

## Geography@HSPVA

### Conceptual Skills

To gain the depth of understanding necessary to make the study of the human story both useful and meaningful, students will develop the intellectual ability to think in abstract and wide-ranging ways about the topics considered in the course. A working definition of each of those intellectual skills is listed below.

- **Causation:** Understanding the ways in which an event has one or more antecedents that led to the event (cause & effect) both in a short and long term historical context. This implies the ability to consider coincidence.
- **Comparison:** Identifying the various ways in which one event, person, place, era, society, etc. resembles another or several others. Contrast is implied by comparison.
- **Contextualization:** Understanding the surrounding circumstances, conditions and connections in which a particular event occurred or situation existed. This implies the ability to see beyond the particular and see things as part of a more general pattern.
- **Interpretation:** Determining the meaning being conveyed by a historical source, a literary work or a secondary historical explanation of events or circumstances. This implies the ability to understand that interpretations may vary according to context and theme and the data available.
- **Argumentation:** Drawing conclusions based on facts and/or sources and effectively defending those conclusions based on valid reasons. Those reasons must be relevant to a particular case under discussion.
- **Use of Evidence:** Applying the available, reliable and relevant facts in support of an argument.
- **Synthesis:** Combining separate sources, facts and interpretations into a coherent whole.
- **Periodization:** Categorizing historical time into parts that have some level of commonality so that the resulting periods contain events or structures that makes them useful to consider together as a whole.
- **Change over Time:** Identifying patterns of characteristics between and among societies from one time period to others. This implies the ability to recognize characteristics and systems that have remained, in their essence, the same – continuity.
- **Skepticism:** Applying a mindset in which one questions the bias or motives of a source or historical interpretation. This implies awareness of the point of view of the source.
- **Imagination:** Using the ability to create a theoretical concept, vision or interpretation that one is not aware of or that does not exist based on known phenomena or circumstances. This implies the ability to generate alternative explanations or predict a range of outcomes.