

Essential Social Studies Skills

Civics and Government:

- **Civic knowledge:** A level of understanding of the principles that underlie the American system of government, the structure, purpose, and actual functioning of the Texas and U.S. governments, and the ways that the American government differs from those elsewhere.
- **Civics skills:** The skills that are essential to engaged and responsible citizenship, including the ability to weigh evidence, read closely, understand conflicting perspectives, and make evidence-based arguments.
- **Civic dispositions:** The qualities of mind and character that are necessary for this country's system of government to effectively function. These include the values of tolerance, empathy, and open-mindedness; respect for complexity, nuance and differing perspectives; and a willingness to engage in respectful dialogue.

Culture and History:

- **Chronological thinking:** The ability to distinguish between past, present, and future and to be able to place historical phenomena in the order in which they occurred.
- **Contextualization:** The ability to connect historical events and processes to specific circumstances of time and place
- **Historical research skills:** The ability to locate and assess sources of historical information, including the ability to distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
- **Historical analysis and interpretation:** The ability to evaluate and analyze historical sources and historical evidence and to interpret the causes, consequences, and significance of historical events.
- **Historical thinking:** The ability to recognize, analyze, and evaluate the dynamics of continuity and change over time. Historical thinking involves understanding that historical events seldom result from single causes but instead from multiple causes working in complex combinations; and that these events are often contingent upon accident, chance, and circumstances.
- **Historical argumentation:** The ability to formulate a meaningful historical question, identify evidence that helps to answer that question, and construct an evidence-based argument that takes account of conflicting interpretations.

Economics and Personal Finance

- **Economic concepts:** The ability to define and apply key economic ideas and principles.
- **Economic thinking:** The ability to compare the costs of a particular action with its likely benefits.
- **Financial management:** The ability to budget, invest, borrow money in an informed and responsible manner.

Geography and Environment

- **Geographic Terminology:** The ability to use geographical terms correctly. These include terms related to landforms, topography, weather, climate and climatic events, and cartography (e.g. orientation, scale, and latitude and longitude).
- **Geographical Location and Context:** The ability to physically locate a place, event, or social phenomenon and to discuss the characteristics and significance of that location.
- **Geographical Presentation:** The ability to organize and display geographical information (for example, on a map, a chart, or graph).
- **Geographical Thinking:** The ability to assess, analyze, and interpret geographical information and to use that information to construct generalizations, solve problems, form judgments, and make decisions. Examples of geographical questions include:
 - What is the potential social and environmental impact of proposed project or development?
 - How have humans altered particular geographical environments?
 - What is the impact of the landscape, topography, and resources on the inhabitants, economy, and ways of life of a particular location?

Kindergarten: Foundations for Learning

Civics and Government

- Civic knowledge: Students should be familiar with the nation's civic holidays, symbols, landmarks, and traditions
- Civic dispositions: Students should know the value of good citizenship inside and outside school.

Culture and History

- Chronological thinking: Students should be able to put events in their own lives and their family's life in temporal order.
- Historical thinking: Students should be able to distinguish between fact and fiction.
- Contextualization: Students should understand that our holidays and celebrations are rooted in past events.

Economics and Finance

- Economic concepts: Students should know the kinds of jobs people perform inside and outside the home.

Geography and Environment

- Students should be able to identify the location of their city, state, and country on a map and globe.
- Students should be familiar with their locality's climate and geography.
- Students should be introduced to the concepts of north, south, east, and west.

Maps

- Students should be able to draw a simple map illustrating the layout of their school.
- Students should be able to identify the location of their city, state, and country on a map or globe.

1st Grade: My Family, My Community, My State, and My Country

Civics and Government

- Civic Knowledge:
 - 1st graders should understand the diverse traditions of Americans and the state and nation's landmarks, traditional songs and folklore, symbols, and landmarks.
- Civics Skills:
 - 1st graders should understand the concepts of diversity and unity, and how it is possible for people to be simultaneously many and one.
- Civic Dispositions:
 - 1st graders should learn the values of good citizenship inside and outside of school, including respect for rules and the opinions of others, and a commitment to honesty and fair play.

Culture and History

- Chronological thinking:
 - Students should be able to place major events in the nation's history in chronological sequence.
 - Students should be able to apply such words as past, present, and future and before and after correctly.
 - Students should be able to describe differences and similarities in life in the past and present.
- Contextualization:
 - Students should understand the backstory of the nation's symbols, holidays, and celebrations.

Economics and Finance

- Economic concepts:
 - Students should understand the difference between needs and wants.
 - Students should understand the concept of money and the forms that money can take.
- Financial management
 - Students should understand the kinds of jobs that people perform to earn money.

