Social Studies Grade 7–The Ancient World to the 7th Century

Curricular Competencies:
- Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to: ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions
- Assess the significance of people, places, events, and developments at particular times and places (significance)
- Determine what is significant in an account, narrative, map, and text (significance)
- Assess the credibility of multiple sources and the adequacy of evidence used to justify conclusions (evidence)
- Characterize different time periods in history, including periods of progress and decline, and identify key turning points that marked periods of change (continuity and change)
- Determine what factors led to particular decisions, actions, and events, and assess their short- and long-term consequences (cause and consequence)
- Explain different perspectives on past or present people, places, issues, and events, and compare the values, worldviews, and beliefs of human cultures and societies in different times and places (perspective)
- Make ethical judgments about past events, decisions, and actions, and assess the limitations of drawing direct lessons from the past (ethical judgment)

Big Ideas
- Geographic conditions shaped the emergence of civilizations.
- Religious and cultural practices that emerged during this period have endured and continue to influence people.
- Increasingly complex societies required new systems of laws and government.
- Economic specialization and trade networks can lead to conflict and cooperation between societies.

Content Learning Standards
- anthropological origins of humans
  Sample Topics:
  - early origins of humans in Africa and the migration of early humans out of Africa to the rest of the world
  - interactions between early humans and Neanderthals
  - technological developments of early humans and the increasingly sophisticated use of stone tools and early metalworking
  - the shift of early humans from a nomadic hunter-gatherer way of life to more settled agricultural communities
- human responses to particular geographic challenges and opportunities, including climates, landforms, and natural resources
- features & characteristics of civilizations and factors that lead to their rise and fall
  Sample Topics:
  - components that are common to cultures around the world and throughout time
  - elements of civilizations such as advanced technology, specialized workers, record keeping, complex institutions, major urban centres
- origins, core beliefs, narratives, practices, and influences of religions, including at least one indigenous to the Americas
  Sample Topic:
  - representations of the world according to the religions, spiritual beliefs, myths, stories, knowledge, and languages of past civilizations and cultures
- scientific, philosophical, and technological developments
- interactions and exchanges between past civilizations and cultures, including conflict, peace, trade, expansion, and migration
  Sample topic:
  - inter-relationships and influences among selected ancient cultures (e.g., Egyptian adaptation of chariots from the Hyksos; Roman adaptation of Greek gods and mythology; adaptations of Sumerian writing system, Babylonian code of law, Sumerian irrigation system)

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Key Questions That May Lead to Inquiries:
- What is the most significant archeological finding that helps us understand the development of humans?
- What are the most significant factors that contribute to the decline of an empire?
- Why are philosophers from this era still significant today?
- How do historians’ views on the decline of the Roman Empire differ?
- Why are the most significant factors that lead to the rise of an empire? What are different ways you can categorize different periods in history?
- What role does geography play in the location of civilizations? What are the different attitudes toward death and the afterlife in religions and cultures?
- How should we resolve competing claims of ownership over religious holy sites? What are the different attitudes toward death and the afterlife in religions and cultures?
- How do artifacts and monuments reflect the surrounding geography? What can we learn from ancient civilizations based on the artifacts we have found?