



A Fundamental Truth:

How History, Government, and Social Studies Classrooms Advance *Structured Literacy & Standards Alignment*.

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

Introduction



Adam Topliff

- 21 years in the Classroom (7-12)
- 9-12 Social Studies Teacher (Wamego High School)
- Humanities Program Manager - HGSS (Starting August 3rd)





Learning Goals

Share your learning on social media! Use **#KSHGSS** and tag **@KSDEtchrleaders**

Define structured literacy within the context of History, Government, and Social Studies.

Understand why disciplinary literacy is different from general reading instruction.

Examine research demonstrating how knowledge-rich social studies instruction improves reading comprehension.

Evaluate the alignment of supplemental instructional resources to standards.

Develop ideas for conducting standards alignment audits within schools.



What does it mean to be literate?

**Structured
Literacy**



Structured Literacy

Structured Literacy

- Technical Definition: Structured Literacy refers to the explicit, systematic, diagnostic, and cumulative approach to teaching literacy that acknowledges the value of both word recognition and oral and written language comprehension as evidenced in all grades and disciplines.
- Plain Speak: Most effective literacy instruction.



*What does it mean
to be literate in
social studies?*

**Structured
Literacy**

We teach
literacy most
effectively



Literacy Expectations

Reading a variety of primary and secondary sources so that it is possible to

- determine the meaning and main idea, identifying and analyzing evidence, relationships, and supporting details.
- interpret words, discipline-specific phrases, analyze text structure, identify purpose, bias, and point of view.
- evaluate an argument or claim citing evidence in support of, or against, the argument or claim.
- analyze two or more texts on the same topic drawing conclusions about the similarities and differences.
- comprehend complex and difficult text within the discipline.
- identify and evaluate critical information communicated in multiple forms of media.



Structured Literacy

We teach literacy most effectively

HGSS: It's Pure Gold
2014 KEEN Conference
(Don Gifford)



Literacy in History and Social Studies

“Instead of relying upon a single authority, students consult a variety of sources and voices on the topic, constructing their own understanding of what is fact, what is true, what is right. The students are not only reading about settled facts and closed questions. They are also reading in the arena of the unsettled, the debatable, the still-emerging.”

Subjects Matter: Every Teacher's Guide to Content-Area Reading,
Daniels and Zemelman, pp. 15-16

Structured Literacy

We teach literacy most effectively



HGSS STANDARDS ALIGNMENT TOOLKIT
STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

Discipline Literacy and Skills

Tim Shanahan and Cynthia Shanahan, in their article *"What Is Disciplinary Literacy and Why Does It Matter,"*² contend that disciplinary literacy emphasizes the knowledge and abilities possessed by those who create, communicate, and use knowledge within the disciplines, such as social studies, science, math, English language arts, etc. It honors the thinking within disciplines of study and invites students to engage in the academic discipline while developing a voice as a member of that community.

Disciplinary literacy requires students to read in a variety of mediums and write in specialized ways for specialized purposes determined by the discipline (Moje, 2008; Shanahan and Shanahan, 2008). Each discipline requires students to employ particular knowledge, tools, and abilities to communicate, create, and use information within that discipline (Shanahan and Shanahan, 2012).

Disciplinary skills include analysis, interpretation, compare and contrast, evaluation, cause and effect, contextualization, corroboration, summarization, questioning, sequencing, sourcing, reasoning, mapping, etc.

Kansas History, Government, and Social Studies Standards



Structured Literacy

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*What does it mean
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STUDENTS LEARN TO

READ LIKE
HISTORIANS

READ LIKE
POLITICAL SCIENTISTS

READ LIKE
ECONOMISTS

READ LIKE
GEOGRAPHERS

READ LIKE
INFORMED CITIZENS

BECAUSE THE WORLD NEEDS **THINKERS** WHO UNDERSTAND IT.

**Structured
Literacy**

We teach
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effectively



Literacy is not an add-on to Social Studies, it's the foundation of meaningful Social Studies learning.



Read multiple sources

Analyze maps

Interpret political cartoons

Evaluate bias

Compare perspectives

Interpret statistics

Read timelines

Analyze photographs

Support claims with evidence



Knowledge Is Power - Literacy Skills Open Doors To Deeper Knowledge

CONTEXTS

The circumstances and setting that provide background information about an event, statement, or idea. The context helps you more fully understand something.

SOCIAL

Social contexts are all about society and what you need to know about your society in any situation. Society has rules around behavior and interaction.

HISTORICAL

Historical contexts are all about what was unique or specific about a certain time in history. This can include cultural and social contexts that are now in the past.

CULTURAL

Cultural contexts are all about understanding cultural expectations and norms. It is different from social context because it's specific to a culture's or subculture's values, not the values of your society as a whole.

ECONOMIC

Economic contexts describe what you need to know about the economics of a situation. For example, a company trying to expand to a new country will want to know the rules of business and supply chain quality to see if they will succeed.



