



# CONCORDIA CURRICULUM GUIDE



GRADE

6

Social Studies





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# PREFACE

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## Ministry of Christian Schools

Parental expectations of Christian schools include

- excellent discipline;
- high academic standards;
- low teacher-student ratios;
- dedicated, conscientious teachers;

Many Christian schools offer these advantages. But the real distinction is that Christian schools proclaim Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world. Teaching Jesus Christ, then, is “the real difference” between Christian and public schools. In Christian schools, teachers and students witness personally and publicly to their faith in Jesus Christ. Students study the Bible and worship God daily. Teachers relate Jesus Christ to all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers and students share Christian love and forgiveness.

Those who teach in Christian schools are privileged with the opportunity to

- teach the Word of God in its truth and purity;
- acknowledge the Bible as God’s infallible Word and the Confessions as the true exposition of the Word;
- identify God’s Word, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper as the means through which God creates and sustains faith;
- emphasize Law and Gospel as the key teaching of Scripture;
- seek to apply Law and Gospel properly in daily relationships with students, parents, and other teachers;
- teach all of what Scripture teaches (including Christian doctrines) to all students, no matter what backgrounds they have;
- share with students what Jesus the Savior means to them personally;
- equip students to proclaim the Good News to others;

- encourage students to find the support and encouragement found only in the body of Christ, of which Jesus Himself is the head.

In Christian schools, Christ permeates all subjects and activities. Religion is not limited to one hour or one class. Teachers seek opportunities to witness in every class and to relate God’s Word to all aspects of life. Through this process, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, students grow in faith and in a sanctified life and view all of life, not just Sunday, as a time to serve and worship God.

In summary, it is intrinsic to ministry in a Christian school that all energies expended in the educational process lead each child to a closer relationship with the Savior and with other members of the Christian community.

## How to Use This Guide

The Concordia Curriculum Guide series is designed to guide you as you plan and prepare to teach. The introductory chapters provide foundational information relevant to the teaching of social studies to students in a Christian school. But the majority of the pages in this volume focus on social studies standards and performance expectations together with ideas and activities for integrating them with various aspects of the Christian faith. This volume does not provide a curriculum plan or lesson plan for any particular period or day. Instead, it provides a wealth of ideas from which you can choose and a springboard to new ideas you may create. You may use this curriculum guide with any textbook series.

The social studies standards included in this book are informed by the standards developed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (see also Chapter 3) and are provided as a compilation of the social studies standards and performance expectations adopted by the individual states. In order to offer a well-coordinated curriculum design, the social studies objectives for this grade level relate to and connect with the standards provided at other grade levels.

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The standards, then, can serve you and your whole faculty in several ways. They can help you

1. plan your teaching in an organized way;
2. coordinate your teaching of a subject with the teaching in other grades in your school;
3. select textbooks and other learning or teaching materials;
4. evaluate your current instruction, materials, and objectives;
5. implement procedures for school accreditation;
6. nurture the Christian faith of your students as you teach social studies.

We assume that teachers will use materials in addition to those included in the guide, but, since many materials do not integrate the Christian faith, we have provided suggestions for specific methods to use as you teach day by day. Everyone has a different teaching style. No one will be able to use all the ideas in this volume. As you think about practices that will work for you and would be helpful in your classroom, consider these possible ways to find and use ideas from this volume:

- Read the entire volume before school starts. Highlight the ideas you think you can use.
- Write ideas in your textbooks. List the page numbers from this volume that contain suggestions you would like to use in connection with a lesson or unit.
- Throughout the year, designate periods of time, perhaps at faculty meetings, to discuss portions of this volume as you seek to improve your integration of the faith in social studies. Brainstorm, develop, and implement your ideas. Then follow up with other meetings to share your successes and challenges. Together, find ways to effectively use the suggestions in this volume.
- Plan ways to adapt ideas not closely related to specific lessons or units in your secular text-

books. Inside your plan book clip a paper with a list of suggestions from the volume that you would like to use. Or list each idea on a file card and keep the cards handy for quick review. Use those ideas between units or when extra time is available.

