



Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools

Academic Standards

Social Studies



8th GRADE

United States History Growth and Development

In Grade 8, students focus upon United States history, beginning with a brief review of early history, including the Revolution and founding era, and the principles of the United States and Maryland constitutions, as well as other founding documents and their applications to subsequent periods of national history and to civic and political life. Students then study national development, westward expansion, social reform movements, and the Civil War and Reconstruction.

The Archdiocese of Washington's Academic Standards for social studies are organized around five content areas. The content area Standards and the types of learning experiences they provide to students in Grade 8 are described below. On the pages that follow, age-appropriate concepts are listed underneath each Standard. Skills for thinking, inquiry, and participation in a democratic society are integrated throughout. Specific terms are defined and examples are provided when necessary.

Standard 1 — History

Students will examine the relationship and significance of themes, concepts, and movements in the development of United States history, including review of key ideas related to the discovery, exploration, and colonization of America, and the revolution and founding era. This will be followed by emphasis on social reform, national development and westward expansion, and the Civil War and Reconstruction period.

Standard 2 — Civics and Government

Students will explain the major principles, values, and institutions of constitutional government and citizenship, which are based on the founding documents of the United States.

Standard 3 — Geography

Students will identify the major geographic characteristics of the United States and its regions. They will name and locate the major physical features of the United States, each of the states, and major cities, and use geographic skills and technology to examine the influence of geographic factors on national development.

Standard 4 — Economics

Students will identify, describe, and evaluate the influence of economic factors on national development from the founding of the nation to the end of Reconstruction.

Standard 5 — Individuals, Society, and Culture

Students will examine the influence of individuals, ideas, and cultural movements in the development of the United States; consider the impact of scientific and technological developments on cultural life, and analyze the importance of artistic expression in the development of the American nation.



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Standard 1 – History

Students will examine the relationship and significance of themes, concepts, and movements in the development of United States history, including review of key ideas related to the discovery, exploration, and colonization of America, and the revolution and founding era. This will be followed by emphasis on social reform, national development and westward expansion, and the Civil War and Reconstruction period.

Historical Knowledge

The American Revolution and Founding of the United States: 1754 to 1801

- 8.1.1 Describe major Indian groups of eastern North America, including early conflict with European settlers.
- 8.1.2 Compare and contrast the relationships among the British, French, Spanish, and Dutch in their struggle for control of North America during European settlement and colonization.
- 8.1.3 Identify and explain the conditions, causes, consequences, and significance of the French and Indian War (1754—1763), and the resistance and rebellion against British imperial rule by the 13 colonies in North America (1761—1775).
- 8.1.4 Identify fundamental ideas in the Declaration of Independence (1776) and analyze the causes and effects of the Revolutionary War (1775—1783), including enactment of the Articles of Confederation and the Treaty of Paris.
- 8.1.5 Identify and explain key events leading to the creation of a strong union among the 13 original states and in the establishment of the United States as a federal republic.

Example: The enactment of state constitutions, the Constitutional Convention, ratifying conventions of the American states, and debate by Federalists versus Anti-Federalists about approval or disapproval of the 1787 Constitution (1787—1788).
- 8.1.6 Identify the steps in the implementation of the federal government under the United States Constitution, including the First and Second Congresses of the United States (1789—1792).
- 8.1.7 Describe the origin and development of political parties, the Federalists, and the Democratic Republicans (1793—1801).
- 8.1.8 Evaluate the significance of the presidential and congressional election of 1800 and the transfer of political authority and power to the Democratic-Republican party led by the new president, Thomas Jefferson (1801).
- 8.1.9 Describe the influence of individuals on social and political developments.

Example: James Otis, Mercy Otis Warren, Samuel Adams, Thomas Paine, George Washington, John Adams, Abigail Adams, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and Benjamin Banneker.
- 8.1.10 Compare differences in ways of life in the northern and southern states, including the growth of towns and cities in the North and the growing dependence on slavery in the South.



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National Expansion and Reform: 1801 to 1861

- 8.1.11 Explain the events leading up to and the significance of the Louisiana Purchase (1803) and the expedition of Lewis and Clark (1803—1806).
- 8.1.12 Explain the main issues, decisions, and consequences of landmark Supreme Court cases: Marbury v. Madison (1803), McCulloch v. Maryland (1819), and Gibbons v. Ogden (1824).
- 8.1.13 Explain the causes and consequences of the War of 1812, including the Rush-Bagot Agreement (1818).
- 8.1.14 Examine the international problem that led to the Monroe Doctrine (1823) and assess its consequences.
- 8.1.15 Explain the concept of Manifest Destiny and its relationship to the westward movement of settlers and territorial expansion, including the purchase of Florida (1819), the annexation of Texas (1845), the acquisition of the Oregon Territory (1846), and territorial acquisition resulting from the Mexican War (1846—1848).
- 8.1.16 Describe the abolition of slavery in the northern states, conflict and compromises associated with westward expansion of slavery, such as the Missouri Compromise (1820), and the continued resistance to slavery by African Americans.
- 8.1.17 Identify the key ideas of Jacksonian democracy and explain their influence on political participation, political parties, and constitutional government.
- 8.1.18 Analyze different interests and points of view of individuals and groups involved in the abolitionist, feminist, and social reform movements and in sectional conflicts.
- 8.1.19 Describe the impact of the California gold rush (1849) on the westward expansion of the United States.
- 8.1.20 Explain the influence of individuals on key events and developments of the early United States.

