



Girard School District

CURRICULUM MAP AND PACING GUIDE

Gr. 6 Content Literacy-Paired with Social Studies Unit U.S. Citizenship

Board Approved:

August 2026

Course Purpose:	This course sits alongside the three existing Grade 6 Social Studies units — U.S. Citizenship; Map Skills, Movements of the Earth, and the 5 Themes of Geography; and Physical and Human Geography — and turns their content into a vehicle for building informational reading, evidence-based writing, and academic discourse. The content and pacing of each original unit are preserved; each block now also carries an explicit literacy target. Two goals drive every lesson: students should get better at reading and thinking about informational text, and they should become more confident using evidence to write and talk about social studies content.				
Reading Strategies	Close Reading & Annotation Text Structure Recognition Determining Main Idea & Details Visual & Text-Feature Literacy Vocabulary in Context	Read short informational excerpts multiple times: first for gist, second to underline the main idea, third to circle unfamiliar vocabulary and box text features (headings, captions, maps). Explicitly name the structure of each text — description, sequence/chronology, cause-effect, compare-contrast, or problem-solution — and use matching graphic organizers to record information. Practice separating the central idea of a passage from supporting facts and examples, using a main-idea-and-details organizer or a one-sentence summary check. Treat maps, diagrams, timelines, and data displays as "texts" in their own right — read legends, captions, and titles for the information they add beyond the words. Use context clues and word parts to determine the meaning of academic and content vocabulary before confirming with a definition (Frayer Model).			
Writing Frameworks	RACE (short response) C-E-R (argument/claim) Explanatory Essay Structure Compare/Contrast Frame	Restate the question, Answer it directly, Cite text evidence, Explain how the evidence supports the answer. Used for daily exit-ticket and quiz responses. Claim, Evidence, Reasoning — used when students take and defend a position (e.g., strongest push factor for migration, most important citizen responsibility). Introduction with a clear thesis → body paragraphs (topic sentence + evidence + explanation) → conclusion that synthesizes and extends the thesis. Used for unit culminating tasks. Point-by-point or block structure with explicit transition language ("similarly," "in contrast," "whereas") — used for lessons comparing historical figures, map types, or regions.			
Discourse Protocols	Think-Pair-Share Jigsaw Socratic Seminar/Fishbowl Four Corners Accountable Talk Stems	Students think independently, discuss with a partner, then share with the class — used to warm up thinking before whole-group discussion. Small groups each master one piece of content, then re-form into mixed groups to teach one another — used for branches of government, map types, and migration case studies. A student-led, text-based discussion around an open-ended question, with an inner circle discussing and an outer circle tracking evidence and discourse moves. Students physically move to a corner representing their position on a debatable question, then discuss and can move if persuaded by peers' evidence. Sentence starters that keep discussion evidence-based and respectful, taught explicitly and posted for reference			
Unit	Literacy Essential Questions	Suggested Informational Text Sets	Vocabulary Focus		
U.S. Citizenship	How do the authors of America's founding documents use language to inform, declare, and persuade?	Excerpt: the Declaration of Independence (opening lines); The Preamble to the U.S. Constitution	democracy	A system of government in which power belongs to the people, who rule directly or through elected representatives.	allegiance Loyalty owed to one's country, government, or leader.
		Selected questions/answers from the USCIS 100 Civics Questions	constitution	The written document that establishes how a government is structured and what powers and limits it has.	capitalism/market economy An economic system in which trade, industry, and prices are controlled by private individuals rather than the government.
	How do identify the main idea and supporting details in a text about government and citizenship?	Short biographical texts: George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson; Comparative biographical texts: Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr.	preamble	The introduction to a document that states its purpose — the Constitution's begins with "We the People."	emancipation The act of setting someone free from slavery or legal, social, or political restrictions.
		Informational/timeline text on the Louisiana Purchase and the Civil War	legislative, executive, judicial	The three branches of the U.S. government: the branch that makes laws, the branch that carries them out, and the branch that interprets them.	civil rights The rights of citizens to political and social freedom and equality.
	How do I use text evidence to write and speak about rights, responsibilities, and historical change?	Grade-appropriate news-style account of September 11, 2001	amendment	A formal change or addition made to a document such as the Constitution.	ratify To formally approve or confirm, making something officially valid.
		Reference text/diagram: U.S. symbols, flag, national anthem, and holidays			

