

RHODE ISLAND'S SOCIAL STUDIES CONTENT STANDARDS

OVERVIEW

The Rhode Island Social Studies Content Standards identify the social studies content students in Rhode Island are expected to learn from kindergarten through high school. When designing instruction and teaching, teachers are also expected to keep the anchor standards front and center to inform students' exploration of and engagement with concepts and topics within the content standards.

The social studies content standards are organized by grade-level from kindergarten through eighth grade and include five courses of study for high school. Although Rhode Island's Secondary Regulations require students to take three credits of Social Studies in high school for graduation, RIDE has provided standards progressions for five high school courses in Social Studies. RIDE understands that many high schools also provide electives in Social Studies to complement the requirements. Next is an outline of the K-8 grade level topics and the five high school courses:

Kindergarten to Grade 8

Kindergarten – Living and Working Together in Schools, Families, and Neighborhoods

Students are introduced to social studies and citizenship by looking closely at their families, school, and neighborhoods. Students learn roles and rules, how people work together, and how to be good citizens in these contexts. Students also learn about the diversity of families and people represented in their school and community and gain an understanding of spatial relationships through the study of maps.

Grade 1 - Living and Working Together in Local Communities

In first grade, students build on what they learned in kindergarten by continuing their introduction to social studies and citizenship through the study of local communities. Students learn roles and rules within communities, how members of a community work together, community diversity, traditions and celebrations, and their place within their community. They also learn how they can contribute to their community and how to be good citizens. They look at other communities nearby, in other places in the United States, and around the world.

Grade 2 - Living and Working Together in Global Communities

During the second grade, students expand their understanding of social studies and citizenship to explore how people in a sampling of communities around the world organize themselves, meet their needs and wants, and resolve problems. Students begin to look outward beyond their local communities to gain a global perspective and contextualize their place in the world before focusing back on the Nation and State in subsequent grades.

Grade 3 - Living and Working Together in the Regions of the United States

In third grade, students prepare for their upcoming studies in Rhode Island and United States history by learning about the regions of the United States and its territories. This regional study provides the context for understanding the land, peoples, resources, major industries, and the intersection between these concepts that make up the Nation. They are also introduced to the United States government.

Grade 4 - Living and Working Together in Rhode Island

Having looked at how people live and work together in a variety of contexts, fourth graders turn their attention to the state of Rhode Island. Students learn about Indigenous communities past and present, Rhode Island's early formation as a state, people over time who made Rhode Island their home, and how diverse Rhode Islanders in the past and present respond to opportunities and challenges. They are also introduced to state and local government.

Grade 5 - United States History: Pre-European Contact to Reconstruction

In fifth grade, students begin their study of United States history starting with Indigenous life and encounters with Europeans. Students then study the formation of the colonies, the American Revolution, the new United States government, and the growth of the republic through the Civil War and Reconstruction by understanding multiple and diverse perspectives.

Grade 6 - Ancient to Medieval World History and Geography

In grade 6, students will expand their worldview through a thematic investigation into early world history and geography. Students will study humankind from the beginnings of civilization to the Middle Ages and will recognize the diversity of cultures that make up the globe. In addition, students will gain an understanding of early world governments as they prepare to study the United States and Rhode Island state government in eighth grade.

Grade 7 - Early Modern to Modern World History and Geography

In grade 7, students continue their thematic study of world history, cultures, and geography from the early modern period through present day globalization. In this continuation of grade 6, students gain an appreciation for the world's richness and diversity of societies and cultures while acquiring a fuller picture of how we as humans arrived to the present day. This background prepares them for their grade 8 study of civics, rights, and responsibilities and the deeper coursework they will engage with in high school.

Grade 8 - Government and Civic Life in the United States and Rhode Island

Having looked at Rhode Island, the early United States, and global histories, grade 8 students engage in a deeper exploration of civic life, and the roots, institutions, and structures of government at the national and state levels. Additionally, students look at the relationships between governmental roles and entities and the rights and responsibilities of citizens and the press. This course presents an opportunity for districts to implement the civics project requirement.

High School

Civics

In this course, students learn about the historical, cultural, and philosophical foundations of the United States government, grapple with the ideals and realities of civic participation, and debate the meanings of citizenship. Students also learn about local, state, and tribal governments, understand political parties, and how dissent and protest work in political systems and in the history of the United States. Students end the course looking beyond the United States to global human rights.

United States History I: Pre-European Contact to Reconstruction

This course is a survey of United States History from Pre-European Contact to Reconstruction following the Civil War. In this course, following what was learned in fifth and eighth grades, students gain a deeper and more rigorous understanding of the Indigenous peoples, European colonies, the founding of the new Nation and its internal struggles, and the diversity of peoples that came or were forced to come to this country.

United States History II: Late 19th Century to the Present

This course is a survey of United States history from the late 19th century to the present day. Students build upon what was learned in their middle school studies to engage in this period of United States' history. Students will also enhance their analytical skills and be able to further recognize diverse and multiple perspectives in history.

World History I: Ancient to Medieval

This is a survey course of the history of the world from the rise of civilization to the Middle Ages. Students will build upon what they learned in middle school to better understand the complexities and diversity of early civilizations, their interactions, and the bases for modern cultures and governments.

World History II: Early Modern to Modern

This is a survey course of the history of the world from the end of the Middle Ages to the modern era. Students will investigate the formation of modern governments, their interactions, and topics such as genocide and global human rights. Students will understand the origins of major current events and better understand their place in our world.