



Social Studies 7

Semester A Summary:

This first semester course provides a look at the origins of American democracy and framing of the Constitution. The student will explore historical, and political change in the United States and gain an understanding of how the government functions, and your own rights and responsibilities as a U.S. citizen. Through this course, students will gain a broader understanding of the relevance of American history to their lives as well as develop a better understanding of the impact of key events on American culture and society.

Semester A Outline

1. Course Overview

1. Getting Started in Middle School American History

2. Constitution Day

1. Constitution Day
 - Understand the importance and meaning of the Declaration of Independence
 - Understand and recite the beginning of the Declaration of Independence
 - Understand the importance and meaning of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights

3. American Citizenship

1. Fundamental American Values
 - Define fundamental principles and values of American political and civic life
 - Provide examples of fundamental principles and values of American political and civic life
2. Becoming a Citizen
 - Summarize what makes a person a citizen of the United States.
 - Define citizenship.
 - Examine the process and importance of immigration policies at different points in US history.
 - Review the criteria and exam for naturalizing US citizens.
3. Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship
 - Explain the purpose of citizens' rights and responsibilities
 - Explain the importance of the protection of individual rights
 - Compare and contrast the rights and responsibilities of citizenship
4. First Amendment Rights
 - Identify the type of speech protected by the First Amendment
 - Identify ways the First Amendment protects rights and identify exceptions to those rights
 - Analyze important Supreme Court decisions
5. American Political Identity
 - List factors that have shaped the distinctive American identity and political

- culture
- Analyze conflicts between U.S. political ideals and reality
- 6. Influential Ideas and Events
 - Evaluate the basic principles and democratic ideals in historical documents and legislation at the federal and state level
 - Explain the role of law in limiting U.S. government, protecting citizens, and promoting the common good
 - Explain the significance of specific events at the federal and state level
- 7. American Citizenship Review
 - Describe ideas relating to civic life, politics, and government
 - Identify the core ideas underlying the U.S. political system
 - Analyze ways that the U.S. government shows democratic ideals
 - Summarize ways that citizens can participate in a democracy
 - Analyze influences on public policy
- 8. American Citizenship Unit Test

4. The Political Process

1. Civics, Politics, and Government
 - Explain the separation of and the interaction between civic and private life
 - Describe the purpose of government and politics
 - Identify political figures from the local, state, and national levels
 - Describe how political parties have changed over time
 - Contrast limited and unlimited government
2. Participating in a Democracy
 - Identify character traits needed for people to effectively participate in a democracy
 - Describe ways that citizens can participate in democracy
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of citizens' efforts used to effect change at the federal, state, and local level
 - Demonstrate civic values and democratic principles by working with others to make decisions
3. The Electoral Process
 - Describe the elements of the electoral process
 - Explain the difference between plurality and majority
 - Describe the line of presidential succession as stated in the 25th Amendment
4. Political Parties
 - Identify the purposes and functions of political parties
 - Differentiate among one-party, two-party, and multi-party political systems
 - Identify the history of the party system in the U.S. government
 - Identify minor and third parties in the U.S. government
5. Platforms
 - Differentiate between party platforms and party planks
 - Identify the importance of party platforms
 - Identify historical platforms of political parties
6. Public Opinion in a Democratic Society
 - Identify the influence of mass media on the understanding of national and international events
 - Describe the functions and responsibilities of a free press
 - Identify examples of how the media influences the political process
 - Analyze how political symbols, propaganda, and persuasion are used by the

media to influence public opinion

7. Public Policy
 - Analyze how public policy is influenced by political and economic trends
 - Describe how individuals and interest groups affect public policy
 - Describe how international issues and events affect local decision making
8. The Influence of Media on Campaigns
 - Analyze political campaigns and the role of the media
 - Examine the requirements for voter registration and participate in a simulated election
 - Analyze evidence from primary sources, including political cartoons
9. Evaluating Political Information
 - Describe at least one difficulty in getting accurate news
 - Identify four components of analyzing news
 - Distinguish between fact and opinion in political news
10. Campaign Contributions
 - Evaluate the role of campaign contributions and costs in the political process
11. Leadership and Elected Officials
 - Identify leadership qualities in politics
 - Evaluate political leaders at all levels of government
12. Oral Presentation
 - Write and present an oral argument
13. The Political Process Review
 - Describe ideas relating to civic life, politics, and government
 - Summarize ways that citizens can participate in a democracy
 - Analyze influences on public policy
 - Analyze political campaigns and the role of the media
 - Evaluate the role of campaign contributions and costs in the political process
 - Examine the requirements for voter registration
 - Analyze evidence from primary sources, including political cartoons
14. The Political Process Unit Test

