



This course supports the assessments for Elementary Social Studies Methods. The course covers 10 competencies and represents 3 competency units.

Introduction

Overview

Elementary Social Studies Methods helps students learn how to implement effective social studies instruction in the elementary classroom. Topics include social studies themes, promoting cultural diversity, integrated social studies across the curriculum, social studies learning environments, assessing social studies understanding, differentiated instruction for social studies, technology for social studies instruction, and standards-based social studies instruction. Participants will learn strategies to meet the needs of a variety of learners and engage students in learning by getting to know their personal and cultural assets. Building a rapport with students and developing a supportive learning environment can help teachers learn how to tap into their students' prior knowledge and understanding to encourage success in the social studies classroom.

Getting Started

Welcome to Elementary Social Studies Methods! To master the competencies for this course, you will read articles located in the WGU Library E-Reserves and selections from the textbook, visit websites, and watch videos. You will also keep a Learning Journal where you will reflect on the materials you are studying.

You will demonstrate your mastery of Elementary Social Study Methods by successfully completing an objective assessment and a performance assessment.

Welcome Video

Watch the following video for an introduction to this course:

Note: To download this video, right-click the following link and choose "Save as...": [download video](#).

Competencies

This course provides guidance to help you demonstrate the following 10 competencies:

- **Competency 672.1.1: Social Studies and Society**
The graduate integrates effective instructional approaches that promote informed and engaged citizenship in a diverse and interdependent democratic society into social studies learning activities.
- **Competency 672.1.2: Social Studies Themes**
The graduate integrates appropriate themes, concepts, and modes of inquiry in the development of social studies education for elementary students.
- **Competency 672.1.3: Culture and Diversity**
The graduate integrates effective instructional approaches that promote elementary



students' growing ability to value diversity and develop connections between their community and culture.

- **Competency 672.1.4: Integrating Curriculum**

The graduate creates interdisciplinary learning experiences that effectively incorporate the concepts and modes of inquiry of social studies.

- **Competency 672.1.5: Promoting Research and Learning in Social Studies**

The graduate develops engaging learning experiences for elementary students that promote research, analysis, and evaluation of real-world situations.

- **Competency 672.1.6: Learning Environments to Promote Social Studies**

The graduate plans developmentally appropriate, healthy, safe, and inclusive learning environments that promote social studies learning.

- **Competency 672.1.7: Assessment**

The graduate evaluates assessment information to inform instructional decision making and support social studies education for all students.

- **Competency 672.1.8: Technology**

The graduate selects appropriate technology tools that support social studies instruction and learning for elementary students.

- **Competency 672.1.9: Social Studies Instruction for Diverse Learners**

The graduate plans instruction in social studies education that provides equitable opportunities for all students.

- **Competency 672.1.10: Social Studies Standards, Goals, and Outcomes**

The graduate integrates social studies standards, learning outcomes, benchmarks, and objectives in the development of social studies education for elementary students.

Teaching Dispositions Statement

Please review the [Statement of Teaching Dispositions](#).

Course Instructor Assistance

Your Course Instructor is an important resource for you to take advantage of as you progress through your study of Elementary Social Studies Methods. Your Course Instructor will be able to help guide your learning, answer questions, and provide valuable information. Be sure to consult your Course Instructor frequently.

Pacing Guide

The pacing guide suggests a weekly structure to pace your completion of learning activities.

- Week 1:
 - Introduction
 - Social Studies and Democracy
 - Social Studies Standards, goals and Outcomes
- Week 2:
 - Social Studies Themes
 - Student Project Part 1
- Week 3:
 - Promoting Research and Learning in Social Studies



- Culture and Diversity in the Classroom
- Week 4:
 - Integrating Curriculum
 - Learning Environments to Promote Social Studies
 - Student Project Parts 2 and 3
- Week 5:
 - Assessment
 - Technology
 - Students with Exceptional Needs
 - Student Project Part 4
- Week 6:
 - Objective Assessment

Learning Resources

VitalSource E-Texts

The textbook for this course is:

- Ellis, A. K. (2011). *Teaching and learning elementary social studies* (9th ed.). Allyn & Bacon. ISBN-13: 9780137039494

WGU Library E-Reserves

The following e-reserve materials will be used in this course:

- Brown, C. L. (2007). Strategies for making social studies texts more comprehensible for English-language learners. *Social Studies*, 98(5), 185–188.
- Reagan, R. (2008). Direct instruction in skillful thinking in fifth grade history. *Social Studies*, 99(5), 217–222.
- Scruggs, T. E., Mastropieri, M. A., Okolo, C. (2008). Science and social studies with students with disabilities. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 41(2), 1–24.

Educational Impact

Educational Impact is an online resource of video training and related worksheets. Educational Impact's videos and worksheets provide you with an opportunity for learning about several important facets of modern education and observing classrooms where specific practices are implemented and problems are addressed. You will access Educational Impact modules at the activity level within this course.

Applying Course Content to Designing an Instructional Unit

This course will prepare you for creating an instructional unit. Use this study aid to review what you have learned before you create your instructional unit.

- [Social Studies Unit Design](#)



Learning Journal

Throughout this course, you will be presented with questions and prompts that will help you reflect on material you are studying, more deeply engage in the content, and apply what you are learning to your personal and professional life. They will also help you prepare for the assessments you will take later in the course.

You may keep notes in this online course, blog your notes, or start an electronic file. You could also keep a paper notebook with your notes. However you choose to keep your notes, be sure to keep your notebook handy as you are learning the material and progressing through the course.

