



Comprehensive Curriculum

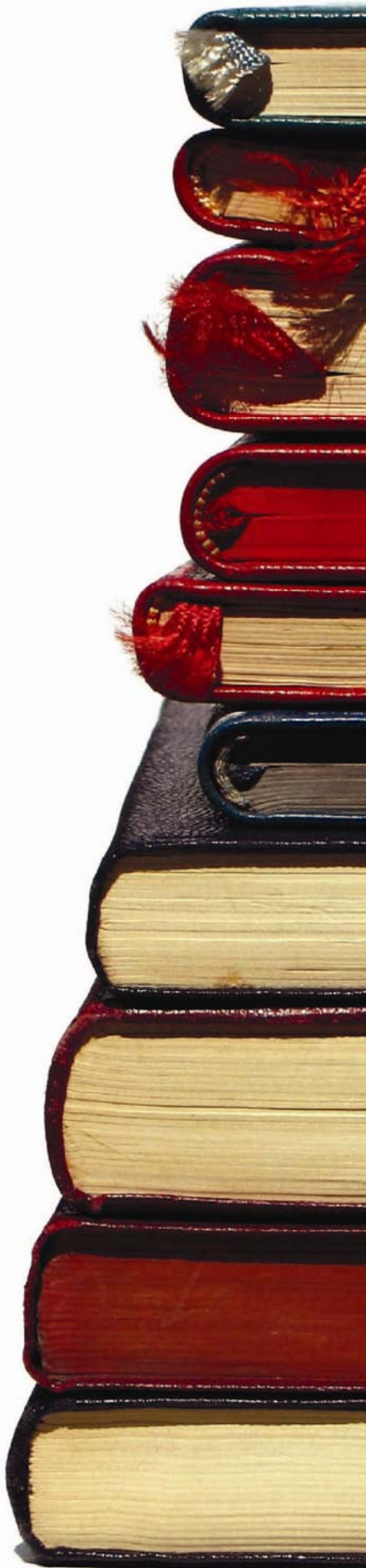
Revised 2008

Grade 6 Social Studies



Louisiana Department of
EDUCATION

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**Grade 6
Social Studies**

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Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum, Revised 2008 **Course Introduction**

The Louisiana Department of Education issued the *Comprehensive Curriculum* in 2005. The curriculum has been revised based on teacher feedback, an external review by a team of content experts from outside the state, and input from course writers. As in the first edition, the *Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum*, revised 2008 is aligned with state content standards, as defined by Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs), and organized into coherent, time-bound units with sample activities and classroom assessments to guide teaching and learning. The order of the units ensures that all GLEs to be tested are addressed prior to the administration of iLEAP assessments.

District Implementation Guidelines

Local districts are responsible for implementation and monitoring of the *Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum* and have been delegated the responsibility to decide if

- units are to be taught in the order presented
- substitutions of equivalent activities are allowed
- GLEs can be adequately addressed using fewer activities than presented
- permitted changes are to be made at the district, school, or teacher level

Districts have been requested to inform teachers of decisions made.

Implementation of Activities in the Classroom

Incorporation of activities into lesson plans is critical to the successful implementation of the Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum. Lesson plans should be designed to introduce students to one or more of the activities, to provide background information and follow-up, and to prepare students for success in mastering the Grade-Level Expectations associated with the activities. Lesson plans should address individual needs of students and should include processes for re-teaching concepts or skills for students who need additional instruction. Appropriate accommodations must be made for students with disabilities.

New Features

Content Area Literacy Strategies are an integral part of approximately one-third of the activities. Strategy names are italicized. The link ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) opens a document containing detailed descriptions and examples of the literacy strategies. This document can also be accessed directly at <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/11056.doc>.

A *Materials List* is provided for each activity and *Blackline Masters (BLMs)* are provided to assist in the delivery of activities or to assess student learning. A separate Blackline Master document is provided for each course.

The *Access Guide to the Comprehensive Curriculum* is an online database of suggested strategies, accommodations, assistive technology, and assessment options that may provide greater access to the curriculum activities. The *Access Guide* will be piloted during the 2008-2009 school year in Grades 4 and 8, with other grades to be added over time. Click on the *Access Guide* icon found on the first page of each unit or by going directly to the url, <http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov/AccessGuide>.



Grade 6
Social Studies
Unit 1: Hunter-Gatherers and Early Farmers

Time Frame: Approximately four weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on hunter-gatherer societies and how agricultural societies developed from them.

Student Understandings

Students will understand that the earliest human communities hunted and gathered, made tools, and used fire to meet their basic needs. Students will understand how climatic changes, food scarcity, and the discovery of seed technology led early communities to the discovery of farming as a way to produce food. Students will learn how geographic physical features and human modification of the environment influenced early farming communities. They will understand that, in order to farm, people had to domesticate animals and plants.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students locate places on a map or globe using latitude, longitude, cardinal directions, and intermediate directions?
2. Can students explain the difference between a primary and secondary source and use both to describe world civilizations?
3. Can students interpret artifacts?
4. Can students describe the wandering, nomadic life of hunter-gatherers?
5. Can students describe the food, shelter, clothing, and tools of hunter-gatherers?
6. Can students explain the roles specialization and inventions played in the development of early human communities?
7. Can students explain why and how humans made the transition from hunting and gathering to farming (cultivation)?
8. Can students describe climatic changes and geographical features that influenced the development of early civilizations?
9. Can students explain why and how the domestication of plants and animals for farming took place?

Unit 1 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

| GLE # | GLE Text and Benchmarks |
|---------------------------|--|
| Geography | |
| 1. | Use latitude and longitude to determine direction or locate or compare points on a map or representation of a globe. (G-1A-M2) |
| Places and Regions | |
| 2. | Identify land and climatic conditions conducive to human settlement in regions of the world and describe the role of these conditions. (G-1B-M1) |
| Economics | |
| 12. | Explain the role of expanding specialization in the development of world civilizations (E-1A-M4) |
| 19. | Use multiple primary and secondary sources to describe world civilizations (H-1A-M4) |
| World History | |
| 22. | Describe features of the earliest communities (e.g., shelter, food, clothing) (H-1C-M1) |
| 23. | Describe hunter-gatherer societies, including the development of tools and the use of fire (H-1C-M1) |
| 24. | Explain how geographical features influenced development of early civilizations (e.g., domestication, cultivation, specialization) (H-1C-M2) |
| 25. | Explain why agricultural societies developed from hunters and gatherers (H-1C-M2) |
| 26. | Discuss the climatic changes and human modifications of the physical environment that gave rise to the domestication of plants and animals and new sources of clothing (H-1C-M2) |

Sample Activities**Activity 1: Location on a Globe (GLEs: 1, 2)**

Materials List: map of the world, world globe, hurricane tracking map

After reviewing with students what they learned last year and what they know already about geography and maps, use a globe to demonstrate *latitude* and *longitude* and to give their characteristics. Have students show where these lines are on a map and on a globe. Make sure the students know all the alternate words for longitude (*meridians*, the *Prime Meridian*, the International Date Line) and latitude (*parallels* like the *equator*). Students should be able to point out the various lines on the map.

Ask students to give the names of places they would like to visit on each continent and ask them to identify the location of each, using latitude and longitude. Direct students to use latitude, longitude, and *cardinal* and *intermediate directions* from the compass rose to describe the direction and degrees required going from Point A to Point B. Repeat this

activity until students are comfortable using latitude, longitude, and the compass rose to determine direction and degrees of distance.

Using textbook maps, direct students to a topographical map of a continent with country boundaries and major cities. Have students locate several cities and/or physical features on the map in terms of:

- location by hemisphere (north, south, east or west)
- location by longitude/latitude
- distance by degrees from the equator
- distance by degrees from the Prime Meridian

Introduce students to the major climatic zones (tropical, temperate, polar) and to the specific lines of latitude (Tropic of Cancer, Tropic of Capricorn, Arctic Circle, Antarctic Circle) that define those zones. Have them identify the zone where they live. Make sure students can distinguish between the words climate and weather. Tell them that they will be using this information when analyzing human civilizations.

During hurricane season, use latitude and longitude to keep track of hurricanes as a class. For a complete lesson on latitude and longitude and for more background resources, go to the Smithsonian Institute's teacher website: <http://www.sil.si.edu/exhibitions/chasing-venus/teachers/lessonplan8.htm>.

Activity 2: Primary and Secondary Sources in History (GLE: 19)

Materials List: old objects from home brought in by students, old objects supplied by the teacher (e. g., old meat grinder, old coffee pot, old coins, old bottles, etc.)

Explain to students that they are about to embark upon a fascinating study of the history of the world, from the time of hunter-gatherers to the Renaissance. Over the course of that study, they will use both *primary* and *secondary sources* to investigate historical events. After defining these two terms for students, generate with them lists on the board of examples of the two types of sources. Explain to them that they are about to do an activity in which they will learn how to analyze objects which are considered primary sources.

The Louisiana Division of the Arts has an excellent unit on teaching students to identify, observe, and analyze objects (*artifacts*) to study history and culture. Their website, <http://www.louisianavoices.org> includes detailed lesson plans, worksheets, etc. An adapted version of one of their lessons includes assigning students to bring in a very old object from their home. If the object is breakable, too valuable, large, or dangerous, they should sketch it at home instead of bringing it to school. Have the students answer questions about the form of the object (shape, material it is made from, texture, color, smell, measurements, economic value, or cost), the utility of the object (was it just for decoration or did it serve a function), and the meaning of the object (about how old is it, does it have a special value to or meaning for your family, what does it say about the

culture that made and used it). Have students present their objects or their sketches to the class.

Explain to students that much is learned about early humans from studying objects like the ones they brought in that were left behind and found by later civilizations. These items are their physical remains (artifacts and fossils). The study of the past using things left behind by humans is called “archaeology.” (For a full and clear description of the work of an archaeologist, go to the Smithsonian Institute’s lesson on it at http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/decoding_the_past/puzzle.html).

Define anthropology and archaeology. Discuss with students the nature of these fields and the different jobs in both fields. Access information from the U.S. Department of Labor website at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos054.htm> for salary, job prognosis, etc. Have students examine old objects (rusty screws, an old bottle, an old meat grinder, etc.) and try to ascertain what they are, what they are made from, what they were used for, how old they are, and where they were made. Following the activity, ask students whether they enjoyed the mystery and challenge of that activity. Suggest to those who did that they might consider a job in anthropology or archaeology.

Activity 3: Hunter-Gatherer Societies (GLEs: 12, 22, 23)

Materials List: flashlights, paper bags, crayons, samples of hunter-gatherer foods (e. g., berries, nuts, fruits, etc.), Grading Rubric for Hunter-Gatherer Project BLM

Introduce students to hunter-gatherer societies by discussing with them humans’ basic needs (food, shelter, clothing) and how those needs are met in their own lives. Ask them how different foods that they eat are produced or obtained (from hunting, fishing, gathering, farming, vegetable gardens, etc.). Ask them what tools and technology are used to obtain, cook, and preserve those foods. Then ask them to imagine their life minus the following forms of technological development – electricity, automobiles and other motorized vehicles, running water, metals, and plastics. In other words, have them imagine what life was like in ... the Stone Age! Remind them that, even today, millions of people in developing countries live without electricity, running water, motorized vehicles, etc.

Tell students that they are going to read about an early human, the Iceman (Ötzi). Obtain a one to two page reading about the Iceman from a textbook, encyclopedia, or website (<http://www.bolzano.net/english/iceman-faq.html#faq7>). Have students read about the Iceman and, using *split-page notetaking* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)), record the facts they learn.

Split-page notetaking is a strategy that assists students in organizing their notes while encouraging active reading and providing an effective visual study guide. First, have students write a heading at the top of their notebook paper with the name of the article

they will be reading and the date. Then have students draw a line down the page creating a $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{2}{3}$ split. In the first, narrower column, students will write key questions regarding the Iceman. A sample would be:

| Name of Article: | Date: |
|--|-------|
| Who is the Iceman? | |
| Where, when, and how was he found? | |
| What were his food, shelter, tools, and clothing like? | |

In the second column, have students write supporting information and facts. Students should be urged to paraphrase and abbreviate as much as possible. It will take time for students to become familiar with the format, but it is a technique that improves literacy by helping students to be able to extract, record, and review information in a clear graphic format. When students are finished, discuss their notes as a class. Remind students that the Iceman is very useful to our study of history because of the condition, quantity, and age of the physical remains (artifacts and fossils) that he provides. Have students study from these split-page notes by folding the page along the dividing line and generating either the big idea or question and the supporting information.

Follow up this note-taking activity on the Iceman with a textbook reading about hunter-gatherer societies and have students use *split-page notetaking* again.

Explain to students that another instructive artifact from hunter-gatherer societies is cave paintings. Show them examples, including the ones found at Lascaux, France. (See pertinent websites, like <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/arcnat/lascaux/en/>, and <http://sunsite.queensu.ca/memorypalace/parlour/caves/index.html> under “Resources” at the end of this unit.) Based on these paintings, have students draw conclusions about the *food, shelter, clothing, and tools* of hunter-gatherer societies.

If time permits, have students create their own cave paintings using the following activity: Have the students wad up paper bags and tape them to the bottoms of their desks. (Wadding the bag will give the surface a rough feel, like a cave wall.) Darken the room. Have the students crawl under tables and chairs to their desks. Then have them draw pictures of local animals on the paper bags (by flashlight). Some will forget to bring a light, or their flashlight will be too bright. Those students must work by feel in the dark.

The teacher and/or students should bring samples of food from a hunter-gatherer’s diet to class (berries, nuts, fruits, parts of plants, hunted meat, etc.) Have students sketch and

taste the foods (FOOD ALLERGY ALERT: Before having students eat any foods in class, send home a food allergy survey for parents to fill out. Keep a list of students' food allergies readily available before you start a lesson that involves eating food in the classroom.) Have students compare a hunter-gatherer's diet to their own and answer the following questions:

- Which diet is more diverse?
- Which is more nutritious?
- Which is more easily available?
- Why do you think hunters-gatherers traveled in small bands rather than in larger groups?
- Was there a time of year when these types of food would be more plentiful than at other times?
- Is there a climatic zone where these types of food would be more plentiful?
- What are disadvantages of living a *wandering and nomadic lifestyle*?

Have a discussion of the different labor and skills required in hunter-gatherer societies. Would the entire band go out hunting and gathering together, or would certain members specialize in different tasks? Discuss inventions and discoveries that gradually made life easier for hunter-gatherers (e.g., inventions—fishhooks, bone needles, arrowheads, scraping tools, spears, pounding stones, fire.) Discuss the discovery of fire and the labor involved in collecting firewood. Assign advanced students to investigate and to report on what parts of the world today still use firewood as their main source of fuel for heating and cooking.

Assign a home collage project to assess whether students have gained information relative to GLEs 22 and 23. Students should make a collage, a digital collage, or a powerpoint on the shelter, food, clothing, and tools used by hunter-gatherers, including at least four examples of each. (See Grading Rubric for Hunter-Gatherer Project BLM.)

The Smithsonian Institute has an amazing lesson on creating a classroom museum. The lesson would apply very well to the theme of "Hunting and Gathering in Your Region of Louisiana." To view their lesson, go to "Creating a Classroom Museum" at http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/collect/crecla/crecla0a.htm)

Activity 4: Glaciers and Physical Features (GLE: 25, 26)

Materials List: article on Ice Ages, illustration of glacial movement, Grading Rubric for Climatic Changes Paragraph BLM

Explain to your students that humans changed to a farming lifestyle for various reasons. One reason was the end of the last Ice Age around 10,000 BC. This resulted in a decrease in the population of large mammals as well as warmed up regions that could then support cultivation of crops.

Obtain a one- to two-page reading about Ice Ages from a textbook, encyclopedia, or website. Tell students that they are going to read an article about Ice Ages. Before reading the article, utilize *SQPL-Student Questions for Purposeful Learning* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to prime students' minds about climatic changes and their effects on human societies.

Write the following provocative assertion on the board: "The earth will never have another Ice Age." Give the students a moment to think about this statement. Then have the class generate a list of questions on the board that they could ask relative to this statement. After students contribute their questions, ask some others to be sure students focus on important information in the text. Read the article aloud as a class. As students read the article, have a student check off which questions that they generated are actually answered in the article. After the reading, go over the answers to those questions. Then have students hypothesize about the answers to the other questions that were not answered in the article. Other sources should be made available to help answer students' questions not answered in the text read aloud.

Show students an illustration of how glaciers move as rivers of ice over the surface of the earth, eroding soil and depositing it where the glaciers melt. Explain glaciated areas of the earth and how glaciers do the following:

- form rivers (give examples)
- create deposits of rich soils (loess regions)
- create plains and hills

Finally, have students write one paragraph about how climatic changes toward the end of the last Ice Age improved conditions necessary to grow crops. Tell them to use what they learned about good farmland and what they learned about how glaciers affect the earth's surface to construct a well-written paragraph. (See Grading Rubric for Climatic Changes Paragraph BLM.) Paragraphs may be read aloud.

Activity 5: Settled Agriculture (GLEs: 2, 24, 25)

Materials List: classroom atlases or textbooks with physical and climate maps, Farming Word Grid BLM

Tell students that about 10,000 BC, humans made an amazing discovery – farming. Give a short introduction to agriculture by talking about the qualities of good farmland:

- *rich soil*
- a location defensible from invaders
- warm, *temperate climate*
- *availability of fresh water supply*
- flat land
- easy transportation of crops to consumers

Use a *word grid* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to familiarize students with the characteristics of good farmland. This learning tool involves building a chart with key vocabulary words or concepts down the vertical axis and characteristics or examples where those words are used along the horizontal axis. Students use an “x” to check off relevant components on the grid (See Farming Word Grid BLM and sample below.)

| | SITE #1: | SITE #2: | SITE #3: |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| rich, fertile soil | | | |
| easily defended | | | |

Walk outside of the school, look around the campus and its surroundings, and have students select three different sites for a fictitious farm and name them at the top of the *word grid* BLM. Have students use “x” to mark the characteristics of good farmland found at each site. Return to the classroom and discuss the *word grid*. Solicit observations from students, compare their findings, and discuss their conclusions (i.e. which site received the most “x’s”).

Next, divide the class into groups or pairs. Use a physical world map to locate places where early agricultural societies would most likely develop. Call upon the groups or pairs to defend their choices. Then show students a map of where the earliest farming communities (circa 10,000 – 5,000 BC) actually developed (See http://worldhistoryforusall.sdsu.edu/dev/units/three/landscape/03_landscape2.pdf for a map of early farming settlements). Have them compare their answers to the historically accurate map. Look at the early settlements and tell which continent they are on, the latitude range of the sites, the annual rainfall there, the annual temperature range, the physical features, and the elevation. Can students make any generalizations based on these?

For a comprehensive unit on early farming communities, see Bickley and Douglass’ curriculum from a project of San Diego University and UCLA’s National Center for History in the Schools at http://worldhistoryforusall.sdsu.edu/dev/units/three/landscape/03_landscape2.pdf.

This is a perfect time to invite a local farmer to your class as a guest speaker. The farmer should address how he or she decides on crops and field placement, technology used on the farm, problems faced in modern agriculture, skills farm workers need today, and the economics of farming.

