

- ★ On the **following page (page #2)** you will write a friendly letter to incoming 8th graders. The overall idea is to give them some information and advice that you wish you may have had when you started 8th grade.
- ★ Your letter should be:
  - Three to five paragraphs in length ( 5-8 sentences = 1 paragraph)
  - In standard 12 point font, In Arial or Times New Roman
  - Either single (1.0) or double spaced (2.0) "Line Spacing"
  - Either block paragraphs or indent paragraphs.
  - Basic rules of writing should be followed → sequencing and flow, complete sentences, correct: spelling, capitalization, grammar, punctuation
  - If these are not followed and impacts the reading of your letter points will be taken off or extra credit will not be awarded
- ★ Each paragraph should cover a different topic. Some topic ideas include:
  - What are some materials or resources that they will need or would be nice to have for Social Studies?
  - What will they be learning about in 8th grade Social Studies? Are there any topics in particular you think they could start researching over the summer?
  - What was your favorite learning topic or activity we did in Social Studies this year?
  - What types of things do you do in this Social Studies class? What can they expect to do each class or throughout the year?
  - What were some of the most important lessons and or skills you learned this year in Social Studies?
  - How can they be successful in Social Studies?
  - How can they avoid failure in Social Studies class?
  - What makes your teacher happy? How can you earn your teachers' respect?
  - What will make your teacher displeased? What could get you in trouble with your teacher?
  - If there is something you would do differently knowing what you know now? What would it be and why?
  - What will you miss about 8th grade Social Studies?
- ★ We plan on sharing these to our social studies class websites so the new 8th graders can see this advice over the summer and prepare for 8th grade early. Be creative and positive!

Many incoming 8th graders have questions about what the upcoming year will be like. There are many things to know about 8th grade overall. But, there are also important things to know about social studies.. This letter will serve to enlighten incoming students on what 8th grade social studies will be like. Allow me to inform you of all the things you need to know to be successful in class next year. Topics that will be discussed in this letter are as follows: material covered in class, references and resources that will be helpful to you, and how to overall succeed in social studies.

One question that I hear asked a lot is ‘what will be covered this year?’. Well, throughout the course of the year you’ll cover many topics in social studies. These topics range from the early Americans to civics. From the beginning of the year, until around the start of spring, you will be studying a wide variety of lessons. A lesson on early Americans or the first Americans is the very first thing that will be covered. This and many other lessons can be found in your “*American History, Beginning to 1877*” textbook. All your lessons from the beginning of the year to the start of spring are found in this textbook. After we are finished covering material from the *American History* book, you’ll then start being taught civics. A variety of lessons retaining to what it means to be a citizen, citizenship, and forms of government will be taught. These lessons will be covered from the start of spring until the end of the year. These lessons can be found in your civics textbook called “*Building Citizenship: Civics & Economics*”.

Another thing that many incoming students may be concerned about is materials they can use for help. Materials that will be helpful to you during the year are notes, quizlet cards, books, and, of course, your teacher. Throughout each lesson notes will be taken. These notes will be taken directly from our textbooks and may be guided by your social studies teacher. The notes you take in class can be used on tests and are helpful study guides. Each lesson in our textbook has vocabulary words to go with it, these vocab words will need to be learned and studied. Quizlet cards of the vocab words will be made each lesson to help you study. Studying the quizlet cards 10 minutes nightly will help you be well prepared for a test at the end of the lesson. Another very helpful study material is your textbook. Because both your notes and quizlet cards are based on the textbook, there is no better material to use than the textbook itself. I myself found it very helpful to reread the book at the end of each chapter to study. Rereading and reviewing the textbook is a very time efficient way to study the lesson in its entirety. Lastly, another helpful resource is your teacher. If you have any questions or concerns your teacher is there to help you. Your teacher is more than willing to help you with any questions. Whether you're asking for clarification on an assignment or a test question your teacher will try their best to explain to you in the most concise and clear way possible.

Ultimately, many students are concerned about their ability to succeed in class. Your social studies class can be easy to pass but you also have just as much potential to fail if you can’t keep up. There are a few things that you can do to make success come easier. To succeed in social studies you need to keep up with your work, dedicate time to study, and pay attention in class. The assignments in social studies are easy to complete and get good grades on if you use the resources provided to you. However falling behind on this work can really make your grade suffer. As long as you stay on pace in class and make up for your absent work then you’ll pass with flying colors. Dedicating time to study is also a great way to succeed in class. Studying will help you get ready for tests, quick checks, and assignments. Setting aside time makes certain you’ll be ready for anything you have to do in class, this will help ensure that you pass. Just paying attention in class can help you succeed. Your teacher will teach all that you could need to know about the topic. So, as long as you listen in class you should be able to pass the class with ease. Your teacher is there to help you but if you don’t make an effort to pay attention in class then you’ll fail. Overall, social studies is an easy class to pass if you pay attention, do your work

on time, and study.

I know that there are many more questions, concerns, and worries that you want answered. But I can assure you that if you apply yourself in class and your classwork then you'll be able to accomplish great things this year. Just remember to use your resources, study, pay attention, and ask for help. All these things will help you succeed in social studies and other classes too! So, what do you say, will you make 8th grade a great year?