



VALWOOD

GO BEYOND

Eighth Grade American Studies Curriculum Social Studies

8th Grade American Studies Overview

Course Description	Topics at a Glance
American Studies students in eighth grade history will study American history of the twentieth and twenty first centuries. The course also includes American government and Georgia history. It is an American history survey course designed to encourage students to think both critically and analytically as they learn about the people and events that helped shape the United States of America. Skills in note taking, writing, analysis of primary source documents and research are developed. Because 8th grade history is part of the American Studies class, the students will read literature for each time period or topic studied.	Government: Three branches and their relationships Government: The presidency and American presidents History: History of Georgia History: World War I History: Holocaust and World War II History: The 60's: Politics, Racial Tension and Space Race Economics: Baseball's Influence on America History: Immigration to America in the early 20 th century
Assessments	Effective Components
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher-designed tests and quizzesCompleted projectsEssays relating to history topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recognize that people from different cultures and different times in history make contributions to our culture.Use technology responsibly for communication and transfer of ideas.Identify different information sources and assess sources.Use appropriate tools, technology and maps to gather, organize and report data and other information.Organize and report information in a variety of complex ways, including tables, graphs, charts and reports.Collaborate with others to identify problems and seek solutions.Present information in a variety of formats, including written paragraphs, posters, illustrations, oral reports, maps, etc. <p>Suggested culminating activity: Field trip to Washington, DC to include visits to the capitol, Smithsonian museums, the National Archives, the Holocaust Museum, different monuments</p>
Grade Level Expectations	
Analyze and interpret historical sources, both primary and secondary, to ask and research historical questions.	
Explain how events in history affect the economy and the politics of our nation.	
Use geographic tools to solve problems. Understand how human and physical systems vary and interact.	
Analyze how one event in history affects another event.	
Analyze the interconnected nature of the United States to other nations. Compare multiple systems of government.	

1. History

The study of history prepares students to develop critical thinking skills in an effort to explain the human experience through events of the past. Discerning clarity from the jumble of conflicting facts and sources, students get a clearer picture of how individuals, communities, and the world connect, both past and present. History develops moral understanding, defines identity and creates an appreciation of how things change, while building judgment and decision-making skills. History enhances the ability to read varied sources and develop the skills necessary to analyze, interpret, and communicate.

History inspires by exposing students to the wonders and beauty of the past. The historical perspective prepares for an ever-changing future by helping to understand changes in the past. It allows students to gain perspective and develop better judgment by discovering and uncovering the complexity of human beings. This allows students to better understand themselves as individuals and their place in a complex and often confusing society. History provides examples of ethical behavior and the context for change, and illustrates the importance of responsible members of society in both our country and our world.

History is a critical component in the future success of a student in the 21st century world. Inquiry is the central component of historical thinking. Students learn the skills of reading, interpreting and analyzing historical sources and develop the ability to craft a well-constructed and communicated historical argument. History teaches the interpretive, analytical, and critical thinking skills that will allow students to become productive citizens in the future.

Valwood Graduate Competencies

The Valwood graduate competencies are the preschool through twelfth-grade concepts and skills that all graduates will be able to demonstrate.

Valwood Graduate Competencies in the History standards are:

- Develop an understanding of how people view, construct, and interpret history
- Analyze key historical periods and patterns of change over time within and across nations and cultures

Content Area: Social Studies - Eighth Grade	
Standard: 1. History	
Valwood Graduates: Develop an understanding of how people view, construct, and interpret history	
Grade Level Expectation Concepts and skills students master: 1. Analyze and interpret historical sources, both primary and secondary, to ask and research historical questions.	
Evidence Outcomes	21 st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies
Students can: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use and interpret documents and other relevant primary and secondary sources pertaining to United States history from multiple perspectives Analyze evidence from multiple sources including those with conflicting accounts about specific events in United States history Critique data for point of view, historical context, distortion, or propaganda and relevance to historical inquiry Construct a written historical argument on the use or understanding of primary and secondary sources Write for a variety of purposes and audiences. 	Inquiry Questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Which primary documents have had the greatest impact on the people of the United States? Should and can historians be completely impartial when writing about history? What makes history different from literature? What makes a good historical question?
	Relevance and Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The context and content from the past are used to make connections to the present such as connecting the World War I to current social and political issues. The historical method of inquiry is used to interpret and refine history and serves as a model for inquiry. For example, historians and communities preserve historical documents, artifacts, and buildings.
	Nature of Discipline: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Historical thinkers evaluate historical sources for purpose, audience, point of view, context, and authenticity. Historical thinkers use primary and secondary sources to evaluate and create hypotheses and interpretations of historical events defended with supporting evidence.

