Teaching Social Studies in the Already Packed Elementary Classroom

KATHI RHODUS AND KATIE ELVIDGE
ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION CONTENT SPECIALISTS
Today’s Target

- Provide ideas and resources for helping K-5 teachers to infuse social studies in their already packed schedule.
- Provide tools to help teachers provide a social studies curriculum that is more than a disconnected approach.
Three Strategies:

1. Review your current reading series/curriculum for social studies connections

2. Use social studies read-alouds throughout the school day to
   - Build knowledge
   - Add information
   - Introduce a social studies unit/lesson
   - Be the foundation for a lesson/unit

3. Use Social Studies textbook/curriculum as part of the literacy block
   - Match the ELA standards to the texts
     - Informational text/Informational writing
     - Speaking and listening about texts
     - Design tasks that infuse the above standards and get at the heart of both ELA and SS standards.
Strategy #1

Review your current reading series/curriculum for social studies connections.
Wonders 1st Grade Series: Scope and Sequence

Wonders had texts that meet the following disciplinary concepts:

- Civics
- Geography
- History

Wonders did not have any texts that would help meet the economics and financial literacy standards.
Consider the following...

The Reading Series offers week long lessons based around multiple texts for 36 weeks.

- Examine the calendar.
- Examine texts – choose what works.
  - Exceptions
- Don’t let the organization of the reading series determine time needed.
With my civics, geography and history texts, additional work may be needed to fully meet the social studies standards. For example, I may need to...

- Add read alouds that coordinate with the texts and provide additional information to increase knowledge about the topic.

- Determine what types of questions should work in tandem with the text to get at the essential understandings of the standards. (ELA and Social Studies)

- Provide opportunities to discuss and write about what they are learning and address questions they still have.
## Next Steps for 1st Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplinary Concepts</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Partial</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>❌</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>❌</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>❌</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics/Financial Literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>❌</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Economics/Financial Literacy

Econ Ed at the St. Louis Fed

New York State Social Studies Resource Toolkit

https://www.stlouisfed.org/~media/education/lessons/pdf/something-special-for-me.pdf?la=en

https://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-k-12-social-studies-resource-toolkit-kindergarten
Lesson Focus

- People can satisfy their wants by saving
- Every choice has costs and benefits

Essential Questions

- Why is it important to think about costs and benefits when we make choices?
- What is the difference between costs and opportunity costs.

Illinois - SS.EC.1.1 Explain and give examples of when choices are made that something else is given up.

D2.Eco.2.K-2. Identify the benefits and costs of making various personal decisions.

Have you ever had to make a choice with more than two alternatives?
SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR ME

VERA B. WILLIAMS
Something Special for Me

1. Why is the money jar only partly full?
2. Where does the money in the jar come from?
3. What do we call money that we are keeping for later?
4. What does Rosa’s mother decide to do with the money in the jar?
1. Why did Rosa cry after they left the camping store?
2. What are Rosa’s wants?
3. What could Rosa do to help her choose how she wants to spend the money in the jar?
1. What were Rosa’s alternatives?
2. What were some positives (benefits) of each alternative?
3. What were some negatives for each alternative?
4. What is a cost of choosing the roller skates?
Opportunity Cost

When we make a choice, our opportunity cost is the second best alternative.

Costs are all of the things we give up when we make a choice.

Opportunity Cost is the second best alternative when we make a choice.
Rosa’s Birthday Choice

Best Alternative

Second Best Alternative

Third Best Alternative

Fourth Best Alternative

Rosa’s Decision
I think Rosa should choose ____________________________
so she has to give up the opportunity to choose her second
best alternative ____________________________.

