

# Collaborative Learning Guide: Civilizations, Empires and Colonialism 6–12

This Collaborative Learning Guide, specifically designed for the Civilizations, Empires and Colonialism 6–12 module, is intended for instructional coaches, district and school leaders and administrators to support communities of practice with educators. It provides a snapshot of the Canvas module content, discussion questions to help educators consider key instructional practices and prompts to help educators connect these instructional practices to the standards. The prompts can deepen engagement while educators are navigating the course or after they have completed it. Use this guide to facilitate discussions among communities of practice or other groups of educators who engage in the professional learning modules together.

## Module Summary

This module supports educators in exploring civilizations, empires and colonialism across 6–12 settings as they apply the 2024 Oregon Social Science Standards. It is designed to help educators deepen their content knowledge about global civilizations and empires, particularly those that are traditionally and historically underrepresented, as reflected in updated social science standards such as 6/7.H.CC.6 and HS.WR.CC.3 and acquire research-based instructional practices for teaching these topics in their own contexts.

### What's in this module?

Section	Activities At-a-glance
0	<b>Module Overview</b> Introduces the module's purpose of exploring teaching civilizations, empires and colonialism across 6–12 settings through application of Oregon's 2024 Social Science Standards and sets up learning goals and success criteria for the module.
1	<b>Engaging Prior Knowledge</b> Provides a foundation for understanding the importance of activating prior knowledge to create meaningful connections and build new learning, while also highlighting potential Essential Disciplinary Practices for teaching colonialism, empires and civilizations.

Section	Activities At-a-glance
2	<b>Essential Disciplinary Practices for Teaching about Civilizations, Empires, and Colonialism</b> Introduces two guiding questions for the module and a foundational understanding of the Essential Disciplinary Practices.
3	<b>Cultivating Global Awareness and Expansive Views of Civilizations, Empires and Colonialism</b> Focuses on an expansive view of civilizations, empires and colonialism by encouraging exploration of diverse civilizations and empires and integrating traditionally underrepresented perspectives into education using a timeline and reflection activity.
4	<b>Using Primary Sources as Authentic Narratives and Diverse Perspectives</b> Emphasizes the use of primary sources, such as oral histories, to provide a holistic historical account of colonialism, empires and civilizations, recognizing the absence of diverse narratives in current materials.
5	<b>(Re)Constructing Historical Narratives</b> Illustrates Essential Disciplinary Practice 6, constructing well-reasoned explanations and arguments through inquiry-led learning by comparing and synthesizing information to understand how empires historically acquired power.
6	<b>Consequences of Cultural Conflict, Interaction and Exchange</b> Introduces key terms and reflections related to the consequences of cultural conflict, interaction and exchange.
7	<b>Cultivating Global Awareness and Expansive Views of Resistance Movements</b> Explores the complexities of historical narratives by examining the resistance and resilience among minoritized, Indigenous and local communities in the face of imperial expansion, highlighting the role of storytelling in cultural resistance and encouraging empathy and understanding by sharing stories of cultural preservation.
8	<b>Extension Activities</b> Encourages reflection on existing classroom materials and language and provides an optional activity to engage students in analyzing the impacts of empire-building by critically examining power dynamics and diverse perspectives.

Section	Activities At-a-glance
9	<p><b>Module Wrap-up</b></p> <p>Concludes and invites participants to reflect on their experience. Throughout the course, the module provides additional resources to deepen content and pedagogical knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Essential Disciplinary Practices Factsheet</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Civilizations &amp; Empires: Key Dates</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Mali Empire</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Mongol Empire</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Sundiata resource</a> from UC Berkeley</li> <li>• <a href="#">Facilitating Critical Classroom Conversations</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Who Are indigenous peoples? Factsheet</a> from the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues</li> <li>• <a href="#">Extension Activity: Defining Greatness</a></li> </ul>

## Bring the Practices to Life

This section selects a few key activities from the module that afford meaningful learning and discussion in a collaborative group setting. Each selected activity has suggested facilitation moves and guiding questions for discussion, although you are encouraged to adapt the structure to meet your group’s needs and strengths.