Write responses to the questions and prompts throughout the course in your study notes for this course. In addition to those responses, you may want to include more of your own thoughts and feelings in your notes. Think about the following:

- your progress through the course, including any personal misconceptions you discover and correct through your studies
- ways the activities and projects enhance your learning
- your reactions to or reflections on the activities in the course
- notes on topics that you want to remember and refer back to as you prepare for the assessments or begin your future teaching activities

You can also use your notebook as a place to review the material from each chapter of the textbook and answer chapter review questions. Your notebook will be a great help to you as you study for the objective assessment and complete your performance tasks.

As a teacher-in-training, you could consider this note-taking process a way to begin modeling good study habits for your future students. Your experiences here will help you to become a well-prepared teacher and a reflective educator.

Social Studies and Society

When many people hear the words *social studies*, they think about coloring maps and learning about history and ancient civilizations. Although it may seem to be all about studying the past, social studies is also about what is happening in today's society—locally and globally.

Social studies is an integrative subject because it focuses on society and the changes that occur in society across all disciplines, such as

- mathematics,
- language arts,
- science, and
- technology.

By bringing local and global topics into the classroom, teachers help children learn about their



society. Children make connections to the past when they have an understanding about what is going on where they live and in the world around them.

Social studies can also help students to learn about discourse, which can include the structures of written and oral language, as well as how members of the discipline talk, write, and participate in knowledge construction. Discipline-specific discourse has distinctive features or ways of structuring oral or written language (text structures) that provide useful ways for the content to be communicated. In history/social studies, language features include expository, narrative, journalistic, maps, and other graphic print materials; presentations of data in text, charts, and graphs; and video and live presentations.

Social Studies and Democracy

Children develop many of their thoughts and beliefs about society in their early school years. Classrooms and schools are laboratories for students to learn social participation through direct practices, and not just through abstract teaching methods.

Understanding society begins as students interact with others in classrooms. From classroom experiences, students learn to function in larger groups, such as

- their school community,
- their neighborhood,
- their town or city,
- their country, and
- their global community.

In the classroom, students can also learn about and appreciate the unique differences and experiences that each individual brings to the learning environment. As a teacher, think about how you can use this knowledge about your students to design and deliver learning experiences that align with their motivations and interests. There are three types of assets:

- **Personal Assets:** Specific background information that students bring to the learning environment. Students bring interests, knowledge, everyday experiences, and family backgrounds that a teacher can draw upon to support learning.
- **Cultural Assets:** Cultural backgrounds and practices that students bring to the learning environment, such as traditions, languages, world views, literature, and art that a teacher can draw upon to support learning.
- **Community Assets:** Common backgrounds and experiences that students bring from the community where they live, such as resources, local landmarks, community events and practices that a teacher can draw upon to support learning.

As the teacher, you bring social studies to life for students by making it connect to the individuals, the society and the world around them.

Define: What Is Social Studies: Intro

As you read "The Excitement and Wonder of the Quest" on pages 5–22 of [Chapter 1 \("Social Studies: Definitions and Rationale"\)](#) in Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies,



complete the following:

- In your journal, define social studies as it relates to your experience.
- Next, explain how the following topics are an integral part of social studies:
 - Social studies is the study of human beings.
 - Citizenship is a cornerstone of social studies teaching and learning.
 - Social studies curriculum is a meaningful combination of the widening horizons approach and the spiral curriculum.
 - Social studies can and ought to be the centerpiece for integrating your curriculum.

Define Key Terms: Social Studies Instruction

Pedagogy means principles and methods of instruction. The term is often used to refer to the teaching profession. The following terms are instructional terms that will be used throughout this course. Read the definitions of the terms and then define the terms using your own words. Include examples to illustrate each term.

- *Strategy*: a plan, method, or series of maneuvers or stratagems for obtaining a specific goal or result (i.e., having students answer questions, or pairing and sharing are strategies for engaged learning)
- *Method*: a way of doing something, especially a systematic way; implies an orderly logical arrangement (usually in steps); a broad instructional approach
- *Learning Task*: Activities that engage students to develop, practice, and apply skills and knowledge related to a specific learning goal (i.e., analyzing a historical document is a learning task). Learning tasks should connect prior knowledge to new knowledge and often include formative assessment.
- *Learning Segment*: A set of learning tasks and lessons that build one upon another toward a central focus, with a clearly defined beginning and end.
- *Central Focus*: A description of the important understandings and core concepts that you want students to develop within the learning segment. The central focus should go beyond a list of facts and skills, align with content standards and learning objectives, and address the subject-specific components in the learning segment.
- *Academic Language*: the means by which students develop and express content understandings.
- *Language Demands*: Specific ways that academic language (vocabulary/symbols, functions, discourse, syntax) is used by students to participate in learning tasks through reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking to demonstrate their disciplinary understanding.

Check your examples of methods, strategies, and activities with the following document:

- "[Examples of Methods and Strategies](#)"

Identify: Principles of Teaching

As you read "Successful Strategies for Social Studies Teaching and Learning" on pages 151–159 of [Chapter 7 \("Successful Strategies for Social Studies Teaching and Learning"\)](#), list



and explain the following concepts in your journal:

- principles of good social studies teaching
- preferences of students about learning social studies
- direct instruction strategies

Read: Indirect Strategies

As you read "Indirect Instruction Strategies" on pages 160–171 of [Chapter 7 \("Successful Strategies for Social Studies Teaching and Learning"\)](#), list and explain the following indirect strategies in your journal:

- role play
- interest centers
- group investigations and projects
- independent studies and presentations
- reflective thinking
- brainstorming

Read: Strategies

As you read "Brainstorming" on pages 172–183 of [Chapter 7 \("Successful Strategies for Social Studies Teaching and Learning"\)](#), list and explain the following indirect strategies in your journal:

- creative expression
- content
- differentiated assignments
- jigsaw/peer teaching and cooperative learning
- simulations
- computer simulations

Read: Chapter 2 ("Children in Democracy: Teaching and Learning Responsible Citizenship")

As you read pages 29–48 of [Chapter 2 \("Children in a Democracy: Teaching and Learning Responsible Citizenship"\)](#), complete the following:

- Identify three to four resources and strategies that you could use in your classroom to encourage students to work independently and collectively to exercise citizenship and interdependence in the classroom.

