

Brookline Social Studies Learning Standards for Grade 6

I. Overview: World Geography, History, and Culture

After being introduced to the study of world geography, students will explore six important world regions in the following manner. They will begin by researching the physical features and climate of a given regions. Next, students will survey key historical events that shape the way people now live in that region. They will then investigate the cultures of the peoples living in these regions, studying languages, social groupings, religions, daily life, arts, economy, and governance. Students will conclude by inquiring about an important issue confronting people in that region.

II. Overarching Big Ideas

Geography is used to interpret the past, understand the present, and plan for the future.

Geographers organize the earth into regions that share common characteristics.

Physical processes shape the earth's surface.

Geographic factors influence where people settle.

All living things are dependent upon one another and their surroundings for survival.

Culture influences peoples' perceptions about places and regions.

Patterns of economic activities result in global interdependence.

People's actions can change the physical environment in positive and negative ways..

III. Overarching Essential Questions

What is geography and why study it?

What is a region?

How is earth's topography formed?

How has geography historically affected where people live today?

How does physical geography affect human life?

How does where we are from influence who we are?

In what ways can we say that the world is getting smaller?

How can we use geographical knowledge to cope with future challenges?

IV. Content Learning Expectations by Topic

Physical and Human Geography

Contents: Physical features, Climate, History and Government, Culture, and Countries:

Global Geography Issue: Cultural Impact of Globalization

Students will:

- Compare and contrast different types of maps.
- Use atlases, maps and charts to identify and classify physical geography information.
- Explain how forces within earth and the actions of mechanical and chemical weathering shape Earth's surface.
- Discuss the characteristics of climate zones.
- Give examples of the aspects of human culture.
- Trace the relationship between cultural change and development of technology and cultural diffusion.

- Predict the impact of globalization on world economies, cultures and traditions..

South America

Contents: Physical features, Climate, History and Government, Culture, and Countries:
Environmental Geography Issue = Use of Rainforests

Students will:

- Locate the major landforms and waterways in South American and discuss how these geographic features determine classification of South American regions.
- Estimate the effect of altitude, latitude, and bodies of water on South American climate zones.
- Illustrate the accomplishments of early South American civilizations
- Analyze the consequences of European conquests and Latin American independence movements on contemporary South American cultures.
- Compare and contrast South American cultures i.e. (language, religion, ethnicity, arts, and daily life)
- Locate political divisions (nation, country, state, cities) and natural resources on a map of South America.
- Problem solve about the conflicting intentions of competing interests concerning South American rainforests.

Europe

Contents: Physical features, Climate, History and Government, Culture, and Countries:
Political Geography Issue = The European Union and multiculturalism

Students will:

- Locate on a map the European physical features, such as waterways, oceans, highlands, mountains, peninsulas, plains.
- Describe how wind and water currents shape Europe's climate.
- Differentiate among the seven climate regions of Europe.
- Assess the impact of Roman civilization on the development of European society, religion, and culture.
- Locate political divisions (nation, country, state, cities) and natural resources on a map of Europe.
- Identify the cultural features of Europe (language, religion, ethnicity, arts, and daily life).
- Identify and explain factors that contribute to conflict within and between countries.
- Generalize about the ways that Russia shares and does not share in the cultural history of Europe.
- Draw conclusions about the impact of cultural and religious differences on the European Union.

North Africa, Southwest Asia and Central Asia

Contents: Physical features, Climate, History and Government, Culture, and Countries:
Cultural Geography Issue = Religion and regional conflict

Students will:

- Locate on a map of North Africa, Southwest Asia, and Central Asia physical features such as sea and waterways, mountains, plateaus, lowlands, rivers, and plains.
- Indicate the effect of dry continental air masses on the climate zones of North Africa, Southwest Asia and Central Asia.
- Explain how the movement of people, products and ideas affected the development of North Africa, Southwest Asia and Central Asia.
- Trace the impact of world religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) on the cultural development of North Africa, Southwest Asia, and Central Asia.
- Discuss how ethnic, cultural, and economic differences have led to conflict in North Africa, Southwest Asia and Central Asia.
- Locate political divisions (nation, country, state, cities) and natural resources on a map of North Africa, Southwest Asia and Central Asia.
- Identify the cultural features of North Africa, Southwest Asia and Central Asia (language, religion, ethnicity, arts, and daily life).
- Illustrate and explain how places and regions serve as cultural symbols.
- Predict the impact of religious pluralism on political stability in North Africa, Southwest Asia and Central Asia.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Contents: Physical features, Climate, History and Government, Culture, and Countries:
Regional Studies Geography Issue = Privatization of Water

