expectations
2.16 Students observe, analyze, and interpret human behaviors, social groupings, and institutions to better understand people and the relationships among individuals and among groups.
2.17 Students interact effectively and work cooperatively with the many diverse ethnic and cultural groups of our nation and world.

Grade 6 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that
• culture is a system of beliefs, knowledge, institutions, customs/traditions, languages and skills shared by a group of people. Through a society's culture, individuals learn the relationships, structures, patterns and processes to be members of the society.
• cultures develop social institutions (e.g., government, economy, education, religion, family) to structure society, influence behavior and respond to human needs.
• interactions among individuals and groups assume various forms (e.g., compromise, cooperation, conflict, competition) and are influenced by culture.
• culture affects how people in a society behave in relation to groups and their environment.
• an appreciation of the diverse complexity of cultures is essential in our global society.

Grade 6 Skills and Concepts
Students will
• demonstrate an understanding (e.g., speak, draw, write, sing, create) of the complexity of culture by exploring cultural elements (e.g., beliefs, customs/traditions, languages, skills, literature, the arts) of diverse groups and explaining how culture serves to define present day groups and may result in unique perspectives
• investigate social institutions (e.g., family, religion, education, government, economy) in relation to how they respond to human needs, structure society and influence behavior in the present day
• explain how communications between groups can be influenced by cultural differences; explain how interactions (e.g., political, economic, religious, ethnic) can lead to conflict and competition among individuals and groups in the present day
• describe conflicts between individuals or groups and explain how compromise and cooperation are possible choices to resolve conflict among individuals and groups in the United States and across regions of the world in the present day
• compare examples of cultural elements (e.g., language, the arts, customs/traditions, beliefs, skills and literature) of diverse groups in the present day, including non-Western cultures within the United States, in current events/news using information from a variety of print and non-print sources (e.g., media, literature, interviews, observations, documentaries, artifacts)
Big Idea: Economics
Economics includes the study of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. Students need to understand how their economic decisions affect them, others, the nation and the world. The purpose of economic education is to enable individuals to function effectively both in their own personal lives and as citizens and participants in an increasingly connected world economy. Students need to understand the benefits and costs of economic interaction and interdependence among people, societies, and governments.

Academic Expectations
2.18 Students understand economic principles and are able to make economic decisions that have consequences in daily living.

Grade 6 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that
- the basic economic problem confronting individuals, societies and governments across present day geographic regions is scarcity: as a result of scarcity, economic choices and decisions must be made.
- economic systems (e.g., traditional, command, market, mixed) and a variety of fundamental economic concepts (e.g., supply and demand, opportunity cost) affect individuals, societies and governments of the present day.
- individuals, businesses and governments must make economic decisions about the use of resources in the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.
- markets are institutional arrangements that enable buyers and sellers to exchange goods and services.
- our global economy provides for a level of interdependence among individuals, regions and nations of the present day.

Grade 6 Skills and Concepts
Students will
- demonstrate an understanding of the nature of limited resources and scarcity, using a variety of print and non-print sources (e.g., news media, news magazines, textbook, Internet) to investigate present day economic problems within the U.S. and in world regions:
  - explain how scarcity requires individuals, groups and governments to make decisions about the use of productive resources (e.g., natural resources, human resources and capital goods)
  - compare economic systems (e.g., traditional, command, market, mixed)
  - explain how the prices of goods and services are determined by supply and demand in market economies
- demonstrate an understanding of markets by providing scenarios to illustrate how goods and services are exchanged; explain how money can be used to express the market value of goods and services; describe the relationship between money and ease of trading, borrowing, investing and saving; analyze the connections between economic conditions and current events of the present day
- investigate the production and distribution of goods and services in present day societies:
  - describe how competition among buyers and sellers impacts the price of goods and services
  - explain ways in which societies (within the U.S. and in world regions) address basic economic questions (e.g., how resources are used to produce goods and services, how regions increase productivity) about the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services
  - analyze examples that demonstrate interdependence of international economic activities
Big Idea: Geography
Geography includes the study of the five fundamental themes of location, place, regions, movement and human/environmental interaction. Students need geographic knowledge to analyze issues and problems to better understand how humans have interacted with their environment over time, how geography has impacted settlement and population, and how geographic factors influence climate, culture, the economy and world events. A geographic perspective also enables students to better understand the past and present and to prepare for the future.

Academic Expectations
2.19 Students recognize and understand the relationship between people and geography and apply their knowledge in real-life situations.

