Social Science in the 6-12 Classroom

Katie Elvidge-Social Science Content Specialist
- Standards Refresher
- Social Science in the Classroom
- Experience Classroom Activities
- Available Resources
A few reminders...

- Standards are not forcing you to change the content
- Rather, they are asking you to change the way you think about students’ roles in social science classes
  - want students to take more active role in learning process
  - asking questions, learning how to discover the answers, communicating their learning, and applying what they’ve learned by being active in their school, community, and beyond

Inquiry goes hand in hand with content – they work together to shape future citizens who can think about and solve issues.
What goals do we have for our students in the future?

- Provide students the skills they need to be functional citizens
- Students take ownership of learning to truly understand material
  - Engage them in the curriculum
- Intensified focus on understanding the why things happened and the impact of those events
  - Less focus on memorization of dates/names
  - Focus on key skills and concepts
Standards are divided into two portions that work in tandem – Inquiry Skills and Disciplinary Concepts

Inquiry skills are the method in which you accomplish your disciplinary concepts

- Divided into 3 main areas that mirror the dimensions of the C3 Framework:
  - Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries
  - Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence
  - Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action

Disciplinary Concepts are divided into 4 categories: Civics, Geography, Economics, and History

- Do not focus on memorization of facts or dates but rather work towards an understanding of more complex concepts.
- Specific content should be determined locally and reflect the state mandates

The Inquiry Skills guide HOW students should learn about the Disciplinary Concepts
These are the skills students should use...

The components of the inquiry skills, when used together, form an inquiry arc that should guide learning in the classroom.
Standards Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- based on themes and aligned to the disciplinary concepts.</td>
<td>- banded by levels of complexity rather than grade levels</td>
<td>- organized around typical course structures: history, civics, geography, economics (psychology, sociology, and anthropology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The themes are:</td>
<td>- most classrooms are comprised of a wide array of ability levels and challenges, a complexity continuum was developed to meet the varying cognitive needs of adolescents and address the range of difficulty of the standards</td>
<td>- cross-curricular integration encouraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Kindergarten: My Social World</td>
<td>- Ideally, by the end of eighth grade, students should have practiced and experienced the less, moderate, and more complex standards in preparation for high school</td>
<td>- provide overarching themes of what students should know and be able to do at the conclusion of the required high school social science courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- First Grade: Living, Learning, and Working Together</td>
<td></td>
<td>- standards provide a baseline, not a ceiling, for what all students should know and be able to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Second Grade: Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Third Grade: Communities Near and Far</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fourth Grade: Our State, Our Nation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fifth Grade: Our Nation, Our World</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is Inquiry?

- Inquiry-based learning is a complex process where students attempt to convert information into useful knowledge.
- They do this by:
  - asking questions
  - finding resources to gather information to answer questions
  - interpreting the information
  - reporting the findings
  - reflecting upon their thinking
The impact of inquiry-based instruction on student learning was presented in a 2008 Edutopia article, *Powerful Learning: Studies Show Deep Understanding Derives from Collaborative Methods* by Brigid Barron and Linda Darling-Hammond which summarized a multitude of research that has been conducted on the subject. Barron and Darling-Hammond summarize research findings into several key points:

A growing body of research has shown the following:

- Students learn more deeply when they can apply classroom-gathered knowledge to real-world problems, and when they take part in projects that require sustained engagement and collaboration.
- Active-learning practices have a more significant impact on student performance than any other variable, including student background and prior achievement.
- Students are most successful when they are taught how to learn as well as what to learn.

The full text of Darling-Hammond and Barron’s article can be found at: [https://www.edutopia.org/inquiry-project-learning-research](https://www.edutopia.org/inquiry-project-learning-research)
Why Inquiry?