Phonological Awareness

Phonics

Fluency

Vocabulary

- 1 Phonological awareness is the ability to notice the sound structure of spoken words.
- 2 Phonemic awareness is the ability to identify, isolate and manipulate language at the individual sound level. It is a part of phonological awareness.
- 3 Basic phonological awareness skills include phoneme blending and segmentation and are generally mastered by most students by the end of the first grade.
- 4 Advanced phonological awareness skills involve manipulating phonemes which include deleting, substituting, or reversing phonemes within words.

- 10 Phonics is a system for approaching reading that focuses on the relationship between letters and sounds.
- 11 The teaching has to move from letter/sound correspondences to graphemes, syllables and morphemes.
- 12 Orthographic mapping is the ability to quickly and efficiently add words to your sight vocabulary.
- 13 Sight vocabulary is all the words you instantly recognize.

- 17 Fluency is the ability to read a text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression.
- 18 Fluency is determined by the size of your sight vocabulary.
- 19 If a student is good at orthographic mapping, reading practice is helpful to increase fluency.
- 20 If a student is not good at orthographic mapping, reading practice does not help to increase fluency.

- 25 Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings.
- 26 Connecting meaning to spelling patterns of words can be critical to expanding a student's vocabulary.
- 27 Morphology is the study of segmenting words into prefixes, suffixes, roots, or bases and the origins of words.
- 28 Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world.

- 5 Phonological awareness difficulties represent the most common source of word-level reading difficulties.
- 6 Phonological awareness is essential for skilled reading.
- 7 Phonemic awareness is needed for efficient sight-word learning.
- 8 Early, explicit, and systematic instruction in phonics, along with direct instruction in phonological awareness, can prevent and also remediate reading difficulties.
- 9 The combination of explicit phonics and phonological training for all students in kindergarten and first grade provides far greater results in word-level reading skills than any other teaching practice that has been studied.

- 14 By the end of first grade, students taught by a code-based approach perform, on average, the equivalent of 7 to 8 standard score points higher on tests of reading comprehension than students taught with a meaning-based approach.
- 15 Guessing words from context is not as efficient as phonetic decoding. Skilled readers can identify unfamiliar words with a high degree of accuracy by sounding them out, even irregular words. By contrast, researchers have found that even proficient readers are not as skilled at correctly guessing words from context with an accuracy rate of only about 25%.
- 16 When we see a word, the areas of the brain responsible for orthography (familiar spelling) and phonology (pronunciation) activate before the areas responsible for the semantic system (meaning).

- 21 Students who are fluent readers are better able to devote their attention to comprehending the text.
- 22 Fluency is the bridge between decoding words and understanding what has been read.
- 23 A student needs to be able to read 130 correct words per minute on a sixth grade level to be successful in content reading.
- 24 As children become fluent readers, they are able to interact with text on a higher level.

- 29 Children's vocabulary skills are linked to their economic backgrounds. By 3 years of age, there is a 30 million word gap between children from the wealthiest and poorest families.
- 30 Vocabulary is the glue that holds stories, ideas, and content together making reading comprehension possible for children.
- 31 There is a strong relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension.
- 32 Awareness of morphology is a strong indicator of and a positive influence upon reading comprehension.

Phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary all lead to

COMPREHENSION

Reading aloud to children builds the foundation of literacy learning. Listening comprehension comes before reading comprehension.

- 34 For maximum academic gains, students need systematic, explicit, engaging and success oriented instruction. Systematic means a teacher has a **specific scope and sequence** for introducing each skill. Explicit means that the teacher provides **clear and precise instruction**. Engaging instruction that is success oriented involves increased **active participation** in the instructional activities while minimizing errors and providing **immediate corrective feedback** when errors occur.