Grade 6 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that

- the use of geographic tools (e.g., maps, globes, photographs, models, charts, graphs, databases, and satellite images) and mental maps helps interpret information, analyze patterns and spatial data, and solve geographic issues in the present day.
- patterns emerge as humans move, settle, and interact on Earth's surface and can be identified by examining the location of physical and human characteristics, how they are arranged, and why they are in particular locations. Economic, political, cultural and social processes interact to shape patterns of human populations, interdependence, cooperation and conflict.
- regions help us to see Earth as an integrated system of places and features organized by such principles as landform types, political units, economic patterns and cultural groups.
- people depend on, adapt to, or modify the environment to meet basic needs. Human actions modify the physical environment and in turn, the physical environment limits or promotes human activities in the present day.
- citizens in an interdependent global community change their environment through the use of land and other resources. Many of the important issues facing societies and nations involve the consequences of interactions between human and physical systems.
Big Idea: Geography – Continued

Grade 6 Skills and Concepts

**Students will**
- demonstrate an understanding of patterns on the Earth's surface, using a variety of geographic tools (e.g., maps, globes, charts, graphs, satellite images):
  - locate, in absolute and relative terms, landforms and bodies of water
  - locate and interpret patterns on Earth's surface (e.g., how different factors, such as rivers, mountains and plains affect where human activities are located)
- investigate regions of the Earth's surface using information from print and non-print sources (e.g., books, films, magazines, Internet, geographic tools):
  - explain relationships between and among physical characteristics (e.g., mountains, bodies of water, valleys) of present day regions and how they are made distinctive by human characteristics (e.g., dams, roads, urban centers); describe advantages and disadvantages for human activities (e.g., exploration, migration, trade, settlement) that resulted
  - describe patterns of human settlement in the present day; explain relationships between these patterns and human needs; analyze how factors (e.g., war, famine, disease, economic opportunity, technology) impact human migration today
  - evaluate how availability of technology, resources and knowledge causes places and regions in the present day to change
  - interpret current events in the world from a geographic perspective
- investigate interactions among human activities and the physical environment in the present day:
  - explain how people modify the physical environment (e.g., dams, roads, bridges) to meet their needs in different regions
  - describe how the physical environment can promote or restrict human activities (e.g., exploration, migration, trade, settlement, development) in the present day
  - explain cause and effect relationships between the natural resources of a place or region and its political, social and economic development
  - describe how individual and group perspectives impact the use (e.g., urban development, recycling) of natural resources using current events
Big Idea: Historical Perspective
History is an account of events, people, ideas, and their interaction over time that can be interpreted through multiple perspectives. In order for students to understand the present and plan for the future, they must understand the past. Studying history engages students in the lives, aspirations, struggles, accomplishments and failures of real people. Students need to think in an historical context in order to understand significant ideas, beliefs, themes, patterns and events, and how individuals and societies have changed over time in Kentucky, the United States and the World.

Academic Expectations
2.20 Students understand, analyze, and interpret historical events, conditions, trends, and issues to develop historical perspective.

Grade 6 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that
- interactions among countries and people are complex because of cultural, political, economic, geographic and historical differences.
- people and groups react and adapt to change over time in a variety of ways based on their needs, goals and experiences.

Grade 6 Skills and Concepts
Students will
- demonstrate an understanding of the interpretative nature of history using a variety of tools and resources (e.g., primary and secondary sources, Internet, timelines, maps):
  - investigate and chronologically describe (e.g., using timelines, charts, fictional and report writing, role playing) major events in present day regions of the world and draw inferences about their importance
  - examine potential causes of recent historical events and show connections among causes and effects; use cause-effect relationships to identify patterns of historical change influenced by government, culture, economics and/or geography
  - analyze historical events, conditions and perspectives of different individuals and groups (e.g., by gender, race, region, ethnic group, age, economic status, religion, political group) in present day regions of the world
- analyze major historical events and people in present day regions of the world using information from print and non-print sources (e.g., biographies, autobiographies, films, magazines, Internet)
Kentucky Core Academic Standards – Social Studies – Seventh Grade

Social studies at the middle level has a different level/grade context each year. For example, grade six includes world geography through an integrated social studies perspective. Grade seven focuses on an integrated study of world history from the earliest civilizations to 1500 A.D. Grade eight covers the history of the United States from the early inhabitants to Reconstruction. Regardless of the level/grade context, students incorporate each of the five areas of social studies in an integrated fashion to explore the content.

The primary purpose of social studies is to help students develop the ability to make informed decisions as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. The skills and concepts found throughout this document reflect this purpose by promoting the belief that students must develop more than an understanding of social studies content. They must also be able to apply the content perspectives of several academic fields of the social studies to personal and public experiences. By stressing the importance of both content knowledge and its application, the social studies curriculum in Kentucky provides a framework that prepares students to become productive citizens.