- Aligns to Danielson
- Components in Domains 1, 2, & 3 can all be addressed with the use of inquiry in the classroom

Charlotte Danielson’s FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMAIN 1: Planning and Preparation</th>
<th>DOMAIN 2: The Classroom Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy</td>
<td>2a Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Content knowledge • Prerequisite relationships • Content pedagogy</td>
<td>• Teacher interaction with students • Student interaction with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b Demonstrating Knowledge of Students</td>
<td>2b Establishing a Culture for Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Child development • Learning process • Special needs • Student skills, knowledge, and proficiency • Interests and cultural heritage</td>
<td>• Importance of content • Expectations for learning and achievement • Student pride in work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c Setting Instructional Outcomes</td>
<td>2c Managing Classroom Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Value, sequence, and alignment • Clarity • Balance • Suitability for diverse learners</td>
<td>• Instructional groups • Transitions • Materials and supplies • Non-instructional duties • Supervision of volunteers and paraprofessionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources</td>
<td>2d Managing Student Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For classroom • To extend content knowledge • For students</td>
<td>• Expectations • Monitoring behavior • Response to misbehavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1e Designing Coherent Instruction</td>
<td>2e Organizing Physical Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learning activities • Instructional materials and resources • Instructional groups • Lesson and unit structure</td>
<td>• Safety and accessibility • Arrangement of furniture and resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1f Designing Student Assessments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Convergence with outcomes • Criteria and standards • Formative assessments • Use for planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMAIN 3: Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3a Communicating With Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expectations for learning • Directions and procedures • Explanations of content • Use of oral and written language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Crafting questions • Discussion techniques • Quality of participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c Engaging Students in Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activities and assignments • Student groups • Instructional materials and resources • Structure and pacing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d Using Assessment in Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assessment criteria • Monitoring of student learning • Feedback to students • Student self-assessment and monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3e Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lesson adjustment • Response to students • Persistence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.danielsongroup.org
As you watch: What parts of the inquiry process do you see students engaging in?

Full video: https://youtu.be/G3Bev-zgCuM
The Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science and the C3 Framework share the same five instructional shifts.

Those shifts are:
- Craft questions that spark and sustain an inquiry.
- Cultivate and nurture collaborative and civic spaces.
- Integrate content and skills purposefully.
- Promote literacy practices and outcomes.
- Provide tangible opportunities for taking informed action.

The shifts and Inquiry Skills are asking us to adjust our thinking on the methods students use when interacting with content.

More information about shifts:  
What does this mean for my classroom?

- Teacher becomes a facilitator of learning rather than sole source of learning.
  - Plan units with Essential Questions
    - What are the big take-aways or enduring understandings I need students to understand from this unit?
  - Allow students the opportunity to process information and draw conclusions
  - You’re still the expert in the room! Ask probing questions and redirect when needed.

- Engage students in the topic and allow them to ask questions that can be used to guide learning.
  - Use an image, quote, audio/visual clip, etc. to pique student interest about topic
  - Allow students to generate questions about topic and connect their questions to Essential Questions of unit
What does this mean for my classroom?

- Need to provide multiple methods for our students to access and understand information.
  - Use a variety of sources, not just the textbook and lecture, for students to learn about topics
    - Incorporate primary sources or other secondary sources, especially those from a variety of perspectives
    - Discuss validity of sources and bias when applicable
  - Plan multiple activities in the course of the unit that allow students to access the information and draw conclusions

- Ensure assessments match learning objectives from unit.
  - How can students demonstrate all they’ve learned? What format (or combination) is best suited to their learning?
  - Is there an opportunity for students to take action based on their learning?
Experience Classroom Activity - QFT

This activity could be **ONE PART** of a unit of inquiry in the classroom.
On ROI’s site:

- Videos from QFT with various applications
- Forums on Educator Network – LOTS of educators sharing examples directly in forum, including a few links to external tables of ideas (some overlap exists between these two links):
  - [https://docs.google.com/document/d/10zW5fgxDOqgJdixGNClljoXS7zDPATdLSG87vKBDb/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10zW5fgxDOqgJdixGNClljoXS7zDPATdLSG87vKBDb/edit)
  - [https://airtable.com/shrAgmnCFDP4gxg46/tblo6B8GwEBn8cgdk](https://airtable.com/shrAgmnCFDP4gxg46/tblo6B8GwEBn8cgdk)
Let’s experience a possible classroom activity!

