

SOCIAL STUDIES – GRADE 4

Course Overview

Focus Areas: *Geography, Montana History and Geography, Plains, Desert Regions, Mountain Regions*

The content of the social studies curriculum is based upon Montana Content Standards and Benchmarks for Social Studies 1-6. In the fourth grade, the emphasis is on the use of appropriate tools to study geography, the study of Montana history, the plains, desert, and mountain regions. The content of fourth grade social studies curriculum includes accessing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to communicate and apply social studies knowledge to real world situations; analyzing how people create and change structures of power, authority and governance to understand the operation of government; demonstrating civic responsibility; making informed decisions based on geographic understanding; and demonstrating an understanding of the impact of human interaction and cultural diversity on societies. Students are expected to develop and use a variety of skills including discussing, comparing, describing, explaining, applying, researching, and reporting. Assessment will include written and oral student response, student-made products and presentations, teacher observations, objective tests, and performance assessment of learning activities and tasks.

Social Studies Content Strands

The following strands contain instructional elements integrated throughout the social studies grade and subject level content standards and benchmarks. Focus areas for integrated elements are 1) participation and application skills and 2) citizenship skills. The depth of implementation in each strand area varies with grade/subject and developmental levels of students. The outlined elements will also help students understand the use of communication skills in learning information in all content areas.

I. Participation and Application Skills

A. Study and Organization Skills

1. Notetaking and Outlining

- Use of inquiry-based learning strategies
- Generate ideas and questions based on student background understanding and interest
- Introduce concept mapping and outlining skills to organize related information

2. Demonstrating a Sense of Chronology

- Timeline activities

3. Identifying, Classifying and Summarizing Ideas

(Content Strands cont.)

- Skills activities as they apply to identifying and classifying
 - Determining historical, geographic, economic and cultural factors of greatest significance
- B. Communication Skills
1. Writing and Research
 - Utilize language arts skills for research studies
 - Connect writing and reading in the research process
 - Discussion and sharing of information
 - Student written reports
 2. Listening and Oral
 - Class discussions
 - Group and individual oral presentations
 3. Reading and Vocabulary
 - Focus on basic terminology
 - Text and supplementary reading
- C. Map and Globe Skills
- Specific map assignments as applicable
 - Map skills assignments from skills development lessons
- D. Group Participation Skills
1. Conflict Resolution
 - Discussions related to current events
 - Classroom situations
 2. Simulations
 - Group simulations as they apply to topic areas
 3. Class Discussion
 - On-going part of class
 - Both teacher- and student-developed topics
 - Current event topics

II. Citizenship Skills

- A. Comparing Different Traditions and Cultures
- Study different groups of people who have affected our own culture
 - Drawing comparisons between different religions and discussing the influence of religion on various regions
- B. Critical and Analytical Skills
1. Drawing Inferences
 2. Distinguishing Fact, Bias and Propaganda
 3. Introducing Cause and Effect Relationships
 4. Interpreting Charts, Graphs, and Visuals

Social Studies Content Standards and Benchmarks

Standard 1: Students will demonstrate a grade level knowledge of geography. (SSCS—3)

Benchmarks

1.1 Students will learn to use and interpret appropriate tools to study geography. (3.4.1, 3.4.4)

Students will:

Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
1.1.1 use maps and globes as tools for study.	V, W, O, P for all.	I, D
1.1.2 interpret pictures, maps, diagrams, and charts of increasing complexity.		D
1.1.3 differentiate between physical and political maps.		D
1.1.4 refer to appropriate reference books as necessary to define or visualize basic geographic land forms.		D
1.1.5 demonstrate an understanding of basic geographical concepts such as rotation, revolution, direction, continent, country distinctions, hemispheres, etc.		D
1.1.6 recognize and state how climate influences the way people live, work, and meet basic needs in a region.		I, D
1.1.7 understand relationship between vegetation and rainfall.		I, D
1.1.8 describe how plants and animals uniquely adapt to their environment.		I, D
1.1.9 realize the effects of political/physical regions on meeting the basic needs of people.		I, D

Standard 2: Students will demonstrate a basic knowledge of Montana historical geography. (SSCS—2-3, 6)

Benchmarks

2.1 Students will study the basic geographical and historical features of Montana. (2.4.3-4, 3.4.5-6, 6.4.5)

Students will:

Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
2.1.1 understand how Montana’s geography played a part in its history and development.	V, W, O, P for all.	I, D for all.
2.1.2 recognize Montana’s geographical features as part of the Rocky Mountain Region.		
2.1.3 name and locate the Rocky Mountain Range.		
2.1.4 locate and explain the significance of the Continental Divide.		
2.1.5 locate the principal cities in Montana.		