Content Area: Social Studies - Eighth Grade	
Standard: 1. History	
Valwood Graduates: Analyze key historical periods and patterns of change over time within and across nations and cultures	
Grade Level Expectation Concepts and skills students master: 2. Explain how events in history affect the economy and the politics of our nation.	
Evidence Outcomes	21 st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Determine and explain the historical context of key people and events from the end of Reconstruction through modern times including the examination of different perspectives b. Evaluate continuity and change over the course of United States history by examining various eras and determining major sources of conflict and compromise c. Examine factors that motivated the military and economic expansion from post Civil War to modern times d. Evaluate the impact of different factors, including but not limited to gender, age, ethnicity and class on groups and individuals in this time period and the impact of these groups and individuals on the events of the time period e. Analyze causes and effects of major conflicts from World War I through modern wars f. Analyze ideas that are critical to the understanding of American history and give examples of the ideals involved in major events and movements. Topics include but are not limited to representative democracy, federalism, capitalism, abolition, temperance, nativism, and expansionism g. Write for a variety of purposes and audiences. 	<p>Inquiry Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the importance of James Oglethorpe, the Charter of 1732, reasons for settlement (charity, economics, and defense), Tomochichi, Mary Musgrove, and the city of Savannah in the settlement of Georgia. 2. Explain the development of Georgia as a royal colony with regard to land ownership, slavery, government, and the impact of the royal governors. 3. Explain the cause of World War I and the United States' involvement as well as the outcome of the war and its affect on the world. 4. Describe the impact of the Holocaust on the world. 5. Explain the causes of World War II, the United States' involvement as well as the outcome of the war and its affect on the modern world. 6. Describe the history of the United States through the term of each president. 7. Describe major developments in civil rights role during the 1950s and 1960s; include Brown v. Board of Education, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr. and his assassination, Detroit Riots, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Bloody Sunday, Jim Crow Laws, Little Rock Nine, Ole Miss Riots, Freedom Riders, March on Washington, and North Carolina Sit In. 8. Describe the impact of the events of 1960's and 1970's on America including the Cold War, JFK's Assassination, the Great Society, Cuban Missile Crisis, Bay of Pigs, Watergate, and Nixon's Resignation. 9. Explain the United States' involvement in Vietnam and how the war affected America. Include the protests that took place in the United States.

	<p>10. Describe the Space Race between the United States and Russia and how this contributed to the Cold War.</p> <p>11. Explain how immigration affected America in the late 1800's and early 1900's, emphasizing the immigration centers at Ellis Island and Angel Island.</p>
	<p>Relevance and Application:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Context and information from the past are used to make connections and inform decisions in the present. For example, the concepts of liberty continue to be defended by lawyers and citizens while the rights and responsibilities of citizens continue to evolve through the work of policy makers, legislators, judges, lawyers, and individuals. 2. Technological developments continue to evolve and impact the present. For example, communication media has evolved from printing, telegraph, and early photography and continues to evolve, in areas such as transportation and scientific discovery.
	<p>Nature of Discipline:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Historical thinkers analyze patterns and themes throughout time. 2. Historical thinkers study places and events from multiple perspectives in a way that leads to interpretations based on available evidence. 3. Historical thinkers use chronology to organize time. 4. Historical thinkers examine sources for audience, purpose, point of view, historical context, and propaganda.

2. Geography

The study of geography creates an informed person with an understanding of spatial perspective and technologies for spatial analysis; and an awareness of the interdependence of the world regions and resources, and how places are connected at the local, national, and global scales. Students understand the complexity and interrelatedness of people, places, and environments. Geography helps students appreciate the dynamic relationships and complexity of the world.

The skills, concepts, and knowledge acquired in geography are fundamental literacy components for a 21st century student. Use of critical thinking, information literacy, collaboration, self-direction, and invention are apparent in every facet of geographic education. Geography helps students develop a framework for understanding the world, ultimately contributing to the creation of informed citizens.

Valwood Graduate Competencies

The Valwood graduate competencies are the preschool through twelfth-grade concepts and skills that all graduates will be able to demonstrate.