Rosa’s Opportunity Cost
Rosa’s opportunity cost is ____________________________.
Something Special for Me

1. What did Rosa decide to purchase?
2. Why did Rosa choose the accordion?
3. What were Rosa’s wants?
4. How did Rosa satisfy her wants?
1. Why do we have to make choices?
2. Why is it important to think about costs and benefits when we make choices?
3. What is opportunity cost?
4. What is the difference between cost and opportunity cost?
A Decision with Three Alternatives

Julie’s Problem
Today is Julie’s birthday. Julie’s aunt gave her money so she could pick her own present. Julie wants a game, a soccer ball, and a teddy bear. Julie only has enough money for one toy. Julie has to make a choice. Julie made a decision chart to help her decide what to choose. Look at Julie’s chart. Read the positives (benefits) and negatives of each alternative.

Rank Julie’s alternatives. Write 1 below her best choice, 2 below her second-best choice, and 3 below her third-best choice.

Julie’s Decision
Circle the alternative Julie should choose.

Julie should choose this alternative because

Julie’s Opportunity Cost
Circle Julie’s opportunity cost.

How can you tell which alternative is the opportunity cost?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternatives</th>
<th>Positives (Benefits)</th>
<th>Negatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You can play inside.</td>
<td>You can’t play by yourself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You can practice for your soccer game.</td>
<td>Can’t play if it is raining.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You can sleep with it.</td>
<td>It could get dirty when you play with it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Choices Do We Make with Our Money?

Supporting Questions
1. How do families gain money?
2. What do families choose to spend money on?
3. Why do families choose to save money?

- Meets the Economics/Financial Literacy Standards (Illinois)
- Texts from ReadWorks (leveled)
- Videos/Slides/Images
Journeys had texts that meet the following disciplinary concepts:

- Civics
- All but one Geography standard
- History

Journeys is missing Economics and Financial Literacy Standards.
With my civics and history texts, my lessons/units need to...

- Add read alouds that coordinate with the texts and provide additional information to increase knowledge about the topic.

- Determine what types of questions should work in tandem with the text to get at the essential understandings of the standards. (ELA and Social Studies)

- Provide opportunities to discuss and write about what they are learning and address questions they still have.
# Next Steps for 5th Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplinary Concepts</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Partial</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civics</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics/Financial Literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Missing Geography Standard

SS.G.4.5: Compare the environmental characteristics of the United States to other world regions.

https://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-k-12-social-studies-resource-toolkit-grades-5-8
Missing Economics/Financial Literacy Standards

EC.1.5: Analyze why and how individuals, businesses, and nations around the world specialize and trade.

EC.2.5: Discover how positive incentives and negative incentives influence behavior in our nation’s economy and around the world.

EC.3.5: Determine the ways in which the government pays for the goods and services it provides.

FL.4.5: Explain that interest is the price the borrower pays for using someone else’s money.
Strategy #2: Use Read Alouds

Reading aloud is the foundation for literacy development. It is the single most important activity for reading success (Bredekamp, Copple, & Neuman, 2000).

It provides children with a demonstration of phrased, fluent reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

It reveals the rewards of reading, and develops the listener's interest in books and desire to be a reader (Mooney, 1990).

- Build background knowledge
- Add information
- Introduce a social studies unit/lesson
- Be used to create a unit/lesson
Literacy Survival Tips by Lori Oczkus: Chapter 2: “Lori’s Top 5 Surefire Strategies for Reading Aloud”

1. Read Aloud 5-7 Times a Day
   a. One Read-Aloud to Build Comprehension and Stamina (10 min)
   b. The rest are 1-3 minute “quick reads”
For Example…

SS.EC.1.K: Explain that choices are made because of scarcity (i.e. because we cannot have everything that we want).

Reinforce lesson/unit on scarcity by using a read aloud.

- Incorporate the word scarcity into your discussion of the story
- Encourage kids to continue using the word scarcity
- Word wall? Other stories? Real-world situations?
Read Aloud Resources

NCSS Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People

https://www.socialstudies.org/publications/notables
#previous

Illinois Children’s Literature Connection Book Lists

http://www.ilsocialscienceinaction.org/illinois-resources.html
Free economics and personal finance lessons and activities.

https://www.stlouisfed.org/~/media/files/education/lessons/a-chair-for-my-mother.pdf?la=en

Classroom Example
Unit Built Around Children’s Book Read Alouds

What questions do you have about this picture?
IF FIRST GRADERS CAN DO IT...

