Social Science in the 6-12 Classroom

Katie Elvidge-Social Science Content Specialist
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
Components of Standards

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

- **Elementary**
  - based on themes and aligned to the disciplinary concepts.
  - The themes are:
    - Kindergarten: My Social World
    - First Grade: Living, Learning, and Working Together
    - Second Grade: Families, Neighborhoods, and Communities
    - Third Grade: Communities Near and Far
    - Fourth Grade: Our State, Our Nation
    - Fifth Grade: Our Nation, Our World

- **Middle School**
  - banded by levels of complexity rather than grade levels
  - 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
  - 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

- **High School**
  - organized around typical course structures: history, civics, geography, economics (psychology, sociology, and anthropology)
  - cross-curricular integration encouraged
  - provide overarching themes of what students should know and be able to do at the conclusion of the required high school social science courses
  - standards provide a baseline, not a ceiling, for what all students should know and be able to do
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.

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?
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 (https://sheg.stanford.edu/) Read Like a Historian 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?
Remember...

- 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.
Available Resources
Newly-Released 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)
Illinois State Board of Education

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

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The stages of the inquiry process are illustrated in the graphic to the right. The graphic is a guide to a suggested process for incorporating the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science, particularly the inquiry skills portion of the standards for Middle School. The statements contained in the graphic are suggested steps for each stage of the process. The intention is to support teachers with the goal of engaging students in the inquiry process.

On the next page you’ll find the Inquiry Skills Standards for the Middle Grades along with space to detail what students will do in the classroom to ensure they’re practicing those skills.

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Adapted from Minnesota Department of Education http://www.mndoe.org/
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.
Social Science Needs Assessment

- Provides a way to help gauge the level of knowledge staff members have regarding the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science
- Space to rate progress and provide reflections/evidence/comments
- Aligns to the Implementation Guide
- Includes resources to support implementation at the end of document

### Needs Assessment for the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science

The following Needs Assessment can provide schools/districts/classrooms with a pulse check on the level of implementation of the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science. Use this document to track progress (i.e. moving from “not yet” to “yes”) as well as record evidence, reflections and comments about progress on the indicators throughout the implementation process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>Reflections/Evidence/Comments on Implementation Progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundational Knowledge</td>
<td>I have read and understand the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science at my grade level(s).</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>Just Starting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I understand the format and structure of the Social Science Standards including the relationship that should exist between the Inquiry Skills and Disciplinary Concepts.</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>Just Starting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I understand the Social Science Standards and their progression from each grade that increase in rigor.</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>Just Starting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I know the history of, and rationale for, the development of the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science found in the narrative of the K-12 Standards.</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>Just Starting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment</td>
<td>I understand the four core disciplines found in the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science.</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>Just Starting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I understand that the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science are for all students and organize course sequence and content with the diversity of student groups in mind.</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>Just Starting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have reviewed the alignment of all instructional materials to the appropriate grade-level of the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science.</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>Just Starting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have utilized the Standards to check for coherence between my own grade/course and the grades/courses before and after to ensure the content builds towards increasing sophistication of student thinking as presented in the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science.</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>Just Starting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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:
Classroom Inquiry Examples
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?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A more perfect union</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>general union questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is a union?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who + when formed our original union?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why did we form a union?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A more perfect union questions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does a more perfect union mean?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do we get a more perfect union?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who can help make AMPU?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where did phrase come from?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why are there different interpretations of AMPU?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes in our union</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How is our union different now than it was before?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What conflicts have caused us to change our union?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What has changing our union caused?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| 3rd                           |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>general union questions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is a union?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What union are we part of? What type?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is in charge of our union?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A more perfect union questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where does this phrase come from?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who said it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does a more perfect union mean?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who decides if it's a more perfect union?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were there conflicts in our union to make it imperfect?</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<th>changes in the union</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who influenced changes in the union?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How has our union changed throughout history?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How will these changes impact our union?</td>
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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 everyday. 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?

What does this have to do with a more perfect union?

What is a territory?
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?