Activity 6: Human Societies Change the Environment (GLE: 26)

Materials List: pictures of two early agricultural settings, Vocabulary Chart on Human Changes to the Environment BLM, Listing on Human Changes to the Environment BLM

To introduce this concept of how human beings have made adaptations to our environment in order to inhabit them, do a *vocabulary self awareness chart* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) with students because many of the relevant terms related to this concept are not everyday words. A *vocabulary self awareness chart* provides students with an opportunity to consciously and individually learn and develop the vocabulary they must know in order to understand new concepts. The teacher can use the words on the chart below and add other words that are considered important in the research. Students rate their understanding of each word with either a “+” (understand well), a “√” (limited understanding or unsure), or a “-” (don’t know). Students should refer to the chart as they progress through the content to update their understandings of the new words. The teacher can check the chart to assess students and provide additional instruction for those students who continue to have difficulty learning key vocabulary. (See Vocabulary Chart on Human Changes to the Environment BLM.)

| Word | + | √ | - | Example | Definition |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---------|------------|
| physical environment | | | | | |
| adaptation | | | | | |
| slash-and-burn farming | | | | | |
| irrigation | | | | | |
| tilling | | | | | |
| modification | | | | | |
| dike/levee | | | | | |
| canal | | | | | |
| dam | | | | | |

Provide pictures of two early agricultural settings, the farming village of Çatal Hüyük (<http://www.smm.org/catal/>) in modern-day Turkey and the prehistoric village of Skara Brae (<http://www.orkneyjar.com/history/skarabrae/skarab2.htm>) in Scotland. (A different archaeological farming site can be used instead.). Ask students to view the pictures and identify ways early humans changed the physical environment to improve their lives (e.g., slash-and-burn farming, tilling soil, diverting water to fields, cutting ditches to fields, building levees to protect against floods, building rock fences to contain domesticated animals, etc.) in those two settings as well as in their own region of Louisiana.

| Ways that humans changed the environment in Çatal Hüyük | Ways that humans changed the environment in Skara Brae | Ways that humans changed the environment in your region of the state |
|---|--|--|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Then, compare the three lists. (See Listing on Human Changes to the Environment BLM.)

Activity 7: Domestication of Plants and Animals (GLEs: 24, 26)

Materials List: dictionary

Play the game *Dictionary* with the word *domesticate*. The game involves having students make up the best definition they can for the word and writing it on a small slip of paper with their names on it. Meanwhile, write an actual dictionary definition on a similar piece of paper. Mix up the papers and then read all the definitions aloud. Have the students vote on which one they think is the dictionary definition. Students get one point for voting for the real dictionary definition and one point for every student who votes for their created definition. Have students write the dictionary definition in their notebooks.

Brainstorm with students a list of wild animals found in their region of Louisiana. Ask students why they think these animals have not been tamed for use on farms. Then give a presentation on *domesticating* animals to be used as farm animals (to eat, to produce milk, eggs or wool, to pull plows or carry loads, to produce manure for fertilizer, etc.). Then ask students whether they gather food from any wild plants (berries, fruits, nuts, etc.) in their region of the state. Explain that plants also were “domesticated” by collecting the best seeds (seed technology) from the biggest and healthiest edible plants and using them to plant a farm crop. Explain that over thousands of years, those animals and plants that were domesticated changed genetically to remain domesticated or as ideal as possible for cultivation on a farm and use by humans.

Activity 8: Comparing Hunting and Gathering to Farming (GLE: 25)

Have students make a chart showing the advantages and disadvantages of hunting and gathering compared to farming. Go over the chart as a class. Discuss why hunting and gathering decreased as the main lifestyle of early humans. Discuss whether students hunt for and gather anything today. Point out that there are still some societies today that depend more on hunting and gathering than on farming.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

- Assessment should be on-going, daily, and an integral part of instruction. Use quick forms of assessment to end a lesson or a class, like asking students what is the most important thing they learned today, a quick listing of ten nouns that were discussed in class, a pair-sharing where each student tries to stump his/her partner with a question, a quick game of charades with the day's vocabulary or concepts, etc.
- Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the types of products that result from the student activities.
- Rubrics on writing assignments and projects should assess content knowledge rather than extraneous elements like creativity, neatness, etc.

General Assessments

- Construct a concept wall and use a dictionary to define difficult vocabulary throughout the unit.
- A teacher-created, comprehensive exam assessing the GLEs from this unit should consist of the following:
 - a variety of formats for objective, convergent test items
 - depth of knowledge at various stages of Bloom's taxonomy
 - I-LEAP-formatted items
 - open-ended response items requiring supporting evidence
 - test items aligned to the verbiage of the GLEs.
- A one-page persuasive essay on whether the student would be a more skilled hunter-gatherer or farmer will ensure that students make a personal connection to the central theme of this unit.
- A pictorial assessment of artifacts and places that students have encountered in the unit may help to cement images of the key concepts into students' wealth of knowledge.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activity 3: Students will make a collage, a digital collage, or a powerpoint of the shelter, food, tools, and clothing of hunter-gatherers. This is a great assessment to assign as a home project. See Grading Rubric for Hunter-Gatherer Project BLM.
- Activity 5: Students will write a paragraph about how climatic changes toward the end of the last Ice Age improved conditions necessary to grow crops. Use the Grading Rubric for Climatic Changes Paragraph BLM to assess the paragraph.

- Activity 6: Students will compile a list on ways that humans have changed their environment in order to be able to inhabit it. See Listing on Human Changes to the Environment BLM.

Additional Resources

<http://www.hbschool.com/activity/cavepaintings/cavepaintings.html> Harcourt Brace's virtual tour of cave paintings.

<http://sunsite.queensu.ca/memorypalace/parlour/caves/index.html> A lecture and virtual tour of the cave paintings at Lascaux.

http://www.museum.state.il.us/exhibits/ice_ages/ A website done by the Illinois State Museum. It has basic information on Ice Ages.

<http://www.smm.org/catal/> A great website for an interactive video on the early farming settlement of Çatal Hüyük.

Hall, Stephen, "Who Iced the Iceman?" National Geographic. July, 2007 issue. A great article on theories about how the Iceman died.

<http://www.foodtimeline.org> A most informative timeline of when and where foods were first cultivated.

Grade 6
Social Studies
Unit 2: River Valley Civilizations (4000–1000 B.C.)

Time Frame: Six weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on geographic influences on the location of early river valley civilizations, the major characteristics of those civilizations, and how those civilizations influenced other cultures through trade and cultural diffusion.

Student Understandings

Students will understand that early farmers often settled along rivers where there was fertile soil, fresh water, and a means of transportation for trading their crops. Students will understand that crop surpluses due to technological innovations and human adaptations to the physical environment allowed for the growth of cities and specialization of work. Students will understand that large civilizations developed in Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, and ancient China. Students will understand that those civilizations developed unique cultures, religions, governments, forms of technology, architecture, and writing and influenced other cultures through trade and cultural diffusion.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify land and climatic conditions that were conducive to early human settlement?
2. Can students explain how different physical features affect human activities like cultivating, herding, defending land, etc?
3. Can students identify major river systems and describe the physical settings that supported permanent settlement along their banks?
4. Can students explain the growth of cities and the defining characteristics of a “civilization”?
5. Can students describe the cultures, governments, religions, architecture, technological innovations, and writings of the four major river valley civilizations?
6. Can students explain cultural diffusion and, in particular, how the four early river valley civilizations influenced cultures around them?

Unit 2 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

| GLE # | GLE Text and Benchmarks |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Places and Regions | |
| 2. | Identify land and climatic conditions conducive to human settlement in regions of the world and describe the role of these conditions (G-1B-M1) |
| 3. | Identify physical features that influenced world historical events and describe their influence (e.g., the Nile and Tigris-Euphrates as “cradles of civilization”) (G-1B-M2) |
| 4. | Explain ways in which goals, cultures, interests, inventions, and technological advances have affected people’s perceptions and uses of places or regions in world history (G-1B-M4) |
| Environment and Society | |
| 9. | Explain how different physical environments affected human activity in ancient civilizations (G-1D-M2) |
| History | |
| 15. | Construct a timeline of key developments in world history (political, social, technological, religious/cultural)(H-1A-M1) |
| 17. | Describe the defining characteristics of major world civilizations from political, social, and economic perspectives (H-1A-M2) |
| 19. | Use multiple primary and secondary sources to describe world civilizations (H-1A-M4) |
| 21 | Conduct historical research using a variety of resources to answer historical questions related to world civilizations (H-1A-M6) |
| World History | |
| 24 | Explain how geographical features influenced development of early civilizations (e.g., domestication, cultivation, specialization) (H-1C-M2) |
| 27. | Locate and describe the major river systems and discuss the physical settings that supported permanent settlement and early civilizations in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, and the Indus valley (H-1C-M3) |
| 28. | Describe the major characteristics of early river valley civilizations (H-1C-M3) |
| 29. | Describe how early river civilizations influenced the development of other cultures through trade and cultural diffusion (H-1C-M4) |
| 35. | Identify forms of writing developed in early civilizations and explain how written records changed political, legal, religious, and cultural life (H-1C-M3) |

Sample Activities

Activity 1: Defining Characteristics of a Civilization (GLEs: 17, 28)

Ask students whether they would consider the hunter-gatherer societies studied in Unit 1 as “civilizations”. Why or why not? How about the early small farming communities like Çatal Hüyük or Skara Brae? Would they consider them “civilizations”? Have students explain their answers. What would they consider, then, to be the major characteristics of a “civilization”? (e.g. has an organized political or governmental structure; has an economy with distinct, diverse jobs; has laws that govern social and economic relations; has urban or very populated areas; often has organized religion; usually has distinct art, architecture, and culture)

Ask students how they think the first cities developed. Why did cities develop? What are the advantages and disadvantages of living in a city? Tell students that they are about to study the world’s first large civilizations. Tell them that, as humans made advances in farming, they could produce more food and feed more people. Small villages grew into towns which grew into cities. Remind them about where the earliest farming communities tended to develop. Tell them that in order to understand civilizations, they must first study and analyze the geographical features that shaped the civilizations themselves.

Activity 2: Rivers and Early Civilizations (GLEs: 2, 3, 9, 19, 21, 24, 27)

Materials List: 5 Boats BLMs, primary and secondary source materials, River Research Sheet BLM, Writing Prompt Sheet BLM

Use a *story chain* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to introduce students to the major rivers that gave rise to the four early river valley civilizations (the *cradles* of civilization). *Story chains* entail passing around a paper onto which each member of a group writes one line of a given story until the story is finished. They are a useful literacy tool when students need to organize new information they read or learn into a narrative form. Another attractive feature of *story chains* for teaching is that they provide for equal participation by members of a cooperative learning group.

Tell students that they will be taking fictitious trips down five rivers – the Tigris, the Euphrates, the Nile, the Indus, and the Huang He (Yellow). Divide the class into five groups and hand each group a picture of a boat from one of the five rivers (See the 5 Boats BLMs). Have the students use primary (photos, maps, travel journals, documentaries) and secondary (internet, encyclopedias, textbook, library books) sources to research their particular river and to complete the River Research Sheet (see BLM).

Once research is completed, instruct students to use the Writing Prompt Sheet (see BLM) to write a travel journal or story of a fictitious trip down their river. The writing process

is a *story chain*, whereby the journal (paper) is passed around the group and each person writes one sentence or line. Along the trip, students are to stop at interesting sites that highlight different natural physical features or interesting human-made attractions. Their trip should have at least ten stops and must start at the river's source and end at the river's mouth. Bon Voyage!

Have a spokesperson from each group read their *story chain* to the class while other members use a map to point out the stops and display the picture of their boat. Once all *story chains* have been presented, ask the class the following questions:

- Were there any similarities among the five rivers?
- How did climate, geography, and other environmental factors affect the way that settlements along these rivers developed?
- What were the most surprising facts they learned?
- What was the land like right along the rivers?
- What advantages did the rivers have for settlers along the banks?
- How did humans prevent flooding along the different rivers?
- What modern technology do people use to live along the rivers today?

Use the *professor know-it-all* literacy strategy ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to provide closure to this activity. Have each group stand up shoulder-to-shoulder for three minutes in the front of the room and answer questions from the class about their river. Challenge the class to ask both factual and higher-level questions and to ask for elaboration when necessary. Challenge the “professors” to “know it all.”

Activity 3: Physical Features that Influenced Early Civilizations (GLEs: 2, 3, 9, 24)

Materials List: student copies of a world map

Tell the class that there are other physical features or landforms besides the five rivers that influenced the early river valley civilizations. Have students locate each of the physical features below on a world map and discuss with students the features' likely influences on early civilizations. Bring in contemporary issues related to these features when appropriate.

- Zagros Mountains
- Himalaya Mountains
- Caspian Sea
- Red Sea
- Dead Sea
- Arabian Sea
- Yellow Sea
- Black Sea
- Great Salt Desert
- Syrian Desert

- Sahara Desert
- Gobi Desert
- Taklimakan Desert
- Persian Gulf
- Sinai Peninsula
- Cataracts along the Nile River

Activity 4: History of Four River Valley Civilizations (GLEs: 15, 17, 28,)

Materials List: posters or chart paper (1 per 3 students), rulers, crayons

In this activity, students will fill out an illustrated timeline of the four early river valley civilizations while the teacher gives a presentation on key events and characteristics of Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, and ancient China. The presentation and time line may take 2-5 days and teachers should assign home reading to enhance the presentation. Have students generate three questions from the text to ask the teacher the following day.

To prepare for the lesson, cut posters lengthwise into three equal sections. Give each student one section, a ruler, and crayons. Tell them that they will be constructing an illustrated timeline about the four river valley civilizations based on the teacher presentation and on readings from the textbook. Tell them that the timeline will cover 2500 years, from 3,500-1,000 B.C. Have students measure the length of the poster board and solicit answers as to how many years an inch or centimeter should represent. Have them draw a line to represent 2500 years and label with small numbers each 100 years along the line. Have them indicate in a corner the ratio of length to years they are using. Then have students create a title for their timeline (e.g., “Early River Valley Civilizations”).

Teachers should give a presentation or *PowerPoint*® on each of the four civilizations. As the teacher talks, students will fill out a preliminary list of approximate dates to place on the timeline. Below is an example of how that list might look:

| APPROXIMATE DATE | EVENT |
|------------------|---|
| 3,500 BC | First cities develop from small farming villages in Mesopotamia |
| 3,100 BC | Menes unites Egypt and becomes its first pharaoh |
| 2,500 BC | The Great Pyramid built near Giza |
| 2,350 BC | Sargon conquers Mesopotamia and forms the world’s first empire |
| 2,300 BC | The Harappan civilization in the Indus Valley evolves |
| 2,000 BC | Epic of Gilgamesh carved in stone |
| 1,770 BC | Code of Hammurabi |
| 1,700 BC | Aryans invade the Indus Valley |
| 1,500 BC | Shang dynasty in China |

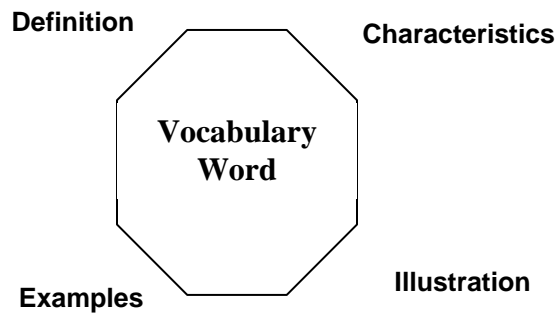
| | |
|----------|--|
| 1,480 BC | Queen Hatshepsut rules Egypt |
| 1,200 BC | Assyrians conquer Babylon; Ramses the Great rules Egypt |
| 1,100 BC | The <i>Vedas</i> written in India; the Zhou dynasty in China |

They will use this list to complete their timeline on the poster. Give students time at the end of each segment of the presentation to update and illustrate those important dates using examples from the textbook. At the end of the activity, post the timelines around the room or have students fold them to use as study guides for a test.

Activity 5: Architecture, Engineering, and Inventions (GLEs: 4, 28)

Materials List: index cards (10 per student); Ziggurat Project Grading Rubric BLM; photos of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro; sugar cubes, cardboard, play dough, boxes or legos to build a ziggurat

Ask students for their definition of technology. Review with them forms of technology employed by hunter-gatherers. Tell them that early farmers developed increasingly sophisticated forms of technology that allowed them to grow more food. Civilizations also developed new forms of transportation for trading their products as well as improved weapons and defense mechanisms. Have students make *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) on the following technological advances: plow, irrigation, grain storage, flood plain, canal, ziggurat, shaduf, papyrus, mummy, city wall. Vocabulary cards entail writing the designated word in the center and dividing the card into 4 parts, one with the definition, one with characteristics of the word, one with examples, and one with an illustration. The card should look similar to the one below:



Go over the cards as a class and have students use them to study for tests.

Ask students what the word “architecture” means. Ask them to describe the architecture (design of buildings) of their school and homes. Ask them whether they have ever visited

places that had really different architecture from their home town. How does the architecture of a place reflect the physical surroundings? Tell students that they will study many different architectural styles over the course of the year. Tell them that they will start by studying a particular architectural style from Mesopotamia – the ziggurat.

Assign a home project whereby each student has to build a model or draw a sketch of a ziggurat. Have students do a reading on ziggurats and then build one out of a material of their choice (sugar cubes, cardboard, play dough, boxes, legos, etc.). If they would prefer to sketch a ziggurat, have them do so. Both models and sketches must be labeled with the various functions of the different levels. Also, models and sketches must have a well-written paragraph about ziggurats attached. (See the Ziggurat Project Grading Rubric BLM.)

Have students use *split-page notetaking* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to comprehend an article on how the ancient Egyptians built pyramids. To do *split-page notetaking*, students write a heading at the top of their notebook paper with the name of the topic of the presentation and the date. Then they draw a line down the page creating a $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{2}{3}$ split. In the first, narrower column, students will write key concepts or questions about pyramid building. In the wider column, students will write important details. Have each student write down one idea for a key concept or question that they need to learn about from the presentation. Then, as a class, agree on the key concepts or questions to put in the left-hand column. An example is below:

| KEY CONCEPT | DETAILS |
|---------------------|---------|
| Materials Used | |
| Source of Labor | |
| Parts of a Pyramid | |
| Technology Utilized | |
| The Burial Chamber | |

Go over the students’ notes as a class, making sure that students have grasped the technical information on the topic. Have students create a Venn diagram *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) comparing ziggurats to pyramids.

Explain to students that people in the Indus Valley used mud bricks to construct their cities. Study photos of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro with the class. What evidence is there that Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro were planned cities, and what does this evidence say about the level of organization of the Indus government, economy, and even values? What advantages do bricks have over stone, straw, and wood – three typical building materials at that time? Explain to students that the people of ancient China also built out of mud bricks. Chinese architecture was based on the principle of “symmetry”. Explain this principle to the students and ask them whether their own homes, schools, and churches are symmetrical. Tell the class that the Chinese built very distinctive curved, tiled roofs. Show them a picture of an ancient Chinese temple.

This is a good time to invite an architect, brick layer, engineer, carpenter, or contractor to the class to explain their design and building techniques.

Activity 6: Communication and Writing (GLEs: 28, 35)

Materials List: playdough (golf ball-sized amount per student), paper plates (1 per student), wooden dowels, excerpt from “The Epic of Gilgamesh,” excerpt from Hammurabi’s Code

Tell students that oral language was the primary form of communication until humans developed forms of writing. Tell them that one of the earliest recorded epics (a long, narrative poem) is from Mesopotamia and tells about the life of a king named Gilgamesh. Tell students that such primary documents like “The Epic of Gilgamesh” are invaluable to historians because they can extract bits and pieces of history from them. Have students read an excerpt from the epic and list as many things as possible that the epic reveals about Mesopotamian civilization. Compare lists.

