

A Context for Teaching and Learning Social Studies



The contents of this guide have drawn from many sources, including:

- National Council for the Social Studies
- New York State Social Studies Learning Standards
- Common Core Learning Standards
- The Council for Economic Education
- National Geographic Education
- College, Career & Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards
- National Geography Standards
- Center for Civic Education

A CONTEXT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING SOCIAL STUDIES



THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The pages that follow aim to provide a context for instruction and engagement in social studies. This context provides the necessary perspective to create a structure of learning experiences that will support our students as they travel through our schools and into their lives as **CITIZENS**. In this guide, you will find information about the goals of social studies education, descriptions of the key areas of social studies instruction, and guidance in lesson planning and implementation. Use this guide in tandem with our [curriculum maps](#) and lists of [Key Social Studies Outcomes](#) for your grade level and/or course as a tool to guide you as you plan meaningful and powerful social studies-based learning experiences for your students.

WHAT IS SOCIAL STUDIES?

According to the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), social studies is defined as:

“...the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school program, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as **CITIZENS** of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.”

More simply put, social studies is the study of humans and everything they have done, are doing, and will do. Given the broadness of this definition, and the targeted goal of citizenship, we need to focus the scope of study for our students.

WHAT DO STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT IN SOCIAL STUDIES?

In New York, social studies education is required for all students in every year of their school careers from Kindergarten through grade twelve. In the earliest grades, students explore their own families, communities, and the communities of others as they build their own sense of self. As the years progress, students conduct more in-depth investigations of peoples in the United States and the rest of the world in order to develop a better understanding of the core areas of social studies: government, economics, geography, and history.

Ultimately, students must pass two Regents examinations in social studies to graduate high school: Global History and Geography and United States History and Government. Students should leave school with the critical skills needed to be active **CITIZENS** in our community, our country, and our world. The New York State K-12 Social Studies Framework defines the concepts, content, and skills that should be the focus of our work with students (<http://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-k-12-social-studies-framework>). This curriculum spirals up through the grade levels, asking students to engage in more complex thinking as they progress through their school careers. The repetition of particular content and concepts is intentional. As students become more sophisticated learners, they examine our past and present in a multifaceted way, looking at events using multiple perspectives and viewpoints. Many core concepts are revisited throughout the years while specific content varies at each grade level.

The New York State Social Studies Curriculum is sequenced as follows:



- Grade 12:** Participation in Government and Economics, the Enterprise System, & Finance
- Grade 11:** United States History and Government
- Grade 10:** Global History and Geography II
- Grade 9:** Global History and Geography I
- Grade 8:** History of the United States and New York II
- Grade 7:** History of the United States and New York I
- Grade 6:** The Eastern Hemisphere
- Grade 5:** The Western Hemisphere
- Grade 4:** Local History and Local Government
- Grade 3:** Communities Around the World
- Grade 2:** My Community and Other United States Communities
- Grade 1:** My Family and Other Families, Now and Long Ago
- Kindergarten:** Self & Others

SOCIAL STUDIES IS ABOUT CONCEPTS AND SKILLS, NOT JUST CONTENT

Concept, content, and skill form an important trio in social studies. Building students' content knowledge alone is not the ultimate goal! We don't want students to just recite content back to us. We want independent thinkers who work thoughtfully to link content to broader themes and ideas. Content should always be used in service of mastering concepts and skills. Content is devoid of meaning without contextualizing it within a larger concept and skill base. Our curriculum maps, NYS Framework, and Key Social Studies Outcomes charts together define the concepts, content, and skills we should focus on at each grade level. We must use concepts, content, and skills together to create social studies learning experiences; it's not "Social Studies" if you're only working on one of these three things in isolation. For example...

