

Teaching Unit: 1. Culture

Essential Understandings

Elements of culture are those elements which are known across generations.

Americans are a people of diverse ethnic origins, customs, and traditions, who are united as Americans by common principles and traditions.

Sub Topic: The American Culture

Knowledge and Skills

Students research their family's migration over the last 50 to 100 years.

People settled in regions around rivers.

People who came to America from elsewhere were in search of greater opportunities than they could find in their homelands.

All cultures are unique, but they have similar elements.

The American culture is diverse because of the merging of people from all over the world.

Cultural trends change over time.

Vocabulary:

Religion

Government

Ritual

Ceremony

Tradition

Architecture

Arts

Leisure

Style / Fad

Anthropologist

Archaeologist

Site

Artifact

Culture

Belief

Teaching Unit: **2. Mesopotamia**

Essential Understandings

Human interaction within a region influences the development of distinctive cultures.

Ancient civilizations made contributions that impact the modern world.

Maps enable people to better understand regions.

The gradual change from nomadic to agricultural cultures led to highly organized civilizations.

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The Ancient Mesopotamian culture impacted government, religion and economic growth throughout the world.

People develop systems to manage conflict and create order.

Sub Topic: ***Tigrus and Euphrates Rivers***

Knowledge and Skills

5000 BC

Students will understand ancient cultures of the fertile crescent, though very different from ours, led to some of the laws, beliefs, and can be seen in our culture today.

The people of Mesopotamia is the oldest civilization that has been found and many inventions were created that we see evidence of today such as: the wheel, cart, banking, library, maps, irrigation systems, to name a few.

Culture is a way of life of a group of people including but not limited to the traditions passed on from generation to generation: stories, music, art, celebrations, etc.

Hammurabi's Code of Law will be explored through class discussion and personal evaluation.

Geography, especially the location of rivers determined where early civilizations grew that were surprisingly sophisticated.

Mesopotamia is present day Iraq.

Judaism is a system of religious beliefs that began in the Fertile Crescent and continues today all over the world.

Students will understand that exchange of goods and services were essential to life and comfort in the Ancient Fertile Crescent and that units of exchange would change as labor became specialized.

Vocabulary:

silt

irrigation

surplus

specialization of labor

civilization, city-states

Cuneiform

polytheistic, monotheistic

ziggurats

Bible

Judaism, Star of David, synagogue

Teaching Unit: **3. Ancient Egypt**

Essential Understandings

Human interaction within a region influences the development of distinctive cultures.

Ancient civilizations made contributions that impact the modern world.

Maps enable people to better understand regions.

Archaeological discoveries are changing our knowledge of ancient cultures.

Specific geographical features impact civilizations.

Religion plays a significant role in ancient cultures.

Sub Topic: ***Nile River***

Knowledge and Skills

3500 BC

Students will identify the geographic location of the Nile River Valley.

The Nile river was the “highway” for the early Egyptian people.

The Egyptian civilization remained stable for centuries due to its geographic features and climate.

The annual flood was vital to maintaining fertile land for agriculture.

The pharaoh was considered a living god.

Cleopatra and Hatshepsut were two female rulers.

People believed in the afterlife.

Religious beliefs affected life on a daily basis.

We know much about the pharaohs because of what was placed in their tombs.

Pharaohs built monuments and elaborate tombs for the afterlife.

Scribes were among the most respected professions.

The Rosetta Stone held the secrets to understanding the work of early scribes.

In addition to hieroglyphics, the Egyptians also used Hieratic script for everyday writing. It was done with a reed pen on papyrus paper.

Priceless treasures have been taken from Egypt, and are housed in museums all over the world.

Notable achievements: 365-day calendar, embalming of the dead, pyramids, water wheel, irrigation, use of sails, pyramids, underground tombs.

Vocabulary:

delta

cataract

nomad

pharaoh

dynasty

papyrus

hieroglyphics

afterlife

Champollion

Ra

Ka

mummification

natron

canopic jar

sarcophagus

Teaching Unit: **7. Ancient India**

Essential Understandings

Human interaction within a region influences the development of distinctive cultures.

Ancient civilizations made contributions that impact the modern world.

Maps enable people to better understand regions.

Climate affects the stability of a culture.

Diverse cultures develop within a region.

Social class systems have long standing effects on a civilization.

Sub Topic: **Indus and Ganges Rivers**

Knowledge and Skills

2500 BC to 1750 BC Indus Valley civilization.

1500 BC Aryan invasion.

Students will identify the geographic location of the Indus River and Ganges River valley.

Today much the Indus River Valley is in Pakistan and some of the Ganges River Valley is in Bangladesh.

The Himalayas Mountains form the northern border of this region.

Trade was important to the people of ancient India.

The region of the ancient Indian culture was larger than Egypt and Mesopotamia combined.

Women emerged as merchants.

The climate of ancient India made it necessary to invent ways to be clean and save water for dry periods.

Towns were laid out in a grid pattern with living spaces on upper stories.

Early civilizations declined either because of disease, flood, or change in the monsoon left the region dry and infertile.

Two hundred fifty years later a new group of people, the Aryans, arrived on the subcontinent, and were nomadic.

Aryans brought horses, chariots, and livestock to the region. They conquered the people who remained in villages along the rivers.

Aryans later became farmers.

What are the main ideas of Hinduism?

What are the main ideas of Buddhism?

Vocabulary:

monsoon

“Bhagavad-Gita”

edict

ahimsa

Mauryan Empire

pass

caste

Hinduism

Buddhism

Asoka

Aryans

reincarnation

Vedas

Siddhartha Gautama

dome

Sanskrit

yoga

Upanishads

empire

Teaching Unit: **6. Ancient China**

Essential Understandings

Human interaction within a region influences the development of distinctive cultures.

