



GRADE 8

Hopes and dreams for this year..

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing.



Social Studies in 8th Grade

Social studies content in grades 8 continues to explore the question of inquiry: **What is the relationship between geography, prosperity, and power?** Course content traces the human experience in the United States from the Reconstruction Period to the present day, and tying political, geographic, economic, and social trends in United States history to parallel trends and time frames in New York State history, specifically the local Syracuse area. A *District-Wide Digital Portfolio Assessment* is given at the end of this course.

In order to build social studies skills, your 8th grade student:

- Reads primary and secondary sources in order to:
 - Analyze the texts using evidence.
 - Understand the main ideas of the text.
 - Relate the texts to important historical events or concepts.
- Distinguishes between fact and opinion in a text.
- Uses technology and media to better understand concepts taught.
- Compares primary and secondary sources about the same topic.
- Learns about historical events within a context and as related to things such as geography, economy, and social and political factors.
- Learns about topics like labor reform and the Great Depression to gain a deeper understanding of history and the present American Landscape.

Resources

Apps

HISTORY Here

History here is Apple Watch compatible and let students teachers and anyone who wishes to explore a new place and learn about the history of a specific location. Although this app is designed for iPhone and Apple Watch, it can be added to an iPad and used with wi-Fi enabled location services.



News-O-Matic

Another iPad, iPhone and Apple Watch compatible app is News-O-Matic. Current events are so important in the classroom and this app provides students with access to lots of relevant and high-interest news stories.

NBC Nightly News

Lots of news organizations have corresponding iPad apps that let you share select content with students easily. With the NBC Nightly News iPad app, you can preview and share news stories from the previous night's television program. It's a great option for making connections with content being taught in the classroom.

NPR News

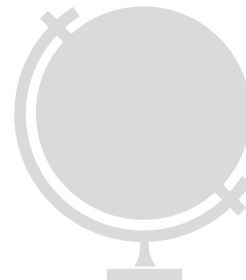
In addition to accessing print content similar to what you might find in other newspapers, NPR has audio recordings students can listen to on their iPad. Not only is this a great option for students who may struggle to follow along with the vocabulary in a news story but it also helps students grow as listeners.

TED Talks

This app is full of relevant information on a range of topics that may align with your social studies goals. These talks can be shown to one child or played for the whole family who are studying a particular topic.

HISTORY TV

If you're looking for videos to share with students, you might want to check out this app from the television station the History Channel. It includes short clips and extras for viewers of any age to explore.



Practice at Home!

Help your child learn outside of school using these activities.

Shared Reading Experiences

Share and talk about the main ideas of articles with your child that are about material dealing with current events occurring **in the United States**, or topics she finds relevant or interesting that are problems for citizens in New York State such as fracking and medical care to name a few. Share items in articles having to do with these issues as studied in social studies. Ask questions about the articles you both read and watch news coverage to compare what other news sources say. Hold a debate that uses evidence from the articles.

Try it

What are some topics you'd like to talk about with your child?

What are some questions you can discuss about these topics?

Write for Enjoyment

Encourage your child to keep a journal; try keeping one yourself based on current event articles he or she is reading that deal with **National Issues**. When you or your child finds a passion topic, write about it in a relevant way. For example, write letters to the editor of a local, state or national paper for publication discussing your views on the topic based on the evidence you use from the articles you have read.

Try it

What are some topics you'd like your child to write about?

Use Technology to Enhance Learning

Since most middle-schoolers are technology fans (and experts), encourage your children to use technology to "show what they know" or further their learning. Of course, as with any use of technology, be sure to monitor your child's technology use, access, and communication with others.

Try it

Some ideas to get you started are below. Brainstorm what topics or apps you could use!

- Make short editorial videos on particular current events.

- Make quick videos (or use one of many various apps) for presenting short narrated lessons about topics being learned so that your child can teach you.

- Create photo collages or scrapbooks of work completed and or articles read.