The social studies content standards at the middle level are directly aligned with Kentucky’s Academic Expectations. Social Studies standards are organized around five “Big Ideas” that are important to the discipline of social studies. The five Big Ideas in social studies are: Government and Civics, Cultures and Societies, Economics, Geography and Historical Perspective. The Big Ideas, which are more thoroughly explained in the pages that follow, are conceptual organizers that are the same at each grade level. This consistency ensures students have multiple opportunities throughout their school careers to develop skills and concepts linked to the Big Ideas.

Under each Big Idea are statements of Enduring Knowledge/Understanding that represent overarching generalizations linked to the Big Ideas of social studies. The understandings represent the desired results - what learning will focus upon and what knowledge students will be able to explain or apply. Understandings can be used to frame development of units of study and lesson plans.

Skills and concepts describe ways that students demonstrate their learning and are specific to each grade level. The skills and concepts for social studies are fundamental to social studies literacy and build on prior learning.

The social studies program includes strong literacy connections, active hands-on work with concrete materials, and appropriate technologies. The social studies curriculum includes and depends on a number of different types of materials such as textbooks, non-fiction texts, biographies, autobiographies, journals, maps, newspapers, photographs and primary documents. Higher order thinking skills, such as compare, explain, analyze, predict, construct and interpret, are all heavily dependent on a variety of literacy skills and processes. For example, in social studies students must be able to understand specialized vocabulary, identify and comprehend key pieces of information within texts, determine what is fact and what is opinion, relate information across texts, connect new information to prior knowledge and synthesize the information to make meaning.
Big Idea: Government and Civics
The study of government and civics equips students to understand the nature of government and the unique characteristics of American representative democracy, including its fundamental principles, structure, and the role of citizens. Understanding the historical development of structures of power, authority, and governance and their evolving functions in contemporary U.S. society and other parts of the world is essential for developing civic competence. An understanding of civic ideals and practices of citizenship is critical to full participation in society and is a central purpose of the social studies.

Academic Expectations
2.14 Students understand the democratic principles of justice, equality, responsibility, and freedom and apply them to real-life situations.
2.15 Students can accurately describe various forms of government and analyze issues that relate to the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

Grade 7 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that
- forms of government in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. had similarities and differences in their purposes and sources of power.
- the key ideals (e.g., citizenship, justice, equality, and rule of law) of a democratic form of government were practiced in some world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
- individual rights in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. varied under different forms of government.

Grade 7 Skills and Concepts
Students will
- demonstrate an understanding (e.g., speak, draw, write, projects, present) of the nature of government:
  - explain the role of government (e.g., establishing order, providing security, achieving common goals) in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. and make connections to how government influences culture, society and the economy
  - compare different forms of government, and the purposes and sources of power in the most common forms of government (e.g., monarchy, democracy, republic, dictatorship) in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
  - analyze how some world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. (e.g., Greece, Rome) demonstrated the use of democratic principles (e.g., justice, equality, responsibility, freedom)
- compare rights and responsibilities of individuals in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. to the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens today
- analyze information from a variety of print and non-print sources (e.g., books, documents, articles, observations, interviews, Internet sources) to research, explain and answer questions about governments and people of world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
Big Idea: Cultures and Societies
Culture is the way of life shared by a group of people, including their ideas and traditions. Cultures reflect the values and beliefs of groups in different ways (e.g., art, music, literature, religion); however, there are universals (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, communication) connecting all cultures. Culture influences viewpoints, rules and institutions in a global society. Students should understand that people form cultural groups throughout the United States and the World, and that issues and challenges unite and divide them.

Academic Expectations
2.16 Students observe, analyze, and interpret human behaviors, social groupings, and institutions to better understand people and the relationships among individuals and among groups.
2.17 Students interact effectively and work cooperatively with the many ethnic and cultural groups of our nation and world.

Grade 7 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
*Students will understand that*
- culture is a system of beliefs, knowledge, institutions, customs/traditions, languages and skills shared by a group of people. Through a society’s culture, individuals learn the relationships, structures, patterns and processes to be members of the society.
- cultures develop social institutions (e.g., government, economy, education, religion, family) to structure society, influence behavior and respond to human needs.
- interactions among individuals and groups assume various forms (e.g., compromise, cooperation, conflict, competition) and are influenced by culture.
- culture affects how people in a society behave in relation to groups and their environment.