Tell students that as cities and civilizations grew, they developed the need for more sophisticated forms of communication and memory than oral language. For example, as people traded more and more products, they could not keep track of all of the figures in their heads and expect other persons to agree on business deals just by word of mouth. Also, with so many people living in one place, a society needed rules or laws by which to function. They could not count on people just remembering those laws, so they started to write them down.

Show students samples of writing from the four river valley civilizations. Discuss what materials (writing tools and writing surfaces) were used in the different civilizations for writing. Tell students that not everyone in those civilizations learned to read and write. In fact, very few did. Some talented youth were allowed to be trained as scribes. Then have all students become scribes, using playdough and wooden dowels to practice writing cuneiform, Egyptian hieroglyphics, Indus Valley seals, and Chinese pictographs. Have students work with the playdough on a paper plate. Play a game whereby students find a symbol to carve into the playdough and then the class has to guess from which civilization it came and what it signifies.

Introduce students to Hammurabi’s Code. (For a translation of the code itself, see <http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/MESO/CODE.HTM>, which is edited by Richard Hooker and translated by L.W. King.) Have them read an excerpt from it and discuss which laws are similar to any of our laws today. Have them discuss the severity of the penalties. What does the code suggest about the relationship between women and men in Mesopotamian society? Explain to them that Hammurabi had the code inscribed onto huge stones that were placed at the entrance to all of his cities so that everyone knew the rules they were expected to follow. Ask them to hypothesize about how effective this method was.

Have students do a reading on the Rosetta Stone (see <http://www.crystalinks.com/rosetta.html> for a sample reading). Use *GISTing* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to summarize the reading. Tell students that *GISTing* is a systematic way to summarize the information in a paragraph. Do the first paragraph as a class. Start with the first sentence. Read it, then write a summary of it in fifteen or fewer words. Then read the second sentence. Change the original summary sentence to include the information in the second sentence as well. Remember that the summary sentence has to have fifteen words or less. Continue in this way until all the sentences of the paragraph have been done. The end result should be one summary sentence about the whole paragraph. A sample *GIST* based on the first paragraph of the internet reading suggested above is:

| Sentence | <i>GIST</i> |
|----------|---|
| 1 | The Rosetta Stone is about 4 by 2 by $\frac{1}{3}$ feet wide. |
| 2 | The Rosetta Stone is a small, granite stone with three different writings on it. |
| 3 | The small, granite Rosetta Stone had three writings on it and helped to decipher hieroglyphics. |

Divide the class into pairs and have them summarize (using *GISTing*) the remaining paragraphs about the Rosetta Stone. Share summaries as a class.

Have students analyze some of the Indus Valley seals and some of the oracle bones from China. What can they infer about life in those two places from those two sets of “writings”?

Activity 7: Trade and Cultural Diffusion (GLEs: 28, 29)

Materials List: index cards, encyclopedias

Hand out index cards with a different traded product on each one (ex: spices, barley, wheat, ivory, gold, wood, camels, dates, copper, silk, grapes, porcelain, etc.) Have students use the textbook or encyclopedia to find out which civilization produced the product and how and where it was traded. Have students share their findings with the class.

Display the pictures of the boats from Activity 2 (see the 5 Boats BLMs) in this lesson. Discuss with the students how boats facilitated trade. Then have students read an article about the camel. Use the *professor know-it-all* literacy strategy ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to assess students’ knowledge of the camel as a beast of burden.

Write the words, “cultural diffusion” on the board. Ask students what *cultural* means and what *diffusion* means. Ask them for examples of cultural diffusion in their own lives (i.e. liking Chinese restaurants, Japanese electronics, music from other places like Reggae,

etc.). Ask them whether they think those products influence their values and decisions in their lives at all. Ask them whether they think any American products influence the lives of kids their age in other countries? Which ones?

Discuss the physical features that isolated China from trade and cultural diffusion with other cultures. Have students think about the advantages and disadvantages of isolation. Tell them that China's isolation will end with the creation of the Silk Road and sea trade routes. Ask students whether they think there are still countries where people are "isolated." Write the word, "globalization" on the board, and discuss with students its meaning and whether they think they are "global" in their views, values, etc. Ask them to compare the two terms, *cultural diffusion* and *globalization*. What is the difference? Which term do they hear the most in their own lives?

Activity 8: Physical Features of the River Valley Civilizations (GLEs: 3, 9)

Materials List: Writing Student Poems BLM; a copy of Langston Hughes poem, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers;" world map

Introduce students to the American poet Langston Hughes and to his poem, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." (For a copy of the poem, visit the Academy of American Poets' website: <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15722>. On the website, a recording is available of Langston Hughes explaining how he wrote the poem as well as reading the poem himself.) As the poem is read, have students locate on a world map the rivers he mentions. Discuss the metaphors and imagery used in the poem. Ask students who they think "I" is in the poem and what Hughes meant by "My soul has grown deep like the rivers."

Tell students that they are going to write a similar poem based on what they have learned about the geographic features and history of the ancient civilizations. Divide the class into six groups and assign each group one of the following physical features: seas, deserts, or mountains (two groups per topic). Hand them the Writing Student Poems BLM and tell them to use all of the materials they have generated over the course of this unit (notes, timelines, *PowerPoint*® presentations, posters, research sheets, etc.) to write a poem similar to Hughes', only on a different physical feature than rivers. (Ex: Instead of "My soul has grown deep like the rivers," "My dreams are as high as the mountains.") Students should use specific geographical features in their poems just as Hughes did. Their poems should demonstrate their knowledge of those features and the history that transpired along with them.

Have students read their poems aloud to the class as a choral (group) reading. Someone from the group can point out the geographical features on a large map as the rest of the group reads.

Activity 9: Debate on Four River Valley Civilizations (GLEs: 4, 17, 28)

Tell the class that they will end this unit with a debate on “In which river valley civilization it would have been best to have lived?” Divide the class into four groups and assign each group a different civilization (Mesopotamia, Egypt, Indus Valley or China). Tell the students that they will have a day to compile a list of the advantages to living in their civilization and the disadvantages to living in the others. Students can use their textbooks and all of the materials they have generated over the course of this unit (notes, timelines, *PowerPoint*®s, posters, research sheets, etc.) to compile their lists. Remind them to include all major characteristics of the civilizations including culture, government, religion, architecture, technological innovations, geographical features, and writings.

Arrange the desks of each group along the four sides of the classroom. Students can put up posters, timelines, maps, etc. to decorate the fronts of their desks to indicate their civilization. Rotate from one group to the next, with each group pointing out one advantage of their civilization at a time. When they have exhausted their lists of advantages, rotate around again, this time having students point out disadvantages to living in the other civilizations. Each member of a group must contribute and serve as a spokesperson.

Have a culmination discussion about why they think one civilization triumphed over the others as the “best to have lived in.” Ask students what characteristics of civilizations they value most. Did their own lives and societies influence their points of view in the debate? Do they think they would feel differently if they really were from those civilizations? How do they think their “perception” of other civilizations is influenced by their own lives?

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

- Assessment should be on-going, daily, and an integral part of instruction. Use quick forms of assessment to end a lesson or a class.
- Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the types of products that result from the student activities.
- Rubrics on writing assignments and projects should assess content knowledge rather than extraneous elements like creativity, neatness, etc.

General Assessments

- A teacher-created, comprehensive exam assessing the GLEs from this unit should consist of the following:
 - a variety of formats for objective, convergent test items
 - depth of knowledge at various stages of Bloom’s taxonomy
 - I-LEAP-formatted items
 - open-ended response items requiring supporting evidence
 - test items aligned to the verbiage of the GLEs.
- Story Chain of River Trip: Students will make a story chain of a fictitious trip down one of the five identified rivers. Make sure that groups have at least **ten** stops on their fictitious trips. Make sure the trip identifies and starts at the river’s source and identifies and ends at the river’s mouth. Assess the accuracy of each group’s map and journey.
- Timeline: Students will construct an illustrated timeline of important events in the history of the four river valley civilizations. Assess based on accurate placement of dates, comprehensiveness, and accurate representation through illustration.
- Ziggurat Project: Students will build a model of or sketch a ziggurat as a home project. The tiers of the ziggurat must be labeled and a paragraph about ziggurats attached to the project. Use the Ziggurat Project Grading Rubric BLM to assess the project.
- Student Poem: Groups of students will write poems similar to Langston Hughes’ poem, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers.” Assess the accuracy of information in the poems.
- Debate: Students will debate about living in the various river valley civilizations. Points should be assigned to the different sides for each relevant, accurate, and factual point made in the debate.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activity 2: River Trip Project: This activity involves groups of students planning a trip down one of five rivers. Assessment should be based on accuracy of maps and on relevance of stops selected for the trip.
- Activity 5: Ziggurat Model or Sketch: This is a home assignment whereby each student sketches or builds a model of a Mesopotamian ziggurat. The sketch or model must be labeled with the various levels of the ziggurat, and each project must be accompanied by a paragraph on ziggurats. Grade for accuracy rather than for creativity. Ribbons can be given for going above and beyond the assignment to include “Most Creative,” “Best Construction,” “Best Paragraph,” etc. (See the Ziggurat Project Grading Rubric BLM.)

- Activity 9: Class Debate: Determine the winner of this debate by assigning one point each time a team makes a historically accurate, relevant, and factual point during the debate. The team with the most points at the end of the debate is the winner.

Additional Resources

http://worldhistoryforall.sdsu.edu/dev/units/three/landscape/03_landscape3.pdf This website has an entire unit of information and activities on river valley civilizations.

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/egypt/literature/hieroglyphs.htm> A great website on hieroglyphics.

Hieroglyphs : The Writing of Ancient Egypt by Norma Jean Katan and Barbara Mintz. A great introduction to the topic for students.

Hieroglyphs by Joyce Milton.

Grade 6
Social Studies
Unit 3: People and Ideas on the Move (1000 B.C.–A.D. 300)

Time Frame: Three weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on some of the smaller ancient civilizations, the migration of early peoples, trade, and the spread of technology and ideas.

Student Understandings

Students will learn about the Hittite, Minoan, Mycenaean, and Phoenician civilizations. Students will understand the reasons for differing patterns of migration of early peoples. Students will understand how ancient civilizations were influenced by trade and by the spread of technology and ideas. Students will use historical thinking skills and conduct research to answer historical questions related to ancient civilizations.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students describe the defining characteristics of the Hittite, Minoan, Mycenaean, and Phoenician civilizations?
2. Can students explain the reasons for different patterns of migration among early people?
3. Can students explain the different ages of technology and, in particular, the development of the plow and of iron tools and weapons?
4. Can students explain the significance of Phoenician trade in the Mediterranean Sea?

Unit 3 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

| GLE # | GLE Text and Benchmarks |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Physical and Human Systems | |
| 5. | Explain reasons for different patterns of migration among early peoples (G-1C-M4) |
| 7. | Describe the economic interdependence among various ancient civilizations (G-1C-M6) |
| Economics | |
| 14. | Use economic concepts (e.g., supply and demand, interdependence) to describe the economic motivations for expanding trade and territorial domination in world history (E-1A-M9) |

| History | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Historical Thinking Skills | |
| 17. | Describe the defining characteristics of world civilizations from political, social, and economic perspectives (H-1A-M2) |
| 19. | Use multiple primary and secondary sources to describe world civilizations (H-1A-M4) |
| 21. | Conduct historical research using a variety of resources to answer historical questions related to world civilizations (H-1A-M6) |
| World History | |
| 29. | Describe how early river civilizations influenced the development of other cultures through trade and cultural diffusion (H-1C-M4) |
| 30. | Describe the development of agricultural societies and individual communities in Southwest Asia, the Mediterranean basin, and temperate Europe, including the role of plow technology (H-1C-M4) |
| 31. | Identify the effects of migration and militarization on the politics and social fabric of Europe and Asia (H-1C-M5) |
| 32. | Analyze the origins and influence of the Hittite, Minoan, and Mycenaean civilizations (H-1C-M5) |
| 33. | Explain the significance of the introduction of iron tools and weapons in Southwest Asia and the Mediterranean region (H-1C-M6) |
| 34. | Explain the significance of Phoenician trade in the Mediterranean basin (H-1C-M6) |

Sample Activities

Activity 1: Travel Log (GLE: 29)

Materials List: construction paper, dates

Use a *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to have students record a more personal reaction to what they learn in this unit. Call it a “Travel Log.” Tell students that, throughout history, there were people who kept logs, journals, or diaries to record important information. Show them a page from Columbus’ journal, the *Notebooks* of Leonardo da Vinci, and/or *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Tell students that they are about to take a trip to some of the smaller civilizations of the ancient world, and they are about to study some of the earliest forms of technology. To make sure they understand and remember all that they learn, they will record new information in their Travel Log. Have students construct the log by folding one sheet of construction paper and about six sheets of loose leaf paper together and stapling it to form a book. Have them choose an artifact from the textbook unit to sketch onto the cover. Tell them that they are going to be writing and drawing on the fronts and backs of the papers in the Travel Log and that they will be skipping only one line between entries. Every entry must be dated.

For the first Travel Log entry, read aloud an encyclopedia article on “dates.” Tell students that dates were one of the first domesticated plants in Mesopotamia and that they

were an important source of food on trade caravans. Have students taste real dates. Have students make their first entry into their Travel Logs by writing today's date, entitling it "Dates," and recording some of the facts about this amazing plant as well as how they found the dates tasted. Share entries aloud.

Activity 2: Forces in Human Migration (GLEs: 5, 14, 29)

Materials List: newspaper articles on migration (optional)

Humans have migrated since prehistoric times. People then and now are motivated to move by both *push* and *pull* factors. Define *push* and *pull* as used in describing the migration or movement of people over time.

Hold a brainstorming session where students identify people they know who have moved into or out of the community and describe the reason they moved. Make a chalkboard list of the reasons people give for migrating. (If the student-made list is not comprehensive, supply others.) Relate the discussion to contemporary migration issues, including the migrations that occurred following hurricanes in Louisiana, and have students collect newspaper articles or watch the evening news to be able to discuss those issues in class.

Ask the class to consider the wealth and successes of the ancient civilizations such as the Egyptians, Harappans, Han, and Sumerians. Would less developed peoples be pulled or pushed to migrate into or away from one of the cradles of civilization? Would people within advanced cultures be pulled or pushed to migrate? Would there be advantages to having poor, low-skilled workers move into a settled culture? Disadvantages? Would invasion and conquest be a form of migration? Inform the class that Unit 3 will involve the study of four civilizations that may have migrated and settled in new areas—Phoenicians, Hittites, Minoans, and Mycenaeans.

Have students write their second entry into their Travel Log listing push and pull factors to migration.

Activity 3: The Hittites, Minoans, Mycenaeans, and Phoenicians (GLEs: 17, 19, 21, 32, 34)

Materials List: primary and secondary sources, music, Civilization Research Sheet BLM

Create cooperative learning groups to research and record data about four civilizations: the Hittites, Minoans, Mycenaeans, and Phoenicians. Tell students that they are going to become detectives and search for facts about each civilization.

Create four "civilization stations" (research centers) in your classroom. Each station should focus on one of the four cultures. Include at least six primary and secondary sources on each culture at each station. Have groups go around to each station to search

for information using the Civilization Research Sheet BLM. Tell students to find as many facts as they can in the given time (10-15 minutes for each station). If necessary, take two class periods to complete this task. Use music to indicate the end of the time allotted at each station and to indicate that students should move silently to the next station. When the music ceases, students can resume research and discussion on the next culture.

When students have visited all four civilization stations, have them do a word splash on each civilization in their Travel Logs. (Draw a circle and put the name of the civilization in the middle of the circle and then “splash” words in the circle that relate to that civilization.) Then do class word splashes on the board as a way to review what students learned about each one.

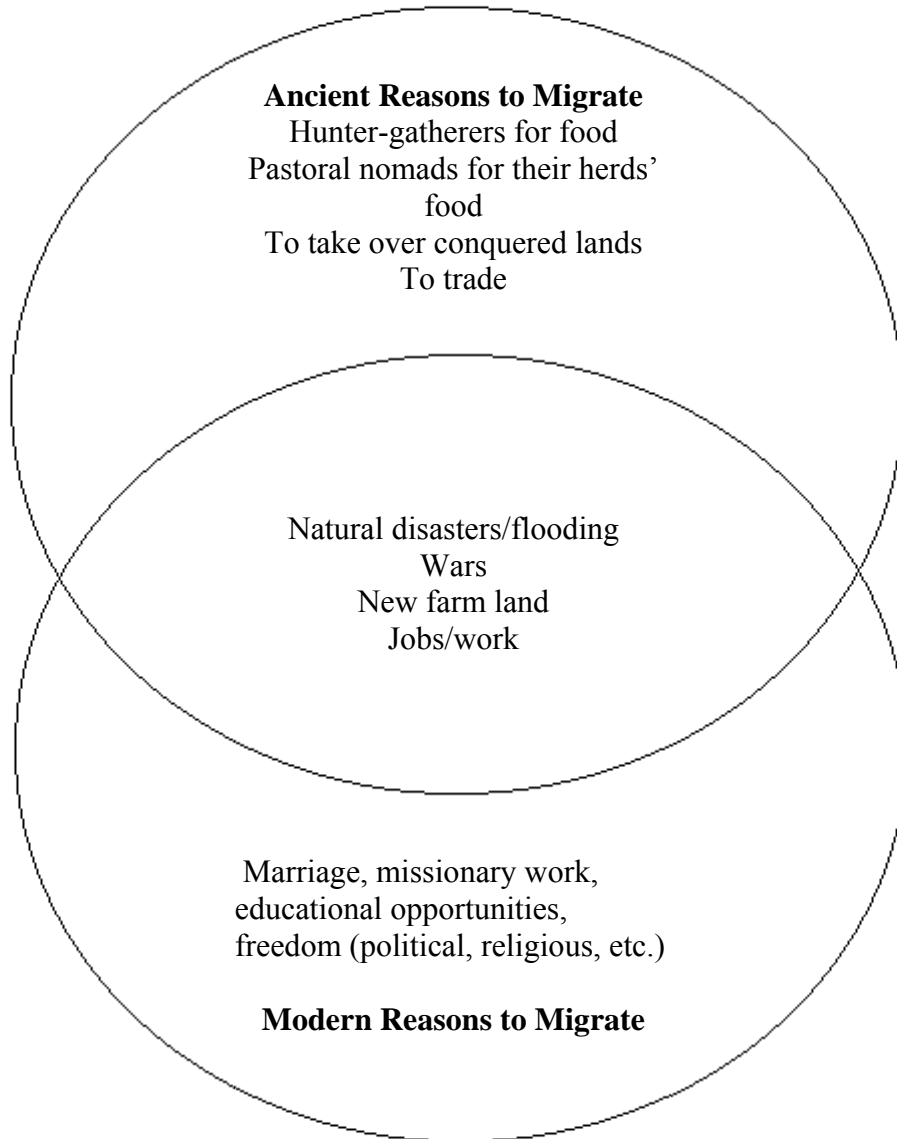
Activity 4: Motivations for Ancient Migrations (GLEs: 5, 29, 31)

Teachers should present information on how the four cultures above migrated and traded. In the presentation, answer the following questions:

- Why did each group migrate and settle in new places?
- What was the advantage of their new settlements?
- How was trade important to each cultural group?
- How did migration help the culture to acquire new ideas?
- How did migration force other cultures to change?
- How did war and conquest force people to migrate?
- How did new inventions and discoveries influence migration?
- How did trade promote human migration and diffusion of culture?

