

Iowa Core – Davenport Schools
Priority Essential Concepts and Skills for 3rd Grade Social Studies
with Details and Examples

Introduction

Social studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school program, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.

*Definition of Social Studies
National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)*

The founders of our country emphasized that the vitality and security of a democracy depends upon the education and willingness of its citizens to participate actively in society. This level of participation requires civic competence. In other words, it is imperative that our future generations gain an understanding of the core concepts of social studies. Life in the United States within our democratic system is constantly changing which creates varying social circumstances. As a result, citizens need to adapt to such changes in order to sustain vital democratic traditions. Meeting this need is the mission of the social studies.

In social studies, students develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions, including but not limited to:

- Possessing basic knowledge and ways of thinking drawn from many academic disciplines
- Expressing ideas in written form
- Reading reflectively and critically
- Analyzing their own and others' opinions on social issues
- Becoming motivated to participate in civic and community life as active and informed citizens

As we work to carry on the ideals of the founders, we are compelled to revisit our fundamental beliefs and institutions and to construct new social contexts and relationships. The Iowa Core for Social Studies reflects the belief that the informed social studies student comprehends and applies to personal and public experiences the core content perspectives of the many academic fields of the social studies. Our entire social experiences, as well as our republic, are established upon the principles of individual citizenship. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the education of those future citizens.

For that reason, the Iowa Core for Social Studies has been structured around five core social studies content areas. They are:

- Behavioral Sciences
- Economics
- Geography
- History
- Political Science/Civic Literacy

For each area, knowledge and skills have been identified and defined in terms of detailed understandings that students should be able to apply. It is of key importance that students possess the knowledge and skills associated with the economic, political, and social forces that make up the human systems in which they live. In addition, they must possess the historical knowledge which created the spatial, temporal, and cultural perspectives present in our world.

The Iowa Core for Social Studies is premised upon a rigorous and relevant K – 12 social studies program. Engaging students in the pursuit of active informed citizenship will require a broad range of understandings and skills. It will also require an articulated curriculum which connects students to the social world through informed instructional experiences led by teachers who are committed to active civic participation. This represents a bold step toward a vision of social and civic literacy for all of Iowa’s students.

Behavioral Sciences

Behavioral sciences include, but are not limited to, the areas of sociology, anthropology and psychology. In addressing these disciplines the actions and reactions of humans are studied through observational and experimental methods.

Grade 3 Priorities - Details and Example

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand current social issues to determine how the individual formulates opinions and responds to issues.*

Examples:

- Understand that the way a person views an issue reflects personal beliefs, experiences, and attitudes.

Economics

Economics addresses the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. The concept of scarcity is understood to mean that available resources are insufficient to satisfy the wants and needs of everyone. Economics is therefore founded upon the alternative use of available resources and the study of choices.

Grade 3 Priorities - Details and Example

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the role of scarcity and economic trade-offs and how economic conditions impact people's lives.*

Examples:

- Understand that goods and services are scarce because there are not enough resources to satisfy all of the wants of individuals, governments, and societies
- Understand that consumers buy less of products and services when prices go up and buy more when prices go down.
- Understand that businesses are willing to sell more products and services when prices go up and less when the price goes down.
- Understand the concept of unemployment.
- Understand the importance of work.
- Understand how competition among sellers results in lower costs and higher product quality.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand how governments throughout the world influence economic behavior.*

Examples:

- Understand that the government pays for goods and services it provides by taxing and borrowing.
- Understand that all societies have developed economic systems and there are advantages and disadvantages to each type of system.
- Understand when consumers buy goods some of the money that goes to the business is used to pay for resources and taxes.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand factors that create patterns of interdependence in the world economy.*

Examples:

- Understand that when countries specialize they become more interdependent.
- Understand the impact of increasing economic interdependence in different regions of the world.
- Understand that local goods and services are part of the global economy.
- Understand the concepts of exports and imports.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand that all economies throughout the world rely upon universal concepts.*

Examples:

- Understand that there are producers and consumers in all economies.
- Understand supply and demand in various types of economies.
- Understand that production, distribution, exchange, and consumption of goods and services are economic decisions with which all societies and nations must deal.
- Understand how nations throughout the world have joined with one another to promote economic development and growth.
- **Understand barriers to trade among people across nations.**

Geography

Geography is the study of the interaction between people and their environments. Geography therefore looks at the world through the concepts of location, place, human-environmental interaction, movement, and region.

Grade 3 Priorities - Details and Example

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the use of geographic tools to locate and analyze information about people, places, and environments.*

Examples:

- Understand political, topographical and historical maps, aerial photos and maps.
- Understand the use of mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments in a spatial context.
- Understand the concepts of title, legend, cardinal directions, distance, grids.
- Understand the use of data sources, atlases, data bases, grid systems, charts, graphs, and maps to generate, manipulate, and interpret information.
- Understand the spatial elements of point, line, area and volume.
- Understand the representations of major physical and human features on maps and globes.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand how human factors and the distribution of resources affect the development of society and the movement of populations.*

Examples:

- Understand causes and effects of human migration.
- Understand reasons for the growth and decline of settlements.
- Understand density and scarcity in terms of human settlement.
- Understand the relationship between population growth and resource use.
- Understand the concepts of renewable and non-renewable resources.
- Understand recycling.
- Understand the relation between economic activities and natural resources in areas.

History

History is the study and analysis of the past. Built upon a foundation of historical knowledge, history seeks to analyze the past in order to describe the relationship between historical facts, concepts, and generalizations. History draws upon cause and effect relationships within multiple social narratives to help explain complex human interactions. Understanding the past provides context for the present and implications for the future.

Grade 3 Priorities - Details and Example

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the effect of economic needs and wants on individual and group decisions.*

Examples:

- Understands factors that shaped the economic system in the United States.
- Understand that economic activities in the community have changed over time.
- Understand that the types of work local community members do have changed over time.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the role of innovation on the development and interaction of societies.*

Examples:

- Understand the influence of cultural, scientific, and technological decisions on societies.
- Understand ways science and technology have changed the way people think about the natural world
- Understands that the use of technology in the local community has changed over time.

Political Science/Civic Literacy

NOTE: The Essential Concepts and Skills listed in Social Studies – Political Science/Civic Literacy are the same as the Essential Concepts and Skills listed in 21st Century Skills – Civic Literacy.

Political science is the study of power and authority through the examination of political processes, governmental institutions, and human behavior in a civil society. In this context the study of civics is understood to include the form and function of government. Civic literacy encompasses civics but also addresses the individual's social and political participation.

Grade 3 Priorities - Details and Example

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the rights and responsibilities of each citizen and demonstrate the value of lifelong civic action.*

Examples:

- Understand what it means to be a citizen.
- Understand why civic responsibility is important and know examples of civic responsibility.
- Understand that Congress passes laws to protect individual rights.
- Understand how people can participate in their government.
- Understand what political leaders do and why leadership is necessary in a democracy.
- Understand opportunities for leadership and public service in the student's own classroom, school, community, state, and the nation.
- Understand the importance of voluntarism as a characteristic of American society.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the differences among local, state and national government.*

Examples:

- Understand the roles of local, state and national government and the roles of representative leaders at these levels such as mayor, governor and President.
- Understand major services provided by national, state, and local governments.
- Understand how national, state and local government officials are chosen.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the role of the United States in current world affairs.*

Examples:

- Understand that the world is divided into many different nations with each one having its own government.
- Understand the major ways nations interact with each other such as trade, diplomacy, cultural contacts, treaties or agreements, and use of military force.
- Understand factors that contribute to cooperation and cause disputes within and among groups and nations.

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