

5th Grade - History

4th Grade History

The study of Geography in Grade 5 requires students to apply earlier skills as they move into the study of more abstract concepts such as longitude, latitude, and map projections. Though the year begins with a specific and focused study of geography (particularly an investigation of World Lakes), students will also explore more specific geography within the context of each unit. For example, it is vitally important to spend time on the geography of the United States when discussing the events leading up to the United States Civil War!

In terms of historical content, students will revisit the Mesoamerican civilizations with a deeper look at Maya, Inca, and Aztec cultures and achievements, and investigate the ensuing clash of cultures which resulted from the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors. They will also discuss the causes of the wave of exploration from European civilizations which began in the 1400s and analyze the effects this wave had on the civilizations on both the European and American continents. Turning their eyes back to Europe, students will learn about the resurgence of classical ideals which defined the Renaissance era. Next, they will explore how the Reformation, was in part a reaction to the decadence of the Renaissance, and both motivated and was motivated by advances in technology.

During the second semester, students investigate continuity through change on a smaller scale beginning with a study of England as it evolved from a strong central monarchy to a constitutional monarchy. Around the same time, in Russia and Japan, the governments became increasingly more centralized, with power being consolidated into the hands of the czar and shogun respectively.

The year ends with a return to the American continent, immersing students in the complexities of the U.S. Civil War. Students will examine the events and issues that led to the war and reexamine the movement westward in light of this impending conflict. Study of the cadence of war—the battles, generals, and political events which shaped the struggle—helps students to understand the events which took place after the surrender at Appomattox Courthouse. Students will explore the conflict between Presidential and Congressional Reconstruction and the resulting impeachment of President Andrew Johnson. They are left with an understanding of the task that remained and the inevitable difficulties that followed. Building upon material learned in Grade 2, students will study the westward movement of the nation, including the effects of Manifest Destiny on Native-American peoples and relations between the United States and Mexico.

Unit 1: Geography, Map Skills, and World Lakes

Unit 2: Maya, Aztec, and Inca Civilizations

Unit 3: The Age of Exploration

Unit 4: The Renaissance

Unit 5: The Reformation

Unit 6: England in the Golden Age

Unit 7: Early Russia

Unit 8: Feudal Japan

Unit 9: Geography of the United States Unit

10: The Civil War

Unit 11: Westward Expansion Before the Civil War

Unit 12: Westward Expansion After the Civil War

Unit 13: Native Americans: Cultures and Conflicts