5. A Constitution for the United States

1. A Weak Confederation
 - Analyze how and why the government was set up under the Articles of Confederation
 - Identify strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation
 - Analyze problems with the Articles of Confederation and the effect of those problems
 - Describe how the Northwest Ordinance established a method for settlement
2. Drafting a Constitution
 - Describe the organizational structure of the government under the Constitution
 - Align weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation with their solutions in the Constitution
 - Summarize the conflicts and compromises of the Great Compromise and the Three-Fifths Compromise
 - Identify key people and describe their roles during the Constitutional Convention
3. Ideas that Influenced the Constitution
 - Identify and analyze what American leaders learned from other forms of

- government and how the principles shaped the Constitution
 - Explain the principle of consent of the governed
 - Evaluate the impact Virginia founding documents had on Virginia's Constitution and the U.S. Constitution
4. Federalists, Antifederalists, the Bill of Rights
 - Identify key issues in the constitutional debate
 - Explain how the Constitution was ratified
 - Describe how the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution
 5. Understanding the Constitution
 - Identify the framework of government that the Constitution established
 - Summarize the seven basic principles of American government
 - Identify the powers and duties of the legislative branch, executive branch, and judicial branch of the American government
 6. Amending the Constitution
 - Explain how the Constitution can be amended
 - Identify the rights that the Bill of Rights protects
 - Summarize how later amendments expanded democratic rights
 - Describe the procedure for amending the Constitution of Virginia
 7. Unit Review
 - Explain the major weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation and how those issues were fixed in the Constitution
 - Analyze the Constitution, including the issues that arose during its writing, the arguments and events surrounding its ratification, and the Bill of Rights
 - Identify key people, locations, and events involved in the writing and ratification of the Constitution
 - Describe the characteristics of a good citizen
 - Explain the principle of consent of the governed
 - Evaluate the impact Virginia founding documents had on Virginia's Constitution and the U.S. Constitution and describe the procedure for amending the Constitution of Virginia
 - Describe the responsibilities of citizens in a diverse society
 8. Unit Test

Semester B Summary:

This second semester course provides an introduction to economics and personal finance. Students explore concepts that make the economy work such as the interactions between scarcity and choice, consumers and producers, supply and demand, and markets and prices. Students investigate ways to earn and use money, the process of economic growth, the role of government in the economy, and ways that economists track change over time. Finally, students explore talents, interests, and career aspirations to gain understanding of concepts such as human capital and how changes in technology create new job offerings.

Semester B Outline

1. Course Overview

1. Getting Started in Middle School American History

2. Limited Government

1. The United States and the World
 - Describe the political organization of the world into countries
 - Identify ways in which countries, including the United States, interact with one another
 - Explain the role of international organizations in world affairs
 - Analyze ways that the United States has both influenced and been influenced by the rest of the world
2. Constitutions and Government
 - Identify the characteristics of a country
 - Explain why states and nations have constitutions
 - Compare and contrast forms of constitutional government
 - Summarize features of U.S. constitutional government
3. Structure of the Government
 - Explain how the US Constitution distributes power throughout the federal government
 - Compare and contrast the responsibilities and powers of the three branches of government
 - Compare judicial processes at the national, state, and local level, and describe the original and appellate jurisdiction of state and federal courts
 - Describe the roles and powers of the executive branch and regulatory boards at the state level
 - Explain the relationship between state governments and the national government in the federal system, in the context of Federalist No. 10 and Federalist No. 51
 - Explain the structures, powers, and lawmaking processes of Virginia's local, state, and tribal governments
 - Compare and contrast civil and criminal court cases
4. National, State, and Local Government
 - Contrast the functions of national, state, and local government
 - Identify local, state, and national leaders
 - Describe the structure of local governments
5. Limited Government Unit Review
6. Limited Government Unit Test

3. **Economics Basics**

1. Economic Decision Making
 - Define cost and benefit
 - Explain that individuals, governments, and businesses deal with scarcity and opportunity costs
 - Describe how choices lead to consequences
 - Explain that evaluation and choice may vary from person to person
2. Distributing Goods and Services
 - Describe different ways that people distribute scarce goods and services
 - Contrast market and command economies
 - List the three basic economic questions
 - Explain how resources can be used to make different goods and services
3. Incentives
 - Describe the difference between positive and negative incentives
 - Explain that changes in incentives cause people to change their behavior
 - Contrast monetary and non-monetary incentives
4. Trade
 - Define exchange, barter, imports, and exports

