

8th Grade Social Studies Checklist

- 8.1: I can talk to you about the things that happened before the founding of the nation. I can talk about how these events led to America's constitutional democracy.
- 8.1.1: I can describe the moral and political ideas that came about during the Great Awakening, as well as the revolutionary excitement of this time.
- 8.1.2: I can look closely at the idea of government as expressed in the Declaration of Independence. I can explain that the government secures individual rights that cannot be taken away.
- 8.1.3: I can tell you how the American Revolution affected other countries, especially France.
- 8.1.4: I can talk about America being a blend of different ideas, including civic republicanism, classical liberal principles, and English parliamentary traditions.
- 8.2: I can look closely at the political principles underlying the U.S. Constitution and compare the enumerated (listed) powers to the implied powers of the federal government.
- 8.2.1: I can tell you why the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights, and the Mayflower Compact were important.
- 8.2.2: I can look closely at the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution to see how successfully each one implemented the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.
- 8.2.3: I can tell you about the major debates that happened when the Constitution was written. I can tell you that these debates resulted in shared powers among institutions, divided state-federal power, slavery, the rights of individuals and states, and the status of American Indian nations.
- 8.2.4: I can tell you about the political ideas laid out in the Constitution as stated in the Federalist Papers (by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay). I can tell you why leaders like Madison, George Washington, Roger Sherman, Gouverneur Morris, and James Wilson were important in the writing and approving of the Constitution.
- 8.2.5: I can understand why Jefferson's Statute for Religious Freedom was an important part of the First Amendment. I know that the founding fathers felt differently about the separation of church and state.
- 8.2.6: I can explain the powers of government described in the Constitution, and the fundamental liberties guaranteed by the Bill of Rights.
- 8.2.7: I can explain the following: federalism, dual sovereignty, separation of powers, checks and balances, majority rule, and how the idea of constitutionalism preserves individual rights.
- 8.3: I can understand the foundation of the American political system and the ways in which citizens participate in it.
- 8.3.1: I can look closely at the state constitutions that came about between 1777 and 1781. I know that these constitutions influenced American political institutions and ideas.
- 8.3.2: I can understand that the rulings of 1785 and 1787 made national resources private, and transferred federal land into private holdings, townships, and states.

- 8.3.3: I can explain the advantages of a common market among the states. I know how the Constitution protected interstate business, common currency, and full-faith and credit.
- 8.3.4: I can explain that the conflicts between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton led to the formation of two political parties. I can describe their differing viewpoints about topics such as foreign policy, Alien and Sedition Acts, National Bank, etc.
- 8.3.5: I can tell you about resistance movements (like Shays' Rebellion and the Whiskey Rebellion) and how the government responded to these movements.
- 8.3.6: I can describe the basic law-making process. I can tell you how the Constitution gives many opportunities for citizens to participate in and influence their government.
- 8.3.7: I can understand the functions and responsibilities of a free press.
- 8.4: I can look closely at the aspirations and ideals of the people of the new nation.
- 8.4.1: I can talk about the country's physical geography, political divisions, and territorial expansion during the terms of the first four presidents.
- 8.4.2: I can explain why certain speeches were so significant (Washington's Farewell Address, Jefferson's 1801 Inaugural Address, John Q. Adams's Fourth of July 1821 Address).
- 8.4.3: I can analyze the rise of capitalism. I know about the economic problems and conflicts that came along with the rise in capitalism.
- 8.4.4: I can tell you about daily life in early America, including the art, music, and literature.
- 8.5: I can look closely at U.S. foreign policy in the early Republic.
- 8.5.1: I can discuss the political and economic causes and consequences of the War of 1812. I know the key battles, leaders, and events that led to peace.
- 8.5.2: I can discuss the way the boundaries of the United States changed. I can tell you about the relationship the U.S. had with Mexico, Canada, and Europe, and how these relationships influenced westward expansion and the Mexican-American War. I can talk about the influence of the Monroe Doctrine.
- 8.5.3: I can discuss the treaties that occurred with American Indian nations during the time of the first four presidents, as well as the outcomes of those treaties.
- 8.6: I can look closely at the different paths and challenges of the American people from 1800 to the mid-1800s. I can tell you about the Northeast.
- 8.6.1: I can talk about the ways that industrialization and technology developed in the Northeast. I can explain how humans changed the land and how the physical geography shaped their actions.
- 8.6.2: I can tell you about the physical obstacles, economic factors, and political factors that were involved with building roads, canals, and railroads.
- 8.6.3: I can tell you why people immigrated from Northern Europe to the United States. I can explain how cities were arranged and how they grew.
- 8.6.4: I can talk about black Americans who became free in the North and founded schools/churches to advance their rights.