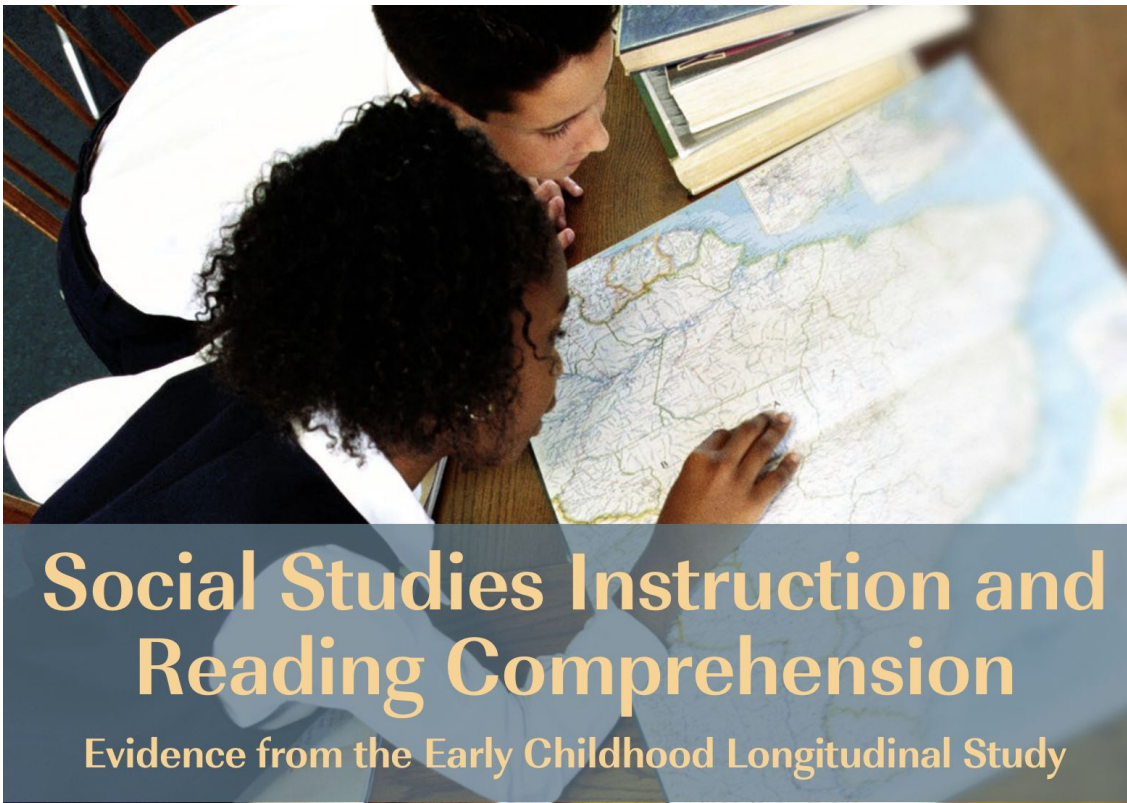
Reading Comprehension Formula

Comprehension = Word Recognition × Language Comprehension

- Students may decode text but struggle with language, concepts, and context.
- Reading is not content neutral

Comprehension becomes heavily dependent on background knowledge!





Social Studies Instruction and Reading Comprehension

Evidence from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study

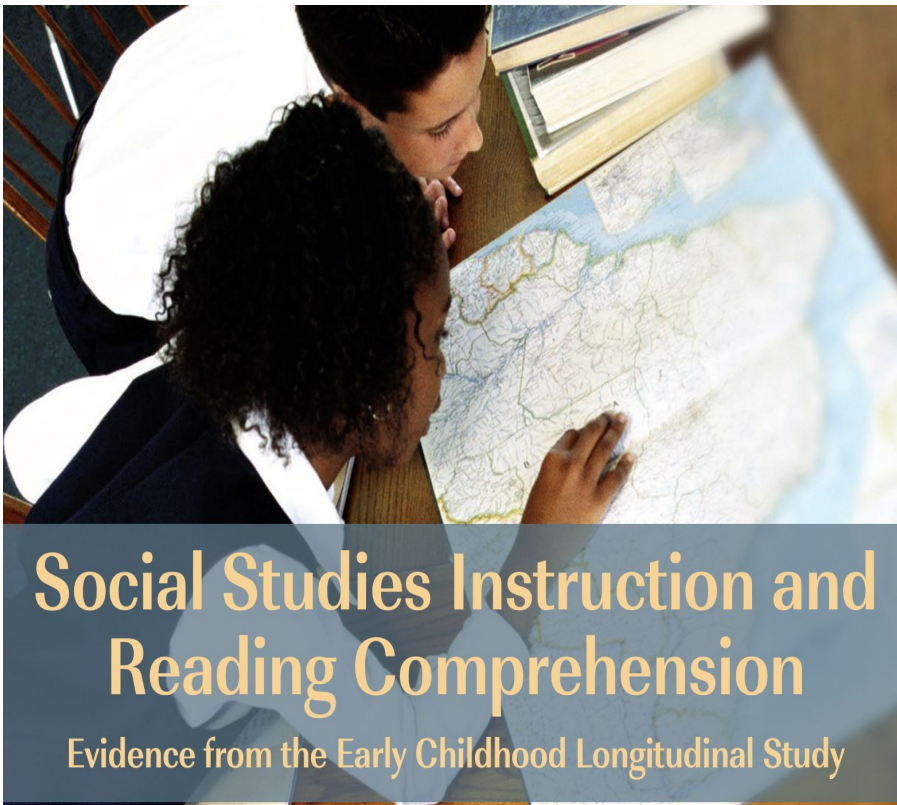
Adam Tyner and Sarah Kabourek. *Social Studies Instruction and Reading Comprehension: Evidence from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study*.

Washington D.C.: Thomas B. Fordham Institute
(September 2020)

[Fordham Study](#)

- **Background Knowledge Is the Foundation of Reading Comprehension.**
- **Social Studies Introduces Rich, Domain-Specific Vocabulary**





Social Studies Instruction and Reading Comprehension

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Fordham Study

Their analysis reveals five key findings. Among them:

- Elementary school students in the U.S. spend much more time on ELA than on any other subject.
- Increased instructional time in social studies—but not in ELA—is associated with improved reading ability.
- The students who benefit the most from additional social studies time are girls and those from lower-income and/or non-English-speaking homes.

