

Alexandra Junior High School
Social Studies 8
Course Description

Objectives

This program focuses on historical worldviews, developing an historical awareness of worldviews shaping societies, and of how present worldviews have been impacted by this history. Through this examination, students will become aware of worldviews at work within themselves and others, thereby helping them to become more conscious citizens in their society. The course is divided into the following three areas (teachers may cover these in any order):

- *Origins of a Western Worldview: Renaissance Europe*
- *Worldviews in Conflict: The Spanish and the Aztecs*
- *From Isolation to Adaptation: Japan*

Methodologies

A variety of instructional techniques **focusing on critical inquiry** are used in the classroom: for example, analysis of historical processes and sources, presentations, debates, dramatic re-enactments, writing within a role, and visual representation. The objective of student critical thinking is to energize their learning by moving beyond passive reception of knowledge; when they have critically analyzed, interpreted, validated and applied the knowledge of the coursework, then they will understand. *“One gains knowledge only through thinking”* (Richard Paul). This emphasis on the student as an active learner will be accomplished using individual and group study techniques.

Our department focuses on the use of major projects, allowing the student to become meaningfully involved in content. In order to do this, the social studies and language arts courses are taught by one teacher who will integrate sections of the two courses, thereby providing time for more developed projects. Our department is moving toward extensive integration of the Humanities courses, and some teachers fully combine them, using the language arts learning objectives to teach the social studies content.

Evaluation

Students' marks for each of the four report periods are based on participation in class activities, assignments, and tests. Teachers will weight these components variously, depending on their own course requirements.

The student's final grade is based on four report card marks and the final exam.

First Report - 20%

Second Report - 20%

Third Report - 20%

Fourth Report - 20%

Final Exam - 20%

Appeal Procedure

Students and parents may appeal a test or assignment mark. An appeal for a review must first be made to the teacher. A further appeal may be made to the department head, and finally to the principal.

Supplies

- Large 3-ringed binder with lined and blank paper
- Highlighters, pencil crayon set, pencils, erasers, blue/black pens