Remind students about contemporary migration and then have students make a Venn diagram *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) in their Travel Logs comparing ancient to modern motivations to migrate. Once completed, students can use their Venn diagrams to quiz each other in preparation for tests and other class activities. The Venn diagram may look something like the chart on the next page.

“Reasons for Human Migration”



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Activity 5: The Ages of Technology (GLEs: 30, 33)

Materials List: Technology BLM, Ancient Technology Worksheet BLM, index cards, Levee Technology BLM, award ribbons for Ancient Technology Fair, various materials to construct models of ancient technology

Remind students about their discussion of technology in the last unit. Tell students that history has been divided into “ages” based on the main forms of technology and that they will be reading about those ages and then constructing models of ancient forms of technology for judging at an “Ancient Technology Fair.”

Use *reciprocal teaching* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) and the Technology BLM (or another reading of the teacher’s choice) to read and learn about the different Ages of Technology. Write the words “summarizer, questioner, clarifier, and predictor” on the board. Tell students that these are four roles that an effective reader takes on when reading. Today, they will divide up those roles in groups. First, demonstrate each role by reading the first paragraph of the reading aloud and applying those four roles to it. For example, ask a student to summarize the first paragraph; he/she may say something like “Even during the first age of technology – the Stone Age – humans made tools from bone, stone, and wood.” Then put yourself in the role of questioner and ask students a couple of key questions related to the paragraph like, “Around when did the Stone Age occur?” or “What are some examples of human ingenuity during this age?” Demonstrate the next role of a good reader by asking students to clarify the term, “age” of technology and then to clarify how humans used technology. Finally, ask students to be predictors – what do they think the next paragraph will be about or what the next age of technology will be and why they think this. Do one or two more paragraphs as a class, if necessary. Then divide the class into groups of four and assign the four roles in each group. Have the groups finish the reading on technology using *reciprocal teaching*. When the groups have finished reading, apply *reciprocal teaching* to the entire article as a class, doing the following:

- **Summarize** the article.
- What **questions** arose in the article?
- What words needed **clarification**?
- Who would like to **predict** what the next age of technology will be?

Use the same groups for the Ancient Technology Fair. Tell students that they are going to research one form of ancient technology, and then they are going to build a model of that form from household and classroom materials (Ex: cardboard, string, corn husks, scrap pieces of wood, glue, plastic containers, etc.). Write a different form of ancient technology on each index card (ex: chariot, woven basket, papyrus paper, shaduf, mud brick, plow, lighthouse, harp, lute, spinning wheel, potter’s wheel, catapult, battering ram, pottery, fishing net) on each index card. Hand out two or three index cards to each group (depending on the size of the class) and allow each group to choose which form of technology it wants to research and build out of the cards they are handed. Then hand out the Ancient Technology Worksheet BLM and have students use primary and secondary sources to complete the worksheet before starting on their model. Have students bring in

materials from home and put out classroom materials for the building of their models. Give students two days to build their models. Have groups that finish early enter the extra levee category of the Ancient Technology Fair by completing the Levee Technology BLM. Display all models by category and invite two or three outside judges to award ribbons in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places in each category. Take pictures of groups with their models, and invite parents to view the models.

Have students tape the pictures of their models into their Travel Logs and write a paragraph about their models in the Ancient Technology Fair.

Take students outside the school and have them look for a fallen tree branch and try to “plow” the earth using the branch. Tell students that this was the first form of a plow that early farmers used and that plows are perhaps the most important agricultural invention of all ages. After returning to the classroom, show students pictures from Egyptian artwork of early plows in Egypt. Then have students search sources for a picture of:

- An all-wooden plow
- An early draft animal-drawn plow with a metal “foot”
- An early tractor-drawn plow
- A modern tractor-drawn plow

For a student-friendly article on the history of the plow, see <http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/economy/plow.htm>.

Activity 6: Military Technology, Ancient Warfare, and Cultural Diffusion (GLEs: 31, 33)

Materials List: newspaper or magazine articles on world conflicts today

Hold a class discussion on war and what impact it has on a region’s culture. Discuss contemporary issues regarding war due to land acquisition, religious beliefs, wealth, etc.

Have students bring in articles illustrating conflict in the world today. Have them write summaries discussing whom the conflict is between, why they are at war, and how the geography of the region impacts military combat.

Discuss contemporary warfare and technology. Issue a home assignment whereby students interview a war veteran. Have students focus the interview on technology and warfare and on what the veteran learned from the war experience. Allow at least one week and one weekend for students to identify a veteran and interview him/her. If a student cannot identify a veteran who is willing to be interviewed, have him/her interview an elderly person who remembers World War II or another war and can answer some questions about what it was like on the home front during that war. Have students present their interviews to the class.

Give a presentation on the following ancient invasions:

- Hyksos invasion of Egypt (chariots)
- Hittite conflicts with Egypt (decline of both cultures)
- Assyrian invasion of Sumer/Babylon
- Assyrian's forcing of the Phoenicians to settle along the Mediterranean Coast
- Dorian invasion of the Mycenaean culture
- Aryan people's invasion of the Indus civilization

Teachers will present information on how armor and fighting equipment improved among the copper, bronze, and iron ages. Present to the students a timeline illustrating the evolution of weapons throughout ancient times and present some examples of weapons today. Bring in any information that students acquired in their interviews of war veterans.

Have students do another entry in their travel logs regarding what they have learned about military technology from this activity.

Activity 7: Trade in the Ancient World (GLEs: 7, 14, 29, 34)

Materials List: posters (1 for every 2 students), map of the Mediterranean with Phoenician trade routes, map or flow chart of the spread of Phoenician culture, Trade Poster Grading Rubric BLM

Introduce students to the following vocabulary related to trade: *trade*, barter, economy, money economy, good or product, luxury good, scarcity, surplus, merchant, caravan, cargo, *supply and demand*.

Have students locate on an historical map the Mediterranean basin and identify routes of Phoenician trade.

Teachers will present information on the significance of Phoenician trade to the Mediterranean basin. Describe with a visual (map or flow chart), the spread of Phoenician culture around the Mediterranean Sea and its impact on local cultures. The visual should include the significant contributions of the Phoenicians (e.g., alphabet, colony and city development, and a trading or commercial economy). A good website for information on the Phoenicians can be found at <http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/westasia/history/phoenicians.htm>.

Review the concept of supply and demand. Phoenicians understood the supplies that were not available in regions and through economic transactions, and they gained prominence and influence in many regions. Through the interdependence of trade, Phoenician culture was often imitated and in turn the Phoenicians incorporated other cultures into their own. Teachers should encourage students to identify how trade influences their present-day culture through diffusion.

Using poster boards and working in pairs, students will create a large map of the world and label the continents and oceans. They will label the eight civilizations (Mesopotamia, Egypt, Indus Valley, China, Minoan, Mycenaean, Hittite, and Phoenician) studied thus far and place the dates that those civilizations thrived under the names. They will make a map key with products traded and place those products on the map where they were produced. Then they should trace trade routes among those civilizations onto the map. (See Trade Poster Grading Rubric BLM.) Display and discuss the maps in preparation for a test.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

- Assessment should be on-going, daily, and an integral part of instruction. Use quick forms of assessment to end a lesson or a class.
- Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the types of products that result from the student activities.
- Rubrics on writing assignments and projects should assess content knowledge rather than extraneous elements like creativity, neatness, etc.

General Assessments

- A teacher-created, comprehensive exam assessing the GLEs from this unit should consist of the following:
 - a variety of formats for objective, convergent test items
 - depth of knowledge at various stages of Bloom’s taxonomy
 - I-LEAP-formatted items
 - open-ended response items requiring supporting evidence
 - test items aligned to the verbiage of the GLEs.
- Travel Log: Students will keep a “Travel Log” during this unit. Students will share their entries, and use their logs at the end of the unit to study for a test. Have them evaluate their logs as a learning tool before moving on to the next unit. If their overall response is positive, suggest to students that they keep a log whenever they study new concepts in any subject.
- Participation in class discussions, civilization stations, group work, and pair work should be monitored by the teacher as well as self-assessed by the students vis-à-vis their participation in such activities. Some students may benefit from a teacher’s individual attention and positive feedback regarding their group participation.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activity 3: Word splashes – Students will create 5 word splashes based on the civilization station research activity. Students should write at least 10 words into each culture’s word splash. Grade them based on accuracy.
- Activity 5: Research sheet and model – Every student is responsible for filling out a research sheet, whereas the group as a whole will create one model. Grade the research sheets for accuracy and thoroughness.
- Activity 7: Use the Trade Poster Grading Rubric BLM to grade the trade posters. Have both members of the pair sign a pledge indicating that the work has been shared equally.

Additional Resources

<http://ancienthistory.mrdonn.org/Mesopotamia.html#CUNEIFORM> Hands-on activity on cuneiform writing.

<http://www.foodtimeline.org/> A timeline on the history of most types of food, it traces where and when different foods were first grown and how their cultivation and consumption spread.

http://extension.usu.edu/aitc/teachers/pdf/lesson/winter07_grain.pdf A great lesson plan on the geography, history, and economics of rice.

Moscati, Sabatino, *The Phoenicians*. A good source of historical and cultural information on the Phoenicians.

Grade 6
Social Studies
Unit 4: The Classical World (1000 B.C. – A.D. 300)

Time Frame: Five weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on the characteristics and influence of four classical civilizations of the ancient world.

Student Understandings

Students will understand that ancient empires established, expanded, and sought to maintain political boundaries. Students will understand that ancient empires engaged in trade and conquest and, through these activities, influenced other cultures. Students will learn why certain civilizations have come to be called “classical” and will understand the enduring influences of those civilizations on students’ own lives and societies. Students will understand that empires have risen and fallen throughout history for many reasons.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students explain the economic interdependence that existed among various ancient civilizations?
2. Can students explain how various ancient civilizations established and maintained political boundaries?
3. Can students identify the essential elements of Greek and Roman government that influenced the U.S. government?
4. Can students explain how the sharing of ideas, goods, and services through trade between the Greek and Roman civilizations influenced other cultures?
5. Can students describe the key characteristics of four classical civilizations – Persia, Greece, Rome, and China?
6. Can students make valid arguments for why civilizations and empires rise and decline?

Unit 4 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

| GLE # | GLE Text and Benchmarks |
|--|---|
| Physical and Human Systems | |
| 8. | Explain how ancient civilizations established and maintained political boundaries (G-1C-M7) |
| Civics | |
| Foundation of the American Political System | |
| 11. | Identify the essential elements of Greek and Roman government that would later influence the U.S. government (H-1C-M7) |
| History: Historical Thinking Skills | |
| 15. | Construct a timeline of key developments in world history (political, social, technological, religious/cultural) (H-1A-M1) |
| 17. | Describe the defining characteristics of major world civilizations from political, social, and economic perspectives (H-1A-M2) |
| 20. | Identify historical issues or problems in world civilizations and discuss how they were addressed (H-1A-M5) |
| World History | |
| 35. | Identify forms of writing developed in early civilizations and explain how written records changed political, legal, religious, and cultural life (H-1C-M3) |
| 36. | Describe the development of the Greek city-states, the cultural achievements of Athens, and the impact of Alexander the Great's conquests (H-1C-M7) |
| 37. | Explain the sharing of ideas, goods, and services through trade between the Greek and Roman civilizations, and the influence of those civilizations on other cultures (H-1C-M7) |
| 38. | Describe and compare/contrast the key characteristics of classical civilizations (e.g., Greek, Roman, Persian, Chinese) (H-1C-M7) |

Sample Activities**Activity 1: What is a “classical” civilization? (GLE: 38)**

Materials List: 30 pennies, 10 index cards per student

This unit focuses on four *classical* civilizations and on the rise and fall of those civilizations as empires. Write the word *classical* on the board and ask students if they have ever heard of a book, a movie, or a car referred to as a “classic”. What do people mean when they say something is a classic? List some examples of classic movies, books, or cars. Discuss what makes those items on the list classical. Then tell students that they are about to learn about the key characteristics of classical civilizations. These are civilizations whose legacies – cultural, political, or otherwise – have endured since their collapse. Demonstrate the concept by handing every student a penny and telling them to study the back of the coin. What do they see? (The building they see is the

Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC and the words they see are: E PLURIBUS UNUM which is Latin for “Out of many, one.”) Tell students that the building is designed like an ancient Greek temple and is an example of how the classical architecture of ancient Greece influences our society today. The words are written in Latin, the language of the ancient Roman Empire and the basis for many of our English words today. Ask students why they think those words in Latin were put on the back of a penny. Emphasize to students that even on a penny, one can see how Greece and Rome continue to influence our lives today.

Use a *learning log* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to have students keep a written record of any examples of how the four classical civilizations they are studying in this unit influence their lives today. Distribute ten index cards to each student and have them staple the cards together to create their logs. Entitle the log “Examples of how my life and society are influenced by the classical civilizations”. Remind students to always date their entries in a learning log. Have students write down their first entry, the penny, and describe what they observed on it about classical influences. Instruct students to keep this log with them when they’re at school, traveling to and from school, and at home. As this unit transpires, have them keep a list of all examples of classical influences that they come across in their daily lives. Have them write a “G” for Greece, “R” for Rome, “P” for Persia, and “C” for China to indicate the origin of the example. Students can share their log entries with a partner and discuss similarities and differences in their responses.

Activity 2: The Development of Greek City-States (GLE: 36)

Materials List: *PowerPoint*® or video clip (optional), Paragraph Grading Rubric BLM

Have students use *split-page notetaking* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to take notes during a teacher presentation (*PowerPoint*®, video clip, or lecture) on Greek geography and the rise of independent city-states. A great source of information for this presentation is

<http://trackstar.4teachers.org/trackstar/ts/viewTrackMembersFrames.do?org.apache.struts.taglib.html.TOKEN=105c8b40f681836b09ede55d02654997&number=286064&password=> or <http://members.aol.com/Donneclass/Greeklife.html> .

To do *split-page notetaking*, students write a heading at the top of their notebook paper with the name of the topic of the presentation and the date. Then they draw a line down the page creating a $\frac{1}{3}$ and $\frac{2}{3}$ split. In the first, narrower column, students will write key concepts or questions about Greek geography and city-states. In the wider column, students will write important details. Have each student write down one idea for a key concept or question that they need to learn about from the presentation. Then as a class, students will agree on the key concepts or questions to put in the left-hand column. Here is an example of how those *split-page notes* might look:

| Notes from Presentation on Ancient Greece | Date: |
|--|--------------|
| Geography of Greece | |
| Why city-states rose | |
| How they were governed | |
| What the city-state looked like | |
| Economy | |
| Religion and Philosophy | |
| Athens and Sparta | |

Students should be urged to paraphrase and abbreviate as much as possible. Present the information, allowing time for students to take notes. Have students study later from these split-page notes by folding the page along the dividing line and generating either the big concept or question and the supporting information.

In the presentation, remind students that Mesopotamia was also organized as city-states at first. One difference is that Greek city-states not only provided security and order to residents, but also a very strong sense of identity. Describe the Greek *polis* and daily life. Explain the need to trade and discuss the importance of olives and grapes as trade products. Introduce students to two city-states, Athens and Sparta, and tell them that they will be reading more in depth about these two city-states.

Have students use *reciprocal teaching* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to read about life in Athens and Sparta. (See Additional Resources at the end of this unit for readings on Athens and Sparta.) Reciprocal teaching is a strategy that reinforces four of the critical tasks that good readers do unconsciously as they read – summarize, question, clarify, and predict. Demonstrate and model these four reading processes for the class with the first paragraph of the selected reading. Begin by reading the paragraph together as a whole class. Next, make predictions about Athens and Sparta, then encourage students to make their own predictions. Tell them to use their predictions to help guide their reading of the text. Next, share some questions that come to mind based on the first paragraph, and then ask students what questions the paragraph brings up in their minds about the topic. Remind students that their predictions and questions will help guide their reading of the passage about Athens and Sparta. After questioning, orally summarize the paragraph and then ask students to summarize the key ideas of each paragraph as they read. Finally, demonstrate how to make sense of words and phrases that may not be clear. Ask students whether any words or phrases need clarification. Tell students that they are going to practice this reading technique in groups to see if they can learn as

much as possible about the Greek city-states of Athens and Sparta. Assign students to groups and establish the four roles – summarizer, questioner, clarifier, and predictor – for *reciprocal teaching*. Have students read the rest of the reading selection on Athens and Sparta, practicing *reciprocal teaching* as they go. Once each paragraph has been read aloud, the summarizer will summarize the paragraph, the questioner will ask a question about the paragraph to make sure everyone understands it, the clarifier will clarify any difficult words or concepts in the paragraph, and the predictor will predict what the next paragraph will be about. Then students will reconvene as a class to discuss their findings. Use *reciprocal teaching* often to reinforce important reading processes and to stimulate whole class discussion of texts.

Have students write a persuasive paragraph answering the question, “In which Greek city-state, Athens or Sparta, would it be best to have lived?” Remind students to compose a catchy topic sentence, include many supporting details, and end the paragraph with a strong conclusion sentence (See the Paragraph Grading Rubric BLM).

At the end of the activity, give students time to update their *learning logs* with any influences from ancient Greece that they may have come across in the reading.

Activity 3: The Legacy of the Greeks: Democracy, Philosophy, Literature, Architecture, and the Olympics (GLEs: 11, 36, 38)

Materials: source materials (articles, websites, textbooks, pictures, etc.) for classroom stations, Greek music, certificates (or mock olive wreaths)

Set up five stations around the classroom, each with articles, pictures, websites, textbooks, or other sources depicting five spheres of Greek legacy – *direct democracy*, philosophy, literature (especially *epic poems and plays*), architecture, and the Olympics. Tell students that they are going to visit each station for about eight minutes to learn about the classical influences of Greece on later civilizations, including that of America. Their mission is to learn as much as they can and to write down at least five new facts they learned at each station. Divide the class into groups and use Greek music to indicate when the groups move from one station to another. Tell students that, when they hear the music, they are to silently move to the next station and cannot begin talking with their group again until the music ceases. When all groups have visited all stations, go over the facts as a class.

The next part of this activity will have to be done over a two-day period of time. On the first day, host a mock ancient Olympics. Divide the class into four or five city-states: Athens, Sparta, Thebes, Corinth, and Delphi. Have “citizens” from each city-state sign up for: wrestling (do arm wrestling instead of body wrestling), chariot races (simulate these by doing the human wheelbarrow race), footraces, javelin throwing (use a long piece of light plastic or other lightweight object), boxing (do a thumb wrestle for this), discus throwing (use a Frisbee), and jumping (do a standing broad jump). Host the Olympics and hand out certificates or improvised olive wreaths as prizes.

The next day, write “A sound mind in a sound body” on the board and tell students that this was an adage from ancient Greece. Ask them what they think it means and if they find it true in their own lives. Analyze yesterday’s ancient Olympics and, as a class, do a Venn diagram comparing today’s Olympics to the ancient games. Give students time to update their *learning logs*.

Activity 4: The Age of Pericles and the Death of Socrates (GLEs: 11, 36, 38)

Have students read about the Age of Pericles in the textbook. Then have them think about which contemporary politician he reminds them of the most. Do a pair-share where students share their answers. Then share answers as a class.