- Evaluate each suggestion after you have tried it. Label it as “use again” or “need to revise.” Always adapt the suggestions to fit your situation.
- Think about integrating the faith each time you plan a lesson. Set a goal for yourself (e.g., two ideas from this volume each week), and pray that God will help you to achieve it. You will find the index at the back of this volume especially helpful in finding faith-connecting activities relevant to specific topics.
- If the ideas in the Concordia Curriculum Guide series seem overwhelming, begin by concentrating on only one subject per month. Or attempt to use the suggested ideas in only two to four subjects the first year. Add two to four subjects per year after that.

Probably the most effective teaching occurs when teachers take advantage of natural opportunities that arise to integrate the faith into their teaching. In those situations, you will often use your own ideas instead of preparing a lesson plan based on teaching suggestions in this guide. Use the white space on the pages of this book to record your own ideas and activities for integrating the Christian faith. We hope this volume will be an incentive to you to create your own effective ways to integrate the Christian faith into the entire school day.

We believe that Christian schools are essential because we believe that our relationship with Jesus Christ permeates every part of our lives. That is why our Christian faith permeates our teaching. That is why we teach in a Christian school.

# CHAPTER 1

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## A Journey: Developing Citizens through Social Studies

By

James B. Kracht

James B. Kracht, author of various social studies curriculum texts and materials in current use and advisor and board member for numerous organizations and agencies, attended Zion Lutheran School in New Palestine, Indiana, is a graduate of Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois, and began his long and productive teaching career in Lutheran schools. Dr. Kracht is a Fellow of the Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education and is a recipient of the Extraordinary Service Award from Texas A&M University and the Distinguished Service Award from the Texas Council for the Social Studies. Dr. Kracht was named director of the writing team for the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies in 1995, and in 1996 became Director of the Social Studies Center for Educator Development. He is currently Associate Dean for Academic Programs in the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University, where he has been on the faculty since 1974. He also serves as a codirector of a national demonstration project for interdisciplinary curriculum development at the middle grades and as a consultant for the development of national social studies standards in the United Arab Emirates and Syria.

### Our Destination

It was a family tradition. On summer Sunday afternoons we would pile into our 1948 Chevy. The first question out of my mouth would be, “Where are we going?” and my dad’s answer was always the same, “We’re going to take a little ride.” “But where?” I would ask. The answer was repeated Sunday after Sunday, “Somewhere.” “Well, how will we know how to get there?” I would insist, knowing I was pressing my luck. “We will just follow our noses,” my mom would laugh. At that point I knew I would never get an answer that would satisfy me, so I would busy myself listening to my parents’ conversation, looking out the back window, and watching the dust trail as our car bumped down the gravel roads. Sometimes those drives would last thirty minutes and sometimes three hours. Frequently we would reach an intersection and disagree on whether to go straight ahead or turn left or right. I was always amazed at the number of new routes we could take and still not know the destination.

While I enjoyed those rides and even continued the tradition with my own children on occasions, most of the journeys I have pursued in life have had a strong sense of destination. Whether travel, education, career, home project, or office task, I approach tasks with a destination or end result in mind. I will admit that sometimes I have chosen the wrong destination and often there have been wrong turns, delays, and detours along the way, but the idea of a destination is comforting. Destinations bring a sense of accomplishment. Destinations are the result of thoughtful decisions. The journey to the destination requires planning and hard work. Wrong turns and detours demand evaluation and correction, while arrival brings a sense of success. In my view, the journey toward citizenship incorporates both the spirit of the Sunday afternoon ride and a planned journey toward a destination. While citizenship is our destination, social studies is the route we take to reach that objective.

Growing new citizens is vital to the continuation of our republican form of government and the

# CHAPTER 2

## Teaching and Learning Social Studies from a Christian Perspective

Social studies explores the world God made, including the universe and especially our planet, Earth, and the plants, animals, and people found in its various habitats. In the great diversity of life, we see the marvelous hand of our awesome God, who in His great love sustains and upholds our world even as He has sent His only Son to pay for the sins of all people.

Social studies and all other subjects can be taught and learned through the following overall goals, which have been the hallmark of the Christian education material prepared by Concordia Publishing House through the years. These materials aim to assist teachers and leaders so that

- through the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, people of all ages may know God, especially His seeking and forgiving love in Christ, and may respond in faith and grow up into Christian maturity;
- seeing themselves as the reconciled, redeemed children of God and individual members of Christ's body, the Church, they may live happily in peace with God, themselves, and their fellow human beings;
- they may be encouraged to express their joy in worship of God and in loving service to others;
- by the grace of God they may value all of God's creative work in His world and Church and witness openly to Christ as the Savior of all people, participating actively in God's mission to the Church and the world;
- they may joyfully live in the Christian hope of new life in Christ now and in eternity.