Grade 7 Skills and Concepts
*Students will*
- demonstrate an understanding (e.g., speak, draw, write, sing, create) of the complexity of culture by exploring cultural elements (e.g., beliefs, customs/traditions, languages, skills, literature, the arts) of diverse groups and explaining how culture served to define groups in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. and resulted in unique perspectives.
- investigate social institutions (e.g., family, religion, education, government, economy) in relation to how they responded to human needs, structured society and influenced behavior in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
- explain how communications between groups can be influenced by cultural differences; explain how interactions lead to conflict and competition (e.g., political, economic, religious, ethnic) among individuals and groups in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
- describe conflicts between individuals or groups and explain how compromise and cooperation were possible choices to resolve conflict among individuals and groups in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
- compare examples of cultural elements (e.g., beliefs, customs/traditions, language, skills, the arts, literature) using information from a variety of print and non-print sources (e.g., media, literature, interviews, observations, documentaries, artifacts) to analyze how cultures in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. have influenced cultures of today.
Big Idea: Economics
Economics includes the study of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. Students need to understand how their economic decisions affect them, others, the nation and the world. The purpose of economic education is to enable individuals to function effectively both in their own personal lives and as citizens and participants in an increasingly connected world economy. Students need to understand the benefits and costs of economic interaction and interdependence among people, societies, and governments.

Academic Expectations
2.18 Students understand economic principles and are able to make economic decisions that have consequences in daily living.

Grade 7 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students understand that
- the basic economic problem confronting individuals, societies and governments in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. was scarcity: as a result of scarcity, economic choices and decisions had to be made.
- the study of economics includes a variety of fundamental economic concepts (e.g., supply and demand, opportunity cost) that apply to individuals, societies and governments in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
- individuals, groups and governments in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. made economic decisions about the use of resources in the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.

Grade 7 Skills and Concepts
Students will
- demonstrate an understanding of the nature of limited resources and scarcity, using information from a variety of print and non-print sources (e.g., textbook, Internet, resource materials) to investigate world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.:
  - explain how scarcity requires individuals, groups and governments to make decisions about use of productive resources (e.g., natural resources, human resources and capital goods)
  - compare economic systems and explain the concept of supply and demand in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
  - describe how goods and services were exchanged in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
- investigate the production and distribution of goods and services in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. explaining ways in which societies addressed basic economic questions (e.g., how resources were used to produce goods and services; how new knowledge, technology/tools, and specialization increased productivity) about the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.
Big Idea: Geography
Geography includes the study of the five fundamental themes of location, place, regions, movement and human/environmental interaction. Students need geographic knowledge to analyze issues and problems to better understand how humans have interacted with their environment over time, how geography has impacted settlement and population, and how geographic factors influence climate, culture, the economy and world events. A geographic perspective also enables students to better understand the past and present and to prepare for the future.

Academic Expectations
2.19 Students recognize and understand the relationship between people and geography and apply their knowledge in real-life situations.

Grade 7 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that
- the use of geographic tools (e.g., maps, globes, photographs, models, charts, graphs) and mental maps helps interpret information, analyze patterns and spatial data, and better understand geographic issues in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
- patterns emerge as humans move, settle, and interact on Earth’s surface, and can be identified by examining the location of physical and human characteristics, how they are arranged, and why they are in particular locations. Economic, political, cultural and social processes interacted to shape patterns of human populations, interdependence, cooperation and conflict in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
- regions help us to see Earth as an integrated system of places and features organized by such principles as landform types, political units, economic patterns and cultural groups.
- people depended on, adapted to, or modified the environment to meet basic needs. Human actions modified the physical environment and in turn, the physical environment limited or promoted human activities in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
## Big Idea: Geography – Continued

### Grade 7 Skills and Concepts

*Students will*

- demonstrate an understanding of patterns on the Earth’s surface, using a variety of geographic tools (e.g., maps, globes, charts, graphs):
  - locate, in absolute or relative terms, landforms and bodies of water
  - locate and interpret patterns on Earth’s surface, explaining how different factors (e.g., rivers, mountains, seacoasts, deserts) impacted where human activities were located in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.

- investigate regions of the Earth’s surface in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. using information from print and non-print sources (e.g., books, films, magazines, Internet, geographic tools):
  - explain relationships between and among physical characteristics of regions during the time of world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D., and explain how regions were made distinctive (e.g., dams, irrigation, roads) by human characteristics; describe advantages and disadvantages for human activities (e.g., exploration, migration, trade, settlement) that resulted
  - describe patterns of human settlement in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.; explain relationships between these patterns and human needs; analyze how factors (e.g., war, famine, disease, economic opportunity and technology) impacted human migration
  - evaluate how availability of technology, resources and knowledge caused places and regions to evolve and change
  - analyze current events to compare geographic perspectives of today with those of world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.