- Create a continuous conversation via email or another technological format in which your child sends you quick snippets (pictures and or texts) of something interesting they learned. Follow up with questions or comments on what your child sends.



ELA in 8th Grade

Students in grades 6-8 should experience a balance of literature (fiction) and informational (non-fiction) texts and have discussions about texts that support language development as well as the building of background knowledge about important topics. Students should be frequently engaged in text-based reading, speaking, and writing tasks. While specific standards vary a bit as students move through grades 6-8, the major concepts remain the same; the biggest difference is that the skills are applied in increasingly more challenging text in each grade.

Assessments

STAR Assessment: STAR Assessments are short tests taken in the Fall, Winter and Spring that provide teachers with information on your child's skills in relation to grade level standards and other students in the same grade.

- Teachers analyze the results to learn what students already know and what they are ready to learn next, to monitor student growth, and to determine which students may need additional help. STAR Assessments are heavily researched and scientifically proven to help teachers guide each student on his or her unique path to mastery.

ANet Assessment: ANet assessments, taken 3 times a year, measure what your child has or hasn't learned through classroom instruction and what they might need additional exposure to or practice with.

Tips to prepare for any assessment:

- Get a good night's rest (The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 9-12 hours of sleep every night for 6-12 year olds)
- Have a healthy breakfast

Major Concepts

Reading

- Cite evidence from text to support analysis
- Determine a theme and explain how it is developed throughout a text
- Identify point of view, how it is developed and how it impacts meaning
- Trace and evaluate the effectiveness of an argument

Writing



- Write an argument and use reasons and evidence to support it; introduce and refute a counterclaim
- Write informative texts using organized and relevant evidence; conduct research to answer questions
- Write narratives using techniques such as dialogue and description

Speaking and Listening

- Engage in discussions with diverse audiences, expressing ideas clearly and persuasively, building on the ideas of others
- Interpret information presented in a variety of texts and formats (speeches, data/graphs, etc.)
- Break down a speaker's argument and claims to determine what is supported by credible evidence and what is not
- Present claims and findings, adapting speech to a variety of contexts and tasks

Language

- Use knowledge of language and conventions of spoken and written English (pauses, punctuation, etc.) when writing, speaking, reading, or listening
- Determine the meaning of unknown words and phrases by using a variety of strategies

STAR Assessments 			
	Fall	Winter	Spring
Test Date			
Score			
ANet Assessments 			
Test Date			
Score			

Practice at Home!

Help your child learn outside of school using these activities.

Reading

Provide time and space for your child to read independently. This time should be free from distractions such as television, electronics and cell phones.

Try it

Make it a routine! When and where will your child read?

Day (s): _____

Time (s): _____

Where: _____

Ask your child what topics, events, or activities he or she likes. Then look for books, magazines, or other materials about those topics that would motivate your child to read.

Try it

What topics, events or activities interest your child?

Write down a few book or magazine ideas.

It is also helpful when your child sees other people reading at home. You could share what you have read.

Try it

What are some books you'd like to read this year?

Use technology to help build your child's interest in reading. There are several websites where students can read books or articles online. The computer will help with words the student cannot read independently. Libraries also have computers students can use to access those sites. Feel free to ask a librarian or teacher for suggestions.



Try it

List any suggestions you may receive throughout the year.

Conversation

Make time for conversation at home. Discuss current events, shared interests, and future aspirations for education and career.

Try it

What can you discuss?

Vocabulary

Visit museums, zoos, theaters, historical sites, aquariums, and other educational places to help increase your child's exposure to new knowledge and vocabulary.

Try it

Where will you go together? What are some new words you learned?



Major Concepts

Linear Equations

- Students have to be able to find the slope and the y-intercept (the point where the line meets the Y-axis).
- Students also have to be able to write equations from a word problem
- They should also be able to work with a system of equations (two or more lines which may or may not meet each other)

Functions

- A function is a special relationship between two variables: the input variable and the output variable.
- Students have to be able to identify functions by looking at tables and graphs.

