



# Human Geography 6

The HCPS Office of Social Studies will build empowered and informed citizens who think critically, advocate locally, impact globally, and innovate by examining the lessons of the past and applying them to today.

## Course Overview

Human Geography 6 is the first in a two-year experience in which students employ geographic, economic, civic, and historical tools to understand how big geographic questions link the past to the present. Grades 6–7 builds on the elementary social studies courses by aligning a progression of skills and student understanding of social studies. This two-year sequence ensures students understand the global context for the events they will study in US History 8, as well as establish a foundation for launching their high school experience. Students study the enduring geographic understandings of movement, human systems, human interactions with the environment, and place and region through global, regional, and local lenses. The course is built on case studies as examples of the ways these enduring geographic understandings can be seen and studied throughout the history of human experience.

## Unit 1: Geographic Thinking

Students will strengthen their understanding of the enduring geographic understandings of place and region, movement, human systems, human interaction with the environment in order to answer the unit question “How would a geographer interpret Earth and the land now called the United States? This unit serves as a bridge from SS4–5, which studies United States History.



## Unit 2: Human Interaction with the Environment



In this unit, students dive deep into the unit question of “Why do humans adapt to, modify, protect, and exploit their environments?” through an analysis of four eras, the Neolithic Revolution & River Valley Civilizations (12,000 BCE–450 BCE), Industrialization & Urbanization (1800–2000s CE), the Green Revolution (1960–70 CE), and Climate Change & Climate Change and Climate Resilience (1980–today).

## Unit 3: Human Systems-Political Structures

Students will evaluate the unit question “How do political structures use power to generate stability, promote conflict and/or cause rebellion, and connect and divide people across location, region, and globe” by studying Early State Formation (3100 BCE–500 CE), Theocracies (500–1700 CE), Democratic Revolutions (1600–1970 CE), and Authoritarian Regimes (2000–today).



## Unit 4: Human Systems-Economic Systems



In this last unit of Grade 6, students will evaluate the unit question “How can economic systems connect and divide people regionally and globally?” by comparing the case study content of Networks of Exchange (1200–1450 CE), Capitalism (1450–1900 CE), Centralized Planning in the 20th Century (1900–2000 CE), and Globalization (1980–today).

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## Unit 1: Geographic Understandings

In this introductory unit, students will strengthen their understanding of the enduring geographic understandings of place and region, movement, human systems, and human interaction with the environment. This unit serves as a bridge from Social Studies Grades 4–5, which is a two-year US History study, by focusing on the geographic region we now know as the United States.

### Enduring Understandings:

- Geographers ask questions about movement, place and region, human systems, and human interact with the environment to interpret the world we live in.

### Unit Question:

- How would a geographer interpret the Earth and the land now called the United States?

### Acquisition:

- Students will be able to analyze geography as a tool for learning about the past, present, and planning for the future.
- Students will analyze the regional impact of place on how people live in the US
- Students will analyze the local, regional, and global movement of people and ideas to and within the United States
- Students will analyze how the cultural geography of the United States demonstrates unity amid diversity.
- Students will analyze how humans in the United States adapt, exploit, manipulate, and protect the environment.

### Experience 1: Geographic Understandings (2000–present)

- Essential Question: Why study Earth and the people who live on it?
- Focus Questions:
  - How do physical and human attributes or characteristics of a location make areas unique?
  - How do people, goods, and ideas move across the planet through immigration, emigration, and other mechanisms?
  - How do humans recognize geographic limitations and strengths and create economic, social, political, cultural, and religious structures that connect and divide people across location, region, and the globe?
  - How do humans adapt, exploit, and manipulate the environment to meet wants and needs?

### Experience 2: Place and Region (2000–present)

- Essential Question: Can a map accurately define a place?
- Focus Questions:
  - How can physical location, climate, and landforms found on maps determine the physical attributes of the United States?
  - How can population density and land use found on maps and in data determine the cultural attributes of the United States?
  - How do physical and human attributes define various form, functional, and perceptual regions of the United States?
  - How have digital communications altered the perception of place?

### Experience 3: Movement (2000–present)

- Essential Question: Why do people move?
- Focus Questions:
  - How have populations shifted throughout time in the United States?
  - How are immigrants and emigrants similar or different? Who are refugees, asylum seekers, labor migrants, displaced persons, forced migrants and other 21st century migrants?
  - How have immigrants influenced the United States and how have different immigrant waves shifted the local environment?
  - How do patterns, trends, and projections of population determine the impact on regional policies?

