

Alabama Course of Study 7th

Seventh Grade Citizenship

This one-semester course is designed to provide students with basic knowledge and skills for functioning in modern American society. The workings of the American government and economy are studied as students explore the active role of citizens in the United States.

Application to students' individual lives is stressed throughout the course as students acquire and apply information and skills to issues and problems in contemporary society. The following topics are to be explored in this course.

- Representative Democracy
- Law
- Personal Economics
- Civic Responsibility

Representative Democracy

This section focuses on the foundations and organization of representative democracy in the United States. Emphasis is placed on understanding the framing documents of American government and

their relevance to our lives today. This component establishes the groundwork for developing knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed for active, responsible participation at the community, state, and national levels.

Law

In this section, students examine the American justice system. Consideration is given to civil and criminal laws, particularly those affecting Alabama's youth.

Personal Economics

Students gain knowledge of the basic elements of economics, their influence on the American consumer, and the role of the consumer in the marketplace. Personal finance principles are studied and then applied to life situations.

Civic Responsibility

Students recognize the meaning and importance of their responsibilities in a representative democracy and develop an appreciation of the need for creative thinking, strong ethical standards, and courageous

action as citizens in today's society. Students explore the political process, the role of civic leaders, and the value of contributing to the general welfare and betterment of society while maintaining the

rights of the individual.

Representative Democracy

Students will

1. Explain the significance and relevance of the U.S. founding documents.
 - The Declaration of Independence

- The Constitution
 - Preamble
 - Three branches of government
 - System of checks and balances
 - The Bill of Rights
2. Discuss the essential characteristics of American democracy.
 - The source of authority
 - Representative government
 - Limited government
 - Constitutional government
 3. Explain the historical background of Alabama's Constitution and its impact.
 4. Explain the American political system.
 - Organization and functions of political parties, campaigns, and elections
 - Process of selecting political leaders
 - Nomination
 - Primary election
 - Referendum
 - People's initiative
 - Appointment
 - Identity of major office holders
 - Community
 - State
 - Nation
 - Evaluation of actions of public officials
 5. Compare the American government with other governmental systems.
Examples: monarchy, dictatorship, theocracy

Law

6. Describe the organization, functions, and jurisdiction of courts within the American judicial system.
 - Local, state, national
 - Juvenile, adult
 - Civil, criminal
7. Explain the kinds of law.
 - Criminal law
 - Crimes against persons
Examples: homicide, assault and battery
 - Crimes against property
Examples: arson, vandalism, robbery
 - Other
Example: substance abuse

- Juvenile law
 - Distinction between juvenile and adult
 - Reasons for having separate system
 - Juvenile justice procedures
 - Juvenile rights
- Civil law
 - Housing laws
 - Family laws
 - Labor laws
 - Contract laws
 - Tort laws

8. Explain the constitutional rights of citizens.

- Due process
 - Examples: search and seizure, arrest, preliminary hearing, appeal of verdicts, parole
- Habeas Corpus
- Speedy and public trials
- Right to counsel
- Trial by jury
- Right against self-incrimination
- Religious expression
- Freedom of speech
- Freedom of press
- Freedom of association and assembly
- Right to privacy
- Right to equal protection
- Right to bear arms

Personal Economics

9. Analyze the impact of the consumer in the marketplace.

- As a consumer
- As a citizen
- As a worker

10. Explain the basic elements of economics as they apply to consumers.

- Scarcity
- Opportunity costs
- Cost/benefit analysis
- Characteristics of a market economy
- Supply and demand

11. Apply the principles of money management to the preparation of a personal budget.

Examples: housing, transportation, food, clothing, medical expenses, insurance

12. Apply the principles of money management to the various services provided by financial

institutions.

- Checking
- Savings
- Loans
- Investments

13. Analyze the costs and benefits of using credit.

- Credit cards
- Loans

14. Apply principles of money management to purchases.

- Comparison shopping
- Brand-name buying

15. Identify the laws protecting the rights of consumers and the avenues of recourse for the violation of those rights.

- Local, state, federal
- Consumer protection agencies and organizations

Civic Responsibility

16. Explain the difference between citizens and noncitizens and the way that U.S. citizenship is acquired.

17. Evaluate the responsibilities of citizens.

- Personal responsibilities
 - Getting an education
 - Choosing a career
 - Providing for oneself and one's family
 - Saving for the future
 - Behaving in a civil manner
- Civic responsibilities
 - Obeying the law
 - Paying taxes
 - Being informed
 - Monitoring public officials
 - Participating in the political process
 - Examples: voting, working in a campaign, holding office, attending rallies, writing letters, petitioning
 - Serving on a jury
 - Serving in the armed forces