- investigate interactions among human activities and the physical environment:
  - explain how people of world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. used technology (e.g., dams, roads, bridges) to modify the physical environment to meet their needs
  - describe how the physical environment promoted or restricted human activities (e.g., exploration, migration, trade, settlement, development) of world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
  - analyze cause and effect relationships between the natural resources of world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. and their political, social and economic development
Big Idea: Historical Perspective
History is an account of events, people, ideas and their interaction over time that can be interpreted through multiple perspectives. In order for students to understand the present and plan for the future, they must understand the past. Studying history engages students in the lives, aspirations, struggles, accomplishments and failures of real people. Students need to think in an historical context in order to understand significant ideas, beliefs, themes, patterns and events, and how individuals and societies have changed over time in Kentucky, the United States and the World.

Academic Expectations
2.20 Students understand, analyze, and interpret historical events, conditions, trends, and issues to develop historical perspective.

Grade 7 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that
- history is an account of human activities that is interpretive in nature, and a variety of tools (e.g., primary and secondary sources, timelines, Internet, maps) are needed to analyze historical events in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
- world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. can be examined in order to develop chronological understanding, recognize cause-effect relationships, and interpret historical events.
- geography and natural resources had a significant impact on world historical perspectives and events prior to 1500 A.D.
- advances in science and technology had a significant impact on historical events in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
- each era (e.g., Beginnings to Human Society, Early Civilizations, Classical Civilizations, Major Civilizations, States and Empires, Medieval Europe and the Rise of Western Civilizations, and Exploration as it relates to world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.) in the history of world civilizations had social, political, economic and/or cultural characteristics.
Big Idea: Historical Perspective – Continued

Grade 7 Skills and Concepts

*Students will*

- demonstrate an understanding of the interpretative nature of history using a variety of tools and resources (e.g., primary and secondary sources, Internet, timelines, maps):
  - investigate and chronologically describe (e.g., using timelines, charts, fictional and report writing, role playing) significant events in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. and draw inferences about their importance
  - examine multiple cause and effect relationships that have shaped history throughout world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.
  - analyze historical events, conditions and perspectives of different individuals and groups (e.g., by gender, race, region, ethnic group, age, economic status, religion, political group) in world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.

- investigate, using primary and secondary sources (e.g., biographies, films, magazines, Internet resources, textbooks, artifacts), to answer questions about, locate examples of, or interpret factual and fictional accounts of major historical events and people:
  - explain how early hunters and gatherers (Paleolithic and Neolithic) developed new technologies
  - describe the contributions made by world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D. (e.g., Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus River Valley, the Middle East, India, China) to society and analyze the impact these contributions made to future generations
  - examine the rise of classical civilizations and empires (e.g., Greece and Rome) and analyze their lasting impacts on the world in the areas of government, philosophy, architecture, art, drama and literature
  - describe the rise of western civilizations (e.g., Mayan, Incan, Aztec) and non-western civilizations (e.g., Egyptian, Chinese, Indian, Persian) and analyze ways in which these cultures influenced government, philosophy, art, drama and literature in the present day
  - explain how the movement of goods affected settlement patterns in and relations between early civilizations, empires, nations and states (e.g., Asia, Africa, and the Americas)
  - examine developments during the Middle Ages (e.g., feudalism, nation states, monarchies, religious institutions, limited government, trade) and describe resulting influences on modern societies
  - describe how the Age of Exploration (world civilizations prior to 1500 A.D.) caused diverse cultures to interact in various forms (e.g., compromise, cooperation, conflict, competition; explain how governments expanded their territories and developed new technologies
Kentucky Core Academic Standards – Social Studies – Eighth Grade

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The primary purpose of social studies is to help students develop the ability to make informed decisions as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. The skills and concepts found throughout this document reflect this purpose by promoting the belief that students must develop more than an understanding of social studies content. They must also be able to apply the content perspectives of several academic fields of the social studies to personal and public experiences. By stressing the importance of both content knowledge and its application, the social studies curriculum in Kentucky provides a framework that prepares students to become productive citizens.

The social studies content standards at the middle level are directly aligned with Kentucky’s Academic Expectations. Social Studies standards are organized around five “Big Ideas” that are important to the discipline of social studies. The five Big Ideas in social studies are: Government and Civics, Cultures and Societies, Economics, Geography and Historical Perspective. The Big Ideas, which are more thoroughly explained in the pages that follow, are conceptual organizers that are the same at each grade level. This consistency ensures students have multiple opportunities throughout their school careers to develop skills and concepts linked to the Big Ideas.