### Experience 4: Human Systems (Culture) (2000–present)

- Essential Question: What is America?
- Focus Questions:
  - How do geographic factors influence art, music, and architecture in different regions of the United States?
  - How does the diffusion of languages in the United States demonstrate unity amid diversity?
  - How can religion be seen in the physical and human attributes of local communities?

### Experience 5: Human Interaction with the Environment

- Essential Question: Why is the environment a complex issue in the United States?
- Focus Questions:
  - What is the regional impact of agriculture, industry, and transportation on the environment of the United States?
  - How do social, economic, and political priorities compete between natural resource use and environmental sustainability?
  - What are the range of responses by government, institutions, and industries to human interaction with the environment?

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## Unit 2: Human Interaction with the Environment

In Unit 2, students will evaluate the unit question through an analysis of four historical case studies representing discrete examples of how humans adapted to, modified, protected, and exploited their environments.

### Enduring Understandings:

- Humans adapt to, modify, protect, and exploit the environment

### Unit Question:

- Why do humans adapt to, modify, protect, and exploit their environments?

### Acquisition:

- Students will analyze how the regional and local growth of early complex societies emerged from humans adapting to, modifying, and exploiting their environment.
- Students will evaluate regional and local examples of how humans adapted to, modified, or exploited their environment to promote industrialization and urbanization.
- Students will explore how the Green Revolution's modification and exploitation of the environment generated local, regional, and global changes.
- Students will explore how human adaptation, modification, and exploitation of the environment created and furthers climate change.

### Experience 1: The Neolithic Revolution and River Valley Civilizations (12,000 BCE–450 BCE)

- Essential Question: Why do complex societies emerge?
- Focus Questions:
  - How did the creation of permanent settlements due to the agricultural revolution alter the lives of hunter-gatherer societies?
  - How are the early complex societies in Africa, Asia, and the Americas similar and different in how they interacted with the environment to create thriving settlements?
  - To what extent did the role of human interactions with the environment impact the progression of early complex societies?

### Experience 2: Industrialization and Urbanization (1800s–2000s CE)

- Essential Question: Are industrialization and urbanization good for everyone?
- Focus Questions:
  - What are the geographic factors that led to societies becoming industrialized and urbanized?
  - How are the cause and effects of industrialization and urbanization similar and different in Asia, Africa, and the Americas?
  - What is the local impact of industrialization and deindustrialization on the environment and individual communities?

### Experience 3: The Green Revolution (1960–1970 CE)

- Essential Question: How revolutionary was the Green Revolution?
- Focus Questions:
  - What are the origins of the Green Revolution?
  - What are the effects of the Green Revolution on societies in the Americas, Asia, and Africa?
  - How has the Green Revolution impacted the environment, food production, and manufacturing?

### Experience 4: Climate Change and Climate Resilience (1980 CE–today)

- Essential Question: How does climate change force humans to live differently?
- Focus Questions:
  - What are the origins of human-caused climate change?
  - What/How do geographic characteristics make some communities more vulnerable to climate change than others?
  - What is the global impact of climate change on the natural environment?
  - What are the local, regional, and global attempts to adapt to and mitigate the effects of human-caused climate change?

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## Unit 3: Human Systems Political Structures

Students have previously learned about democratic structures but will now be engaging in a deep dive about how geography influences how humans in different places and times organize. Students will learn about early state formation, theocracies, democratic revolutions, and authoritarian regimes across history.

### Enduring Understandings:

- Humans recognize geographic limitations and strengths to create political structures that generate stability, promote conflict, cause rebellion, and connect and divide people across location, region, and the globe.

### Unit Question:

- How do political structures use power to generate stability, promote conflict and/or cause rebellion and connect and divide people across location, region, and the globe?

### Acquisition:

- Students will analyze regional and local examples of how early political structures generated stability, promoted conflict, and/or caused rebellion.
- Students will analyze regional and local examples of how theocracies generated stability, promoted conflict, and/or caused rebellion.
- Students will analyze local, regional, and global examples of democratic revolutions and authoritarian regimes as attempts to generate stability and connect and divide people across location, region, and globe.

