

## U.S. History – Grade 8 Overview 2025-2026

This document is designed to provide parents/guardians/community an overview of the curriculum taught in the FBISD classroom. It includes pacing, TEKS, Unit Overview, Big Ideas and Essential Questions, Concepts, and Instructional Model.

### Definitions

Overview– The content in this document provides an overview of the pacing and concepts covered in a subject for the year.

TEKS – Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are the state standards for what students should know and be able to do.

Process Standards – The process standards describe ways in which students are expected to engage in the content. The process standards weave the other knowledge and skills together so that students may be successful problem solvers and use knowledge learned efficiently and effectively in daily life.

Unit Overview – The unit overview provides a brief description of the concepts covered in each unit.

Big Ideas and Essential Questions - Big ideas create connections in learning. They anchor all the smaller, isolated facts together in a unit. Essential questions (questions that allow students to go deep in thinking) should answer the big ideas. Students should not be able to answer Essential Questions in one sentence or less. Big ideas should be the underlying concepts, themes, or issues that bring meaning to content.

Concept – A subtopic of the main topic of the unit

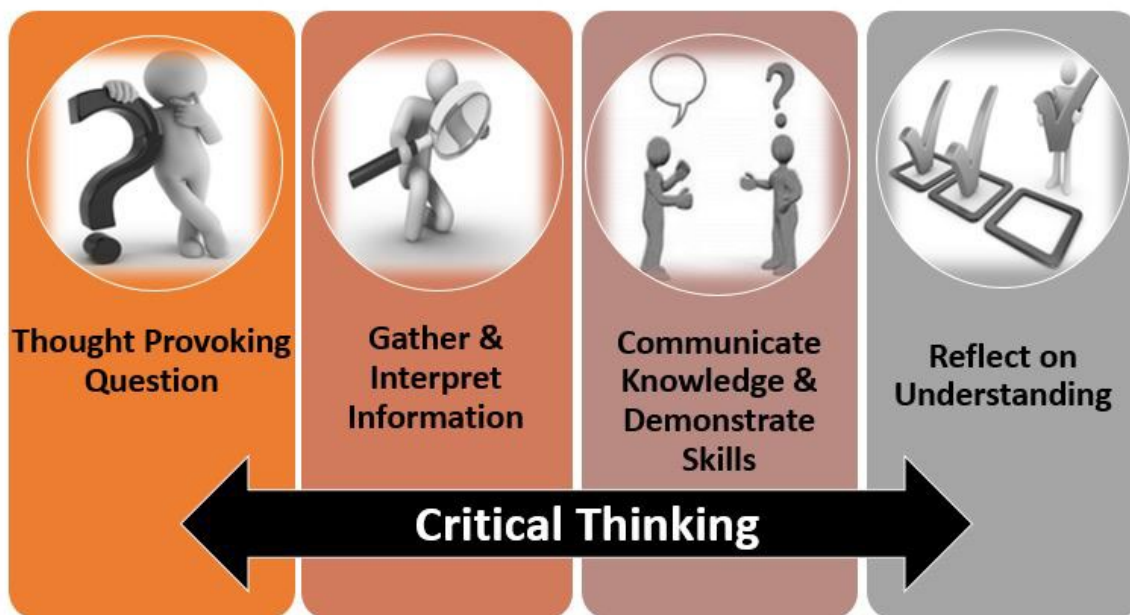
Instructional Model – The structures, guidelines or models in which students engage in a particular content that ensures understanding of that content.

### Parent Supports

The following resources provide parents with ideas to support students' understanding

- [Active Classroom](#)
- [Britannica School](#)
- [Ebsco Host](#)
- [World Book](#)
- [Khan Academy](#)
- NewsELA ([Access through FBISD Clever Portal](#))

## Social Studies Instructional Model



This model is an inquiry-based approach to learning Social Studies with a focus on critical thinking skills. Students start with a thought-provoking question, which frames the concept and flows throughout. After students make predictions based on the question, students will gather and interpret information to build his/her understanding of the standard(s) addressed by the question. Next, students will communicate the knowledge gained and demonstrate understanding by engaging in communication and application skills. Finally, students will reflect and assess their understanding.

### Adopted Resources

[FBISD Middle School Resources](#)