Ancient civilizations made contributions that impact the modern world.

Maps enable people to better understand regions.

Geographical isolation impacts culture.

Changes in governmental leadership influences culture.

Sub Topic: ***Yellow and Yangtze Rivers***

Knowledge and Skills

1700 BC

China's geography isolated it from other early countries.

Chinese culture seems quite unique compared to other early cultures studied because of its geographical isolation.

China's river and tributary network provided transportation to the Pacific coast.

Chinese used the sea to transport goods to India and beyond.

The Shang, Zhou, Qin, and Han dynasties ruled ancient China.

Trade developed along a route called the Silk Road, which was not a road but rather a string of merchants that bought and sold from one another.

Products from China reached as far as Rome, but no one could determine how they got there because of the number of merchants trading goods along the way.

The Great Wall of China is 4000 miles long and was built to protect the border from invaders. It took about 2000 years to complete.

The methods involved in silk production was kept secret.

Vocabulary:

basin

species

bronze

plateau

terrace

Great Wall of China

isolation

mandate

civil war

bureaucrat

Teaching Unit: **4. Ancient Greece**

Essential Understandings

Human interaction within a region influences the development of distinctive cultures.

Ancient civilizations made contributions that impact the modern world.

Maps enable people to better understand regions.

Civilizations with limited resources required them to be dependent on others.

Democratic ideals require balance between the rights and responsibilities of individuals with what is ethical.

Recognizing different viewpoints benefit all.

Sub Topic: ***Mediterranean, Black, and Aegean***

Knowledge and Skills

3000 BC to 1400 BC and 1000 BC

Climate change led to human migration, and groups of people settled along the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas in the region known as Greece.

The physical features of Greece includes high mountains and narrow valleys.

Climate in ancient Greece was hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters.

Rugged land coupled with lack of major rivers made it necessary to use the sea for basic needs.

Because only one-quarter of the land was suitable for growing crops, people were forced to trade with neighbors.

The need for clean water led to the development of dug wells.

People established communities along rivers and along the coast. They also established settlements around the Mediterranean Sea as far away as Egypt, Rome, France and Spain.

Greeks grew wheat, grapes and olives and used these items to trade for other food and goods.

Communities called city-states were separated by mountainous regions or the sea, and therefore some were quite different than others. Example, Athens and Sparta

Science & technology emerged as people had time to think of better and easier ways to work

The Trojan War had lasting effects on civilization. A 400 year period called the Dark age.

The Olympic Games began in Greece.

Greed root words are part of the English language.

Myths are stories about Greek gods, and some explain their interactions with mortals.

Ancient Greek Civ. produced many of the world's famous thinkers, writers and scientists.

The government of the United States is patterned after the same in ancient Athens.

Vocabulary:

peninsula	colony	polis	aristocracy
sponsor	democracy	spartan	tyrant
myth	shrine	oracle	tragedy
comedy	philosophy		

Teaching Unit: **5. Ancient Rome**

Essential Understandings

Human interaction within a region influences the development of distinctive cultures.

Ancient civilizations made contributions that impact the modern world.

Maps enable people to better understand regions.

Civilizations saw periods of rise and decline.

Large empires were difficult to govern.

The interdependence of cultures has lasting influence on cultures.

Sub Topic: ***Tiber River, Mediterranean Sea, and***

Knowledge and Skills

750 BC and 509 BC

Rome included people in and around present day Rome. 510 BC

The Roman Republic included the land to the northern part of the Adriatic Sea. 264 BC

The Roman Empire included all conquered lands around the Mediterranean Sea (and from 300 to 600 miles inland), to Germany and England. 117 AD

Greek culture was a strong influence on the Roman Republic.

Roman government changed as the empire grew, from rule by kings, to citizens, to an emperor.

The Roman Empire was prosperous and peaceful for 200 years.

The Roman Empire expanded as the needs of its people increased.

The Roman Empire produced infrastructure throughout the regions under its control. (roads, bridges, aqueducts)

The English language contains many words that can be traced to Latin roots.

The Romans developed a prosperous civil. maintained through military power & discipline.

The Forum was the center of government.

The Colosseum was the center of public events.

Gods and goddesses were involved in all aspects of their lives. Many Roman gods and goddesses are paralleled after the Greeks' gods and goddesses.

Christianity began as a part of Judaism and developed into a separate religion.

Early Christians were persecuted in Rome.

The Roman emperor Constantine converted to Christianity, and within 20 years, the Roman Empire began to decline.

Vocabulary:

republic	Senate	consul	patrician	plebian
atrium	paterfamilias	oratory	gladiator	aqueduct
arch	Gospels	disciple	parables	persecution
predecessor	bishop	orthodox	denomination	

Teaching Unit: **8. Passport Project**

Essential Understandings

Regions around the world have created political boundaries that define countries.

Neighboring countries have similarities and differences.

Cultural elements may be regional or global

All cultures have made contributions to the world.

Today's cultures have historical roots.

Sub Topic: **Independent Culture Project**

Knowledge and Skills

This project involves completion of a series of “quests” contained in a “passport” that guide the student in completing the project in a timely manner:

Quest 1: Overview information on a country.

Quest 2: Flag

Quest 3: Physical map

Quest 4: Inventions and famous people

Quest 5: Natural points of interest, man made points of interest, and recipe

Quest 6: Cultural timeline, traditional costumes, political map

share a piece of literature or picture of a musical instrument.

Quest 7: Compile all work in a book or poster (or other pre- approved format).

Use internet and library resources to find cultural information about a country.

Use research to prepare a presentation for class.

Complete portions of this project according to the timeline within the “passport.”

Know the differences between a political and physical map.

Know what natural resources are.