Read: Strategies to Teach Social Studies

Read the following document and list three to five strategies for helping students learn about individuals' rights and responsibilities:

- ["Strategies to Teach Social Studies"](#)

Write: Skills in Social Studies

As you read "Teaching Skills" on pages 132–136 of [Chapter 6 \("Successful Strategies for Social](#)



[Studies Teaching and Learning"\)](#) from Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies, complete the following:

- List and explain the methodological tools of social studies.
- Identify and explain the three categories of values.
- Why do you think it has been suggested that teachers often teach facts and information, rather than concepts and ideas in social studies?
- What can you suggest will improve the conceptual aspect of lesson planning?

Examine: Website Resources

Visit the following websites:

- [iCivics](#)
- [PBS Teachers](#)

As you visit the websites listed below, complete the following:

- Create a list of resources for teaching students to work independently and collectively to promote positive change in the classroom, school, community, and world.
- Identify strategies for teaching about positive change.

Social Studies Standards, Goals, and Outcomes

Social studies standards can be influential learning tools when they are presented to students in a significant manner. The standards have meaning when students create connections between information, skills, beliefs, and points of view that they find useful both in and out of school. Social studies instruction needs to emphasize the depth of ideas with proper breadth of topic coverage and focus on teaching the essential learning goals for understanding and application.

Standards in Social Studies

Social studies integration creates opportunities for children to see the "big picture" and to develop comprehension of how different aspects of life fit together. Using the social studies standards, social studies content is taught topically across disciplines.

The content should cross time and space, and should link knowledge, talents, beliefs, principles, and attitudes. Learning tasks should provide students with the chance to analyze historical documents or primary sources to synthesize understandings about various places or time periods around the world. Outcomes are more dynamic when active learning engages children in goal-oriented thinking and decision making.

Define: Standards

Many states have designed their own learning standards for Social Studies. In some instances, state standards center on specific topical knowledge such as Exploration and Colonization, Pre-Columbian Native Americans, Industrialization, Southeast Asian culture, etc. In contrast, the National Council for Social Studies C3 Framework provides standards that center on concepts and skills rather than topics.



The two types of standards intersect in Social Studies lessons. When children develop an understanding of broad concepts and discipline-specific skills, they are prepared to explore in-depth topics. This means it is important for teachers to be familiar with both the C3 framework and state standards. The following activities will help you develop this familiarity.

Constructing: Standard Alignment

Read the following selections from Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies and review the following websites:

- "Keys to Developing a Successful Unit" on pages 124–130 [Chapter 6 \("Planning for Social Studies Teaching and Learning"\)](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education: State Education Agency \(State Department of Education\) Listings](#)
- [College, Career & Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards \(Read pp. 29–50\)](#)

As you read the materials above, complete the following:

- Explore your state's Department of Education social studies standards.
- Review the C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards, focusing on the various standards in Dimension 2: Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools (pp.29–50.)

Explain: Lesson Alignment

Lesson objective should align with standards, and assessments should align with objectives—that is, assessments should directly measure what students were expected to learn. Review the lesson plan listed below and complete the following:

- Explain how the objective links to state and national standards, the lesson plan, and the assessment.
- Explain how the objective is to be measured and what form of assessment is being used (e.g., summative, formative, formal, or informal).

Review the following resources:

- [Discovery Education: "Understanding American Values" Lesson Plan](#)
- "Planning for Social Studies Teaching and Learning" on pages 119–126 and "Teaching Values" on pages 138–145 in [Chapter 6 \("Planning for Social Studies Teaching and Learning"\)](#)

Social Studies Themes

When we systematically explore the human experience, we use categories to describe different types of relationships and elements in that experience. We use these categories, or themes, to uncover causes for events and developments in the world that occurred in the past and/or present. As an elementary teacher, you can design powerful learning experiences for your students that use the various themes as lenses on life. Here are the ten themes identified by the



National Council for Social Studies:

- culture
- time, continuity, and change
- people, places, and environments
- individual development and identity
- individuals, groups, and institutions
- power, authority and governance
- production, distribution, and consumption
- science, technology, and society
- global connections
- civic ideals and practices

The themes are briefly described in [this document](#). You will explore them in more detail in this course.

While you learn about the themes, you will have opportunities to consider how you could incorporate them into your classroom to create rich learning tasks and experiences that engage students to develop, practice, and apply skills and knowledge related to your learning objectives.

Culture

Today, American children encounter more diversity than ever before in our country's history. In classrooms, teachers can help students understand that diversity makes interesting, thriving societies. Try to learn about the cultural assets that each of your students bring to the classroom. Cultural assets refer to the traditions, languages and dialects, worldviews, literature, art, and so on, that you can draw upon to support learning and enhance your lessons.

Read: Chapter 3 Social Studies and Diversity in America

Read the following section from *Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies*:

- Pages 51–58 of [Chapter 3 \("Social Studies and Diversity in America"\)](#)

Complete the following:

- Explain the four levels of social studies curriculum and describe how content is typically taught in the social studies classroom.
- Choose a specific grade level in your journal and identify which of the four levels of social studies curriculum you would use to explore concepts or similarities and differences among cultural groups.
- Describe an instructional strategy you would use that is appropriate for the grade level chosen and the model you selected.