### Activities 1 and 2: Engaging Prior Knowledge and Essential Disciplinary Practices

#### Suggested Facilitation

Begin by explaining that the goal is to explore historical concepts like colonialism and empires and reflect on their impact on teaching. Highlight the value of diverse perspectives and Essential Disciplinary Practices. Start by connecting prior knowledge, prompting educators to reflect on their understanding of empire and colonialism, and discuss these reflections in small groups. Then, review definitions of key terms, encouraging comparison with educators' interpretations, and lead a discussion on how these might shape instructional strategies. Introduce the Essential Disciplinary Practices and discuss their practical application in teaching, asking how these can enhance engagement and understanding. Finally, guide educators to reflect on integrating new insights into their curricula and facilitate sharing to foster collaborative professional growth.

#### Reflection Questions

- How has your understanding of empire and colonialism transformed through this activity?
- What are the characteristics of colonialism, and which empires acted as colonial powers?

- What approaches will you adopt to incorporate themes of resistance and resilience into your curriculum?
- How do you plan to cultivate empathy and critical thinking in your students when exploring historical and contemporary global issues?
- What additional knowledge might you need about civilizations, empires and colonialism to support your teaching practice?

#### Activity 4: Using Primary Sources as Authentic Narratives and Diverse Perspectives

##### Suggested Facilitation

Begin by highlighting the importance of primary sources in deepening students' historical understanding and invite participants to share how oral histories and artifacts provide firsthand perspectives often absent from traditional narratives, particularly those of non-Western cultures. Emphasize that engaging with these sources fosters a nuanced understanding of global histories and cultures. Invite educators to watch *The Sunjata Story*, an oral epic tradition about Sundiata Keita, highlighting its cultural and historical insights and its use in teaching non-Western histories. Provide the Primary Source Analysis Performing Arts Tool to guide their analysis. Encourage reflection on the Sundiata epic's role in teaching the Mali Empire's history and the importance of oral traditions, aligning with Essential Disciplinary Practice 7 for global awareness. Pose reflective questions, such as how to glean values and beliefs about the Malian Empire from the narrative, use asset-based language respectfully, address deficit-based language to maintain a welcoming environment and invite students to share their cultural practices to appreciate global diversity, while promoting active engagement through discussions or pair-shares.

##### Apply the Content

This section contains prompts to help educators deepen their content knowledge of the 2024 Social Science Standards and apply their pedagogical learning from the relevant module, aligned with the grade levels they teach.

##### Suggested Facilitation

Ask participants to review the standards that align with their grade level and the content of the module and reflect on the questions below. Educators may be grouped according to grade band.

##### Content Questions for Consideration

For 6–8 educators:

- How did early forms of governance after 600 CE address the inclusion and treatment of historically underrepresented groups, and what can we learn from their approaches (6/7.C.PI.2)?

- What significant examples of Indigenous resilience and resistance can inform our understanding of historical and contemporary struggles against colonialism, and how can these narratives be integrated into the curriculum (6/7.H.CC.6)?
- How did technological advancements in transportation and communication alter the interactions and cultural exchanges between human settlements throughout history (6/7.G.MM.3)?
- In what ways have historical conflicts between liberty, equality and authority influenced the balance between individual rights and the common good, particularly concerning majority rule and minority rights (8.C.DP.11)?
- Who were the key figures and movements that have expanded justice and equality for underrepresented groups, and what methods did they use to affect change at local and national levels (8.C.CE.13)?

For 9–12 educators:

- What strategies and methods did national and cultural groups employ to resist European imperialism between 1750–1945, and how effective were these efforts in challenging imperial power (HS.WR.CC.3)?
- How did different cultural groups maintain their identity and sovereignty in the face of European imperial pressure during this period (HS.WR.CC.3)?
- What global conflicts and compromises shaped the United States' rise as a global power between 1890–1945, and what were the key factors influencing its foreign policy decisions (HS.US.CC.6)?
- How can the actions of the United States during this era be evaluated in terms of both positive and negative impacts on global politics and international relations (HS.US.CC.6)?