



**Diocese of Richmond**  
**Social Studies Curriculum**  
Grade Level: 8th Grade - Civics & Economics

**SS 8.1: The student will apply social science skills to understand the foundations of American constitutional government.**

- a. Explain the fundamental principles of consent of the governed, limited government, rule of law, democracy, and representative government
- b. Examine and evaluate the impact of the Magna Carta, charters of the Virginia Company of London, the Virginia Declaration of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, and the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom on the Constitution of Virginia and the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights
- c. Compare and contrast American civic ideals with theological and cardinal virtues

**SS 8.2: The student will apply social science skills to understand the creation and implementation of the United States Constitution.**

- a. Describe the purposes for the Constitution of the United States as stated in its Preamble
- b. Describe the creation of the Articles of Confederation, and its failure
- c. Analyze the arguments of the Federalists and Antifederalists
- d. Explain the perspectives of small v. large states
- e. Describe process of the development on the Constitution
- f. Explain the relationship between the Church and State in the development of the Constitution

**SS 8.3: The student will apply social science skills to understand the Bill of Rights and Amendments.**

- a. Understand the role of the Bill of Rights in the ratification of the United States Constitution
- b. List and explain the five (5) freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment
- c. Explain the Amendments that protect the rights of the accused (4-8th)
- d. Explain the remaining Amendments of the Bill of Rights (remaining)
- e. Describe the extensions of the Bill of Rights (13th, 14th, 15th, 17th, 19th, 23rd, 24th, and 26th)
- f. Understand the remaining Amendments
- g. Explain how the Constitution can be amended to protect the rights and freedoms of individuals
- h. Examine the amendments in terms of social justice and Catholic Social Teaching

**SS 8.4: The student will apply social science skills to understand citizenship and the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens.**

- a. Describe the processes by which an individual becomes a citizen of the United States.
- b. Describe the First Amendment freedoms of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition, and the rights guaranteed by due process and equal protection of the laws
- c. Describe the duties of citizenship, including obeying laws, paying taxes, defending the nation, and serving in court
- d. Examine the responsibilities of citizenship, including registering and voting, communicating with government officials, participating in political campaigns, keeping informed about current issues and respecting differing opinions in a diverse society
- e. Evaluate how civic and social duties address community needs and serve the public good
- f. Practice trustworthiness and honesty
- g. Practice courtesy and respect for the rights of others
- h. Practice responsibility, accountability, and self-reliance
- i. Practice respect for the law
- j. Practice patriotism

- k. Practice thoughtful decision making
- l. Practice service to the school and/or local community
- m. Identify and explain the rights and responsibilities of citizens, according to both the law and according to the Catholic Church
- n. Recognize the importance of citizen participation in government decisions

**SS 8.5: The student will apply social science skills to understand the structure of the government of the United States at the national level.**

- a. Describe the structure and powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the national government
- b. Explain the principle of separation of power and the operation of checks and balances
- c. Explain or simulate the lawmaking process
- d. Explain how the Constitution allocates power and responsibility to the Legislative Branch of the national government
- e. Explain the necessity of laws
- f. Explain the roles of the cabinet and regulatory commissions in the executive branch

**SS 8.6: The student will apply social science skills to understand the American constitutional government at the state level in Virginia.**

- a. Describe the structure and powers of the state government
- b. Explain the relationship of state governments to the national government in the federal system
- c. Explain or simulate the lawmaking process at the state level
- d. Describe the roles and powers of the executive branch and regulatory boards of the state of Virginia

**SS 8.7: The student will apply social science skills to understand the American constitutional government at the local level.**

- a. Describe the structure and powers of the local government
- b. Explain the relationship of local government to the state government
- c. Explain or simulate the lawmaking process at the local level

**SS 8.8: The student will apply social science skills to understand the political process at the local, state, and national levels of government.**

- a. Describe the functions of political parties
- b. Compare and contrast the similarities and differences of political parties
- c. Analyze campaigns for elective office, with emphasis on the role of the media
- d. Evaluate and explain the role of campaign contributions and costs
- e. Examine the history and requirements for voter registration
- f. Participate in simulated local, state, and/or national elections
- g. Describe the role of the Electoral College in the election of the president and vice president

**SS 8.9: The student will apply social science skills to understand how public policy is made at the local, state, and national levels of government.**

- a. Examine the impact of the media on public opinion and public policy
- b. Describe how individuals and interest groups influence public policy
- c. Describe the impact of international issues and events on local decision making
- d. Explain the role of the Catholic Church in influencing public policy in the U.S.

