

An Introduction to Eighth Grade Social Studies: U.S. History 1754-1877

Throughout their social studies experience, Eighth grade students will analyze how the U.S. was created, grew as a nation and endured a civil war.

Utilizing Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards, MD State Standards and the C3 document, Eighth grade students will focus on developing understandings of four macro concepts throughout the year: Contributions, Change, Interactions and Perspectives. These four macro concepts are to be **integrated** with the standards. The concepts are the catalyst for teaching the standards in depth. Eighth grade students will build upon their understandings of the macro concepts and will be able to **transfer** their understandings of the concepts across all disciplines. Given any content, students should be able to apply the skills and processes embedded in the macro concepts.

Eighth grade teachers will have access to a Course Organizer providing an overview for Eighth grade instruction for the year. Each macro concept is a part of the title of the units that will take place approximately over the course of one marking period. Eighth grade teachers will also have access to unit planners and unit organizers for each unit. Each unit organizer reflects Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards, Maryland State Standards, and the C3 document that have been grouped under categories that are to be explicitly taught within that unit and then supported throughout the entire year. The four units were designed in chronological order in keeping with the story of American History. The course emphasizes each of the four macro concepts – Unit 1 Contributions (1754-1787), Unit 2 Change (1788-1824), Unit 3 Interactions (1825-1850), and Unit 4 Perspectives (1851-1877).

Curriculum writers discussed ideas outlined below that *can* be used as entry points when exploring the four macro concepts that will be used to teach the standards with eighth graders. The macro concepts are provided as the lens used to focus instruction, each macro concept will carry over into all of the four units. For example, while *contributions* is the focus of Unit 1 a teacher can still relate *contributions* when teaching about westward expansion. Curriculum writers believe it is important to note that this course was designed with the intention to be instructed in chronological order. As the year progresses, Eighth grade students will make connections among macro concepts and ultimately understand how the four macro concepts are interconnected within the story of American History.