Similarity and Congruence

- Similarity between two or more objects is when they are the same SHAPE (difference may be size and/or orientation).
- Congruent objects have the same SIZE and SHAPE. They also have the same angles between the same sides of the two objects (difference may be orientation).

Integer Exponents / Scientific Notation

- If we look at the number 5^7 , 5 is the Base and 7 is the Exponent. 7 tells us that the number 5 is multiplying itself 7 times like $5 \times 5 \times 5 \times 5 \times 5 \times 5$.
- Scientific notation is a method of writing really big and small numbers in a more convenient way. For example, a really big number 51000000 can be written as 5.1×10^7 .

Irrational Numbers Using Geometry

- Students use right triangles (one angle is 90 degrees) and the Pythagorean Theorem to understand triangle side lengths that are not whole numbers.

Resources

Apps

Bedtime Math App

Thinking Blocks

Ask your child's teacher if they have any additional app suggestions.



Web

www.asdk12.org/staff/hoppas_mary/pages/Everyday_Math_Parent_Support/Vocabulary_Cards.html

www.teachertube.com/

learnzillion.com/math

Assessments

STAR Assessment: The STAR Assessment is taken in the Fall, Winter and Spring.

- **STAR Assessments** are given district-wide three times per year. Some students' progress is being monitored more often.

Unit assessments are given at the end of each module/topic of study.

Tips to prepare for any assessment:

- Get a good night's rest (The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 9-12 hours of sleep every night for 6-12 year olds)
- Have a healthy breakfast

STAR Assessments

	Fall	Winter	Spring
Test Date			
Score			

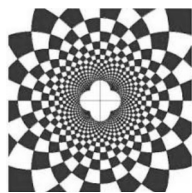
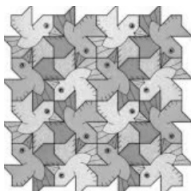
Practice at Home!

Help your child learn outside of school using these activities.

Transformations

What transformations do you see in each design below? Label each as either Rotation (figure turns around a point) Reflection (the figure is flipped over a line), Translation (a figure is moved in a space), or Dilation (the images grows and shrinks proportionally).

Try it



Equations

Find the cost of different cell phone plans. Have your child use math and write equations to make a decision on which plan is best for your family. Creating a visual for the plans is a great way to justify thinking.

Try it

Which cell phone plan is the best buy for your family? How many GB of data do you need?

Fun Fact: The average smartphone user utilizes about 2.9 GB of data a month.

Plan A: Activation fee of \$25.00. The service fee per month is \$65 and data is \$10 per GB

Plan B: Activation fee of \$20.00. The service fee per month is \$55 data is \$15 per GB

Plan C: Activation fee of \$28.00. The monthly plan is \$90 per month and \$40 per month for unlimited data.

Show your work below!

Try it

Being able to solve questions fluently before going to high school is important. Practice solving for x for the equation below. Be sure to check if your solution is correct!

$$7x - (3x + 5) - 8 = \frac{1}{2}(8x + 20) - 7x + 5$$



Science in 8th Grade

Our 8th grade students focus upon Life Science. Students will learn about topics such as :

- Cellular Energy
- Cells
- Organisms
- Genetics
- Reproduction
- Organization of Life

Our 8th grade scientists will also continue to conduct investigations and experiments. They will apply the scientific method in order to practice like a scientist. Using the scientific method, 8th graders will:

- Question, observe, and research.
- Develops a hypothesis (based on observations and research).
- Make predictions.
- Experiment as well as follow instructions in order to conduct experiments.
- Develops a conclusion.
- Compare the results of an experiment to what is written about the topic throughout their research.