Read and List: Cultural Explorations

Create an annotated (a brief description that summarizes or provides detail about your topic or ideas) list of three to five activities that you could include in your classroom that support



students' ability to identify social, economic, and cultural characteristics of people in diverse places.

Use the following resources to complete this activity:

- "Creating a Culturally Responsive Learning Environment" on pages 59–63 of [Chapter 3 \("Social Studies and Diversity in America"\)](#)
- ["Diversity Council: "Diversity Lesson Plans for Elementary School"](#)

Time, Continuity and Change

As a teacher, you will be introducing students to history—the history of peoples, societies, and nations. Studying the past helps students identify ways that people have viewed themselves, their society, and the world around them at different periods of time.

Read and Chart: Chapter 12 Making History Come Alive

- Read pages 314–320 of [Chapter 12 \("Making History Come Alive"\)](#)

List: Strategies for Teaching Time, Continuity, and Change

As you read, fill out this four-column in your journal.

- In the first column, create a list of topics that you could use to teach about time, continuity, and change.
- In the second column of the chart, list a strategy that you could use to teach the topic listed in column one.
- In column three, list artifacts that could be used with your strategy to promote analysis of change, continuity, and time in society's values, traditions, and ways of life.
- In column four, briefly describe a learning activity that could be used with your strategy to promote the analysis of change, continuity, and time in society's values, traditions, and ways of life.

People, Places, and Environment

Have you ever been driving and suddenly realized that you were not sure of where you were because a landmark that you were used to was gone or changed? The study of geography is more than studying maps. Geography helps students learn that geographical systems and features influence human populations, and human populations impact the environment.

Read: Humans Interact With the Environment

After reading the following section in Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies material, write a lesson objective and describe a learning activity task that would help students explore the positive and negative consequences of humanity's interaction with the environment. The learning task could be any activity, discussion, or other mode of participation that allows students to develop, practice, and apply skills and knowledge related to the stated learning objective.

- "Exploring our Geographic World" on pages 275–281 of [Chapter 11 \("Exploring our Geographic World"\)](#)



Create: Citizens and the Environment

Read the following resources:

- "Service Learning as Citizenship" on pages 35–41 of [Chapter 2 \("Children in a Democracy: Teaching and Learning Responsible Citizenship"\)](#)
- [iCivics](#)
- [PBS Teachers](#)
- [Center for Civic Education](#)

Using the following document, design a service learning activity that helps students learn how to improve the environment:

- "[Activity Design Template](#)"

Individual Development and Identity

Through social studies, students study how personal development occurs in social and cultural contexts and influences identity formation. This theme also focuses on helping students become intentional about their own values, and inform their choices with knowledge of their family, community and the larger world. In examining this theme, teachers should explore the community assets, or common backgrounds and experiences that students bring to the classroom. For example, teachers should learn about where students live or have lived, resources available in the community, local landmarks, and community events and practices that could be relevant to the curriculum.

Describe: Social Studies Strategies

Explore the material listed below:

Read this brief description of [Culturally Responsive Instruction](#), on the *Kentucky Department of Education* website.

Peruse the physical elements of a culturally responsive classroom and watch a master teacher lead a culturally responsive 4th grade classroom in this [video](#).

Read "[Stages of Multicultural Curriculum Transformation](#)", on the *Critical Multicultural Pavilion* website.

Explore the lesson plan "[Not 'Indians,' Many Tribes: Native American Diversity](#)", on the *Edsitement!* website

Explore the lesson plan "[Musical Chairs Human Rights Essay](#)", on the *Discover Human Rights* website

Read Marsha Rakestraw's blog entry, "[What Assumptions are We Making about Our Students' Experiences?](#)" on the *Institute for Humane Education* website.



In your journal, answer the following questions:

- What cultures are you aware of in your community?
- What are the five stages of Multicultural Curriculum Transformation?
- Have you considered how ecology and environment have influenced the development of culture?
- Do you believe teaching human rights can enhance students' respect for one another? If so, how?

What assumptions should you avoid making in the classroom about your students' experiences and values?

Complete the following:

- In your notebook describe a culturally responsive learning activity that will support a student's formation of individual identity in relation to other students in a geographical setting.
- Describe how the activity is culturally responsive.
- Explain how your activity allows student to use their personal experiences and prior knowledge to explore a geographic skill or concept.

Individuals, Groups and Institutions

How many groups and institution have you belonged to in your lifetime? Each of the formal and informal political, economic, and social organizations that you have participated in have played an integral role in your social values, your thinking patterns, your social groups, your personal values, and your principles.

Through social studies, students are introduced to institutions and analyze how they function, how they meet the needs of people, and how they contribute to the shared objectives of a society.

Summarize: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

Read the following document from the University of Iowa's Center for Teaching:

- ["Classroom Structures Which Encourage Student Participation"](#)

Select three structures from this document and explain how you would use the structures to have your students explore the following questions:

- What groups am I a part of?
- Why am I part of a particular group?
- What are my responsibilities to the group?
- How am I influenced by societal establishments?
- What is my responsibility for institutional change?

Power, Governance, and Authority

Elementary students develop concepts of fairness and order through their interactions with



other students and adults. They also begin to understand complex notions of power and authority by exploring big events and developments through individual human stories. In this theme, students become aware that government may provide a structure through which rights and responsibilities can be fulfilled. These complex ideas provide great opportunities for teachers to encourage inquiry while allowing students opportunities to develop their own questions to investigate, and to create plans to seek information about their questions.