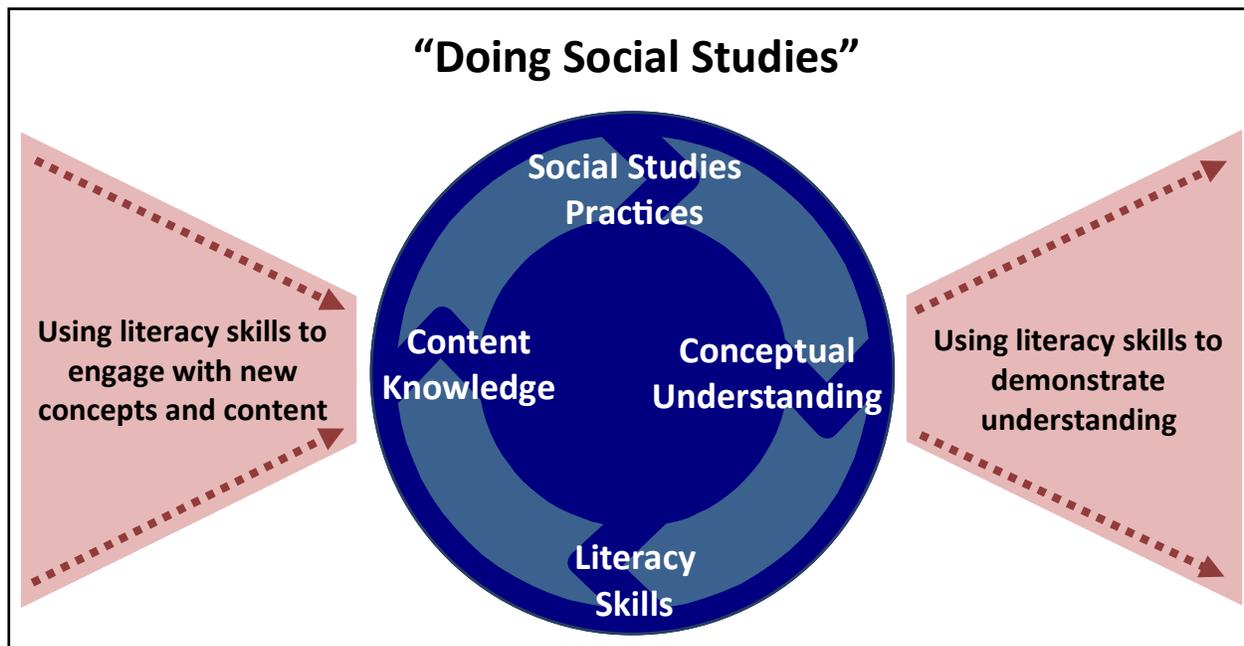
- If we simply read about the US Constitution for information (content), we're not "doing social studies" unless we also do something like put the information in context of a time period (skill) or link it to a social studies theme like government or human rights (concept).
- If we interpret charts and graphs (skill) we're not "doing social studies" unless we also do something like using these pieces of evidence to make connections to larger social studies-related ideas (concept) and/or specific events (content).
- If we discuss the meaning of community (concept), we're not "doing social studies" unless we also do something like discuss examples from our own city (content) or compare and contrast (skill) communities across time or space.



DOING SOCIAL STUDIES IS TEACHING LITERACY

The process of teaching and learning social studies has many components. As teachers of social studies, we must create learning experiences that satisfy the rigors of both the Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy (CCLS) as well as the New York State Learning Standards for Social Studies. This reminds us that, more than ever before, we must ask our students to critically analyze sources and evidence to examine the past and present as we prepare them to be stronger readers, writers, and thinkers. At all grade levels, literacy walks hand-in-hand with social studies.

We know that literacy cannot be defined simply as reading and writing. Literacy is the complex set of skills that all people need to interact and engage with the information they encounter on a daily basis. Knowing that the heart of social studies lies in grappling with multiple sources of information and knowledge, we come to the conclusion that “Doing Social Studies” is teaching literacy.



Look at the diagram above and think about the interconnectedness between social studies and literacy. If we want our students to engage in true social studies inquiry, they must use critical literacy skills to access multiple sources of information. Students use those sources to build content knowledge and conceptual understanding while continuing to develop literacy skills and social studies practices. Finally, they must again use critical literacy skills to demonstrate their understanding. Literacy and Social Studies are not mutually exclusive, they are dependent upon each other and work synergistically.

WHAT ARE THE KEY COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL STUDIES?

Social studies is a multi-faceted discipline that covers a wide array of topics. Our NYS Standards focus on four major disciplines in social studies: history, geography, government, and economics. In the Rochester City School District, our elementary report card indicators for social studies tie directly to these standards and also revolve around the process of gathering, using, and interpreting evidence. At the elementary level (K-5), teachers should issue a grade every marking period for each of the indicators below. While teachers of social studies at other grade levels issue holistic grades, all teachers, regardless of grade level, must plan learning experiences that touch on all dimensions of social studies every marking period. While there may be a particular focus area or emphasis depending on the content and curriculum, each of these dimensions should be part of instruction. The indicators are as follows:

<u>New York State Social Studies Practices</u>		<u>RCSD Elementary Report Card Indicators</u>
Gathering, Using, & Interpreting Evidence	→	Gathering, Using, & Interpreting Evidence
Chronological Reasoning & Causation	↘	Historical Thinking
Comparison & Contextualization	↗	
Geographic Reasoning	→	Geographic Reasoning
Economics & Economic Systems	↘	Social & Political Participation
Civic Participation	↗	Economics & Economic Systems



Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence

While not formally part of the New York State Social Studies Learning Standards, **GATHERING, USING, AND INTERPRETING EVIDENCE** is the foundation of all things social studies.