Students will:

- Locate on a map of Africa, South of the Sahara physical features such as mountains, plateaus, lowlands, rivers, escarpments, valleys and plains.
- Estimate the effect of altitude, latitude, and bodies of water on the seven climate zones of Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Outline the historical significance of the West African kingdoms.
- Generalize about the effect of the slave trade, imperialism and the struggles for independence on the economic development of Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Locate political divisions (nation, country, state, cities) and natural resources on a map of Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Identify and list the cultural features of this region (languages, religions, ethnicities, arts, and daily life).
- Research the arguments for and against the privatization of water in Sub-Saharan Africa.

South and East Asia

Contents: Physical features, Climate, History and Government, Culture, and Countries:
Economic Geography Issue = Rise of China

Students will:

- Locate on a map of South and East Asia physical features such as mountains, plateaus, lowlands, rivers, plains, peninsulas, islands, archipelagos, and seas.
- Estimate the effect of altitude, latitude, and bodies of water on the seven climate zones of South and East Asia.

- Trace the development of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism in South and East Asian history.
- Discuss the impact of contact with Europe in the development of nation-states in South and East Asia.
- Locate political divisions (nation, country, state, cities) and natural resources on a map of South and East Asia
- Identify and list the cultural features of this region (language, religion, ethnicity, arts, and daily life).
- Classify different types of economic systems (traditional, command, market, mixed) and locate example of these systems in South and East Asia.
- Anticipate the global consequences of the economic development of China.

Australia, Oceania and Antarctica

Contents: Physical features, Climate, History and Government, Culture, and Countries:
Historical Geography Issue = Indigenous Peoples

Students will:

- Locate on a map of Australia, Oceania, and Antarctica physical features such as mountains, plateaus, rivers, plains, high and low islands, major reefs, oceans, and seas.
- Estimate the effect of altitude, latitude, and bodies of water on the seven climate zones of Australia, Oceania and Antarctica
- Trace the early migrations that peopled Australia and Oceania.
- Appraise the impact on the cultural development of Australia and Oceania of European exploration, transportation of convicts, trade, missionary activity, and settlement.
- Locate political divisions (nation, country, state, cities) and natural resources on a map of Australia and Oceania.
- Identify and list the cultural features of this region (language, religion, ethnicity, arts, and daily life).
- Explain ways that Antarctica differs from other world regions.
- Evaluate proposals for remedying historical disparities between indigenous and European-ancestry peoples in Australia and Oceania.

V. Skill Learning Expectations by Domain

A. Study Skills by Category

Investigation Skills

Students will:

- Generate questions based on data.
- Find evidence in text and digital sources to support opinions/statements.

Organization Skills

Students will:

- Develop an efficient method for note-taking.
- Use charts, graphs and tables to organize data.

Comprehension Skills

Students will:

- Utilize non-fiction reading skills including identifying main idea and supporting details, summarizing, paraphrasing, making textual connections.
- Employ context clues to decipher primary source documents.

Presentation Skills

Students will

- Develop public speaking skills through debate, oral presentation of research, and dramatic presentations.
- Produce a 5-paragraph essay with thesis, supporting details, conclusion, and bibliography.

B. Thinking Skills by Category

Historical Thinking Skills

Students will:

- Interpret primary source materials in context.
- Develop historical perspective: be able to take another's point of view.

Analytical Thinking Skills

Students will:

- Use evidence to prioritize causes and effects,
- Make predictions based on evidence and prior knowledge.

Organizational Thinking Skills

Students will:

- Employ meta-cognition to monitor and reflect on one's own learning.
- Develop hypotheses about the relationship between physical and human geography.

Critical Thinking Skills

- Discriminate fact from opinion.
- Evaluate sources for reliability.