- This activity could be a way to kick off a unit in your classroom.
- Allows students to ask questions about the upcoming unit with a focus for their questions and some guidance on how to revise and prioritize their questions.
- Modified QFT worksheet - [QFT Small Group Worksheet](#)
Step 1

With your group, write down as many questions as you can about the focus.

**Rules**
- Do not stop to discuss, judge, or answer any question.
- Write down every question exactly as it was stated.
- Change any comments to questions.

What might be difficult about following these rules for us? For our students?
Step 2

- Follow the rules for producing questions.
- Number your questions.
Categorize each question as *closed* (C) or *open* (O)

- A *closed question* has short, direct answers
- An *open question* requires more explanation.

*Could also use explanation and argument*

- **Explanation** – researchable and can be reported as fact
- **Argument** - choose a position and defend it with evidence

*Many thanks to Emily Crement for the alternate wording suggestion!
Step 4

- Are there any questions you want to revise?
- Choose at least one question to change from closed to open?
- Choose one question to change from open to closed?

Add those new questions to your list too.
Step 5

Select the **2 most interesting questions** you think the group should discuss.
Please share...

- What were your two priority questions?
- Your rationale for selecting those questions.
What do I do with questions generated?

Several options exist for how these questions can be used in the classroom to guide inquiry:

- Students are divided into groups, different groups focus their inquiry on different questions
  - Based on groups they used to do QFT
  - Based on student choice of question to investigate
- Use questions generated to “drill down” to one essential question to guide the whole class
  - Other questions generated could become supporting questions
Experience Classroom Activity - SAC

This activity could be one part of a unit of inquiry in the classroom.
Let’s experience a possible classroom activity!

- This could be **ONE PART** of a unit of inquiry on the Progressive Era in a 6-12 classroom.
- Resource comes from Stanford History Education Group’s [Read Like a Historian](https://sheg.stanford.edu/) Program

Today we are going to do a Structured Academic Controversy on the social reformers of the Progressive Era. (Settlement House Movement SAC from SHEG)

- At your table:
  - Divide into two groups – Team A and Team B
Many of the social reformers during the Progressive Era were U.S.-born, white, middle-class, Protestant, college-educated women. Some historians have characterized these social reformers as generous women who wanted to assist the poor. Other historians have characterized them as condescending and elitist people who wanted to make immigrants become more Christian and American.

Today's Question is: What were the attitudes of settlement house social reformers towards immigrants?

Team A will argue: Settlement house social reformers were generous and helpful.

Team B will argue: Settlement house social reformers were condescending and judgmental.
Both teams read Documents A-D
- As you read, each person should look for three pieces of evidence that support your side.

Team A presents their arguments to Team B (each person on team must share at least one argument they found).
- Team B writes down Team A’s arguments and then repeats them back to Team A.

Team B presents their arguments to Team A (each person on team must share at least one argument they found).
- Team A writes down Team B’s arguments and then repeats them back to Team B.

Everyone can ABANDON their assigned position and entire group attempts to develop a consensus.
After groups come to a consensus the whole class discusses:

- What consensus did groups reach? What were the arguments for each side?
- Most of us were thinking about how we would have felt in this situation. But how might attitudes have differed back then?
- What else would we need to know in order to have a better understanding of people’s opinions?
- Based on these documents, what are some laws and organizations that we have today that came out of the Progressive Era?
How could I use something like this in my classroom?

- How could an activity like this fit into a unit on the Progressive Era?
- What other components or types of activities would you include in a unit of inquiry on the Progressive Era?
- What changes may you need to make to the current or existing unit to include an activity like this?
- What modifications need to be made to adjust for your students’ needs?
Standards are not forcing you to change the content.

Rather, they are asking you to change the way you think about students’ roles in social science classes:

- want students to take a more active role in learning process
- asking questions, learning how to discover the answers, communicating their learning, and applying what they’ve learned by being active in their school, community, and beyond.

