

Hi Students, Parents & Guardians:

I would like to tell you about the general workings of Social Studies class. After reading this, please sign, detach and return the back page to confirm that you have read my letter. Thanks.

- **Every student will have a 3-ring binder with a 5-tab divider that we will label in class. Most of the time the binder will stay at school. It will come home if students need to organize and/or parents need to review the work.**



Ms. Dill at Gettysburg

Tab 1 – Current Unit - In this section, the students clip in **all** the papers that go along with the unit we are studying at the time. Any papers we hand out in class, do in class, or get back as homework related to the unit will go in this section. This will be important when it comes time to study for a test on the unit or compile all unit papers for a final unit assessment.

****At the end of each unit the students are asked to organize **all** the papers we have been saving according to a table of contents. They will get the maximum amount of points on this organizational activity if they have saved everything. (I tell them that as adults we have to save lots of paperwork for taxes, insurance claims, returning merchandise, etc...Filing and organization are life-long skills they need to practice.)

It would be a good idea to go through this section now and then to see the work your child is doing in class. Some of it will be graded and some will not. When each unit is done, we will gather all the papers together and make a nice folder cover for them to be saved in. Then the current unit space in the binder will be open for the next unit to begin.



Our topics this year focus on government and 19th century U.S. history:

1. Civics and Government: Citizenship, US Constitution and the 3 Branches of Government,
2. The U.S. Grows: Westward Expansion, Reform/Invention, Immigration/Industrialization, and finally
3. The U.S. Divides and Reunites: Civil War/Reconstruction

Tab 2 – Geo. Quizzes – (Geography Quizzes) Throughout the year we will have map quizzes over the countries on different continents. Generally, quizzes will be on **Fridays**.

This is the list of quizzes you can expect to see your child studying for this year:

Continents and Oceans

States East of the Mississippi

States West of the Mississippi

U.S. Capitals

Maine counties

Middle East

Former Soviet Republics

Southeast Asia

Selected African nations

North America

South America

Northern Europe

Southern Europe



Students who save all of their quizzes will get a prize for being organized and responsible.

Tab 3 – Kindness – As part of our Effective Citizenship focus, this section is where students keep notes, stories, activities, etc. related to acts of kindness and making positive difference in the world.

Tab 4 – Atlas Work – Students will store worksheets that build atlas skills in this section.

Tab 5 – Other – We keep “other” things in this section.

- **Scholastic News** - Scholastic offers a student news magazine for middle school students called, *Scholastic News*, which I abbreviate as SN on Jupiter Grades. Each student receives a subscription as part of the social studies curriculum. There are questions to complete on the back, after reading the articles and a skill sheet to do, also. These are passed out on many, but not all, Fridays and are due on the following Friday. More details will be coming soon.
- **Absences** – *It is important for a student to let me know if he/she was absent yesterday*. However, undoubtedly, there was a 50-minute class that I need to explain to the student and I can't do it in the two minutes before today's class begins. I don't know how to solve this problem except to ask the student to see me after school. It is best if he/she can stay the very next day after their absence. **Please reinforce that staying after to make up work or get extra help is NOT a detention.** That word holds a negative feeling for kids and sometimes they don't stay for help because they think they are in trouble if they have to stay after for any reason.

Almost all the sixth grade teachers are after school everyday and this would be a chance for the student to float around and catch up with all of us at a less stressful moment. As a junior high teacher, I have dozens of students to keep track of each day. I sometimes forget who was absent yesterday, so it is important that students take the responsibility to ask me about getting their make-up work explained. Thank you.

- **Contacting Me** – Email is the best way to communicate quickly. A good time to call me at school (646-5142) is between 10:35 - 11:100 am. If I am not in a meeting, I would most likely be available to take a call. Between 2:15 and 3:00 is also a good time. This is true for all the sixth grade teachers.

My email address is: bdill@wocsd.org .

My teacher web site is: <http://teacherweb.com/ME/WellsJuniorHigh/Dill/>

There is lots of information for parents on my site, as the year progresses. Also, kids can often print worksheets, attached to the site, that they may have forgotten at school.

My home phone # is: 985-6206

For many years I have given out my home phone. Students have it written on page 1 of their agenda. I have never had students or parents overstep my privacy by doing this. I am happy to take calls regarding homework and class concerns. It is better to be able to do the homework, than to come in and say, "I didn't understand how to do it." I have told students that if they call at an inconvenient time, I will be honest and tell them of a better time. People have respected this and anxiety is reduced because kids and adults can have questions answered as they arise. Please contact me if you need to ask or to let me know of any concerns, academically or socially.

I just love teaching and knowing the kids. If there is anything that I can do to make your child's school experience better, please call me. Thank you for your support.

Bonnie Dill



We have read through the student/parent letter. Some of the quick highlights to remember are:

- ✓ Geography Quiz on many (not all) Fridays, students should study all week, a bit each night.
- ✓ “Scholastic News” a student news magazine with comprehension questions to complete, will be given out on many Fridays...due the next Friday.
- ✓ Student Binder will often stay at school but when it comes home, parents will probably want to look through it to help organize and see work done.
- ✓ Ms. Dill’s home phone, email, and teacher website address are in the letter! Please make a note of them so you can contact the teacher if necessary and keep up on information on the web.
- ✓ When a student is absent, most likely he or she should plan to stay after the day he or she comes back...to see all the teachers, not just Ms. Dill.
- ✓ Parents and students must let the teachers know if there is anything we can do to make school an even better place to be! Please let us know of any problems or issues.

Don’t forget to bookmark my site: <http://teacherweb.com/ME/WellsJuniorHigh/Dill/>
and Jupiter Grades: <https://jupitergrades.com>

-----Cut Here-----

Please sign this portion of the paper, cut and return so that I know you have seen my letter.

Thanks,
Bonnie Dill

Printed Student Name _____

Printed Parent Name _____

Parent Signature _____