Curriculum Resources & Materials	*Chromebook/Schoolology access *USCIS 100 Civics Questions & Answers: uscis.gov/citizenship *Materials for Citizenship Showcase (poster board, index cards, or slides)	* Frayer Model	*Three branches of government graphic organizer *Rights vs Responsibilities sorting cards or two-column chart *Colonial period cause/effect organizer *Civil War Timeline template * Text Structure Signal Word Reference Sheet * Annotation Poster	* C-E-R (Claim-Evidence-Reasoning) Template * C-E-R (Claim-Evidence-Reasoning) frame and rubric
	Pacing Guide			
	Week(s)	Content Focus	Reading Skill	Writing Task
1	Principles of American Democracy; "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"	Determine author's purpose and main idea (Declaration of Independence excerpt); annotate for key claims.	Summary paragraph: In your own words, what did the Declaration of Independence announce?	Turn-and-Talk: What does "the pursuit of happiness" mean to you today?
2	The Constitution as "Supreme Law of the Land"; the Preamble	Close read the Preamble; annotate unfamiliar/academic vocabulary.	Paraphrase the Preamble line-by-line into 6th-grade language.	Choral recitation + partner check: explain why "We the People" comes first.
3	Systems of Government: Congress/legislative, President/executive, courts/judicial	Identify text structure: description/classification in a text explaining the three branches.	Three-column graphic organizer (branch / role / example) → one explanatory paragraph.	Jigsaw: each group becomes the "expert" on one branch, then teaches the class.
4	Rights and Responsibilities of a U.S. Citizen	Read a list/enumeration-structured text on rights vs. responsibilities; sort claims into categories.	CER paragraph: Claim — Evidence — Reasoning on "Which responsibility of citizenship matters most, and why?"	Structured discussion using accountable-talk stems to agree/build on peers' claims.
5	Colonial Period, Independence, and Native American peoples already in America	Identify cause-and-effect text structure: why colonists came to America.	Cause-effect graphic organizer → short explanatory paragraph.	Discussion: compare colonists' reasons for coming to America with reasons people migrate today.
6	The 1800s: Louisiana Purchase, causes of the Civil War, Lincoln and Emancipation	Read a chronological/sequence text; build and interpret a timeline.	RACE-strategy short response: What caused the Civil War, and what changed because of it?	Socratic seminar: What made the Emancipation Proclamation significant?
7	1900s to present: a 20th-century U.S. war, the Civil Rights Movement, September 11, 2001	Compare/contrast text structure: Abraham Lincoln (1865) and Martin Luther King Jr. (1965).	Compare/contrast paragraph on Lincoln's and MLK's accomplishments, citing text evidence.	Fishbowl discussion: how are the two leaders' impacts alike and different?
8	U.S. Geography, Symbols, and Holidays; unit review	Identify and use text features (maps, captions, diagrams, headings) in a reference-style text.	Culminating essay: "What Does It Mean to Be a U.S. Citizen?" (informative, evidence-based)	Citizenship Showcase: students present a symbol, holiday, or historical figure and field questions.
Culminating Task:	Students write a multi-paragraph informative/explanatory essay that defines U.S. citizenship using evidence from at least two texts studied in the unit (e.g., the Preamble, a Civics Question, a biography). The essay should address democratic principles, at least one right and one responsibility, and one historical event or figure that shaped American citizenship.			
Extended Discourse Task:	Socratic Seminar / Structured Academic Controversy: "Should the voting age be lowered to 16?" Students prepare using evidence from the unit's rights-and-responsibilities texts and use accountable-talk stems to agree, disagree, and build on one another's ideas.			



