



St. Mel's Catholic School

HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCE STANDARDS

Grade Seven

World History and Geography: Medieval and Early Modern Times

Students in grade seven study the social, cultural, and technological changes that occurred in Europe, Africa, and Asia from 500-1789 AD. After reviewing the ancient world and the ways in which archaeologists and historians uncover the past, students study the history and geography of great civilizations that were developing concurrently throughout the world during medieval and early modern times. They examine the growing economic interaction among civilizations as well as the exchange of ideas, beliefs, technologies and commodities. They learn about the resulting growth of Enlightenment philosophy and the new examination of the concepts of reason and authority, the natural rights of human beings and the divine right of kings, experimentalism in science and the dogma of belief. Finally, students assess the political forces let loose by the Enlightenment, particularly the rise of democratic ideas, and they learn about the continuing influence of these ideas in the world today.

7.1 Students analyze the causes and effects of the vast expansion and ultimate disintegration of the Roman Empire, in terms of:

1. The early strengths and lasting contributions of Rome (e.g., significance of Roman citizenship; rights under Roman law; Roman art, architecture, engineering and philosophy; preservation and transmission of Christianity) and its ultimate internal weakness (e.g., rise of autonomous military powers within the empire, undermining of citizenship by the growth of corruption and slavery, lack of education and the distribution of news).
2. The geographic borders of the empire at its height and the factors that threatened its territorial cohesion.
3. The establishment by Constantine of the new capital in Constantinople and the development of the Byzantine Empire with an emphasis on the growing schism between Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy.

7.2 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of civilizations of Islam in the middle ages, in terms of:

1. The physical features and climate of the Arabian peninsula, its relationship to surrounding bodies of land and water and the relationship between nomadic and sedentary ways of life.
2. The origins of Islam and the life and teachings of Mohammed.
3. The significance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah as the primary sources of Islamic beliefs, practice and law, and their influence in Muslims' daily life.
4. The expansion of Muslim rule through military conquests and treaties, emphasizing the



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cultural blending within Muslim civilization and the spread of Islam and the Arabic language.

5. The growth of cities and the trade routes created among Asia, Africa, and Europe, and the products and inventions that traveled along these routes (e.g., spices, textiles, paper, steel, new crops).

6. The intellectual exchanges among Muslim scholars of Eurasia and Africa and the contributions Muslim scholars made to later civilizations in the areas of science, geography, mathematics, philosophy, medicine, art, and literature.

7. Compare the legend of the first simple mosque built in Medina where Mohammed's camel chose to stop and the story of the spot on which Christ chose for his Church in Rome (St. Peter's).

7.3 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the civilizations of China in the middle ages in terms of:

1. The reunification of China under the Tang Dynasty and reasons for the spread of Buddhism in Tang China, Korea, and Japan.

2. Agricultural, technological, and commercial developments during the Tang and Sung periods.

3. The influences of Confucianism and changes on Confucian thought during the Sung and Mongol periods.

4. The importance of both overland trade and maritime expeditions between China and other civilizations in the Mongol Ascendancy and Ming Dynasty.

5. Compare and contrast the similarities of the teachings of Confucius to the teachings of Jesus (e.g., Jesus – “Do unto to others as you would have them do unto you.”

Confucius – “When asked, what do you think of repaying evil with kindness, Confucius replied: Then what are you going to repay kindness with? Repay kindness with kindness, but repay evil with justice.”).

6. The historic influence of such discoveries as tea, the manufacture of paper, wood block

printing, the compass, and gunpowder.

7.4 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the Sub-Saharan civilizations of Ghana and Mali in Medieval Africa, in terms of:

1. The Niger River and the vegetation zones of forest, savanna and desert and the relationship of these features to the trade in gold, salt, food, and slaves; the growth of the Ghana and Mali empires.

2. The importance of family, labor, specialization, and regional commerce in the development of states and cities in West Africa.

3. The role of the trans-Saharan caravan trade in the changing religious and cultural characteristics of West Africa, and the influence of Islamic beliefs, ethics and law.

4. The growth of Arabic as a language of government, trade, and Islamic scholarship in West Africa.

5. The importance of written and oral traditions in the transmission of African history and



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culture.

7.5 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the civilizations of Medieval Japan, in terms of:

1. The significance of Japan's proximity to China and Korea and the intellectual, linguistic, religious, and philosophical influence of those countries on Japan.
2. The reign of Prince Shotoku of Japan and the characteristics of Japanese society and family life.
3. The values, social customs, and traditions prescribed by the lord-vassal system consisting of shogun, daimyo and samurai and the lasting influence of the warrior code in the 20th century.
4. The development of distinctive forms of Japanese Buddhism.
5. The ninth and tenth century golden age of literature, art, and drama, and its lasting effects on culture today, including Murasaki Shikibu's *Tale of Genji*.
6. Investigate the reasons for the ban of Christianity in Japan in the 1600s by the Ieyasu of the Tokugawa family.