- 8.6.5: I can talk about the progression of the American education system, including the roles of religious and private schools. I can talk about Horace Mann's campaign for free public education, and the way public education became a part of American culture.
- 8.6.6: I can look closely at the women's suffrage movement, including biographies, writings, and speeches.
- 8.6.7: I can identify common themes in American art, transcendentalism, and individualism.
- 8.7: I can look closely at the different paths and challenges of the American people from 1800 to the mid-1800s. I can tell you about the South.
- 8.7.1: I can describe the way the agrarian economy in the South developed. I can point out the cotton-producing states and tell you why cotton and the cotton gin were so important.
- 8.7.2: I can explain how slavery started and developed. I can tell you how slavery affected black Americans, as well as how it affected the region's political, social, religious, economic, and cultural development of the time. I can talk about strategies that were tried to both keep and overturn slavery.
- 8.7.3: I can look closely at white Southern society. I can tell you how the physical environment influenced events and conditions before the Civil War.
- 8.7.4: I can compare the lives of and opportunities for free blacks in the North with those of free blacks in the South.
- 8.8: I can look closely at the different paths and challenges of the American people from 1800 to the mid-1800s. I can tell you about the West.
- 8.8.1: I can tell you about the election of Andrew Jackson, Jacksonian democracy, and Jackson's actions as president.
- 8.8.2: I can discuss westward expansion, including its purpose, challenges, and economic incentives. I can tell you about the Manifest Destiny, Lewis and Clark's expedition, the removal of Indians, the Trail of Tears, settlement of the Great Plains, and the acquisition of land.
- 8.8.3: I can tell you about pioneer women and their accomplishments, including what specific pioneer women (Laura Ingalls Wilder, Annie Bidwell, etc.) achieved.
- 8.8.4: I can look closely at the importance of the great rivers and the struggle over water rights.
- 8.8.5: I can talk about Mexican settlements and their locations, cultural traditions, attitudes towards slavery, the land-grant system, and economies.
- 8.8.6: I can tell you about the Texas War for Independence and the Mexican-American War. I can discuss land settlements, what happened after the wars, and the effects the wars had on Americans, including Mexican Americans.
- 8.9: I can look closely at early attempts to abolish slavery and to live up to the ideals stated in the Declaration of Independence.
- 8.9.1: I can tell you about the leaders who worked as abolitionists, including John Quincy Adams, John Brown, Harriet Tubman, Benjamin Franklin, Theodore Weld, William Lloyd Garrison, and Frederick Douglass.
- 8.9.2: I can talk about the abolition of slavery in early state constitutions.

- 8.9.3: I can tell you how the Northwest Ordinance was important in education, and in the banning of slavery in new states north of the Ohio River.
- 8.9.4: I can talk about how slavery was addressed by the annexation of Texas and California's admission to the union as a free state under the Compromise of 1850.
- 8.9.5: I can tell you why the following were important: the States' Rights Doctrine, the Missouri Compromise, the Wilmot Proviso, the Compromise of 1850, Henry Clay, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott v. Sandford decision, and the Lincoln-Douglas debates.
- 8.9.6 I can discuss the lives of free blacks. I can tell you the laws that limited their freedom and economic opportunities.
- 8.10: I can look closely at the causes, events, and consequences of the Civil War.
- 8.10.1: I can compare different interpretations of state and federal authority that were spoken and written about by statesmen like Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun.
- 8.10.2: I can point out the boundaries between the North and the South. I can tell you about their geographical differences, and the differences between agrarians and industrialists.
- 8.10.3: I can point out the origins and constitutional issues raised by the doctrine of nullification and secession.
- 8.10.4: I can talk about Abraham Lincoln's presidency. I can tell you about his important writings/speeches like the "House Divided" speech, the Gettysburg Address, the Emancipation Proclamation, and his inaugural addresses, including how each of these related to the Declaration of Independence.
- 8.10.5: I can tell you about the lives of leaders and soldiers on both sides of the Civil War (Ulysses S. Grant, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, black soldiers, etc.).
- 8.10.6: I can describe key events in the Civil War (important battles, geographical advantages and obstacles, technological advances, General Lee's surrender at Appomattox).
- 8.10.7: I can explain how the war affected soldiers, civilians, the environment, and future warfare.
- 8.11: I can look closely at the character and consequences of Reconstruction.
- 8.11.1: I can discuss the goals of Reconstruction and how it affected the politics and social structures of different regions.
- 8.11.2: I can tell you why former slaves moved to cities in the North and West and how their experiences differed in those regions.
- 8.11.3: I can tell you about the effects of the Freedman's Bureau. I can talk about restrictions placed on freedmen, racial segregation, and "Jim Crow" laws.
- 8.11.4: I can talk about the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and its effects.
- 8.11.5: I can understand the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution and show their connection to Reconstruction.
- 8.12: I can look closely at the Industrial Revolution, including how it changed the American economy, social conditions, and political conditions.

- 8.12.1: I can explain how agricultural and industrial development were related to climate, natural resources, markets, and trade. I can point out this development on a map.
- 8.12.2: I can tell you why federal Indian policy developed. I can explain why wars with American Indians occurred, and how these were related to agricultural development and industrialization.
- 8.12.3: I can explain how states and the federal government encouraged business growth through tariffs, banking, land grants, and subsidies.
- 8.12.4: I can tell you about important entrepreneurs, industrialists, and bankers of the time (Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, Leland Stanford).
- 8.12.5: I can look closely at the location and effects of urbanization, immigration, and industrialization.
- 8.12.6: I can tell you about child labor, working conditions, laissez-faire policies towards big business. I can talk about the labor movement and its important leaders (Samuel Gompers), the demand for collective bargaining, and strikes/protests.
- 8.12.7: I can point out where new immigrants came from and how they contributed to the building of cities and the economy. I can explain how immigrants were encouraged to assimilate into the mainstream. I can describe nativism.
- 8.12.8: I can tell you what Grangerism and Populism were and explain their impact.
- 8.12.9: I can name important inventors and inventions, and how they improved the quality of life (Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, Orville and Wilbur Wright).