### Social Studies and God

Our loving and almighty God cares for us. He loves and desires to save all people. Any course of instruction about our world and human history

that ignores the Creator and Preserver of all things is incomplete.

For the children of God, learning Social Studies involves a developing knowledge and understanding of the following:

- God
- Ourselves
- Other Christians
- Nonbelievers
- All creation

### God's Word teaches these truths:

- God created the holy angels, the universe, our planet, and all things in six days (Genesis 1).
- He created our first parents, Adam and Eve, and through them all people.
- Yielding to the temptation to abandon God's will, Adam and Eve sinned. All of creation suffered sin's devastating consequences.
- Although God made people in His image, that image was lost to our first parents and to all who would come after them through the fall into sin (Genesis 5:3).
- Strife between God and fallen humanity, among people, between people and animals, among animals, and between people and their environment continues as a result of sin (Genesis 3).
- God sent His only Son to live, die, and rise again in order to pay for the sins of all people (2 Corinthians 5:15). Jesus is the Son of God and also true man. Salvation can be found only in Him (Acts 4:12).
- As God who created all things, Jesus exerts control over the forces of nature. For example, He stilled the storm (Luke 8:22–25), and He reversed the natural decaying process when He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:38–44).

# *CHAPTER 3*

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## **Using the Ten Strands of Social Studies in Christian Education**

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has approved ten strands for social studies education. These ten strands provide a helpful organizing framework for the social studies standards as they are developed and implemented in our nation's schools.

1. Culture
2. Time, Continuity, and Change
3. People, Places, and Environments
4. Individual Development and Identity
5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
6. Power, Authority, and Governance
7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
8. Science, Technology, and Society
9. Global Connections
10. Civic Ideals and Practices

The NCSS has given permission for the standards and performance expectations charts for students in early grades (k–3), middle grades (4–8), and high school (9–12) to be adapted to incorporate elements of the Christian faith. The adapted standards and expectations charts for each of the strands follow.

# CHAPTER 4

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## Social Studies Curriculum Standards for Students in Grade 6

This chapter includes social studies standards that have been compiled from the individual state departments of education. They are organized, grade by grade, into the following five areas:

1. Geography 
2. History 
3. Society and Culture 
4. Citizenship and Government 
5. Economics 

The standards have been systematized according to the following numerical designations to indicate grade level, area, category, and performance objective:

The first digit indicates the grade level (e.g., the 2 in 2.5.1.8 designates that the performance expectation is for grade 2).

The second digit indicates the area of social studies (as listed above) addressed by the standard (e.g., the 5 in 2.5.1.8 designates the standard as an economic area since 5 is the number for economics).

The third digit identifies a category within the area. These categories are the same at every grade level (e.g., the 1 in 2.5.1.8 relates to the category *Economic systems, institutions, and incentives affect people in many aspects of life*, which is the first category of economics at every grade level).

The fourth digit indicates the number of the specific performance expectation. These expectations will vary from level to level (e.g., the 8 in 2.5.1.8, as found in the economics area of the grade 2 standards relating to the category *Economic systems, institutions, and incentives affect people in many aspects of life*, refers to the eighth item in that category).

Chapter 5 provides faith-integration activities organized by category. These activities provide many opportunities to teach aspects of the Christian faith in conjunction with each area of the social studies curriculum. Each activity is keyed to a specific performance expectation.

A complete list of social studies standards performance expectations for this grade level is provided on the remaining pages of this chapter.