Under each Big Idea are statements of Enduring Knowledge/Understandings that represent overarching generalizations linked to the Big Ideas of social studies. The understandings represent the desired results - what learning will focus upon and what knowledge students will be able to explain or apply. Understandings can be used to frame development of units of study and lesson plans.

Skills and concepts describe ways that students demonstrate their learning and are specific to each grade level. The skills and concepts for social studies are fundamental to social studies literacy and build on prior learning.

The social studies program includes strong literacy connections, active hands-on work with concrete materials, and appropriate technologies. The social studies curriculum includes and depends on a number of different types of materials such as textbooks, non-fiction texts, biographies, autobiographies, journals, maps, newspapers, photographs and primary documents. Higher order thinking skills, such as compare, explain, analyze, predict, construct and interpret, are all heavily dependent on a variety of literacy skills and processes. For example, in social studies students must be able to understand specialized vocabulary, identify and comprehend key pieces of information within texts, determine what is fact and what is opinion, relate information across texts, connect new information to prior knowledge and synthesize the information to make meaning.
Big Idea: Government and Civics
The study of government and civics equips students to understand the nature of government and the unique characteristics of American representative democracy, including its fundamental principles, structure, and the role of citizens. Understanding the historical development of structures of power, authority, and governance and their evolving functions in contemporary U.S. society and other parts of the world is essential for developing civic competence. An understanding of civic ideals and practices of citizenship is critical to full participation in society and is a central purpose of the social studies.

Academic Expectations
2.14 Students understand the democratic principles of justice, equality, responsibility, and freedom and apply them to real-life situations.
2.15 Students can accurately describe various forms of government and analyze issues that relate to the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

Grade 8 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that
- the American political system developed from a colonial base of representative democracy by the actions of people who envisioned an independent country and new purposes for the government.
- the United States government was formed to establish order, provide security and accomplish common goals.
- the fundamental values and principles (e.g., liberty, justice, individual human dignity, the rule of law) of American representative democracy as expressed in historical documents (e.g., the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States) are enduring and remain significant today.
- the Constitution of the United States establishes a government of limited powers that are shared among different levels and branches. The Constitution is a document that can be changed from time to time through both formal and informal processes (e.g., amendments, court cases, executive actions) to meet the needs of its citizens.
- as members of a democratic society, all citizens of the United States have certain rights and responsibilities, including civic participation.
Big Idea: Government and Civics – Continued

Grade 8 Skills and Concepts

Students will

- demonstrate an understanding (e.g., illustrate, write, model, projects, present) of the nature of government:
  - explain the role of government (e.g., establishing order, providing security, achieving common goals) in the United States prior to Reconstruction and make connections to how government influences culture, society and the economy
  - describe how democratic governments in the United States prior to Reconstruction functioned to preserve and protect the rights (e.g., voting), liberty and property of their citizens by making, enacting and enforcing rules and laws (e.g., constitutions, laws, statutes)
  - compare purposes and sources of power in the most common forms of government (e.g., monarchy, democracy, republic)
- investigate the Constitution of the United States:
  - examine ways the Constitution is a document that can be changed from time to time through both formal and informal processes (e.g., amendments, court cases, executive actions) to meet the needs of its citizens
  - explain the political process established by the U.S. Constitution and ways the Constitution separates power among the legislative, executive and judicial branches to prevent the concentration of political power and to establish a system of checks and balances
  - analyze why the powers of the state and federal governments are sometimes shared and sometimes separated (federalism)
- make inferences about and among significant historical events and historical documents (e.g., the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States) to illustrate connections to democratic principles and guaranteed rights for all citizens
- explain pros and cons of how citizen responsibilities (e.g., participate in community activities, vote in elections) and duties (e.g., obey the law, pay taxes, serve on a jury, register for the military) impact the U.S. government’s ability to function as a democracy
- analyze information from a variety of print and non-print sources (e.g., books, documents, articles, interviews, Internet) to research answers to questions and explore issues
Big Idea: Cultures and Societies
Culture is the way of life shared by a group of people, including their ideas and traditions. Cultures reflect the values and beliefs of groups in different ways (e.g., art, music, literature, religion); however, there are universals (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, communication) connecting all cultures. Culture influences viewpoints, rules and institutions in a global society. Students should understand that people form cultural groups throughout the United States and the World, and that issues and challenges unite and divide them.

Academic Expectations
2.16 Students observe, analyze, and interpret human behaviors, social groupings, and institutions to better understand people and the relationships among individuals and among groups.
2.17 Students interact effectively and work cooperatively with the many diverse ethnic and cultural groups of our nation and world.

