

Social Studies Scope & Sequence

Kindergarten through Grade 3

A World-Centered, Multicultural Framework

Curriculum Philosophy

This scope and sequence centers a world-centered, non-Eurocentric perspective throughout. Africa is taught as the origin of human civilization. Indigenous and Global South communities are presented with dignity and depth — not as footnotes. European history is included as one meaningful thread among many: ancient Greece and Rome are taught in honest context, including their debts to African and Near Eastern civilizations and the contradictions within their societies. American history is taught honestly, celebrating achievements while not erasing injustice. Oral tradition, community knowledge, and diverse ways of knowing are honored alongside written historical records.

Kindergarten

Me, My Family & My Community

Kindergarten: *Children begin where they are — themselves — then expand outward to family structures, community helpers, and the wider world. Global connections are introduced through diverse family stories and cultural celebrations.*

Unit / Quarter	Key Topics	Skills & Thinking	Global & Diverse Voices
Q1 Who Am I?	• Self-identity & personal story • Family structures worldwide (nuclear, extended, multigenerational) • Names, languages spoken at home • Cultural foods, clothing & celebrations	• Drawing & labeling self-portraits • Oral storytelling • Comparing similarities & differences	• West African naming ceremonies • South Asian joint family systems • Indigenous family clan structures • European family traditions (e.g. Scandinavian, Celtic)

Q2 My Community	• Neighborhood & community helpers • Goods vs. services • Rules & why we have them • Different types of communities (urban/ rural/suburban)	• Mapping home & school • Identifying community roles • Understanding shared responsibility	• African village governance (Ubuntu philosophy) • Indigenous community roles • Community markets worldwide • European town squares & market traditions
Q3 Seasons, Time & Celebrations	• Days, weeks, months, seasons • Calendars across cultures (Gregorian, Lunar, Ethiopian, Islamic) • Holidays & their origins • Why families celebrate differently	• Sequencing events • Calendar reading • Comparing cultural practices without judgment	• Lunar New Year traditions • Diwali & light festivals globally • Kwanzaa & African harvest festivals • Indigenous seasonal ceremonies • European solstice & harvest festivals (Midsommar, Samhain origins)
Q4 Our Earth & People	• Continents & oceans introduction • People live in many places • Basic map & globe skills • Caring for our Earth	• Globe/map exploration • Identifying land & water • Connecting environment to daily life	• Indigenous land stewardship • Global environmental heroes • Children around the world including Europe
1st Grade <i>Families, Traditions & Our Changing World</i>			
First Grade: Students deepen understanding of family, heritage, and culture across the globe. History begins with oral tradition — stories passed down — honoring non-written forms of historical record.			
Unit / Quarter	Key Topics	Skills & Thinking	Global & Diverse Voices

Q1 Stories We Carry: Oral History & Heritage	• Oral tradition as a form of history • Family histories & ancestors • How culture is passed down • Elders as knowledge-keepers	• Interviewing family members • Listening & retelling • Understanding primary sources	• West African griot tradition • Aboriginal Australian Dreamtime stories • Native American oral traditions • African American family storytelling • Celtic & Norse storytelling traditions of Europe
Q2 Homes, Food & Daily Life Around the World	• Types of homes across climates & cultures • Traditional foods & where they come from • Clothing & climate connections • Daily routines in different countries	• Comparing & contrasting • Geographic reasoning (climate → shelter) • Respectful curiosity about difference	• Maasai homesteads • Indigenous longhouses • Japanese architecture • West African compounds • European cottage & stone home traditions (Ireland, Greece, Scandinavia)
Q3 Land, Maps & Where We Live	• Continents & major countries including Europe • Map keys, compass rose, cardinal directions • Physical features: mountains, rivers, deserts, forests • People adapt to their environments	• Reading & drawing maps • Identifying physical features • Understanding human-environment interaction	• Amazon rainforest communities • Saharan desert peoples • Arctic Indigenous peoples (Inuit/Yupik) • Pacific Island navigation traditions • Alpine & Mediterranean European communities
Q4 Then & Now: How Life Has Changed	• Comparing past and present daily life • Technology changes over time • Historical figures who made change • How children can make a difference	• Sequencing historical change • Biography reading • Cause & effect thinking	• Wangari Maathai (Kenya) • Harriet Tubman • Malala Yousafzai • Cesar Chavez • Greta Thunberg (Sweden) — youth voice for the planet

2nd Grade

Communities, Government & Global Connections

Second Grade: Students explore how communities organize themselves, make decisions, and connect with each other. Government is introduced through diverse civic models. Economics begins with trade and resource sharing.

