

Virginia Studies

The standards for Virginia Studies allow students to develop a greater understanding of Virginia’s rich history, from the early settlements of American Indian language groups and the founding of Jamestown to the present. Geographic, economic, and civic concepts are presented within this historic context. Students will develop the skills needed to analyze, interpret, and demonstrate knowledge of important events and ideas in our history, and understand the contributions made by people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Students will use geographic tools to examine the influence of physical and cultural geography on Virginia history. Ideas that form the foundation for political institutions in Virginia and the United States also are included as part of the story of Virginia.

The study of history must emphasize the intellectual skills required for responsible citizenship. Students practice these skills as they extend their understanding of the essential knowledge defined by all of the standards for history and social science.

Skills

- VS.1 The student will develop skills for historical and geographical analysis including the ability to
- identify and interpret artifacts and primary and secondary source documents to understand events in history;
 - determine cause and effect relationships;
 - compare and contrast historical events;
 - draw conclusions and make generalizations;
 - make connections between past and present;
 - sequence events in Virginia history;
 - interpret ideas and events from different historical perspectives;
 - evaluate and discuss issues orally and in writing;
 - analyze and interpret maps to explain relationships among landforms, water features, climatic characteristics, and historical events.

Virginia: The Land and Its First Inhabitants

- VS.2 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the geography and early inhabitants of Virginia by
- locating Virginia and its bordering states on maps of the United States;
 - locating and describing Virginia’s Coastal Plain (Tidewater), Piedmont, Blue Ridge Mountains, Valley and Ridge, and Appalachian Plateau;
 - locating and identifying water features important to the early history of Virginia (Atlantic Ocean, Chesapeake Bay, James River, York River, Potomac River, and Rappahannock River);
 - locating three American Indian (First American) language groups (the Algonquian, the Siouan, and the Iroquoian) on a map of Virginia;
 - describing how American Indians (First Americans) adapted to the climate and their environment to secure food, clothing, and shelter.

Colonization and Conflict: 1607 through the American Revolution

- VS.3 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the first permanent English settlement in America by
- explaining the reasons for English colonization;
 - describing how geography influenced the decision to settle at Jamestown;
 - identifying the importance of the charters of the Virginia Company of London in establishing the Jamestown settlement;
 - identifying the importance of the Virginia Assembly (1619) as the first representative legislative body in English America;
 - identifying the importance of the arrival of Africans and women to the Jamestown settlement;
 - describing the hardships faced by settlers at Jamestown and the changes that took place to ensure survival;
 - describing the interactions between the English settlers and the Powhatan people, including the contributions of the Powhatans to the survival of the settlers.
- VS.4 The student will demonstrate knowledge of life in the Virginia colony by
- explaining the importance of agriculture and its influence on the institution of slavery;
 - describing how European (English, Scotch-Irish, German) immigrants, Africans, and American Indians (First Americans) influenced the cultural landscape and changed the relationship between the Virginia colony and England;
 - explaining how geography influenced the relocation of Virginia's capital from Jamestown to Williamsburg to Richmond;
 - describing how money, barter, and credit were used.
- VS.5 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the role of Virginia in the American Revolution by
- identifying the reasons why the colonies went to war with England as expressed in the Declaration of Independence;
 - identifying the various roles played by Virginians in the Revolutionary War era, with emphasis on George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Patrick Henry;
 - identifying the importance of the American victory at Yorktown.

Political Growth and Western Expansion: 1781 to the Mid 1800s

- VS.6 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the role of Virginia in the establishment of the new American nation by
- explaining why George Washington is called the "Father of our Country" and James Madison is called the "Father of the Constitution";
 - identifying the ideas of George Mason and Thomas Jefferson as expressed in the Virginia Declaration of Rights and the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom;
 - explaining the influence of geography on the migration of Virginians into western territories.

Civil War and Post-War Eras

- VS.7 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the issues that divided our nation and led to the Civil War by
- identifying the events and differences between northern and southern states that divided Virginians and led to secession, war, and the creation of West Virginia;
 - describing Virginia's role in the war, including identifying major battles that took place in Virginia.

- VS.8 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the reconstruction of Virginia following the Civil War by
- a) identifying the effects of Reconstruction on life in Virginia;
 - b) identifying the effects of segregation and “Jim Crow” on life in Virginia;
 - c) describing the importance of railroads, new industries, and the growth of cities to Virginia’s economic development.

Virginia: 1900 to the Present

- VS.9 The student will demonstrate knowledge of twentieth century Virginia by
- a) describing the economic and social transition from a rural, agricultural society to a more urban, industrialized society, including the reasons people came to Virginia from other states and countries;
 - b) identifying the social and political events in Virginia linked to desegregation and Massive Resistance and their relationship to national history;
 - c) identifying the political, social, and/or economic contributions made by Maggie L. Walker, Harry F. Byrd, Sr., Arthur R. Ashe, Jr., and L. Douglas Wilder.
- VS.10 The student will demonstrate knowledge of government, geography, and economics by
- a) identifying the three branches of Virginia government and the function of each;
 - b) describing the major products and industries of Virginia’s five geographic regions;
 - c) explaining how advances in transportation, communications, and technology have contributed to Virginia’s prosperity and role in the global economy.