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CURRICULUM MAP AND PACING GUIDE

Gr. 6 Content Literacy-Paired with Social Studies Unit Map Skills

Board Approved:

August 2026

Course Purpose:	This course sits alongside the three existing Grade 6 Social Studies units — U.S. Citizenship; Map Skills, Movements of the Earth, and the 5 Themes of Geography; and Physical and Human Geography — and turns their content into a vehicle for building informational reading, evidence-based writing, and academic discourse. The content and pacing of each original unit are preserved; each block now also carries an explicit literacy target. Two goals drive every lesson: students should get better at reading and thinking about informational text, and they should become more confident using evidence to write and talk about social studies content.					
Reading Strategies	Close Reading & Annotation	Read short informational excerpts multiple times: first for gist, second to underline the main idea, third to circle unfamiliar vocabulary and box text features (headings, captions, maps).				
	Text Structure Recognition	Explicitly name the structure of each text — description, sequence/chronology, cause-effect, compare-contrast, or problem-solution — and use matching graphic organizers to record information.				
	Determining Main Idea & Details	Practice separating the central idea of a passage from supporting facts and examples, using a main-idea-and-details organizer or a one-sentence summary check.				
	Visual & Text-Feature Literacy	Treat maps, diagrams, timelines, and data displays as “texts” in their own right — read legends, captions, and titles for the information they add beyond the words.				
	Vocabulary in Context	Use context clues and word parts to determine the meaning of academic and content vocabulary before confirming with a definition (Frayer Model).				
Writing Frameworks	RACE (short response)	Restate the question, Answer it directly, Cite text evidence, Explain how the evidence supports the answer. Used for daily exit-ticket and quiz responses.				
	C-E-R (argument/claim)	Claim, Evidence, Reasoning — used when students take and defend a position (e.g., strongest push factor for migration, most important citizen responsibility).				
	Explanatory Essay Structure	Introduction with a clear thesis → body paragraphs (topic sentence + evidence + explanation) → conclusion that synthesizes and extends the thesis. Used for unit culminating tasks.				
	Compare/Contrast Frame	Point-by-point or block structure with explicit transition language (“similarly,” “in contrast,” “whereas”) — used for lessons comparing historical figures, map types, or regions.				
Discourse Protocols	Think-Pair-Share	Students think independently, discuss with a partner, then share with the class — used to warm up thinking before whole-group discussion.				
	JigSaw	Small groups each master one piece of content, then re-form into mixed groups to teach one another — used for branches of government, map types, and migration case studies.				
	Socratic Seminar/Fishbowl	A student-led, text-based discussion around an open-ended question, with an inner circle discussing and an outer circle tracking evidence and discourse moves.				
	Four Corners	Students physically move to a corner representing their position on a debatable question, then discuss and can move if persuaded by peers’ evidence.				
	Accountable Talk Stems	Sentence starters that keep discussion evidence-based and respectful, taught explicitly and posted for reference				
Unit	Literacy Essential Questions	Suggested Informational Text Sets	Vocabulary Focus			
Map Skills, Movements of the Earth, & 5 Themes of Geography	How do informational texts use visuals — maps, legends, diagrams — to convey information words alone cannot?	Political, physical, climate, and language maps (read as informational “texts”). Diagram/explanatory text: how mapmakers project a round Earth onto a flat map.	latitude/longitude	Latitude lines run east-west and measure distance north or south of the equator; longitude lines run north-south and measure distance east or west of the prime meridian.	absolute location	The exact position of a place on Earth, usually given as latitude and longitude coordinates.
			cardinal/intermediate directions	Cardinal directions are N, S, E, W; intermediate directions (NE, NW, SE, SW) fall between them.	migration	The movement of people from one place to live in another.
	How can recognizing text structure (description, sequence, cause-and-effect) help me understand geographic processes like migration or Earth’s movements?	Diagram and caption set: Earth’s rotation and revolution (day/night, seasons). Informational article on why people migrate (push/pull factors).	scale bar	A map tool that shows the relationship between distance on the map and actual distance on Earth.	push factor/pull factor	A push factor drives people away from a place; a pull factor draws people toward a new place.
			key/legend	The part of a map that explains what its symbols and colors mean.	land use	The way people use land, such as for farming, housing, or industry.
	How do I write clear procedural and explanatory text about using and interpreting maps?	Textbook excerpts on land use and its connection to economic activity. Atlas or reference-text entries paired with a scale bar and compass rose.	projection	A method of showing the round Earth on a flat map, which always creates some distortion.	elevation	The height of land above sea level.

