

**SEVENTH GRADE CONTENT STANDARDS**

**TOPICS FROM THE CALIFORNIA STATE HISTORY~SOCIAL SCIENCE  
FRAMEWORK**

What students should know:

**World History and Geography: Medieval and Early Modern Times**

UNCOVERING THE REMOTE PAST

~ Demonstrate knowledge of some of the ways we know about the past.

RENAISSANCE, REFORMATION AND SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION

~ Demonstrate an understanding of major people and developments in Europe during the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Scientific Revolution that influence politics, religion, and arts today.

GROWTH OF ISLAM

~ Demonstrate an understanding of the major people and developments in the spread of Arab civilization between the seventh and tenth centuries.

AFRICAN STATES IN THE MIDDLE AGES

~ Understand the political, economic, and cultural life of sub-Saharan civilizations in the period from 800-1600 A.D.

CIVILIZATION OF THE AMERICAS

~ Explain the economic basis, political organization, and cultural contributions of the Mayan, Aztec, and Incan civilizations.

CHINA

~ Explain the development of Chinese culture and society from 500-1609.

FEUDAL JAPAN

~ Demonstrate an understanding of the development of Japanese civilization from its beginnings through the Middle Ages.

## MEDIEVAL SOCIETIES: EUROPE AND JAPAN

~ Demonstrate an understanding of the political and economic systems that characterized medieval societies in Europe and Japan, and the religious and cultural values that influenced medieval thought in each country.

Seventh Grade Skills Based on Standardized Tests ~ Read and interpret surveys

~ Compare and contrast charts ~ Analyze advertisements

~ Understand time zones on a map

~ Read and interpret a supply and demand chart ~ Use two different maps to get information

~ Infer information from a chart

**SEVENTH GRADE CONTENT STANDARDS  
HISTORICAL THINKING MIDDLE GRADES  
6TH - 8TH GRADES**

What students should be able to do:

**Chronological/Spatial Thinking**

1. Students know the key events of the historical eras they are studying, and place them in chronological sequence.
2. Students understand the relationships between a year (e.g., 1865) ,and the century (e.g., the nineteenth) in which it occurred. /
3. Students identify places on maps of neighborhoods, cities, and countries which they are studying.
4. Students understand that change happens at different rates at different times; that some aspects of a thing can change while others remain the same; that change is complicated and not always what it seems.
5. Students understand that we use periodization to divide the past into meaningful chunks of time (e.g., Middle Ages, the Civil Rights Era, Reagan years).
6. Students understand that the present is connected to the past. They identify both similarity (continuity) and difference (change) between past and present (e.g., compare a historical photograph of a street scene with the same street today).

**Evidence**

1. Students become familiar with artifacts, photographs, stories, music and short written sources from other times. They use these sources to generate questions about the past.
2. Students identify the uses of an artifact. They identify parts of the artifact and how they might contribute to its usefulness, They identify the main subject of a photograph. They identify details in a photograph and explain how they contribute information to the picture. The students understand the meaning of the vocabulary used in written sources and accurately read information from them. They identify the main idea or ideas stated in the source as well as supporting details.
3. Students understand that some sources are more reliable than others. They compare reliable and unreliable sources and offer reasons why a particular source is more or less reliable than another

4. Students understand that primary sources can tell us about the person or people who created them. They use the source to help figure out the purposes and perspectives of the author(s). He or she identifies vocabulary in printed documents which reveal the author's perspectives.
5. Students begin to relate two or more different primary sources from a time period to each other They explain the influence of the time in which they were produced.

### **Diversity/Multiple Perspectives**

1. Students examine beliefs, values, and conditions of life of a variety of different people from different times and places.
2. Students imaginatively place themselves in the position of others in different circumstances-today or in the past-and explain what things would look like from those other' people's positions. They explain differences between two or more participants' views of a particular event. They tell a story incorporating the views of two or more characters.
3. Students understand the importance of considering the actions and perspectives of all of those involved in a particular event. They discuss how a person's circumstances were connected to how they viewed the world (e.g., a person who lived in the desert valued water highly; an enslaved person saw being able to travel at will as part of the meaning of freedom). They understand how actions of different people are connected to their values, beliefs, and circumstances.
4. Students do not dismiss others because they are different. They value diversity; they value the attempt to understand why others act as they do.