**SS 8.10: The student will apply social science skills to understand the legal systems established by the Constitution of Virginia and the Constitution of the United States.**

- a. Describe the organization of the United States judicial system as consisting of state and federal courts with original and appellate jurisdiction
- b. Describe the exercise of judicial review
- c. Compare and contrast civil and criminal cases
- d. Explain how due process protections seek to ensure justice

**SS 8.11: The student will apply social science skills to understand the United States economy and personal finance and career opportunities.**

- a. Explain that because of scarcity, consumers, producers, and governments must make choices, understanding that everyone's choice has an opportunity cost
- b. Compare and contrast how traditional, free market, command, and mixed economies decide how to allocate their limited resources
- c. Describe the characteristics of the United States economy, including limited government, private property, profit, markets, consumer sovereignty and competition
- d. Describe how in a market economy supply and demand determine prices
- e. Describe the types of business organizations and the role of entrepreneurship
- f. Examine competition in the marketplace
- g. Explain how and why government provides certain goods and services
- h. Describe how local, state, and federal governments allocate their budgets and collect taxes to pay for goods and services they provide
- i. Explain the structure of and main function of the Federal Reserve System and how it acts as the nation's central bank
- j. Describe how governments regulate to protect consumer, labor, the environment, competition in the marketplace, and property rights



## Diocese of Richmond Social Studies Curriculum

Grade Level: 9<sup>th</sup> Grade - World History I

### **SS WHI.1: The student will apply social science skills to understand the period from the Paleolithic Era to the agricultural revolution.**

- a. Explain the impact of geographic environment on hunter-gatherer societies
- b. Describe characteristics of hunter-gatherer societies, including their use of tools and fire
- c. Analyze how technological and social developments gave rise to sedentary communities
- d. Analyze how archaeological discoveries are changing current understanding of early societies
- e. Describe early hominids
- f. Compare and contrast the Paleolithic and Neolithic Ages

### **SS WHI.2: The student will apply social science skills to understand the ancient river valley civilizations, including those of Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus River Valley, and China and the civilizations of the Hebrews and Phoenicians.**

- a. Locate these civilizations in time and place and describing their major geographic features
- b. Summarize the effects of their geography on culture
- c. Describe the development of technology, political, economic patterns, and social, including slavery
- d. Explain the development and interactions of religious traditions
- e. Describe the origins, beliefs, traditions, customs, and spread of Judaism
- f. Explain the development of language and writing
- g. Explain the enduring influence of these civilizations

### **SS WHI.3: The student will apply social science skills to understand the civilizations of Persia, India, and China in terms of chronology, geography, social structures, government, economy, religion, and contributions to later civilizations.**

- a. Locate Persia in time and place, including Zoroastrianism and the development of an imperial bureaucracy
- b. Explain the rise of the Persian Empire
- c. Analyze the leadership of Cyrus, Cambyses and Darius
- d. Locate India in time and place, including its origins, early development, and the debate over the Aryan migrations
- e. Describe the achievements of the Mauryan and Gupta empires
- f. Describe the origins, beliefs, traditions, customs, and spread of Hinduism
- g. Describe the origins, beliefs, traditions, customs, and spread of Buddhism
- h. Locate China in time and place, including the development of an empire and the construction of the Great Wall; and
- i. Describe the impact of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism
- j. Describe the rise and fall of the Zhou and Qin Dynasties
- k. Explain the cultural contributions of China during this time period

**SS WHI.4: The student will apply social science skills to understand ancient Greece in terms of its impact on Western civilization.**

- a. Locate Greek civilizations in time and place and describing their major geographic features
- b. Describe the social and religious structure of ancient Greece
- c. Describe the cultural development of Athens and Sparta, with emphasis on the significance of citizenship and the development of democracy
- d. Evaluate the political and economic development of Greece, with emphasis on the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars
- e. Evaluate the significance of the conquest of Greece by Macedonia and the formation and spread of Hellenistic culture by Alexander the Great
- f. Cite and explain contributions in drama, poetry, history, sculpture, architecture, science, mathematics, and philosophy, with emphasis on Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle

**SS WHI.5: The student will apply social science skills to understand ancient Rome from about 700 B.C. (B.C.E.) to 500 A.D. (C.E.) in terms of its impact on Western civilization.**

- a. Locate Roman civilizations in time and place and describing their major geographic features
- b. Describe the social structure and cultural development of the Roman Republic
- c. Describe and evaluate the political and military structure of the Roman Republic under the rule of Julius Caesar
- d. Describe and evaluate the political and military structure of the Roman Republic under the rule of Augustus Caesar
- e. Assess the economic structure of Rome, Rome's imperial conquests, and the Pax Romana
- f. Evaluate the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the Germanic invasions