Curriculum Resources & Materials	*Chromebook/Schoolology access *Blank World/regional map handouts for the annotated map culminating project *Rulers *Compass rose stickers/stamp *Latitude/longitude practice worksheet *Map-savenger hunt handout *"How to find an absolute location" procedural writing template *Four Corners signage (labeled positions for the migration debate)		*Frayer Model	*Text Structure Signal Word Reference Sheet *Annotation Poster	*C-E-R (Claim-Evidence-Reasoning) Template *C-E-R (Claim-Evidence-Reasoning) frame and rubric
	Pacing Guide				
	Week(s)	Content Focus	Reading Skill	Writing Task	Discourse/Talk
	1-3	Parts of a map; the 5 Themes of Geography (movement, human-environment interaction, place, location, region)	Visual literacy: read a map as an informational text, identifying legend, scale, compass rose, and title as text features.	Labeled diagram of a map with explanatory captions for each part.	Partner map scavenger hunt — explain findings using academic vocabulary.
	4-6	Latitude and longitude; Earth's movements — day/night and the seasons	Identify procedural/sequential text structure (how to locate coordinates) and cause-effect text structure (why seasons occur).	Step-by-step "how-to" paragraph for finding an absolute location using latitude and longitude.	Think-Pair-Share: explain in your own words why we have day, night, and seasons.
7-9	Map projections; political, physical, climate, and language maps	Compare/contrast text structure across different map types; note distortions in projections.	Compare/contrast paragraph on how two map types show different information about the same place.	Jigsaw: small groups become "experts" on one map type and teach it to the class.	
10-12	Migration: cultural diffusion, push and pull factors	Identify cause-and-effect structure and author's perspective in a migration text.	CER paragraph: claim about the strongest push or pull factor for migration, supported with evidence.	Four Corners activity: take a position on the most powerful reason people migrate; defend it with text evidence.	
13-15	Land use, economic structures, and unit culminating task	Read an informational text on the link between land use and economic activity; determine main idea and details.	Culminating task: create and explain an annotated map applying the 5 Themes of Geography (informative writing, integrating text features).	Gallery walk: present annotated maps and respond to classmates' questions.	
Culminating Task:	Students create an annotated map of a self-selected region and write an explanatory piece that applies all 5 Themes of Geography, correctly uses at least six unit vocabulary terms, and includes a legend, scale bar, and compass rose as text features that support their written explanation.				
Extended Discourse Task:	Structured discussion: "Which map projection is most useful, and for what purpose?" Students compare distortion trade-offs across projections and justify their reasoning with evidence from the texts studied.				



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CURRICULUM MAP AND PACING GUIDE

Gr. 6 Content Literacy-Paired with Social Studies Unit Physical and Human Geography

