

Social Studies 8

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School Year 2004-05
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Introduction

Welcome to 8th Grade Social Studies! This year we finish a two-year adventure in Our Great American History Challenge. Our Middle School Social Studies courses challenge us to be good Social Scientists – to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to explore our history, geography, economy, government, and much more. Our work also prepares us for the New York State Social Studies Assessment Test we take next June and for the challenges of high school.

There are several parts to this sheet. They include the expectations, policies, and procedures we will use during the year. You will also find attached our classroom rules and a special SS8 sheet which should be returned as soon as possible.

Course Expectations

Our goal is to become good Social Scientists. A good Social Scientist is someone who enjoys learning and demonstrates continual growth, has a body of knowledge and skills, is able to investigate problems and find and apply solutions, communicates effectively and works cooperatively, accepts responsibility for their actions and their learning.

As good Social Scientists we will be able to successfully solve the problems and challenges we face in Social Studies, including homework, tests, projects, and passing the grade. **Everyone who works hard and does his or her best will be successful!**

Here are some useful **Steps for Success** in 8th Social Studies

- Take responsibility and treat others and everything with respect
- Complete everything to the best of your ability!
- Don't be afraid to make mistakes – learn from them and improve!
- Keep open communication with your parents, teachers, and classmates!
- Come to class on time, prepared, and ready to work!
- Work on your weaknesses – always ask for help if you need it!
- Follow the classroom rules (attached) and the Student handbook!
- Be part of the winning team made up of your parents, teachers, classmates, and the most important member – you!

For a more complete description of expectations, requirements, procedures, and rules you can contact Mr. Cook.

Grading Policy

We will be following the general grading procedures found in the Student Handbook. In each ten-week period, your Social Studies grade will be figure using the following categories and weights:

- Student work (homework, projects, class activities, packet grades) 45%
- Quiz and Test grades 45%
- Social Scientist Grades (participation and preparation grades) 10%

It is important to remember that your grade depends on you. You will have the opportunity to correct and return most of your student work, and participate in remediation activities for your quiz and test grades. If you do your best and take responsibility, you will be successful!

Homework Policy

Homework is a significant part of our work. I never give busy work – each assignment is important. To do well you must complete each of the homework steps below to the best of your ability (we will learn more about these steps in class.)

1. Get the Assignment (make sure you understand it and have the necessary materials!)
2. Do the Assignment completely and to the best of your ability!
3. Bring the Assignment to Class
4. Get Feedback in form of grades or other assessment.
5. THEN – either success or go back through the steps again!

We will be setting our goals at 80 or better. That means that success is when we get an 80 or higher on an assignment. Any thing less we should always rework!

- Assignments are due at the beginning of class unless you are told otherwise by Mr. Cook! Since they are so important to our work, we follow these procedures if they are not done.
- Incomplete work (any part not done) is given a 50 and three points deducted from your preparation grade for the 5 weeks.
- Don't leave the hard ones out – they are the ones you need to do! Remember, if you get it wrong, you will be able to correct it!
- Missing work (not done or not handed in when asked for) is marked missing and counts as a zero and five points are deducted from your preparation grade for the 5 weeks.
- **Missing homework must be made up!**

Students MUST make up missing work by choosing one of the following:

- Student completes assignment and make up work
- Student completes assignment and stays 9th period for a homework detention.

If I student consistently fails to complete homework, they may lose their choice in how they make up their work. Remember, homework is essential to success!

8th Grade Classroom Rules

We all want to reach the goals we have set for this year's Social Studies, and to do this we want a classroom that runs smoothly and safely and which promotes learning. That is why we will be following these basic rules...

1. We will follow the rules found in the student handbook and discipline code.
2. We will **treat** everyone and everything with **respect**.
3. We will all **take responsibility** for our learning and behavior.
4. We will come to class prepared and begin at the bell by getting out our materials and checking the "Can You" board.
5. We will make sure not to disturb the class or classmates by inappropriate talking or actions.
6. Each student will be given six bathroom/locker slips per ten weeks. Students can use these at anytime during class to go directly to the bathroom, locker, or to get a drink. The student is responsible for the material or activities we are doing at class. Students should not abuse the privilege or may lose their passes for the ten weeks.
7. You don't have to ask permission to leave your seats to get a tissue or sharpen your pencil, but remember to follow rules #2, #3, & #5.

We will be following the discipline code procedure in handling the breaking of any these rules.

A Final Note To Parents!

Here are some ways you can keep up with your student's Social Studies work:

- Check the agenda weekly – we write our week's work in it on Monday.
- Look for SS progress reports at 3, 5, and 8 weeks
- Ask your student what they are doing in class – I promise it is NOT "nothing"
- Contact me if you have any questions or concerns!
- Check out my Folder in the MS Collections at www.keshequa.org