Grade 8 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that
- culture is a system of beliefs, knowledge, institutions, customs/traditions, languages and skills shared by a group of people. Through a society's culture, individuals learn the relationships, structures, patterns and processes to be members of the society.
- cultures develop social institutions (e.g., government, economy, education, religion, family) to structure society, influence behavior, and respond to human needs.
- interactions among individuals and groups assume various forms (e.g., compromise, cooperation, conflict, competition) and are influenced by culture.
- multiple factors contributed to the cultural diversity of the United States prior to Reconstruction; an understanding and appreciation of the diverse complexity of cultures is essential in our society.

Grade 8 Skills and Concepts
Students will
- demonstrate an understanding (e.g., speak, draw, write, sing, create) of the nature of culture by exploring cultural elements (e.g., beliefs, customs/traditions, languages, skills, literature, the arts) of diverse groups in the United States prior to Reconstruction and explain how culture served to define specific groups and resulted in unique perspectives
- investigate social institutions (e.g., family, religion, education, government, economy) in relation to how they responded to human needs, structured society and influenced behavior in the United States prior to Reconstruction
- explain how communications between groups were influenced by cultural differences; explain how interactions influenced conflict and competition (e.g., political, economic, religious, ethnic) among individuals and groups in the United States prior to Reconstruction
- describe conflicts between individuals or groups and explain how compromise and cooperation were possible choices to resolve conflict among individuals and groups in the United States prior to Reconstruction
- compare examples of cultural elements of today to those in the United States prior to Reconstruction, using information from a variety of print and non-print sources (e.g., media, literature, interviews, observations, documentaries, artifacts)
Big Idea: Economics
Economics includes the study of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. Students need to understand how their economic decisions affect them, others, the nation and the world. The purpose of economic education is to enable individuals to function effectively both in their own personal lives and as citizens and participants in an increasingly connected world economy. Students need to understand the benefits and costs of economic interaction and interdependence among people, societies, and governments.

Academic Expectations
2.18 Students understand economic principles and are able to make economic decisions that have consequences in daily living.

Grade 8 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that
- the basic economic problem confronting individuals, societies and government in the development of the United States prior to Reconstruction was scarcity; as a result of scarcity, economic choices and decisions were made.
- the development of the American economic system, institutions and markets prior to Reconstruction helped individuals, groups and governments achieve their goals and impacted life in the United States.
- the United States government and its policies played a major role in determining how the U.S. economy functioned prior to Reconstruction.
- individuals, businesses and the government of the U.S. prior to Reconstruction made economic decisions about the use of resources in the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.

Grade 8 Skills and Concepts
Students will
- demonstrate an understanding of the nature of limited resources and scarcity in the United States prior to Reconstruction, using information from a variety of print and non-print sources (e.g., news media, news magazines, textbook, Internet):
  o explain how scarcity required individuals, groups and governments to make decisions about use of productive resources (e.g., natural resources, human resources and capital goods)
  o describe how goods and services were exchanged and how supply and demand and competition determined prices
  o analyze cause-effect relationships among financial decisions by individuals and groups and historical events
- investigate the production and distribution of goods and services in the United States prior to Reconstruction:
  o examine ways in which basic economic questions about the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services were addressed
  o explain how resources were used to produce goods and services and how profit motivated individuals and groups to take risks in producing goods and services
  o analyze how new knowledge, technology/tools and specialization influenced productivity of goods and services
- analyze interdependence of economic activities among individuals and groups in the United States prior to Reconstruction
Big Idea: Geography
Geography includes the study of the five fundamental themes of location, place, regions, movement and human/environmental interaction. Students need geographic knowledge to analyze issues and problems to better understand how humans have interacted with their environment over time, how geography has impacted settlement and population, and how geographic factors influence climate, culture, the economy and world events. A geographic perspective also enables students to better understand the past and present and to prepare for the future.

Academic Expectations
2.19 Students recognize and understand the relationship between people and geography and apply their knowledge in real-life situations.

Grade 8 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings
Students will understand that
- use of geographic tools (e.g., maps, globes, photographs, models, charts, graphs, databases) and mental maps helps to interpret information, analyze patterns and spatial data, and understand geographic issues encountered in the United States prior to Reconstruction.
- patterns emerge as humans move, settle, and interact on Earth’s surface and can be identified by examining the location of physical and human characteristics, how they are arranged, and why they are in particular locations. Economic, political, cultural and social processes interact to shape patterns of human populations, interdependence, cooperation and conflict in the United States prior to Reconstruction.
- regions help us to see Earth as an integrated system of places and features organized by such principles as landform types, political units, economic patterns and cultural groups.
- people depended on, adapted to, or modified the environment to meet basic needs. Human actions modified the physical environment and in turn, the physical environment limited or promoted human activities in the United States prior to Reconstruction.
**Big Idea: Geography – Continued**