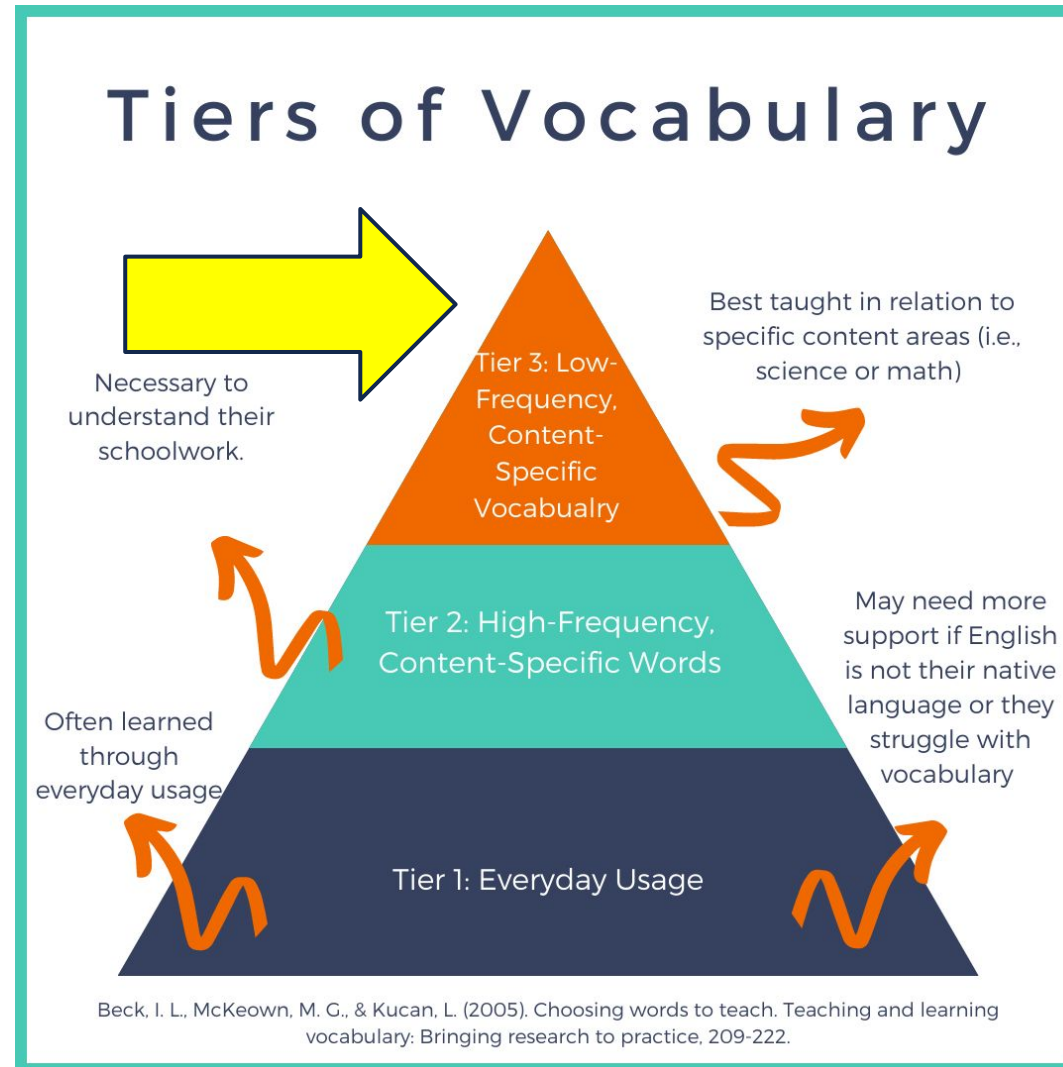


How do we teach literacy effectively in a Social Studies classroom?

- Intentional and consistent lesson design that's literacy driven.
 - *Tiered vocab instruction*

