

8th Grade Civics Curriculum

Unit 1 (Chapters 1-5) Theme:

Foundations of American Democracy

Enduring Understanding:

As American citizens, we make a commitment to the nation and to the values and principles that are part of United States democracy.

Essential Questions:

- What civic character traits are important to the preservation and improvement of American constitutional democracy?
- What values and principles are basic to American Constitutional democracy?
- What is the American idea of constitutional government?

Historical Questions:

- What is the role of government in everyday life?
- What are the principles in the Constitution?
- What are the freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights?
- What are the differences between the duties and responsibilities of citizens?

Wisconsin State Social Studies Standards:

A.8.4 Conduct a historical study to analyze the use of the local environment in a Wisconsin community and to explain the effect of this use on the environment

A.8.7 Describe the movement of people, ideas, diseases, and products throughout the world

A.8.11 Give examples of the causes and consequences of current global issues, such as the expansion of global markets, the urbanization of the developing world, the consumption of natural resources, and the extinction of species, and suggest possible responses by various individuals, groups, and nations

B.8.2 Employ cause-and-effect arguments to demonstrate how significant events have influenced the past and the present in United States and world history

B.8.3 Describe the relationships between and among significant events, such as the causes and consequences of wars in United States and world history

B.8.4 Explain how and why events may be interpreted differently depending upon the perspectives of participants, witnesses, reporters, and historians

B.8.5 Use historical evidence to determine and support a position about important political values, such as freedom, democracy, equality, or justice, and express the position coherently

B.8.6 Analyze important political values such as freedom, democracy, equality, and justice embodied in documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights

B.8.7 Identify significant events and people in the major eras of United States and world history

B.8.10 Analyze examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, or nations

C.8.1 Identify and explain democracy's basic principles, including individual rights, responsibility for the common good, equal opportunity, equal protection of the laws, freedom of speech, justice, and majority rule with protection for minority rights

C.8.2 Identify, cite, and discuss important political documents, such as the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and landmark decisions of the Supreme Court, and explain their function in the American political system

C.8.3 Explain how laws are developed, how the purposes of government are established, and how the powers of government are acquired, maintained, justified, and sometimes abused

C.8.4 Describe and explain how the federal system separates the powers of federal, state, and local governments in the United States, and how legislative, executive, and judicial powers are balanced at the federal level

C.8.5 Explain how the federal system and the separation of powers in the Constitution work to sustain both majority rule and minority rights

- C.8.6 Explain the role of political parties and interest groups in American politics
- C.8.7 Locate, organize, and use relevant information to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and advocate the position in a debate
- C.8.8 Identify ways in which advocates participate in public policy debates
- C.8.9 Describe the role of international organizations such as military alliances and trade associations
- E.8.1 Give examples to explain and illustrate the influence of prior knowledge, motivation, capabilities, personal interests, and other factors on individual learning
- E.8.2 Give examples to explain and illustrate how factors such as family, gender, and socioeconomic status contribute to individual identity and development
- E.8.3 Describe the ways in which local, regional, and ethnic cultures may influence the everyday lives of people
- E.8.6 Describe and explain the influence of status, ethnic origin, race, gender, and age on the interactions of individuals
- E.8.7 Identify and explain examples of bias, prejudice, and stereotyping, and how they contribute to conflict in a society
- E.8.10 Explain how language, art, music, beliefs, and other components of culture can further global understanding or cause misunderstanding
- E.8.11 Explain how beliefs and practices, such as ownership of property or status at birth, may lead to conflict among people of different regions or cultures and give examples of such conflicts that have and have not been resolved
- E.8.12 Describe conflict resolution and peer mediation strategies used in resolving differences and disputes
- E.8.14 Describe cooperation and interdependence among individuals, groups, and nations, such as helping others in times of crisis

Common Core State Standards for Literacy in Social Studies:

Reading:

1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
3. Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).
4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
9. Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.
10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing:

2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events: a) Introduce a topic clearly, b) Develop the topic, c) Use transitions, d) Use precise word choice, e) Use appropriate voice, and f) Provide a conclusion.

Unit 2 (Chapters 6-8) Theme:

The National Government

Enduring Understanding:

Under our federal system, the executive, legislative, and judicial branches share the responsibility of governing the nation.