**Grade 8 Skills and Concepts**

*Students will*

- demonstrate an understanding of patterns on Earth's surface using a variety of geographic tools (e.g., maps, globes, charts, graphs, photographs, models):
  - locate, in absolute or relative terms, landforms and bodies of water
  - locate, interpret patterns on Earth's surface, and explain how different physical factors (e.g., rivers, mountains, seacoasts) impacted where human activities were located in the United States prior to Reconstruction
- investigate regions of the Earth's surface in the United States prior to Reconstruction using information from print and non-print sources (e.g., books, films, magazines, Internet, geographic tools):
  - explain relationships between and among physical characteristics of regions and how they were made distinctive by human characteristics (e.g., dams, roads, urban centers); describe
  - advantages and disadvantages for human activities (e.g., exploration, migration, trade, settlement) that resulted
  - describe patterns of human settlement; explain relationships between these patterns and human needs; analyze how factors (e.g., war, famine, disease, economic opportunity, and technology) affected human migration
  - evaluate how availability of technology, resources and knowledge caused places and regions to evolve and change
  - analyze current events to compare geographic perspectives of today with those prior to Reconstruction
- investigate interactions among human activities and the physical environment in the United States prior to Reconstruction:
  - explain how people used technology to modify the physical environment to meet their needs
  - describe how the physical environment and different viewpoints promoted or restricted human activities (e.g., exploration, migration, trade, settlement, development) and land use
  - analyze cause-effect relationships between and among natural resources and political, social and economic development
Big Idea: Historical Perspective

History is an account of events, people, ideas, and their interaction over time that can be interpreted through multiple perspectives. In order for students to understand the present and plan for the future, they must understand the past. Studying history engages students in the lives, aspirations, struggles, accomplishments and failures of real people. Students need to think in an historical context in order to understand significant ideas, beliefs, themes, patterns and events, and how individuals and societies have changed over time in Kentucky, the United States and the World.

Academic Expectations

2.20 Students understand, analyze, and interpret historical events, conditions, trends, and issues to develop historical perspective.

Grade 8 Enduring Knowledge – Understandings

Students will understand that

- history is an account of human activities that is interpretive in nature, and a variety of tools (e.g., primary and secondary sources, data, artifacts) are needed to analyze and understand historical events.
- U.S. History can be analyzed by examining significant eras (Exploration as it relates to the settlement of America, The Great Convergence, Colonization and Settlement, Revolution and the New Nation, Expansion and Reform, Civil War) to develop chronological understanding and recognize cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation.
- U.S. History (prior to Reconstruction) has been impacted by significant individuals and groups.
- geography, culture and economics have a significant impact on historical perspectives and events.
- advances in science and technology have a significant impact on historical events.
# Big Idea: Historical Perspective – Continued

**Grade 8 Skills and Concepts**

*Students will*

- demonstrate an understanding of the interpretative nature of history using a variety of tools and resources (e.g., primary and secondary sources, Internet, timelines, maps):
  - investigate, describe and analyze significant historical events and conditions in the U.S prior to Reconstruction, drawing inferences about perspectives of different individuals and groups (e.g., gender, race, region, ethnic group, age, economic status, religion, political group)
  - examine multiple cause-effect relationships that have shaped history (e.g., showing how a series of events are connected)

- investigate, using primary and secondary sources (e.g., biographies, films, magazines, Internet resources, textbooks, artifacts) to answer questions about, locate examples of, or interpret factual and fictional accounts of major historical events and people:
  - analyze how exploration and the settlement of America caused diverse cultures to interact in various forms (e.g., compromise, cooperation, conflict, competition); explain how governments expanded their territories and the impact this had on the United States prior to Reconstruction
  - describe events and conditions that led to the “Great Convergence” of European, African and Native American people beginning in the late 15th century; analyze how America’s diverse society developed as a result of these events
  - explain how the ideals of equality and personal liberty (e.g., rise of individual rights, economic freedom, religious diversity) that developed during the colonial period were motivations for the American Revolution and proved instrumental in forging a new nation
  - describe how the growth of democracy and geographic expansion occurred and were significant to the development of the United States prior to Reconstruction
  - compare the political, social, economic and cultural differences (e.g., slavery, tariffs, industrialism vs. agrarianism, federal vs. states’ rights) between and among regions of the U.S. and explain how these differences contributed to the American Civil War
  - evaluate how advances in science and technology contributed to the changing American society in the United States prior to Reconstruction