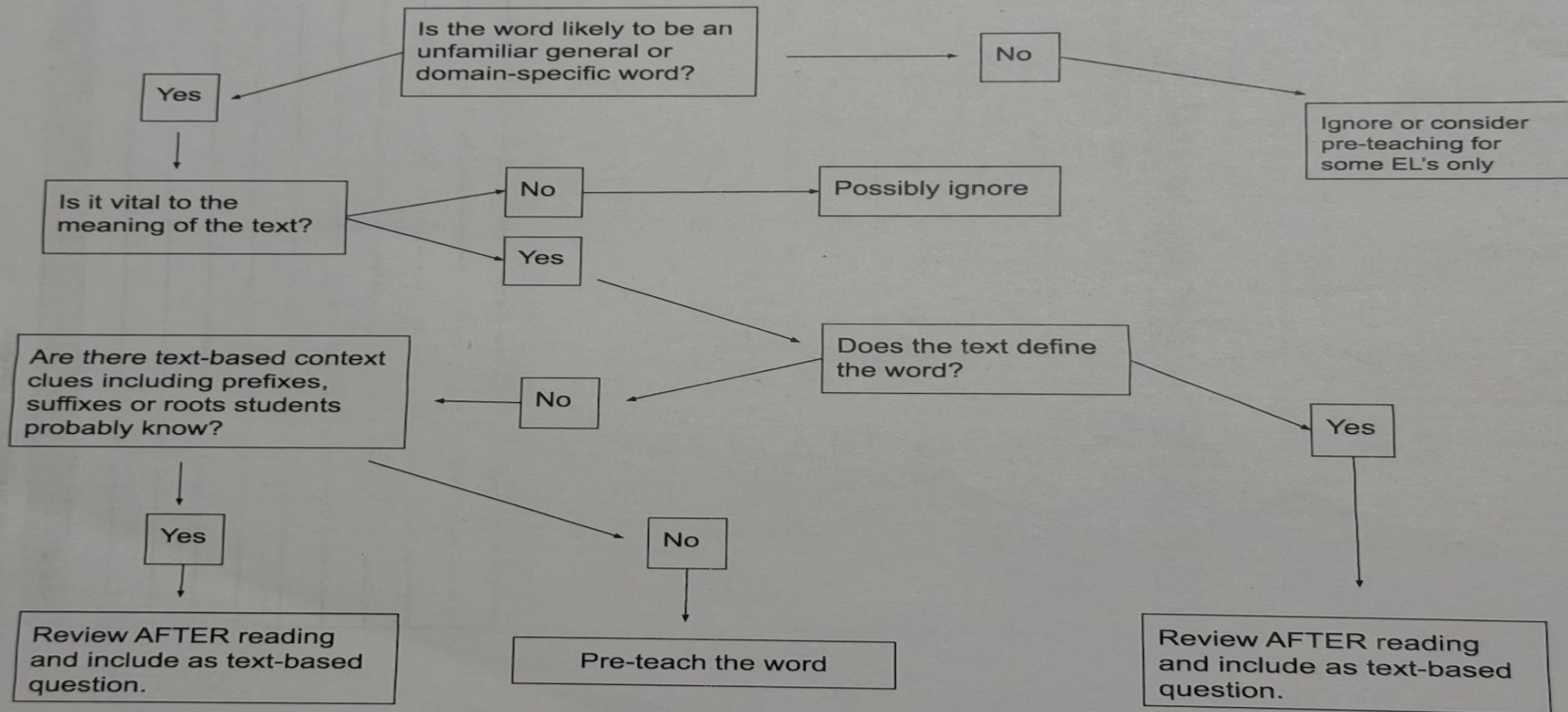


Words Matter...But How Much?



To preteach or not preteach? That is the question.

Vocabulary Decision Tree



Diamond, Linda. "Teaching Vocabulary is Complex: Techniques and Decisions..."The Reading League.



How do we teach literacy effectively in a Social Studies classroom?

- Intentional and consistent lesson design that's literacy driven.
 - *Tiered vocab instruction*
 - *Formative assessments that focus on literacy learning.*

