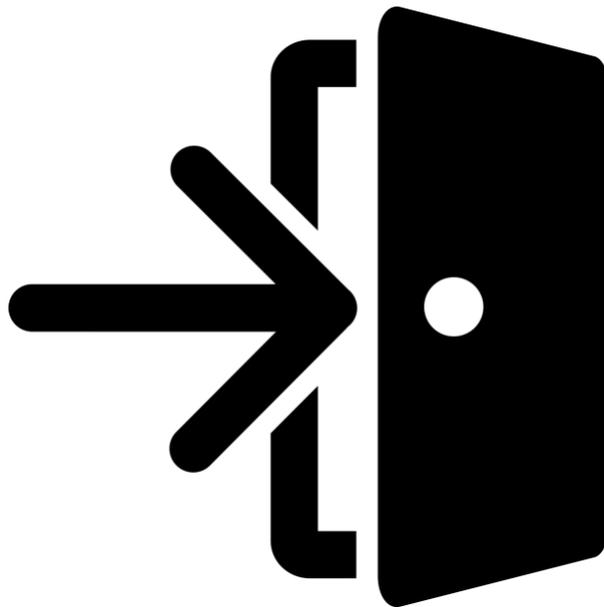


McKinley 6th Grade Social Studies

a.k.a “Ancient Civilizations”

2019 – 2020 Course Syllabus

Teacher: Mr. Miller brian.miller@slps.org



Course Description:

This class opens a door to our shared history, by using a multidisciplinary approach. Gifted learners will practice thinking like Historians as well as Sociologists, Anthropologists, Geographers, Economists, Ethnographers, and Archeologists, just to name a few. The curriculum is framed using the current 2019, Missouri Social Studies Grade Level Expectations (GLE's).

Some major themes throughout the course include:

- The role geography plays in influencing culture
- The causes and effects of major paradigm shifts over the last 5000 years.
- The impact of the Agricultural Revolution in relation to the development of new and more complex societies
- The origins, structure, and significant beliefs of Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam
- Trace the impact of conflicts, competition, and cooperation within and among classical civilizations
- Explain how interregional trade intensified the exchange of goods and ideas such as the trans-Saharan trade, the Silk Roads, and the Indian Ocean networks.
- How can the study of history help humans to understand themselves and their place in the world along with the world around them?

By carefully tracing the ancient history of human civilization we begin to see ourselves as part of a much larger entity. Often deep and relevant classroom discussions occur. All students are required to engage in meaningful analysis of any information presented. All Students are also required to demonstrate their mastery of all learning objective(s), through guided discussions, writing, and project designs/presentations.

Rules Policies & Procedures:

In order to get the most out of this course, everyone needs to work together. Classes need to be safe environments where mutual respect and inclusivity flourish to better serve everyone's diverse needs. As a result, students are expected to adhere to the district code of conduct in addition to following our classroom expectations and academic culture. Negative and hurtful behaviors which disrupt anyone's learning goal(s) need to be addressed. One student's behavior should never prevent themselves or others from reaching their learning goals. Therefore, maintaining adequate levels of respect for each other, at all times, is the expectation of all.

If a student becomes disrespectful, a protocol of consistent interventions will follow. Most issues are often resolved during or after class times. If more severe infractions occur, or repeated negative behaviors

persist, sometimes parents, guardians, and school administration need to be included in the intervention process.

Restorative Learning: On occasion, students may become disruptive, or uncooperative during class. If a student's behavior becomes disruptive to the learning of others, a verbal warning will be issued. If a student continues to disrupt the learning outcomes for themselves or their class, and after they have been continually redirected, a restorative learning assignment may be issued. Typically, this assignment requires the student to work at home to restore the learning "lost" during class. Students need to understand that their negative behavior directly upsets the learning outcome for themselves and their peers. Restorative Learning ensures that even when a student becomes disruptive, learning will still take place. Being disruptive does not allow one to escape their academic and civic responsibilities. If a student refuses to complete their Restorative Learning Assignment, they will receive a zero, and their overall grade for the course may become impacted. Restorative Learning Assignments are posted on the SIS Parent Porthole. Although the assignment may be visible to all, only the disruptive learner(s) will actually be assigned the work. Students who are not assigned restorative learning should simply ignore the assignment on Parent Porthole and will be marked exempt so as not to affect their grades. If there is ever a question as to which student(s) have been assigned some Restorative Learning, simply send me a message and I will be able to confirm or not.

Engagement: If the student comes to class with a positive attitude, and participates in all learning activities, they generally have very few issues with their academic performance. Effort, and engagement, can often translate into earning higher grades. I try my best to reach all students. However, it is ultimately the individual student's responsibility to come to class each day, prepared, and ready to learn.

Instructional Strategies:

Our Social Studies curriculum is continually revised to best meet the diverse needs of our gifted 6th graders. A portion of the coursework and assessments focuses on Project Based Learning. 6th graders, especially gifted students, often learn best when creative approaches to coursework is met by utilizing their exceptional problem-solving abilities. A personal computer, smartphone, or tablet is **NOT** required for

academic success in this course. This year we have been asked to restrict the use of smart devices to the lunchroom. Access to computer labs during testing is restricted. We are severely technologically challenged at this school! We are in desperate need of having one to one 24/7 access to internet connected computers! Our new administration is asking for help from the district to allocate funding to provide us the tools to be successful.

Social Studies Notebook: All quizzes and tests are open notes! Students will be encouraged to take notes on relevant information presented during all learning activities. Information may come from but is not limited to reading, discussions, lectures, videos, guest speakers, and field trips. Students are required to record all their notes in their social studies notebooks. At the beginning of each class, learner's will be required to write both the question and their response to each daily writing prompt. Notebooks are collected and graded frequently. Notebook grades are a significant portion of each quarterly grade report. It is the student's responsibility to try and take adequate notes all year long. Effort and consideration of all questions proposed is more of the objective than the individual organization or methodology of the notes. Proper notetaking is both a process and a product. Some students struggle at first with the process aspect of note taking. This is one reason why I allow the use of a learner's social studies notebook for all tests and quizzes. When a student has taken good notes, they are not only rewarded with a good notebook grade, but it also often improves all their grades. When student's refuse to take notes or do not respond to their writing prompts, grades often become lower than expected.

Homework = No homework is given for the sake of homework. In short, I do not typically assign homework. However, some projects may require more time or consideration for students to complete than is given during class time. In these cases, some work on projects may need to take place outside of the classroom. All videos and reading materials used during instruction can be accessed easily on the internet. If a student is struggling to keep up with the content they are encouraged to watch and read materials again, at home.