

# **Sixth Grade**

## **United States Studies: 1900 to the Present**

The Sixth Grade course focuses on modern America from the beginning of the twentieth century to present times. Because our world today is mostly affected by national and international events and changes after World War II, the thrust of this year's study is placed most heavily on recent history. Special emphasis is placed on the study of America as a world leader. At the beginning of the course, the industrial, urban, and social changes in America from 1870-1900 are briefly reviewed as a transition into modern America. Many historians recognize this period of time as a turning point because of the emergence of the United States as a major world power after the Spanish-American War. There were economic and social changes as well, including new inventions in communication and transportation that occurred during this period.

**THE FIRST THREE CONTENT STANDARDS ARE APPLIED THROUGHOUT THE COURSE.**

### **Map and Globe Skills**

Students will

1. Extend the development of map and globe skills.

- Features: Locate major geographic features associated with America's history.

Examples: ocean currents, prevailing winds, large forests, major rivers, significant mountain ranges

• Relative location: Use cardinal and intermediate directions to describe the relative location of selected places in North America.

Examples: Maine in the northeastern United States, Mexico to the south of the United States, the Atlantic Ocean on the eastern border of Georgia

• Absolute location: Use a grid system to describe the absolute location of selected places encountered during the study of America's history.

- Latitude and longitude

Example: comparing climates of places in America with countries of the origin of early settlers

- Equator
- Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn
- Arctic and Antarctic Circles

- Prime Meridian, International Date Line relative to North America and the world

- Directions: Extend orientation skills by following and giving specific cardinal directions and verbal instructions.

Example: describing proposed trade and exploration routes through the eyes of the explorers

- Scale: Compare differences found on a variety of scales.

Example: comparing a local area map with a map of a larger area such as Jamestown with the 13 colonies or with the North American continent

### **Information Literacy**

2. Read, interpret, and organize information using a variety of sources and tools.

- Charts
- Globes
- Graphs
- Illustrations
- Maps
- Time lines
- Tables

3. Apply reference skills in independent investigations of selected topics.

- Atlases
- Electronic resources

Example: accessing information on the Internet

- Dictionaries
- Reference books
- Media centers
- Newspapers
- Databases

### **The Emergence of Modern America: 1900 - 1928**

4. Review major changes in America from 1870 to 1900.

- Industrialization

Examples: labor, railroads, monopolies and mergers, “robber barons”, Horatio Alger, Rockefeller, Carnegie

- Urbanization

Examples: immigration, “The Melting Pot,” *How the Other Half Lives* by Jacob Riis, Jane Addams

- Cultural Changes

Examples: women's suffrage movement, expanding educational system, emerging writers and artists, establishment of unions, Tuskegee Institute and Booker T. Washington

- Communication and Technology

Examples: Pony Express, Samuel F. B. Morse, Bell and the telephone, Trans-Atlantic cable

5. Explain why the phrase "end of the Frontier" is descriptive of America in the early 1900s.

Examples: continental expansion complete, purchase of Alaskan territory, absorption of Indian culture

6. Explain the accomplishments and limitations of the Progressive movement.

- Needs of an industrial society

Examples: social reform, moral reform

- Efforts to reform labor laws
- Role of the media and the arts

7. Relate the causes of World War I and reasons for the entrance of the U.S. into the war to students' lives today.

- Alliances (friendship), threats

8. Describe the impact at home and abroad of the United States' World War I involvement.

- Problems of agriculture
- Changing labor force
- America's role in saving the allies
- Sinking of *Lusitania*
- Songs and slogans of the war
  - "Over There"
  - "Lafayette, We Are Here"
- U.S. rejection of world leadership

Examples: League of Nations, Versailles Treaty

- Heroes

Examples: national, state, "Sergeant York" movie

9. Discuss the technological advances in warfare as they impact upon society.

- Machine gun
- Tank
- Submarine
- Airplane
- Gas and gas masks

10. Examine prominent leaders and significant people from 1900-1928.

- Politics  
Examples: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, Woodrow Wilson
- Industry  
Examples: J. P. Morgan, Andrew Carnegie, William Randolph Hearst, John D. Rockefeller
- Science and Technology  
Examples: Wright Brothers, Albert Einstein, Charles Lindbergh
- Fine Arts and Literature  
Examples: John Phillip Sousa, George and Ira Gershwin, George M. Cohan, Scott Joplin, Louis Armstrong, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Andrew Wyeth, Frederick Remmington

11. Explain how principles of scientific management and technological innovations influenced production, work, and daily life.

