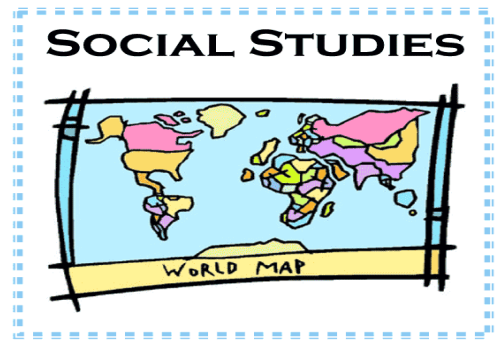




# Mrs. Briggs 7th Grade 2011-2012



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## WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Welcome Back! I hope that the end of the summer finds you rested, rejuvenated, and eager for the 2011-2012 school year to begin.



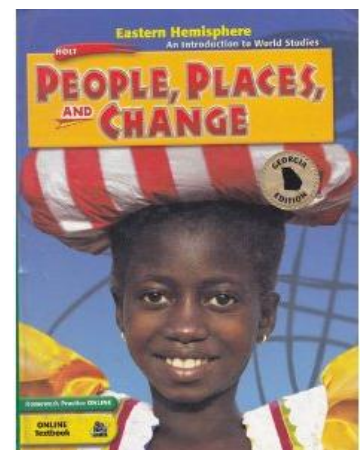
I'd like to take this time to introduce myself. My name is Mrs. Heather Briggs. I graduated from Michigan State University with a Master's degree in Curriculum and Teaching. This will be my eighth year teaching 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies and Language Arts at Linden Middle School. As a Linden Alumni, I am very excited to give back to my community by teaching our future generations. I feel blessed to have a career I truly enjoy. I am passionate about the subjects I teach and hope to encourage all students to be active life-long learners and to give them the necessary skills to meet their academic goals.

As a Social Studies teacher, I am committed to expanding students' understanding of the world around us. Through a combined study of history, geography, and culture we will explore global diversity world-wide and connect the past to current issues in the news today.

It is my goal to create a safe, effective, challenging, and exciting learning environment for all students in my classroom. I set high expectations, but am willing to help students, in any way possible, to meet those goals. In return, I urge students to bring their curiosity, enthusiasm, and determination with them to class each day. I look forward to the triumphs and challenges of the upcoming year. Let's work together to make it a meaningful and positive experience for everyone.

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The 7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum begins with a brief review of the Five Themes of Geography as they relate to the Eastern Hemisphere, which includes Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Oceania. In each unit, we begin by studying the physical geography of the region. We identify major landforms, climate zones, and natural resources. Students learn how people have adapted to these features over time and how it impacts their culture today. In addition, historical investigation of each region ranges from achievements of ancient civilizations to debates on current political, social, or economic issues. Special focus is given to exploring the diversity and cultural characteristics of each region. Throughout the course, students will be challenged to expand their critical thinking skills, broaden their understanding of the world around them, and appreciate diversity in our global society. We will be utilizing textbooks titled "Eastern Hemisphere: People, Places, and Change," and curriculum supplements such as "History Alive," "Inspired," and United Streaming video clips etc. Curriculum is guided by the Michigan Department of Education's Content Standards and Benchmarks, Social Studies Grade Level Content Expectations, and Common Core State Standards. All are accessible via <http://www.michigan.gov/mde>.



## CLASSROOM RULES

My first priority is to maintain a safe and comfortable learning environment for all students. In order to achieve this, all students are expected to abide by:



1. Follow directions the first time they are given.
2. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
3. Respect yourself, others, and all school property.

Students who choose not to follow the rules, will be given a verbal warning to correct their behavior and an opportunity to do so. If they choose not to cooperate they will be removed from class and /or parent contact will be made. Serious or consistent offenses will be referred to the Interim Room.

## CLASSROOM ROUTINES

Beginning Class: Before class begins, students should sharpen their pencils, write the daily agenda in their student planner, and sit in their assigned seat ready to follow teacher instructions.

Ending Class: During the last few minutes of class, we will review the day's lesson, assign homework, answer questions, and clean the classroom. Students should remain seated until teacher dismissal.

Leaving Class: Students must fill out the hallway pass in their planner and get it signed by the teacher. In addition, they should take Mrs. Briggs' designated hall pass and return in a reasonable time.

### Materials Needed Daily:

- ✓ 3 ring binder or sturdy folder labeled "Social Studies"
- ✓ Lined Paper
- ✓ Pencils/Pens
- ✓ Student Planner
- ✓ Covered Social Studies Book

## MRS. BRIGGS EXPECTATIONS

- My classroom is a Bully Free Zone. Everyone must work together to maintain this. Please contact me if you have any concerns in this area.
- School rules as outlined in the student handbook will be adhered to at all times. This includes: no gum, prohibiting technology of any sort during school hours, and proper dress code.
- Come to class on-time and prepared. Bring your writing utensil, binder, textbook, and student planner EVERYDAY!
- Use the restroom and visit your locker before class begins. I reserve the right to restrict hall passes at my discretion. School policy requires signed student planners be used to track hall passes.
- Stay on-task throughout the entire class period. When finished early, you can take advantage of alternative options, as long as they do not disturb others learning.
- Have pride in your work and show it through neat handwriting, following directions, being organized, and completing assignments on time and to the best of your ability.
- Be responsible and respectful at all times.
- Ask questions and seek help when you are confused, need clarification or extra instruction.
- Have a positive attitude.



Classroom Supplies: Students will have access to classroom supplies including lined paper, computer paper, colored pencils, markers, crayons, scissors, glue, rulers, construction/poster paper etc. Students should ask permission before using these materials and they should be returned to their designated spot.