Valwood Graduate Competencies in the Geography standard are:

- Develop spatial understanding, perspectives, and personal connections to the world
- Examine places and regions and the connections among them

Content Area: Social Studies - Eighth Grade	
Standard: 2. Geography	
Valwood Graduates: Develop spatial understanding, perspectives, and personal connections to the world	
Grade Level Expectation Concepts and skills students master: 1. Use geographic tools to solve problems. Understand how human and physical systems vary and interact.	
Evidence Outcomes	21 st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies
Students can: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret maps and other geographic tools as a primary source to analyze a historic issue Describe the nature and spatial distribution of cultural patterns Recognize the patterns and networks of economic interdependence Explain the establishment of human settlements in relationship to physical attributes and important regional connections Calculate and analyze population trends Write for a variety of purposes and audiences. 	Inquiry Questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Locate and evaluate the importance of key physical features on the development of Georgia; include the Fall Line, Okefenokee Swamp, Appalachian Mountains, Chattahoochee and Savannah Rivers, and barrier islands. How have people and the environment interacted to produce changes over time? How is human activity limited by the environment? How has the environment influenced human activity?
	Relevance and Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The analysis and understanding of patterns found in human and physical systems helps to explain impacts on society such as the impact of migration patterns on regions. Technology is used to find, plot, and express the patterns found in human and physical systems that affect society such as population density and growth analyses, impact of deforestation, and human and environmental changes that affect world health.
	Nature of Discipline: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Spatial thinkers use geographic tools to discover and investigate geographic patterns.

Content Area: Social Studies - Eighth Grade	
Standard: 2. Geography	
Valwood Graduates: Examine places and regions and the connections among them	
Grade Level Expectation Concepts and skills students master: 1. Conflict and cooperation occur over space and resources	
Evidence Outcomes	21 st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies
Students can: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze how economic, political, cultural, and social processes interact to shape patterns of human population, interdependence, cooperation and conflict Compare how differing geographic perspectives apply to a historic issue Interpret from a geographic perspective the expansion of the United States by addressing issues of land, security, and sovereignty Write for a variety of purposes and audiences. 	Inquiry Questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the importance of new immigrant communities to the growth and economy of the United States. How will the location of resources lead to cooperation or conflict in the future? How has conflict over space and resources influenced human migration? How have differing perspectives regarding resource and land use lead to cooperative policies or conflict? How would human settlement patterns be different if people did not trade resources with others?
	Relevance and Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Nations are working cooperatively or are engaged in conflict over the division and control of land, water, and other resources. Individuals and groups make choices regarding the use of space and resources in society. For example, various nations and groups fought over the resources of the United States and businesses and individuals have raced for land and resources throughout history including the Gold Rush and the Western land rush.
	Nature of Discipline: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Spatial thinkers study how factors influence the allocation and use of space and resources. Spatial thinkers study how different perspectives affect cooperation and conflict over space and resources.

3. Economics

Economics and personal financial literacy teach students the skills, knowledge, and habits that they must master in order to contribute in a positive manner to society. Economics and personal financial literacy teach how to understand personal responsibility, set goals, create plans, evaluate choices, value entrepreneurship, comprehend globalization and international connections, and learn to make rational decisions through critical analysis.

Economics teaches students how society manages its scarce resources, how people make decisions, how people interact in the domestic and international markets, and how forces and trends affect the economy as a whole. Personal financial literacy applies the economic way of thinking to help understand how to manage scarce resources using a logical decision-making process that involves prioritization based on analysis of the costs and benefits of every choice.

Economics and personal financial literacy are essential to function effectively in personal lives, as participants in a global economy, and as citizens contributing to a strong national economy. As citizens, workers, consumers, savers, and investors, members of society must have a level of economic and personal financial literacy that enables them to understand how economies function and to apply economic analysis in their own lives.

Valwood Graduate Competencies

The Valwood graduate competencies are the preschool through twelfth-grade concepts and skills that all graduates will be able to demonstrate.

Valwood Graduate Competencies in the Economics Standard are:

- Understand the allocation of scarce resources in societies through analysis of individual choice, market interaction, and public policy
- Acquire the knowledge and economic reasoning skills to make sound financial decisions

Content Area: Social Studies - Eighth Grade	
Standard: 3. Economics	
Valwood Graduates: Understand the allocation of scarce resources in societies through analysis of individual choice, market interaction, and public policy	
Grade Level Expectation Concepts and skills students master: 1. Economic freedom, including free trade, is important for economic growth	
Evidence Outcomes	21 st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies
Students can: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Give examples of international differences in resources, productivity, and prices that provide a basis for international trade Describe the factors that lead to a nation having a comparative and absolute advantage in trade Explain effects of domestic policies on international trade Explain why nations often restrict trade by using quotas, tariffs, and non-tariff barrier Write for a variety of purposes and audiences. 	Inquiry Questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how technological developments, had an impact on the United State's growth. Discuss the effect of Baseball on the economy of America through the ages. Include the construction of ball parks and the jobs these parks created. How does where and how you purchase products affect the social, economic, and environmental conditions? Relate this to the study of baseball. Explain how baseball strikes have affected the economy.
	Relevance and Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The understanding of trade and collaboration within the market economy is important to business and individual economic success. Analysis of the positive and negative impacts of trade agreements is critical to a nation's economy. Identification of the role of information as a good or service and its influence on production, trade, income, and technological advances aids businesses to operate efficiently. Innovation and invention create absolute or comparative advantage in trade.
	Nature of Discipline: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Economic thinkers explore the patterns and development of the interconnected nature of trade. Economic thinkers analyze the components of economic growth.