Use *RAFT writing* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to learn about the Greek philosopher Socrates and to prepare for a mock trial of him. *RAFT writing* involves providing students with a role (R), audience (A), form (F), and topic (T) to give direction to their reading and writing about a new subject. Assign the following roles: one person in the class as the judge, one person as Socrates, and one-third of the remainder of the class serving as the jury, one-third as defending lawyers, and one-third as prosecutors. The audience that the lawyers and prosecutors should write for is the jury, whereas the jury’s intended audience is the judge. Socrates’ audience is his family, and the judge’s audience is a courtroom filled with Greek citizens. For the form, assign the judge to write a speech introducing the case in the courtroom. Socrates should write a letter to his family about his imprisonment. The defenders should write a brief, outlining all of the reasons Socrates is not guilty, and the prosecutors a brief saying why he is guilty. The form for the jury will be a statement justifying their decision on Socrates’ guilt or innocence. The topic for them all is: Did Socrates corrupt the youth in ancient Athens? Have the students read about Socrates from the textbook or an encyclopedia, do the *RAFT writing*, and then conduct a mock trial of Socrates based on their writings.

Activity 5: The Greek Alphabet (GLE: 35)

Materials List: chart of the Egyptian, Phoenician, and Greek alphabets

Remind students about the Phoenician alphabet and how it spread (mainly through trade) throughout the region along the Mediterranean Sea. Show the class a chart illustrating the Egyptian, Phoenician, and Greek alphabets (see <http://phoenicia.org/imgs/evolchar.gif> or <http://www.peak.org/~jeremy/dictionaryclassic/chapters/pix/alphabet.gif>), and analyze the letters and the evolution of our current alphabet. Have students write their own names in Greek letters. Then have them write a word using the ancient Greek alphabet and put it on the board for the class to guess what it is. Ask students if they know of any contemporary use of Greek letters (fraternities and sororities, scientific or mathematical notations, etc.).

At the end of the activity, give students time to update their *learning logs*.

Activity 6: The Persians (GLEs: 8, 17, 38)

Materials List: *PowerPoint*® or video clip of the Persians (optional)

Brainstorm ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) with students questions that they might want to answer regarding a new civilization – the Persians. Do a presentation on the Persians (*PowerPoint*®, video clip, or lecture) and then go over with the class how many of the questions they asked were answered in the presentation. Go over the answers, too. Were any other questions answered in the presentation that the class had not mentioned in their *brainstorming*?

Assess what students have learned by doing a quick “focus listing,” which entails dividing the class into teams and giving them five minutes to list as many nouns as they heard or saw in the presentation. Review what a noun is before starting the activity. Each team will have a scribe to do the writing while the rest of the team names nouns from the presentation. A focus listing is a fun, competitive, and quick way to assess student knowledge. Students themselves are amazed by how much they remember from a particular presentation.

Activity 7: Alexander the Great (GLE: 36)

Materials List: video or audio recording equipment (if available)

Teachers will present information on *Alexander the Great*. A very good teacher resource is the video, *In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great*, by PBS (Public Broadcast Systems).

Direct students to work in small groups and select one of the following scenarios to flesh out. Prompts in the form of questions accompany each scenario but should not limit students’ lines of thinking.

- **Scenario A:** Alexander is conducting an empire-wide televised news conference at a critical point in his reign.
 - What questions might reporters ask?
 - How will Alexander respond?

- **Scenario B:** Alexander and Darius are appearing together as guests on a television talk show after the battle at Gaugamela.
 - How will the conqueror and the defeated rival treat each other?
 - What issues will cause fireworks between them?
 - What role will the show’s host play?

- Scenario C: Alexander is close to death, granting an interview to a writer for the *Inquiring Macedonian*.
 - What kind of publication is the *Inquiring Macedonian*?
 - Of what accomplishments is Alexander most proud?
 - What regrets about his life does Alexander have?
 - What are Alexander’s parting words to the world?

If videotape equipment is available, film the students doing their dramatizations and show them to the class.

Activity 8: The Persian, Peloponnesian, and Punic Wars (GLEs: 8, 20, 38)

Materials List: Ancient War Chart BLM, video or audio recording equipment (if available), microphone (if available)

Create a framework for studying war by using a *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to get students used to searching for the dates, causes, sides, major battles, weapons, and effects of the wars. Assign each student the Persian Wars, the Peloponnesian Wars, or the Punic Wars. Hand them the Ancient War Chart BLM *graphic organizer* and have them complete it as they use their textbook to research the war assigned to them.

Have pairs of students write news interviews (one student is the reporter and the other is an eyewitness) from the battlefield of the war they researched based on what they learned. After writing the interviews, give students time to practice them and then use available technology to broadcast (using microphones) or record (using video or audio equipment) the interviews. Give students time after the news interviews to fill out the Ancient War Chart BLM on the other two wars that they did not research themselves. Play the interviews back to the class if they were recorded, or use the Ancient War Chart BLM to compare the three wars as a class.

Activity 9: Welcome to Ancient Rome (GLEs: 11, 17, 37, 38)

Materials List: *PowerPoint*® or video clip of the Romans (optional), History Walk BLM, 25 pictures of ancient Rome, Ancient Rome Essay Rubric BLM

Do a teacher presentation (*PowerPoint*®, video clip, or lecture) on ancient Rome. Include information on the founding of Rome, daily life, how it was ruled, famous emperors, its architecture and roads, its military, and how the empire expanded. Then post twenty-five pictures of things from the presentation around the room and conduct a “history walk.” Each picture should be numbered. Have students walk around the room and place the correct number next to a listing of the corresponding pictures (see History Walk BLM for a sample). As a class, go over the correct answers.

Use *SQL-Student Questions for Purposeful Learning* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to have students think about two adages about Rome that are still referred to today. *SQL* involves writing a provocative question or statement on the board before assigning a reading in order to provide direction to students as they read. In this case, write the following two statements on the board: “Rome wasn’t built in a day,” and “All roads lead to Rome.” Tell students that they are going to read further about ancient Rome and then write a one-page essay justifying or supporting either of these old adages about ancient Rome. As a class, generate questions students might ask in order to support each of these statements. Make a list of the questions beneath each statement. Then assign a reading on ancient Rome from the textbook. When students have completed the reading, have them choose one of the statements and write a one-page essay justifying it, using historical facts and details they learned from the reading or from the teacher presentation. (See the Ancient Rome Essay Rubric BLM.)

Activity 10: Greek and Roman Government (GLEs: 11, 17, 36, 38)

Review with students what they have learned about how Greece and Rome were governed. In pairs, students should devise a list of ways that the U.S. government is like that of Greece and Rome and ways it is not.

This is a great time in the curriculum to invite a government official (elected or appointed) into the classroom to discuss how government works today.

- How are laws made?
- How do we pay for government?
- Why is it important to vote once you’re 18?
- What ideas do students have for improving the country, and to which politicians or government officials should they voice these ideas?

Activity 11: Classical China (GLE: 38)

Materials List: pictures of Shi Huangdi’s grave and of an early Chinese seismograph

Show students pictures of Shi Huangdi’s grave and solicit ideas from the class about what that particular artifact says about ancient China. (For pictures of Shi Huangdi’s grave, see http://archaeology.about.com/od/figurinesandclaypipes/ss/terracotta_2.htm.) Review the word “dynasty” with the students and then summarize the Qin and Han Dynasties for them. Explain to students what the Civil Service is in America today, and tell them that the idea of having a Civil Service started in China. Ask students whether there have been any earthquakes reported in the news lately. Then ask them how scientists measure the size of an earthquake. What instrument do they use to measure it? Show them a picture of an early Chinese seismograph. Next, use *SQL-Student Questions for Purposeful Learning* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to introduce students to Chinese acupuncture. Write the statement, “If I got a serious disease, I would be willing to go

through acupuncture to try to cure it.” Tell students that they will be reading an article about acupuncture, and then will have to agree or disagree with this statement. Ask students what questions they would have for an acupuncture doctor before they would go through with the medical procedure. Write their questions on the board. Then have students read the article. When they are finished, review whether their questions were answered in the article. Next, have students share whether they agree or disagree with the statement and why. Tell students that the Civil Service, the seismograph, and acupuncture are three influences of classical China on our lives today.

Activity 12: The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World (GLE: 38)

Materials List: posters, digital collage software or *PowerPoint*® software (optional), Paragraph Grading Rubric BLM

Do a short teacher presentation (*PowerPoint*®, video clip, or lecture) on the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Then have pairs of students select one of the ancient wonders to research and present as a *PowerPoint*®, poster, travel brochure, or digital collage.

Have students go to <http://ce.eng.usf.edu/pharos/wonders/other.html>, other useful websites, their textbook, or encyclopedias to select a modern wonder of the world. Students should write a paragraph about their choice, both describing it and justifying why they think it should be in a list of seven modern wonders. (See the Paragraph Grading Rubric BLM.)

Activity 13: A Conversation with the Ancients (GLEs: 8, 15, 17, 20, 38)

Materials List: available primary and secondary source materials, one brown paper bag per student

As a culmination activity to this whole unit, have students research a famous person from one of the classical civilizations. A possible list would include:

| | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Solon | Xerxes | Cyrus the Great | Alexander the Great |
| Draco | Darius | Hannibal | Julius Caesar |
| Plato | Socrates | Aristotle | Marcus Aurelius |
| Scipio | Cincinnatus | Shi Huangdi | Archimedes |
| Euclid | Sophocles | Thucydides | Herodotus |
| Pericles | Cleisthenes | Homer | Aesop |
| Hippocrates | | | |

Each student should think of ten items that could fit in a brown paper bag and that would represent their person. Have students write the name of the person on the outside of the bag, and then fill it with ten items or pictures of items that represent that person’s life and

contributions. If they are having difficulty thinking of ten items, encourage them to include items that represent the culture or daily life of that person's time (contextual clues). Have each student share with the class what they learned about that person, what objects they chose to put in their paper bag, and why.

Discuss with students why civilizations like Persia, Greece, and Rome declined as empires. Were there common reasons or was each case unique? Does the end of an empire mean the end of a civilization? Tell students that they will be studying more about the decline of the Roman Empire before they begin their study of the Middle Ages.

Have students complete their *learning logs* that they started at the beginning of this unit and hand them in.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

- Assessment should be on-going, daily, and an integral part of instruction. Use quick forms of assessment to end a lesson or a class, like asking students what is the most important thing they learned today, a quick listing of ten nouns that were discussed in class, a pair-sharing where each student tries to stump his/her partner with a question, a quick game of charades with the day's vocabulary or concepts, etc.
- Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the types of products that result from the student activities.
- Rubrics on writing assignments and projects should assess content knowledge rather than extraneous elements like creativity, neatness, etc.

General Assessments

- *Learning Log*: Remind students each day to maintain their *learning logs*. Give them a couple of minutes at the end of each class to write down examples of classical influences that they may have heard about during the class. Assess based on the amount and accuracy of their entries.
- Simulations (the trial of Socrates and an interview with Alexander the Great): Make sure students are clear about their roles. Assign peer helpers if needed. Assess students by the accuracy and pertinence of the points they make in the simulation.
- Focus listing: A focus listing is a quick way to assess how much information students have retained from a reading, video, or lecture. It is usually practical to just divide the class into 2 to 4 groups and have them congregate around a designated scribe. Give the groups 3 to 5 minutes to make a list of all of the

nouns (common or proper) that they learned about or viewed in the presentation. Build in a sense of competition to have students recall as many as possible.

- Paragraphs and essays: Give students time to rewrite a paragraph or essay that has mistakes. By rewriting the papers based on a teacher’s corrections and input, a student will learn from his/her mistakes. Have the students include any pre-writing activities, like a web or rough draft, so teachers can analyze how the students came to their conclusions. Peer evaluations will give students a further opportunity to improve on their writing.
- Paper bag presentation: Have students decorate the outside of the paper bag (used in Activity 13) with something that represents their figure. Make sure the name of their figure as well as the student’s name are on the outside of the paper bag. The paper bag must contain ten objects or pictures of objects that represent an aspect of that figure’s life.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activities 2 and 12: Assess the paragraphs using a rubric. See the Paragraph Grading Rubric BLM.
- Activity 9: Use a rubric to assess a one-page essay on an adage about ancient Rome. See the Ancient Rome Essay Rubric BLM.
- Activity 12: A sample grading scale to grade the project on the Wonders of the World would look like this:

| Number of Accurate Facts Depicted in the Project | GRADE |
|--|-------|
| 19-20 | A |
| 17-18 | B |
| 14-16 | C |
| 12-13 | D |
| 11 or below | F |

- Activity 13: To assess the paper bag project and the learning log, simply count each object and entry as 10 points based on the item’s historical and representative accuracy.

Additional Resources:

<http://members.aol.com/Donnclass/Greeklife.html#FAMILY>. A great website with information about ancient Greece that students can relate to easily.

Trackstar® <http://trackstar.4teachers.org/trackstar/index.jsp>, part of the HPR*TEC website, funded by the Louisiana Department of Education. This site has numerous teacher-made web quests and is updated every month.

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/Olympics> A great source of information on the ancient Olympics.

“The Real Source of Athens’ Greatness” and “A School for Conquest” in Abraham, Henry and Pfeffer, Irwin, *Enjoying Global History*. New York: Amsco School Publications, Inc., 1996. A great textbook filled with readings that appeal to students’ interest level.

Grade 6
Social Studies
Unit 5: Spread of Culture and Religion (A.D. 300–1000)

Time Frame: Four weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on the spread of religion and culture in the ancient world.

Student Understandings

Students understand that cultural traditions and major religions developed, spread, and then influenced world civilizations. Students learn to compare and contrast major religions in terms of leadership, location, and key beliefs.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify the major new religions during this period and how they relate to the different empires?
2. Can students explain the different ways that religions spread, including through trade, empire, Diasporas, colonization, and proselytizing?
3. Can students explain the differences in beliefs, leaders, and locations of the different major religions and how they spread?
4. Can students explain the effect of major religions on European, Asian, and African civilizations?

Unit 5 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

| GLE # | GLE Text and Benchmarks |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Physical and Human Systems | |
| 6. | Explain factors or events that have facilitated cultural diffusion (e.g., the Silk Road, Crusades) (G-1C-M5) |
| History | |
| Historical Thinking Skills | |
| 17. | Describe the defining characteristics of major world civilizations from political, social, and economic perspectives (H-1A-M2) |
| 18. | Describe the causes, effects, or impact of a given historical development or event in world civilizations (H-1A-M3) |
| 19. | Use multiple primary and secondary sources to describe world civilizations (H-1A-M4) |

| GLE # | GLE Text and Benchmarks |
|----------------------|---|
| 20. | Conduct historical research using a variety of resources to answer historical questions related to world civilizations (H-1A-M6) |
| World History | |
| 39. | Identify the major new religions and relate them to the empires that emerged in the Mediterranean Basin, China, and India (e.g., Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam) (H-1C-M8) |
| 40. | Compare and contrast the major religions in terms of leaders, key beliefs, and location (H-1C-M8) |
| 41. | Trace the spread of major religions and cultural traditions (e.g., the migration of Jews, spread of Christianity, expansion of Islamic rule) (H-1C-M9) |
| 42. | Identify the effect that the major religions have had on European, Asian, and African civilizations (H-1C-M9) |

Sample Activities

Activity 1: Introduction to the Study of World Religions (GLE: 17)

As a class, define the words “religion” and “philosophy.” Analyze the difference between the two. Tell the class that this unit will focus on the history of some of the oldest and major religions and philosophies of the world.

Remind students that even the earliest civilizations had complex religious practices (e.g. the ziggurat in Mesopotamia, the after-life beliefs of Egyptians, the mythology of the Greeks and Romans). Most of those early religions were “polytheistic”, which means belief in many gods. The very first “monotheistic” religion (belief in one God) was Zoroastrianism in the Persian Empire. In fact, one of the lasting legacies of the Persian Empire was its conception of monotheism. Tell them that they will be studying the origin and spread of the major religions in the world today. Their roots go back to empires that no longer exist, but they have continued their distinct beliefs and traditions as outlined by their sacred texts or writings and through their long-standing worship rituals.

Explain to the students that, perhaps, religion is the most significant element that binds a cultural group together. Religions have shaped cultures, especially in their defining of moral standards, religious holidays, and the literature, art, and architecture which pervade those societies. From how people dress to how people greet one another, from what people eat to how people get married, from how people decide on a career to how people spend their money, religion is a formative player in cultures around the world.

At the same time, religion can be the most divisive element within and among groups. The ever-present struggle for power does not just plague governments, but religions, too. One group of leaders or set of beliefs seeks to establish itself above all others. This has led to divisions within the same basic religions. Give students examples. Furthermore,

religions have fought among one another for power and influence. In seemingly unending wars, religions continue to this day to fight in an effort to dominate in different regions of the world. Religious differences have also led to some of the most egregious moments of human degradation and annihilation.

Challenge students to learn about the history and basic beliefs of the major religions in the world today. Challenge them to be able to describe how those religions have influenced world history. Challenge them to analyze religion in their own society and the role that the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution has played in guaranteeing freedom of religion in American society. Challenge them to be able to identify conflicts in the world today that reflect religious power struggles and to analyze possible solutions to those problems.

Activity 2: Researching the World’s Religions (GLEs: 17, 18, 19, 20, 39, 40)

Materials List: excerpt from the Ten Commandments, Major World Religions BLM, Religion Research BLM, poster paper

Have students brainstorm a list of religions, modern or historical. As a class, conduct an analysis of Christianity, the religion with which students are probably most familiar. Try to get students to provide information on its origin, founder, past and current leaders, sacred writings, usual places of worship, holy sites, main beliefs, main divisions, etc. Then explain that the Ten Commandments were and continue to be a basis for three major religions of today—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Read a translation of the Ten Commandments and then have pairs of students rewrite them in simpler, more modern language.

Distribute the Major World Religions BLM *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to all students. Then, as a class, complete the column on Christianity. (See BLM and sample below.)

| | Christi- anity | Juda- ism | Islam | Hindu- ism | Buddhism | Confu- cianism | Taoism |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Dates | | | | | | | |
| Empire in which it started | | | | | | | |

Divide the class into six groups and assign each group one of the other religions or philosophies on the *graphic organizer*. Provide each member of the group with a different source for their assigned religion or philosophy (e.g., a textbook, an encyclopedia, a library book, a pictorial collection from that religion). Have students read independently about their assigned topic, and fill out the Religion Research BLM based on their source, and then give them time to combine answers as a group.

The groups should then teach the rest of the class about their researched religion by rotating through the different components on the *graphic organizer*, with each group member presenting one component at a time. Encourage students to fully explain in story form, if possible, each aspect of the religion. Have the rest of the class fill out the *graphic organizer* as each group makes its presentation.

When every group has presented, discuss and analyze the similarities and major differences among the religions/philosophies.

Assign a home project for assessing students' knowledge of at least one of the major world religions. Have each student make a poster or mobile that depicts one of the religions studied in this unit. The project must have at least ten objects representing some aspect of the religion, including a map of where it started and where it is mainly practiced today.

Activity 3: Sacred Texts (GLEs: 19, 40)

Materials List: excerpts from the Dead Sea Scrolls, the *Book of the Dead*, the *Vedas*, and the *Tau Te Ching*

Explain to the students that one of the main reasons that religious traditions have lasted for some 2,000 years is because of writing. Writing was probably invented originally to record trade, market, and financial information. However, it then lent itself perfectly to recording laws, history and religious texts.