**SS WHI.6: The student will apply social science skills to understand the development of Christianity.**

- a. Describe the origins, beliefs, traditions, customs, and spread of Christianity in time and place
- b. Explain the unifying role of the Church in Europe after the collapse of Rome
- c. Sequence events related to the spread and influence of Christianity and the Catholic Church throughout Europe
- d. Identify the role of St. Paul and other apostles in the spread of Christianity

**SS WHI.7: The student will apply social science skills to understand the Byzantine Empire and Eastern Europe from about 300 to 1000 A.D. (C.E.).**

- a. Describe why Constantinople became a major trading center
- b. Explain the influence of geography on the establishment of Constantinople as the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire and describing the Byzantine Empire in time and place
- c. Describe Justinian and his contributions, including the codification of Roman law, and the expansion of the Byzantine Empire and economy
- d. Characterize the role Byzantine art and architecture played in the preservation of Greek and Roman traditions
- e. Explain the disputes that led to the split between the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Orthodox Church
- f. Analyze and explain the influence of Byzantine culture on Eastern Europe

**SS WHI.8: The student will apply social science skills to understand the Islamic civilization from about 600 to 1000 A.D. (C.E).**

- a. Describe the origin, location, beliefs, traditions, customs, and spread of Islam, with emphasis on the Sunni-Shi'a division and the Battle of Tours
- b. Assess the influence of geography on Islamic economic, social, and political development, including the impact of conquest and trade
- c. Explain the cultural and scientific contributions and achievements of Islamic civilization

**SS WHI.9: The student will apply social science skills to understand Western Europe during the Middle Ages from about 500 to 1000 A.D. (C.E.) in terms of its impact on Western civilization .**

- a. Locate and describe the societies of Western Europe during the Middle Ages in time and place
- b. Describe the social, religious, and cultural development of the Franks, with emphasis on the Age of Charlemagne
- c. Explain the social, religious, and cultural development of the Magyars and Anglo-Saxons
- d. Describe the social, religious, and cultural patterns of the Vikings
- e. Evaluate and explain the development of feudalism and the manor system
- f. Explain how the effects of the Dark Ages in Europe brought on the Feudal system

**SS WHI.10: The student will apply social science skills to understand the civilizations and empires of Asia, with emphasis on Japan and China.**

- a. Locating and explain major global and regional trade routes
- b. Explain technological advances and transfers, networks of economic interdependence, and cultural interactions
- c. Explain the impact of Shinto and Buddhist traditions and the influence of Chinese culture on the region
- d. Evaluate the impact of the Mongol Empire throughout Asia

**SS WHI.11: The student will apply social science skills to understand the civilizations and empires of Africa, with emphasis on the African kingdoms of Axum and Zimbabwe and the West African civilizations of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.**

- a. Trace the growth of African trade
- b. Summarize the achievements of early West African societies
- c. Locate early civilizations and kingdoms in time and place and describe major geographic features
- d. Explain the development of social, political, economic, religious, and cultural patterns in each region
- e. Evaluate and explain the European interactions with these societies, with emphasis on trading and economic interdependence

**SS WHI.12: The student will apply social science skills to understand the civilizations of the Western Hemisphere including the Maya, Aztec, and Inca.**

- a. Locate early civilizations in time and place and describing major geographic features;
- b. Explain the development of social, political, economic, religious, and cultural patterns in the civilizations of the Americas
- c. Evaluate and explain the European interactions with these societies, with emphasis on trading and economic interdependence
- d. Discuss methods and impact of conquistadors

**SS WHI.13: The student will apply social science skills to understand the social, economic, and political changes and cultural achievements in the high and late medieval periods.**

- a. Describe the emergence of centralized monarchies (England, France, Spain, and Russia) and distinctive political developments in each
- b. Explain conflicts across Europe and Asia, including the Crusades and the fall of Constantinople
- c. Explain patterns of crisis and recovery related to the Black Death (bubonic plague)
- d. Evaluate and explain the preservation and transfer to Western Europe of Greek, Roman, and Arabic philosophy, medicine, and science
- e. Explain the significance of the Great Western Schism

**SS WHI.14: The student will apply social science skills to understand the developments leading to the Renaissance in Europe in terms of its impact on Western civilization.**

- a. Determine the economic and cultural foundations of the Italian Renaissance
- b. Sequence events related to the rise of Italian city-states and their political development, including Machiavelli's theory of governing as described in *The Prince*
- c. Cite the contributions of artists and philosophers of the Renaissance, as contrasted with the medieval period, including Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Petrarch
- d. Compare and contrast the Italian and the Northern Renaissance, and citing the contributions of writers