### **Historical Interpretation**

1. Students understand that historical accounts may be provided through stories about real people or fictional characters.
2. Students understand that it is possible to tell different stories about the same events.
3. Students identify differences in two or more historical accounts,
4. Students understand that historical accounts on television, in film, in fiction and elsewhere, are interpretations which can be subjected to critical questioning.
5. Students use several sources to construct a narrative of a historical event.

**Historical/Geographic Significance**

1. Students explain how the people, events, and trends they are studying are significant for people today.
2. Students explain how certain events and decisions had consequences for others. They evaluate the consequences as positive or negative (or a combination of the two).

Students distinguish between the significant and trivial detail~ in relation to a particular historical development or account.

## **HISTORICAL THINKING: SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS - SEVENTH GRADE**

### **Chronological and Spatial Thinking**

- Construct a time line of China during the Middle Ages.
- Label major physical features of Europe on a blank physical outline map.
- Create a classroom time line covering the years 500-1500, adding significant events throughout the Middle Ages unit.
- Construct a time line of the major events of the Renaissance period.
- Map the spread of the Renaissance from Florence throughout Europe.
- Show the expansion of the Ghana, Mali, and Songhai empires by drawing maps.
- Compare lands and trade routes shared by African states and Islamic travellers.
- Draw a map that shows where the Aztec, Inca, and Mayan empires were located and what countries are in those locations today.

### **Examining Evidence**

- Look at artists' drawings of samurai life. Does this support or contradict the idea of samurai life in *Of Nightingales That Weep*?
- Watch *Castle*, D. Macaulay, 60 minutes. Watch *Middle Ages*, BBC, five 20-minute segments. Watch *Knights F~ Armor*, A&E, 2 hours. Answer teacher created discussion questions.
- Participate in a classroom discussion of the various types and parts of European castles (using pictures and vocabulary list).
- Using selections from *CHESS*, compare Japanese feudalism with European feudalism (including castle design).
- Use the *Tale of Sundiata* to understand how oral tradition reflects the life of the people in Mali.
- Examine pictures of surgical tools used during the rise of Islam and compare them with surgical tools of today.
- Examine/discuss slides of African art (TCI) in terms of purpose and materials.

### **Diversity/Multiple Perspectives**

- Refer to the novel, *The Examination*, and compare and contrast the decisions of the two brothers. Who did the right thing?
- Compare and contrast the life of a young person in feudal Japan and a young person in feudal Europe.
- Based upon the novel, *A Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver*, compare the differing views of Eleanor of Aquitaine as seen by Abbot Suger, Empress Mathilda, William the Marshall, and Eleanor herself.
- Discuss quotations to determine if they are Buddhist, Confucian, or Taoist in origin (TCI).

### **Interpretation**

- Read *The Examination* and discuss the influence of the examination system on Chinese social and political life.
- Compare Chinese poetry and painting appreciated in Japanese imperial courts and urban centers with the distinctive Japanese style of painting that developed in the ninth century and with Noh drama, a unique Japanese art form.
- Do an illumination of a significant term from the Middle Ages ("Medieval"). Each line should relate to how ideas from the Middle Ages influence us today.
- Read *Of Nightingales That Weep* by Paterson, and discuss the role of the samurai in feudal Japan.
- Write an essay speculating on the forces that led to the rise and fall of the Mayan Empire.

### **Determining Historical/ Geographical Significance**

- Write an essay exploring how Japan's proximity to China led to the borrowing of ideas, institutions, and technology, and how Japan's isolation allowed it to borrow selectively and develop a culture of its own.
- Read *A Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver* by Konigsburg and chart the importance of the following in the European Middle Ages: the role of women, chivalry, the Crusades, feudalism, and the church.
- Design a game board of the Renaissance (using a map of Europe), paying particular attention to lasting ideas originating in the Renaissance by using the

following categories: religion, art, daily life, and technological innovation.  
Discuss the importance of the Tale of Sundiata in African history.

