



5th Grade Social Studies

August 2019

Dear Students,

Welcome to Fifth Grade Social Studies! I am passionate about American history, and I want to share with you the excitement and drama of how our country developed! Here is our schedule:

- U.S. Landform regions, maps, timelines, primary and secondary sources –August/September
- First Civilizations and Native Americans – September/October
- Age of Exploration – October/November
- Colonization of North America – November/December/January
- Crisis with Great Britain and Revolutionary War – January/February/March
- U.S. Government and the Constitution – April/May
- 50 states and capitals - April/May
- Westward Expansion – May/June

Mark these important dates on your calendar! On **Monday, October 14**, we will visit the Reagan Library to participate in the **Air Force One Discovery Center**. This will be an experience in leadership that you will not forget! In addition, we will participate in the **Walk-Through the American Revolution on Tuesday, March 10**. You will wear a colonial costume, have a speaking part, re-enact a battle scene, sing Yankee Doodle, and learn a lot about our War of Independence!

In addition to learning the history of our nation, we will

- use a variety websites, videos, and primary sources to deepen our understanding of historical events.
- analyze the different perspectives of people who were part of the historical events.
- examine the concept of POWER and its connection to the events we study.
- learn methods to read and understand nonfiction text.
- learn organizational, note-taking and study skills which will help you in future classes.



Here are my expectations and procedures:

1. **Materials:** Each day you should bring your Social Studies folder, sharpened pencils, Chromebook, and agenda to my classroom. Write assignments and test dates in your agenda.
2. **Handouts and Notes:** The handouts are shortened summaries of the information in the book. You will develop organizational, listening, and note-taking skills with the handouts. The handouts are **VERY important, because my test questions come from the handouts**. You should
 - (a) number the handouts in the order in which I give them to you;
 - (b) fill them out neatly, accurately, and completely;
 - (c) save them in your Social Studies folder;
 - (d) study them for tests; and
 - (e) hand them in as part of a “Note Check” at test time.

In second trimester, you will also take notes in a spiral notebook. You must also save your handwritten notes to study for tests and to hand in for “note checks”.

3. **Lost handouts and notes:** If you lose your handouts or notes, you will need to copy them from the “masters,” which are always hanging on a hook at the front of the classroom. You may do this before school, after school, or at recess.
4. **Absences:** If you are absent for any reason, you must make up the reading and notes you missed. Come to me before class begins to obtain handouts. Then come in at recess to copy the notes from the “master” or arrange to copy the notes from a friend.
5. **Tests:** We will have a test after every unit, approximately every 2-4 weeks. Here are some tips:
 - a. Use the **Unit Overview** (Handout #1 - handed out on the first day of each unit) as a study guide throughout the unit. It contains all of the important questions and vocabulary for the unit.
 - b. Actively participate in class discussions and our daily reviews.
 - c. Begin studying when I announce the test (usually about a week before the test). Each night, review several handouts and reread part of the book. See if you can tell the “story” without referring to the handouts. **Do not wait until the last night to study!**
 - d. Actively participate in the review session on the day before the test.
6. **“Note Check”:** On test day, you will hand in your handouts and notes. The grade on your notes is feedback to you on your organization, neatness, listening skills, and focus. Strive for notes that are complete, accurate, organized, and neat.
7. **Participation is important:** “Participation” means (a) bringing all of your materials to class, (b) being an “active” learner - eyes on the teacher, sitting tall, participating in discussions, and (c) consistently working with the class in all activities.
8. **Rules:** I require a respectful, organized classroom so that all students can participate and learn.
9. **Keep your parents informed!** You are required to show your graded work to your parents.
10. **HELP!** If you have questions about what we are learning or feel concerned about staying organized, please come see me. I am happy to answer your questions and I want you to be successful in my class. I am almost always in my classroom after school. I can help!

Please take this letter home and share it with your parents. Keep the letter in a safe place so you can re-read it later. Have your parents sign the attached slip, and bring the slip back to me. I am looking forward to a great year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Stelter
sssteller@mbusd.org

Parents, I post Social Studies homework and upcoming tests on the Homework page of my website at <http://mrssteltersclass.weebly.com>.