# GEOGRAPHY



- 6.1 Sixth-grade students will have the opportunity to learn geographic skills, to develop their knowledge of the Earth, and to grow in understanding and appreciation of their responsibilities as stewards of all the Earth's resources.**
- 6.1.1 Skill in using geographic tools helps people to understand the world from a spatial perspective.**
- 6.1.1.1 Identify and use features regularly associated with maps, including title, scale, legend, grid, and projection.
  - 6.1.1.2 Analyze and interpret maps to gain and report information about geographical areas.
  - 6.1.1.3 Create a map to show proportion or relative size, relative distance, orientation, and labeling distinctions.
  - 6.1.1.4 Learn to use parallels and meridians to determine locations on a map or globe and identify the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.
  - 6.1.1.5 Locate major historical and contemporary societies on maps and globes.
  - 6.1.1.6 Draw a sketch map of the world and include major natural, cultural, economic, and political features.
  - 6.1.1.7 Locate and describe world climate regions.
  - 6.1.1.8 Tell how the Earth/sun relationships, ocean currents, and winds influence climate.
  - 6.1.1.9 Explain how several biomes from throughout the world relate to their climate and identify major climate zones.
  - 6.1.1.10 Locate major ecosystems, continental divides, land and water features, countries, and cities on maps and globes.
  - 6.1.1.11 Describe various ecosystems and explore how the environment acts on ecosystems to create stress zones.
  - 6.1.1.12 Explain and demonstrate how physical processes change landforms.
  - 6.1.1.13 Distinguish between renewable and nonrenewable resources, such as fossil fuels, fertile soils, and timber, and present ideas for the sustainable use of these resources.
  - 6.1.1.14 Compare the natural hazards that occur in your state with those occurring in other localities and evaluate their effects.
  - 6.1.1.15 Construct and analyze thematic maps such as isoline climate maps, dot population maps, choropleth income maps, and bounded-area vegetation maps to present and obtain information.
  - 6.1.1.16 Compare types of maps, such as aerial, topographic, and thematic, and the different types of map projections and explain the appropriate use of each.
  - 6.1.1.17 Use graphs, charts, models, and databases to compare populations, incidence of disease, and economic activities in various geographic regions.
  - 6.1.1.18 Explain location technologies such as Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and relate their use to latitude and longitude.
  - 6.1.1.19 Practice using information technology to gather geographic data.
  - 6.1.1.20 Study a major geographic region in the non-Western world in depth.
- 6.1.2 The physical characteristics of places and regions influence where and how people live and work (Physical and Human Systems).**
- 6.1.2.1 Name and locate the major cities of the Eastern and Western hemispheres.
  - 6.1.2.2 Identify the countries through which a person would travel to go from one city to another when cities are selected from both the Eastern and Western hemispheres.

# CHAPTER 5

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## Information and Activities for Integrating the Faith as Keyed to Grade 6 Standards

The social studies standards included in this chapter have been compiled from the individual state departments of education and organized grade by grade into the following five areas:

1. Geography 
2. History 
3. Society and Culture 
4. Citizenship and Government 
5. Economics 

The standards have been systematized according to the following numerical designations to indicate grade level, area, category, and performance objective as described on the first page of chapter 4.

Performance expectations are numbered sequentially (e.g., the 8 in 2.5.1.8 is found in the grade 2 area, relating to the category *Economic systems, institutions, and incentives affect people in many aspects of life* and is the eighth item in that category). A complete list of social studies standards performance expectations for this grade level is provided in chapter 4.

On the pages of chapter 5, you will find an easy-to-reference two-column format for faith integration with the social studies standards. The left-hand column under the heading “Information by Topic” provides helpful teaching background information and insights relevant for integrating some aspect of the Christian faith. The number following the topic identifies the performance expectation to which the topic relates (see chapter 4). Beside each entry, in the right-hand column under the heading “Discussion Points/Activities,” you will find ideas helpful for planning and organizing student learning experiences that reinforce and expand upon these faith connections.

Be sure to consult the index at the end of this volume for a complete listing of topics and where they may be found.



- 6.1 Sixth-grade students will have the opportunity to learn geographic skills, to develop their knowledge of the Earth, and to grow in understanding and appreciation of their responsibilities as stewards of all the Earth's resources.**
- 6.1.1 Skill in using geographic tools helps people understand the world from a spatial perspective.**

## Maps (Title, Scale, Legend, Grid, Projections)

Human beings use many tools to help them understand their world and the people who live in the world. The tool that God has given to us to understand Him and the world that He created is His Word, Holy Scripture, and His divine Word, Jesus Christ. Through Jesus we know that “God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). (6.1.1.1)

- Maps in a Bible atlas can help you to understand the events in the Bible. Make a list of the titles of the maps in your Bible atlas. Under each title, list two or more Bible stories for which the information on this map may be useful. Tape your list to the back of your Bible atlas for easy reference.
- In Galatians 4:4–5, Paul writes, “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.” Find a map of the Roman Empire at the time of the birth of Jesus Christ. How did God use the advances made by the Romans to establish and spread Christianity?