Read: Local, State and National Government

Review the following resources:

- ["Outline a Strategy Template"](#)
- ["Three-Step Interview Strategy Example"](#)
- "Political Science" on pages 79 and 95–96 of [Chapter 4 \("Setting and Achieving Social Studies Standards"\)](#)
- [page 374 of Appendix \("Standards Sampler"\)](#)
- ["Strategies to Teach Social Studies"](#)

Complete the following activity:

- Identify three strategies that actively engage students in exploring the topics of power, governance and authority.

Design: Citizen and Government Relationships Activity

Explore the following:

- ["Powerful and Purposeful Teaching and Learning in Elementary School Social Studies"](#)

Review the document "[Activity Design Example](#)" to identify features of a learning task or activity that engages students to develop, practice, and apply skills and knowledge related to a specific learning goal. Learning tasks may be scaffolded to connect prior knowledge to new knowledge. Then use the document "[Activity Design Template](#)" to design your own learning activity that allows students to investigate and identify relationships between citizens and the government.

Production, Distribution, and Consumption

Like most people, you have probably wanted something that wasn't available or you couldn't afford it. One way or another, our wants tend to exceed limited resources. In this section, students are introduced to the idea that there are unequal distributions of assets that require systems of trade to maintain the well-being of the market—the study of economics. Students learn about economics as they explore economic choices and consequence and compare their level of understanding with others.

Read and Search: Resources for Teaching About Economics

Read the following section of *Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies*:

- "Economics" on pages 87–89 of [Chapter 4 \("Setting and Achieving Social Studies Standards"\)](#)



- [Pages 374–380 of Appendix \("Standards Sampler"\)](#)
- ["Strategies to Teach Social Studies"](#)

Complete the following:

- Identify key concepts to teach about economics.
- Search the Internet for five resources for learning experiences that investigate the relationship between people and resources. Write down the resources in your journal.
- Next to each resource, write a strategy that you might use to include the resources in a lesson activity.
- Briefly explain your idea for the learning experience.

Science, Technology, and Society

How often do you use your tablet, laptop, or cell phone? Having access to so much technology, can you imagine life without it? Scientific progress and technology have influenced human existence over centuries, and modern life would be vastly different without the complex technologies that have been developed. In this topic, students explore how technology creates social change and influences societies.

Read and List: Science-Technology-Society Strategies

Review the following web pages:

- ["Examination of the Science-Technology-Society \(STS\) Approach to the Curriculum"](#)
- ["What is STS ?"](#)
- ["Significance of Chemistry to Society "](#)
- ["Strategies to Teach Social Studies"](#)

Complete the following:

- List three to five strategies for teaching and learning about science technology and society
- Describe how the strategies promote learning about science, technology, and society.

Global Connections

There was a time when it took months for news to reach across the nation. Today news spreads instantaneously—as events are happening. Within the global connection theme, students are exposed to various media and first-hand experiences to learn how events that take place in one part of the world impact other locations of the world. To help student develop a better understanding of global connections, they should have opportunities to examine and explore global connections, issues, and concerns.

Organize: Local, National, and International News

Read the following resources to complete this activity:

- "The Meaning of Citizenship: A Global Perspective" on pages 45–47 [Chapter 2 \("Children in a Democracy: Teaching and Learning Responsible Citizenship"\)](#)
- "Current Events" on page 168 of [Chapter 7 \("Successful Strategies for Social Studies](#)



[Teaching and Learning"\)](#)

- "Current Events" on page 208 of [Chapter 8 \("Assessing Social Studies Learning"\)](#)
- "Current Events" on page 330 of [Chapter 12 \("Making History Come Alive"\)](#)
- [page 379 of Appendix \("Standards Sampler"\)](#)
- ["Strategies to Teach Social Studies"](#)
- [Teaching Social Studies](#)

Complete the following:

- List strategies for teaching about global connections.
- List a topic for a lesson that would include global, national and local connections.
- Describe a strategy you would use to create a learning experience that highlights different perspectives of the topic.

Civic Ideals and Practices

"You don't have the right to do that!" is a common statement made by individuals when they don't like something that has happened. However, such statements may not reflect an understanding of the rights of citizens in a democracy.

Students need to become familiar with civic ideals and practices in the United States and in other countries throughout the world. Students learn best when they have experience participating in community service and engaging in political activities. Community and political experience provides opportunity for students to explore civic ideals and practices.

Read and List: Strategies for Teaching Civics

Review the following section from *Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies*: "[Civic Ideals and Practices](#)" on page 379 of Appendix ("Standards Sampler")

Complete the following:

- Write the order that the items on in "Civic Ideals and Practices" should be taught.
- Next to each item on the list, briefly explain a strategy you could use to teach about civic ideals and practices.

Student Project Part 1

- Begin Elementary Social Studies Methods: Task 1, Part A in Taskstream:

For details about this student project, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.

Promoting Research and Learning in Social Studies

Children often see social studies as irrelevant to their lives because they think of social studies as predominantly history. Excite students to the world around them by creating an inquiry-based culture in the classroom. Through research, you can help students learn that social studies addresses issues in real peoples' lives and their relationships to the world around them.

Research in Social Studies

Children like to touch, to explore, and to ask why. In integrating inquiry in classroom activities,



students can be introduced to artifacts, primary documents, text-based documents, images, recordings, interviews, charts, statistics, and maps. The research process not only teaches students to explore the topics of social studies and their "big" questions, but it also teaches problem solving, critical thinking, and decision making.