Columbia Falls - SD6

<p>2.1.6 identify the bordering states and country; national parks and monuments.</p> <p>2.1.7 discover why Montana has seasonal changes as part of a temperate zone location on the globe.</p> <p>2.1.8 compare Montana’s climate to other regions (i.e., desert region, tropical region, etc.)</p> <p>2.1.9 explain the importance of various forest uses and products to Montana’s economy.</p> <p>2.1.10 discuss forest conservation and the forest as a habitat for living things.</p> <p>2.1.11 appreciate and describe the various ways forests may be utilized in Montana and compare with various other parts of the world.</p> <p>2.1.12 describe how forest regions are interdependent with other parts of regions of the world.</p> <p>2.1.13 locate bodies of water in Montana and discuss the importance of conserving and preserving those waters.</p> <p>2.1.14 identify Montana’s three branches of government—legislative, judicial, and executive.</p> <p>2.1.15 identify, use and support voting and majority rule as a method for making group decisions.</p> <p>2.1.16 discuss the culture of Native Americans who were in Montana at the time white men arrived.</p> <p>2.1.17 discuss the role played in Montana history by traders, trappers, priests.</p> <p>2.1.18 locate the Louisiana Purchase and discuss its importance to Montana history, especially the exploration of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.</p> <p>2.1.19 discuss reasons for settlement in Montana (i.e., the discovery of gold, cattle ranching, railroads).</p> <p>2.1.20 identify and study Montanans and those associated with Montana who have contributed to Montana’s heritage (i.e., Lewis and Clark, Colter, Sacajawea, Chief Joseph, Custer, Charlie Russell, Jeanette Rankin).</p> <p>2.1.21 trace on a map historical events in Montana’s history (i.e., the retreat of the Nez Perce through Montana, the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the Battle of the Little Big Horn).</p> <p>2.1.22 locate Montana Indian reservations and discuss the culture of the tribes living on them today.</p> <p>2.1.23 describe and explain the significance of the state seal, flower, bird, tree, etc.</p> <p>2.1.24 explain how tourism contributes to the Montana’s economy.</p> <p>2.1.25 discuss the recreational opportunities in Montana.</p> <p>2.1.26 list and discuss some of Montana natural resources and the importance of using them wisely (i.e., coal, oil, clean air, water).</p>		
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Standard 3: Students will demonstrate a basic knowledge of various desert regions. (SSCS—3)

Benchmarks

3.1 Students will locate and compare the world’s deserts in order understand differences in geographical regions. (3.4.2-3, 3.4.6)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
3.1.1	describe and compare desert regions of the world focusing on the southwestern part of the United States.	V, W, O, P for all.	I, D for all.
3.1.2	form generalizations about the factors that characterize desert regions; namely, lack of rainfall, extreme temperature variations between day and night, sandstorms, wind and weathering effects.		
3.1.3	hypothesize about reasons why few people live in desert regions.		
3.1.4	recognize the names of some of the states/continents in which deserts exist.		
3.1.5	understand cultures and social customs of various desert people.		
3.1.6	understand economic development and ways to make a living for various desert cultures and problems associated with them.		

Standard 4: Students will demonstrate a basic knowledge of plains regions. (SSCS—3)

Benchmarks

4.1 Students will locate and compare plains regions of the world. (3.4.2-3, 3.4.6)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
4.1.1	generalize about the types of land forms and climate areas that are best suited to farming.	V, W, O, P for all.	I, D for all.
4.1.2	recognize the interdependence of farming regions with other types of regions.		
4.1.3	discuss the significance of location, climate regions, and other physical characteristics as they relate to farming.		
4.1.4	recognize the names of some of the states that would be classed as farming regions.		

Standard 5: Students will demonstrate a basic knowledge of the Mountain West. (SSCS—3)

Benchmarks

5.1 Students will locate and compare mountain regions in the world in order to understand geography, landforms, resources, and unique cultural features of the region. (3.4.2-3, 3.4.6, 4.4.4)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
5.1.1	identify features that distinguish the Mountain West.	V, W, O, P for all.	I, D for all.
5.1.2	discuss the advantages and disadvantages of living in a mountain region.		
5.1.3	recognize the effect mountains have on climate and rainfall.		
5.1.4	recognize that all major rivers have a source in mountains or highlands and discuss some of the reasons why rivers have been an important factor in settlement of new areas.		
5.1.5	recognize the names of states located in the Mountain West—major cities.		
5.1.6	identify resources in the Mountain West.		
5.1.7	identify some major land forms, such as the Great Basin Desert, Great Salt Lake, Snake River.		
5.1.8	recognize the different ways people make a living in the Mountain West and associated problems.		