

Nashoba Regional School District

# **HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE**

**Standards and Benchmarks  
Grade 4**



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Nashoba Regional School District History and Social Science Standards and Benchmarks, 2008.

Work in this document is based upon the standards outlined in the Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework, August 2003.

# History and Social Studies by Grade Level

## Grade 4

Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (August 2003)

### Our People, Our Country

**Grade Four Focus: The geography and people of the United States today.**

**Concepts and Skills to be addressed:**

The fourth grade social studies curriculum will focus on the geography and people of the United States today. Students will study geography through the “five themes of geography”: location, place, human interaction with the environment, movement, and regions. Additionally, students will investigate the geography and people of contemporary Mexico and Canada. Time permitting, teachers may choose to address the standards on the geography and social characteristics of the nations in Central America and the Caribbean Islands. Teachers may also choose to have students study an early civilization in the first half of the school year. The MA DOE recommends China as this civilization because it is not taught in grade 7 and may be connected to the ELA curriculum.

**Background Information:** In 1984, the Association of American Geographers and the National Council for Geographic Education published *Guidelines for Geographic Education: Elementary and Secondary Schools*. The booklet introduced five interrelated geographic themes that K-12 teachers can use as a framework for studying our country and our world. These themes form the foundation of our NRSD geography curriculum.

#### Five Themes of Geography

Location: Position on the Earth’s surface  
Place: Physical and Human Characteristics  
Human/Environment Interactions: Shaping the Landscape  
Movement: Humans interacting on Earth  
Regions: How they form and change

**Big Ideas:**

- Location, climate, and physical surroundings affect the way people live. (G)
- Maps can be used to provide information about people, places, and physical and cultural environments. (H,C,G,E)
- Studying geography helps us understand the interconnectedness of people and their environment. (H,C,G,E)
- Geographic factors affect political, social, and economic aspects of a civilization. (H,C,G,E)
- Geographic regions have distinctive characteristics. (G)
- The United States is a land of people who have diverse ethnic origins, customs, and traditions. (H)
- Gaining United States citizenship is a process that immigrants must go through to become a legal citizen. (C,G)
- All citizens of the United States have certain rights and responsibilities as members of a democratic society. (C,G)

## **Big Ideas - continued:**

The United States has an abundance of natural resources. (E)  
Supply and demand impact the prices of goods and services. (E)

### **In relation to History and Geography:**

How do location, climate, and physical surroundings affect the way people live?  
How can longitude and latitude help you determine absolute locations?  
What kinds of information can you gain from “reading a map” (title, compass rose, scale, and legend)?  
Why leave home for a place you don’t know?  
What happens when different cultures try to live together?  
How and why does geography affect settlement?  
Does where you live determine how you live?

### **In relation to Civics and Government:**

How have minorities assimilated and impacted regions of the United States?  
What rights do you have as a citizen?

### **In relation to Economics:**

What natural resources are found in the United States?  
What natural resources are now in limited supply?  
How would the limited availability of a resource impact its cost?

**By the end of FOURTH Grade, students should be able to answer the Essential Questions above and apply knowledge and concepts attained to be able to:**

## **REGIONS OF THE UNITED STATES**

- Locate on a map (4.8/ G)
  1. North America
  2. United States
  3. Atlantic and Pacific Oceans
  4. Gulf of Mexico
  5. Mississippi and Rio Grande Rivers
  6. Great Lakes
  7. Hudson Bay
  8. Appalachian and Rocky Mountains
  
- Locate on a map of North America (4.9/G) – see Appendix H of the Frameworks for a listing of states in each region.
  1. Current boundaries of United States (including Alaska and Hawaii)
  2. New England
  3. Middle Atlantic
  4. Atlantic Coast/Appalachian
  5. Southeast/Gulf
  6. South Central
  7. Great Lakes

