

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS, MIDDLE AGES, ORIGINS OF MODERN CHINA & EUROPEAN UNION POST WWII ERA

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TOR Middle School – 6th Grade Social Studies A Team
Extra-Help – By appointment only

A. CLASS DESCRIPTION

The social studies curriculum has recently been revised to align with the national Common Core Standards. The standards are embedded within the content area of civics, economics, geography and history. These standards reflect student understanding of how to access, synthesize and evaluate information to communicate and apply social studies knowledge to real world situations. These standards include reading like a historian, writing, researching, speaking and listening. Furthermore, sixth grade social studies students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements that define a civilization, such as, government, religion, achievements, politics, economics and social structures while evaluating them through these six elements, as well, as evaluating modern day China and Europe.

B. Scope and Sequence

- Unit 1 – Map Skills & Basic Geography
- Unit 2 – Early Humans/Archaeology
- Unit 3 – The Characteristics of Civilization
- Unit 4 – Imperial China
- Unit 5 – The Mongol Empire
- Unit 6 – Communist China during the Cultural Revolution and Today
- Unit 7 - Greek and Roman Empires
- Unit 8 – Europe in the Middle Ages
- Unit 9 – The European Union Today

C. ASSIGNMENTS

Homework assignments and long-range projects will be posted in Mrs. Sheeran's classroom. Students are expected to write down their assignments in their agenda books. In the event, homework or classwork is missed due to an absence; it is the student's responsibility to ask me what he or she missed. The student will then have 2 days to complete missing work.

D. REQUIRED MATERIALS

In class you are required to have the following materials each day (unless told otherwise):

- Your COMPLETED Homework/Assignments
- Agenda book
- 2-3 Subject Spiral Notebook (large size – not small one)
- Folder for papers
- Pencils, highlighters, and colored pencils
- Tissues

**At home, I suggest you also have a dictionary/thesaurus or online access.

E. Behavioral and Academic Expectations -Turn of River Middle School is committed to promoting academic excellence. Every student is challenged to do their best while they learn and grow. Thus, in order to help the students succeed here are expectations as cited in the TOR Agenda Book under the heading of "Code of Conduct". My Own Classroom Procedures/Rules: Raise your hand for permission to speak, raise your hand to leave your seat, follow directions quickly, make smart choices, and make the teacher happy!

F. GRADING PLAN

- 10% Homework**
- 30% Class Work**

30% Projects/DBQ's/Papers (A DBQ is a Document Based Question, in which the student is evaluated on their ability to formulate & support an answer from documentary evidence. The documents are provided as a means to familiarize students with using historical sources in multiple forms.)

30% Tests/Quizzes

G. Miscellaneous

1. IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDENCE

Keep in mind that this is a class in which we are **ACTIVELY** learning about the material each day. Make-up work at home does not substitute for the learning that takes place in our class. Also, there are times we do group project work in which classmates rely on each other. Therefore, attendance is important for you to be as successful as possible.

2. WORKING WITH A PARTNER OR IN GROUPS

When students work with a partner or in groups, it allows them to learn interactively (cooperative learning). According to Harvard University's School of Education, small groups are good for:

- Generating a broad array of possible alternative points of view or solutions to a problem
- Giving students a chance to work on a project that is too large or complex for an individual
- Allowing students with different backgrounds to bring their special knowledge, experience, or skills to a project, and to explain their orientation to others
- Giving students a chance to teach each other
- Giving students a structured experience so they can practice skills applicable to professional situations
- Students who have difficulty talking in class may speak in a small group.
- More students, overall, have a chance to participate in class.
- Talking in groups can help overcome the anonymity and passivity of a large class or a class meeting in a poorly designed room.
- Students who expect to participate actively prepare better for class.

Many students have had little experience working in groups in an academic setting. Collaborative group work requires careful planning on the part of the instructor (me), and it is not without its difficulties for students. Therefore, I will be teaching students how to work in groups. Such skills I will incorporate in my lessons are: interpersonal and organizational skills for groups to manage; listening, clarifying statements, providing good/effective feedback; keeping discussions on task; probing assumptions and evidence; eliciting viewpoints and perspectives; mediating conflicts; etc.

Individual student accountability is essential in ensuring successful group work. Therefore, it is **VITAL** that your child takes this learning process seriously rather than thinking it is free time and won't be held accountable for the work. I will be using cooperative group rubrics and other methods to determine how best to grade, taking both individual and group effort into consideration. Also, I will be implementing metacognition strategies into the groups. Metacognition is simply, thinking about one's thinking. More precisely, it refers to the processes used to plan, monitor, and assess one's understanding and performance. Your child's critical awareness of his or her thinking and learning will promote greater insights about his or her strengths/deficiencies in his or her intellectual and social skills. Groups themselves will evaluate the effectiveness of their own work toward the final product, and assess each member's contributions. An evaluation form will be provided that asks group members to rate their peers in areas such as participating, suggesting ideas, working constructively toward common goals, behavior etc.

For some students, this may be the first class in which they learn and develop social studies skills. If you work and apply yourself, this will not be a "difficult" class. You will, however, be challenged to do more than simply memorize information and spit it back at me. I look forward to learning and growing with you this year!! ☺

I, _____, have read Mrs. Sheeran's class
(name of student)

syllabus. I understand the information contained within the syllabus and I agree to abide by the classroom rules and TOR's Code of Conduct. I also agree to seek extra-help from Mrs. Sheeran, my parents/guardian, or another source, if I need it, so that I can be successful in Mrs. Sheeran's class.

(signature of student)

As the parent(s)/guardian(s) of _____, I have
(name of student)

also reviewed Mrs. Sheeran's class syllabus with my child and understand what is expected of him/her . If I have further questions or concerns, I agree to contact Mrs. Sheeran as soon as they arise so that I can help my child to be as successful as possible.

signature(s) of parent(s)/guardian(s)

Please return just this **COMPLETED** page to Mrs. Sheeran. The other page is for you and child to keep as a reference. Thank you.