Unit / Quarter	Key Topics	Skills & Thinking	Global & Diverse Voices
Q1 How Communities Are Governed	- Rules, laws & their purpose - Types of leadership (elected, hereditary, council) - Rights & responsibilities - Democracy vs. consensus decision-making	- Identifying rules vs. laws - Discussing fairness - Civic participation basics	- Haudenosaunee Confederacy & democratic influence - African council-based governance (Ubuntu) - Ancient Athenian democracy (Greek roots of Western democracy) - Contemporary child parliaments in Africa
Q2 Economic Thinking: Needs, Wants & Trade	- Needs vs. wants - Resources: natural, human, capital - Trade & barter throughout history - Supply, demand & scarcity basics	- Categorizing needs/ wants - Understanding trade relationships - Making economic choices	- Silk Road trade networks - Trans-Saharan gold & salt trade - Indigenous trade systems - African market economies - Medieval European trade fairs & guild systems
Q3 Africa: Cradle of Civilization & Diverse Cultures	- Africa as the origin of humanity - Diversity of Africa (54 countries, not one place) - Ancient Egypt & Nubia - Great Zimbabwe, Mali Empire highlights - Modern African life & innovation	- Reading maps of Africa - Challenging stereotypes with facts - Comparing ancient & modern	- Centering African perspectives throughout - African scientists, leaders, artists today - African children's daily lives

Q4 Being a Global Citizen	• What connects people worldwide • Human rights basics • Environmental stewardship • Taking action in your community	• Empathy & perspective-taking • Identifying global issues • Planning a community action	• UN Convention on the Rights of the Child • Youth activists globally • Community change-makers • European youth climate & peace movements
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3rd Grade

Ancient Civilizations & the Roots of Human Society

Third Grade Students explore humanity's earliest civilizations with Africa and the Americas featured prominently alongside ancient Europe. Students examine what makes a civilization, how people organized society, and what legacies remain today. Ancient Greece and Rome are included as ONE of many influential civilizations — not the only one.

Unit / Quarter	Key Topics	Skills & Thinking	Global & Diverse Voices
Q1 What Is a Civilization? The First Humans	• Human origins in Africa (out of Africa theory) • Hunter-gatherer societies • Neolithic Revolution: farming changes everything • Early settlement patterns along rivers	• Defining 'civilization' • Reading timelines • Comparing ways of living	• East African Great Rift Valley as human origin • San/Bushmen of Southern Africa • Indigenous farming knowledge systems • Early European Neolithic peoples (Stonehenge builders, cave painters of Lascaux)
Q2 Ancient Africa: Egypt, Nubia & West African Kingdoms	• Ancient Egypt: Nile Valley civilization • Nubia/Kush: older & equally powerful kingdom • Great Zimbabwe & Southern African kingdoms • Mali, Ghana & Songhai empires	• Analyzing primary sources (artifacts, architecture) • Geographic connections (Nile, Niger, Zambezi) • Timeline placement	• African scholars & Timbuktu libraries • Black Egyptian pharaohs including Nubians • Women leaders of ancient Africa (Queen Nzinga, Candace of Meroe)

Q3 Ancient Greece, Rome & the Mediterranean World	• Ancient Greece: city-states, democracy & philosophy • Connections between Greece, Egypt & North Africa (Alexander, Cleopatra) • Roman Empire: government, engineering & expansion • Who was included — and excluded — in Greek democracy • Rome's diverse empire: peoples from Africa, Asia & Europe	• Comparing Greek & Roman government systems • Understanding myth vs. historical fact • Analyzing who benefits from a system	• African scholars in Alexandria (Library of Alexandria) • North African Romans (Septimius Severus, first African-born emperor) • Women in ancient Greece & Rome • Enslaved people in Greek & Roman society • Greek debt to Egyptian & Phoenician knowledge
Q4 The Americas Before Columbus & Ancient Asia	• Indigenous peoples had thriving civilizations long before European contact • Maya civilization: writing, math, astronomy • Aztec/Mexica Empire • Mississippian cultures & Cahokia • Ancient China & India: parallel civilizations	• Analyzing 'before & after' contact • Comparing civilizations across continents • Honoring Indigenous knowledge	• Indigenous voices & historians • Reframing 'discovery' narratives • Living descendants of ancient civilizations • Global exchange of knowledge across ancient world

Notes for Curriculum Planning

- Each unit is designed to span approximately 4–6 weeks, adaptable to your family's pace.
- Unit studies should include primary sources, literature, hands-on projects, and field connections wherever possible.
- Grades K–1 focus on concrete, personal connections; Grades 2–3 introduce abstract social and historical concepts.
- European history is woven in proportionally — present and accurate, but not given outsized emphasis over other world civilizations.
- Suggested pairings: Combine Social Studies units with Nature Science units that share geographic regions for cross-disciplinary depth.