Geography and Environment

- Geographic terminology:
 - Students should understand the meaning of the words near and far, north, south, east, and west, and the names of major bodies of water and land masses.
- Geographical location and context:
 - Students should understand how people's lives are influenced by their environment, weather, and climate and the natural resources that are available in their region.
- Geographical presentation:
 - Students should be able to draw simple maps in which they locate particular cities, states, and countries as well as major land masses, bodies of water, and mountain ranges.
- Geographical thinking:
 - Students should be able to explain how people adapt to very different environments and climates.

2nd Grade: Our Diversity and Our Shared Traditions and Heritage

Civics and Government

- Civic Knowledge: Students should understand the diversity of the American people and also their shared traditions, customs, symbols, and landmarks.
- Civics Skills: Students should understand that people can have different customs, religions, and beliefs, and yet still be Americans.
- Civic Dispositions: 1st graders should learn the value of tolerance and mutual respect.

Culture and History

- Chronological thinking:
 - Students should understand when and from where various groups of people came to the United States.
- Historical Research Skills
 - Students should read age-appropriate books and articles that describe the diversity of Americans.
- Historical Thinking:
 - Students should understand that the American people can be both diverse and united, a concept that is expressed in the traditional motto of the United States, *E Pluribus Unum*.
- Contextualization:
 - Students should understand the backstory of the various groups of people that have come to the United States, and the struggles and hardships they experienced.

Economics and Finance

- Economic concepts:
 - Students should understand the difference between needs and wants.
 - Students should understand the concept of money and the various forms that money can take.
- Financial management
 - Students should understand the kinds of jobs that people perform to earn money.
 - Students should understand the various forms that money can take.
 - Students should understand the function of banks.
 - Students should recognize that they must make choices in spending money and can't spend more money than they have.
 - Students should understand the concepts of price, saving and spending, consumers and producers, and goods and services.

Geography and Environment

- Geographic terminology:
 - Students should understand the meaning of the words used to describe various environments (e.g. continents, hemispheres, oceans, lakes, rivers, ponds, cities, states, the equator), weather events (e.g. hurricanes and tornadoes), climates (e.g. tropical, temperate, polar), and landforms (mountains, deserts, valleys).
- Geographical location and context:
 - Students should understand how people adapt to different environments.
- Geographical presentation:

- Students should be able to draw simple maps in which they identify the countries or continents that Americans come from.
- Geographical thinking:
 - Students should be able to explain how geography influences the kinds of economic activities of a particular region.

3rd Grade: People Who Left a Mark on Texas, the Nation, and the World

Civics and Government

- Civic Knowledge: Students should learn about people who made a difference and left the world a better place.
- Civics Skills: Students should learn the importance of human agency, the ability of individuals improve society, increase knowledge, and contribute to the arts through their own efforts and creativity.
- Civics Dispositions: Students should understand the skills associated with leadership and inventiveness, including grit, determination, tenacity, integrity, creativity, and hard work.

Culture and History:

- Chronological thinking: Students should be able to locate the people they study in a particular historical era.
- Contextualization: Students should be able to describe what life was like at the time that the person they study was alive.
- Historical research skills: Students should be able to locate books or articles about the people they study.
- Historical analysis and interpretation: Students should be able to explain these individuals' qualities, accomplishments, and significance.

Economics and Personal Finance

- Economic concepts: Students should understand concepts associated with economic success, including demand, entrepreneurship, risk-taking, and management.
- Economic thinking: Students should understand the importance of seeing problems and needs as opportunities.

Geography and Environment

- Geographical Location and Context: Students should understand where the people they study came from and lived and what their environment was like.
- Geographical Presentation: Students should be able to locate the people they study on a map.
- Geographical Thinking: Students should ask how context may have contributed to this person's success.

4th Grade: Texas: Its People, Geography, Economies, and History

Civics and Government

- Civic knowledge: Students should be able to explain Texas's symbols, landmarks, geographical regions, and flags, and the cultural groups that make up the Texas population.
- Civics skills: Students should be able to research aspects of Texas's history and the state today.
- Civic dispositions: Students should be familiar with individuals and groups that have worked to make Texas a fairer and more just state.

Culture and History:

- Chronological thinking: Students should be able to place the major events and developments in Texas history in chronological sequence.
- Contextualization: Students should be able to locate prominent figures from Texas's past in their historical circumstances.
- Historical research skills: Students should be able to research a topic in Texas history.
- Historical analysis and interpretation: Students should be able to describe the debates surrounding controversial episodes in Texas's past.
- Historical thinking: Students should be able to discuss the causes of landmark events in Texas history.
- Historical argumentation: Students should be able to draw upon evidence to address a historical question about Texas.