Essential Questions:

- How is the national government organized and what does it do?

- How are power and responsibility distributed, shared, and limited in the government established by the United States Constitution?

Historical Questions:

- How is the legislative branch organized and how does it function?
- What are the duties, qualifications, and powers of the president and other members of the executive branch?
- How is the judicial branch organized, and what is the level of its authority?
- How are Supreme Court decisions related to the United States Constitution?

Wisconsin State Social Studies Standards:

B.8.2 Employ cause-and-effect arguments to demonstrate how significant events have influenced the past and the present in United States and world history

B.8.4 Explain how and why events may be interpreted differently depending upon the perspectives of participants, witnesses, reporters, and historians

B.8.5 Use historical evidence to determine and support a position about important political values, such as freedom, democracy, equality, or justice, and express the position coherently

B.8.10 Analyze examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, or nations

C.8.2 Identify, cite, and discuss important political documents, such as the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and landmark decisions of the Supreme Court, and explain their function in the American political system

C.8.3 Explain how laws are developed, how the purposes of government are established, and how the powers of government are acquired, maintained, justified, and sometimes abused

C.8.4 Describe and explain how the federal system separates the powers of federal, state, and local governments in the United States, and how legislative, executive, and judicial powers are balanced at the federal level

C.8.5 Explain how the federal system and the separation of powers in the Constitution work to sustain both majority rule and minority rights

E.8.12 Describe conflict resolution and peer mediation strategies used in resolving differences and disputes

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Unit 3 (Chapters 9-11) Theme:

Political Parties and Interest Groups

Enduring Understanding:

Political and economic institutions evolve to help individuals and groups accomplish their goals.

Essential Questions:

- What is American political culture?

- How does the American political system provide for choice and opportunities for participation?
- How can citizens take part in civic life?

Historical Questions:

- What are the origin, structure, function, and types of U.S. political parties and interest groups?
- What are voting requirements and responsibilities in elections at the local, county, state, and national levels?
- How do individual voters, political parties, and interest groups influence American government?

Wisconsin State Social Studies Standards:

- A.8.1 Use a variety of geographic representations, such as political, physical, and topographic maps, a globe, aerial photographs, and satellite images, to gather and compare information about a place
- A.8.11 Give examples of the causes and consequences of current global issues, such as the expansion of global markets, the urbanization of the developing world, the consumption of natural resources, and the extinction of species, and suggest possible responses by various individuals, groups, and nations
- B.8.5 Use historical evidence to determine and support a position about important political values, such as freedom, democracy, equality, or justice, and express the position coherently
- B.8.10 Analyze examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, or nations
- C.8.6 Explain the role of political parties and interest groups in American politics
- C.8.7 Locate, organize, and use relevant information to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and advocate the position in a debate
- C.8.7 Locate, organize, and use relevant information to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and advocate the position in a debate
- D.8.10 Identify the economic roles of institutions such as corporations and businesses, banks, labor unions, and the Federal Reserve System
- E.8.5 Describe and explain the means by which groups and institutions meet the needs of individuals and societies
- E.8.14 Describe cooperation and interdependence among individuals, groups, and nations, such as helping others in times of crisis

Common Core State Standards:

Reading:

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
6. Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).
7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
8. Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing:

1. Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content: a) Introduce a claim, b) Support the claim, c) Use effective word choice and sentence fluency, d) Use appropriate voice, and e) Provide a conclusion.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events: a) Introduce a topic clearly, b) Develop the topic, c) Use transitions, d) Use precise word choice, e) Use appropriate voice, and f) Provide a conclusion.

Unit 4 (Chapters 12-14) Theme:

State and Local Government

Enduring Understanding:

People form governments to establish order, provide security, and accomplish common goals.

Essential Questions:

- What purposes should government serve?
- How are state and local governments organized, and what do they do?

Historical Questions:

- What are the powers and responsibilities of state governments?
- What are the various systems of local governments?
- How do state and local governments deal with community issues?