Example: Thomas Jefferson, Robert Fulton, Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, Sacajewea, Daniel Boone, Little Turtle, Tecumseh, Black Hawk, John Marshall, James Madison, Dolley Madison, Andrew Jackson, John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, James Polk, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, Horace Mann, Dorothea Dix, and Lucretia Mott.

The Civil War and Reconstruction Period: 1850 to 1877

- 8.1.21 Analyze the causes and effects of events leading to the Civil War, including development of sectional conflict over slavery.
- Example: The Compromise of 1850, furor over publication of Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852), Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854), the Dred Scott Case (1857), the Lincoln-Douglas Debates (1858), and the presidential election of 1860.
- 8.1.22 Describe the importance of key events in the Civil War, including the battles of Antietam, Vicksburg, and Gettysburg, and the Emancipation Proclamation and Gettysburg Address (1861—1865).
- 8.1.23 Explain and evaluate the policies, practices, and consequences of Reconstruction, including the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution.



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8.1.24 Describe the conflicts between Indians and settlers of the Great Plains.

8.1.25 Identify the influence of individuals on political and social events and movements.

Example: Henry Clay, Harriet Tubman, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Roger Taney, Stephen A. Douglas, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, John Brown, Jefferson Davis, Clara Barton, Robert E. Lee, Ulysses S. Grant, William T. Sherman, Andrew Johnson, Thaddeus Stevens, Susan B. Anthony, Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, and Chief Joseph.

Chronological Thinking

8.1.26 Develop and interpret United States history timelines from 1750 to 1877 by designating appropriate intervals of time and recording events according to the chronological order in which they occurred.

Comprehension, Analysis, and Interpretation

8.1.27 Recognize historical perspective by identifying the historical context in which events unfolded and by avoiding evaluation of the past solely in terms of present-day norms.

8.1.28 Identify, evaluate, and distinguish fact from opinion in a variety of information resources*; differentiate between historical facts and interpretations, recognizing that the facts the historian reports reflects his or her judgment of what is most significant about the past.

8.1.29 Distinguish in historical narratives between unsupported expressions of opinion and informed hypotheses grounded in historical evidence.

* information resources: print media, such as books, magazines, and newspapers; electronic media, such as radio, television, Web sites, and databases; and community resources, such as individuals and organizations

Research Capabilities

8.1.30 Form historical research questions and seek responses by analyzing primary resources — such as autobiographies, diaries, maps, photographs, letters, and government documents — and secondary resources, such as biographies and other nonfiction books and articles on the history of the United States.

Example: Analyze and interpret the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (1786), President George Washington's Farewell Address (1796), the First Inaugural Address by Thomas Jefferson (1801), the Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions of the Seneca Falls Convention (1848), and the Second Inaugural Address by Abraham Lincoln (1865).

Issues-Analysis, Decision-Making, Planning, and Problem Solving

8.1.31 Examine the causes of problems in the past and evaluate solutions chosen as well as possible alternative courses of actions. Consider the information available at the time, the interests of those affected by the decision, and the consequences of each course of action.



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Standard 2 – Civics and Government

Students will explain the major principles, values, and institutions of constitutional government and citizenship, which are based on the founding documents of the United States.

Foundations of Government

- 8.2.1 Identify and explain essential ideas of constitutional government, which are expressed in the founding documents of the United States, including the Virginia Declaration of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, the Massachusetts Constitution of 1780, the Northwest Ordinance, the 1787 U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers, Washington’s Farewell Address (1796), and Jefferson’s First Inaugural Address (1801).

Example: The essential ideas include limited government, rule of law, due process of law, separated and shared powers, checks and balances, federalism, popular sovereignty, republicanism, representative government, and individual rights to life, liberty, property, freedom of conscience, and due process of law.

- 8.2.2 Distinguish between a subject and a citizen.

Example: In a nondemocratic political system, a subject passively follows the ruler or rulers. In a democratic political system, a citizen may play an active role in making laws or in selecting representatives to make them.

- 8.2.3 Identify and explain the relationship between rights and responsibilities of citizenship in the United States.

Example: The right to vote and the responsibility to use this right carefully and effectively.