Economics and Personal Finance

- Economic concepts: Students should learn be able to describe entrepreneurship, jobs, bankruptcy, competition, opportunity costs, specialization, resource allocation, and comparative advantage, and what makes a business successful.
- Economic thinking: Students should understand how Texas's economy has changed over time and describe the Texans whose innovations altered the state and the nation's economies.

Geography and Environment

- Geographic Terminology: Students should be able to identify and locate terms associated with the geography of Texas, including Panhandle, the Rio Grande Valley, the Gulf Coast, the Piney Woods, and the Hill Country.
- Geographical Location and Context: Students should be able to identify the regions of Texas and their natural resources.
- Geographical Presentation: Students should be able to draw a map illustrating Texas's cities, regions, and topography.
- Geographical Thinking: Students should be able to explain how Texans have adapted to, taken advantage of, and altered various physical environments.

5th Grade: World History to 1450

Civics and Government:

- Civic knowledge: Students should be able to familiar with the basic terms used to describe social and governmental systems in world history, including aristocracy, Caliphate, empire, monarchy, pastoralism, patriarchy, and theocracy.

Culture and History:

- Chronological thinking: Students should be able to describe the Neolithic Revolution and the discovery of agriculture, the development of metal technology, and the rise of early civilizations; the classical civilizations of China, India, and the Mediterranean and their religions and cultural achievements; the peoples and cultures of the New World; the emergence of the major world religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam their belief systems, and their influence on politics, society, and gender roles; and the importance of the Mongols.
- Historical argumentation: Students should be able to explain how and why various civilizations rose, fell, and changed over time.

Economics and Personal Finance

- Economic concepts: Students should be able to discuss the history of money and trade.
- Economic thinking: Students should be able to compare and contrast the economic systems found in various societies.

Geography and Environment

- Geographic Terminology: Students should be familiar with terms associated with world history
- Geographical Location and Context: Students should be able to locate major civilizations and trade routes on a map.
- Geographical Thinking: Students should be able to discuss the concept of cultural diffusion.

6th Grade: World History Since 1450

Civics and Government

- Civic knowledge: Students should be able to define terms associated with form of government since 1450, including absolute monarchy, constitutional monarchy, dictatorship, representative democracy, and the welfare state, and political philosophies including communism, fascism, and liberalism.
- Civics skills: Students should understand the attributes of effective political leadership citing specific examples from world history including Winston Churchill, Mahatma Gandhi, and Nelson Mandela.
- Civic dispositions: Students should compare and contrast the attitudes toward free speech and religious liberty under various systems of government.

Culture and History:

- Chronological thinking: Students should be able to organize the major events since 1450 on a timeline.
- Contextualization: Students should be able to place a major historical event or decision in its proper historical context.
- Historical research skills: Students should be able to conduct research on an important topic in world history since 1450.
- Historical analysis and interpretation: Students should compare and contrast interpretations of a major historical development or historical figure since 1450, such as Christopher Columbus, the motives and consequences of European imperialism, the causes of World War I, or the origins of the Cold War.
- Historical argumentation: Students should be able to discuss why, at various points in time, disagreements and divisions resulted in revolution and war and why compromise solutions weren't achieved.

Economics and Personal Finance

- Economic concepts: Students should be able to define terms associated with labor systems since 1450, including apprenticeship, contract labor, sharecropping, and wage labor, and terms associated with economic systems, including planned or command economy, a market economy, and a mixed economy.
- Economic thinking: Students should discuss the causes and consequences of a key economic development since 1450, such as the reasons why the Industrial Revolution began in England or why the Great Depression occurred and lasted as long as it did.

Geography and Environment

- Geographic Terminology: Students should be able to identify on a map the location of the regions and events that played pivotal roles in world history since 1450.
- Geographical Location and Context: Students should be able to locate on a map major geographical regions and events and patterns of trade and migration in world history since 1450.

- Geographical Presentation: Students should be able to illustrate on a map the Columbian exchange, the transatlantic slave trade, European colonialism and imperialism, the combatant countries and major battles of World Wars I and II.
- Geographical Thinking: Students should be able to explain:
 - How expansion, trade, war, and the encounters of various societies and cultures shaped the course of world history since 1450.
 - How geographic context influenced and shaped events.