## Maps (Interpretation of)

It is one thing to use Bibles and a Bible atlas to teach students geography. It is quite another thing to nurture the Christian faith of students as you teach geography. As you teach social studies, speak the Gospel: the Good News that Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection has removed the sin of all people, specifically your sins and the sins of your students. Rejoice in this salvation as you teach and learn. (6.1.1.2)

- Use a map in a Bible atlas to learn about Christianity in the world today. List five countries in which more than 90 percent of the population is Christian. List five countries with less than 10 percent Christians. Which continents have the most countries with Christian majorities (50 percent or more)? Which continents have the fewest?
- Study a map showing the physical characteristics of Palestine and Sinai (Map 2 in the *Concordia Self-Study Bible* is a good example.). What kinds of physical features do you see? Write a short paragraph describing how this region might look.

## Maps (Sketch Maps, Relative Size, Orientation, Labels)

Accurate maps are needed to enable people to get from one place to another. John the Baptist's map to salvation included repentance for sin, trust in “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29), and living a life in which we “bear fruits in keeping with repentance” (Luke 3:8). (6.1.1.3)

- John the Baptist baptized many people, including Jesus, in the Jordan River. You can read this account in Luke 3:1–22. Find the source of the Jordan River and trace it to its end. Using the scale of your map, calculate the length of the Jordan River. Compare its length with three rivers that are important in the United States.



## INFORMATION BY TOPIC

## DISCUSSION POINTS/ACTIVITIES

- Draw a sketch map of your church property. Include orientation and scale, and label the features you show. Use one of the maps in a brochure that introduces visitors to your church and school; include a short description of Jesus as the way to heaven (John 14:6).

### Maps, Locations on (Tropic of Cancer, Tropic of Capricorn, Parallels, Meridians)

Christianity is rooted in history and geography. Scripture records historical events and refers to places that can be located on maps. God acted in history, sending the Savior to live on Earth, suffer and die for our sins, and rise from the dead on Easter. Yet we are saved “by faith in the Son of God, who loved [us] and gave Himself for [us]” (Galatians 2:20). (6.1.1.4)

- Divide your class into two or more teams. Using a map of the United States and a copy of *The Lutheran Annual*, make a list of the longitude and latitude of five churches. Exchange lists with another team. See who can find and name the mystery churches fastest.
- Locate the equator, the Tropic of Cancer, the Tropic of Capricorn, and the North and South poles on a map or globe. Complete this statement using these terms: All of the stories in the Bible take place between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

### Maps and Globes (Locations of Societies)

From creation, God has wanted all people to trust and serve Him. Genesis 10–11 gives some insight into the origins of many ancient peoples, but Scripture does not speak of many of the civilizations that developed all over the world. Jesus, however, came to Earth to be the Savior of all people, no matter where they settle or what their customs (1 John 2:2). (6.1.1.5)

- Compare a map of Paul’s missionary journeys with a map of the Roman Empire in the first century AD. Did Paul’s journeys ever take him outside the Roman Empire? In what ways did God use the Roman Empire to help Paul and other early Christian missionaries spread the Gospel? How does God use groups of people today to carry the Gospel to others?
- Locate Wittenberg on a map of Europe. The pope and other major officials of the Catholic Church were in Rome, Italy. Calculate the distance between Rome and Wittenberg. Luther walked this distance in the winter of 1510–11.

### Maps (Sketch)

Jesus sent His disciples to “all nations” to baptize and teach all the things that He had commanded them to teach (Matthew 28:19–20). As you help students become aware of the societies of the world, remind them that God sent His Son to die for all people and that He wants all people to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4). (6.1.1.6)

- On a sketch map of the world, color the countries in which our church body’s partner churches are located. Use a different color to show the countries in which our church maintains overseas churches and missions. For locations in which both are present (for example, Hong Kong), use stripes of both colors. You will find all of these churches and missions listed in *The Lutheran Annual*. Set up a sched-



ule in your classroom to pray for these partner churches during the school year.

- Make a World Mission Prayer Map for your classroom by highlighting on a sketch map countries where the majority of the population is non-Christian. In your classroom devotions each day, pray for the people of one of these countries and for missionaries to bring them the Good News about Jesus. Encourage students to serve as full-time church workers, perhaps as missionaries in another land.