### Process Standards

**8.29** The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including technology.

**8.30** The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms.

**8.31** The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others.

Grading Period 1		
Unit 1: Exploration and Colonization		
Estimated Date Range: 08/12-09/10		
State Assessments N/A	Assessments District Assessments N/A	Common Formative Assessments Unit 1, Concept 2, Topic 2
<p><b>Unit Overview:</b> In this two-concept unit, students will study European exploration and colonization of North America and the Thirteen British Colonies, including the foundations of representative government. The major focus of this unit is that students understand the motives for exploration, the impact geography had on colonization including population distribution, settlement patterns, and economic activities, and political, economic, religious, and social reasons that the British Thirteen Colonies were established.</p> <p><b>Big Ideas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploration is driven by need, curiosity, and unpredictable events.</li> <li>• Cultural regions have specific traits.</li> </ul> <p><b>Thought Provoking Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What motivates one to explore?</li> <li>• To what degree is your identity tied to where you live?</li> </ul>		
Concepts within Unit #1		TEKS
Concept #1: European Exploration and Colonization		8.1B, 8.2A, 8.10A, 8.10C, 8.11A
Concept #2: Thirteen British Colonies		8.1A, 8.2B, 8.3A, 8.3B, 8.3C, 8.10A, 8.11A, 8.12A, 8.12B, 8.12C, 8.15A, 8.15E, 8.23A, 8.25A, 8.25B
Unit 2: Revolutionary Era		
Estimated Date Range: 11/11-10/10		
State Assessments N/A	Assessments District Assessments N/A	Common Formative Assessments N/A
<p><b>Unit Overview:</b> In this three-concept unit, students will study the causes and events of the American Revolution as well as their effects. The major focus of this unit is that students understand what led to the American Revolution, battles and other events during the revolution, key individuals and their impact, and the effects of the revolution on the newly formed United States of America.</p> <p><b>Big Ideas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All conflicts and revolutions have political, economic, and social causes and effects.</li> <li>• Turning points help define major eras in history, some are so significant they change the world.</li> <li>• All conflicts and revolutions have political, economic, and social causes and effects.</li> </ul> <p><b>Thought Provoking Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do people revolt?</li> <li>• How do you know a turning point has occurred?</li> <li>• Does conflict bring about change?</li> </ul>		

Concepts within Unit #2	TEKS
Concept #1: Causes of the Revolution	8.4A, 8.4B, 8.15E, 8.20B
Concept #2: Events of the Revolution	8.1B, 8.4B, 8.4C, 8.10C, 8.15C, 8.19A, 8.22B, 8.23E
Concept #3: Critical Period – America After the Revolution	8.1A, 8.4C, 8.6A, 8.15B, 8.20A

## Grading Period 2

### Unit 3: Constitution and Government

Estimated Date Range: 10/21-12/17

Assessments		
State Assessments N/A	District Assessments N/A	Common Formative Assessments Unit 3, Concept 2

#### Unit Overview:

In this four-concept unit, students will study the Constitutional Convention, Principles of the U.S. Constitution, and Rights and Responsibilities of U.S. citizens. The major focus of this unit is that students understand the influences of the past on the creation of the Constitution, what led to the Constitutional Convention, the writing of the US Constitution (including the key individuals and compromises), how the Constitution reflects the seven major principles and how they form the basis for our government, why and how the Constitution has and can be amended, and what responsible citizenship looks like.

#### Big Ideas:

- Governments evolve over time.
- The aim of a constitutional government is to create a more fair and peaceful society.
- Knowledgeable and active citizens protect democracy.

#### Thought Provoking Questions

- Why do governments change?
- How can a government ensure fairness and peace in a society?
- Should you be knowledgeable in order to be an active citizen?

Concepts within Unit #3	TEKS
Concept #1: Constitutional Convention	8.1A, 8.1B, 8.4D, 8.5C, 8.15A, 8.17A, 8.20A, 8.21A
Concept #2: The Constitution	8.15C, 8.15D, 8.16A
Concept #3: The Bill of Rights	8.19A, 8.19B, 8.19C, 8.21B, 8.25A, 8.25C
Concept #4: Country in Review	8.1A, 8.3A, 8.15D

## Grading Period 3

### Unit 4: The Early Republic

Grading Period Three Estimated Date Range: 01/08-01/30

Assessments		
State Assessments N/A	District Assessments N/A	Common Formative Assessments Unit 4, Concept 1 and 2

**Unit Overview:**

In this four-concept unit, students will study the first five presidents of the United States and their policies. The major focus of this unit is that students understand the foreign and domestic policy issues Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe faced as well as the formation of political parties and their impact on US politics.

**Big Ideas:**

- Leaders must deal effectively with political, economic, and social issues.
- Turning points help define major eras in history, some are so significant they change the world.
- Leaders must deal effectively with political, economic, and social issues.
- All conflicts and revolutions have political, social, and economic causes and effects.
- Leaders must deal effectively with political, economic, and social issues.

**Thought Provoking Questions**

- What makes a leader effective?
- Can one point in time change things forever?
- What issues do leaders face?
- What are the causes and effects of conflict?
- What makes a leader effective?

Concepts within Unit #4	TEKS
Concept #1: George Washington in Office	8.5A, 8.5B, 8.5C, 8.5E, 8.14A, 8.14B, 8.20A, 8.22A
Concept #2: Adams and Jefferson	8.1B, 8.5A, 8.5B, 8.5E, 8.18A, 8.18B, 8.20A, 8.22A
Concept #3: War of 1812	8.5A, 8.5D, 8.5E, 8.13A
Concept #4: Monroe's Presidency	8.1A, 8.5A, 8.5B, 8.5E, 8.18B

**Unit 5: America Transforming – Industrialization**

Estimated Date Range: 02/02-02/12

Assessments		
State Assessments N/A	District Assessments N/A	Common Formative Assessments Unit 5

**Unit Overview:**

In this three-concept unit, students will study the Industrial Revolution. The major focus of this unit is that students understand how the Industrial Revolution transforms America and the American way of life.

