

# Social Studies Newsletter

## Welcome to 8 grade

Hi, my name is Alfonso Guerriero and welcome to 8 grade social studies. Most students call me Mr. Guerriero or Mr. G. My co-teacher is Mr. Piccigallo (he is assigned to the ICT social studies class) and our email appears on the upper right hand corner of this newsletter. We are truly looking forward to working with each student this year.

### Local History Theme

Our curriculum teaches American history through the lens of the Lower East Side. It was created in 2015 by Mr. Piccigallo and me. We firmly believe that the subject of social studies or history is typically taught with a focus on national and international events, and historical figures, but ignores the places students (of all ages) engage with most, their neighborhoods.



From Left to Right- Bill Gates, Tom Brokaw & Chris Piccigallo. We had the unique opportunity to interview the philanthropist, NBC journalist in September 2010.

Through local history, students will learn to question history as it has been taught and history as it is being made around them. Involving students in local history helps them to analyze their place in a larger context and encourages them to think metacognitively.

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### Teacher emails

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The lessons are designed to teach content one day and the *Next Generation Learning Standards* skills on another day. Each lesson is aligned with <https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/nys-next-generation-literacy-standards-grades-6-12.pdf>

Finally, the lessons focus on content/skills-based objectives to meet the requirements of students learning about local as well as New York City and US history. To learn more about the curriculum's vision/mission statement, please visit the LES Young Historians website

<https://www.lesyounghistorians.com/>.

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade units of study

- Introduction to local history
- Industrialization/Immigration
- The Progressive Movement
- US Imperialism & WW I
- The Roaring Twenties & Great Depression
- WW II
- The Cold War

Our website-  
**www.lesyounghistorians.com.**

### School's Grading Policy (6-8)

- Formative Assessments (40%)
- Performance Assessments (40%)
- Classroom Standards (20%)

Our local history curriculum aims to offer a different experience for all eighth-grade students. We introduce most of our units through utilizing the school's area. First, we plan walking tours and teach students how to observe through critical thinking, the school's neighborhood. The tours focus on street names, landmarks, and other neighborhood features. Next, we invite residents and anyone willing to share their life stories with students. For example, we have interviewed W.W. II veterans, authors, local restaurateurs, and immigrants to enhance a student's understanding about a particular topic. This marks our oral histories component, where we teach students essential listening and interviewing skills.



Eighth grade social studies teacher, Alfonso Guerriero leading a walking tour with his students.

### In class expectations & class/homework assignments

- **Depending on the day, class work will be completed in each student's notebook or Google docs.**
- ***Electronic Supplies:*** We have a classroom set of laptops that will be used at least twice a week. **Most lessons will be completed in class either in their notebook or Google docs. All notebooks will remain inside the classroom. Some assignments will require each student to visit our website [www.lesyounghistorians.com](http://www.lesyounghistorians.com). All students/families will be told in advance.**
- **ALL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS WILL REQUIRE A COMPUTER---DOCUMENTS WILL BE UPLOADED TO GOOGLE CLASSROOM UNLESS DIRECTED OTHERWISE.**
- **If a student does not have a computer at home, please tell the teacher.**
- **The Google Classroom code for each class will be given the first day of school. Families will have access to the codes as well, please communicate this with your child.**
- Every day students will be learning a combination of content/skills-based lessons. Each lesson is designed for students to read, write, speak/listen, and critically think about the topic.
- Every other week, students will be given a set of social studies vocabulary words related to the topic that will appear in Google Classroom. Students are required to define and study all words and list the words into <https://quizlet.com/> ---sign-up is free.
- There will be several writing assignments due throughout the year—families will be notified in advance.
- There will be quizzes twice a month based on the content and vocabulary words of the week.
- There will be a Socratic Seminar every other Friday, starting in October. Most students are already familiar with the objectives of the Socratic Seminar since this was taught in sixth and seventh grade.
- Students are expected to be respectful to all classmates and adults in the room.
- Students are expected to follow all school policies—i.e., behavior in class, bathroom policy, cell phone policy, locker use, etc.