4. Civics

Civics has an impact on every individual daily through the work of city councils, state legislatures, Congress and school boards. Civics teaches students the complexity of the origins, structure, and functions of governments; the rights, roles, and responsibilities of ethical citizenship; the importance of law; and the skills necessary to participate in all levels of government.

Civics is a foundational component of the educational experience and critical to the continued success of our society. A democratic and free society relies on the skills, intelligence, engagement and virtue of its citizens. Our students will one day be responsible for strengthening our civic culture based on the knowledge they learn at school, their own values, and their choices for action. Democracy demands that they have these tools to be responsible contributors to civic culture.

Valwood Graduate Competencies

The Valwood graduate competencies are the preschool through twelfth-grade concepts and skills that all graduates will be able to demonstrate.

Valwood Graduate Competencies in the Civics standard are:

- Analyze and practice rights, roles, and responsibilities of citizens
- Analyze the origins, structure, and functions of governments and their impacts on societies and citizens

Content Area: Social Studies - Eighth Grade	
Standard: 4. Civics	
Valwood Graduates: Analyze and practice rights, roles, and responsibilities of citizens	
Grade Level Expectation Concepts and skills students master: 1. Analyze elements of continuity and change in the United States government and the role of citizens over time	
Evidence Outcomes	21 st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies
<p>Students can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Describe instances in which major political, social, economic, or cultural changes occurred and the reasons for the changes Analyze the changing definition of citizenship and give examples of the expansion of rights Describe examples of citizens and groups who have influenced change in United States government and politics Evaluate the result of various strategies for political change over time Analyze primary sources supporting democratic freedoms and the founding of our government. Documents to include but not limited to the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights and explain how they provide for both continuity and change Examine ways citizens may effectively voice opinions, monitor government, and bring about change nationally Write for a variety of purposes and audiences. 	<p>Inquiry Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the concepts of separation of powers and checks and balances. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Explain voting qualifications and elections in the United States. Explain the electoral college and how it works in a presidential election. Explain the role of political parties in government. Explain the qualifications, term, election, and duties of members of Congress. Evaluate how the legislative branch fulfills its role as the lawmaking body for the United States. Describe the organization of the executive branch, with emphasis on major policy areas of state programs; include education, human resources, public safety, transportation, economic development, and natural resources. Evaluate how the executive branch fulfills its role through state agencies that administer programs and enforce laws. Explain the structure of the court system in the United States, including trial and appellate procedures and how judges are selected. Evaluate how the judicial branch fulfills its role in interpreting the laws of the United States and ensuring justice in our legal system.

	<p>Relevance and Application:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are elements that contribute to continuity and change in order to maintain a free and democratic society. For example, the right to vote is fundamental in society, but who can vote has changed over time. 2. Individuals work collaboratively to research and advocate ideas regarding important issues facing society such as suffrage, the rights of workers, and the rights of children.
	<p>Nature of Discipline:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Responsible community members read diverse sources to create understanding, critically analyze issues, and place them in historical context. 2. Responsible community members understand and discuss the dynamic nature of national government and the individual's role in the process.

Content Area: Social Studies - Eighth Grade	
Standard: 4. Civics	
Valwood Graduates: Analyze origins, structure, and functions of governments and their impacts on societies and citizens	
Grade Level Expectation Concepts and skills students master: 2. Recognize the place of law in a constitutional system	
Evidence Outcomes	21 st Century Skills and Readiness Competencies
Students can: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Discern various types of law Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of rule of law Describe and engage in various means of conflict management Explain the role and importance of the Constitution Discuss the tensions between individual rights, state law, and national law Explain how state and federal court power of judicial review is reflected in the United States form of constitutional government Use a variety of resources to identify and evaluate issues that involve civic responsibility, individual rights, and the common good Write for a variety of purposes and audiences. 	Inquiry Questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What is the "common good?" What are key court cases and historical events in the development of the United States? What are examples of successful and unsuccessful conflict resolution in United States history and why? How has the United States balanced individual rights and law? Which is more effective, the rule of law or the rule of man? Why?
	Relevance and Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Laws interact and may remain the same or change over time. For example, in a society with laws, leadership can change but the law remains the same. Laws allow understanding of the proper course of action and consequences for not adhering to the law. For example, safety belts are required in automobiles for safety reasons and various government agencies regulate industries to protect the common good.
	Nature of Discipline: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible community members exercise their rights and responsibilities to effect change. Responsible community members understand rule of law and judicial review as components of the judicial system.