Many people often express the belief that, “history doesn’t change.” We know that this is not true. Our understandings of the past and present are continually revised, reshaped, and recreated as we learn new information. Thousands of years ago, people believed the Earth was flat. Several hundred years ago, people thought the sun revolved around the Earth. We very recently believed that there were nine planets in our solar system until Pluto was downgraded. Students must understand that our interpretations of history, our current reality, and ourselves continually change based on the evidence available to us and the ways in which that evidence is arranged into credible accounts and stories. Furthermore, they must understand that they have the power to create their own claims and interpretations about these things.

The basic building blocks of **GATHERING, USING, AND INTERPRETING EVIDENCE** are found in answers to questions like...

- ⇒ What are the most important questions to ask about this topic?
- ⇒ What kinds of evidence should I look for to answer this question?
- ⇒ Is this evidence reliable and trustworthy?
- ⇒ What conclusions can I make based on evidence?
- ⇒ Does the evidence support my claims?

Our students must be given the opportunity to create their own questions and gather evidence to answer those questions. They must analyze the interpretations and arguments of others and construct their own claims using evidence. These activities are not only the basis of social studies teaching and learning, but the foundation of critical thinking in our lives as human beings.

In the earliest grades, students might...	In the intermediate grades, students might...	At the commencement level, students might...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Use primary and secondary sources to gather information.✓ Evaluate sources by distinguishing between fact and opinion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Use primary and secondary sources to create arguments.✓ Evaluate the utility and credibility of sources by examining relevance and intended use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Use multiple and varied sources to create original arguments supported by evidence.✓ Evaluate sources by corroborating with other sources and expert opinions.

*see Key Social Studies Outcomes for a more detailed view of what students should know and be able to do at each grade level

See graphic on the next page for examples of what students should think about and do when they are **GATHERING, USING, AND INTERPRETING EVIDENCE**.



Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence

What I Should Think About...

What I Should Do...

How do I find out and explain what happened? What evidence will help me?

Dig up and organize evidence

Where did this evidence come from? How do I know this?

Identify my sources

Is this source trustworthy? Why or why not?

Consider the author's intent; Compare account with other sources of evidence

Is this evidence useful for helping me explain what happened?

Judge the relevance of each piece of evidence to the question

How do I use my evidence to build an idea about what happened?

Construct reasonable claims and justify them with evidence

How do I make a strong case for my idea about what happened?

Pull claims together into a persuasive account that's well supported by evidence



Historical Thinking

HISTORICAL THINKING is tied to the New York State Social Studies Learning Standards of History of the United States and New York and World History:

Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States, New York, and the world and examine the broad sweep of history from a variety of perspectives.

History is the study of the past and the stories we tell about the past. History provides the context for our current reality and serves as the basis of our future. History helps us define who we are as individuals and groups. The study of history is essential. When we use historical thinking skills to study the past, we aim to understand the perspectives of people in the past and the context within which they lived and acted. In order to grasp this context, historians must understand chronology, and know how to analyze and interpret evidence that has been left behind.

The basic building blocks of **HISTORICAL THINKING** are found in answers to questions like...

- ⇒ What stories do we tell about the past and why do we tell them?
- ⇒ How do the people and events of the past affect my life?
- ⇒ How will my actions affect others?
- ⇒ How do peoples' culture and beliefs shape their actions?
- ⇒ Why did people make the decisions they made in the past?
- ⇒ How does my history help define my identity?
- ⇒ How do we know about the past?

It is essential for students to understand the dynamics of change and continuity over time in context, not just so they don't repeat mistakes of the past, but so they have a more complete understanding of their own identities.