- Explain why people choose to trade and how trade benefits people who engage in it
 - Describe free trade and trade barriers
5. Market and Prices
 - Explain the interaction of markets and prices
 - Describe market prices, relative prices, and equilibrium prices
 6. Competition in Markets
 - Explain how sellers compete for buyers
 - State results of competition among sellers
 - State results of competition among buyers
 - Demonstrate how a market economy applies to different situations
 - Identify positive and negative effects of competition
 7. Economic Institutions
 - Describe the functions of banks in the economy
 - Explain how personal savings contribute to the overall economy
 - Describe the roles of labor unions in the economy
 - Describe the roles of non-profit organizations in the economy
 - Identify the rewards and risks associated with the use of financial institutions
 8. Economics Basics Unit Review
 - Explain how the existence of unlimited wants and scarce resources influence actions by consumers, producers, and governments
 - Describe the interactions of markets and prices on a local and global level
 - Describe how competition functions in the market
 - Compare and contrast the roles of individuals, businesses, organizations, government, and other institutions in the economy
 9. Economics Basics Unit Test
4. **Building on Economics Basics**
 1. Money and Inflation
 - Identify characteristics of money
 - List the functions of money
 - Contrast inflation and deflation
 2. Government's Role in the Economy
 - Explain how government provides certain goods and services in a market economy
 - Describe how government brings in money to pay for public goods and services
 - Describe the function of the Federal Reserve System
 - Identify the role of the government in a market economy
 - Compare and contrast the effects of different taxation policies
 3. Virginia and the Global Economy
 - Analyze how Virginia and the United States relate to the global economy
 4. Interest Rates
 - Define interest rate
 - Analyze how supply and demand determine interest rates
 - Analyze how risk determines interest rates
 5. Income
 - Describe how people earn income
 - Explain different factors that determine peoples' income
 6. Business Organization and Entrepreneurship
 - Explain characteristics of entrepreneurs
 - Describe how entrepreneurs earn profits and take losses

- Differentiate the pros and cons of entrepreneurship
 - Describe types of business organizations and the role of entrepreneurship
 - Describe characteristics of the United States economy, including profit, markets, and competition
7. Productivity and Growth
 - Explain how workers can improve their productivity
 - Analyze the relationship between productivity and economic growth
 8. Economic Changes
 - Define and explain the components of gross domestic product
 - Explain the circular flow diagram
 - Explain how changes in spending affect others
 - Identify U.S. recessions
 - Calculate and use per capita GDP
 9. Unemployment and Inflation
 - Explain the terms unemployed and unemployment rate
 - Identify factors that are often associated with unemployment
 - Identify effects of unemployment on the economy as a whole
 - Determine how inflation affects what people can afford to buy
 - Compare standards of living across different times and places
 10. Business and Investing
 - Identify different types of investments
 - Describe how the stock market works
 - Differentiate between different types of businesses based on how they are organized
 - Explain how large corporations influence the economy
 11. Building on Economics Basics Unit Review
 - Explain how people make and use money in a market economy
 - Discuss the factors that contribute to economic growth at the individual and national levels
 - Analyze how Virginia and the United States relate to the global economy
 - Identify and analyze economic indicators, including gross domestic product and unemployment rates
 - Predict consequences of economic choices and changes over time
 - Describe types of business organizations and the role of entrepreneurship
 - Describe role of government and characteristics of the United States economy, including profit, markets, and competition
 12. Building on Economics Basics Unit Test
5. **Personal Finance**
 1. Personal Finance
 - Identify and distinguish among different forms of credit
 - Analyze the advantages and disadvantages to using credit for purchases
 - Create a personal budget
 - Identify the costs and benefits associated with using financial tools
 2. Career Choices
 - Identify personal talents, interests, and aspirations that can help with career selection
 3. Human Capital
 - Describe the role human capital, such as attitudes and behaviors, plays in career success
 - Explain the components of human capital and the economic supply and demand for them

- Describe the importance of education to lifelong personal finances
- 4. Technological Change and Globalization
 - Explain the impact of technological change and globalization on career opportunities
- 5. Personal Finance Unit Review
 - Identify personal talents, interests, and aspirations that can help with career selection
 - Describe the role human capital, such as attitudes and behaviors, plays in career success
 - Describe the importance of education to lifelong personal finances
 - Explain the components of human capital and the economic supply and demand for them
 - Explain the impact of technological change and globalization on career opportunities
- 6. Personal Finance Unit Test