- 8.2.4 Define and explain the importance of individual and civic responsibilities.

Example: Individual responsibilities might include taking care of yourself, accepting responsibility for the consequences of your actions, assuming the responsibility to become educated, and supporting your family. Civic responsibilities might include obeying the law, respecting the rights of others, being an informed citizen, becoming involved in civic affairs, monitoring the actions of governmental officials, communicating with elected representatives, voting, paying taxes, serving in the armed forces, and serving on juries.

- 8.2.5 Identify the ways that people become citizens of the United States.

Functions of Government

- 8.2.6 Define, compare, and contrast unitary*, federal*, and confederate* forms of governmental organization.

- 8.2.7 Distinguish among the different functions of national and state government within the federal system by analyzing the Constitution of the United States and the Maryland Constitution/Code of the District of Columbia.

Example: Identify important services provided by state government, such as maintaining state roads and highways, enforcing health and safety laws, and supporting educational institutions. Compare those services to functions of the federal government, such as defense.



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- 8.2.8 Explain how and why legislative, executive, and judicial powers are distributed, shared, and limited in the constitutional government of the United States.
- 8.2.9 Examine functions of the national government in the lives of people, including purchasing and distributing public goods and services, financing government through taxation, conducting foreign policy, and providing a common defense.

- * unitary system: a system that concentrates all governmental power in a central or national government
- * federal system: a system in which power is divided and shared between national and state governments
- * confederate system: a system of government in which sovereign states delegate powers to a national government for specific purposes

Roles of Citizens

- 8.2.10 Explain the importance in a democratic republic of responsible participation by citizens in voluntary civil associations/nongovernmental organizations that comprise civil society.
- 8.2.11 Describe various types of elections and explain ways that citizens can participate in political parties, campaigns, and elections, such as primary, general, state, local, and national elections.
- 8.2.12 Explain how citizens can monitor and influence the development and implementation of public policies.
- 8.2.13 Research and defend positions on issues in which fundamental values and principles related to the Constitution of the United States are in conflict, using a variety of information resources*.
- Example: Majority rule and minority rights, liberty and equality, or individual rights and the common good.

*information resources: print media, such as books, magazines, and newspapers; electronic media, such as radio, television, Web sites, and databases; and community resources, such as individuals and organizations

Standard 3 – Geography

Students will identify the major geographic characteristics of the United States and its regions. They will name and locate the major physical features of the United States, each of the states, and major cities, and use geographic skills and technology to examine the influence of geographic factors on national development.

The World in Spatial Terms

- 8.3.1 Read a topographic map to interpret its symbols. Determine the land forms and human features that represent physical and cultural characteristics of areas in the United States.

* cultural characteristics: human features, such as population characteristics, communication and transportation networks, religion and customs, and how people make a living or build homes and other structures



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Places and Regions

- 8.3.2 Map and locate all states of the United States, major cities, mountain ranges, and river systems of the United States.

Physical Systems

- 8.3.3 Locate and map the major climate regions in the United States and describe the characteristics of each climate type.

- 8.3.4 Name and describe processes that build* up the land and processes that erode* it.

Example: The Appalachian Mountains are a formation that has undergone erosion.

* building: forces that build up Earth's surface include mountain building and deposit of dirt by water, ice, and wind; the Mississippi Delta is made up almost entirely of eroded material

* erosion: the process by which the products of weathering* are moved from one place to another

* weathering: the breaking down of rocks and other materials on Earth's surface by such processes as rain or wind

Human Systems

- 8.3.5 Identify the agricultural regions of the United States and be able to give reasons for the type of land use during different historical periods.

- 8.3.6 Map changes in national boundaries, distribution of population, and economic activities at critical stages of development in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the United States.

- 8.3.7 Analyze geographic factors that have influenced migration and settlement patterns and relate them to the economic development of the United States.

Example: The presence of a major waterway influences economic development and the workers who are attracted to that development.

Environment and Society

- 8.3.8 Develop maps showing the distribution of natural resources — such as forests, water sources, and wildlife — in the United States at the beginning of the nineteenth century and give examples of how people exploited these resources as the country became more industrialized and people moved westward.

- 8.3.9 Identify ways people modified the physical environment as the United States developed and the types of problems that resulted.

Example: Identify urbanization*, deforestation*, and extinction* or near extinction of wildlife species.

* urbanization: the growth of cities

* deforestation: the clearing of trees or forests

* extinction: the state in which all members of a group of organisms, such as a species, population, family or class, have disappeared from a given habitat, geographic area, or the entire world



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Uses of Geography

8.3.10 Explain the importance of the major mountain ranges and the major river systems in the development of the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Example: Locate major cities, and suggest reasons for their location and development.

8.3.11 Use information technology, such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS)* and remotely sensed images, to gather information on ways people changed the physical environment of the United States in the nineteenth century.

