

Dear Parent,



We're excited to have your child in Social Studies at Whitmore Lake Middle School.

This is a very important year in your child's life, and we are pleased to be part of it.

At school, we're building on the skills that your child has already learned and we're introducing new ones. See this side of the brochure for details about what we're doing this year in Social Studies.

At home, your child can practice the skills we're learning at school. See the other side of this brochure for easy things that you can do to encourage that practice.

By working together, we can make sure that your child acquires the skills he or she needs to be successful in school and life.

We look forward to working with you and your child this year. When you have questions, please feel free to contact us at 449-4715.

Sincerely,
The Middle School
Social Studies Teachers

In every grade, we teach Social Studies skills that will help students:

Express informed opinions

- Gather information from books, maps, newspapers, graphs, charts, and timelines.
- Construct maps, graphs, and timelines.
- Investigate why different people have different points of view.
- Take a position on an issue and defend it.

Think historically

- Understand time and order of events.
- Comprehend, analyze, and interpret the past.
- Judge the causes and effects of key historical decisions.

Describe our world

- Explain global issues and events.
- Describe, compare, and explain location, characteristics of people, places, cultures.
- Understand the human impact on the environment.
- Understand how the environment affects trade and economies.

Be effective citizens

- Be a good citizen by following laws, rules.
- Know purposes of governing bodies and assess their effectiveness.
- Know the core Democratic values.
- Compare checks and balances at all government levels.
- Recognize that nations in the world interact with one another.

Make informed economic decisions

- Explain goods and services.
- Describe supply and demand.

In Middle School, we teach Social Studies skills that will help your child:

Express informed opinions

- Read about public issues to understand more than one perspective.
- Analyze public issues to express thoughtful positions on them.
- Discuss public issues with others in order to clarify the issues, consider opposing views, apply core Democratic values, and make educated decisions about the issues.
- Compose well-written essays that express a position on a public issue and support the position with a logical argument.

Think historically

- Describe events in American history before 1865.
- Discuss the role of Native Americans in early U.S. history.
- Trace the routes of European explorers in America.
- List the causes and consequences of the Revolutionary War.
- Explain the westward expansion of the United States.
- Describe the political and social causes of the Civil War.



Describe our world

- Identify the diverse places, cultures, and communities of the western hemisphere.
- Describe cultural, economic, political, and environmental features of North and South America.
- Identify major cultural, economic, and political features of Africa and Asia.
- Describe major African and Asian cultures including language, religion, belief systems, gender roles, and traditions.



Be effective citizens

- Explain how Americans created a new government.
- Describe how the United States government was formed and explain major historical documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Parents:
Here are some easy ways to help your child practice Social Studies skills.

Express informed opinions

- Expose your child to current events through newspapers, television shows, magazines, etc.
- Discuss current events and differing points of views on controversial issues.
- Ask your child his or her opinions on issues and specific reasons to support his or her positions.
- Encourage your child to volunteer for causes s/he supports.



Think historically

- Discuss similarities and differences between current events and events of the past.
- Encourage your child to talk to older family members about events they experienced throughout their lives.
- Watch and discuss historical TV shows and movies.
- Travel to historical sites.
- Encourage your child to read historical novels, magazines, and biographies.
- Describe the world in which we live.

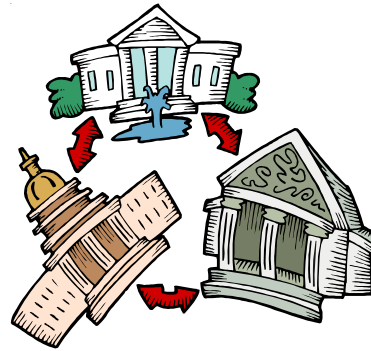
- Expose your child to people, foods, art, and literature from other cultures.
- Travel and have children “navigate” using maps.

Describe our world

- Have your child locate a country that’s been mentioned in the news, using a globe or atlas. Where is it located in relationship to where you live?
- Together, find and read information about that country’s language, economic conditions, customs, and traditions.

Be effective citizens

- Discuss voting and elections with your child.



- Model and encourage good citizenship.
- Read about and discuss current events with your child.
- Talk to your child about the role of government in your family’s life.



Make informed economic decisions

- Discuss daily and long-term economic choices the family makes and point out the economic impact these choices have on family and social stability.
- Open a savings and/or checking account for your child and assist him or her in managing the account.
- Model and encourage responsible budgeting, saving and spending.
- Teach your child how to use newspapers to track investments and business news.



Whitmore Lake Middle School

In Middle School, we’re teaching your child important citizenship skills.

What are these skills?

How can you help your child practice them?

W ...exceptional, personalized education

For more good ideas, ask your child’s teacher, or contact:
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(734) 449-4715 • <http://www.wlps.net>