<b>MODEL UNIT FOR SEVENTH GRADE – MEDIEVAL SOCIETIES: EUROPE AND JAPAN</b> <b>Sample Question: What can castles tell us about life in the Middle Ages in Europe and Japan?</b>	
<b>Historical Thinking Standard</b>	<b>Assignments/Activities</b> To show evidence of standards, students might:
<b>Chronological/Spatial Thinking</b> ✓ Location ✓ Sequencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Label the countries in Europe and Japan and identify the capitals.</li> <li>■ Label major physical features of these countries on a blank physical outline map.</li> <li>■ Create a class time line covering the years 500-1500, adding significant events throughout the Middle Ages unit.</li> </ul>
<b>Examining Evidence</b> ✓ Examining primary sources (such as photos, artifacts, and documents) ✓ Relationship between primary sources and historical/geographical context ✓ Author's intentions/perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Watch <i>Castle, D. Macaulay</i>, 60 minutes.</li> <li>■ Watch <i>Middle Ages</i>, BBC, five 20-minute segments.</li> <li>■ Participate in a classroom discussion of the various types and parts of European castles (using pictures and vocabulary list).</li> <li>■ Using selections from CHES, compare Japanese feudalism with European feudalism (including castle design).</li> </ul>
<b>Diversity/Multiple Perspectives</b> ✓ Influences (such as location, race, gender, class, age, sexual orientation) ✓ Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Read <i>A Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver</i> by Konigsburg and chart the differing views of women, chivalry, the Crusades, feudalism, and the Church as seen by Abbot Sugget, Empress Mathilda, William the Marshall, and Eleanor herself.</li> <li>■ Read <i>Nightingales that Weep</i> and explain Japanese views on women, warfare, and proper behavior.</li> </ul>
<b>Interpretation</b> ✓ Constructing historical accounts ✓ Comparing historical accounts ✓ Moral judgment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Write a compare/contrast essay which discusses the similarities and differences of Japanese and European castles. Explain what the differences and similarities tell us about the two societies.</li> </ul>
<b>Determining Historical/Geographical Significance</b> ✓ Connecting past and present ✓ Causation ✓ Evaluation ✓ Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Construct a European or Japanese castle from a particular time and location; write a two-page story about an event that took place in that castle. Include an appropriate coat of arms, a map of the realm, a map of the castle grounds, and a floor plan.</li> </ul>

*California History-Social Science Framework*

**GRADE SEVEN-WORLD HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY  
MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN TIMES**

The study of world history and geography continues this year with an examination of social, cultural, and technological change during the period A.D. 500-1789. A review unit on the ancient world begins with a study of the ways archaeologists and historians uncover the past. Then, with the fall of Rome, this study moves to Islam, a rising force in the medieval world; follows the spread of Islam through Africa; crosses the Atlantic to observe the rise of the Mayan, Incan, and Aztec civilizations; moves westward to compare the civilizations of China and Japan during the Middle Ages; returns to a comparative study of Europe during the High Middle Ages; and concludes with the turbulent age of the Renaissance, Reformation, and Scientific Revolution that ushered in the Enlightenment and the modern world.

The sequence of these units is both historical, advancing across the years A.D. 500-1789, and geographic, advancing across the major continents of the earth. The units are focused on the great civilizations that were developing concurrently over these years. By developing world maps and time lines, students can locate these cultures in time and in place, compare events that were developing concurrently in the world, and observe the transmission of ideas, beliefs, scientific developments, and economic trade throughout this important period of history.

**Connecting with Past Learnings: Uncovering the Remote Past**

In the first review unit of this course, the students address this question: How do we know about the past? They will see that archaeologists develop their theories by looking for clues in the legends, artifacts, and fossils left behind by ancient peoples. For more recent periods, historians use written records as well as material culture to find out what happened in the past. Through examples, students will observe that historians and archaeologists work as detectives by formulating appropriate questions and drawing conclusions from available evidence, to try to reconstruct past societies and cultures; their social structure and family life; their political and economic systems; and their language, art, architecture, beliefs, and values. Students will also learn that new discoveries by archaeologists and historians change our view of the past. The process of reconstructing the past requires knowledge, an open mind, and critical thinking.