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	C-E-R (argument/claim)	Claim, Evidence, Reasoning — used when students take and defend a position (e.g., strongest push factor for migration, most important citizen responsibility).						
	Explanatory Essay Structure	Introduction with a clear thesis → body paragraphs (topic sentence + evidence + explanation) → conclusion that synthesizes and extends the thesis. Used for unit culminating tasks.						
	Compare/Contrast Frame	Point-by-point or block structure with explicit transition language ("similarly," "in contrast," "whereas") — used for lessons comparing historical figures, map types, or regions.						
Discourse Protocols	Think-Pair-Share	Students think independently, discuss with a partner, then share with the class — used to warm up thinking before whole-group discussion.						
	JigSaw	Small groups each master one piece of content, then re-form into mixed groups to teach one another — used for branches of government, map types, and migration case studies.						
	Socratic Seminar/Fishbowl	A student-led, text-based discussion around an open-ended question, with an inner circle discussing and an outer circle tracking evidence and discourse moves.						
	Four Corners	Students physically move to a corner representing their position on a debatable question, then discuss and can move if persuaded by peers' evidence.						
	Accountable Talk Stems	Sentence starters that keep discussion evidence-based and respectful, taught explicitly and posted for reference						
Unit	Literacy Essential Questions	Suggested Informational Text Sets	Vocabulary Focus					
Physical and Human Geography	How do informational texts explain relationships between physical environments and human ways of life?	Informational articles on climate zones and vertical climate zones. Diagram/text pairing: how latitude and elevation influence climate and vegetation.	vegetation region	A large area characterized by a particular kind of plant life shaped by its climate.		natural resource	A material from the land, water, or air that people use to meet their needs.	
			climate zone	A region of Earth defined by a consistent pattern of temperature and precipitation.		land use	How people develop and use the land — for farming, housing, industry, and more.	
	How can I trace cause-and-effect chains (e.g., latitude → climate → vegetation → population) across a text?	Population maps and data displays, read as informational text. Textbook excerpts on how culture develops and spreads (cultural diffusion).	population density	The number of people living in a given area, usually measured per square mile or kilometer.		cultural diffusion	The spread of customs, ideas, and technologies from one culture or place to another.	
			population distribution	The pattern of where people live across a region or the world.		zero population growth	A state in which a population neither grows nor shrinks because birth and deaths are balanced.	
	How do I write comparative and explanatory texts about world regions using data and evidence?	Informational text on natural resource distribution and land use. Comparative text on stages of economic development across regions.	culture	The customs, beliefs, and ways of life shared by a group of people.		economic development	The process by which a region's wealth, industry, and standard of living grow and change over time.	
Curriculum Resources & Materials	*Chromebook/Schoolology access *Blank World/regional map handouts for the annotated map culminating project *Rulers *Compass rose stickers/stamp *Latitude/longitude practice worksheet *Map-scavenger hunt handout *"How to find an absolute location" procedural writing template *Four Corners signage (labeled positions for the migration debate)		*Frayer Model	*Text Structure Signal Word Reference Sheet *Annotation Poster		*C-E-R (Claim-Evidence-Reasoning) Template *C-E-R (Claim-Evidence-Reasoning) frame and rubric		

Pacing Guide				
Week(s)	Content Focus	Reading Skill	Writing Task	Discourse/Talk
1-3	Climate and vegetation regions; latitude's influence on climate	Trace a cause-and-effect chain across a text: latitude → climate → vegetation.	Cause-effect chain paragraph explaining how latitude shapes a region's vegetation.	Small-group discussion mapping the climate-vegetation relationship using a shared graphic organizer.
4-6	World population distribution, density, and growth; culture	Integrate data (population maps/graphs) with narrative text to determine main idea.	RACE-strategy response: How does environment shape where and how people live?	Seminar: "How does environment shape culture?" — supported by evidence from two texts.
7-9	Natural resources and land use	Determine main idea and supporting details in a text on uneven resource distribution.	Explanatory paragraph on one way people use natural resources to meet their needs, or a persuasive paragraph on responsible resource use.	Four Corners / mini-debate: how should a region balance resource use and conservation?
10-12	Migration and cultural diffusion (connects to Unit 2)	Synthesize across two texts: connect migration causes (Unit 2) to how migration spreads culture.	Compare/contrast paragraph: how migration changes both the place people leave and the place they arrive.	Jigsaw case studies: small groups examine a migration example and share findings.
13-15	Population density/growth, economic development stages, and culminating task	Interpret graphs and data displays as text; compare stages of economic development across regions.	Culminating research-based explanatory essay: "How Do Physical Features Shape Human Life?"	Student-led seminar or presentation of culminating essays with peer questioning.
Culminating Task:	Students write a multi-paragraph explanatory essay connecting a region's physical geography (climate, vegetation, resources) to human patterns (population, culture, economic development), citing evidence from at least three texts studied across the unit.			
Extended Discourse Task:	Seminar: "Which has a bigger impact on how people live — physical geography or human decisions?" Students use evidence from the unit's texts to support a position and respond to counterclaims.			