Wisconsin State Social Studies Standards:

B.8.10 Analyze examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, or nations

C.8.1 Identify and explain democracy's basic principles, including individual rights, responsibility for the common good, equal opportunity, equal protection of the laws, freedom of speech, justice, and majority rule with protection for minority rights

C.8.4 Describe and explain how the federal system separates the powers of federal, state, and local governments in the United States, and how legislative, executive, and judicial powers are balanced at the federal level

C.8.7 Locate, organize, and use relevant information to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and advocate the position in a debate

C.8.8 Identify ways in which advocates participate in public policy debates

E.8.1 Give examples to explain and illustrate the influence of prior knowledge, motivation, capabilities, personal interests, and other factors on individual learning

E.8.11 Explain how beliefs and practices, such as ownership of property or status at birth, may lead to conflict among people of different regions or cultures and give examples of such conflicts that have and have not been resolved

E.8.12 Describe conflict resolution and peer mediation strategies used in resolving differences and disputes

E.8.14 Describe cooperation and interdependence among individuals, groups, and nations, such as helping others in times of crisis

Common Core State Standards for Literacy in Social Studies:**Reading:**

3. Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).
4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing:

2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events: a) Introduce a topic clearly, b) Develop the topic, c) Use transitions, d) Use precise word choice, e) Use appropriate voice, and f) Provide a conclusion.

Unit 5 (Chapters 15-17) Theme:

The Individual, the Law, and the Internet

Enduring Understanding:

Citizens possess certain rights; therefore, with citizenship, there are also certain responsibilities expected of all Americans.

Essential Questions:

- What is the place of law in the American constitutional system?

- What are the essential characteristics of limited and unlimited government?
- What are the rights of citizens?

Historical Questions:

- How have law systems developed over time to define the legal rights and responsibilities of Americans?
- What is the difference between civil and criminal cases?
- What are the rights guaranteed by the Constitution to those accused of a crime?
- What are the challenges Americans face with the development of technology?

Wisconsin State Social Studies Standards:

B.8.2 Employ cause-and-effect arguments to demonstrate how significant events have influenced the past and the present in United States and world history

B.8.4 Explain how and why events may be interpreted differently depending upon the perspectives of participants, witnesses, reporters, and historians

B.8.5 Use historical evidence to determine and support a position about important political values, such as freedom, democracy, equality, or justice, and express the position coherently

B.8.6 Analyze important political values such as freedom, democracy, equality, and justice embodied in documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights

C.8.1 Identify and explain democracy's basic principles, including individual rights, responsibility for the common good, equal opportunity, equal protection of the laws, freedom of speech, justice, and majority rule with protection for minority rights

C.8.2 Identify, cite, and discuss important political documents, such as the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and landmark decisions of the Supreme Court, and explain their function in the American political system

C.8.3 Explain how laws are developed, how the purposes of government are established, and how the powers of government are acquired, maintained, justified, and sometimes abused

D.8.4 Describe how investments in human and physical capital, including new technology, affect standard of living and quality of life

D.8.5 Give examples to show how government provides for national defense; health, safety, and environmental protection; defense of property rights; and the maintenance of free and fair market activity

E.8.12 Describe conflict resolution and peer mediation strategies used in resolving differences and disputes

Common Core State Standards for Literacy in Social Studies:

Reading:

1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
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Writing:

1. Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content: a) Introduce a claim, b) Support the claim, c) Use effective word choice and sentence fluency, d) Use appropriate voice, and e) Provide a conclusion.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events: a) Introduce a topic clearly, b) Develop the topic, c) Use transitions, d) Use precise word choice, e) Use appropriate voice, and f) Provide a conclusion.

Unit 6 (Chapters 18-22) Theme:

The Economy and the Individual

Enduring Understanding:

An economic system is the way a society organizes the production and consumption of goods and services.

Essential Questions:

- How do the domestic politics and constitutional principles of the United States affect its relations with the world?
- How does the state of the economy affect the decisions individuals and governments make?

Historical Questions:

- How does scarcity force people to make economic choices?
- How do democratic capitalism and free enterprise work in the American economy?
- How are personal financial choices and decisions related to principles of economics?
- What is the relationship between supply and demand in an economic system?
- What is the relationship between management and labor?