In the earliest grades, students might...	In the intermediate grades, students might...	At the commencement level, students might...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Generate ideas about possible causes of events in the past.✓ Compare perspectives of people in the past to people today.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Evaluate why and how events occurred based on evidence.✓ Analyze and explain why individuals and groups had differing perspectives of the same time period and/or event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Construct original interpretations of the past and present using multiple sources of evidence.✓ Analyze how historical contexts shape perspectives of the past and present.

*see Key Social Studies Outcomes for a more detailed view of what students should know and be able to do at each grade level

See graphic on the next page for examples of what students should think about and do when they are engaging in **HISTORICAL THINKING**.



Historical Thinking

What I Should Think About...

Chronology

- When do time periods begin and end?
- How do we classify periods of time?
- What comes before, what comes after, and why does that matter?

What I Should Do...

Interrogating Evidence

Examine multiple sources of history...

- Who made this?
- Who was it made for?
- What message is being sent by this?
- How do you feel about this message?
- Is this credible?
- What can we learn from this source?

Change

Think about how things change from one state to another...

- What are the multiple causes and effects of change?
- Is the change positive, negative, or somewhere in-between?

Building Conceptual Frameworks

Use big concepts to better understand the world...

- How does new knowledge fit with everything else I know and have experienced?
- How can we categorize and sort new knowledge to make sense of it?

Context & Empathy

Think about how beliefs and values of people in the past relate to their perspectives and actions...

- How do peoples' culture and beliefs shape their actions?
- What influenced peoples' actions in the past?

Engaging With Accounts

Investigate different "stories" of history...

- Who created this "story" and why?
- What evidence can be used to prove this?
- How are multiple accounts similar and different?



Geographic Reasoning

GEOGRAPHIC REASONING is tied to the New York State Social Studies Learning Standard of Geography:

Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world in which we live—local, national, and global—including the distribution of people, places, and environments over the Earth’s surface.

Most often, we associate geography only with physical location. Indeed, every place on Earth can be described using a specific and unique set of characteristics. However, geography is much more than that. When we study geography, we look at the Earth’s physical systems (like landforms, climate, bodies of water), human systems (like culture, migration, transportation), and biological systems (like habitats and environmental adaptations). We must examine the dynamic relationships between these systems in terms of space and location.

The basic building blocks of **GEOGRAPHIC REASONING** are found in answers to questions like...

- ⇒ How is where I live similar to and different from other places?
- ⇒ How does my environment affect me and how do I affect my environment?
- ⇒ How and why do people, goods, and ideas move from place to place?
- ⇒ What tools do we use to study the Earth?
- ⇒ In what ways are different parts of the world connected?

In studying geography, students must develop a sense of space. They must see the impacts of global interconnections, cultivate the skills needed to analyze change as it is related to place, and foster an appreciation of diversity.

In the earliest grades, students might...	In the intermediate grades, students might...	At the commencement level, students might...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Use geographic tools and create maps to describe location and other geographic characteristics of a place.✓ Describe the connections between people and their environments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Construct and use maps to represent and explain cultural and environmental characteristics.✓ Explain how human identities and cultures are related to physical environments and characteristics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Construct and use maps to analyze global patterns and interconnections.✓ Evaluate the impacts of human-environment interactions and analyze the reciprocal relationships between history and geography.

*see Key Social Studies Outcomes for a more detailed view of what students should know and be able to do at each grade level

See graphic on the next page for examples of what students should think about and do when they engage in **GEOGRAPHIC REASONING**.



Geographic Reasoning

What I Should Think About...

Geographic Tools & Sources

- How can I use maps and other geographic tools to understand the world?
- How do these tools affect the way I see the world?

Places and Regions

- What are the physical and human characteristics of a place?
- How do we divide the Earth into areas and regions?
- How do culture and human experience change the way we see places and regions?

Human Systems

- What are the characteristics of human populations? (language, culture, population etc.)
- How and why do people migrate and settle across the Earth?
- What are the relationships between human economic systems and location?
- How do these human systems affect places and regions?
- How does human cooperation and conflict affect the Earth?

Physical & Biological Systems

- How do landforms, waterforms, and the environment affect the ways people live?
- How do physical processes (like weathering and changing seasons) change our Earth?
- What are the characteristics of ecosystems and biomes?

Environment & Society

- How do humans adapt to their environments?
- How do humans change the environment, and what are the effects of these changes?
- What effects do human and environment interactions have on governments, economies, and other institutions?

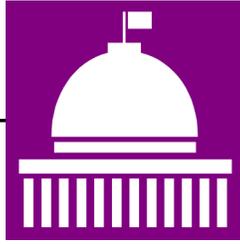
What I Should Do...