Read multiple sources

Analyze maps

Interpret political cartoons

Evaluate bias

Compare perspectives

Interpret statistics

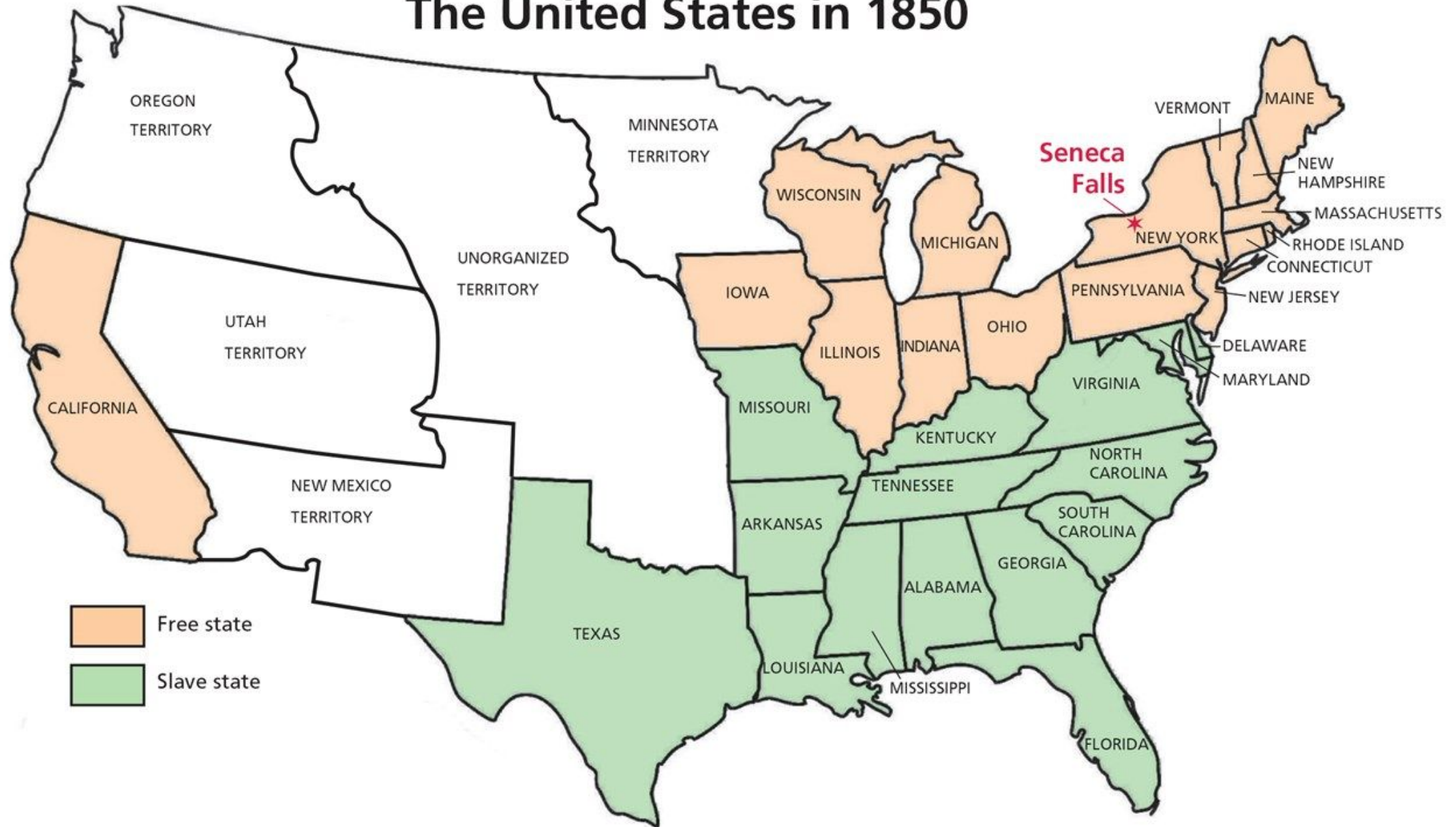
Read timelines

Analyze photographs

Support claims with evidence



The United States in 1850



How do we teach literacy effectively in a Social Studies classroom?

- Intentional and consistent lesson design that's literacy driven.
 - *Tiered vocab instruction*
 - *Formative assessments that focus on literacy learning.*
- District support ensure how to best develop and create literacy rich Social Studies classrooms.
 - *Professional development / PLC work focus on discipline specific literacy skills.*
 - *Careful consideration of resource / supplemental material adoption.*



≡ *Connected. Balanced. Powerful Learning.* ≡



Standards Alignment
We clearly communicate what we want our students to know and be able to do.
in Social Studies.



What does **Standards Alignment** mean in Social Studies?

Standards Alignment
We clearly communicate what we want our students to know and be able to do.
in Social Studies.

KANSAS HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, AND SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

Standard 1 Choices have consequences

Standard 2 Individuals have rights and responsibilities

Standard 3 Societies are shaped by the identities, beliefs, and practices of individuals and groups

Standard 4 Societies experience continuity and change over time

Standard 5 Relationships among people, places, ideas, and environments are dynamic.





HGSS Standards Page

Kansas History, Government, and Social Studies Standards



[Assessments](#) ▶[At-Risk Evidence Based Programs and Practices](#)[Career and Technical Education](#) ▶[Early Childhood](#) ▶[Graduation](#) ▶[Health and Safety](#) ▶[Individual Plan of Study](#)[Learning Alternatives](#) ▶[School Counseling](#) ▶[Special Education](#) ▶[Standards](#)[Student Awards and Recognition](#) ▶

Standards Documents

[Expand all](#)[▶ HGSS Standards, Benchmarks, and Appendices](#)[▼ HGSS Standards Alignment Toolkit](#)

The Standards Alignment Toolkit supports educators with aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessments with the Kansas State Standards, the first step toward ensuring all students receive a high-quality education. This toolkit is designed to reduce the time and effort required to break down or make sense of the standards, enabling teachers to focus more on preparing to deliver meaningful instruction that fosters student engagement.

- [HGSS Standards Alignment Toolkit \(PDF\)](#)
- [HGSS - Content and Skills Planning Tool for Unit Planning \(PDF\)](#)
- [HGSS - Constructive Coaching Tool \(PDF\)](#)

[▶ HGSS Standards Guidance Documents](#)

For more information on History, Government, and Social Studies, contact:

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1. Define learning outcomes by close examination and “unpacking” of the standards:

- a. Articulate the details of the desired learning outcomes for students.
- b. Build educator knowledge related to the rigor and text complexity necessary for students to meet grade level expectations.

2. Vertical alignment:

- a. Clarify content across grade levels/ grade bands (vertical alignment), recognizing the specific expectations for the level of understanding students are expected to have at that grade level, the grade above and the grade below.
- b. Identify how skills and knowledge are sequentially built from one grade to the next.

3. Horizontal alignment:

- a. Identify how/when the content standards are addressed within a grade level (horizontal alignment).
- b. Clarify if there is a district-wide scope and instructional sequence.
- c. Intentionally collaborate to coordinate instruction of grade level content across subjects.
- d. Review standards and the assessment blueprint.

4. Analyze existing curriculum:

- a. Review the current curriculum adopted. In review, consider any required or recommended learning objectives, content, and assessments.
- b. Focus on the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) and text complexity for each grade level to assure adequate rigor.
- c. Identify any gaps, redundancies, or outdated resources.
- d. Identify if Tier 1 (core) curriculum is aligned with the components of structured literacy (explicit, systematic, cumulative, scaffolded, highly interactive, multimodal, specific feedback, and data driven) and elements of structured literacy (phonemes and graphemes, morphemes, vocabulary, text structure, orthographic conventions, stress and syllable patterns, critical thinking, sentence structure/grammar).