Assessments

NYS Science Assessment: The NYS Science intermediate assessment is given in 8th grade. It is a 5th-8th grade assessment, which means materials taught at each grade level 5-8 can be included on the exam. This test consists of 30 multiple choice questions, 15 short answer questions, and a performance test which contains three stations. Material students learn during 6th grade will be seen when your student is in 8th grade.

Resources

Books

The Gene: An Intimate History
by Siddhartha Mukherjee

Cells: Experience Life at Its Tiniest
by Karen Bush Gibson

Cells, Tissues, and Skin
by Douglas B. Light



Apps

Creatures of Light
American Museum of Natural History

Solve the Outbreak
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Click and Learn
Howard Hughes Medical Institute

Mitosis
Inkling Systems, Inc.

HudsonAlpha iCell
HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology



Explore Science Locally

Baltimore Woods
(315) 673-1350

Beaver Lake Nature Center
(315) 638-2519

Bricks 4 Kidz
(315) 632-8592

Clark's Reservation
(315) 492-1590

The Museum of Science and Technology (MOST)
(315) 425-9068

Rosamond Gifford Zoo
(315) 435-8511

Wonderworks
(315) 466-7700

Practice at Home!

Help your child learn outside of school using these activities.

Energy

Have your child create an “energy” log. For one entire day, he must write down everything he does that requires energy. Remember that the human body uses energy to think and move!

Try it

Time	Activity	Did it require energy?

Play Science Password

Help improve your middle schooler’s science vocabulary by playing a variation of the game “Password”. This activity will help your child review science concepts, learn new ones, and become familiar with the definitions and examples of various concepts in science. Have your child write their vocabulary on index cards and review words and hard concepts.

Try it

List some key concepts or vocabulary words that you and your child could review together.

8

Fine Arts



Arts in 8th Grade

The arts are an important part of a complete education, allowing students to develop artistic skills in the four artistic processes of creating, presenting/performing, responding, and connecting. In Seventh Grade, students will continue to use their knowledge and skills as artists and musicians.

Students may also begin/continue instrumental music (Orchestra and Band) instruction in Seventh Grade.

Major Concepts

Art

- Constant practicing and refining of skills and knowledge previously learned
- Responding to art, artistic literacy

Music

- Continued growth in music literacy (pitch and rhythm)
- Musical styles and historical periods

Resources



Art Apps

Sketchbook
PixPop Art
DoInk
ArtSet Pro
Making Emoji
Art Project

Music Apps

GarageBand
MonkeyDrum
Note Perfect
Ear Trainer
Note for Little Drummers

Dance Apps

QDancer
Kids Dance
Pirate Sessa
GoNoodle

Theater Apps

The Complete Fairytale
Play Theater
Kids' Theatre Works

Keep up with
SCSD Arts events
with the Fine Arts
calendar!



Art Exhibit

Date	Location

Music Concerts

Date	Location

Arts in the Syracuse Community

Everson Museum of Art
ArtRage Gallery
Community Folk Art Center
Open Hand Theater/
International Puppet Museum

Stone Quarry Hill Art Park
Corning Museum of Glass
Syracuse Stage
The Redhouse Arts Center

Gifford Family Theater
Famous Artists Broadway
Series
Symphoria

Syracuse Children's Chorus
Syracuse Children's Theatre
CNY Jazz

Practice at Home!

Help your child learn outside of school using these activities.

Virtual Museum Tour

Google "Virtual Museum Tour" and pick an art museum to explore. Choose a piece of artwork that you see and complete the questions below together.

Try it

Title of piece:

Artist:

What techniques have been used to create the artwork?:

What kind of light do you see? Where is it coming from?:

What about space- where are the open areas and where are the closed-off areas?:

Where does your view enter the artwork? Describe the pathway leading your eye around the work:

What does this art make you think about? What does it make you wonder about?:

Do you think the artist imagined, observed or remembered the subject of this work? Why?:

On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is *Very Original* and 10 is *Not Very Original*, how would you rate this piece of art? Why?:

Discuss Music

Check out any music that you own, turn on the radio, or check out YouTube. Choose a song and complete the questions below together.