### Climate Regions

Introduce your students to the Koppen Climate Regions Classification System at [geography.about.com/library/weekly/aa011700a.htm](http://geography.about.com/library/weekly/aa011700a.htm). Help your students appreciate the complex relationships between people and the environment that exist in the world that God has created. With your students, continually praise God for the wonders of His creation as does the psalmist in Psalm 104. (6.1.1.7)

- Use a world atlas to find which countries lie in a tropical region. In your school's picture file or on the Internet, find pictures of churches in this region. How are the church buildings different from churches where you live? In what other ways might the churches be different from yours?
- Watch the news for stories of natural disasters (hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, etc.) in other parts of the world. How does the climate of a region affect the type of aid that is needed in an emergency? To learn about the ways in which the people of our church body help in times of natural disasters, visit Lutheran World Relief's Web site at [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org).

### Climate (Causes of )

The explanation of the First Article in Luther's Small Catechism cites many personal ways that God cares for the people He created. The writer of Psalm 104 cites many examples from nature to show the greatness of God and His care for people. After trying to list the many blessings people have in God's creation, the psalmist exclaims, "O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom have You made them all; the earth is full of Your creatures" (Psalm 104:24). Later he reminds us also that "these all look to You, to give them their food in due season" (Psalm 104:27). In other words, God continually sustains all the things He has created. As you teach about God's creation, hold up this wonder and awe at God's continuing love and care for His creation—an important point in the face of the continuing ravages of sin that are manifested in the destruction of tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, and the like. (6.1.1.8)

- Find pictures to illustrate each of the following statements that hint at the complexities of God's creation: Latitude, elevation, wind and ocean currents, and landforms all affect climate individually or in combination. The zone of low latitudes, near the equator, receives more direct rays of the sun year-round than the zones of high latitudes near the poles. Midlatitudes experience variable weather. Wind currents carry warm and cool air around the earth in fairly constant patterns. Warm and cold ocean currents affect the temperature along coastal lands. The combination of water vapor and wind currents can form patterns of precipitation. Large bodies of water and mountain ranges can also influence temperatures and precipitation.
- Read through Psalm 104, noticing the similes and metaphors that are used to describe God's handiwork. Discuss how amazing our world is and how God made everything to work together flawlessly.

**Climate Zones and Biomes**

Find more information about world biomes at this University of California Web site: [www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/glossary/gloss5/biome/](http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/glossary/gloss5/biome/). Understanding the relationships between climate and the various biomes is essential to subduing the earth (Genesis 1:28), in the biblical sense of caring for and wisely using the Earth and its resources. Within the context of these biomes, God cares for all people (Psalm 36:6), as we confess in the explanation of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed. (6.1.1.9)

- Work with a group in your class to research a biome (tundra, taiga, deciduous forest, tropical rain forest, grassland, and desert). Together prepare a compare/contrast chart of the biomes. Then construct a climatogram to record temperature and precipitation for the biome you study. After all information has been recorded and reported, discuss how biomes can only be the result of a Creator who is a God of precision and meticulousness (Genesis 1:31). Write a two-page essay explaining the biome you studied and highlight one plant, one animal, and the special adaptations God gave to each one.

**Maps and Globes** (Locations of Ecosystems, Landforms, Political Features)

As your students develop their knowledge of the Earth, nurture these ideas: No matter where one might go in the world, God is present sustaining all things (Hebrews 1:3). "As high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:11–12) through Christ Jesus. (6.1.1.10)

- "Continental divide" is an expression used to state that a great difference exists between people, ideas, or places. For example: "There is a continental divide between mothers and daughters regarding what dress is acceptable for school." Describe other "continental divides" you have observed. Note that Jesus has removed the "continental divide" of sin between God and all people (Ephesians 2:13–18).
- One insight connected with the study of ecosystems is that every living thing is connected to every other living thing in some way. Similarly, Scripture teaches that when human beings sinned, all creation was affected (Romans 5:12; 8:20–22). Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has provided forgiveness and eternal life for all (Romans 4:25).

**Ecosystems** (Stress Zones in)

When God created the Earth, He gave man the task of taking care of it. Understanding the various factors that negatively impact ecosystems and exploring ways to care for ecosystems will better enable students to care for and support efforts to care for God's creation. (6.1.1.11)

- Debate: For a Christian, one aspect of the sanctified life is to be an environmentalist.
- Consult the studies of environmental contaminants and their effects on aquatic environments. In what way do these studies help Christians participate in God's creative work (Genesis 1:26)?

