

9th Grade American Online School

SOCIAL SCIENCES CURRICULUM

Understanding Power, People, and Planet Through Historical, Geographical, Political, and Cultural Lenses

Version Apr/2025

1. Introduction

The Role of Social Sciences Education in 9th Grade

The 9th Grade Social Sciences curriculum invites students to explore the systems, stories, and structures that shape human life—past, present, and future. By examining history, geography, civics, economics, and culture, students build a multidimensional understanding of society. Emphasis is placed on critical inquiry, civic responsibility, and global awareness as students analyze sources, engage in debates, and design solutions for complex societal challenges.

By the end of this course, students will:

- ✓ Trace key events and ideologies that shaped the post-WWII world.
- ✓ Analyze how geography influences society, environment, and development.
- ✓ Understand democratic institutions, rights, and civic responsibilities.
- ✓ Apply economic reasoning to global interdependence and inequality.
- ✓ Reflect on cultural systems and their role in shaping identity and society.

2. Core Competence Areas

SoSCI.1 History and Global Power Dynamics

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- ✓ **Analyze the rise of the U.S. as a global superpower.**
- ✓ **Evaluate Cold War conflicts and ideological divides.**
- ✓ **Examine international human rights developments and global shifts in power.**

Competencies

SoSCI.1.A.1 – Understanding Post-WWII Power Shifts

- Explain how military, economic, and cultural factors established U.S. dominance.

SoSCI.1.A.2 – Analyzing Cold War Tensions

- Evaluate key events such as the Berlin Wall, Korean War, and Cuban Missile Crisis.

SoSCI.1.A.3 – Exploring Human Rights Movements

- Describe the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and investigate global case studies.

SoSCI.1.A.4 – Investigating Decolonization and Global Change

- Trace the emergence of new nations and assess global political transitions.

SoSCI.2 Geography and Spatial Thinking

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- ✓ **Interpret maps and spatial data to analyze human-environment interactions.**
- ✓ **Evaluate patterns of settlement, urbanization, and resource distribution.**
- ✓ **Propose sustainable solutions to global environmental issues.**

Competencies

SoSCI.2.A.1 – Reading and Creating Maps.

- Use coordinates, scales, and symbology to analyze political and physical maps..

SoSCI.2.A.2 – Understanding Human-Environment Interactions.

- Examine how geography influences culture, economy, and resource use.

SoSCI.2.A.3 – Analyzing Urban Development.

- Assess the impacts of urban planning, sustainability, and population growth.

SoSCI.2.A.4 – Addressing Global Challenges.

- Evaluate environmental issues such as deforestation and climate change and propose solutions.
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SoSCI.3 Civics and Political Systems

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- ✓ **Describe democratic systems and citizen responsibilities.**
- ✓ **Compare global government structures.**
- ✓ **Evaluate rights and freedoms in contemporary contexts.**

Competencies

SoSCI.3.A.1 – Understanding Democratic Principles.

- Describe the structure and function of democratic institutions, including checks and balances.

SoSCI.3.A.2 – Comparing Political Systems.

- Analyze similarities and differences across democracies, monarchies, and authoritarian regimes.

SoSCI.3.A.3 – Participating as Informed Citizens.

- Identify civic duties such as voting and advocacy and explain their societal impact.

SoSCI.3.A.4 – Protecting Civil Liberties and Human Rights.

- Evaluate legal protections and explore real-world challenges to justice and equality.
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SoSCI.4 Economics and Global Interdependence

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- ✓ **Explain basic economic principles and systems.**
- ✓ **Analyze international trade and its impact on nations.**
- ✓ **Assess economic inequality and development goals.**

Competencies

SoSCI.4.A.1 – Applying Economic Reasoning.

- Define scarcity, opportunity cost, supply and demand, and apply them to real-life examples.

SoSCI.4.A.2 – Understanding Global Trade Systems.

- Examine trade flows, tariffs, and economic relationships among countries..

SoSCI.4.A.3 – Analyzing Inequality.

- Assess global economic disparities and the role of institutions in mitigating them.

SoSCI.4.A.4 – Evaluating Development and Sustainability.

- Explore solutions to economic and environmental challenges using SDGs and local initiatives.
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SoSCI.5 Cultural Studies and Global Citizenship

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- ✓ Define cultural elements and their influence on identity.
- ✓ Compare cultural practices and worldviews.
- ✓ Reflect on global interconnectedness and shared responsibility.

Competencies

SoSCI.5.A.1 – Understanding Culture and Identity.

- Describe how traditions, norms, and beliefs shape personal and group identity.

SoSCI.5.A.2 – Comparing Cultural Systems.

- Explore global traditions with curiosity, empathy, and critical perspective.

SoSCI.5.A.3 – Investigating Cultural Change.

- Analyze migration, conflict, and globalization as drivers of cultural interaction.

SoSCI.5.A.4 – Practicing Global Citizenship.

- Articulate roles and responsibilities in a connected, multicultural world.

3. Assessment and Evaluation

Formative Assessments – Checking Progress Through Interactive Learning

- ✓ Source analysis, map work, and current event reflections.
- ✓ Group discussions and inquiry-based tasks.
- ✓ Civic role-play and micro-presentations.

Summative Assessments – Final Projects and Exams

- ✓ Thematic essays, case studies, and research reports.
- ✓ Unit tests on history, civics, geography, and economics.
- ✓ Structured oral presentations on global issues.

Authentic Assessment – Real-World Applications

- ✓ UN simulations, economic scenario projects, cultural exchange proposals.
 - ✓ Civic action plans and media critique assignments.
 - ✓ Cross-curricular debates and ethical reflections.
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4. Instructional Strategies for Online Learning

Inquiry-Based and Problem-Based Learning

- ✓ Pose essential questions and allow student-led exploration of topics.
- ✓ Integrate themes from literature, environmental science, and digital literacy.

Project-Based Learning (PBL)

- ✓ Use current events, historical cases, and simulated decision-making activities.

Technology-Integrated Learning

- ✓ Interactive mapping (e.g., ArcGIS, Google Earth), iCivics, and documentary analysis.
- ✓ Online research databases and digital annotation tools.