Use *GISTing* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to summarize excerpts from four sacred texts: the Dead Sea Scrolls, the *Book of the Dead*, the *Vedas*, and the *Tau Te Ching*. (Excerpts can be found in the textbook, an encyclopedia, or at <http://www.sacred-texts.com>.) Tell students that *GISTing* is a systematic way to summarize information. Do the first one as a class. Starting with the first sentence, read it and write a summary of it in fifteen words or less. Then read the second sentence. Change the original summary sentence to include the information in the second sentence as well. Remember that the summary sentence has to have fifteen words or less. Continue in this way until all the sentences of the excerpt have been done. The final result should be one summary sentence about the whole excerpt. Below is a sample *GISTing* from the first verse of the *Tau Te Ching*:

| Sentence # | Summary Statement |
|------------|---|
| 1 | The path you should take changes. |
| 2 | The path you should take changes, just as a name cannot name what is ever-changing. |
| 3 | The changing path comes from the creator and named the Mother of all things. |
| 4 | Along that changing path, renounce desires or you won't be able to see deeply. |

| | |
|---|---|
| 5 | As we travel that changing path, names and their meaning will change. |
| 6 | As we travel that changing path, we will discover the Mystery of names and their meaning. |
| 7 | It is Mystery, along our changing, desire-free path, which offers subtle and wonderful truth. |

Have students work in pairs to read and use *GISTing* for the other three excerpts. Compare the final summary sentences for each excerpt as a class.

Activity 4: The Spread of Religions (GLEs: 6, 17, 39, 41)

Materials: copy of the First Amendment, current events articles on religion, Spread of Religions Timeline BLM, historical maps of the spread of each of the seven major world religions, one clipboard for each student group

Ask students the following questions:

- How do religious beliefs spread and how might they evolve?
- How do people learn about a new religion?
- Do you know of anyone who has converted from one religion to another?
- What influences someone to adopt another religion?
- Do you think it is easier to join a religion when a minority or a majority of the people around you practice it?
- Do you know someone from a different religion who lives in your neighborhood?

Have students arrive at the conclusion that tolerance of differences in religion has allowed such a diverse religious population to exist in the United States. Read and discuss the First Amendment of the U. S. Constitution as a class. Ask students what that amendment means in terms of religion. Remind them that freedom of worship has not existed in every society. Bring in current events articles describing religious issues.

Explain to students that each religion had a particular place and date of origin (except for Hinduism and Taoism) and then spread to a broader region. There are diverse ways and reasons for that spreading of religion. Make a presentation on how and why each religion spread. Be sure to include how missionaries (proselytizing), European colonization and empires, major trade routes, physical isolation, and language differences influenced the diffusion of religion. During the presentation, have students fill out the Spread of Religions Timeline (See BLM).

Show students a historical map illustrating the spread of Christianity. The teacher should model forming three questions based on the map, then answer the questions. Have students return to their original research groups from Activity 1. Each group should prepare a map illustrating the spread of the religion they researched. Map templates of different regions of the world will save time in this activity. The map should also locate the site of the origin of the religion. Display the maps around the room.

Have each group formulate three questions about its map and perform a walkabout.

- Have the students post the three questions.
- Give each group of students a clipboard.
- Each group of students should visit each map site and answer the three questions about the map. At the sound of an auditory signal, the students will rotate to the next map and continue the walkabout until all maps have been visited. (When students encounter their own map, they may at that time discuss their answers regarding other maps.)

Come back together as a class and discuss the answers.

Activity 5: The Effects of Religion on History (GLEs: 18, 42)

Materials List: Effects of Religion BLM, Grading Rubric for Essay BLM

Religion has played a huge role in history and continues to be a dominant force in most societies. Ask students to list ways that religion is affecting issues in this country and around the globe today. Then give students the Effects of Religion BLM *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) and have them use their textbook to find one example of each of the identified effects of religion on ancient history. (See BLM and sample below.)

| Effect | Examples | Religion Involved |
|---------------|----------|-------------------|
| On empire | | |
| On governance | | |
| On trade | | |

Have students write a one-page essay on the effects of religion on history, both ancient and modern. Encourage students to give concrete examples to illustrate their main points. (See the Grading Rubric for Essay BLM.)

As a culmination activity, invite someone from one of the non-Christian religions to be a guest speaker and to explain to the class that religion's beliefs and traditions.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

- Assessment should be on-going, daily, and an integral part of instruction. Use quick forms of assessment to end a lesson or a class such as:
 - asking students what is the most important thing they learned today,
 - a quick listing of ten nouns that were discussed in class,

- a pair-sharing where each student tries to stump his/her partner with a question, or
- a quick game of charades with the day's vocabulary or concepts.
- Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the types of products that result from the student activities.
- Rubrics on writing assignments and projects should assess content knowledge rather than extraneous elements like creativity, neatness, etc.

General Assessments

- Timeline activities: Assess the timelines for accuracy and for comprehensiveness. Assess students' abilities not only to generate timelines and maps, but also to analyze them.
- Visual projects like posters and mobiles: Use a rubric to assess knowledge of GLE's displayed on the visual project. While contests may be held for the most creative, the neatest, etc., do not grade on extraneous criteria.
- Paragraphs and essays: Give students time to rewrite a paragraph or essay that has mistakes. By rewriting the papers based on a teacher's corrections and input, a student will learn from his/her mistakes. Have the students include any pre-writing activities, like a web or rough draft, so teachers can analyze how the students came to their conclusions. Peer evaluations will give students further opportunity to improve their pieces of writing.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activity 2: Each student will do a home project, either a poster or a mobile depicting one of the world's religions or philosophies covered in this unit. Assess for knowledge of GLEs 39 and 40 only.
- Activity 4: Each group will label a map depicting the spread of a major religion and then will formulate three questions about the map. Assess the questions for historical logic and the answers for historical accuracy.
- Activity 5: Each student will write a one-page essay on the effects of religion on ancient and modern history. Assess for accuracy of topic and conclusion sentences and for the accuracy and amount of supporting historical detail. See the Grading Rubric for Essay BLM.

Additional Resources:

“Dead Sea Scrolls.” [Film]. Panorama City, CA: Family Films, 1960. 15 min., col., 16mm. Address: 14622 Lanarck St. Panorama City, CA 91402. Shows the caves and sites where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. The thousands of fragments being worked on by scholars and other scenes emphasize the importance of the discovery of the scrolls.

Grade 6
Social Studies
Unit 6: The Rise and Fall of Empires and Kingdoms (A.D. 300–1000)

Time Frame: Three weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on reasons for the rise and fall of empires and kingdoms in the late ancient and early medieval worlds.

Student Understandings

Students understand major characteristics of empires and kingdoms in the early Middle Ages and reasons for their development and collapse. Students learn about the impact of those kingdoms and empires on world history, especially on economic history.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students identify the functions and characteristics of different mediums of exchange, including money?
2. Can students describe why empires rise and fall apart, especially the Roman Empire?
3. Can students explain the economics of European feudalism and of other empires of this era?
4. Can students explain changes and developments that were brought about by the emergence and collapse of major empires and kingdoms in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas, especially their break-up into smaller political units?
5. Can students describe major events, key figures, and social structures of the Middle Ages?
6. Can students identify the major technological inventions that would lead into a period of intensive exploration, colonization, and world interaction?

Unit 6 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

| GLE # | GLE Text and Benchmarks |
|---------------------------|--|
| Places and Regions | |
| 4. | Explain ways in which goals, cultures, interests, inventions, and technological advances have affected people’s perceptions and uses of places or regions in world history (G-1B-M4) |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Economics | |
| Fundamental Economic Concepts | |
| 13. | Identify the functions and characteristics of money (e.g., money as a store of value) and compare barter exchange to money exchange (E-1A-M8) |
| History | |
| Historical Thinking Skills | |
| 17. | Describe the defining characteristics of major world civilizations from political, social, and economic perspectives (H-1A-M2) |
| 18. | Describe the causes, effects, or impact of a given historical development or event in world civilizations (H-1A-M3) |
| 20. | Identify historical issues or problems in world civilizations and discuss how they were addressed (H-1A-M5) |
| 21. | Conduct historical research using a variety of resources to answer historical questions related to world civilizations (H-1A-M6) |
| World History | |
| 37. | Explain the sharing of ideas, goods, and services through trade between the Greek and Roman civilizations, and the influence of those civilizations on other cultures(H-1C-M7) |
| 43. | Describe the changes and developments brought about by the emergence and collapse of major empires/kingdoms in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas (H-1C-M10) |
| 44. | Describe major events, key figures, and social structure of the Middle Ages (e.g., the fall of Rome, Charlemagne, feudalism) (H-1C-M10) |

Sample Activities

Activity 1: The Fall of Rome (GLEs: 18, 20, 43)

Materials List: Cause and Effect on the Fall of Rome BLM

Discuss the fall of Rome with students. Share with students that, like any huge empire that has come before or after it, Rome has sparked many theories surrounding its fall. Since the empire crumbled, all other great empires or nations have been compared to Rome, with many coming up short. For many, understanding the fall of Rome is key to analyzing the survival of the United States as a world power. For much of the last century, the United States has been compared to the Roman Empire. There are those who say that America is following the same path to destruction as the ancient Romans. So, why did Rome fall? Could its fate have been averted, and if so, would the world be different today? The answer lies in what one thinks after examining all the facts.

Assign a reading about the fall of Rome. As students are reading, have them make a list of all the causes of its decline. Then use *RAFT writing* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to have students apply their new knowledge about the fall of Rome to a

practical simulation. *RAFT* is an acronym for Role, Audience, Form of writing, and Topic. It involves assigning those four components to students as a writing activity. In this case, tell students that they are going to become advisors (Role) to the Roman emperor (Audience). They will be writing a “plea” (Form) on behalf of Roman citizens on how to hold the Roman Empire together (Topic). Give students time to write their plea and to find supporting evidence for it. Then select one student to serve as Roman emperor and another student to serve as his/her servant, who will introduce each advisor. Role play advisors giving their advice to the emperor. Students should listen for and observe logic and accuracy in their classmates’ RAFTs. To culminate the activity, discuss with students whether they think Rome could have withstood the test of time and empire had it adhered to their assorted advice. Analyze with students any comparisons they see between the Roman Empire and America as a world power today and, again, whether any of the advice they gave the Roman Emperor would also be relevant to the American President.

Next, have students read about and list the effects of the fall of Rome. Use a *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to have students create a cause and effect chart. (See the Cause and Effect on the Fall of Rome BLM). Allow time for students to pair up and study the information in their charts in preparation for quizzes and other class activities.

Activity 2: Barter and Money Economies (GLEs: 13, 37)

Materials List: map of Roman Empire trade routes

Teachers will present information on what the basic characteristics of money are (e.g., recognizable, durable, divisible, known value). Define *money* as any medium of exchange. Ask students what precious metals traders and buyers have used so that they could easily recognize their value (e.g., copper, silver, and gold). Discuss that money has one other important characteristic: it can be stored (saved). *Barter* is a direct exchange of products between buyers and sellers. In bartering, there is no recognizable standard of value. It does not allow for savings.

The teacher will assign each student a role as a buyer or seller in a marketplace. (Commercial simulations exist.) The students’ jobs are to buy or sell their products to the best possible advantage. In the first round, they will barter to achieve the best outcome as a consumer and seller. In the second round, play money will be used to buy and sell in the market.

Teachers should ask the students to explain differences between barter and money markets (e.g., ability to save and store money for future purchases). Review the map of trade routes during the Roman Empire. (See <http://intranet.dalton.org/groups/rome/RMap2.html>.) Explain that the Romans minted coins that circulated everywhere in the Roman Empire and that the Romans also honored coins minted by captive peoples. Teachers should present information and discuss the

relationship between money and promotion of trade in the empire. With the collapse of the Roman Empire, there was no central authority to guarantee the value of money. Ask students to explain why bartering became important again after the fall of Rome. Ask them to form hypotheses to explain what happened to Roman trade routes, markets, and cities along the trade routes.

Activity 3: The Rise of Feudalism in Europe (GLEs: 17, 44)

Materials List: Feudalism Vocabulary BLM, video equipment (optional), film or article about the Black Plague

With the fall of Rome, the *Pax Romana* was at an end, and peoples who had enjoyed the protection of Rome were left without defenses. Germanic tribes like the *Goths* from the north invaded and pillaged communities throughout the empire. The teacher should ask: “If you were a farmer or a landowner, what would you do to protect yourself, your family, and your possessions?”

Have students fill out a *vocabulary awareness chart* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) on specific feudalism terms (see the Feudalism Vocabulary BLM). A *vocabulary awareness chart* is an excellent way for students to monitor their individual understanding of vocabulary words. The teacher can use the words on the chart in the BLM and add other words that are considered important in the research. Students will rate their understanding of each word with either a “+” (understand well), a “√” (limited understanding or unsure), or a “-“ (don’t know at all). Students should refer to the chart as they progress through the content to update their understandings of the new words. The teacher can check the chart to assess students and provide additional instruction for those students who continue to have difficulty learning key vocabulary. The following is a sample of the *vocabulary awareness chart*:

| Word | + | √ | - | Example | Definition |
|-----------|---|---|---|---------|------------|
| serf | | | | | |
| craftsman | | | | | |

The teacher should present (possibly in a multi-media form) the idealized model of feudalism, showing relationships among serf, knight, and noble and relationships between Catholic representatives (priest, bishop, and archbishop) and the people. Then use *RAFT writing* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to have students apply their new knowledge to a practical simulation. In this case, tell students that they are going to become feudal characters (Role) going to their local noble (Audience) with a plea (Form) about a problem in their life right now (Topic). Give students time to write their plea and

to find supporting evidence for it. Then select one student to serve as the noble and one to serve as his/her servant, who will introduce each character. Role play “A Day in the Life of a Feudal Lord” by having students approach the lord with their problems. If there is time, encourage students to dress their part and film the role play. Playing it back to students will reinforce their understanding of feudal life and relationships. Students should listen for and observe accuracy and logic in their classmates’ *RAFTs*.

Tell students that another huge problem during the Middle Ages was the *Black Plague*. Show a video clip or read an article about it. Do a word splash on the Black Plague by drawing a big circle on the board and writing Black Plague in the center. Have students come up and “splash” words relevant to the Black Plague inside the circle. Culminate the activity by emphasizing the enormous impact of the Black Plague on history. Have students copy the word “splash” into their notebooks.

Activity 4: The Feudal Manor (GLEs: 17, 21, 44)

Materials List: computers (one for every two students or team) and Internet access (if available), library books or encyclopedias on the Middle Ages, posters (one for every two students or team), Feudal Manor Poster Grading Rubric BLM

Divide students into project teams or pairs. Have students investigate how the feudal manor functioned using the following website:

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/middleages/feudal.html>, the websites listed in the Additional Resources section at the end of this unit, and/or library books or encyclopedias on the Middle Ages.

Have students create a poster that includes the following:

- A diagram of a manor, illustrating the division of land, the manor house, the parish church, and clustered homes.
- A chart that details political relationships among the nobles, knight (lord), and serfs.
- A sketch of a medieval castle with at least ten forms of castle defenses labeled (e.g. merlons, crenels, gatehouse, moat, drawbridge, narrow slit windows, bailey, catapults, towers, thick stone outer wall, thick stone inner wall, hours).

See the Feudal Manor Poster Grading Rubric BLM for a sample rubric.

Activity 5: Charlemagne (GLE: 44)

The teacher will present (possibly in a multi-media format) the key figures of the Middle Ages. The teacher will specifically present information on *the accomplishments of Charlemagne* relating to his involvement in creating a new Roman Empire, spreading Christianity, educating his nobles, and promoting trade. After the presentation, ask for someone to volunteer to be *Professor Know-It-All* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#))

and answer questions from the class about Charlemagne’s life and accomplishments. *Professor know-it-all* is an effective and fun method of assessing students’ mastery of a topic. Give students time to write down two or three good questions to ask about Charlemagne, and rotate the role of *professor know-it-all*. Students should hold the know-it-all accountable for his/her answers and ask for clarification and elaboration, if necessary.

Activity 6: Byzantine Empire and Justinian’s Rule (GLEs: 17, 43, 44)

Out of the ashes of the fall of the Roman Empire came the rise of the Byzantine Empire. The teacher will present information on the Byzantine Empire, the life of Justinian, the reforms of Theodora, and the *architecture* of the Hagia Sophia. Have students use *split-page notetaking* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to record the facts they learn.

Split-page notetaking is a strategy that assists students in organizing their notes while encouraging active reading and listening, and providing an effective visual study guide. First, have students write a heading, “The Byzantine Empire and Justinian’s Rule,” at the top of their notebook paper. Then have students draw a line down the page creating a $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{2}{3}$ split. In the first, narrower column, students will write key questions or concepts regarding the topic. A sample would be:

| The Byzantine Empire and Justinian’s Rule | |
|---|--|
| Where and when was the Byzantine Empire? | |
| How did it become an empire? | |
| Who was Justinian and what qualities did he have? | |
| What did Justinian accomplish? | |
| Who was Theodora and why was she important? | |
| Describe the Hagia Sophia. | |

In the second column, have students write supporting information and facts. Students should be encouraged to paraphrase and abbreviate as much as possible. It will take time for students to become familiar with the format, but it is a technique that improves literacy and understanding of concepts by helping students to be able to extract, record,

and review information in a clear graphic format. When students are finished, discuss their notes as a class. Using this data, ask students to explain the following:

- Why was Justinian successful in expanding the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire?
- How was culture revived during Justinian's reign (e.g., Hagia Sophia)?
- What contributions did Empress Theodora make to culture and politics at the time?
- What was the long-term impact of Justinian's reign on the Byzantine Empire?

Have students study from these split-page notes by folding the page along the dividing line and generating either the big idea or question and the supporting information.

Activity 7: The Maya and the Arab Empires (GLE: 43)

Materials List: Essay Grading Rubric BLM

While the western Roman Empire was collapsing, other parts of the world saw new vigorous civilizations rise, prosper, and decline. Compare two such civilizations – the Maya and the Arab Empires – by having students read about them and write a comparative essay on the two civilizations. In the essay, students should compare:

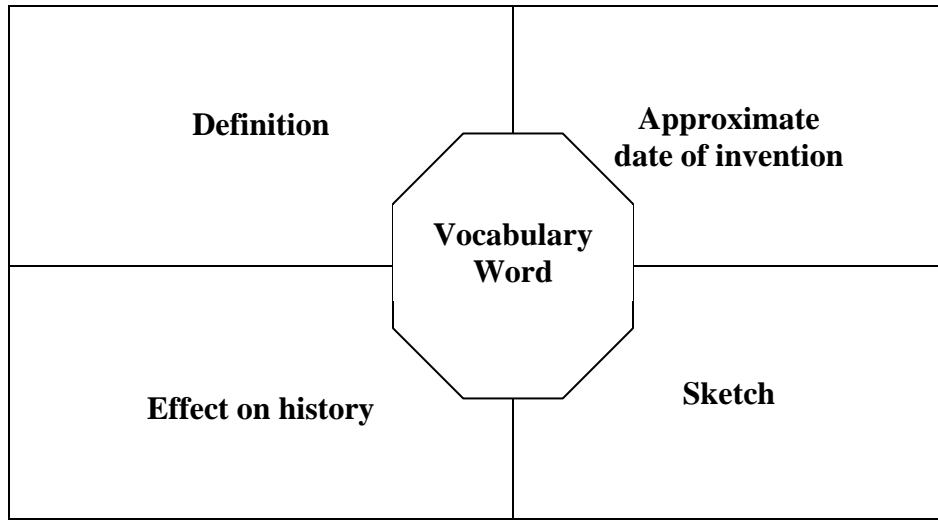
- their rise as empires (date and leaders)
- their spread as empires (areas conquered and governed)
- their economy (crops and trade)
- major inventions and accomplishments in art and architecture
- causes for their decline (date overtaken)

Use the Essay Grading Rubric BLM to assess student knowledge in the essay.