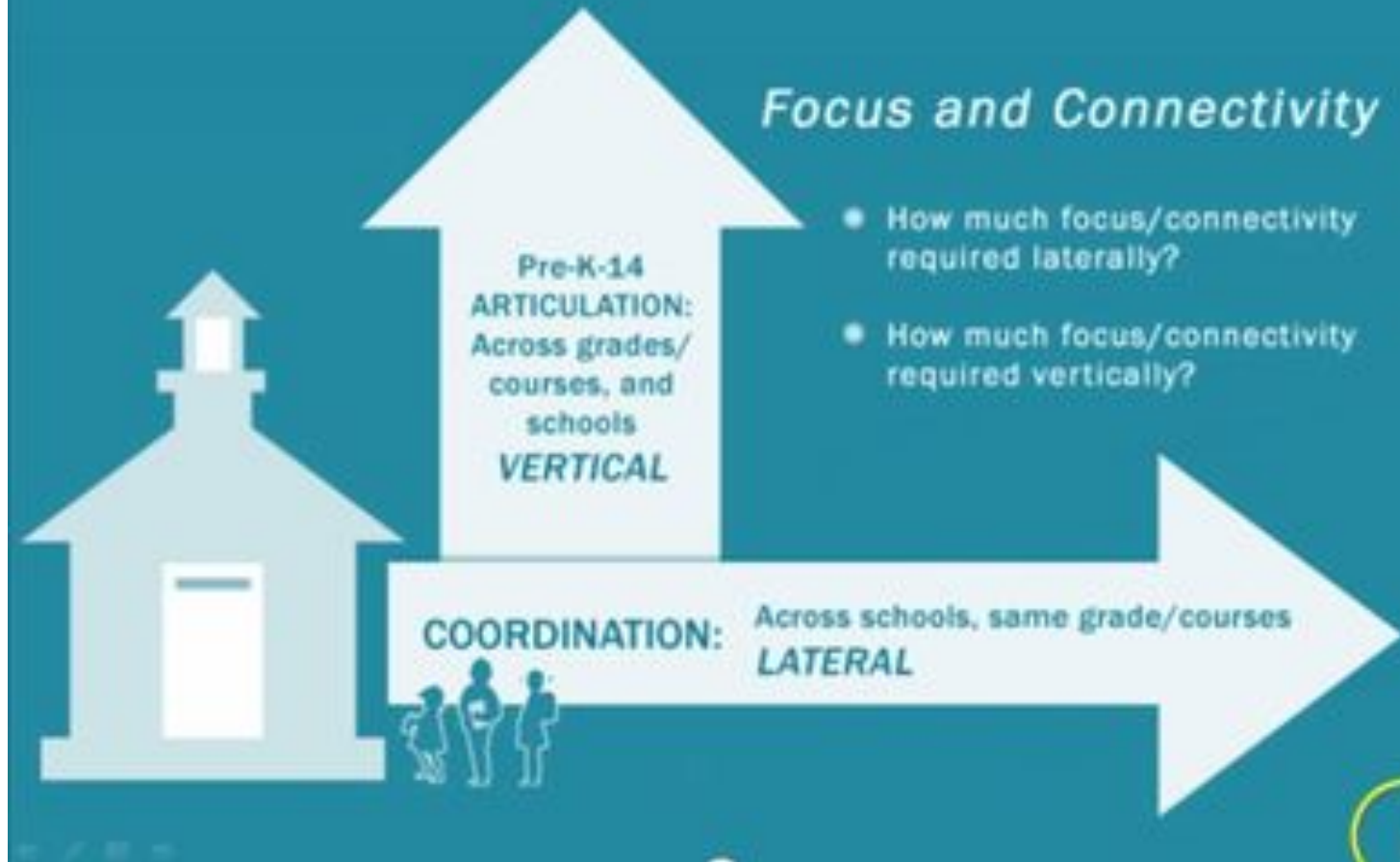




Curriculum Review & Alignment



Requirements of an Effective Curriculum



Vertical vs Horizontal Curriculum Alignment in Schools

A Practical Guide to Lesson Planning & Curriculum Management

Vertical Alignment

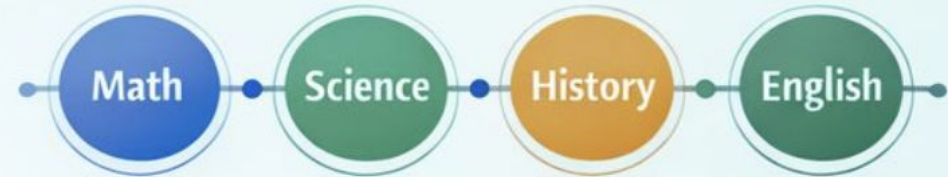


 Progression Across Grades

 Builds on Prior Learning

 Ensures Skill Development

Horizontal Alignment



✓ Consistency Within Grades

✓ Aligns Instruction & Assessment

✓ Equal Learning Experiences



Vertical Alignment



 Progression Across Grades

 Builds on Prior Learning

 Ensures Skill Development

Social Studies Learning Standards



Social Studies Skills: The student understands and applies reasoning skills to conduct research, deliberate, and form and evaluate positions through the processes of reading, writing, and communicating.