Inquiry goes hand in hand with content – they work together to shape future citizens who can think about and solve issues.
Classroom Inquiry Examples
Middle School US History
A More Perfect Union

During this unit, students will discover how the founding documents provide a platform for our nation to constantly evolve to become “more perfect”.

How do we obtain a more perfect union?

- What is a more perfect union and where did the idea come from?
- Why was the Articles of Confederation considered a weak form of government?
- How were the needs and desires of the people (then and now) addressed in the Constitution?
A more perfect union - 1st

General union questions:
- What is a union?
- Who + when formed our original union?
- Why did we form a union?

A more perfect union questions:
- What does a more perfect union mean?
- How do we get a more perfect union?
- Who can help make AMPU?
- Where did phrase come from?
- Why are there different interpretations?

Changes in our union:
- How is our union different now than it was before?
- What conflicts have caused us to change our union?
- What has changing our union caused?

A more perfect union - 3rd

General union questions:
- What is a union?
- What union are we a part of? What type?
- Who is in charge of our union?

A more perfect union questions:
- Where does this phrase come from?
- Who said it?
- What does a more perfect union mean?
- Who decides if it’s a more perfect union?
- Were there conflicts in our union to make it imperfect?

Changes in the union:
- Who influenced changes in the union?
- How has our union changed throughout history?
- How will these changes impact our union?
Preamble

Everyone in America working together to keep making our country better seek fairness. Give people the rights they deserve and give justice to all. And ensure peace for everyone. Plus give people protection every day. And make sure people have health, safety, morality, and peace. Protect the good things (privileges) of freedom for the people of the world.

VERSION OF THE PREAMBLE

Everyone in America working together to make our country always better. Publish the law and order system of justice. Make sure of peace and harmony. Provide defense for many people in our country. Give welfare to the common people. To keep safe our dreams of freedom for us and future generations. We invest and publish this system of advances and fundamentals, for our country the U.S.A..
During this unit, students will discover why the United States fought for independence and how the Founding Documents addressed the issues brought about by the Revolutionary War. Students will also explore the impact the Revolutionary War had on World history.

What Rights Would have to be Threatened for People to Challenge Authority?

- What is the difference between a revolution and a rebellion and what would cause someone to revolt/rebel?
- How were the causes of the Revolutionary War addressed in our Founding Documents?
- Why was the American Revolution an important event in world history?
During this unit, students will discover the different types of expansion and how expansion often creates or leads to conflict.

How does Expansion Lead to Conflict?

- What is expansion and its consequences?
- How did technology impact economic expansion?
- How was expansion justified?
What causes the territories to change?

How did they decide who owns the land?

What factors helped the country (colonies) to expand?

Why did the Indian territory shrink?

Did we have a war with Spain?

How many different regions took part in claiming territory?

How did the Indians (Native Americans) react to the expansion?
The American Civil War

How did the events of the Civil War and Reconstruction have a lasting impact on current events?

Why did sectional differences create tensions that led to war?

What social, political, and economic issues tended to divide Americans in the period prior to the Civil War?

How did western expansion cause the North and South to confront the issue of slavery?

How do nations recover from war?
Available Resources
Strategy
Resources

- Question Formulation Technique
  - Right Question Institute: [https://rightquestion.org/education/](https://rightquestion.org/education/)
  - Modified Small Group Worksheet

- Structured Academic Controversy
  - Stanford History Education Group: [https://sheg.stanford.edu](https://sheg.stanford.edu)
    - Provides SAC structure
    - Historical SACs
    - SAC collection
  - ProCon.org: [https://www.procon.org/](https://www.procon.org/)
    - Does not provide SAC structure
    - Current Issues
Illinois-Specific Resources

- Illinois Social Science in Action website
  - [http://www.ilsocialscienceinaction.org/](http://www.ilsocialscienceinaction.org/) (is also linked from IL Classrooms in Action)