**Growth of Islam**

In this unit students examine the rise of Islam as a religion and as a civilization. Attention should be given to the historic events of A.D. 636-651 when Arab armies reunited the ancient Middle East. Students should analyze the geographic and economic significance of the trade routes between Asia and Europe that were used by Arab merchants. They should consider the importance of a common literary language (Arabic) and religion (Islamic) in unifying the many ethnic groups of this region. The religious ideas of

Mohammed, the founder of Islam, should be discussed both for their ethical teachings and as a way of life. Mohammed should be seen as a major historical figure who helped establish the Islamic way of life, its code of ethics and justice, and its rule of law. Students should examine the position of Christians and Jews in the Islamic world who, as "People of the Book," were allowed to practice their religious beliefs. Contributions of Islamic scholars, including mathematicians, scientists, geographers, astronomers, and physicians from many ethnic groups, should be emphasized and their relationship to Greek thought acknowledged. Scholars at Baghdad and Cordoba, the two great centers of Muslim learning, helped to preserve much of the learning of the ancient world; and, by the end of the ninth century, they added important new discoveries of their own in mathematics, medicine, geography, history, and science. Attention should be paid to the flowering of Jewish civilization in Cordoba, where poets, philosophers, and scholars established a vibrant culture.

In time the influence of Greek rationalism waned, and religious mysticism came to dominate orthodox Islamic thought. In this intellectual climate, poetry and literature flourished. Students can be introduced to these achievements through selections from *The Thousand and One Nights* (Arabic) and the poetry of Omar Khayyam, a Sufi mystic (Persian). Islam spread to Turkey, where, in the fourteenth century, the Ottoman Turks began gradually to absorb other Turkish tribes and to establish control over most of Asia Minor. In 1453 they captured Constantinople, the seat of the Byzantine Empire, and expanded into Christian Europe until nearly 1700. In studying the social structure of the Ottoman Empire, students should give attention to the role of women; the privileges of its conquered peoples; slavery; the political system; and the legal code. Analysis should be made of the geographic conditions that facilitated the expansion of Islam through the Middle East, through North and sub-Saharan Africa, to Spain, and east through Persia to India and Indonesia, with influences that persist in these regions to the present day

### **African States in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times**

This unit begins with a geographic survey of sub-Saharan Africa and the landforms, climate, vegetation, rivers, and resources associated with its major geographic regions.

Students should analyze the importance of an iron technology and of geographic location and trade in the development of the sub-Saharan empires of Ghana and Mali. Both became states of great wealth-Ghana, by controlling the trade in gold from the south; and Mali, by controlling both the southern trade in gold and the northern trade in salt. Both kingdoms exercised commercial, cultural, and political power over a large part of Africa.

The Muslim conquest of Ghana ended in destruction of the kingdom (1076). Mali's rulers, on the other hand, converted to Islam. Under Islamic rule, the nation achieved recognition as a major power Its leading city, Timbuktu, with its university became known throughout the Muslim world as a center of learning, a tradition that lasted through Mali's conquest by Songhay in the fourteenth century and Songhay's fall two centuries later to Moroccan invaders.

## **Civilizations of the Americas**

In this unit students are introduced to three great civilizations of Middle and South America: the Mayans, Aztecs, and Incas. By developing maps and time lines, students should be able to place these cultures in geographic and historical perspective. With the development of maize agriculture around 2000 B.C., foundations were laid for cultural advances in these regions. Mayan civilization achieved its Classic Age about the time the Greco-Roman civilization collapsed. The great cultural advance that began in Peru around 1000 B.C. culminated in the Imperial Incan civilization of the fourteenth century A.D. The Aztec civilization, which incorporated the achievements of its conquered neighbors, reached its height by the sixteenth century A.D.

