**6th GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES EXPECTATIONS**

**(A fast-break classroom)**



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The sixth grade social studies curriculum is very challenging for sixth grade students. The state standards dive very deep into a number of abstract social and political ideologies. In order to fully cover all material and prepare all students for the next grade level, we must move at a very quick pace. The class content for social studies covers a lot of categories. History, government styles, and different world cultures are all broken down and discussed. Students will be challenged and engaged on a day-to-day basis in the classroom. We will use an in-class textbook as well as many videos and online resources to help educate students. Through much discussion with 7th and 8th grade teachers and students, the number one difficulty noticed for incoming seventh graders is the ability to read through non-fiction material and summarize the information. A good portion of the social studies class this year will be geared around learning to read a nonfiction text and take good notes based off of what is read. The ability to be a good note taker will be extremely beneficial for students for the rest of their scholastic careers in middle school, high school, and college. Each student will be given a note-taking guide each week which will be used for taking notes from the material that we will be covering that week. Students will fill their notes out as we go through and discuss the class material. Generally all class periods will be broken down into segments. There will be a P.G.S. segment (discussed below), a reading/note-taking segment, and demonstration segment which could include investigation activities, web quests, historical or cultural videos, or guest speakers from the field of social studies. All of the class content will be taught in this nature. We read it, we demonstrate it, and we take notes on it. This method has been proven to work and students will get used to and appreciate this consistent routine!

**Student Work Breakdown**

Actual grades will be taken for students only on their test and quiz scores as well as their class participation sheet. However, students will be expected to do a lot of other work to learn the class material. Below is a breakdown of the general work that will be required of students.

**1. Participation-**I am a big believer in students taking an active role in their learning. Each nine week grading period the students will be provided with a participation grid sheet. Each time a student participates in class, I will initial a box on their sheet. Students can participate in class by volunteering to answer a question, reading aloud in class, or volunteering to help out in teacher demonstrations. At the end of each nine week period, I will collect students’ participation sheets and grade them. After the first nine weeks, students turning in sheets with 30 initialed boxes will receive the required 30 participation points for an A+. The second nine weeks, the number of required participation points goes up to 35, and for the third and fourth nine weeks the requirement jumps up to 40. I will allow students to have up to five bonus points each nine weeks. Meaning it is possible to get a 105% on your participation grade for the nine weeks. **It is paramount that students keep this participation sheet and do not lose it, or they will face a deduction in their final participation grade!**

**2. P.G.S-**The acronym stands for, “Pre-game Stretch.” It is a class warmup or bell ringer activity. At the beginning of most classes, I will have three questions on the board. Students will be given the first five minutes of class to answer those questions. The questions will be based on the information that was covered during the previous class session, or information that students are struggling with on homework or quizzes. At the end of five minutes, students will trade and grade their papers as I go through the correct answers for each question. I trade and grade so that students can receive instant feedback as to how they performed. This is a great practice and review activity. The questions are also geared to help students on the weekly quiz or test.

**3. Homework-**Over the course of the week students will be assigned homework assignments based on the current and previous lesson material. Students will receive class time to start many of these assignments, but will be expected to complete whatever is not done during class on their own time. Each assignment will provide students with great practice and it will help prepare them for the weekly exam. Questions in the homework assignments will be a mixture of multiple choice, matching, modified true/false, and short answer essay questions. These packets will be challenging for students, but they will help the students apply the information they learned in class. The packets will also help prepare the students for the state standardized 6th grade ISTEP test which students will take at the end of the year. **Students can always refer to their notes in order to help them complete the assignments!**

**4. Quizzes and Tests-**Generally, every Friday in class will be an assessment day. Students will either be given a quiz on the lesson topic covered during the week or a test over the current unit of study. Generally, each unit we cover has two to four lessons within it. Students will be quizzed over each lesson and when all lessons are complete, a test will then be taken over the entire unit. Students will need to show both concrete and abstract knowledge of the information covered in the lesson or chapter in order to receive an A. Students will be allowed to use their notes from their note-taking guides on their tests, thus further validating the importance of taking good notes throughout the week. **No notes will be allowed to be used for quizzes. Students MUST learn to study for their tests and quizzes before they take them. Again, learning proper study skills will be crucial for students not only in my class, but for the rest of their school careers!**

**General Notes**

Students can expect to have some work to do for social studies pretty much every night of the week. However, I rarely assign homework on the weekends. Students will be given some class time for all homework items. **I am always available to the students for questions during class and after school.** I also want to again stress that it is quite crucial that students take care and keep track of all of their materials (e.g. participation sheet and note-taking guides). Students losing their materials will not be a valid excuse and will result in poor grades. My expectations for sixth grade students are very high, and I demand that they be responsible for all of their classroom materials. Social studies class for the sixth graders will be challenging and demanding at times; however, if students are willing to fully engage themselves in the class and the work, they will do quite well and find that they are not only better social studies students, but better all –around students, as well. I have described my class above as a fast-break classroom. We have a lot of material to cover and I stay very focused during class time. Being organized and focused helps us cover all state standards before students move on to seventh grade. The students will also gain a lot of valuable knowledge about the natural world that will help them as they transition to much more abstract social studies courses in 7th grade, 8th grade, and high school. Students will have to work very hard in my room and I expect and demand that they do! I am very enthusiastic about the opportunity to teach your son or daughter this school year, and I will do my best to ensure that their sixth grade social studies experience is both gratifying and beneficial. Please follow me on Twitter **@mrcrosstcms** for important class announcements. A reminder that Twitter is PUBLIC! It is designed for me to give out information, not have conversations. Questions can be asked by parents or students, but should not include any private information or include any student names. Any comments to me on Twitter should be professional, positive, and relevant. **Please call, e-mail, or visit me to discuss anything of major relevance!** Failure to follow the above mentioned guidelines will result in being blocked from my class Twitter account. Also, please use my website ([www.mrcross.net](http://www.mrcross.net)) daily to see much more in-depth and detailed class summaries and announcements. Parents and students will also find useful learning resources on my website as well!

 -Mr. Cross

6TH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES GAME PLAN FOR SUCCESS!

(Learn Like A Champion Today)

* **START EVERY ACTIVITY PROMPTLY**
* **PAY ATTENTION TO DETAIL**
* **BRING EFFORT AND ENTHUSIASM EVERYDAY**
* **TAKE GOOD NOTES AND USE THEM**
* **RE-READ THE READING MATERIAL**
* **DO YOUR HOMEWORK! NO MISSING ASSIGNMENTS!**
* **PARTICIPATE IN CLASS (IT IS 10% OF YOUR GRADE)**
* **SEEK HELP FROM MR. CROSS WHEN NEEDED**
* **STUDY FOR QUIZZES AND TESTS**

I have read this expectations sheet and understand what to expect for my child’s sixth grade social studies class.

**AGAIN, PLEASE VIST MY WEBSITE** [**WWW.MRCROSS.NET**](http://www.mrcross.net) **AND FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER @mrcrosstcms**

Student name:

Parent name:

Date:

(Signing and turning this sheet into Mr. Cross will be worth two participation points for the first nine weeks)