7.6 Students analyze the geography, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the civilizations of Medieval Europe, in terms of:

1. The geography of the Europe and the Eurasian land mass, including its location, topography, waterways, vegetation and climate and relationship of life in ancient Europe and during the Roman Empire.
2. The spread of Christianity north of the Alps and the role played by the early Church and by monasteries in its diffusion after the fall of Rome.
3. The development of feudalism, its operation in the medieval European economy, the way in which it was influenced by physical geography (the role of the manor and the growth of town) and how feudal relationships provided the foundation of political order.
4. The conflict and cooperation between the Papacy and European monarchs (e.g., Charlemagne, Gregory VII, Emperor Henry IV).
5. The significance of developments in medieval English legal and constitutional practice and their importance in the rise of modern democratic thought and representative institutions (e.g., Magna Carta, parliament, development of habeas corpus, and independent judiciary in England).
6. The causes and course of the Religious Crusades and the effects on Christian, Muslim and Jewish populations in Europe with emphasis on the increasing contact with the cultures of the Eastern Mediterranean world.
7. Mapping the spread of the Bubonic Plague from Central Asia to China, the Middle East, and Europe and its impact on global population.
8. The importance of the Catholic church as a political, intellectual and aesthetic institution (e.g., founding of universities, the political and spiritual role of the clergy, creation of monastic and mendicant religious orders, preservation of Latin language and religious texts, St. Thomas Aquinas' synthesis of classical philosophy with Christian theology and the concept of "natural law").



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9. The history of the decline of Muslim rule in the Iberian Peninsula that culminated in the “Reconquista” and the rise of Spanish and Portuguese kingdoms .

10. Compile a list of personal, social, economic, and political reasons why a young man or woman might have had for entering a medieval monastery or convent during the Middle Ages of European history. Contrast these reasons for entering or not entering religious orders today.

7.7 Students compare and contrast the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the Mesoamerican and Andean civilizations, in terms of:

1. The locations, landforms and climates of Mexico, Central America, and South America and their effects upon the Mayan, Aztec, and Incan economies, trade, and development of urban societies.
2. The roles of people in each society, including class structures, family life, warfare, religious beliefs and practices, and slavery.
3. How and where each empire arose and how the Aztec and Inca empires were defeated by the Spanish.
4. The artistic and oral traditions and architecture in the three civilizations.
5. The Meso-American achievements in astronomy and mathematics, including the development of the calendar and the Mesoamerican knowledge of seasonal changes to the civilization's agricultural systems.

7.8 Students analyze the origins, accomplishments and geographic diffusion of the Renaissance, in terms of:

1. The way in which the revival of classical learning and the arts affected a new interest in “humanism” (i.e., a balance between the intellect and religious faith).
2. The importance of Florence in the early stages of the Renaissance and the growth of independent trading cities (e.g., Venice) with emphasis on their importance in the spread of Renaissance ideas.
3. The effects of re-opening of the ancient “silk road” between Europe and China, including Marco Polo's travels and the locations of his routes.
4. The growth and effect of ways of disseminating information (e.g., the ability to manufacture paper, translation of the Bible into the vernacular, printing).
5. Advances in literature, the arts, science, mathematics, cartography, engineering, and the understanding of human anatomy and astronomy (e.g., biographies of Dante, de Vinci, Michelangelo, Guttenburg, Shakespeare).
6. Research one of the great Renaissance writers or artists and their beliefs inspiring their contributions to the Catholic Church of their day. (Raphael, Michelangelo, Da Vinci, Giotto, Dante).

7.9 Students analyze the historical developments of the Reformation, in terms of:

1. The causes for the internal decay of the Catholic church (e.g., tax policies, selling of indulgences).
2. The theological, political, and economic ideas of the major figures during the Reformation (e.g., Erasmus, Martin Luther, John Calvin, William Tindale).



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3. The influence of new practices of church self-government among Protestants on the development of democratic practices and ideas of federalism.
4. The location and identification of European regions that remained Catholic and those that became Protestant and how the division affected the distribution of religions on the New World.
5. How the Counter-Reformation revitalized the Catholic Church and the forces that propelled the movement (e.g., St Ignatius of Loyola, and the Jesuits, the Council of Trent).
6. The institution and impact of missionaries on Christianity and the diffusion of Christianity from Europe to other parts of the world in the medieval and early modern periods, including their location on a world map.
7. The "Golden Age" of cooperation between Jews and Muslims in Medieval Spain which promoted creativity in art, literature and science, including how it was terminated by the religious persecution of individuals and groups (e.g., the Spanish Inquisition and the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from Spain in 1492).

7.10 Students analyze the historical developments of the Science Revolution and its lasting effect of religious, political and cultural institutions, in terms of:

1. The roots of the scientific revolution (e.g., Greek rationalism; Jewish, Christian, and Muslim science; Renaissance humanism, new knowledge from global exploration).
2. The significance of the new scientific theories (e.g., Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Newton) and the significance of inventions (e.g., telescope, microscope, thermometer, barometer).
3. The scientific method advanced by Bacon and Descartes, the influence of new scientific rationalism on the growth of democratic ideas and the coexistence of science with traditional religious beliefs.

7.11 Students analyze political and economic changes in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries (Age of Exploration, the Enlightenment, and the Age of Reason), in terms of:

1. The great voyages of discovery, the location of the routes, and influence of cartography in developing a new European world view.
2. The exchanges of plants, animals, technology, culture, and ideas among Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas in the 15th and 16th centuries and the major economic and social effects on each continent.
3. The origins of modern capitalism, the influence of mercantilism and cottage industry, the elements and importance of a market economy in seventeenth-century Europe, and the changing international trading and marketing patterns, including their location on a world map and the influence of explorers and map makers.
4. How the main ideas of the Enlightenment can be traced back to such movements as the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Scientific Revolution and the Greeks, Romans, and Christianity.



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5. How democratic thought and institutions were influenced by Enlightenment thinkers (e.g., Locke, Montesquieu, American founders).

6. How the principles in the Magna Carta were embodied in such documents as the English Bill of Rights and the American Declaration of Independence.

7.12 Identify the roles missionaries and social workers play in struggling, war-torn, or thirdworld nations today.