



Southmoreland School District

Fourth Grade Social Studies Curriculum Overview

Fourth Grade Social Studies Overview:

The fourth grade social studies curriculum is divided into four modules: (1) Civics and Government, (2) Economics, (3) Geography, and (4) History. Fourth grade students expand their knowledge and appreciation of their local and American history. They compare different perspectives using both primary and secondary texts. They are empowered with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to make informed decisions that are relevant to their lives today. Students develop critical thinking and interpersonal communication skills to become responsible and productive citizens in our culturally diverse and interdependent world. In addition, students learn about how their community works as well as the variety of ways that communities organize themselves. Finally, students develop conceptual understandings by examining the geographic and economic aspects of life in their own neighborhoods and compare them to those of people long ago. The civic mission of social studies requires more than the acquisition of content. The National Council of Social Studies defines social studies as “the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence.”

Module Titles:

Module 1: Civics and Government

Module 2: Economics

Module 3: Geography

Module 4: History

Module Overviews:

Module 1: Civics and Government

The goal of this module is for students to learn about our government and our rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Fourth grade students identify services provided by local, state, and national governments. They analyze the roles of the three branches of government. Students describe the roles of leadership and public service in school, community, and state. In addition, students outline how citizens participate in school and community activities. The students identify state symbols and national holidays. They examine and explain rules, laws, and consequences for the classroom, school, community, and state. Finally, students explain the principles and ideals of liberty and freedom, democracy, justice, and equality that shape local and state government.

Module 2: Economics

The goal of this module is for students to understand the basic elements of a community’s economic system, including producers, distributors, and consumers of goods and services. Fourth grade students recognize the difference between basic



Southmoreland School District

Fourth Grade Social Studies Curriculum Overview

needs and wants. Students identify scarcity of resources in PA and regions of the US. In addition, students explain the role of producers in making goods and providing services. The students describe the three basic questions all economic systems must answer: (1) What to produce?, (2) How?, and (3) For whom?. They analyze the impact of government involvement in state and national economic activities. Finally, students explain why regions and nations must conduct trades with others.

Module 3: Geography

The goal of this module is for students to recognize the impact of geographic locations on its people. Fourth grade students describe how geographic tools are used to organize and interpret geographic information. They locate and describe places and regions in the USA and PA. Students analyze the human characteristics of a region using the following criteria: population, culture, settlement patterns, economic activity, and political activity. Finally, students identify the effect of the physical systems on people within a community and vice versa.

Module 4: History

The goal of this module is for students to understand the significance of historical events that shaped our nation. Fourth grade students identify and describe how geography and climate have influenced continuity and change over time. They distinguish between fact and opinion from multiple points of view and primary sources as related to historical events. Students conduct research by selecting a specific topic and developing questions related to that topic. In addition, students differentiate common characteristics of social, political, cultural, and economic groups in PA and US history. The students describe the significance of historical documents, artifacts, and places significant to PA and US history. Finally, students distinguish between conflict and cooperation among groups and organizations that impacted history related to ethnicity, race, and immigration.