- Light bulb
  - Edison
- Automobile assembly lines
  - Ford
- Rapid transit
- Household appliances
  - Singer
- Radio
  - Marconi
- Aviation
  - Wright Brothers
- Telephone
  - Bell
- Business
  - Otis, Westinghouse

12. Describe the impact of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Amendments on U.S. life, past and present.

13. Illustrate how the political geography of the U.S. changed from the end of the Spanish-American War through the 1920s.

- Overseas  
Examples: Philippines, Guam, Cuba, Panama Canal
- Within the U.S.

14. Relate the growth of cities and industries to the location of natural resources.

- Industries  
Examples: Roosevelt Dam, oil drilling
  - Cities  
Examples: Birmingham, Pittsburgh
15. Describe patterns of population movement.  
Example: migration of rural southerners to big cities
16. Describe the magnitude and significance of the immigration movement from 1900 to 1928.
- Countries and cultures from which immigrants came
  - Importance of Ellis Island  
Example: “Colossus” by Emma Lazarus
  - Impact on industry and agriculture
  - Immigration laws of 1920s
  - Cultural differences and similarities  
Examples: religion, customs, neighborhood
17. Demonstrate an understanding of the reasons for hardships and struggles faced by various groups of people in America during the 1920s.  
Examples: lack of high-paying jobs, educational opportunities, technological advances, “Little Orphan Annie”
18. Discuss characteristics and distinctive features of life in America during the 1920s.  
Examples: clothing, dance, speakeasies, sports (Babe Ruth), inventions, architecture, music, Prohibition, Harlem Renaissance (“Dream Variations” by Langston Hughes), Charles Lindbergh
- The Great Depression and World War II: 1929 - 1945**
19. Identify the contributing factors of the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression.  
Examples: economic policies of the Harding and Coolidge administrations, unemployment, failed banks, collapse of farm economy
20. Describe the impact of the Great Depression on American economic and cultural life.  
Examples: politics, economics, society, art, literature, music, military, migration patterns, Dorothea Lange’s photography
21. Discuss the disasters of the early 1900s.  
Examples: Titanic, Hindenburg
22. Analyze racial and ethnic conflict during the 1920s and 1930s.  
Examples: Red scare, Ku Klux Klan activities, Black migration to northern cities, immigrants

23. Explain how Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs affected American workers.

Examples: National Recovery Act (NRA), Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Rural Electrification Act, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), Social Security Act, Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), Housing Act of 1937

24. Explain the significance of the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the United States' entrance into World War II.

Examples: social and military implications

25. Identify the key political leaders in World War II.

- Allies
  - Roosevelt
  - Churchill
  - Truman
  - Stalin
- Axis
  - Hitler
  - Mussolini
  - Hirohito, Tojo
- Military and political leaders
  - Roosevelt
  - Churchill
  - Hitler
  - Stalin

26. Demonstrate an understanding of key military strategies and activities of World War II.

- Military campaign in the African and European theaters
  - Examples: El Alamein, Normandy, Battle of the Bulge
- Military campaigns in the Pacific theaters
  - Examples: Tarawa, Saipan, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, Midway
- Economic and human cost
  - Examples: Holocaust, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, global casualties
- Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki casualties

27. Assess the impact of World War II on American culture.

- Industrialization of the country
  - Examples: retooling of factories, "Rosie the Riveter"
- Scientific and technological development
- Restrictions of personal and civil rights

Examples: selective service, rationing, internment camps, censorship of the press

- National heroes

Examples: McArthur, Eisenhower, Audie Murphy, Patton, Nimitz

- State heroes

Example: Red Erwin

- Role of women

Examples: the work force, military (WACs, WAVES, USO), heads of family

- Fine arts

Examples: big bands, jitterbug, “Kilroy was here,” Duke Ellington

### **Postwar United States: 1945 - 1969**

28. Evaluate changes in the United States after World War II.

- Economic

Examples: consumerism, instant credit, job market, industrial changes, GI Bill

- Technological

Examples: transportation, communication, industry

- Military

Example: desegregation of the military

29. Describe American society and culture of the 1950s “Baby Boom.”

Examples: suburbs, consumer culture, television age, rise of youth-centered entertainment, automobile, decay of inner city, Elvis Presley, *Mickey Mouse Club*, *I Love Lucy*, *American Bandstand*