18. Discuss the influence of the media on American life.

- Voter
- Consumer

19. Apply a civic problem-solving model.

- Identifying a problem

- Gathering information
 - Generating possible solutions
 - Selecting the most appropriate solution
 - Developing an action plan
 - Implementing the plan
- Examples: recycling, revitalization of neighborhoods, tax support for public services, curfews, teen issues

Seventh Grade World Geography

This one-semester study of geography in the Seventh Grade emphasizes the knowledge and skills necessary to develop a geographic perspective. By the end of this course, students should understand the fundamental physical and human patterns on the Earth's surface as well as the processes that created these patterns. Representative areas of the world should be selected for detailed studies of the content standards. In this course students learn how to apply a geographic perspective to the past, present, and future. This Seventh Grade study of Geography supports the study of World History in the Eighth and Ninth Grades as well as the study of U.S. History in the Tenth and Eleventh Grades. The six essential elements of geography are used to organize the content standards. Geographic skills and perspectives (*Geography for Life*, 1994) are interwoven throughout the content standards.

Geographic Elements

- **The World in Spatial Terms**

The structuring of geographic information, the ordering of knowledge into real and mental maps, and the spatial analysis of that information

- **Places and Regions**

The basic units of geography and how those units are organized differently by different people

- **Physical Systems**

Physical and environmental phenomena, such as land forms and climate, and their interaction through ecosystems, renewable resources, and the hydrologic cycle

- **Human Systems**

Human populations and their economic activities, migration patterns, settlement patterns, territorial arrangements, and political conflicts

- **Environment and Society**

Interaction between physical and human systems and identification of the central role of resources in environment-society links

- **Uses of Geography**

A component to understand the past, interpret the present, and plan for the future Geographic skills provide the necessary tools and techniques for students to think geographically. They enable

students to observe patterns, associations, and spatial order as they are asking geographic questions; acquiring, organizing, and analyzing geographic information; and answering geographic questions. Geographic perspectives specifically addressed in this course are a spatial perspective and an ecological perspective. Students will gain experience in applying a spatial perspective through the inquiry of where and why (space and place) the human experience occurred in a particular place. An ecological perspective will be developed and applied through the examination of the connections and relationships between and among the living and nonliving elements on Earth. Technology use is vital to this course. The use of spatial databases, Internet resources, census information, remotely sensed imagery, and virtual maps including daily television weather maps will enhance instruction. Students also benefit from the integration of content from other subject areas such as mathematics, earth science, and language arts.

The World in Spatial Terms

Students will

1. Explain map essentials: type, size, shape, distance, direction, location, scale, symbols.
 - Reference and thematic maps, topographic and planimetric maps
 - Globes
 - Map projections
 - Aerial photographs
 - Satellite images
 - Latitude and longitude
 - Cardinal and intermediate directions
 - Fractional, graphic, and verbal scale
 - Conventional symbols used in atlases
2. Illustrate spatial information using data, symbols, and colors to create thematic maps.
Examples: patterns of population, economics, rainfall, vegetation, landforms, hurricane tracks over several seasons, international trade in commodities
3. Illustrate graphically and analyze the distribution of major physical and human features on Earth's surface using different scales.
Examples: Physical features—continents, mountain chains, oceans, rivers, climate
Human features—countries, cities, population, economy, language, religion, resources
4. Evaluate the spatial arrangement of urban and rural land-use patterns in the local community or in a nearby community.
 - Commercial
 - Residential
 - Industrial
 - Agricultural
 - Mining

Places and Regions

5. Locate selected countries, cities, and physical features on maps, globes, and satellite images.

6. Identify physical and human criteria used to define regions at different spatial scales.
Examples: hemispheres, regions within continents or countries, city boundaries, school districts, developed and less developed regions of the world
7. Evaluate the impact of human activity on landscapes over time using maps, graphs and satellite produced images.
Examples: agricultural patterns in different areas of the world, tree clearing in rain forests, damming of rivers and destruction of wildlife habitats, urban growth, land use change
8. Compare the physical and human characteristics of places using observation data and geographic resources.
Examples: soils, landforms, vegetation, wildlife, religion, language, politics, population, land use
9. Relate place names with cultural and/or political perspectives.
Example: names given to places or regions to symbolize an event or principle or to honor a person or cause
10. Relate the use of technology to the way culture groups perceive and use places and regions.
Example: Air conditioning in the southern U.S. increases productivity and encourages migration into the South.

