

**ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Grade Three Social Studies Program**  
*The Study of Massachusetts*

**DESCRIPTION**

The third-grade History /Social Studies curriculum is focused on the history and geography of the State of Massachusetts. Students begin the year with a focus on mapping and geography skills. As the year progresses, a more chronological approach is used, beginning with the first settlers in Massachusetts, the Wampanoag Indians. Students study the arrival of the Pilgrims, as well as a few selected periods of Massachusetts history. These include the events in Boston, Lexington and Concord that led up to the American Revolution and the development of the mills in the 1800s.

In addition, students explore concepts in economics and civics by looking at “Massachusetts in the Millennium, and Beyond.”

**SUGGESTED TIMELINE**

Although each school, and perhaps even individual teachers, will determine a specific schedule for accomplishing the agreed-upon curriculum objectives, the following schedule is suggested in order to give an example of how the year could be scheduled.

September – June	<b>PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY</b>
October – November (4–8 weeks)	<b>SETTLEMENT/1620S</b>
December – January (4 weeks)	<b>WE BECOME A STATE</b>
February – April (4 weeks)	<b>INDUSTRY COMES TO MASSACHUSETTS (LOWELL MILLS/IMMIGRATION/1800S</b>
May – June (4–8 weeks)	<b>MASSACHUSETTS IN THE MILLENNIUM AND BEYOND</b>

## GEOGRAPHY

### Key Places

Where are these natural features found in or near Massachusetts?

Cities/towns: Boston, Worcester, Springfield, Lowell, Acton

Waterways: Merrimack and Connecticut Rivers, Atlantic Ocean, Quabbin Reservoir

Features: Cape Cod and Cape Ann, coastal lowlands, Berkshire Hills

Islands: Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket

Routes: 2, 2A, 495, 95/128, 90 (Mass Pike), 27, 111

### Organizing Questions

1. What natural features are in or near Massachusetts?
2. How did people change the land in Massachusetts; e.g., Quabbin Reservoir, Lowell, Cape Cod Canals, Back Bay?

### Vocabulary

equator, latitude, longitude, cardinal and intermediate directions, rivers, mountains, cape, valley, harbor, bay, island

map terms: map key, compass rose, map title

### Outcomes

All students will be able to:

1. follow a river from source to mouth;
2. use cardinal and intermediate directions to move between several points on a Massachusetts map;
3. produce a map and label locations (include Quabbin Reservoir; Charles, Merrimack and Connecticut Rivers; Connecticut River Valley; Berkshire Hills; coastal lowland; Cape Cod; Cape Ann; Boston; Worcester; Springfield; Acton; Nantucket; Martha's Vineyard; Boston Harbor; Atlantic Ocean; Mount Greylock);
4. use geographical tools, terms, and resources in working with maps, atlases, and globes;
5. be able to locate major highways on a map of Massachusetts;
6. name the New England states and their capitals;
7. sing a song that names all fifty states (can be done in Music class).

## SETTLEMENT (PLIMOTH / WAMPANOAG/1620S)

### Vocabulary

colony, colonists, tribe, nation, government, Mayflower, Mayflower Compact, New World, Massachusetts, decade, century, 1600s, historical perspective, trade, barter

### Key Places

Europe, North America, England, Holland, Plimoth/Plymouth, Atlantic Ocean, Massachusetts Bay

### Key People

Massasoit, Squanto, Wampanoag, William Bradford, Pilgrims

### Organizing Questions

1. Who was living in Massachusetts in 1620?
2. Why did the Pilgrims come?
3. What were the differences / similarities between the Native Americans and the Pilgrims (e.g., food, use of land, homes, way of life)?
4. What were the effects of the two cultures coming together?
5. How did the Pilgrims govern themselves?

### Outcomes

All students will understand:

1. why the Pilgrims came to the New World;
2. the hardships aboard the Mayflower;
3. the difficulties of surviving in the New World;
4. the effects of the two cultures coming together;
5. the importance of the rules for self-government;
6. why the Pilgrims chose Plimoth for their settlement;
7. barter and trade in the Pilgrims' survival.

## **WE BECOME A STATE (1775 – 1788)**

### Vocabulary

patriot, export, import, tax, apprentice, revolution, 1776, Declaration of Independence

### Key Places

Lexington, Concord, Boston, Faneuil Hall, Bunker Hill, Old North Church, Charlestown

### Key People

Paul Revere, Samuel Adams, John Hancock, King George III, Sons of Liberty, Isaac Davis, William Dawes, Samuel Prescott, Amos Doolittle

### Organizing Question

1. What was the relationship between the Colonists and England before, during, after the war?

### Outcomes

Students will understand and/or know:

1. the major events in this area that led up to the Revolutionary War (e.g., Boston Tea Party, Stamp Act);
2. some of the key people in this area during the Revolutionary Period;
3. the importance of the Declaration of Independence;
4. why there was a war and who won;
5. how Massachusetts become a state;
6. observe and describe local or regional artifacts and/or sites and generate questions;
7. what a tax is and why taxes are needed: they will give examples of local tax-supported facilities and services.

## **INDUSTRY COMES TO MASSACHUSETTS (LOWELL MILLS/IMMIGRATION/1800S)**

### Vocabulary

invention, machine, textile, wages, mill/factory, immigrant, canal, boardinghouse, transportation

### Key Places

Waltham, Lowell

### Key People

Francis Cabot Lowell

### Organizing Questions

1. What inventions, ideas, events led to the development of cotton mills?
2. How did the lives of people change with the rise of industry?
3. Why did people immigrate to the U.S.?
4. What other significant industries existed in Massachusetts in the 1800s?

### Outcomes

Students will understand and/or know:

1. that Francis Cabot Lowell brought the concept of factories to Massachusetts;
2. the purpose and use of mills and canals in manufacturing;
3. that many workers moved from farms to factories and industries;
4. the lives and working conditions of the mill girls in Lowell;
5. several reasons for immigrating to Massachusetts;
6. there were a wide variety of industries in Massachusetts (e.g., whaling, fishing, shoemaking, paper, watches, textiles, farming, papermaking, shipbuilding, shipping).

## **MASSACHUSETTS IN THE MILLENNIUM (20TH CENTURY AND BEYOND)**

### Vocabulary

city, town, urban, suburban, rural, neighborhood, democracy, town meeting, president, governor, senator, representative, mayor, elections, goods and services

### Key Places

Washington, D.C.; Boston; Acton; Massachusetts; New England

### Key People

current president, governor, senator, representative, and mayor

### Organizing Questions

1. What is Massachusetts like in the twenty-first century?
2. Economy? Government? Culture? City of Boston?

### Outcomes

Students will understand and/or know:

1. the important businesses in the Massachusetts economy today (high-tech, manufacturing, education, publishing, tourism, transportation, cranberry and dairy farming);
2. the type of government we have in Acton, Boston, Massachusetts and the United States;
3. at least ten places of note in Massachusetts today, including historical, natural, and man-made sites representing a variety of regions;
4. a variety of famous people from Massachusetts representing artists, politicians, writers, inventors, others;
5. several Boston landmarks, districts, and neighborhoods.