## REGIONS OF THE UNITED STATES - continued...

8. Plains
9. Southwest Desert
10. Pacific States
11. Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

- Identify the states, state capitals, and major cities in each region of the United States. (4.10/ G)
- Describe the climate, major physical features, and major natural resources in each region. (4.11/G)
- Identify and describe unique features of the United States (e.g., the Everglades, the Grand Canyon, Mount Rushmore, the Redwood Forest, Yellowstone National Park, and Yosemite National Park). (4.12/ G)
- Identify major monuments and historical sites in and around Washington D.C. (e.g. The Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials, the Smithsonian Museums, the Library of Congress, the White House, The Capital, the Washington Monument, the National Archives, Arlington National Cemetery, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Iwo Jima Memorial, and Mount Vernon). (4.13/ G)
- Identify the five different European countries (France, Spain, England, Russia, and the Netherlands) that influenced different regions of the present United States at the time the New World was being explored and describe how their influence can be traced to place names, architectural features, and language. (4.14/ H,G)
- Describe the diverse nature of the American people by identifying the distinctive contributions to American culture of:
  - A. Several indigenous peoples in different areas of the country (e.g., Navajo, Seminoles, Sioux, Hawaiians, and Inuits).
  - B. African Americans, including an explanation of their early concentration in the South because of slavery and the Great Migration to northern cities in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and recent African immigrant groups (e.g., Ethiopian) and where they tended to settle in large numbers.
  - C. Major European immigrant groups who have come to America, locating their countries of origin and where they tended to settle in large numbers (e.g., English, Germans, Italians, Scots, Irish, Jews, Poles, and Scandinavians).
  - D. Major Spanish-speaking (e.g., Cubans, Mexicans) and Asian (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese) immigrant groups who have come to America in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, locating their countries of origin and where they tended to settle in large numbers. (4.15/H,G)
- Identify major immigrant groups that live in Massachusetts and where they now live in large numbers (e.g., English, Irish, Italians, French Canadians, Armenians, Greeks, Portuguese, Haitians, and Vietnamese). (4.16/H,G)

## **CANADA**

- On a map of North America, locate Canada, its provinces, and major cities. (4.17/G)
- Describe the climate, major physical characteristics, and major natural resources of Canada and explain their relationship to settlement, trade, and the Canadian economy. (4.18/G, E)
- Describe the major ethnic and religious groups of modern Canada. (4.19/G, H, C, E)
- Identify when Canada became an independent nation and explain how independence was achieved. (4.20 H, G)
- Identify the location of at least two Native American tribes in Canada (e.g., Kwakiutl and Micmac) and the Inuit nation and describe their major social features. (4.21/H, G)
- Identify the major language groups in Canada, their geographic location, and the relations among them. (4.22/ H, G)

## **MEXICO**

- On a map of North America, locate Mexico and its major cities. (4.23/G)
- Describe the climate, major physical characteristics, and major natural resources of Mexico and explain their relationship to the Mexican economy. (4.24/G)
- Identify the language, major religion, and peoples of Mexico. (4.25/H)
- Identify when Mexico became an independent nation and describe how independence was achieved. (4.26/H, G)

## **OPTIONAL STANDARDS FOR ANCIENT CHINA, C. 3000-200 BC/BCE (time permitting)**

- On a map of Asia, locate China, the Huang He (Yellow) River and Chang Jiang (Yangtze) Rivers, and the Himalayan Mountains. (4.1/G)
- Describe the topography and climate of eastern Asia, including the importance of mountain ranges and deserts, and explain how geography influenced the growth of Chinese civilization. (4.2/G, E)
- Describe the ideographic writing system used by the Chinese (characters, which are symbols for concepts/ideas) and how it differs from an alphabetic writing system. (4.3/H)
- Describe important technologies of China such as bronze casting, silk manufacture, and gunpowder. (4.4/H, E)

### **OPTIONAL STANDARDS FOR ANCIENT CHINA - continued...**

- Identify who Confucius was and describe his writings on good government, codes of proper conduct, and relationships between parent and child, friend and friend, husband and wife, and subject and ruler. (4.5/H, C)
- Describe how the First Emperor unified China by subduing warring factions, seizing land, centralizing government, imposing strict rules, and creating with the use of slave labor large state building projects for irrigation, transportation, and defense (e.g., the Great Wall). (4.6/H, C, E)
- After visiting a museum, listening to a museum educator in school, or conducting research in the library, describe an animal, person, building, or design depicted in an ancient Chinese work of art. (4.7/H, G)

### **OPTIONAL STANDARDS FOR CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS (time permitting)**

- On a map of North and South America, locate the Isthmus of Panama which divides North from South America. Use a map key to locate islands, countries, and major cities of Central America and the Caribbean Islands. (4.27/G, E)
- Describe the climate and major natural resources of Central America and the Caribbean Islands and explain their relationship to the economy of those regions. (4.28/G, E)
- Identify the different languages used in different countries in the Caribbean region today (e.g., Spanish in Cuba, French in Haiti, English in Barbados and Jamaica). (4.29/H)
- Identify when the countries in the Caribbean and in Central America became independent nations and explain how independence was achieved. (4.30/H, G)