

PROPOSED SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM
BASED ON MSDE STANDARDS AND GOALS

Seventh Grade Social Studies



UNIT TWO

The Influence of Culture in Africa

The Middle Ages and Today



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Introduction

The instructional guide for unit two, seventh grade social studies is *not* designed to be the “*end all and be all*” of social studies. It is designed to show how to meet the state standards in a meaningful manner, and allow time for individual teacher extension. The skill focus for this unit is the development of student writing. As you worked your way through the first unit, time for extension probably seemed like a far off dream. Be reassured, however, that as with all new curriculum, time for extension may only become available after you have used the guide once or twice and become familiar with the material.

Begin by reading the *Enduring Understanding and Essential Questions* below. Those two items encapsulate the whole idea or **WHY** of the unit. Why, as in “Why study this?” As you read through the guide you will see that the unit sequentially builds up to the ideas expressed in the Enduring Understanding. Next review the **WHAT**; this is the MSDE Content Standards for this unit. These standards represent what MSDE wants students to be able to know and do. The MSDE standards that are specific to each Lesson Sequence and are further broken down into MCPS Content Focus Statements for each session. The rest of the guide and what you do in the classroom is the **HOW**.

Why?

Enduring Understanding

- Cultural systems are the shared beliefs, values, customs, and behaviors, that influence how societies develop and change. When cultures interact with one another, traditions, beliefs and values are exchanged through the dynamic process of cultural diffusion. This process alters political, economic, and social systems and may result in conflicts or tensions due to this cultural change.
- After 1200 CE, trade between African kingdoms and the Islamic world transformed African political, economic, and social systems. Many African societies reflected a blend of both African and Islamic cultural practices and beliefs. By the 1400s, as European trade expanded into sub-Saharan Africa, interactions between African, Islamic and European cultures laid the foundation for increasing tensions between these cultures.
- Cultural diffusion continues to influence the development of cultures and nations in Africa today. The pluralistic cultures of many African nations strive to find a common national identity as they struggle to seek political, economic, and social stability.

Possible Essential Questions

1. How does cultural diffusion occur?
2. How can economic activity lead to the exchange of cultural and political ideas?
3. How can economic hardship lead to political and social instability?
4. How do cultural traditions endure over time?
5. How do cultural factors influence the development and change in political systems?

What?

MSDE Content Standards (5/19/00)

[*italics* = not directly assessed on MSPAP, **bold** = MSDE glossary word, [brackets] = MCPS notes]

The student will be able to:

World History

- Summarize the importance of the political, economic, and social life of Mali and other African empires and analyze the role of Islam in Africa
- Describe the major traditions, customs, and beliefs of Islam and its expansion into Southwest Asia (Middle East), North Africa, and Europe

Geography

- Construct and interpret graphs, charts, databases, and thematic maps using map elements including a title, symbols, cardinal and intermediate directions, compass rose, border, longitude and latitude, legends/key and scale
- Explain interrelationships among physical and human characteristics that shape the identity of places
- Analyze geographic characteristics that influence the location of human activities in world regions
- Analyze the influence of transportation and communication on the movement of people, goods, and ideas from place to place
- Describe the forces and processes of cooperation that unite people across Earth's surface in terms of language, ethnic heritage, religion, political philosophy, social and economic systems, and shared history

Economics

- Analyze the relationship between the availability of natural, capital, and human resources, and the production of goods and services now and in the past
- Analyze effects of supply and demand on the production, consumption, and distribution of goods and services