The accomplishments of these civilizations should be explored: the Mayans for their noble architecture, calendar, pictographic writing, and astronomy; the Incas for their excellence in engineering and administration; and the Aztecs for their massive temple architecture and Aztec calendar. Historical and archaeological records should help students understand the daily lives and beliefs of these people.

## **China**

In this unit students examine Chinese culture and society during the Middle Ages, a period that saw the remarkable development in China of great cities; construction of large seagoing vessels; and great technological progress, including the invention of the compass, gunpowder, and printing. Important economic changes during the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 618-906) established a "modern" form of Chinese society that lasted well into the twentieth century. Students should analyze the economic foundations of this society in the conversion of the jungle regions of the Yangtze Valley into productive rice paddies. Elaborate irrigation canals supported the production and distribution of vast quantities of rice to the imperial centers of the north. The wealth that resulted supported in turn, a money economy, a merchant class engaged in extensive private trading, and the growth of China's provincial cities.

During the Mongol Ascendancy (1264-1368), a flourishing sea trade developed between China, India, and the coast of Southeast Asia. Foreign merchants such as Marco Polo were given special privileges and high office. The Ming Dynasty undertook between 1405 and 1423 a series of great maritime expeditions that eclipsed in scale the European exploits of a century later. Abruptly, in 1424, the Emperor suspended these enterprises, however, and forbade even the construction of sea-going vessels. Students should examine how the Chinese ideal of a unified state under one leader, with a strong bureaucracy controlling the machinery of government, restrained progress. Unable to control the growth of its maritime commerce, the bureaucracy chose instead to withdraw from it.

Students should analyze how Confucian thought supported these actions and returned China to its traditional values. The merchant class was subordinated as a necessary evil of society, and little priority was placed on Chinese trade and manufacturing, which, in A.D.

1000, had been the most advanced in the world. The Chinese invention of printing fostered scholarly study and spread traditional ideas more widely throughout society. The outlook of the Chinese scholarly class came to dominate Chinese thought and government well into the twentieth century. Students should critically analyze the different ways in which Chinese inventions-gunpowder, the compass, and printing-affected China and the West.

## **Japan**

Students will focus next on Japan during the reign of Prince Shotoku (A.D. 592-632). Students should observe Japan's close geographic proximity to the more ancient civilization of China and analyze how that led to the borrowing of ideas, institutions, and technology. At the same time they should consider how its insular location facilitated Japan's political independence, allowing it to borrow selectively and to fashion a culture uniquely its own.

With the establishment of direct relations between the Chinese and Japanese courts in A.D. 607, Japanese artists, crafts-persons, scribes, interpreters, and diplomatic dignitaries made frequent visits to China. Members of Japan's upper classes studied Chinese language, literature, philosophy, art, science, and government. Buddhism was introduced and blended with Japan's traditional Shinto religion, "the way of the gods."

Students might compare Chinese poetry and painting appreciated in Japanese imperial courts and urban centers with the distinctive Japanese style of painting that developed in the ninth century and with Noh drama, a unique Japanese art form. By the ninth century Japanese literature was entering its golden age and included the works of several gifted women authors, among them Murasaki Shikibu, whose Tale of Genji ranks among the classics of world literature.

## **Medieval Societies: Europe and Japan**

In this unit students will encounter Europe during the High Middle Ages. This study will focus on the economic and political structure of feudal society; daily life and the role of women in medieval times; the growth of towns, trade, and technology; and the development of universities. Special attention should be paid to Christianity in the Middle Ages because the Church, more powerful than any feudal state, influenced every aspect of medieval life. The story of St. Francis of Assisi should be told, both for his embodiment of the Christian ideal and for the accessibility to students of his gentle beliefs. Attention also should be given to the Crusades, with these European undertakings viewed from both the Christian and Muslim vantage points. What were the Crusades? Why did they begin? What were their results?