Participate: Planning an Inquiry-Based Social Studies Unit

Complete the following simulation:

- [Inquiry at Afeni Davis Elementary](#)

After you have completed the simulation, complete the following:

- Write your own definition of inquiry without consulting any resources. When you are finished, compare your definition of inquiry to the one on page 227 of [chapter 9 \("Inquiry, Discovery, and Problem Solving: Children as Researchers"\)](#).
- Describe three methods you could use to promote inquiry in your own classroom.

Describe: Research Strategies

Read the following:

- "Four Types of Inquiry Research" on pages 232–245 of [Chapter 9 \("Inquiry, Discovery, and Problem Solving: Children as Researchers"\)](#)
- ["Direct Instruction in Skillful Thinking in Fifth Grade History"](#) in the WGU Library E-Reserves

As you read, complete the following:

- List four types of inquiry research with a brief description for each.
- Explain how you would teach students to evaluate the reliability of different historical sources. Provide an example of how you might teach this skill in second grade and in sixth grade.

Create: Primary Document Analysis Lesson

Visit the following web pages:

- ["Using Primary Sources"](#)
- ["Primary Source Sets"](#)
- [Visual Image Analysis Guide](#)
- [Written Document Analysis Guide](#)

Complete the following:

- Select a primary source for a classroom lesson from the "Primary Source Sets" page.
- Read the teacher's guide for the type of source you selected and determine how you would have your students analyze the primary source. Select specific questions you



would ask your students.

Evaluate: Effective Strategies

Read the following lesson about tenement life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in New York City, on the Tenement Museum website:

- Tenement Life [Primary Source Activity Lesson Plan Appropriate for Elementary School](#)

As you read, write an evaluation of this lesson in your journal and identify how it does or does not meet the following criteria:

- uses research strategies for supporting social studies learning
- uses strategies that help student evaluate the reliability of different historical sources for specified purposes
- uses effective strategies for teaching students to apply specified common methods of a historian in a given situation
- uses activities that help students compare divergent recounting of the same event
- uses strategies that support students' ability to analyze points of view

Then complete the following:

- Explain how you could modify this lesson plan to include the missing elements and meet the above criteria.
- Present a plan to help students defend an interpretation of an historical or social event based on evidence from multiple sources.

Refer to the following chapters to complete the activity:

- [Chapter 2 \("Children in a Democracy: Teaching and Learning Responsible Citizenship"\)](#)
- [Chapter 9 \("Inquiry, Discovery, and Problem Solving: Children as Researchers"\)](#)
- [Chapter 7 \("Successful Strategies for Social Studies teaching and Learning"\)](#)

Culture and Diversity in the Classroom

The United States continues to become a more diverse nation, and there has never been a greater need for people to live civilly and respectfully together. In classrooms, it is important to teach anti-bias lessons early so that instead of fearing differences, students learn to appreciate diversity. Teachers should learn about and acknowledge the cultural assets that their students bring to the classroom and encourage students to share their traditions, language, literature, art, and views with the class. These activities will help teachers to build their rapport with the students and will also encourage students to build rapport with each other by developing a deeper understanding of each other's feelings and ideas. The more students understand that diversity contributes to broader knowledge and skill development in our country, the more they will accept diversity as integral to progressive societies.

Culture and Diversity

A teacher who is sensitive to cultural change will produce students better prepared to live in



global communities. There are numerous ways teachers can develop balanced educational experiences for your students. Bringing in artifacts to the classroom, sharing what is happening globally, and making connections between global occurrences and local occurrences help students make connections and develop an understanding of culture and diversity.

Identify: Diverse Groups: Objective 1

As you review the following section from *Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies*:

"Cultural Sensitivity in Social Studies Curricula" on pages 58–64 of [Chapter 3 \("Social Studies and Diversity in America"\)](#), complete the following:

- Search the Internet for diverse groups or associations within your community or state.
- List eight to ten diverse groups within your community or state.
- Determine how the groups you identified reflect cultural diversity.
- Describe an instructional strategy that would help students develop positive connections with diverse groups in their community.

Compare and Contrast: Lesson Plan

Read the following lessons:

- ["Teaching Tolerance - The Sneetches"](#)
- [One World, One Heart Beating > "What Can We Learn from a Box of Crayons?"](#)

After reviewing the lessons, answer the following questions:

- What is the same in how diversity is presented in these lessons?
- What is different in how diversity is presented in these lessons?
- Do they both reflect sensitivity to diversity to the same extent? Explain.
- Which lesson would you prefer to teach? Why?
- Reflect briefly on your feelings about teaching diversity lessons?

Integrating Curriculum

Integrating curriculum is not a new or novel methodology for teaching. The world students live in is interdisciplinary. Integration is a curriculum approach that decisively draws together knowledge, perceptions, and inquiry methods of more than one content area to develop a more powerful realization of an essential idea, issue, person, or event. The intention is not to eliminate individual content areas but to use them in combination one connecting to the other. Social studies blurs disciplinary boundaries in ways that encourage social understanding and civic effectiveness; it integrates knowledge, skills, and character with genuine action. In everyday classroom activities you can integrate various subjects into the social studies to create a holistic learning experience.

Strategies and Activities for Social Studies

Integrating curriculum is not a new or novel methodology for teaching. Integration is a curriculum approach that decisively draws together knowledge, perceptions, and inquiry methods of more than one content area to develop a more powerful realization of an essential



idea, issue, person, or event. Teachers can utilize students' prior academic learning and skills to enhance understandings of new information. Teachers should also try to learn more about the personal and community assets of students to learn how a students' interests, knowledge, and prior experiences can enhance understanding of stated learning goals. The intention is not to eliminate individual content areas but to use them in combination—one connecting to the other.

Interpret: Project-Based Learning

Watch [Five Keys to Rigorous Project-Based Learning](#) on the [Edutopia](#) website.

