**Course Syllabus: Social Studies 8 (Geography)**

*Exploring the World and Learning about*

**Dillingham Middle School**: 8th Grade, 2018-2019 School Year

**Teacher: Mrs. Megan Gunderson**

* *Email:* [mgunderson@dlgsd.org](mailto:mgunderson@dlgsd.org)
  + *Note: Email is the best way to contact Mrs. Gunderson. Phone calls will only be answered during prep time, and before/after school. All messages will be returned as soon as possible. In case of Emergency, please contact the school office (907-842-5221).*
* *Phone:* 907-842-5221
* *Website:* gundersonsclassroom.weebly.com
* *Classroom: Room 202*
* *Remind: @98fnp3*

**Course Description**

The middle school Geography course is focused on increasing knowledge of physical and human geography through the studies of regional groupings. Students will analyze population and settlement patterns to evaluate the ways that human activities modify the physical environment. Students will compare human development, standards of living, systems of government, and economic factors across the globe. In addition, students will gain a rich understanding of global cultures and the historical factors that have shaped modern issues. Most of their reading passages and literary study in English/Language Arts will correspond to the unit of study in Geography. (See ELA syllabus for novel titles per Geography unit)

**Required Supplies**

Blue or black pens, #2 pencils (I highly recommend Ticonderoga brand)

1 inch, Three Ring Binder

Lined Loose Leaf Paper for Binder

Take Home Folder (for homework, notes home, etc.)

Colored Pencils (to keep at home, for finishing mapwork)

**Supplies Provided by Teacher and/or School District for use on campus during the school day**

Technology: Computer (Chromebook), Internet Access

Subject Dividers with Tabs for Binder

Reading Resources (Textbook, Atlas, etc)

Colored Pencils

**School Supply Notes:**

* Student binders will remain in the classroom and used daily (for both ELA and Social Studies classes).
* Student computers will not leave the school this year. Teachers will allow time for students to retrieve computers from the 8th grade cart at the beginning of any class which will use them.
* Backpacks will not enter the classroom; they are to be kept in student lockers.
* The school has *supplies available for students who need them*. Please see Mrs. Gunderson privately if you need supplies. Parents or community members interested in donating supplies to the Language Arts classroom are encouraged to contact Mrs. Gunderson or the school counselor.

**Course Overview**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Trimester 1** | **Trimester 2** | **Trimester 3** |
| Unit 1: Basic Geography Skills | Unit 5: Africa | Unit 8: Australia/Oceania |
| Unit 2: US & Canada | Winter Holidays Around the World | Unit 9: Antarctica |
| Unit 3: Latin America | Unit 6: SW Asia (Middle East) | Unit 10: Travel Project |
| Unit 4: Monsoon Asia | Unit 7: Europe/Russia |  |
| FINAL | FINAL |  |

**Virtual Field Trips and Guest Speakers**

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**Arts Integration**

Since DMS does not currently offer a fully dedicated fine art elective, this social studies course will attempt to integrate the creative arts at least once during each regional unit of study. This could take the form of:

* 2d fine art (painting, sketch, collage)
* 3D fine art (sculpture, paper mache, carving)
* Musical arts (composing, listening)
* Movement (dancing)
* Drama (reading, writing, or acting in short skits)

**Reading and Writing Requirements**

Students will be required to read and annotate passages from the textbook and other non-fiction articles in class at least once a week. They must also summarize the text and respond to related questions in writing. This will provide students with the opportunity to use the following strategies also practiced in Language Arts:

* HUG reading annotation strategy
  + Highlight main idea
  + Underline important details
  + Get it in your own words
* Summarization strategies
* RACE text dependent analysis strategy
  + Restate the Question
  + Answer
  + Cite Evidence
  + Explain

Students must develop annotation, summarization, and analysis skills for note taking, researching, quoting material, and questioning information. These skills are emphasized on the 8th grade ELA PEAKS state exam and are the foundation for success in content area reading in high school and college.

**Travel Project**

After all Geography units are complete, students will spend the last month of school working on an in-depth travel project based on authentic, real-world scenarios. They will be expected to plan for an extended trip around the world (including budgeting, travel arrangements, reservations, etc). For each country ‘visited’, students will also complete a project ‘artifact’ and country profile sheet. More specific project details will be shared during the third trimester.