**Big Ideas:**

- Scientific discoveries and technological innovations may have consequences.
- Eras are periods of time, classified by like or related events and issues.
- Key people influence societies and bring about change.

**Thought Provoking Questions**

- What are the impacts of new ideas and inventions?
- Can a period of time change a nation?
- Can citizens changes the world?

Concepts within Unit #5	TEKS
Concept #1: Factors of Industrialization	8.10C, 8.11A, 8.11B, 8.12A, 8.12B, 8.13B, 8.14A, 8.14B, 8.23A, 8.23B, 8.23D, 8.27A, 8.27B, 8.27C, 8.28A, 8.28B

Concept #2: Economic and Environmental Impact of the Industry Revolution	8.10C, 8.11A, 8.11B, 8.12A, 8.12B, 8.13B, 8.14A, 8.14B, 8.23A, 8.23B, 8.23D, 8.27A, 8.27B, 8.27C, 8.28A, 8.28B	
Concept #3: Impact of the Industrial Revolution on Life in the North and South	8.10C, 8.11A, 8.11B, 8.12A, 8.12B, 8.13B, 8.14A, 8.14B, 8.23A, 8.23B, 8.23D, 8.27A, 8.27B, 8.27C, 8.28A, 8.28B	
<b>Grading Period 3</b>		
<b>Unit 6: Democracy, Westward Movement and Reform</b> Estimated Date Range: 02/17-03/13		
<b>State Assessments</b> TELPAS Window 02/16-03/27 STAAR Interim Window: 02/23-02/27	<b>Assessments</b> <b>District Assessments</b> N/A	<b>Common Formative Assessments</b> N/A
<b>Unit Overview:</b> In this three-concept unit, students will study how America transformed after the end of the Jeffersonian era and the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution. This unit focuses on the expansion of democracy under Andrew Jackson, the causes and effects of territorial growth of the United States during the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century, and the era of reform. To learn about the expansion of democracy and political changes, students will interact with information related to the presidency of Andrew Jackson and the various social reform movements of the 1800's. .		
<b>Big Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Trade, war, and migration create spatial diffusion and have far-reaching effects on the regions of contact.</li><li>Humans impact their environment, and their environment impacts them.</li></ul>		
<b>Thought Provoking Questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>How far can an idea spread and what are its lasting impacts?</li><li>How does where you live, impact how you live?</li></ul>		
<b>Concepts within Unit #6</b>	<b>TEKS</b>	
Concept #1: U.S. – Mexican War	8.6B, 8.6C, 8.20B, 8.21B	
Concept #2: Westward Expansion	8.1A, 8.6B, 8.10B, 8.10C, 8.11A, 8.12C, 8.23A, 8.23C, 8.23D, 8.27B, 8.27C	
Concept #3: Reform in the Republic	8.1A, 8.24A, 8.24B	

Grading Period 4		
Unit 7: Civil War and Reconstruction Estimated Date Range: 03/09-05/28		
<b>State Assessments</b> <b>TELPAS Window 02/16-03/27</b> <b>04/07-04/09 STAAR ELA</b> <b>04/14 STAAR Science</b> <b>04/15 STAAR Social Studies</b>	<b>Assessments</b> <b>District Assessments</b> <b>N/A</b>	<b>Common Formative Assessments</b> <b>N/A</b>
<b>Unit Overview:</b> In this five-concept unit, students will study life in the North and South during the Antebellum Period, growing sectionalism, battles and events of the Civil War, the period of Reconstruction, and local history. The major focus of this unit is that students understand the causes and effects of the Civil War, including local history.		
<b>Big Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Places and regions within the same country have different physical and human characteristics.</li> <li>• Turning points help define major eras in history, some are so significant they change the world.</li> <li>• Turning points help define major eras in history, some are so significant they change the world.</li> <li>• All conflicts and revolutions have political, social, and economic causes and effects.</li> <li>• Governmental policies (or the lack of policies) sometimes have unintended consequences.</li> </ul>		
<b>Thought Provoking Questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does where you live impact how you live?</li> <li>• When do you know a turning point has occurred?</li> <li>• Can one point in time change things forever?</li> <li>• How does conflict affect people/us?</li> <li>• How is society impacted by governmental policies (or the lack of policies)?</li> </ul>		
Concepts within Unit #7	TEKS Link to TEKS	
Concept #1: Causes of the Civil War	8.1A, 8.7A, 8.7B, 8.7C, 8.8B, 8.8C, 8.10B, 8.12C, 8.17B8, 8.18C, 8.21C	
Concept #2: The Civil War	8.1B, 8.8A, 8.8C, 8.8D, 8.10C, 8.22A, 8.23E	
Concept #3: Reconstruction	8.1A, 8.9A, 8.9B, 8.9C, 8.16B	
Concept #4: Local History Enrichment	FB1, 8.9C, 8.16B	