To understand what was distinctive about European culture during this period, students should compare Western Europe with Japan during the High Middle Ages. They will see that the two cultures had aspects in common: a feudal, lord-vassal system, with military

leaders (shogun), great lords (daimyo), and knights (samurai). Both feudal societies emphasized personal loyalty to the lord, military skills, a strict code of honor, self-discipline, and fearlessness in battle. Students will also see striking differences in cultural values, religious beliefs, and social customs, including differences in women's roles. Japanese Haiku poetry and European epic poetry such as Beowulf provide an interesting contrast. By seeing that some cultural traditions have survived since the Middle Ages, including the importance that Japanese place on family loyalty and ceremonial rituals, students should better understand the meaning of historical continuity. They also should appreciate the significance of change by seeing how much both cultures have been transformed by forces of modernization while retaining aspects of their cultural heritage. Another aspect of medieval societies that students should understand was the continuing persecution of the Jewish minority; the massacre of Jews by the Crusaders; and the expulsion of Jews from England in 1290, from France in 1306 and 1394, and from many German cities during the time of the Black Death. Students should learn of the conflicts between Christians and Moslems in Spain, beginning in 1085, and the plight of the Jews caught between the warring faiths. Examination of the Spanish and Portuguese inquisitions, during which people were tortured and burned at the stake, should demonstrate the lengths to which religious authorities went to force conversions and to destroy as heretics those who continued in their Judaic faith. The expulsion of the Jews and Moslems from Spain in 1492 should be noted.

### **Europe During the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Scientific Revolution**

This unit focuses on an unusually rich and important period whose effects continue to influence politics, religion, culture, and the arts of the present day.

A remarkable burst of creativity that began in the fourteenth century in northern Italy and spread through Europe produced the artistic and literary advances of the Renaissance. Classical literature was rediscovered, and humanistic studies flourished. Particular attention should be paid to Florence, Italy, as a major center of commerce, creativity, and artistic genius. Students should be introduced to the writings of Shakespeare, Cervantes, and Machiavelli and to the art of Michelangelo, da Vinci, Botticelli, Raphael, Titian, Van Eyck, and Durer. Examination of masterpieces such as Michelangelo's Moses and Durer's The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse will demonstrate the powerful vision of these artists as well as the power of art to communicate ideas. Students should analyze how Renaissance painting differed from that of the Middle Ages, even though both reflected many of the same religious themes and symbolisms. They should observe how Renaissance art reflected the advances of that age in science, mathematics, engineering techniques, and understanding of human anatomy.

Students should closely examine the Protestant Reformation and become familiar with the religious beliefs of Martin Luther and John Calvin as well as the history of the English Bible. To understand why Luther's 95 theses, nailed to the Wittenberg church door, had such historic results, students should consider the growing religious, political, and economic resistance to the supremacy of the Renaissance popes. Through vivid narrative, attention should be given to the dramatic series of events leading to Luther's

excommunication, the peasants' revolt, the spread of the Reformation throughout northern Europe and England, the Catholic response in the Counter-Reformation, the revival of the Inquisition, and the bloody religious conflicts that followed. Most of Germanic Europe became Protestant, while most of Latin Europe remained loyal to Rome. Throughout Europe, the secular power of kings and local rulers grew at the expense of church authority and led to the age of kings. Students should learn the meaning of the divine right of kings, particularly in relation to the French monarchy

The beginnings of modern science can be found in these same tumultuous years of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Students should draw on their science courses to examine the significance of the methods of scientific observation, mathematical proof, and experimental science developed by such giants of this age as Galileo, Johannes Kepler, Francis Bacon, and Sir Isaac Newton. Students should consider the significance of the inventions of this age—the telescope, microscope, thermometer, barometer, and printing press—and observe how all these developments spurred European leadership in commerce and helped to usher in the age of exploration and the Enlightenment.

### **Linking Past to Present**

This study will conclude with an examination of the political forces let loose in the Western world by the rise of capitalism and the Enlightenment and the impact of the ideas of this period on Western society in the future, especially on the young American republic that the students will be studying in grade eight. To carry this theme into modern times, students will consider the ways in which these ideas continue to influence our nation and the world today; for example, the importance of rationalism in science and technology; the effort to solve problems rationally in local, state, national, and international arenas; and the ideal of human rights, a vital issue today throughout the world.