**Technology**

Today’s world requires students to master technology to be successful in college, the workforce, or military service. Similarly, educational standards laid out by the State of Alaska require students to use technology and alternate forms of media to communicate and demonstrate an understanding of content area knowledge.

Students will be required to use their School District Email Address, Google Education Suite (Drive, Docs, Slides, Earth, Maps), Newsela, Remind, and other online learning sites in this 8th grade Geography course.

Personal devices will not be needed. Cell phones should not be visible.

**Student Expectations**

**All students will be RESPECTFUL towards themselves, others, and the school.**

* **Prompt:**
  + Be on time.
  + Enter the classroom quietly.
  + Retrieve supplies, go to assigned seat, and immediately begin opening activity.
* **Polite:**
  + Be nice or neutral to everyone.
  + Encourage your classmates!
  + Swearing, teasing, talking back, and bullying will NOT be tolerated.
  + Respect yourself, your classmates, your teacher, and your classroom.
  + Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
* **Patient:**
  + Wait respectfully and calmly for your turn.
  + Listen and stay seated when someone is talking.
  + Be patient with yourself! Learning takes time. Give yourself the grace to make a few mistakes.

**All students will be RESPONSIBLE for their own education and behavior.**

* **Prepared:**
  + Bring all materials and necessary work every day.
  + Turn in assignments on time.
  + Arrive ready for a great learning experience!
* **Productive:**
  + Stay on task.
  + Follow directions.
  + Persevere through challenges by asking questions and focusing on the positive.
  + Complete assignments on time with minimal prompting or reminding.
  + Remain seated unless otherwise instructed.

**All students will be SAFE to themselves and others.**

**Classroom Management**

**Arrival:** Students will come into the classroom quietly and respectfully.  Students will gather their materials, go directly to their assigned seat, and follow posted instructions for the opening activity.  Students will continue working until the teacher begins class.

**Leaving During Class**: Students are expected come to class prepared and ready to work from bell to bell.   The 4 minute passing time should be used for any personal errands or restroom breaks. Students are expected to stay in class the entire hour, without leaving the room and interrupting instruction.  Extenuating circumstances or exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**Dismissal**: Near the end of class, students will be directed to clean up their desks and floor space.  When students are finished, they must sit quietly and wait to be dismissed from their desk space.  They must NOT wait at the door for the bell to ring.

**Voice Level**: The chart below will be used to determine the appropriate volume for each activity.

0:  Silent (No Voice)

1:  Whisper Voice

2:  Regular Voice

3:  Presentation Voice

4:  Outside Voice

**Food/Drink**: Only water is allowed in middle school classrooms. No other food or drink items may be consumed unless an exception is made for special lessons or classroom parties.

**Backpacks**: Student backpacks should be kept in their lockers.  If students bring them to class, they will be asked to return them to their lockers. Only necessary items for class should be kept with the students at their desks; most heavy items like books and binders will be kept in the classroom in a designated area. We want to be productive and avoid distractions, while also being safe and avoiding accidental falls.

**Distracting Items:** All personal items that are not directly necessary for school (including ***cell phones***, kendamas, fidgets, earbuds, etc) should be put away in lockers during class.  Students who repeatedly have trouble with this expectation will be required to place their distracting items in a designated area or in the office. In this case, such items will remain in the designated area until the end of class (unless instructed otherwise by the teacher).  Frequent issues of this kind could result in office referral.

**Progress Reports**

Parents/Guardians and students are responsible for logging in to the Powerschool system to check student’s grades.  Our Powerschool website is ps.dlgsd.org. Information about how to log in to this system is available from the secretary and the counselor.

Due to time constraints, I am not able to contact parents every time a child has a missing assignment or receives a failing grade on an assignment. Please regularly check Powerschool so that you can be aware of these issues. I am always happy to answer any questions you may have about your child’s grades. While I may not contact you for every assignment, if your child’s overall grade drops to an F for more than a week, I will contact you about steps that can be taken to resolve this issue.

**Middle School Late Work Policy**

All assignments are due on the given due date that is posted on the classroom whiteboard, on Powerschool, or in Google Classroom.  If a student does not hand in work by the due date, they have **TWO WEEKS** to hand in any late work. If the student has not handed in the assignment within that time period, the grade for that assignment will become a zero and will **NOT** be changed.

**Extra Help**

Mrs. Gunderson is always available after school from 3:15-4:00 pm on Mondays to help students.  Other days and times are possible but require advance notice, as there are often meetings in the afternoon after school. For