Physical Systems

11. Explain patterns in the physical environment within the context of physical processes.
Examples: tectonic processes and continental drift, ocean and atmospheric circulation, erosion, Earth-Sun relationships and seasons, weather and climate, renewable and nonrenewable resources
12. Predict the short- and long-range effects of extreme weather phenomena and human activity on the physical environment.
Examples: hurricane's impact on a coastal ecosystem, heavy rainfall on hill slopes after deforestation
13. Describe ecosystems and explain why they differ from place to place.
Examples: differences in soils, climates, topography, and populations
14. Identify changes over time in a nearby ecosystem resulting from human intervention.
Examples: natural wetlands being replaced by farms, forests and farmland being replaced by housing developments

Human Systems

15. Describe human populations on the Earth's surface.
 - Characteristics
Examples: birth rate, death rate, life expectancy, population density
 - Distribution
Examples: dot maps and choropleth maps of population concentration or dispersal, population pyramids
 - Migration
Examples: rural to urban migration, southerners into northern areas of the United States in

- the twentieth century, northerners into the southern region in the late twentieth century, movement of Mongols across Asia and into Europe in the thirteenth century
16. Identify ways in which communities reflect the cultural background of their inhabitants.
Examples: distinctive building styles, billboards in Spanish, foreign language advertisements, ethnic restaurants
 17. Relate economic activity of a region within its geographic context.
Examples: mining coal and other resources, irrigation and agriculture, sport franchise, impact on the local or regional community of the gain or loss of certain economic activities
 18. Evaluate trading patterns of the United States and other countries related to locations.
Examples: petroleum, wheat, cotton, automobiles, textiles
 19. Discuss major industries in the United States from the perspective of how geography and the factors of production helped determine the locations of manufacturing plants.
Example: those producing steel, aircraft, automobiles, food products, textiles, apparel
 20. Identify major agricultural and urban settlement types and the geographic reasons for their location.
Examples: plantation, subsistence farming, truck-farming communities, port city, governmental center, planned city, single-industry city
 21. Explain factors that contribute to conflict within and between countries.
Examples: use of land, economic competition for scarce resources, boundary disputes, cultural differences, control of strategic locations

Environment and Society

22. Evaluate the environmental effects of human actions on the four basic components of Earth's physical systems.
 - Atmosphere
Examples: effects of ozone depletion, climate change
 - Biosphere
Examples: the effects of deforestation, reduction in biodiversity
 - Lithosphere
Examples: the effects of land degradation, gully erosion
 - Hydrosphere
Examples: the effects of pesticides and non-point pollution washed into river systems, decline of quality groundwater
23. Identify the significance of major technological innovations that have been used to modify the physical environment, both in the past and in the present. Examples: the effects of the introduction of fire, steam power, diesel machinery, electricity, work animals, explosives
24. Explain how the characteristics of different physical environments affect human activities.
Examples: how people in Siberia, Alaska, and other high-latitude places deal with the characteristics of tundra environments such as frost heaves, freezing of public utilities, very short growing seasons; how people in low latitudes deal with tropical heat and high humidity with mid-day siestas

25. Explain the ways humans prepare for natural hazards.
Examples: earthquake preparedness, constructing houses on stilts in flood-prone areas, designation of hurricane or tornado shelters and evacuation routes in hurricane- and tornado-prone areas
26. Describe world patterns of resource distribution and utilization by mapping and discussing such natural resources in terms of the locations of major deposits.
Examples: petroleum, coal, copper, iron ore
27. Relate the importance of energy resources to the development of human societies.
Examples: wood and water to people settling in new lands, natural gas for heating and cooling of buildings, coal for factories

The Uses of Geography

28. Identify changes over time indicating the process of urban growth in the United States.
 - Site characteristics
 - Situations
 - Function
29. Assess the role of different land-survey systems in establishing contemporary landscape patterns by examining maps.
Example: comparing the history and landscape of a metes-and-bounds state, such as Georgia, with a rectangular land-survey system state such as Alabama
30. Evaluate the geographic impact of using major energy sources in the twenty-first century.
Examples: petroleum, coal, nuclear power, solar energy
31. Analyze a geographic issue developing sound arguments in favor of recommendations for specific actions on the issue.
Examples: building a dam and reservoir, construction to revitalize a downtown area, siting of a new landfill
32. Assess the balance between the negative impact of human habitation on the environment and the need for natural resources thought essential to sustain human life.