Applying Geography to the Past

- How has geography provided a context for historic events and circumstances?
- How have places and regions changed over time?
- How do our perceptions of the world change over time?

Applying Geography to the Present & Future

- How might our current geographic conditions affect our future plans and activities?
- How might our future actions change our environments?
- What predictions can we make about how people will perceive the world in the future?



Social and Political Participation

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION is tied to the NYS Social Studies Learning Standard of Civics, Citizenship, and Government:

Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the necessity for establishing governments; the governmental system of the U.S. and other nations; the U.S. Constitution; the basic civic values of American constitutional democracy; and the roles, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship, including avenues of participation.

Social and political participation includes the study of politics and political systems both at home and around the world, but also includes participation in classrooms, communities, and other organizations. Our studies in this domain begin firmly with the strength and power we have within our own families and schools, and expand progressively to include the discussion of ongoing issues and dilemmas in our communities, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and the dynamic relationships between and among citizens and their governments. These studies prepare students to take informed civic action.

The basic building blocks of **SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION** are found in answers to questions like...

- ⇒ How do I participate in my community?
- ⇒ How does government affect my life?
- ⇒ What rights and responsibilities do I have as a person and as a citizen?
- ⇒ How is my school, city, and country organized?
- ⇒ In what ways do people work together to solve problems?

In order to be active and productive citizens, students must develop the desire and tools to address public issues and work both individually and collaboratively to resolve problems. They must have an understanding of their rights and responsibilities within our government and society.

In the earliest grades, students might...	In the intermediate grades, students might...	At the commencement level, students might...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Describe and explain the purposes and functions of government. ✓ Work with others to make group decisions at school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analyze the consequences of public policies, laws, and/or agreements. ✓ Participate in activities focused on school or community problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analyze and evaluate public policies and propose alternative actions. ✓ Actively participate in community social and political activities.

*see Key Social Studies Outcomes for a more detailed view of what students should know and be able to do at each grade level

See graphic on the next page for examples of what students should think about and do when they engage in **SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**.



Social and Political Participation

What I Should Think About...

Citizenship

- What rights and responsibilities do I have as a citizen?
- What does it mean to be a good citizen?
- How do individual people and groups work together to accomplish goals?
- How is my point of view similar to and different from the perspectives of others?

Rules & Laws

- How do rules and laws affect our lives?
- How do individuals and groups create and shape rules and laws?
- How and why have rules and laws changed over time?

Governments & Institutions

- What basic values and principles is our government founded upon?
- How do governments and institutions serve people?
- How are governments and institutions organized to carry out their duties?
- What are their powers and limitations?
- What is the relationship between the United States government and other governments and institutions?

What I Should Do...

Taking Civic Action

- How can I cooperate with others - locally, regionally, and globally - to solve problems?
- How can I stand up for what I believe in?
- How can I participate in our government to produce positive change?
- How can I work collaboratively to maintain and improve my community, our society, and our world?



Economics and Economic Systems

ECONOMICS AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS is tied to the New York State Social Studies Learning Standard of Economics:

Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of how the United States and other societies develop economic systems and associated institutions to allocate scarce resources, how major decision-making units function in the U.S. and other national economies, and how an economy solves the scarcity problem through market and non-market mechanisms.

When we study economics and economic systems, we aim to understand the varied ways in which individuals, groups, and governments make decisions to use scarce resources to satisfy their needs and wants. Those resources are more than just money; they include natural resources, human capital (labor), time, and space. Since there are limited resources in our world, we all must make choices about how to use them. Students must think about the economic choices they make, the costs and benefits of those choices, and the consequences those choices will have in the future. Expanding beyond their own lives, students examine how their choices play out at the local, state, national, and international levels.

The basic building blocks of **ECONOMICS AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS** are found in answers to questions like...

- ⇒ What resources do I have and how did I acquire them?
- ⇒ How do I use the resources I have to get what I need and want?
- ⇒ Where do the goods and services I need and want come from and how are they produced?
- ⇒ How does trade affect our community, our country, and our world?
- ⇒ What role do governments and other institutions play in my economic decisions?

Ultimately, as a result of studying economics and economic systems, students should gain the tools necessary to understand the interaction of buyers and sellers in markets, the workings of the US and global economies, and be able to make sound financial decisions for themselves and their families.

