To: 6th Grade Parent/Guardian(s)

# From: Dr. Jeffrey R. Niemi

Social Studies 6 Teacher

Work Phone #: 366-3880

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Re: Social Studies 6 Course Syllabus for SY 14 -15

Dear 6th Grade Parent/Guardian(s):

Welcome to Andersen Middle School and the 6th Grade! Please review the course syllabus so that you may better understand the basic procedures and content your child will experience in my class this year.

**Course:** S.S. Grade 6 – World History: Ancient Civilizations

Students in grade six expand their understanding of history by studying the people and events that ushered in the dawn of the major Western and non-Western ancient civilizations. Geography is of special significance in the development of the human story. Continued emphasis is placed on the everyday lives, problems, and accomplishments of people, as well as their role in developing social, economic, and political structures. The ways in which humanity established and spread ideas that helped transform the world forever will also be analyzed. Students develop higher levels of critical thinking by considering why civilizations developed where and when they did, why they became dominant, and why they declined. Students analyze the interactions among the various cultures, emphasizing their enduring contributions and the link, despite time, between the contemporary and ancient worlds.

**Grade 6 Study Units:**

* Digging Up the Past (Ch. 1 in Text)
* Early Civilizations (Ch. 2 in Text)
* Ancient Egypt and Nubia (Ch. 3 in Text)
* Ancient Greece (Ch. 9 in Text)
* Ancient Rome (Ch. 10 in Text)
* Ancient China (Ch. 4 in Text)
* Ancient India and Persia (Ch. 5 in Text)

**Course Textbook:** Social Studies---The World---Gold Edition (Scott Foresman)

* Each student will be assigned a text to BRING HOME within the first month of school. Students should not leave texts in lockers or bring to class
* A class set is available for student use in the classroom

**Grading Policy:**

The quarter (and semester) grade in Social Studies 6 will be determined by the student’s performance in 5 grading categories. Please note the following distribution:

**Marking Period Grade Components:**

* Assignments = 25%
* Tests = 25%
* Quizzes = 15%
* Cornell Notes (Collected at the End of Unit) = 25%
* Projects/Special Activities = 10%

**Late Work Policy:**

Students are expected to turn work in on time. Late work will be accepted up until the end of the unit. Work submitted after a unit is completed will not be accepted (exceptions: excused absences or special arrangements made with the teacher prior to the end of a unit).

**Classroom Discipline:**

Students are expected to exhibit appropriate and civil behavior at all times. An optimal learning environment revolves around students who are committed to learning and who manage their personal behavior in accordance with classroom standards. Please note the classroom rules and disciplinary procedures for minor offenses.

**Classroom Rules:**

1. Listen Carefully
2. Follow Directions
3. Work Quietly
4. Respect Others
5. Respect School & Personal Property
6. Make an Honest Effort to Learn

**Classroom Disciplinary Procedure (Minor Offenses):**

1. 1st Offense = Verbal warning/Name written on board
2. 2nd Offense = Time out/Counseled by teacher/Note written in agenda
3. 3rd Offense = After-school detention Assigned/;Parent contacted
4. 4th Offense = Sent to office (Administration)

**Teacher/Parent Communication:**

Communication between the parent(s) and the teacher is an important part of a student’s success in school. The student agenda will be updated every class period. Parents need to review the student agenda for information on assignments, academic and/or behavioral performance in class. Parents are encouraged to correspond with the teacher via the agenda, email, or phone as needed.

**Educational Philosophy:**

My personal educational philosophy is shaped by professional experience and training, DODEA and school expectations, and educational research. Student-centered and teacher-centered activities are routinely used to cultivate student success in social studies. Student-centered activities such as cooperative learning are proven by research to improve student achievement, motivation, and social skill development. The Cornell Note-Taking System is a structured way for students to acquire and master information in a manner that is personalized for them. Note-taking is also supported by research to be an effective way for students to learn.

**Teacher Bio:**

* 22 years as a middle-school teacher (18 at AMS/DDESS-Guam)
* Certified secondary social studies teacher (credentialed by DoDEA, State of Minnesota, and Territory of Guam)
* Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree in Secondary Education (Social Studies/History) from St. Cloud State University (Minnesota)
* Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree in Secondary Education (Social Studies/Micronesian Studies) from the University of Guam
* Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degree in Teacher Leadership from Walden University

Please be encouraged to contact me via the agenda, email, or phone if there is a concern. I am very willing to work with parents to help students be successful academically, socially, and behaviorally.

Again, welcome to a new year of school. I look forward to working with your son or daughter this year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeffrey R. Niemi

SS 6 Teacher

Andersen MS