

Loyalsock Township School District

Benchmarks: What Students Should Know and Be Able to Do

Social Studies

Topic: Planet Earth (Geography)

Instruction will focus on maps, mapmakers and geographic terms. Students will learn about the Continental Drift Theory of Alfred Wegener and the evidence he used to develop his theory. Articles will also discuss some of the historic and modern man-made wonders on our planet.

Topic: Earth (Geography)

Instruction will focus on Earth's natural wonders, as well as some amazing geographical facts and records. Students will learn about scientists who study people— archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists.

Topic: Earliest Humans

Instruction will focus on the earliest peoples, beginning with the hunter-gatherers, discovery of fire and earliest weapons. Articles will also discuss major changes such as domestication of animals, formation of settlements and the discovery of farming during Neolithic and Paleolithic eras. Students will learn about how leisure time gave earliest humans time to devote to better weapons, shelter, clothing, pottery and cave paintings.

Topic: Historic Times Begin

Instruction will focus on the earliest historic people. Articles will discuss Mesopotamia, Cuneiform writing, laws of Hannibal, and polytheism. Students will learn about the contributions of the Assyrians (first paved roads, postal system, etc.) and the Chaldeans (calendar with seven-day week, astronomy/astrology, etc.).

Topic: People of Phoenicia

Instruction will focus on the ancient Phoenicians who lived in present-day Lebanon. Articles will discuss sea traders of the Mediterranean, their ships and the exploration of Hanna. Students will learn about the first alphabet, purple dye and other cultural advancements of the Phoenicians.

Topic: Life in Ancient Egypt

Instruction will focus on the ancient Egyptians and the development of their powerful culture. Articles will discuss the geography of Egypt, the importance of the Nile, religion and hieroglyphics. Students will learn about paper and other inventions and discoveries of the ancient Egyptians.

Topic: Pyramids

Instruction will focus on ancient leaders such as Hatshepsut, Ramses XI, and Tutankhamen, the Boy King. Articles will also discuss archaeologists Howard Carter, Dr. Kent Weeks and Jean-François Champollion, the man who cracked hieroglyphics. Students will also read about ancient Egyptian architecture.

Topic: African Kingdoms

Instruction will focus on African kingdoms such as Kush, Ghana, Mali and Songhai. Articles will discuss the geography, architecture, culture and contributions of each kingdom.

Topic: Ancient Israelites

Instruction will focus on the history, culture and geography of the Israelites. Articles will discuss Judaism, the history of the disputed land of Palestine, well-known people and their contributions to the world.

Topic: Ancient Greeks

Instruction will focus on the ancient Greeks, including the geography of Greece. Articles will discuss Sparta and Athens, the beginning of democratic government, and the Persian Wars. Students will read about the development of a writing system through culture contact with the Phoenicians and the first Olympic Games.

Topic: Greek Civilization

Instruction will focus on the Golden Age of the Greeks, including the architecture of the time. Articles will discuss famous Greeks in history—philosophers and leaders such as Pericles, Socrates, Aesop, etc. Students will also learn about the Peloponnesian War.

Topic: Alexander the Great

Instruction will focus on Alexander the Great and his Macedonian Empire. Articles will discuss architecture and the empire's contributions to civilization, as well as its collapse. Students will use maps to study the extent and geography of the empire.

Topic: Ancient India

Instruction will focus on Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and the geography of India. Articles will discuss the civilizations and archaeological discoveries at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, the Aryans, Sanskrit, Caste System, as well as the Maurya and Gupta Empires. Students will learn about contributions made by these cultures.

Topic: Ancient China

Instruction will focus on Ancient China and dynastic rule, including the geography of China and how it was isolated from rest of world. Articles will discuss the Takla Makan mummies, early writing system, Confucius,

Laozi, the Great Wall, the Silk Road and Qin Shi Huangdi. Students will read about the contributions of ancient Chinese cultures to the world.

Topic: Ancient Japan

Instruction will focus on the geography of Japan and how geography shaped its opinion of the outside world. Articles will discuss shoguns, samurai, culture and architecture of ancient Japan. Students will read about the contributions of ancient Japanese cultures to the world.

Topic: Life in Rome

Instruction will focus on the early Romans, the Etruscan conquest and the spread of Greek ideas to the Romans. Articles will discuss government, religion, architecture and the geography of Rome and Italy. Students will learn about Punic Wars and the increasing power of Rome.

Topic: Ancient Rome: Part II

Instruction will focus on the Golden Age of Rome. Articles will discuss the Pax Romana, famous Romans, the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum and everyday life of citizens of the Roman Empire.

Topic: Barbarians

Instruction will focus on the Roman Empire, including Caesar, Constantine and Hadrian's Wall. Articles will discuss the contributions of the empire to the world. Students will read about the Romans' clash with the Vikings in the British Isles and the barbarian invasions that led to the fall of Rome.

Topic: Christianity

Instruction will focus on Jesus Christ, the early Christians and the Christian Church. Students will read about monks and their contribution to keeping books alive and the catacombs of Rome.

Topic: Islamic Empire

Instruction will focus on the geography of the Middle East, Mohammad and the spread of Islam. Students will learn about the Ottoman Empire and their contributions to science and math.

Topic: Middle Ages

Instruction will focus on the barbarians who came through Europe causing people to huddle for protection under the feudal system. Articles will discuss towns, money, diminishing trade and the fading of the Greek and Roman democratic ideals. Students will also read about life in a castle.

Topic: Crusades Bring Change

Instruction will focus on the Catholic Church, the Crusades and how culture contact brought about huge change in medieval Europe. Articles will discuss the end of the feudal system, the renewed interest in Greek and Roman ideas and how the rise of towns and guilds brought back democratic thinking again. Students will also read about the Magna Carta.

Topic: Age of Exploration

Instruction will focus on the brave people who went off to explore the world. Articles will discuss such explorers as Marco Polo and Christopher Columbus, whose adventures made Europeans more and more curious about the world.

Topic: Maya, Aztec and Inca

Instruction will focus on the Mesoamerican Empire, including the Maya, Aztec and Inca civilizations. Articles will discuss the geography of the region and the end of each civilization.

Topic: The Renaissance

Instruction will focus on the Renaissance. Articles will discuss famous people of the time and their contributions to the world in art, literature, architecture and knowledge.

Topic: Reformation

Instruction will focus on the change in the Catholic Church known as The Reformation. Articles will discuss Joan of Arc, Martin Luther and the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg.

Topic: Oceania

Instruction will focus on the oceanic peoples of the Pacific. Articles will discuss the contributions of Australian aborigines, Maori of New Zealand, Papuans of New Guinea and ancient Polynesians. Students will learn about contact with European explorers and archeological finds that have increased our knowledge of these cultures.

Topic: Wrapping it Up

Instruction will include additional information about the people and places that shaped the history of our world. Students will also have an opportunity to review and reinforce some of the material presented in earlier weeks.