In your journal, answer the following questions:

- What is project-based learning (PBL)?
- Why introduce real-world problems to students?
- What is a good problem?
- What are the five keys of PBL?
- How does PBL promote integrated content?

Watch and Reflect: Learning Centers

Watch the following videos. As you watch, describe in your notebook how the teachers prepared for instruction and used comprehension strategies:

- [Reading Lesson: Beginning Stages of Cause and Effect](#)
- [Literacy Centers: Developing Skills in Reading and Writing](#)

In your journal, answer the following questions:

- How does implementing the learning center strategy in social studies build background knowledge and experience for students?
- How does the use of learning centers promote social studies integration with other subjects?

Read: Methods and Strategies

Read the following from *Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies*:

Pages 84–85 of [Chapter 4 \("Setting and Achieving Social Studies Standards"\)](#)

Explain each of the following and describe how teachers can help students acquire these skills:

- adaptability and resilience
- initiative taking
- self-regulation and goal setting
- independent learning
- structuring knowledge
- collaboration with teams
- utilizing various methods of inquiry

Create: Integrated Learning Activity



Review the examples of integrated lessons in the sections from Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies listed below. Design a learning activity that supports social studies inquiry within the language arts or mathematics curriculum.

- "[Activity Design Template](#) "
- "Significant Themes for Integration" on pages 264–273 of [Chapter 10 \("Social studies and the Integrated Curriculum"\)](#)

Design: Unit

Read pages 137–149 in *Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies* and review the following websites on unit plan designing:

- "[How to Plan a Unit of Study](#)"
- "[Step-by-step Unit Design Guide](#)"
- "[Designing Multidisciplinary Integrated Curriculum Units](#)"
- "[Concept to Classroom](#) "

As a teacher, you will be required to teach the state standards, which are designed to meet the national standards. Complete the following steps to plan a culture and diversity unit:

- Look at the national themes and identify one that could be used in an integrated unit of study.
- Identify an academic content area other than social studies that could be integrated with the social studies theme.
- Outline a lesson segment based on your chosen theme that integrates social studies with the other academic content areas.
- Write an objective for each content area.
- List your primary resources.
- List the technology that you will use.
- Outline what the integrated plan will look like for each of the three content areas.

Student Project

Now that you have learned about standards, goals, outcomes and themes, it's time to start thinking about the learning segment or unit you will be designing. Your unit should have a central focus, which means you must include a description of the important understandings and core concepts that you want students to develop within the learning segment. The central focus should go beyond a list of facts and skills, align with content standards and learning objectives, and address the subject-specific components.

First review what we have covered so far:

- [Social Studies Unit Design](#)

Next, access details about your student project under the "Assessment" tab in this course.



Read the task description and review the rubric in Taskstream to see how what you have been learning will be applied to creating your unit.

Learning Environments to Promote Social Studies

Students in elementary school spend over 900 hours per year in the classroom and school. Organizing the space within the classroom to provide students access to information and artifacts that are rich in social studies concepts does much more than just make the room attractive and appealing, it forms incidental knowledge and helps build a sense of community among the students.

Learning Environments

Research substantiates that physical environments influence academic learning and also behavior. Students like to touch objects, and the most effective elementary classrooms provide students with visual and tactile stimuli that allow for interaction and exploration. Link the physical environment of your classroom to learning goals so that your classroom learning environment becomes part of learning processes.

Read: Field Trip Safety

Review the following web page. Take notes on how to plan and conduct field trips that support learning:

- "[Why Take Field Trips?](#)"

Interview: Field Trip Safety

Set up an interview with a principal at a local school. During your interview ask the following questions:

- What are the school's guidelines for planning field trips?
- What permission slips do teachers send home to the parents or guardians?
- What are the school's guidelines for safety in the classroom and for field trip safety?

In your journal, list insights you gained from this experience. Describe how what you learned will influence classroom and fieldtrip safety.

Design: A Social Studies Classroom

As you read "[Designing Classroom Spaces to Maximize Social Studies Learning](#)", complete the following in your journal:

- Sketch out what your classroom for 30 elementary students might look like.
- Identify the environmental design components in your classroom that engage and motivate students regarding the social studies curriculum.

Explain: Differentiation through Learning Centers

As you watch [Module 2: Principles of Differentiated Instruction, Topic F: Planning Differentiated Lessons: Content – Process – Product](#) from *Educational Impact: A Guide to Differentiated Instruction*, complete the following in your journal:



- Explain how to differentiate content.
- Identify one activity that allows you to differentiate content, process, and product.
- Write a brief description for the following concepts:
 - learning centers
 - flexible grouping
 - adjusted questions
 - learning contracts
 - tiered activities

Create: Learning Centers

Create a table with four columns in which you do the following:

- List five to ten social studies topics that could be used in learning centers.
- Identify a grade level for each topic.
- Provide a brief explanation of how each topic in the list would be used in a learning center strategy.

Student Project Part 3

- Begin Elementary Social Studies Methods: Task 1, Parts B1, B2, and B2a in [Taskstream](#):

For details about this student project, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.

Assessment

Assessment should be a natural and ongoing part of the curricular process. Assessments can be informal, such as daily questions teachers ask to check for understanding, or formal, such as planned and administered assessments. Assessments are used for planning instruction, diagnosing learning difficulty, and for identifying interventions to improve learning.

Various types of assessments can be used in social studies, including objective assessments, performance assessments, portfolios, and projects. Assessments used in social studies should align with curriculum goals, learning objectives, and standards. All assessments should be fair and unbiased for all students.

Create: Assessment Table

As you read the material listed below, create a table that has two columns. Complete the following:

- Label the first column "formal strategies," and the second column "informal strategies."
- Under each column list assessment strategies used in social studies.