- Resources:
  - **Illinois Resources** – all resources created by Content Specialists specifically aligned to the Illinois Social Science Standards
  - **Resource Website** – external websites that may be helpful to support standards implementation in the classroom (many may be aligned to C3 Framework)
**Newly-Released Illinois-Specific Resources**

- Inquiry Graphics K-12
  - Intention is to support teachers with the goal of engaging students in the inquiry process
  - Statements include suggested steps for each stage of the inquiry process
  - Select grade level from: [http://www.ilsocialscienceinaction.org/illinois-resources.html](http://www.ilsocialscienceinaction.org/illinois-resources.html)
Analyzing Source Packets

- K-2, 3-5, and 6-12
- By focusing on the documents, objects, photographs, and oral histories—students can get a glimpse into the past beyond what a textbook can provide.
- The purpose of this document is to provide teachers tools to assist students as they examine and analyze sources.
Katie Elvidge

- kelvidge@isbe.net
- www.ilsocialscienceinaction.org
  - Illinois Resources – all resources created by Content Specialists specifically aligned to the Illinois Social Science Standards
  - Resource Website – external websites that may be helpful to support standards implementation in the classroom (many may be aligned to C3 Framework)

- www.ilclassroomsinaction.org
  - Resources to support all content areas

Please provide some brief feedback at: http://bit.ly/NorthGreeneSS1-25
Thank you!!
Classroom Inquiry Example

Fourth Grade Classroom in Hillsboro, IL

Marcy Jorn and Shonda Ronen
4th Grade Classes in Beckemeyer Elementary
“The students were intrigued by the fact that a bill starts as simply an idea. This inquiry was structured to be very open-ended as students could choose to investigate how a bill becomes a law and then try to come up with an idea to drive change at the school, local or state level. This flexibility allowed students to distinguish the roles of the different officials. They quickly learned that some of their proposals didn't need to go to the Senator or Mayor but were more related to our own district and could be heard by the principal and superintendent/school board. Other proposals needed to be brought to the Mayor, Representative or Senator.”
Illinois State Board of Education

Classroom Inquiry Example

- What is it like to be in office?
- Can you outlaw smoking?
- Why are people still littering even though it is a law?
- Will there be a law where texting is leagal?
Information about Unit:

Throughout the month of April, students in Mrs. Jorns’s Class have been learning the following new Illinois Social Studies Standards through an inquiry-based unit on civics:

- Distinguish the responsibilities and powers of government officials at the local, state, and national levels.
- Explain how a democracy relies on people’s responsible participation and draw implications for how individuals should participate.
- Identify core civic values (such as honesty, mutual respect, cooperation, and attentiveness to multiple perspectives and democratic principles such as equality, freedom, liberty, and respect for individual rights) that guide our state and nation.
- Explain how rules and laws change society and how people change rules and laws in Illinois.

We have already been visited by Representative Avery Bourne and Mayor Sullivan. We are learning so much from these primary sources.

Senator Andy Manar will be here on Tuesday, April 11th to speak with the students and answer their questions about state laws and how state government works.

We hope that this will be a valuable learning experience for all of the students in learning the above civics standards. We want our students to learn the importance of civic engagement. We told students to try to “dress their best” on this special day when they get to meet Senator Manar. Please talk with your child about questions he/she may want to ask the Senator. We have attached a sheet for your child to record his/her questions. Students have been researching certain questions throughout this month. They may want to ask Senator Manar specific questions related to their research topic.

As always, thank you for your continued support!
Dear Principal Fraley,

I have been noticing that in my class in the afternoon the boys keep starting trouble in the room. The teacher Mrs. Jean has been getting very mad about it. So I have been thinking about an extra 15 minute class because I think it will be good for kids.

Sincerely,
Zoe Fullerton
Fourth Grade Student in Mrs. Jean’s Class

Dear Senator Manar,

I feel how you used to test as a reporter and in my question I know that it one person make laws it would be a mess people would be angry and fight and complain. Can you come again next to the class room going take in 5th grade here.

Sincerely,
Graham Wilson
Fourth Grade Student at Beckemeyer School