### Experience 1: Early State Formation (3100 BCE– 500 CE)

- Essential Question: How is power gained and lost?
- Focus Questions:
  - Using the social structures and belief systems in the early states of Greece, Rome, China, and Nubia/Egypt, what are the similarities and differences in how power is divided and maintained?
  - What were the motivations for territorial expansion among early complex societies?
  - How does power shift from one authority to another?

### Experience 2: Theocracies (500–1700 CE)

- Essential Question: Did theocracies create stability?
- Focus Questions:
  - What is the role of religion in a theocracy?
  - What are the factors that contributed to the rise of theocracies?
  - How did theocracies expand and limit economic and social opportunities?

### Experience 3: Democratic Revolution (1600–1970 CE)

- Essential Question: How effective were democratic revolutions in achieving their goals?
- Focus Questions:
  - What were the causes for democratic rebellions in Africa, Asia, the America, and Europe?
  - How did sovereignty and individualism influence democratic revolutions and how did the revolutions impact the roles of gender and equality?
  - What was the role of nationalism in the creation of new empires and the rise of the nation-state?
  - What are the local, regional, and global impacts of democratic revolutions?

### Experience 4: Authoritarian Regimes (2000 CE– today)

- Essential Question: Can authoritarian regimes survive in the 21st century?
- Focus Questions:
  - What factors contributed to the rise of authoritarian regimes in Asia, Africa, the America, and Oceania?
  - What efforts have been made to resist the centralization of power within authoritarian regimes and how have those efforts connected and divided people?
  - How do the policies of 21st century authoritarian regimes challenge universal human rights, limit economic opportunities and access to technology?

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## Unit 4: Human Systems Economic Systems

In elementary school, students have learned about economic decisions. This unit builds upon that learning by examining four case studies of economic systems as they develop and are influenced by the unique place in which they exist.

### Enduring Understandings:

- Humans recognize geographic limitations and strengths to create economic structures that generate stability, promote conflict, cause rebellion, and connect and divide people across location, region, and the globe.

### Unit Question:

- How can economic systems connect and divide people regionally and globally

### Acquisition:

- Students will investigate how regional control of resources promoted regional and global trade among complex societies
- Students will evaluate the regional and global causes and consequence of expanding capital markets through imperialism and settler colonialism
- Students will investigate how centrally planned economies impacted regional and global relationships
- Students will evaluate the regional and global causes and consequences of globalization

### Experience 1: Networks of Exchange (1200–1450 CE)

- Essential Question: Is trade worth it?
- Focus Questions:
  - What were the incentives, costs, and benefits of the salt and spice trade in Asia, Africa, and Europe?
  - How were goods and ideas traded along the Silk Road, Indian Ocean Trade Routes and Trans Saharan trade routes?
  - What was the impact of the trade systems that emerged to meet the demand for salt and spice?

### Experience 2: Capitalism (1450–1900 CE)

- Essential Question: How did capitalism connect and divide people?
- Focus Questions:
  - What are the principles of capitalism?
  - What is the role of capitalism in spurring innovation and creating wealth?
  - What were then political, economic, social, and cultural impacts of imperialism and settler colonialism on societies in Asia, Africa, Oceania, and the Americas?
  - How did communities in Asia, Africa, Oceania, and the Americas respond to and resist imperialism and settler colonialism?

### Experience 3: Centralized Planning in the 20th Century (1900–2000 CE)

- Essential Question: How did centrally planned economies connect and divide people?
- Focus Questions:
  - What are the principles of communism and socialism?
  - What is the role of labor movements, leaders, and political change in the formation of centrally planned economies?
  - What are the long-term impacts of centrally planned economies in Asia, Europe, and the Americas?

### Experience 4: Globalization (1980 CE– today)

- Essential Question: Is globalization good for everyone?
- Focus Questions:
  - How have new international institutions, multinational corporations (supply chains), recognition of global human rights, digital communication, and industrial technologies (outsourcing) led to accelerated globalization?
  - What are the long-term impacts of globalization in Asia, Europe, the Americas, and Africa?
  - How have regional responses to economic globalization promoted and challenged understandings of nationalism?

All HCPS Social Studies Frameworks are built to align with the Maryland State Social Studies Standards and MSDE State Frameworks. Information on the standards and frameworks can be found on the MSDE website (<https://marylandpublicschools.org>).