

Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Social Studies

Curriculum Framework

Overview

2017

Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Elementary Social Studies Curriculum Committee

Mission Statement

The mission of the Elementary Social Studies Curriculum of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is the development of Catholic citizens who will uphold democratic principles and serve the Church, the nation, and the world within the framework of Gospel values.

Social Studies

The leading national organization in the field, the National Council for the Social Studies, has adopted this definition of social studies:

Social studies is 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 develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. (<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/execsummary>)

C³ Framework

The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards was developed to:

- enhance the rigor of the social studies disciplines
- build critical thinking, problem solving, and participatory skills to become engaged citizens; and
- align academic programs to the Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies.

What are the guiding principles?

The C3 is driven by the following shared principles about high quality social studies education:

- Social studies prepares the nation's young people for college, careers, and civic life.
- Inquiry is at the heart of social studies.
- Social studies involves interdisciplinary applications and welcomes integration of the arts and humanities.
- Social studies is composed of deep and enduring understandings, concepts, and skills from the disciplines. Social studies emphasizes skills and practices as preparation for democratic decision-making.
- Social studies education should have direct and explicit connections to the Standards for English Language Arts.

What are the instructional shifts for social studies?

The C3 Framework emphasizes the acquisition and application of knowledge to prepare students for college, career, and civic life. It intentionally envisions social studies instruction as an inquiry arc of interlocking and mutually reinforcing elements that speak to the intersection of ideas and learners. The Four Dimensions highlighted below center on the use of questions to spark curiosity, guide instruction, deepen investigations, acquire rigorous content, and apply knowledge and ideas in real world settings to become active and engaged citizens in the 21st century.

C3 Framework Organization

Dimension 1: Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries	Dimension 2: Applying Disciplinary Tools and Concepts	Dimension 3: Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence	Dimension 4: Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action
Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries	Civics	Gathering and Evaluating Sources	Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions
	Economics		
	Geography	Developing Claims and Using Evidence	Taking Informed Action
	History		

Connections to the Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies

The C3 Framework changes the conversation about literacy instruction in social studies by creating a context that is meaningful and purposeful. Reading, writing, speaking and listening and language skills are critically important for building disciplinary literacy and the skills needed for college, career, and civic life. Each of the Four Dimensions are strategically aligned to the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies.

Why do we need the C3 Framework?

There are a number of motivating factors that inspired this work:

- **Marginalization of the Social Studies** – The loss of instructional time at the elementary level and the narrowing of instruction in response to multiple-choice, high-stakes testing has significantly impacted time, resources, and support for the social studies. The introduction of the Common Core provided an opportunity for social studies educators to re-frame instruction to promote disciplinary literacy in social studies in such a way as to allow social studies to regain a more balanced and elevated role in the K-12 curriculum.
- **Motivation of Students** – Children and adolescents are naturally curious about the complex and multifaceted world they inhabit. But they quickly become disengaged when instruction is limited to reading textbooks to answer end-of-chapter questions and taking multiple-choice tests that may measure content knowledge but do little to measure how knowledge is meaningful and applicable in the real world. The C3 Framework addresses this issue in fundamental ways.

- **The Future of Our Democracy** – Abundant research bears out the sad reality that fewer and fewer young people, particularly students of color and students in poverty, are receiving a high quality social studies education, despite the central role of social studies in preparing students for the responsibilities of citizenship. Active and responsible citizens are able to identify and analyze public problems, deliberate with other people about how to define and address issues, take constructive action together, reflect on their actions, create and sustain groups, and influence institutions both large and small. They vote, serve on juries when called, follow the news and current events, and participate in voluntary groups and efforts. Implementing the C3 Framework to teach students to be able to act in these ways—as citizens—significantly enhances preparation for college and career.

Scope and Sequence

The National Council for the Social Studies Task Force on Scope and Sequence identified the scope and sequence common in many school districts throughout the United States. The scope and sequence reflect an “expanding environments” approach to social studies.

The Elementary Social Studies Curriculum Committee used the NCSS Scope and Sequence and the C³ Framework as the basis for its own pattern. The following Scope and Sequence forms the Elementary Social Studies Curriculum.

Kindergarten - Awareness of Self in a Social Setting (Early Childhood Guidelines)

Grade 1 - The Individual in Primary and Social Groups - Understanding School and Family Life

Grade 2 - Meeting Basic Needs in Nearby Social Groups - The Neighborhood

Grade 3 - Sharing Earth and Space with Others - The Community

Grade 4 - Interdisciplinary Study of the Local Region - Pennsylvania

Grade 5 - The Western Hemisphere - The United States and Its Close Neighbors

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Grade 6 - The Eastern Hemisphere and Ancient Civilizations

Grade 7 - Building a Strong and Free Nation: BC-1850) - The United States (Early American Civilizations through Manifest Destiny)

Grade 8 - Building a Strong and Free Nation: 1850-1960 - The United States (Road to the Civil War to the New Frontier)

Ten Thematic Strands in Social Studies

The Ten Thematic Strands in Social Studies are designed to be woven throughout the curriculum at all grade levels. The Elementary Social Studies Curriculum seeks to develop these ten strands throughout the scope of the program.

I. Culture

Anthropology explores likenesses and differences between and among peoples in geography and history as well as through multicultural studies.

II. Time, Continuity, and Change

History opens students to knowledge, skills, and values in exploring their own past and our collective past.

III. People, Places, and Environments

Geography allows students to investigate the world through the five themes of Location, Place, Interactions, Movement, and Regions.

IV. Individual Development and Identity

Psychology and anthropology help students discover about themselves individually and as a society.

V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

Sociology, anthropology, history and political science guide students to learn about their relationship with society's institutions.

VI. Power, Authority, and Governance

Political science, history, law, and other areas inform students about the development, structures, and functions of rule and law.

VII. Production, Distribution, and Consumption

Economic concepts and issues assist students in understanding their roles as producers and consumers in the world.

VIII. Science, Technology, and Society

Connecting science and technology in the world with history and the social sciences is important in the life of every student.

IX. Global Connections

Interdependence is a key attribute in the world of every student, and this theme supports this understanding.

X. Civic Ideals and Practices

The role of civic competence is critical to the social studies and society as developed through this theme.

(<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/execsummary>)