Wisconsin State Social Studies Standards:

A.8.7 Describe the movement of people, ideas, diseases, and products throughout the world

D.8.1 Describe and explain how money makes it easier to trade, borrow, save, invest, and compare the value of goods and services

D.8.2 Identify and explain basic economic concepts: supply, demand, production, exchange, and consumption; labor, wages, and capital; inflation and deflation; market economy and command economy; public and private goods and services

D.8.7 Identify the location of concentrations of selected natural resources and describe how their acquisition and distribution generates trade and shapes economic patterns

D.8.8 Explain how and why people who start new businesses take risks to provide goods and services, considering profits as an incentive

D.8.9 Explain why the earning power of workers depends on their productivity and the market value of what they produce

D.8.11 Describe how personal decisions can have a global impact on issues such as trade agreements, recycling, and conserving the environment

Common Core State Standards for Literacy in Social Studies:

Reading:

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing:

2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events: a) Introduce a topic clearly, b) Develop the topic, c) Use transitions, d) Use precise word choice, e) Use appropriate voice, and f) Provide a conclusion.

Unit 7 (Chapters 23-25) Theme:

The Free Enterprise System

Enduring Understanding:

Free enterprise is the freedom of individuals and businesses to operate and compete with a minimum of government interference or regulation.

Essential Questions:

- What are the distinctive characteristics of American society?
- How has the United States influenced other nations, and how have other nations influenced American politics and society?

Historical Questions:

- How does the government promote and monitor economic activity in the United States?
- What is voluntary exchange?
- How do the federal government and the banking industry function together to help people achieve their financial goals?
- How do federal, state, and local governments and institutions promote economic goals?

Wisconsin State Social Studies Standards:

D.8.1 Describe and explain how money makes it easier to trade, borrow, save, invest, and compare the value of goods and services

D.8.4 Describe how investments in human and physical capital, including new technology, affect standard of living and quality of life

D.8.5 Give examples to show how government provides for national defense; health, safety, and environmental protection; defense of property rights; and the maintenance of free and fair market activity

D.8.6 Identify and explain various points of view concerning economic issues, such as taxation, unemployment, inflation, the national debt, and distribution of income

D.8.8 Explain how and why people who start new businesses take risks to provide goods and services, considering profits as an incentive

D.8.10 Identify the economic roles of institutions such as corporations and businesses, banks, labor unions, and the Federal Reserve System

D.8.11 Describe how personal decisions can have a global impact on issues such as trade agreements, recycling, and conserving the environment

Common Core State Standards for Literacy in Social Studies:**Reading:**

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
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10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Writing:

2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events: a) Introduce a topic clearly, b) Develop the topic, c) Use transitions, d) Use precise word choice, e) Use appropriate voice, and f) Provide a conclusion.

Unit 8 (Chapters 26-27) Theme:

The United States and the World

Enduring Understanding:

The exchange of goods and services helps create economic interdependence among peoples in different places and different countries.

Essential Questions:

- How is the world organized politically?
- What are alternative ways of organizing constitutional governments?

Historical Questions:

- What are market, command, and mixed economies throughout the world?
- How does global economic interdependence relate to changing traditions, values, and beliefs?

Wisconsin State Social Studies Standards:

- D.8.1 Describe and explain how money makes it easier to trade, borrow, save, invest, and compare the value of goods and services
- D.8.2 Identify and explain basic economic concepts: supply, demand, production, exchange, and consumption; labor, wages, and capital; inflation and deflation; market economy and command economy; public and private goods and services
- D.8.3 Describe Wisconsin's role in national and global economies and give examples of local economic activity in national and global markets
- D.8.4 Describe how investments in human and physical capital, including new technology, affect standard of living and quality of life
- D.8.5 Give examples to show how government provides for national defense; health, safety, and environmental protection; defense of property rights; and the maintenance of free and fair market activity
- D.8.6 Identify and explain various points of view concerning economic issues, such as taxation, unemployment, inflation, the national debt, and distribution of income
- D.8.7 Identify the location of concentrations of selected natural resources and describe how their acquisition and distribution generates trade and shapes economic patterns
- D.8.8 Explain how and why people who start new businesses take risks to provide goods and services, considering profits as an incentive
- D.8.9 Explain why the earning power of workers depends on their productivity and the market value of what they produce
- D.8.10 Identify the economic roles of institutions such as corporations and businesses, banks, labor unions, and the Federal Reserve System
- D.8.11 Describe how personal decisions can have a global impact on issues such as trade agreements, recycling, and conserving the environment

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4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
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