Civics: The student understands and applies knowledge of government, law, politics, and the nation's fundamental documents to make decisions about local, state, national, tribal, and international issues, and to demonstrate thoughtful, participatory citizenship.



Economics: The student applies understanding of economic concepts and systems to analyze decision-making and the interactions between individuals, households, business, government, and societies.



Geography: The student uses a spatial perspective to make reasoned decisions by applying the concept of location, region, and movement, and demonstrating knowledge of how geographic features and human cultures impact environment.



History: The student understands and applies knowledge of historical thinking, chronology, eras, turning points, major ideas, individuals, and themes of local, Washington state, tribal, United States, and world history in order to evaluate how history shapes the present and future.



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



Horizontal Alignment

Math

Science

History

English

✓ Consistency Within Grades

✓ Aligns Instruction & Assessment

✓ Equal Learning Experiences

Assessment for Learning

- enables teachers to use information about students' knowledge, understanding and skills to inform their teaching
- teachers provide feedback to students about their learning and how to improve

Assessment as Learning

- involves students in the learning process where they monitor their own progress, ask questions and practise skills
- students use self-assessment and teacher feedback to reflect on their learning, consolidate their understanding and work towards learning goals

Assessment of Learning

- assists teachers to use evidence of student learning to assess student achievement against learning goals and standards



History, Government, and Social Studies (HGSS) Content and Skills Planning Tool for Unit Planning

(The unit plan of study is designed to assist educators as they intentionally link the Kansas State Department of Education HGSS Standards with units in the classroom. **This is not meant to replace daily lesson planning.** Follow the steps below to complete this unit planning.)



STEP 1: Unit Content (Identify the essential content covered in the unit. For example, The Vietnam Era, Bleeding Kansas, regions of Kansas, etc.)

STEP 2: Focus Standard (Select the HGSS standard and benchmarks that will inform the instruction for the unit. Your instruction may change depending on the focus standard selected. Use the HGSS benchmark sentence starters to aid in building your unit.)

1. The student will recognize and evaluate ...
2. The student will analyze the context and draw conclusions about ...
3. The student will investigate and connect _____ with contemporary issues.
4. The student will use their understanding of _____ to make a claim or advance a thesis using evidence and argument.

STEP 3: HGSS Supporting Standard(s) (Identify which HGSS standards will best support the unit. Not all remaining standards will be utilized.)

STEP 4: Compelling Question(s) (As compelling questions typically focus on a narrow amount of content, you may have several compelling questions depending on the scope of the unit. Refer to page 7 of the Classroom-Based Assessment Toolkit for compelling question ideas.)

STEP 5: Assessment Connections: (How does this unit prepare teachers and students for a classroom-based assessment?)



Vertical vs Horizontal Curriculum Alignment in Schools

A Practical Guide to Lesson Planning & Curriculum Management

Vertical Alignment



Progression Across Grades

Builds on Prior Learning

Ensures Skill Development

Horizontal Alignment



Consistency Within Grades

Aligns Instruction & Assessment

Equal Learning Experiences



Assessing High-Quality Supplemental Materials

Assessing high-quality curricular materials is important, but all too often, social studies educators need to fill curricular gaps with supplemental materials. The following checklist has been designed to assist educators in evaluating and determining if supplemental materials are high-quality and align with HGSS standards, support discipline-specific skills, and are grounded in accurate and reliable information.

As more boxes are checked, the likelihood of the supplemental material being high-quality increases.

Title of source: _____

Author: _____ Date: _____

- ☐ Does the content of the supplemental material align to at least one of the HGSS Standards. If so, identify which standard the supplemental material most closely aligns. This standard will serve as the focus standard.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL CHECKLIST: CRITICAL ELEMENTS

- ☐ Does the content of the supplemental material align within the grade level suggested Scope and Sequence?
- ☐ Does the supplemental material prioritize inquiry-based learning?
- ☐ Does the supplemental material prioritize student agency?
- ☐ Is the content of the supplemental material accurate, reliable, and can the biases be determined?
- ☐ Does the supplemental material include a variety of Social Studies discipline specific skills?

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Historical Thinking (sourcing, contextualization, cause and effect, analysis, close reading, identifying bias.)
- ☐ Historical Research and Writing.
- ☐ Civic Engagement and Civil Dialogue.

Supplemental Resource Selection Process

- *Does this resources align to our learning goals?*
- *What resources align to KSDE vision of HQI?*
- *Does this resource support literacy rich instruction?*



Strengthening Alignment & Instruction Is Never Ending



How often do students analyze evidence?

How often do they write?

How often do they investigate compelling questions?

How often do they use primary sources?

Which standards receive little instructional time?



Structured Literacy

We teach literacy
most effectively

in Social
Studies

Standards Alignment

We clearly
communicate what
we want our
students to know
and be able to do.

in Social
Studies

Balanced Assessment Systems

We use relevant data
to make instructional
decisions.

in Social
Studies

High Quality Instruction

We ensure
instruction reflects
high expectations.

in Social
Studies





26-27 KSDE Regional PLCS

A Journey Towards Improvement

#RoadTrip26-27



“There are two educations. One should teach us how to make a living and the other how to live.”

- John Adams





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