7th Grade: Civics and Government in Texas and the United States

Civics and Government

- Civic knowledge: Students should understand the concepts of federalism, separation of power, checks and balances; the structure of government; the roles of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government; and the workings of political parties and interest groups.
- Civics skills: Students should understand how the political system tries to resolve conflicts through elections, court rulings, and a process of negotiation and compromise.
- Civic dispositions: Students should understand how the Texas and U.S. governments strive to balance majority rule and minority rights, public opinion and rule of law, and local and central government.

Culture and History:

- Chronological thinking: Students should be able to discuss the origins of the principles that underlie the Constitution and the American system of government and how this system of government has changed over time.
- Contextualization: Students should be able to explain why the Constitution was concerned with limited government and individual rights.
- Historical research skills: Students should be able to close read and interpret the nation's foundational documents.

Economics and Personal Finance

- Economic concepts: Students should be able to describe the defining characteristics of the U.S. economy, including its emphasis on private property and competition.
- Economic thinking: Students should understand the importance of economic incentives and deterrents.
- Financial management: Students should understand the ways that the government raises revenue, including through federal, state, and local taxes, income, property, and sales taxes, and tariffs.

Geography and Environment

- Geographic Terminology: Students should be able to define terms associated with the geography of the United States, such as arroyo, bog, canyon, cape, cartography, channel or strait, chapparal, cove, crater, dune, estuary, fall line, gulch, levee, peninsula, pueblo, reef, swamp, and the Mason-Dixon line.
- Geographical Location and Context: Students should be able to identify the United States's geographical regions, including the Appalachian Highlands, the Great Lakes, and the Great Plains, and geographic landmarks, including its major rivers and lakes.
- Geographical Presentation: Students should be able to map and chart maps and chart the nation's geographical expansion and the arrival of immigrants and locate key localities, mountain ranges, and regions on a map.
- Geographical Thinking: Students should understand why geography has been an important factor in American politics since the nation's founding and how the nation's political system has reinforced the importance of geography.

8th Grade: U.S. and Texas History to 1877

Civics and Government

- Civic knowledge: Students will understand the development of a distinctive American identity and of ideas about liberty and representative government prior to the Revolution, the debates and compromises that shaped the U.S. Constitution, the new nation's successes in failures in resolving ideological, partisan, and policy differences prior to the Civil War, and the ways that the Reconstruction amendments reshaped the U.S. Constitution.
- Civics skills: Students will learn about successful examples of presidential and military leadership and be able to draw conclusions about the reasons why these leaders were effective.
- Civic dispositions: Students will be familiar with the struggles to make the U.S. a more equal society.

Culture and History:

- Chronological thinking: Students will be able to place the major events of U.S. history to 1877 in chronological sequence.
- Contextualization: Students will be able to place historical decisions and attitudes into their proper historical context.
- Historical research skills: Students will closely and critically read and interpret the foundational documents of U.S. history.
- Historical analysis and interpretation: Students will be able to evaluate conflicting interpretations of major events in U.S. history including the causes of the Revolution and the Civil War and why the Patriots and the Union were able to prevail.
- Historical argumentation: Students will be able to formulate responses to key issues in U.S. history to 1877, such as:
 - Why the American colonies prospered economically despite their relatively underdeveloped technology and resources.
 - Why the colonies revolted against British rule even though by certain measures the colonists were lightly taxed and governed.
 - How the U.S. Constitution promoted economic growth.
 - Why, unlike many newly independent nations, the United States was able to establish a stable political system and prospering economy.
 - Why the U.S. economy grew rapidly in the decades before the Civil War.
 - Why the United States was unable to abolish slavery in the absence of a Civil War that left some 750,000 dead.

Economics and Personal Finance

- Economic concepts: Students should understand key economic concepts including sanctity of contracts, terms associated with finance, including stocks and bonds, and words associated with the American economic development, including mercantilism, extractive economy, infrastructure.
- Economic thinking: Students should be able to discuss about the controversies surrounding economic policy in American history, including the disputes over British mercantilism that contributed to the Revolution, debates surrounding Alexander Hamilton's financial program, disagreements over the federal tariff and the Bank of the United States, the role of economics in

the decision of the Confederate states to seceded and the Union to ultimately prevail in the Civil War, and the emergence of sharecropping in the Southern states after the Civil war.

- Financial management: Students should learn how to establish and build credit and manage their personal finances.

Geography and Environment

- Geographic Terminology: Students should be able to identify and describe the major geographical features, ecosystems, and regions of the United States.
- Geographical Presentation: Students should be able to map and explain how the geographical boundaries of the United States changed as a result of war, purchase, annexation, migration, and policies.
- Geographical Thinking: Students should be able to explain how geography influenced the course of American history before 1877; how geography shaped regional differences; and how Americans adapted to and altered the natural environment.