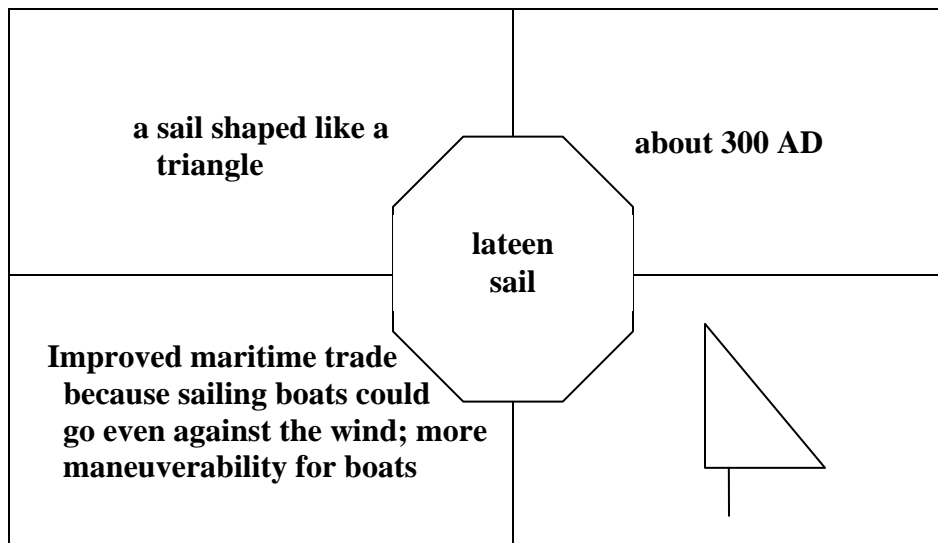
Activity 8: New Inventions that Will Change the World (4)

Materials List: nine index cards per student, hole puncher, yarn, African Embassy Addresses (optional)

Technological innovations that would truly change the nature of empire and trade were right on the horizon. Have students create *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) on the following technological advances: *cannon*, *telescope*, *magnetic compass*, *astrolabe*, *lateen sail*, *frigate*, *galleon*, and *caravel* as well as on the following figure, *Philip the Navigator*. *Vocabulary cards* entail writing the designated word in the center and dividing the card into four parts. In this case, have students fill in one part on the definition, one part on the approximate date of the invention, one part on the effect the invention had on history, and one a sketch of the word. The card should be formatted like the one below:



Here is an example of a completed card:



Have students manipulate the cards on their desks in the following ways:

- Practice historical chronology by having students place them in chronological order on their desks.
- Have students select three inventions that they think were the most important.
- Have students select those inventions that we still use today.
- Finally, have students punch holes into the left-hand corner of their index cards and tie them together loosely with a piece of yarn. They can use them to study for a test.

Allow time for students to study their cards individually and with a partner in preparation for quizzes and other class activities. (Have students retain these vocabulary cards for use in activity 7 in Unit 8.)

As a precursor to Unit 8, assign each student an African country that they will research during Unit 8, and have them write a business letter to that country's embassy in Washington (see http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Country_Specific/emb_address.html for a list of embassy addresses) to request information about that country. Once students receive a response to their requests, have students hold on to the country information until activity 8 in Unit 8.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

- Assessment should be on-going, daily, and an integral part of instruction. Use quick forms of assessment to end a lesson or a class.
- Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the types of products that result from the student activities.
- Rubrics on writing assignments and projects should assess content knowledge rather than extraneous elements like creativity, neatness, etc.

General Assessments

- A teacher-created, comprehensive exam assessing the GLEs from this unit should consist of the following:
 - a variety of formats for objective, convergent test items
 - depth of knowledge at various stages of Bloom's taxonomy
 - I-LEAP-formatted items
 - open-ended response items requiring supporting evidence
 - test items aligned to the verbiage of the GLEs.
- Role play advising the Roman emperor: Have students speak dramatically to the Roman emperor regarding at least one idea for how to avert the fall of Rome. Expect students to give at least three grounds for their particular advice to the emperor.
- Role play of feudal characters: Have students read about and then dramatize the needs of one of the positions on a feudal manor. Have them base their plea on facts about their daily life on the manor.
- Feudal Manor Poster: Students will work in groups to create a poster illustrating a feudal manor, the relationships among people on the manor, and at least ten castle defenses. Use a rubric to assess the poster for accuracy.
- Essay comparing two empires: Have students read about and write a comparative essay on the Maya and Arab empires. At the end of the activity, ask students in which empire they would prefer to have lived and why.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activity 1: Create a large cause and effect chart on the floor of the classroom using electrical tape, or on the board using chalk. Create cards of different causes and effects of the fall of Rome and have students place the cards on the correct side of the chart. When they get one wrong, discuss with the class clues for how to tell whether an event is a cause or an effect. Use the chart to end classes during this unit, having the students practice with it daily until they master it.
-
- Activity 4: Feudal Manor Poster: Use a rubric to assess student knowledge demonstrated on the poster. (See the Feudal Manor Poster Grading Rubric.) Knowledge of three areas should be assessed: of the components of a feudal manor, of the relationships on a manor, and of the defenses built into medieval castles.
- Activity 7: Essay Comparing the Maya and the Arab Empires: Use a rubric to assess the essay (see the Essay Grading Rubric BLM). The essay should reflect mastery of GLE 43 as it relates to the Mayans and the Arabs.

Additional Resources:

“World History: The Fertile Crescent to the American Revolution,” The Teaching Company, www.TEACH12.com. Available for purchase. A series of high school history lectures by a high school teacher, Linwood Thompson, from Los Angeles. Great lectures on the fall of Rome, the Byzantine Empire, and the Middle Ages.

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/medieval/history/history.htm> History website, Kidipede, out of Portland State University and written specifically for middle school students. Pages on the Middle Ages are well organized. Easily accessed and understood by students.

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/middleages/feudal.html> History website sponsored by the Annenberg Foundation with clearly organized and readable information about the Middle Ages. Covers daily life in the Middle Ages, including clothing, health, homes, etc.

<http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/history/middleages/> An E-Museum on the Middle Ages. Click on images to find out more about topics of interest. Read about the people in the photographs.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/lostempires/trebuchet/> The Public Broadcasting Service compilation of a fascinating group of slideshows and units on various aspects of the Middle Ages. Slideshow on how to build a trebuchet will really interest students. Website includes teacher guides and resources.

Grade 6
Social Studies
Unit 7: The Rise of New Empires and Expansion of Communication and Trade
(A.D. 1000–1500)

Time Frame: three weeks



Unit Description

This unit focuses on the rise of new empires and on how trade facilitated cultural diffusion and greater communication among the three continents of the Old World.

Student Understandings

Students will understand that the late Middle Ages was a time of intensified interaction among the three continents of the Old World – Asia, Africa, and Europe. Students will understand that trade, communication, war, and technological advances all played key roles in bringing about new empires and widening cultural diffusion. Students will learn about two great civilizations that arose in the Americas, the Aztec and the Inca.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students describe the African trading empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai and how they facilitated the spread of Islamic culture?
2. Can students explain factors that facilitated cultural diffusion like the Crusades and the Silk Road?
3. Can students explain how Europe responded to the fall of the Roman Empire?
4. Can students explain how Mongol conquests and rule affected Asia?
5. Can students describe the Aztec and Inca Empires in the Americas?
6. Can students explain the effects of exploration and trade on the economic and cultural development of Europe, Africa, and Asia prior to 1500?

Unit 7 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

| GLE # | GLE Text and Benchmarks |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Places and Regions | |
| 4. | Explain ways in which goals, cultures, interests, inventions, and technological advances have affected people’s perceptions and uses of places or regions in world history (G-1B-M4) |
| Physical and Human Systems | |
| 6. | Explain factors or events that have facilitated cultural diffusion (e.g., the Silk Road, Crusades) (G-1C-M5) |

| GLE # | GLE Text and Benchmarks |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Environment and Society | |
| 10. | Analyze world or regional distribution of natural resources in terms of the need to import or the capacity to export (G-1D-M3) |
| Economics | |
| Fundamental Economics Concepts | |
| 14. | Use economic concepts (e.g., supply and demand, interdependence) to describe the economic motivations for expanding trade and territorial domination in world history (E-1A-M9) |
| History | |
| Historical Thinking Skills | |
| 16. | Interpret data presented in a timeline to identify change and continuity in world civilizations (H-1A-M1) |
| 20. | Identify historical issues or problems in world civilizations and discuss how they were addressed (H-1A-M5) |
| World History | |
| 45. | Identify effects of exploration and trade on the economic and cultural development of Europe, Africa, and Asia prior to 1500 (H-1C-M11) |
| 46. | Explain how communication among regions was accomplished between AD 1000 to 1500 (H-1C-M11) |

Sample Activities

Activity 1: A Timeline of Change (GLEs: 4, 6, 16, 20, 45, 46)

Materials: student copies of the Timeline BLM

Hand out copies of the Timeline BLM and tell students that this unit will cover a fascinating and important time period of five hundred years, from 1000 to 1500 A.D. Do a cursory explanation of the items on the timeline, using a world map to show where the events occurred. Explain that the late Middle Ages was a time of intensified interaction among the three continents of the Old World – Asia, Africa, and Europe. In Europe the Crusades brought Christians and Muslims into direct conflict, causing feudalism in Europe to wane partially from the labor shortage caused by Christian attrition along with other factors. The Habsburgs were crowned emperors of the Holy Roman Empire as France and England entered a war that would last almost one hundred years. In Africa three great trading empires rose up mainly on the backs of two invaluable natural resources – salt and gold. With the spread of trade in Africa and with the Arab conquest of the Holy Land and of the Byzantine Empire, came the further spread of Arabic culture. In Asia, the Mongols, a tribe of fierce nomadic warriors, conquered and ruled China, fortifying the Silk Road and increasing its influence as a trade route. Meanwhile, in the Americas, the Aztec and Inca civilizations arose and thrived only to face the onslaught of a new age of exploration and colonization after 1500. Tell students that they will be

referring back to this timeline throughout the unit to help keep all of these events in a historical perspective.

Activity 2: African Trade Empires (GLEs: 4, 6, 10, 14, 45, 46)

Materials List: pre-1500 world map, video equipment (optional)

Present information on the three African trading empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai, using the Timeline BLM presented in Activity 1 to reference those three empires and using a world map to point out their locations. Emphasize the value of salt - as a spice and as a preservative. Emphasize the spread of Islam in northern Africa due to trade as well as religious fervor.

Use *RAFT writing* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to have students master and present information on the Empire of Mali and on Mansa Musa's famous pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324. *RAFT* is an acronym for role, audience, form, and topic; *RAFT writing* is a strategy that allows students to master newly-read material by having them assume a unique role and to transform their understanding into a unique form of writing for a particular audience. Tell students that they will be reading about Mali, one of the three trading empires of Africa, and about one of its main leaders who took a famous pilgrimage in 1324. Explain how pilgrimages lead to cultural diffusion. After reading a selection about Mali and Mansa Musa, divide students into groups of three or four students who will take on the role of teacher. Their audience will be the other groups in the class, and they will have to write and perform a song, a rap (poetry set to music or percussion), or a poem that teaches others about the topic of Mali and Mansa Musa's famous pilgrimage. Their songs, raps, or poems should include at least fifteen accurate facts that they learned from the reading selection.

Give groups time to practice their songs, raps, or poems. They may want to wear costumes. Then have each group perform their song, rap, or poem for the rest of the class. If video equipment is available, film their presentations and play them back for the entire class.

Culminate the activity by asking students whether they know of any pilgrimages taken today. Tell them that they will be studying another effect of pilgrimages – the Christian Crusades.

Activity 3: The Crusades (GLEs: 6, 45, 46)

Materials List: reading or film documentary on the Crusades, Cause and Effect Chart on the Crusades BLM

Referring back to the Timeline BLM, explain to students that the Crusades was a key event in the history of the Christian Church. Assign a reading on the Crusades or show a

short documentary on them and then have students fill out a *graphic organizer* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to note the causes and effects of the Crusades. After sharing answers on the chart, discuss whether current problems in the Middle East share similar causes or effects (See the Cause and Effect Chart on the Crusades BLM). As a home assignment, have students write a one-page letter home as if they were Christian Crusaders in 1040 AD.

Activity 4: The Mongols and Marco Polo (GLEs: 6, 45, 46)

Materials List: the books, *A World Explorer: Marco Polo* and *The Travels of Marco Polo* (optional)

Do a teacher presentation on the Mongols, focusing on their nomadic warrior culture and their fierce fighting techniques. On a world map, show how far their empire extended and tell about their unsuccessful attempts to conquer Japan. Consider reading aloud to the class Charles P. Graves' book, *A World Explorer: Marco Polo*. This book is written in a very engaging style for sixth graders, so they enjoy listening to the story of Marco Polo's life as written by Graves. His book is based on Marco Polo's own *The Travels of Marco Polo*. Following each chapter, conduct a focus listing whereby teams of students will list as many nouns or as many facts that they heard while the chapter was read. Discuss the obstacles Marco Polo and fellow traders and travelers faced at that time.

Activity 5: The Aztecs and the Inca (GLEs: 4, 46)

Materials List: construction materials like legos, cardboard, or clay and grass; Model Grading Rubric BLM; student copies of the Aztec Facts BLM; Aztec Market Home Letter BLM; coffee beans

Introduce Aztec and Inca history, emphasizing the adaptations their societies made to their physical surroundings. Show students a picture of the Mexican flag and share with them the legend of Tenochtitlan's founding. Ask students which founding legend seems more plausible – that of Tenochtitlan, or that of ancient Rome?

Divide the class into five teams. Have each team choose either Tenochtitlan or Machu Picchu to read about in their textbooks and to construct a model of one of those cities based on their reading. Legos lend themselves to such construction as does cardboard, clay, and grass, etc. Have students label their models with specific aspects of the cities. For a suggested grading rubric, see the Model Grading Rubric BLM.

Introduce Aztec market practices to students. Then hand out copies of the Aztec Facts BLM and read through them with the class. Tell them that they are going to simulate an Aztec market in the classroom. Send home the Aztec Market Home Letter. Give students time the next day to plan their stand for the market. Have students work in pairs or groups. On market day, display the models that students built. Hand out five coffee

beans to each student to use as money for the market. Each market stand will release one shopper at a time until everyone has had a chance to shop.

Activity 6: The Hundred Years War (GLE: 20)

Materials List: reading or film documentary on Joan of Arc

Referring back to the Timeline BLM, introduce students to the Hundred Years War between France and England. Tell them that England was probably more powerful militarily than France, resulting in English victories in many of the early battles. However, a peasant girl named Joan of Arc came along and changed the course of history for France. Use *SQPL-Student Questions for Purposeful Learning* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to have students compare Joan of Arc to one of America’s national heroes, George Washington. *SQPL* involves writing a provocative question or statement on the board before assigning a reading, in order to provide direction to students as they read. In this case, write the following on the board: “There are a lot of similarities between Joan of Arc and George Washington.” As a class, generate a list of facts about George Washington from what students may know about him. Tell students that they are going to read a selection about Joan of Arc. As a class, generate questions students might ask in order to be able to draw similarities between the two national heroes. Sample questions may be:

- Was she in the army?
- When and where did she live?
- Was she ever president?
- Was she a leader?

Then assign the reading on Joan of Arc. When students have completed the reading, answer the questions posed as a class. At the end of the discussion, vote on whether they agree or disagree with the statement that there are many similarities between Joan of Arc and George Washington.

Activity 7: Zheng He, the Forbidden City, and the Ming Dynasty (GLEs: 4, 10, 14, 45, 46)

Materials List: pictures of Zheng He’s boats, the Forbidden City, and medieval castles and churches of Europe; dictionary

Referring back to the Timeline BLM, tell students that when Mongol rule ended in China in 1368, a new dynasty – the Ming Dynasty – was founded and would rule China for nearly 300 years. During the Ming Dynasty, China’s relative isolationism was broken by sailors like Zheng He who organized seven major sailing fleets that explored the Pacific and Indian Oceans all the way to the Persian Gulf and Africa. Show the class pictures of Zheng He’s boats (For an animated version of replicas of Zheng He’s boats, see http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/sultan/media/expl_01q.html) and discuss how they were

perfect vehicles of cultural diffusion. Discuss some of his voyages. Then tell them that the Ming Dynasty also had huge building projects like the Forbidden City. Show them a sketch of the city (See <http://www.china.org.cn/english/kuaixun/74855.htm> for sample pictures) and have them compare its architecture with that of medieval European castles and churches. Tell students that toward the end of the Ming Dynasty, China would enter another period of “isolationism.” Have students come up with their own definitions of isolationism. Then compare their definitions with one from a dictionary. How close did they come to matching it?

Activity 8: Africa: Natural Resources and Contemporary Problems (GLEs: 10, 20)

Materials List: African Embassy Addresses (optional), African Research Sheet BLM, Grading Rubric for the African Country Project BLM, posters or *PowerPoint*® (optional), Internet access, colored markers or crayons

About one month before you teach this unit, assign students an African country that they will research and have them write a business letter to that country’s embassy in Washington to request information about that country.

Tell students that the continent of Africa would become one of the main targets for colonization and exploitation in the next period in world history – colonization. One of the main reasons for this was the abundance of natural resources that it had. Go over the definitions of the following words with the students: economy, natural resources, exports, imports, scarcity, surplus, and colony.

Then have the students begin their research of the African country they were assigned in Unit 6. At that time, students were instructed to send a business letter to the embassy of their assigned nation in Washington, D.C., requesting information on that country. Have them use the African Research Sheet BLM to research their country. Students should use any information that they received from their assigned country’s embassy. When they are finished researching their assigned country, students will compile their findings into a poster project or a *PowerPoint*® presentation. Have students do an oral presentation to the class on their country. Use the sample Grading Rubric for the African Country BLM to assess the students’ projects.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

- Assessment should be on-going, daily, and an integral part of instruction. Use quick forms of assessment to end a lesson or a class such as:
 - asking students what is the most important thing they learned today,
 - a quick listing of ten nouns that were discussed in class,

- a pair-sharing where each student tries to stump his/her partner with a question, or
- a quick game of charades with the day's vocabulary or concepts.
- Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the types of products that result from the student activities.
- Rubrics on writing assignments and projects should assess content knowledge rather than extraneous elements like creativity, neatness, etc.

General Assessments

- A teacher-created, comprehensive exam assessing the GLEs from this unit should consist of the following:
 - a variety of formats for objective, convergent test items
 - depth of knowledge at various stages of Bloom's taxonomy
 - I-LEAP-formatted items
 - open-ended response items requiring supporting evidence
 - test items aligned to the verbiage of the GLEs.
- The comprehensive exam should also require students to interpret the timeline presented in this unit as well as locate the various events on a world map.
- Musical Rap or Poem Activity: Assess this activity based on the accuracy and number of facts regarding the Empire of Mali and the pilgrimage of Mansa Musa. Give awards for Most Creative, Best Performed, etc.
- African Country Research and Presentation. Assess based on all three components of the activity: research, compilation of research into a poster or a *PowerPoint*® presentation, and oral presentation. Remember to assess based largely on content material.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- Activity 2: Song, Rap or Poem about Mali and Mansa Musa: This activity forces students to creatively and publicly express new knowledge, thereby insuring greater mastery of it. Use a simple scale to assess knowledge acquired.