* Geographic Information Systems (GIS): information technology systems used to store, analyze, manipulate, and display a wide range of geographic information

Standard 4 – Economics

Students will identify, describe, and evaluate the influence of economic factors on national development from the founding of the nation to the end of Reconstruction.

8.4.1 Identify economic factors contributing to the European exploration and colonization in North America, the American Revolution, and the drafting of the Constitution of the United States.

8.4.2 Illustrate elements of the three types of economic systems, using cases from United States history.

Example: Traditional economy*, command economy*, market economy*.

8.4.3 Evaluate how the characteristics of a market economy have affected the economic development of the United States.

Example: Characteristics included the role of entrepreneurs, private property, markets, S competition, and self-interest.

8.4.4 Explain the basic economic functions of the government in the economy of the United States.

Example: The government provides a legal framework, promotes competition, provides public goods and services, controls the effects of market failures, and regulates interstate commerce.

8.4.5 Analyze contributions of entrepreneurs, inventors, and other key individuals in the development of the United States economy.

Example: Contributors included Alexander Hamilton, Lewis and Clark, Eli Whitney, Samuel Gompers, Madam C.J. Walker, Andrew Carnegie, and George Washington Carver.

8.4.6 Relate technological change and inventions to changes in labor productivity in the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Example: The cotton gin increased labor productivity in the early nineteenth century.



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8.4.7 Trace the development of different kinds of money used in the United States and explain how money helps make saving easier.

Example: Types of money included wampum, tobacco, gold and silver, state bank notes, greenbacks, and Federal Reserve Notes.

8.4.8 Examine the development of the banking system in the United States.

Example: Examine such elements as the central bank controversy, the state banking era, and the development of a gold standard.

8.4.8 Explain and evaluate examples of domestic and international interdependence throughout United States history.

Example: Triangular trade routes, regional exchange of resources.

8.4.10 Examine the importance of borrowing and lending (the use of credit) in the United States and list the advantages and disadvantages of using credit.

8.4.11 Compare and contrast job skills needed in different time periods in United States history and use a variety of information resources* to research jobs and careers.

* traditional economy: an economy in which resources are allocated based on custom and tradition

* command economy: an economy in which resources are allocated by the government or other central authority

* market economy: an economy in which resources are allocated by decisions of individuals and businesses

* information resources: print media, such as books, magazines, and newspapers; electronic media, such as radio, television, Web sites, and databases; and community resources, such as individuals and organizations

Standard 5 - Individuals, Society, and Culture

Students will examine the influence of individuals, ideas, and cultural movements in the development of the United States; consider the impact of scientific and technological developments on cultural life, and analyze the importance of artistic expression in the development of the American nation.

8.5.1 Examine key ideas of individuals in the Second Great Awakening, such as Henry Ward Beecher, and explain their relationship to social reform movements in the early decades of the 1800s.

8.5.2 Compare and contrast the beliefs of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau about the role of individuals in society.

8.5.3 Examine the concepts of a work ethic, philanthropy, volunteerism, and concern for the common good as important aspects of American society in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Example: In the 1830s, French observer Alexis de Tocqueville noted the importance of volunteerism, the American tendency to form voluntary associations to address community needs.



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- 8.5.4 Trace the development of the American educational system, including the work of Horace Mann in the public schools movement (1830s to 1850s), and describe the differences in educational opportunities for girls and women, African Americans, and students in rural areas.
- 8.5.5 Give examples of how immigration affected American culture in the decades before and after the Civil War, including growth of industrial sites in the North; religious differences; tensions between middle-class and working-class people, particularly in the Northeast; and intensification of cultural differences between the North and the South.
- 8.5.6 Give examples of the changing role of women in the northern, southern, and western parts of the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, and examine possible causes for these changes.
- 8.5.7 Give examples of scientific and technological developments that changed cultural life in the nineteenth-century United States, such as the use of photography, the invention of the telegraph (1844), and the invention of the telephone (1876).
- 8.5.8 Identify individuals in the arts and literature and their roles in portraying American culture in the nineteenth century including Louisa May Alcott, John James Audubon, George Caleb Bingham, George Catlin, Emily Dickinson, Frederick Douglass, Washington Irving, Alfred Jacob Miller, Edgar Allan Poe, and Walt Whitman.
- 8.5.9 Describe changes in entertainment and recreation, such as the growing interest in sports of various kinds, in the mid-nineteenth century and explain how these changes related to urbanization and technological developments.
- 8.5.10 Use a variety of information resources* to identify examples of traditional arts, fine arts, music, and literature that reflect the ideals of American democracy in different historical periods and plan presentations on or performances of selected works.

* information resources: print media, such as books, magazines, and newspapers; electronic media, such as radio, television, Web sites, and databases; and community resources, such as individuals and organizations