Read the following section from *Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies*:

- "Assessing Assessment: Why Is It Important" on pages 211–216 of [Chapter 8](#) ("[Assessing Social Studies Learning](#)")

Choose: Formative and Summative Assessments



For each of the following objectives, identify whether a formative or summative (final) assessment would be best to assess learning.

- Students will identify all fifty states and capitals in the United States.
- Students will locate and identify where four Civil War battles took place using a blank map of the USA.
- Students will compare two separate cultures within the local community.
- Students will summarize a speech given by Malcolm X.
- Students will predict how technology will change the automobile industry in the next ten years.

To complete this activity, review the following section from *Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies*:

- "An Overview of Assessment" on pages 199–210 of [Chapter 8 \("Assessing Social Studies Learning"\)](#)

Explain: Using Data to Inform Teaching

Watch the following video:

- [Module 2: Topic B Powerful Case Studies: Using Data to Increase Student Achievement \(Educational Impact: Assessment for Learning\)](#)

Then, complete the following in your journal.

- Write one to two paragraphs that explain how to use assessment data to differentiate student instruction in social studies.
- Identify strategies that you might use from the video or prior readings that include student participation and self-assessment.

Technology

Incorporating technology in the classroom is a great way to increase a student's interest in learning. There are numerous ways that you can use technology in the classroom. Some districts use smart boards instead of more traditional whiteboards or chalkboards. Many classrooms today have built-in audio and video equipment that teachers can use to bring their lessons to life in the classroom.

Other technologies used in classrooms may include computers and tablets, computer software, online resources, smartphones, cameras, opaque projectors, MP3 players, digital readers, email and blogs, and so forth. How will you determine when a technology adds to learning or distracts from learning? In what ways will you include technology to improve student performance?

Read: Technology Resources for the Classroom

Read the following sections from *Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies* and take notes in your notebook on the ways that these technologies could be used to teach about social studies. Provide three examples of how you can utilize each technology in classroom activities:



- "Computer Simulations" on pages 181–183 of [Chapter 7 \("Successful Strategies for Social Studies Teaching and Learning "\)](#)
- "Media Literacy" on pages 357–358 of [Chapter 13 \("Social Studies and the Literacy Connection"\)](#)

Students with Exceptional Needs

Teachers in elementary classrooms commonly face the challenge of having to adapt the curriculum to reach all of the students in the classroom, many of whom have unique learning needs. For example,

- students with disabilities may need instructional accommodations to allow them to access the general curriculum,
- students who are learning English may need support that allows them to acquire the academic vocabulary necessary for school success, and
- students with gifts and talents may need supplemental activities to match instruction with their interest and abilities.

Effective teachers identify students' instructional needs and differentiate and adapt instruction to facilitate learning.

Social Studies for Students with Exceptional Needs

There are different approaches for meeting students' instructional needs. Teachers can differentiate and modify instruction as well as provide instructional accommodations for students. In this topic, you will learn how to plan and adapt instruction that meets students' instructional needs.

List: Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners

Read the following articles and list three to five strategies that could be used to promote language and vocabulary development within the social studies content:

- ["English Language Learners: A Policy Research Brief"](#)
- ["Strategies for Making Social Studies Texts More Comprehensible for English-Language Learners"](#)

Create: Speaking and Listening Strategies

Read the following and brainstorm what reading, writing, and speaking strategies could be incorporated in lessons to increase opportunities for students to interact and develop speaking and listening skills:

- "Experience and Discussion" on pages 349–351 of [Chapter 13 \("Social Studies and the Literacy Connection"\)](#)
- Pages 9–18 of ["Science and Social Studies with Students with Disabilities"](#)

Adapt: Accommodations and Modifications

Study the examples provided in ["Adapting Social Studies for the Inclusive Classroom"](#) and complete the following:



- List one accommodation and one modification for a social studies lesson.
- Explain how you would implement the accommodation and modification, while keeping the student's needs confidential.

Evaluate: Assessments

Read the following section *Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies*:

- Figure 8.4 ("An Assessment Activity Using Graphics and Multiple Choice Questions") on page 220 of [Chapter 8 \("Assessing Social studies Learning"\)](#)

Complete the following:

- Evaluate how effective this assessment would be for assessing social studies learning for students who are English language learners.
- Identify areas in which an English language learner may encounter difficulties with the assessment.
- Identify and explain specific areas of the assessment that accommodations or modifications could be made for English language learners.
- Describe the modifications or accommodations that you would make and explain why you selected the modifications or accommodations.

Develop: Assessment Construction

Read the following sections of *Teaching and Learning Elementary Social Studies*:

- "Integrated Assessment Strategies" on pages 202–217 of [Chapter 8 \("Assessing Social Studies Learning"\)](#)
- Figure 8.4 ("An Assessment Activity Using Graphics and Multiple Choice Questions") on page 220 of [Chapter 8 \("Assessing Social studies Learning"\)](#)

Apply what you know about assessments and information to complete the following:

- Develop an assessment that provides alternatives that support learners with exceptional needs in your notebook.
- What type of assessment will you use?
- What types of questions will you use?
- What types of non-verbal clues will you provide?
- What additional support will be given during the assessment time?

Student Project Part 4

Complete the following in [Taskstream](#):

- Elementary Social Studies Methods: Task 1, Parts C1, C2, and C3
- Complete any unfinished elements in Elementary Social Studies Methods: Task 1

For details about this student project, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.



Final Steps

Congratulations on completing the activities in this course! This course has prepared you to complete the assessments associated with this course. If you have not already been directed to complete the assessments, schedule and complete your assessments now.