Suggested scale:

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 15 accurate facts | A |
| 13-14 accurate facts | B |
| 11-12 accurate facts | C |
| 10 accurate facts | D |
| Below 10 | F |

- Activity 5: Model of Tenochtitlan or Machu Picchu: This activity lends itself to visual and kinesthetic learners who can demonstrate an understanding of new knowledge through physical reconstruction of that knowledge. Divide students into groups so as to balance the kinds of learners in the groups. Use the sample Model Grading Rubric BLM to assess knowledge acquired.

- **Activity 8: African Research and Presentation:** This project consists of three components: the research, the compilation of that research into a poster or *PowerPoint*® presentation, and an oral presentation to the class based on what they have learned. Use the sample Grading Rubric for the African Country Project BLM to assess knowledge acquired.

Additional Resources:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/13/68/73.pdf An entire unit on Mansa Musa. Teacher background information as well as suggestions for student activities.

Levtzion, Nehemih. *Ancient Ghana and Mali*. New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1973. A complete history of these two African empires to give background information to the teacher.

Graves, Charles P. *A World Explorer: Marco Polo*. Garrard Pub. Co. 1963.

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/medieval/history/highmiddle/hundredyearswar.htm>
Basic information about the Hundred Years War and Joan of Arc.

Grade 6
Social Studies
Unit 8: The Renaissance, the Reformation, and Global Exploration (A.D. 1300–1600)

Time Frame: Five weeks



Unit Description

This unit examines the fundamental changes in societies brought about by the Renaissance, the Reformation, and global exploration.

Student Understandings

Students will understand the social, technological, political, and economic bases for the Renaissance, the Reformation, and global exploration as well as how those events transformed society.

Guiding Questions

1. Can students define the word Renaissance and describe the major contributing factors that led to the Renaissance?
2. Can students describe the achievements of some of the major figures of the Renaissance?
3. Can students explain the causes and effects of the Reformation?
4. Can students explain some of the major technological inventions that powered the Renaissance, Reformation, and global exploration?
5. Can students explain major social, economic, political and cultural underpinnings for global exploration and colonization?

Unit 8 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

| GLE # | GLE Text and Benchmarks |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| History | |
| Historical Thinking Skills | |
| 15. | Construct a timeline of key developments in world history (political, social, technological, religious/cultural) (H-1A-M1) |

| GLE # | GLE Text and Benchmarks |
|-------|---|
| 16. | Interpret data presented in a timeline to identify change and continuity in world civilizations (H-1A-M1) |

| World History | |
|----------------------|---|
| 47. | Explain how and why Europe changed politically, socially, culturally, or economically during the period of intensified hemispheric interactions (H-1C-M12) |
| 48. | Describe the major contributing factors that led to the Renaissance (H-1C-M12) |
| 49. | Describe the major contributing factors that would lead to the Reformation (H-1C-M12) |
| 50. | Explain the major social, economic, political, and cultural features of European African, and Asian societies that stimulated exploration and colonization (H-1C-M14) |
| 51. | Identify major technological developments in shipbuilding, navigation, and naval warfare, and trace the cultural origins of various innovations (H-1C-M14) |
| 52. | Describe the major achievements of the early Renaissance in Europe, including the impact of innovations in printing (H-1C-M14) |

Sample Activities

Activity 1: Causes of the Renaissance (GLEs: 47, 48)

Materials List: map of the major Italian trading cities (c. 1300's)

Remind students of the poverty, disease, and banality of life as a serf in Europe during the Middle Ages. Also, remind them of how the Crusades and the Black Death affected Europe's population, which resulted in laborers becoming scarce, feudalism waning, and wages rising. Along with the increase in Mediterranean trade brought about by the Crusades and technological advances, the general economy of Europe improved and, by the late Middle Ages, people's lives began to change in fundamental ways.

Ask students whether they have ever heard of the term, Renaissance (hotel, business, "Renaissance man," etc.). Share with them several synonyms for the term: revival, new start, revitalization, and new beginning. Then tell them that it is a French word derived from the Italian word for "rebirth." Ask students whether they remember how important literature, architecture, art, science, and philosophy were to the ancient Greeks and Romans. Tell them that a lot of the works by Greeks and Romans had largely been forgotten in daily life during the Middle Ages. Meanwhile, they were being preserved by Islamic scholars, by the Byzantine Empire, and by monks in Europe's monasteries. Explain that the Renaissance was a period in European history, from about 1300 to about 1600 A.D., during which Europe experienced a "rebirth" of interest in Greek and Roman art, literature, architecture, education, and science. This led to a flowering of the arts (e.g., sculpture, painting, literature, architecture) in Italy, from which the Renaissance spread to other parts of Europe.

Show students a map of the major trading cities of Italy in the 1300s. Point out Milan, Genoa, Venice, Florence, and Naples. Explain the role these cities played in buying goods shipped from Asia and the Middle East through the eastern Mediterranean Sea and then sending them all around Europe. Also, explain that these Italian cities were manufacturing centers for products like glass, weapons, and cloth. This trade led to the development of the first banks and made the economies of Italy’s city-states grow. It also created a very wealthy merchant class who became princes and “patrons” of the arts, like the Medici family of Florence. Wealthy merchants were able to finance the careers and projects of famous Renaissance figures such as Michelangelo and da Vinci.

Summarize with students the major contributing factors that led to the Renaissance: the decline of feudalism, a renewed or reborn interest in Greek and Roman ideas and works, the revival of trade in Europe, and the emergence of a new wealthy merchant class in Italy.

Activity 2: A Renaissance Artist: Michelangelo (GLE: 52)

Materials List: children’s water color paints (one set per student), blank paper, tape, encyclopedias and Internet access (optional), pictures of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel

Tell students that one of the most famous Renaissance artists was Michelangelo. Have students use *split-page notetaking* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to organize what they learn about Michelangelo from a selected reading about him from the textbook, an encyclopedia article, or another source (see <http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/bio/m/michelan/biograph.html> for one reading).

To do *split-page notetaking*, students will write a heading at the top of their notebook paper with the name of the topic of the reading and the date. Then they will draw a line down the page creating a 1/3 and 2/3 split. In the first, narrower column, students will write key concepts or questions about Michelangelo’s life and art. In the wider column, students will write important details they learn from the reading. Have each student write down one idea for a key concept or question that they need to learn about from the presentation. Then, as a class, students will agree on the key concepts or questions to put in the left-hand column. Here is an example of how those *split-page notes* might look:

| Notes from a Reading about Michelangelo | Date: |
|---|--------------|
| What was his childhood like? | |
| Why did he become an artist? | |
| What were some of the obstacles he faced to become an artist? | |

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| What were some of his major works? | |
|------------------------------------|--|

When students are finished reading and taking notes, have them share their notes with their peers and add any important details they may have overlooked. Then discuss the notes as a class.

Introduce Michelangelo's fresco painting of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican in Rome by showing them pictures of it and by explaining to them the technique of fresco painting (applying wet plaster to a surface and then painting it while it is still wet). Explain that Catholic Pope Julius II was Michelangelo's main "patron," and that he commissioned Michelangelo to do the painting of the ceiling of his chapel. Tell students that the painting of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel was one of the most grueling artistic accomplishments of all times. Tape a blank sheet of paper under each student's desk. Have students lie on their backs and paint any scene they choose, using a small set of water colors. When they are finished, ask them what challenges Michelangelo may have faced while painting the Sistine Chapel on his back. Remind them that he had to go up and down rickety scaffolding to mix his paints, as well. Post the student paintings around the room to remind them about this one great artist and one of his major accomplishments.

Activity 3: A Renaissance Man: Leonardo da Vinci (GLEs: 15, 16, 52)

Materials List: encyclopedias (optional), drawings from da Vinci's *Notebooks*

Another famous Renaissance artist and scholar was a man by the name of Leonardo da Vinci. Ask students whether they have ever heard of him or of some of his accomplishments. Tell students that they are going to make a timeline of Leonardo da Vinci's life based on a selected reading from the textbook, an encyclopedia, or other source (see http://library.thinkquest.org/3044/nov_over.html for one source). As they read, have them make a list of events (and the dates they happened) in da Vinci's life. Then have students select six to eight of the events that they consider most important. Have them begin the timeline with his date of birth and end it with the date of his death. Have them accurately place the important events of his life that they selected onto the timeline, with illustrations of those events. Have some or all of the students present their timelines and then post them in the classroom.

Explain to students the phrase "Renaissance man" or someone who is knowledgeable about many fields or knows how to do a diversity of things. Tell them that Leonardo da Vinci is the quintessential Renaissance man. Discuss with the class his Notebooks in which he recorded his thoughts and studies and findings about all sorts of things, as well as his detailed anatomical and engineering drawings. Then have students select someone in their own lives who is most like a Renaissance man or woman. Have them write a paragraph about why they chose that person, then read their paragraphs to the class.

Activity 4: A Renaissance Writer: Shakespeare (GLE: 52)

Materials List: selected passages from some of Shakespeare’s plays, video film equipment (optional), pictures of London’s Globe Theater (c. 1600)

The Renaissance did not just spark artistic accomplishments in the fine arts, but in literature, too. One of the most famous writers of all time was William Shakespeare. Select a reading about William Shakespeare (see <http://www.shakespeare.org.uk/content/view/12/12> for one such reading), and then use *reciprocal teaching* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) to have students read and learn about Shakespeare’s life and achievements. Write the words “summarizer, questioner, clarifier, and predictor” on the board. Tell students that these are four roles that an effective reader takes on when reading. First, demonstrate each role by reading the first paragraph of the reading aloud as a class and applying those four roles to it. A sample based on the above-listed internet site reading is below:

| Sample Script | Sample Student Answer |
|--|---|
| SUMMARIZER: Would someone please summarize the paragraph we just read? | Shakespeare was born in 1564 in a river-crossing and market town of Stratford-upon-Avon in England. |
| QUESTIONER: What is one of the sources the writer uses for facts about Shakespeare’s life? | The register in the town church is one source mentioned. |
| CLARIFYER: What is a register? | It must be some kind of document kept by the church. |
| PREDICTOR: About what do you think the next paragraph in this selection will be? | Maybe it will talk about what he did as a kid. |

Do one or two more paragraphs as a class, if necessary. Then divide the class into groups of four and assign the four roles to students in each group. Have the groups finish the reading on Shakespeare using *reciprocal teaching*. When the groups have finished reading, apply *reciprocal teaching* to the entire article as a class, doing the following:

- **Summarize** the reading.
- What **questions** arose in the reading?
- What words needed **clarification**?
- Who would like to **predict** whether Shakespeare’s writings will always be popular?

To give students a flavor of the language and subject of Shakespeare’s plays and sonnets, select short passages from several of Shakespeare’s works. Have groups of students select a passage to perform and give them time to practice their parts. Show the class pictures of the Globe Theatre and explain to them theatre-going in Elizabethan England.

Have the groups perform their short passages in front of the class. Videotape the performances if equipment is available and play them back for students to see.

Tell students that Shakespeare was only one of many Renaissance writers. He had a great impact on the English language itself, being credited with inventing hundreds of words and phrases. In this way, the Renaissance continues to influence students' lives today.

Activity 5: The Invention of the Printing Press (GLE: 48, 49, 52)

The new ideas in art, science, and literature of the Renaissance were spread further by the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in the mid-1400's. Before Gutenberg's movable type, books had to be copied by hand. This was often done by monks in monasteries and was an arduous task because they did elaborate illustrations in them, too. Have the class estimate how long it would take to copy their textbook by hand. Ask them about the difference it makes for every student to have a copy of the textbook compared to if only the teacher had one, and how expensive it would be if the books had to be copied by hand.

Have students read a passage about how movable type worked and then to explain it to the class in their own words illustrating what they mean on the board. Tell them that in 1456, Gutenberg printed the first copies of the Bible in Latin. It was later translated and printed in other languages, leading to the spread of religion and to more people learning to read and wanting an education.

Activity 6: The Reformation (GLEs: 49, 52)

Materials List: world map, Essay Grading Rubric BLM

Identify Germany on a world map as the initial site of a period in time known as the Reformation. (The date usually associated with the beginning of the Reformation is 1517, when Martin Luther put forth his ninety-five theses.) Ask students:

- Where does the word *Reformation* come from?
- What does *reform* mean?
- What might have needed to be reformed in 1517?

Remind students about how much the Roman Catholic Church controlled daily life in the Middle Ages. Remind them of the heavy taxes collected not just by the lord of the manor but by church personnel. Explain to them how the Renaissance fueled the building of huge and elaborate church structures like St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican and like Michelangelo's painting of the Sistine Chapel. Such masterpieces required money. One of the main ways that the church collected money was to sell indulgences. Explain to students that an indulgence is a document which grants forgiveness for sins committed, resulting in people's having to pay the local priest to forgive their sins. That money was

spent on the local church or was sent to Rome or other cities to build new and magnificent cathedrals. Of course, many Christians found this practice of selling indulgences unfair, as well as other practices by the Church (like appointing family members of the kings and princes as bishops and popes).

One person, a monk named Martin Luther, protested against corruption and injustices in the Roman Catholic Church. In 1517, he wrote ninety-five “theses” or complaints about the Roman Catholic Church and posted them on the door of his local church in Wittenberg, Germany. Because of the new printing presses, his complaints were quickly copied and spread throughout Germany. Ask students what effect they think this may have had on the people in his city. Ask them what they think the pope may have done to Martin Luther. Have students read an excerpt from the textbook or other source about what happened to Martin Luther for his actions and what effect the Reformation had on the Catholic Church. Did it change its practices? What effect did the Reformation have on other aspects of European society?

Have students imagine how many “complaints” or “theses” they would have about their school or sports team. What do they think would happen if they were to do as Martin Luther did and post their complaints on a door? Do they think things would change like they did in Europe in the 1500’s?

Divide the class into groups of two or three students. Have each group research one of the terms below and then make a short presentation to the class about what that term is and what it has to do with the Reformation.

- Protestants
- John Calvin
- Religious Peace of Augsburg
- King Henry VIII
- Jesuits
- Council of Trent
- Baroque architecture
- Huguenots
- Edict of Nantes
- Thirty Years’ War
- Treaty of Westphalia

Have students write a one-page essay on the causes and effects of the Reformation. Use the Essay Grading Rubric BLM to assess the essays.

Activity 7: Navigational Technology (GLE: 51)

Materials List: diagrams of a Portuguese caravel, an Indian Ocean dhow, a Chinese junk, art supplies

Have students take out their *vocabulary cards* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) from Unit 6. Review the following technological advances: cannon, telescope, magnetic compass, astrolabe, lateen sail, frigate, galleon, and caravel as well as the following Portuguese figure, Philip the Navigator.

Show students diagrams and descriptions of a Portuguese caravel (like Columbus' ships), an Indian Ocean dhow, and a Chinese junk – all from the 15th to 16th centuries. Discuss how the ships compare in terms of their sailing features. Explain that advances in maritime technology and Renaissance ideas led to an era of global exploration.

Have students use art supplies to create an advertisement to try to get sailors for an exploring expedition. Include in the advertisement advantages that they would accrue as a member of the crew. Have students select a destination that they think would have offered the most incentive to potential crew members. Encourage them to add a sketch of the ship as well as a departure port and date in their ads. Post the advertisements around the classroom.

Activity 8: Exploration and Colonization (GLE: 50)

Materials List: student copies of a world map, crayons

To activate prior knowledge of the concepts used in this activity, begin by asking students what they know about the following individuals:

- Marco Polo
- Christopher Columbus
- Ferdinand Magellan
- Francisco Pizzaro
- Vasco da Gama
- Hernando Cortez
- John Cabot
- Giovanni Verrazano

Explain to students how the main trade route would shift in the 1500's from the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean. Using the classroom world map, pinpoint and briefly discuss the four major countries involved (Spain, Portugal, England, and France) in exploration and colonization in the 1500s. Hand out individual student maps, and have students locate and color Spain blue, Portugal red, and Italy green, using colored pencils or markers. Tell students that England and France joined these explorer countries and have them color England orange and France purple. Have students use their textbook to trace the routes of the above explorers onto the map.

Write the words “colonization,” “colonize,” “colonial,” and “colony” on the board.

Brainstorm ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) with students what they may have learned about those terms in their social studies class last school year. Ask students to name some former colonies of Spain, Portugal, England, and France. Then have each student come up with his/her own definition for the word “colony”. Share definitions as a class.

Explain to students why European countries wanted to set up colonies:

- To relieve overpopulation
- To get raw materials for their industries and economies
- To convert other people to their religion
- To get luxury goods like metals (gold, silver)
- To expand their markets
- To be able to control trade with new places
- To become more powerful and wealthy

Then discuss with students some of the effects of colonization on local populations. Ask them to use what they know about the history and culture of their own state – Louisiana – to list some of the effects of colonization on the colony. Discuss ways in which they think Louisiana is still affected today by its history as a former French and Spanish colony.

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

- Assessment should be on-going, daily, and an integral part of instruction. Use quick forms of assessment to end a lesson or a class, like asking students what is the most important thing they learned today, a quick listing of ten nouns that were discussed in class, a pair-sharing where each student tries to stump his/her partner with a question, a quick game of charades with the day’s vocabulary or concepts, etc. Use this daily assessment to guide instruction or reteaching of a subject.
- Use a variety of performance assessments to determine student understanding of content. Select assessments that are consistent with the types of products that result from the student activities.
- Rubrics on writing assignments and projects should assess content knowledge rather than extraneous elements like creativity, neatness, etc.

General Assessments

- Paragraphs and Essays: Having students write about a topic is perhaps the best way to have them internalize new information as well as to assess whether they

- have grasped new concepts. Make sure students express complete thoughts and use logic and historical facts to back up their statements. Give students suggestions for how to improve these writings and give them a chance to revise them before giving them a summative grade.
- **Construction and interpretation of a timeline:** A timeline is a tool for students to visualize historical events. Class timelines, as well as individual timelines, are good reference tools for further understanding of a historical concept. Have students discuss the relevance of the events that they selected to put on their timelines. Have students explain how they decided where to place each event on the timeline. Have students question each other's selection and placement of dates on the timeline.
 - **Student presentations to the class:** Presentation of information can be informal, which may lead to further discussion, or a formal evaluation, possibly in the form of a rubric. Students need practice in giving a presentation, and teachers should evaluate a presentation not only based on certain criteria, but also how well a student can inform his peers, as well as the teacher. Peer evaluation can be a tool to use. Positive, constructive criticism from students' peers can strengthen their presentation skills.

Activity-Specific Assessments

- **Activity 3:** Paragraph in which students select a "Renaissance man or woman" in their own lives. The purpose of assigning this paragraph is to insure that students grasp the concept of a Renaissance man or woman and to force students to make a personal association with the concept. Assess the paragraph based on whether it demonstrates comprehension of the concept and on whether the student offers sufficient (at least 3 supporting reasons) evidence for his/her selection.
- **Activity 6:** Essay on the causes and effects of the Reformation. This essay forces students to put a very difficult concept, the Reformation, into their own words. Assess the essay based on understanding and content. If possible, give the student a chance to revise it if there are major problems. See the sample Essay Grading Rubric BLM.
- **Activity 7:** Advertisement to recruit sailors for an exploration trip. The purpose of this activity is to force students to place themselves in another era of history and to imagine what it would have been like to be an explorer. Encourage students to be creative. Assess the advertisement based on the number of details included on the advertisement as well as how convincing the advertisement is overall.

Additional Resources:

www.eyewitnesstohistory.com An account by one of Michelangelo's students of his painting of the Sistine Chapel.

www.twingroves.district96.k12.il.us/Renaissance/Town/Town.html An account of daily life during the Renaissance.

www.learner.org/interactives/renaissance/index.html A great website for information on the Renaissance.