Political System

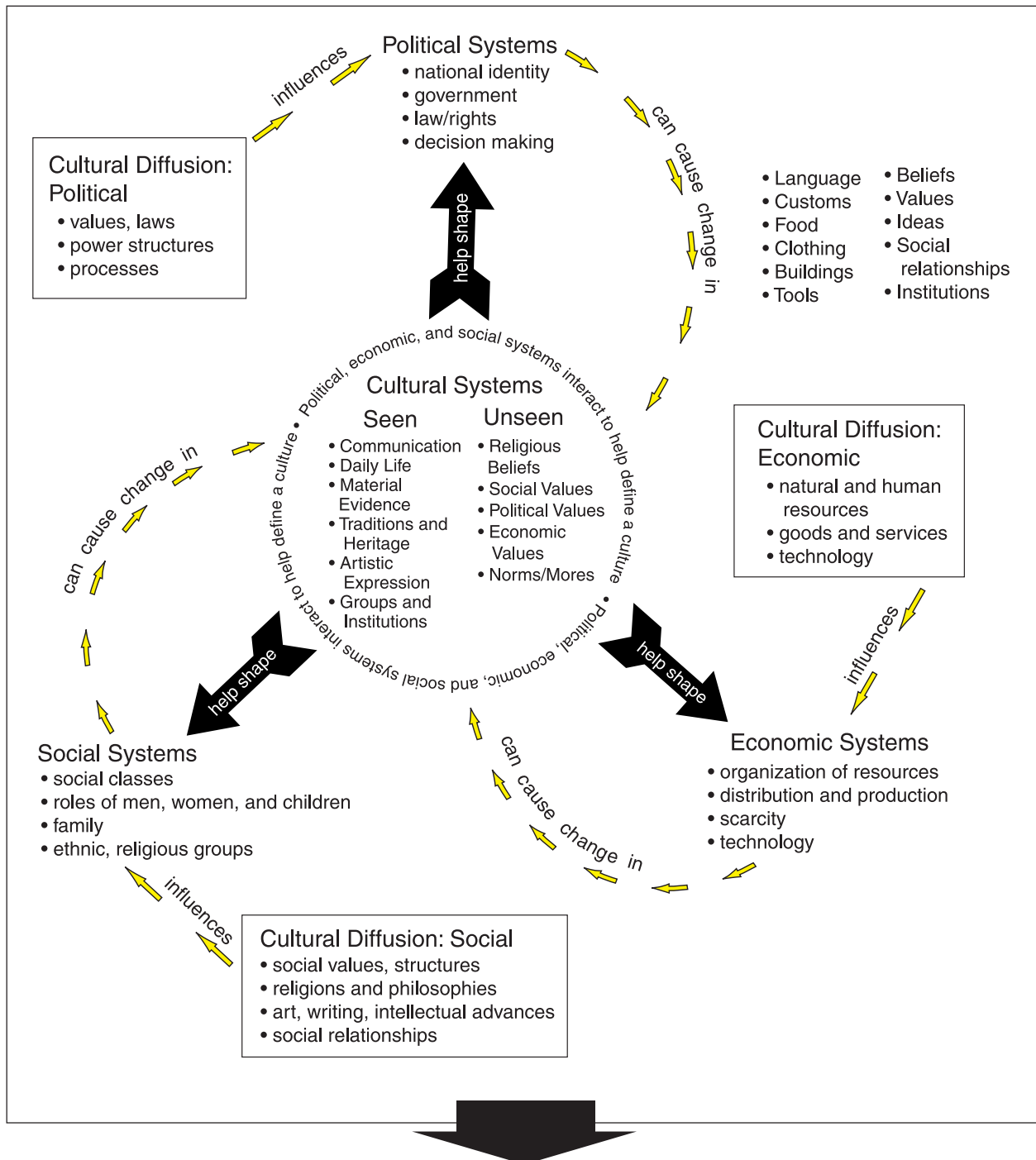
- Describe the characteristics of a sovereign nation
- Distinguish among various forms of government with emphasis on the ways of life and opportunities they permit, promote, and prohibit

Peoples of the Nation and World

- Analyze how the environment and cultural diffusion influence the development of the United States and other cultures
- Analyze characteristics that are used to organize people into cultures
- Analyze the variety of forms and roles institutions assume in cultures around the world
- Describe and analyze the practices, beliefs, and influence of religions of the world

Concept Map

Seventh Grade - Unit Two • The Influence of Culture in Africa



History:

Cultural systems are the primary means of interaction between individuals and societies. As human societies came into broader contact with one another, cultural diffusion accelerated. With that, cultural change accelerated. Every society since the 1400s has been managing diffusion induced change in their culture. Change induced by inside economic and political systems have also accelerated the pace of change. The course of modern world history is fundamentally a study of cultural change.

Instructional Flow

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Pre - Assessment

What did students learn about culture in unit four of sixth grade? What are the seen and unseen characteristics of culture? Students complete the classification work of a museum curator to assess their knowledge of the characteristics of culture and to introduce vocabulary for the unit.

LS 1 Culture: Characteristics and Principles (2 Weeks)

The Principles of Culture are introduced after a comparison of modern culture to the past artifacts from the pre-assessment. Through making connections to their own experiences and by reading observations of Peace Corps volunteers, students show their knowledge of the Principles of Culture. Student learn:

- the Principles of Culture - extended from sixth grade.
- African nations are pluralistic societies with many different cultures.
- understanding culture requires multiple perspectives and avoidance of stereotype.



LS 2 The Influence of Geography and Trade (2 weeks)

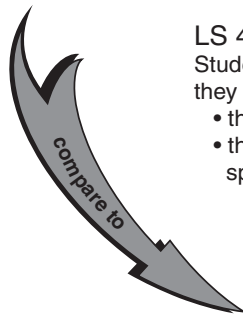
Students make predictions about the influence of geography on the development of regional African cultures. A trade simulation builds geographic knowledge and introduces the power of cultural diffusion. Students learn:

- human and physical geographic characteristics of the African continent.
- how trade extended across the continent and connected to routes in the Middle East and India in the middle ages.
- how cultural diffusion affected African societies as a result of trade.

LS 3 Kingdom of Mali: Two Cultures, One King (1 week)

Students compare traditional West African culture and Islamic West African culture in the 1300s to answer the question, "Was Mali an Islamic Kingdom?" Students learn that:

- traditional African cultures with strong kinship ties thrived in rural villages.
- Islamic culture was most readily adopted in trading cities but differed from rural life.
- Mansa Musa, a king of Mali, promoted the spread of Islamic culture, yet allowed traditional culture to remain as well.



LS 4 African Cultures Past (2 weeks)

Students examine the development of African societies and how they were changed by cultural diffusion. Students research:

- the Kingdom of Songhai, Swahili city-states, Great Zimbabwe, Kingdom of Kongo.
- the impact of North African aggression and coastal trade with Europeans, including the spread of guns, expanded slave trade, and increased division and conflict within African kingdoms.

LS 5 Defining National Cultures Today (1 week)

Students analyze modern conflicts in Africa to understand how different cultural identities within a pluralistic society may make the formation of a common national identity difficult. Students examine:

- South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Nigeria
- how past colonial practices contributed to ethnic division and tension.
- efforts being made today to form a common national identity shared by all cultural groups.

End of Unit Assessment