In the earliest grades, students might...	In the intermediate grades, students might...	At the commencement level, students might...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Discuss the goods and services they use on a regular basis.✓ Describe how scarcity necessitates decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Compare the costs and benefits of economic choices.✓ Explain how those decisions affect individuals, businesses, and society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Analyze the role of the United States in the global economy.✓ Evaluate the effects of governmental economic policies.

*see Key Social Studies Outcomes for a more detailed view of what students should know and be able to do at each grade level

See graphic on the next page for examples of what students should think about and do when they learn about **ECONOMICS AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS**.



Economics and Economic Systems

What I Should Think About...

Resources, Trade, & Markets

- What is a resource?
- What resources do I have access to?
- Why and how do people and groups trade resources?
- How do systems of trade affect the choices I have and the decisions I make?
- How do governments and institutions affect how people and groups trade?

The Local & National Economy

- What is my role in our economy?
- What is the role of my community in the economy of our country?
- What services does our government provide?
- How do governments and institutions affect my economic decisions?

The Global Economy

- How and why does our country trade with other countries?
- What is interdependence?
- In what ways does global trade affect me and my country?
- How do the policies of governments and institutions affect the economy and the environment?

What I Should Do...

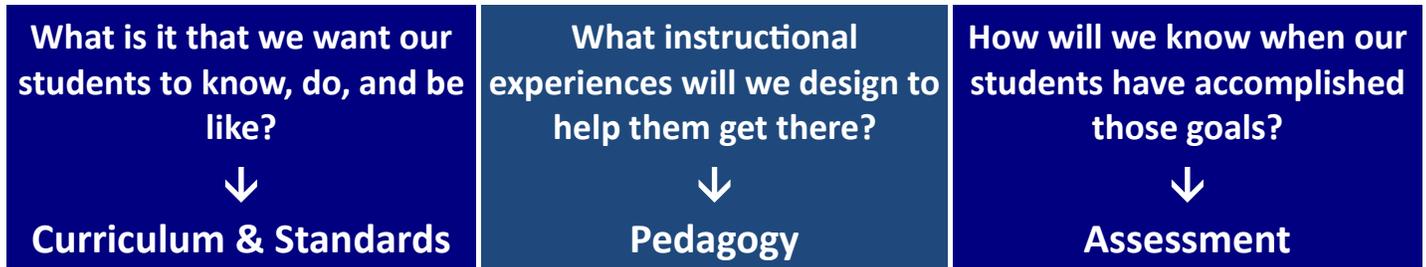
Making Informed Economic Decisions

- What are the costs and benefits of my choices and decisions?
- What are incentives and how do they influence my decisions?
- How do my economic decisions affect others?
- How do the economic policies of governments and institutions affect me and my decisions?

CONSTRUCTING SOCIAL STUDIES LEARNING EXPERIENCES



As we deepen our understanding of the goals and components of social studies instruction, we must ask ourselves how this knowledge translates into meaningful classroom practice. We must think about how best to construct meaningful social studies learning experiences that are centered around inquiry and integrated authentic learning. Regardless of the content we use to engage our students, we must be careful to always make the following questions the basis of our instructional planning and decision-making:



CREATING INQUIRY AND RELEVANCE THROUGH INQUIRY

Using essential questions is key in engaging students in authentic, meaningful, inquiry-based investigations in social studies. They are the centerpiece of all learning experiences. Creating essential questions is hard work! It requires significant content knowledge, is dependent upon a deep understanding of standards and student outcomes, can be time consuming, and is difficult to accomplish alone. Good questions should be...

- **Student-Friendly:** appealing to what students value and care about, in accessible language
 - Is the question approachable, relevant, and validating of students' experiences?
- **Conceptual:** requiring students to use broad conceptual frameworks to interpret knowledge and information
 - Does this question revolve around a big idea or enduring issue and allow students to connect content to those concepts in meaningful ways?
- **Substantive:** requiring students to pay attention to specific social studies content
 - Will the answer to this question require students to put events and/or situations into the context of a particular historical setting or present circumstance?
- **Procedural:** requiring students to use analysis, interrogate evidence, and/or employ other social studies-specific skills to uncover and examine accounts of the past and present
 - Is this question open ended?
 - Does this questions allow for multiple possible answers that encourage student thinking?
 - Does the question require students to garner evidence to prove their claims?

INSTEAD OF ASKING THIS...

What are some rules we must follow?



ASK A QUESTION MORE LIKE THIS...