**Landforms** (Change of)

Although Scripture does not describe any landform changes that took place as a result of the flood of Noah's time, this flood must have changed the physical landscape of the Earth in many ways. Mountains are spoken of as if they were present before and after the flood (Genesis 8:4).

Encourage your students to study descriptions of this flood and its effects in Genesis 6–9. God would never again try to eliminate sin by destroying all humanity (Genesis 9:15). Rather, God would remember His promise to Adam and Eve and send a Savior who would suffer for the sins of all humanity through death on a cross and give eternal life with God to all people who trust in Him (Genesis 9:11–17; 1 Peter 3:18–22). (6.1.1.12)

- Conduct a comparative study of divine creation and the theory of evolution, starting with Hebrews 11:1–3. Complete a compare/contrast chart. Many on both sides of the issue are guilty of misquoting sources, ignoring evidence, using only portions of studies for their own purposes, quoting out of context, and citing older scientific studies that have since been changed or repudiated. It would be good for Christians to rely on Hebrews 11:3 and acknowledge that the scientific information is still incomplete but needs to be studied with vigor in keeping with the Lord's mandate to subdue the Earth. Science is not the enemy, for God is a God of order.
- Research the “phenomenal” events that occurred as a result of the Mount St. Helen's volcano eruption in 1980. For example, stratified rock was formed in five hours (see Jay L. Wile, *Exploring Creation with General Science: Apologia*, p. 198). In His miracles, Jesus did many phenomenal things, including changing water into wine and healing people in an instant. His most phenomenal act, however, was to assure our forgiveness through His death and bodily resurrection.

**Resources** (Renewable and Nonrenewable)

“The world which God created was a good world; this is evident when one surveys his surroundings” (John W. Klotz, *Ecology Crisis: God's Creation and Man's Pollution* [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971], p. 167). To care for His human creation, God created a wonderful world for them, not only in natural beauty, but also in the resources created for their use. As you teach this standard, foster the idea that the Earth is the Lord's (Psalms 24:1; 50:10–11) and human beings are His chosen stewards of what He has created (Genesis 1:28). God's care for people culminates in the salvation that He gives through His Son (John 3:16). (6.1.1.13)

- Report on a topic such as solar energy, wind energy, or geothermal energy. Relate the presence of these energy sources to the psalmist's observation in Psalm 86:10: “You are great and do wondrous things; You alone are God.”
- Take pictures of renewable and nonrenewable resources found in your local environment and create a bulletin board. Title it “God's Blessings: Renewable and Nonrenewable Resources.”
- Design and build a solar water heater or a solar oven. Have a cook-off using solar heat. How would using a solar water heater or similar device contribute to our receiving “our daily bread with thanksgiving,” as the explanation to the Fourth Petition states?

**Natural Hazards**

The presence of natural hazards is one evidence of the groaning of the whole creation (Romans 8:22) that is the result of sin's power in the world. These hazards are reminders that our own bodies, groaning under the weight of sin, eagerly await deliverance from sin and "redemption of our bodies" (Romans 8:23) through Jesus Christ. As students become aware of natural hazards, continue to assure your students of their full and free forgiveness of sin by faith in Christ Jesus and remind them of the hope of the resurrection of the body and life everlasting that believers in Christ have and that we confess in the creeds of the Church. (6.1.1.14)

- Interview a person who has experienced or seen firsthand the effects of a natural hazard. Ask about what happened as well as the effects on the people and communities involved. Identify the greatest needs of people who experience natural hazards and recommend preparations your own community, church, and school might make to be ready for a natural hazard's occurrence.
- Research and chart the occurrence of natural hazards in your state over a period of years. On your chart include the date and time of the occurrence, the number of lives lost, the damage in terms of number of homes and value of property destroyed, and evidence of recovery. Write a prayer asking God for protection from natural hazards that may occur.