If you are Absent: It is the *student's responsibility* to check the "Make-Up Work" folder on the counter if they have been absent. In it, they will find the worksheets they missed with their name on it. If they have questions about how to complete the assignment they are welcome to ask the teacher or fellow students. The amount of days they were absent will determine the amount of extra time they have before their assignments are due. Students are expected to complete all tests or quizzes they had prior knowledge of and ample time to study for, even if they missed the day before.

Group work: It is imperative that students work together in a cooperative manner, respect each other, and the tasks at hand.

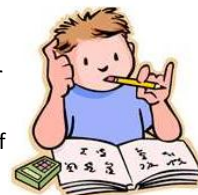




## INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES & PHILOSOPHY

Students will be given learning target objectives for each unit of study based on curriculum guidelines. Each objective will be achieved using differentiated instructional techniques.

**Formative Assessments:** (daily class activities, homework, etc.) are designed as learning opportunities for students to master the material and provide immediate feedback regarding student understanding. These activities and assignments will be reviewed by students and the teacher to ensure mastery of the subject matter, allow improvement, and create ownership of their own academic success.




**Summative Assessments:** (quizzes, tests, projects, presentations) will be designed for student demonstration of subject mastery. Students may retry/redo these assessments as designated by the teacher.

### GRADING *\*Please label all assignments with Name/Hour*

Grade updates and missing assignments are shared with students frequently and can be accessed at any time via the district's online grading tool, **StandardsScore** at <http://login.clihome.com/> or by contacting Mrs. Briggs. The overall grade will be calculated using a cumulative grade point system including formative and summative assessments. Students will be aware of grading rubrics used to evaluate each assignment, which will vary based on the learning target objectives and difficulty of each assignment.



#### Overall Grading Scale:

Over 100%=A+	89-87%=B+	79-77%=C+	69-67%=D+	60% or Below=E
100-93%=A	86-83%=B	76-73%=C	66-63%=D	
92-90%=A-	82-80%=B-	72-70%=C-	62-60%=D-	

Student progress on formative assessments will be recorded in my grade book using a 4 point rubric (see below). These grades are meant to encourage student responsibility to complete daily activities and reflect learning achievement prior to the summative assessments. Summative assessments will represent student mastery of the learning target objectives and be calculated using total points, a percentage, or letter grade. The overall grade will be a combination of both types of assessments. **Cheating** and **Plagiarism** will result in a zero for the assignment and/or further disciplinary action.

### Descriptive Grading Rubric for Assessments

Level	Description	Kid-Friendly Description
4 A Range	Student has demonstrated mastery of understanding at least 90-100% of the learning target objective(s). Mistakes made were minor and do not detract from the overall understanding of the concepts presented.	I get it! I made few, if any, (small) mistakes. I can easily answer questions and help others.
3 B Range	Student has demonstrated mastery of understanding at least 80-90% of the learning target objective(s). There were minor mistakes that inhibit mastery.	I've almost got it. I made some mistakes that could easily be fixed. I can mostly answer questions about the topics covered.
2 C Range	Student has demonstrated mastery of understanding at least 70-80% of the learning target objective(s). Major mistakes were made and/or misunderstandings exist. The student is encouraged to seek additional help from the teacher.	I found the assignment hard to do and difficult to complete without making mistakes. I need help to fix my mistakes.
1 D Range	Student has demonstrated mastery of understanding at least 60-70% of the learning target objective(s). Student does not understand the learning objective(s) and needs corrective action. The student is encouraged to seek additional help from the teacher.	I did not understand how to do the assignment. I need help to redo the questions and fix my mistakes.
0 E Range	Student has demonstrated mastery of understanding at least 60% or less of the learning target objective(s). It is possible that student understanding was unable to be assessed because work was not completed or turned in. The student is encouraged to seek additional help from the teacher.	I forgot to finish my work and/or didn't have it completed or turned in on time.

- Daily agendas listing class activities, homework, due dates, and upcoming quizzes and tests are written on the board for students to copy into their planners and can be accessed via **Parent Web**.
- Homework must be turned in ON-TIME. **Students will have two late passes per trimester that will allow them to turn in an assignment one day late without penalty.** All other late assignments will receive half credit or less if incomplete. All missing work will be a "0" in the grade book.
- Students with chronic late/missing work or who are seeking additional help will be encouraged to utilize **After School Tutoring on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 2:40-3:40 in the library.**



#### Students have access to extra credit every day in my class.

- They may bring in up to five current event news articles (per trimester) about topics we study. This encourages students to stay aware of global issues and make connections between classroom learning and real life.
- They must complete an extra credit summary sheet, (which are kept in a folder on the counter), attach the article to it, and hand it in.
- By completing the extra credit, students will positively impact their grade at the end of the trimester. Other extra credit opportunities will be offered periodically throughout the year. Each opportunity is written on the board ahead of time with the due date and the point value. **Students can earn a maximum of 25 extra credit points each trimester.**

#### ORGANIZATIONAL TIPS

- Organization is proven to be an asset to higher student achievement, so it is my expectation that students keep their binder ORGANIZED at all times.
- I suggest every student have a 3 ring binder labeled "Social Studies."
- Divide the binder into sections using divider tabs labeled:

To-Do  
Returned Work  
Notes  
Quizzes/Tests  
Resources



- A 3 hole punch is available at all times so that all papers can be organized into student binders. Keep only Social Studies papers in this binder. Do not throw ANY papers away until after report cards have been sent out each trimester.
- The BEST study tool for quizzes, tests, and project completion will be an organized binder with all of your notes, daily activities, and graded work to use as review in conjunction with the textbook or reading samples.
- If a student struggles with organization, please see me so I can help you keep things in order. If you are unable to purchase/find supplies needed for class, please speak to me as soon as possible.