30. Describe the social and cultural implications and significant events of the Cold War.

- Berlin airlift

Examples: humanitarian aid, “Iron Curtain”

- Korean conflict

Examples: North vs. South Korea, “Bamboo Curtain”

- Red Scare

Examples: McCarthyism, “black list,” Hollywood, bomb shelters, air raid drills

- Berlin Wall

Examples: division of East/West Germany, Checkpoint Charlie

- Cuban missile crisis

Examples: Castro, Khrushchev, Bay of Pigs, first threat of nuclear warfare

- Vietnam War
    - Examples: North versus South Vietnam, domino theory, expense, length, heroes, Jeremiah Denton
  - Space race
    - Examples: Sputnik; “Miss Baker,” the monkey; Alan Shepherd; Neil Armstrong; Huntsville
31. Contrast domestic policy of postwar presidents from the 1940s through the 1960s.

- Truman’s “Fair Deal”
  - Eisenhower’s “Peace and Prosperity”
  - Kennedy’s “New Frontier”
  - Johnson’s “Great Society”
32. Understand the key events and people in the Civil Rights movement.

- National
  - *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*
  - Dwight Eisenhower
  - March on Washington
  - Martin Luther King
  - Civil Rights Act of 1964
  - Lyndon B. Johnson
  - Voting Rights Act of 1965
  - “The Year of Chaos 1968”
- State
  - Montgomery Bus Boycott
  - Rosa Parks
  - The Selma March
  - Freedom Riders
  - George Wallace
  - Birmingham church bombing
  - Eugene “Bull” Conner
  - The University of Alabama

33. Understand the social/cultural implications of the Vietnam War for America.
- Examples: protests, Kent State, popular culture, challenging of authority, returning veterans, POWs, MIAs

**Contemporary United States: 1970 - Present**

34. Explain the affects of Richard Nixon and Watergate on the public perception of the office of president.
35. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and Bush administrations.

- Environmental
    - Examples: Clean Air Act, Environmental Protection Agency, Endangered Species Act surface mining in Alabama
  - Social
    - Examples: Equal Rights Amendment, Supreme Court ban on school prayer, protection of the handicapped
  - Political
    - Examples: opening relations with China, Middle East peace talks, Strategic Arms Treaty with Soviet Union, regime in El Salvador, Iran-Contra scandal, collapse of the Iron Curtain and Berlin Wall, Desert Shield and Desert Storm
  - Economic
    - Examples: involvement in developing countries, reduction in military spending, “Read my lips—no new taxes.”
36. Explain the dynamics of a politically divided government.
- Examples: Republican Congress and Democratic Executive branch, Democratic Congress and Republican Executive branch
37. Compare the “frontier” concept in modern America to earlier concepts of the frontier.
- Space
  - Oceanic exploration
38. Demonstrate an understanding of the American economy and economic decision making on American society.
- Intradependence of U.S. decisions
    - Examples: imports and exports, supply and demand, inflation, deficit spending, advantages of free trade
  - Interdependence of world and U.S. decisions
    - Examples: shoes, clothing, electronics, OPEC/gasoline, transportation
39. Analyze the environmental and social consequences of humans changing the physical environment.
- TVA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ damming of rivers
  - Construction of interstate systems
  - Strip mining
  - Destruction of wetlands
  - Clear cutting of timber
40. Describe the impact of technological innovations on American life from the 1970s to the present.
- Economic

Examples: robotics, computer revolution, rapid rail system, satellite communication in the twentieth century

- Social/Cultural

Examples: microwaves, electricity, television, computers, Internet, satellite, music, video games, cellular phones, compact disks

- Political

Examples: C-SPAN, sound bites, television and radio advertising

41. Describe the impact of and reasons for the influx of immigrants on American life in the twentieth century.

Examples: religious diversity, language, internment labor, health care, welfare system

42. Discuss the social issues of the 1990s from differing perspectives.

Examples: urban violence, drug traffic, affirmative action, juvenile crime, obsession with sports