Try it

Title of song:

Musician:

What musical techniques have been used to create this song?:

What does this song make you think or wonder about?:

What do you think the musician was trying to accomplish with this song? Do you think they succeeded? How did you decide whether or not they succeeded?:

On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is *Very Original* and 10 is *Not Very Original*, how would you rate this song? Why?:



Physical Education in 8th Grade

By 8th grade children have begun to establish many of the personal habits that will help determine their future health and well-being. Gross motor skills, which involve whole-body movement, are just about fully developed by this age, although your child will continue to refine their skills as they grow and gain more strength. Keep in mind that the information here is intended only as a general guide.

What Your Child Might Be Learning

- Understands that you need to move 60 minutes every day
- Understands that physical activity helps you learn
- Performs a variety of stretches and exercises while demonstrating correct technique
- Participates in a variety of activities that improve cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and flexibility
- Apply locomotor, nonlocomotor, and manipulative skills to team physical activities
- Able to use a pedometer and heart rate monitor to measure their current fitness level
- Create a personalized fitness program
- Plan and implement a two-week personal physical fitness plan in collaboration with the teacher.
- Identify and apply basic weight/resistance training principles and safety practices
- Fifth grade students need 10 hours of sleep every evening
- Understands that healthy food provides you with energy
- Understands that physical activity is important for good health

What Does My Child Need for Physical Education Class?

Students are expected to come to the gym prepared for a class full of learning and DOING

- Safe and secure gym shoes with a non-marking sole.
- Comfortable clothing so kids are free to run, roll, and scoot.
- A positive attitude and lots of energy.

What days does my child have PE class?

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Grades by Quarter

2 nd Quarter	4 th Quarter

Resources

Web

SHAPE: Society of Health and Physical Educator
www.shapeamerica.org

Fuel Up To Play 60
www.futp60.com

Onondaga Health Department
healthyliving.ongov.net

Cornell Cooperative Extension
cconondaga.org/nutrition-health

American Heart Association
healthyforgood.heart.org

Movement and Mindfulness
www.gonoodle.com

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation
www.healthiergeneration.org/live_healthier/get_moving/increase_physical_activity

Practice at Home!

Help your child learn outside of school using these activities.

Middle School Sports offered

Fall	Winter	Spring
Football	Boys Basketball	Baseball
Boys Soccer	Girls Basketball	Boys Lacrosse
Girls Soccer	Boys Volleyball	Girls Lacrosse
Girls Swim	Girls Volleyball	Softball
Boys Cross Country	Boys Swim	Boys Outdoor Track
Girls Cross Country	Wrestling	Girls Outdoor Track

Staying Active

Make time to encourage your child to participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Walking, jogging, biking, swimming or playground play is appropriate activities for you to engage your child.

Try it!

What activities can your student incorporate into their weekly schedule?

It is also helpful when your child sees other people doing physical activity at home. As a parent/guardian you are the role model. You can get involved in your child's physical activities. Something as simple as a walk in the morning or evening is enough to impact a child and push him or her to stay active.

Exploring Interests

Try it!

Ask your child what sports, events, or activities he or she likes. Then look for books, magazines, or other materials about those topics that would motivate your child to read about the activity.

Make time for conversation at home. Discuss current events, shared interests, and future aspirations for education and career. Visit recreation centers, pools, parks, walking/jogging paths, and other physical activity places to help increase your child's exposure to new activities.

Try it!

Where can you visit to increase your child's exposure to new activities?

Technology

Use technology to help build your child's interest in physical activity. There are several websites where students can read books or articles online. The computer will help with words the student cannot read independently. Libraries also have computers students can use to access those sites. Feel free to ask a librarian or teacher for suggestions

Try it!

Go to www.onlib.org for information on the Onondaga County Public Libraries.

My local County Library Branch is:

My Local Parks and Recs Department is:
