

Sixth Grade Unit 1

Theme Overview:

“Contributions to Society” was selected for an eight-week interdisciplinary study of ancient civilizations and their contributions to society and science. The goal of this unit is for students to recognize the influence of ancient civilizations on today’s society. Through their research, students will investigate ancient civilizations including Egypt, Rome, China, India, Greece, Mesopotamia, and Japan. Students will read a variety of genres, including historical fiction, biography, and nonfiction. The thematic unit will incorporate language arts, science, and social studies standards. Students will be able to work as individuals, on teams, and in small groups.

Driving Questions:

- **How did the art, drama, and literature of ancient civilizations reflect the life, traditions, and beliefs of society?**
- **What were major socio economic, scientific, and political contributions of these ancient civilizations to our society today?**
- **How did people in the ancient world conceptualize and attempt to cope with the world around them through math, science, philosophy, and religion?**
- **How did geography and natural resources influence ancient civilizations?**

New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards specific to this unit:

Language Arts Teachers:

When the setting of a novel is relevant to its plot, it is appropriate and meaningful to address the geographical location using maps, charts, and other resources. For students, this will provide reinforcement for similar topics in social studies.

Social Studies Standards

*Note that geography is now embedded across all grade levels and units. It should be addressed within the topic of study rather than in isolation. The geography standards are highlighted, but mapping the location of any standard when appropriate enhances learning for students. *

6.1.8.A.1.a. Determine the impact of religious beliefs on government and societal norms in early civilizations.

6.1.8.B.1.e. Determine the relationship between technology innovation on urbanization and the impact of both on the environment.

6.1.8.C.1.f Analyze how technological innovations transformed the economy, affected the status and social class of different groups of people and the outcomes that resulted.

6.1.8.D.1.f Compare and contrast the migratory experiences of different groups of people and explain why their treatment differed.

6.1.8.D1.g. Determine how cultural transmission from different ethnic groups has impacted the development of the

American future.

6.1.8.B.2.a. Speculate why explorers were willing to confront significant challenges in search of new trade routes.

6.1.8.A.3.a. Explain how and why early government structures developed and their influence on American politics and institutions.

6.1.8.B.3.a. Compare and contrast the impact that technological innovation has had on land use, resources and the environment in the past and present.

6.2.8.A.1.a. Explain how clans and tribal groupings served as a form of government.

6.2.8.B.1.a. Determine the impact of geography, climate and availability of wild plants, animals and water on the survival of nomadic societies.

6.2.8.B.1.b. Explain how archaeological discoveries and scientific methods have been used to trace the migration of different groups of people from Africa to Eurasia, Australia and the Americas.

6.2.8.C.1.a. Explain the significance of the creation of tools and use of fire on hunter-gatherer societies.

6.2.8.D.1.a. Explain how cave paintings were used to express and communicate ideas during this time period.

6.2.8.D.1.b. Relate the development of language to survival and establishment of structure within communities.

6.2.8.A.2.a. Explain how roles, rules and structure in an agrarian community changed as people adapted to survive.

6.2.8.A.2.b. Explain why strong centralized governments began to form and their role in the communities.

6.2.8.B.2.a. Compare and contrast how nomadic and agrarian societies used land and natural resources for survival.

6.2.8.B.2.b. Explain why the agrarian revolution led to exponential population growth and the development of communities.

6.2.8.C.2.a. Explain how the rise in agrarian communities and technology advancements led to the division of labor, specialization of skills and improvements in weapons.

6.2.8.D.2.a. Analyze cultural practices of large agricultural settlements using evidence gathered by archaeologists.

6.2.8.B.3.a. Explain the benefits and challenges facing ancient civilizations established near major rivers or other large bodies of water.

6.2.8.B.3.b. Determine the role of geography and climate patterns on the development of trade networks, inventions and the spread of disease and their relationship to a civilization's survival.

6.2.8.D.3.a. Explain why social classes became prevalent and how they were determined.

6.2.8.D.3.b. Explain the importance of a written language on political, legal, religious and cultural life.

6.2.8.D.3.c. Explain how archaeologists have been able to decipher ancient languages using the Rosetta Stone.

6.2.8.D.3.d. Explain the significance of religion and artistry in daily life, literature, festivals and the building of complex structures.

Science

5.3.8B1-Perform mathematical computations using labeled quantities and expressing answers in correctly derived units.

5.9.6A1-Explain how the motions of the earth, sun, and moon define units of time including days, months, and years.

5.2.8B2-Describe the development and exponential growth of scientific knowledge and technological innovations.

Materials

Possible core novels and/or authentic readings:

Tuck Everlasting by Natalie Babbitt (E)

The Giver by Lois Lowry (C)

The Roman Mysteries: The Thieves of Ostia by Caroline Lawrence (A)

The Golden Goblet by Eloise Jarvis McGraw (A)

The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming the Brotherhood of the Conch Book II by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (C)

(continued on next page)

The City of Ember by Jeanne DuPrau (E)

Social Studies Textbook-Chapters 3-5; 9-12; 13-16

Science Textbooks: *Astronomy, Introduction to Matter; Forces, Motion and Energy;*

Microorganisms, Fungi and Plants.

Guided Reading:

ILA Anthology (Prentice Hall) : "Mummy", pgs. 46-51; "The Dog of Pompeii", pgs. 220-229; "Orpheus", pgs. 408-411; "The Gorgon's Head", pgs. 797-803; "Arachne", pgs. 822-825.

Expository Text - Articles from *Encarta* and/or *Grolier*, Newsweek, Time

National Geographic-Reading Expeditions

Detectives in Togas by Henry Winterfield (E)

Roman Mysteries: The Secrets of Vesuvius by Caroline Lawrence (C)

The Egypt Game by Zipha Keatley Snyder (A)

Bone from a Dry Sea by Peter Dickenson (C)

Independent Reading/Research:

American Reading Company leveled readers – Ancient Civilizations Collection

Scott Foresman leveled readers:

Title	F&P Level	DRA	Lexile
<i>Discovering the Old Stone Age</i>	W	44+	960
<i>Looking at Prehistory</i>	V	44+	910
<i>What Archaeology Tell Us About Prehistory</i>	Y	44+	1000
<i>Ideas That Shaped Egyptian Life</i>	U	44+	840
<i>Life and Beliefs in Ancient Egypt</i>	V	44+	940
<i>Egyptian Mythology and Everyday Life</i>	X	44+	980

Teacher Resources:

City of Ember

<http://www.webenglishteacher.com/duprau.html>

A “must visit” web site! Collection of web sites, including questions, cross-curricular connections, and vocabulary.

http://www.mce.k12tn.net/reading52/city_of_ember.htm

This has actual lesson plans including questions, vocabulary, activities, etc...

The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming

<http://www.chitradivakaruni.com>

This site is about the author.

The Golden Goblet

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/gob/gobsg1.html>

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/egypt/index.html>

This is an interactive website of King Tut’s tomb.

http://cybersleuth-kids.com/sleuth/History/Ancient_Civilizations/index.htm

<http://www.kathimitchell.com/ancivil.html>

http://www.ancientcivilizations.co.uk/home_set.html

<http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/subjects/ancientcivilizations.htm>

World Book Encyclopedia, Brain Pop, Encyclopedia Britannica, Facts on File
Expository Text - Articles from *Encarta* and/or *Grolier*
National Geographic-Reading Expeditions

Audio-Visual

Movies (clips)

Hercules Walt Disney

The Clash of the Titans

Ben Hur

Excerpts of *Gladiator*

National Geographic Video Clip Library

<http://www.youtube.com/user/NationalGeographic>

Graphic Organizers

Suggested Student Activities

Theme introduction activities:

Brainstorm what it means to contribute to society.

Brainstorm students' background knowledge about ancient civilizations.

Teacher will direct student understanding to incorporate the idea that all civilizations from ancient to present have contributed to society.

Core text activities:

1. Listen to daily read alouds and discuss vocabulary words.
2. Predict possible outcomes of the character's actions.
3. Critique and appraise decisions made by the characters, citing specific examples from the text.
4. Make inferences using textual information and providing supporting evidence.

Short-term projects that could result in a long-term PBL of a newspaper:

1. Read editorials from a newspaper and identify writer's point of view.
2. Write an editorial from the point of view of a person from a specific ancient civilization.
3. Cover one of the events of an ancient civilization as a reporter. Write an informative article including the five W's.
4. Create a cartoon depicting the times.
5. Create a sports page depicting the sporting events on the time.
6. Write two classified ads: employment and sales.
7. Create advertisements for products and/or services of the time period.
8. Support the premise that Egypt is the gift of the Nile.
9. Analyze the responsibility of a Pharaoh.
10. Compare/contrast Egypt's government with the United States' government.

11. Create your own alphabet.
12. Draw parallels between farms of ancient Egypt and American plantations.
13. Compare/contrast life of an ancient Egyptian child with that of a present day child.

Short-term projects that could result in a long-term PBL of an interactive museum exhibit:

1. Research your civilization and choose a focus for your museum exhibit.
2. Create a brochure describing your exhibit.
3. Create an advertisement of a persuasive nature. *(continued on next page)*
4. Write a detailed description of your exhibit; include relevant content information. Record or videotape your description. (Optional)

Other possible long-term projects:

1. Create a movie treatment, an outline of a movie script. Choose an aspect of the ancient civilization and devise a movie idea.
2. Create a travel brochure of an ancient civilization.
3. Write a short skit set in an ancient civilization of your choice featuring characters that actually existed during that time.

Assessments

- Informal daily observations
- Writing Conferences
- Anecdotal Notes (Guided Reading and Guided Writing)
- Rubrics:

Writing Rubric
Speaking Rubric
Oral Presentation-Dramatization
Open Ended Scoring rubric
Final Project