**Maps (Types of Thematic)**

The *New Atlas of the United States of America* at [nationalatlas.gov/index.html](http://nationalatlas.gov/index.html) is a useful Web site for developing map skills and for making a variety of maps of the United States. For data regarding the United States, go to the Census Bureau's site at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) and click on American Fact Finder. To learn about thematic maps go to [interactive2.usgs.gov/learningweb/textonly/teachers/exploremaps\\_guide3.htm](http://interactive2.usgs.gov/learningweb/textonly/teachers/exploremaps_guide3.htm). The variety and unique nature of our world shows God's creativity and love for us. This variety can be seen by studying different types of maps. As you and your students construct and use various types of maps, praise God for the magnificence and variety of His creation and thank Him for His blessings. (6.1.1.15)

- The tower of Babel story from Genesis 10–11 explains much about how people and cultures migrated to populate regions of the Earth. Read the account and break into small groups to discuss the many cultural differences on our planet that can be traced to this event.
- Analyze population distribution, climate, product, and vegetation maps to discover how God has provided resources and living space. As you study vegetation maps, refer to Genesis 1:11–12, the account of God creating plants on the third day of creation. As you analyze population maps, refer to the creation of people as described in Genesis 1:26–28 and Genesis 2 and the growth of populations as described in Genesis 5 and 10. As you study climate maps, recall God's creation of the sky on the second day of creation as recorded in Genesis 1:6–8.

**Maps and Map Projections (Types and Use of)**

The rich array of tools for learning is another of God's gifts to His people. Types of maps and map projections, like the great variety of mathematical tools, carpentry tools, or medical technologies, are means that God uses to enrich our lives and enable us to learn about the world that He has created. Holy Scripture is His best tool for learn-

- Draw a rough map of the world on an orange. Peel the orange carefully from top to bottom preserving as many large pieces as possible. Lay all the peelings on a flat surface, making cuts where necessary to get it to lie flat. Analyze the distortions of the continents that result. Discuss the idea that flat map projections never accurately reflect the Earth's



## INFORMATION BY TOPIC

ing because it enables us, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to learn about His gift of salvation to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. (6.1.1.16)

## DISCUSSION POINTS/ACTIVITIES

surface. A globe is the only accurate map projection. Various projections, however, are useful for presenting information about the Earth in a variety of ways, just as the Church presents the Gospel in a variety of ways to reach as many people as possible with the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ.

- Learn about mapmaking, how maps distort physical features, and how people misuse maps. Discuss with your classmates these questions: How is the misuse of maps in public discussion related to the Seventh and Eighth Commandments?

### Graphs, Charts, Models, Databases (Use of)

Consult your state's education Web site for gaining access to databases designed especially for children. Often states have purchased access to these sites, such as Kids Infobits, for use by the state's children and teachers. Obtain an access code from your state's library or department of education. Health data is available from the National Center for Health Statistics at this site: [www.cdc.gov/nchs/](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/). Obtaining and organizing information is a skill needed by everyone to enable people to analyze information, make comparisons, and reach well-informed decisions. Several points of departure for teaching the Christian faith suggest themselves: Studying Scripture to gain information about the Christian faith is essential. Gaining and using accurate information to make decisions is an aspect of living life to honor God for His love and care in Jesus. Analyzing information regarding the needs of others is one step in a process to provide care for others in need, which is another aspect of the Christian life. (6.1.1.17)

- To review making graphs and charts, use a small package containing various types of candies. First, estimate and record your estimate of how many different types of candies are in the package, and estimate the total number of candies in each package. Then count the number of each type of candy and the total number. Make charts and graphs of estimates and actual numbers. Use Microsoft Access to create a database. Use class totals to figure mean, median, and mode. Working to gain and organize accurate information is one way to honor and praise God in what we do.

- Consult the National Center for Health Statistics Web site ([www.cdc.gov/nchs/](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/)) for information about the overall health of people who live in the United States. Report your findings to your class. Brainstorm with your classmates what you might do to help each other live a healthy lifestyle. Explain how living a healthy lifestyle is also a way to praise God for the gifts He has given to you that are mentioned in the explanation of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed.

### Global Positioning Systems (GPS), Global Information Systems (GIS)

By His grace, God has given human beings the intellect to create technologies to better serve Him and each other. These technologies are one evidence that "He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life," as Luther says in his explanation to the First Article. Remind your students as you teach this standard that God gives new technologies to us to use "only

- Invite a person who has the Global Position System (GPS) installed in his or her car to demonstrate some of its capabilities to your class. List the blessings God can give through this system.

- The Geography Network has information about Geographic Information Systems (GIS) materials, equipment, maps, and data at [www.geographynetwork.com/](http://www.geographynetwork.com/). Explore the different types of maps