Questions They Developed:

Our Questions
- Is she nervous?
- Where are they going?
- Why does she have a book & ruler?
- Did someone throw a tomato? Who?
- Is there blood on the wall?
- What is the note in his pocket?
- Are they police officers? U.S. Marshal
- Why do they have medals?
- Why is she by herself?
- Why are the men surrounding her to protect her?
- Is she in trouble?
- Why are they ignoring her?
- Does she live in a castle?

Plans for Research:

Where can we find answers?
- internet
- Facebook
- Google
- Amazon
- Vudu
- Siri
- YouTube
- Netflix
- Phone
- Teacher
- Principal
- Look for the girl, ask her
- Ask people in town, or family
Classroom Inquiry Example

IF FIRST GRADERS CAN DO IT...

RESEARCHING & DEVELOPING MORE QUESTIONS:

TAKING ACTION:
- Writing Letters to Ruby Bridges
- Group presentations to the other 4 first grade classrooms explaining what they had learned from their inquiry.
IF FIRST GRADERS CAN DO IT...

Dear Ms. Bridges,

My name is Alex. I am in first grade. We have been learning about you. I think you were brave and nice. You helped our world. I get to go to school with everyone. Thank you for integrating our school. Did anyone say sorry? Do you still talk with Mrs. Henry? Do you have white friends now?

Yours Truly.

Jan. 19, 2017

Dear Ms. Bridges,

My name is Kiera. I am in 1st grade. We have been learning about you. I think you helped things change in the world. Brave and peaceful. You helped black people. I get to go to school and be friends with Kent. Thank you for being a black and white people be friends and change the laws. Do you still talk to Mrs. Henry?

Yours Truly.

Jan. 19, 2017
**WHAT DID THEY LEARN?**

- Students actively participated in each step of the inquiry arc.
- This unit also fulfilled a state mandate: African American History

Every public elementary school and high school shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying the events of Black History.

- The inquiry skills were used to teach the history standard:

**SS.H.2.1:** Describe individuals and groups who have shaped a significant historical change.

---

**Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science-1st Grade**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inquiry Skills</th>
<th>Developing questions and planning inquiries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constructing Essential Questions</strong></td>
<td>SL.H.2.1: Create questions to help guide inquiry about a topic with guidance from adults and/or peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Determining Helpful Sources</strong></td>
<td>SL.H.2.2: Explore facts from various sources that can be used to answer the developed questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gathering and Evaluating Sources</strong></td>
<td>SL.H.2.3: Gather information from one or two sources with guidance and support from adults and/or peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developing Claims and Using Evidence</strong></td>
<td>SL.H.2.4: Evaluate a source by distinguishing between fact and opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicating Conclusions</strong></td>
<td>SL.H.2.5: Act and answer questions about arguments and explanations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Taking Informed Action</strong></td>
<td>SL.H.2.6: Use listening, consensus building, and voting procedures to decide on and take action in their classroom.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Core Standards**

- Civic and Political Institutions  
  - SL.C.V.1.1: Explain how people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community.  
  - SL.C.V.1.2: Identify and explain how roles function in various settings, inside and outside of the school.

**Geography Standards**

- Geographic Representations: Spatial Views of the World  
  - SL.G.R.1.1: Construct and interpret maps and other representations to navigate a familiar place.

**Economics and Financial Literacy Standards**

- Economic Decision Making  
  - SL.E.D.1.1: Explain and give examples of how choices are made that something else is given up.  
  - SL.E.D.1.2: Describe the skills and knowledge needed to produce certain goods and services.