Why do rules change sometimes?

In asking students about rules they must follow, they only have to name one or two examples of rules to answer the question (substantive). By changing the question to ask students about changing rules and consequences over time, they must understand what a rule is (conceptual), give specific examples of actual rules (substantive), and justify why rules and the consequences for breaking them can be changed by providing evidence (procedural).

INSTEAD OF ASKING THIS...

What are the three branches of government?



ASK A QUESTION MORE LIKE THIS...

Why do I have to be 18 to vote?

Making participation the focus of this question about government makes learning centered more on action than discrete knowledge (procedural). In answering this question, students still have to demonstrate an understanding of the functions and purposes of the three branches (substantive), but their own role as citizens is what's driving them (conceptual), not a disconnected requirement of memorization.

INSTEAD OF ASKING THIS...

Upon what principles was the U.S. founded?



ASK A QUESTION MORE LIKE THIS...

Has America lived up to its founding ideals?

In the first question, students could simply list terms or words: democracy, federalism, etc. (substantive); the second requires students to understand the major founding principles of our government (conceptual) and make judgments about their application (procedural), using specific examples from history and/or the present (substantive).

PLANNING LESSONS TO PROMOTE ACTIVE LEARNING

If we want to make social studies powerful and engaging for students, we've got to change the way we think about lesson planning. Rather than planning a succession of 180 stand-alone lessons, we must intentionally plan multi-day, integrative learning experiences focused on inquiry, critical literacy skills, and social studies practices while using social studies content as a vehicle for driving this learning. Though lessons may use many formats, the questions below can be used as a critical tool to guide your planning process.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION BEFORE THE LESSON...

- What are the **learning targets** and **objectives** of this lesson?
- What **pre-assessment** activities/**data** will be used to gauge student knowledge and skill?
- Is any pre-teaching necessary to prepare students to engage in this lesson?
- What **materials** will I need to enact this learning experience?
- In what ways can the content, concepts, and skills in this lesson be made **relevant and engaging** for my students?

INTRODUCTION

Teacher acts as instructor, unpacking goals, standards and/or targets, and engages students by modeling the thinking and doing that they will be asked to participate in during the lesson.

- ⇒ How will the lesson's **learning targets and intended outcomes** be explained to students? (unpacking NYS and Common Core standards)
- ⇒ What **compelling questions** will be introduced to students to drive learning?
- ⇒ How will students be **introduced to the content, concepts, and skills** that will be dealt with in this lesson?
- ⇒ In what ways will **academic vocabulary** be introduced to students?
- ⇒ What **literacy and social studies strategies** and thinking skills will be **modeled** for students?
- ⇒ How will I **capture student interest**?
- ⇒ How will this be **adapted** for English Language Learners (ELLs) and Students With Disabilities (SWDs)?

BODY

Students grapple with concepts and information as they apply and extend their skills to make sense of problems and construct knowledge. The teacher acts as a supportive coach.

- ⇒ What **supporting questions** will frame the **activities** in which students will engage?
- ⇒ What **primary and secondary sources** will students **analyze deeply** to **synthesize and evaluate** information?
- ⇒ In what ways are these activities...
 - **rigorous, relevant, and worthwhile?**
 - **open-ended?**
 - posed as a series of **questions** and related **problems to solve?**
 - **real-world, authentic, and engaging?**
 - structured to create **problem solvers?**
 - asking students to **apply skills AND conceptual understandings?**
 - allowing for **formative assessment** and **student self-monitoring?**
- ⇒ How will these activities be **differentiated** for SWDs and ELLs?
- ⇒ How will **student progress** on these activities be **monitored?**

CONCLUSION

Students present and demonstrate their understanding and skills. The teacher probes and guides as necessary.

- ⇒ What actions will students take to **demonstrate their knowledge and understanding?** (writing, sharing, presenting, taking action in or out of class, etc.)
- ⇒ How will these activities be **differentiated** for SWDs and ELLs?
- ⇒ How will students receive **feedback?**
- ⇒ What questions will be used to **assess, connect, and extend student understanding?**
- ⇒ How will **assessment** of student understanding **drive support and enrichment?**

REFLECTING AFTER THE LESSON...

- **Based on student performance**, what **support and enrichment** is necessary to ensure student understanding and extend learning?
- What were the **strengths** and **weaknesses** of this lesson?
- **What comes next?**





Every child is a work of art.
Create a masterpiece.