**History Standards**

- Change, Continuity, and Context  
  - SL.H.C.1.1: Create a chronological sequence of multiple events.  
  - SL.H.C.1.2: Describe individuals and groups who have shaped a significant historical change.  
  - Perspectives  
    - SL.H.P.1.1: Compare perspectives of people in the past to those of people in the present.
THAT’S NOT ALL...

- RI.1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- RI.1.3 Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
- RI.1.4 Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text ("segregate"/ "integrate")
- W.1.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.
- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
- W.1.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects.
- SL.1.2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- SL.1.3 Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

What's Next? Let Them Decide!
#3: Use social studies textbook or curriculum as part of the literacy block time.

- Standards alignment/state mandates and student learning are what determines the materials that should be used.
- It is more important to deeply learn the concepts in social studies than to cover a bunch of topics.

180 days in a school year
8 party/special occasions
3 Assemblies/fire drills
Early dismissals

160 days

440 pages
Do the questions and tasks lead to standard mastery of Social Studies?
Are there read alouds that build knowledge about the topic?
Can I locate leveled texts to use during guided reading time in my literacy block?
READWORKS
www.readworks.org

- Printable Articles
- Paired Texts
- Question Sets
- Vocabulary Activities
- eBooks
- StepReads (levels)
- Audio for All Books
- Collections for ELLs
- Web based - works across devices

- Grade Level
- Number of Words
- Lexile Level
- Vocabulary
- ELA Standards
- Related Articles

https://www.readworks.org/social-studies-reading-passages#!s0:372/q:/g:/t:/s:372/k:/cid:/pt:A/features:/staff_picks:/sel:/
Printable texts

Texts are available at five different levels, starting with 600L and ending at “Max.”

Students can also answer questions that you create without leaving the article and even take a quiz.

Text Sets: https://newsela.com/text-sets/#/featured
A to Z Reading

Social Studies

https://www.readinga-z.com/content-area-reading/social-studies/

Additional Tool

https://www.readinga-z.com/comprehension/visual-devices/

Tools to help students analyze and interpret texts that have a variety of text features.
Raz-Kids provides comprehensive leveled reading resources for students. Every eBook is available in online and mobile formats, and allows students to listen to, read at their own pace, and record themselves reading.

https://www.raz-kids.com/main/RazQuizRoom
Where can I find lessons/units to fill the gaps?
Free State Social Studies Curricula:

Louisiana Department of Education

https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/k-12-socia l-studies-resources

New York State K-12 Social Studies Resource Toolkits

https://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-k-12-social-studies-resource-toolkit
Massachusetts Model Curriculum Units

Register and then receive a link to access grade level units.

http://www.doe.mass.edu/Candl/model/files.aspx?id=A19469FFE895CC20CE72131816716785FE43F712
Grades 3 & Up

Core Knowledge history and geography curriculum materials are available for free download. New units are in development and will be added when ready.

https://www.coreknowledge.org/curriculum/download-curriculum/
This elementary Science and Social Studies curriculum does double duty: it exposes students to the core knowledge, skills and habits of thinking needed to be successful in science and social studies, while at the same time honing student’s ability to read and write about complex informational texts.

https://www.matchfishtank.org/curriculum/science-and-social-studies/

- match fishtank also has math and ELA curricula.
PBS Learning Media
Elementary Social Studies

https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/subjects/social-studies/elementary-social-studies/
Create inquiry based lessons/units.

- The inquiry process provides opportunities for students to build on their experiences, apply their skills, and express their knowledge and ideas - these are habits of lifelong learners.

Inquiry Graphics for all grade levels K-12 can be found at: http://www.ilsocialscienceinaction.org/illinois-resources.html

Thank you!

Illinois Social Studies Resources: http://www.ilsocialscienceinaction.org/

Illinois Resources for All Subject Areas: http://www.ilclassroomsinaction.org/

Contact Us:

- Kathi Rhodus – Illinois State Board of Education Content Specialist krhodus@isbe.net

- Katie Elvidge – Illinois State Board of Education Content Specialist kelvidge@isbe.net