

Iowa Core – Davenport Schools
Priority Essential Concepts and Skills for 6th 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 6 Priorities - Details and Example

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the changing nature of society.*

Examples:

- Understand that a large society may be made up of many groups, and these groups may contain many different subcultures.
- Understand various institutions influence people.
- Understand various institutions influence elements of culture.
- Understand that technology is important in spreading the ideas, values, and behavior patterns within a society.
- Understand the role of institutions in furthering both continuity and change.
- Understand the means by which individuals, groups, and institutions may contribute to social continuity and change within a community.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand how personality and socialization impact the individual.*

Examples:

- Understand the ways family, gender, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic factors and institutional affiliations contribute to personal identity.
- Understand the influence of perception, attitudes, values, and beliefs on personal identity.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand how to evaluate social research and information.*

Examples:

- Understand that human behavior is studied using scientific methods.
- Understand basic distinctions between information that is based on fact and information that is based on opinion.

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 6 Priorities - Details and Example

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the impact of advancing technologies on the global economy.*

Examples:

- Understand the evolution of technology over time.
- Understand the role of technologies that interlock the global economy.
- Understand the role of investment and government support in advancing technologies.

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 6 Priorities - Details and Example

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 physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.
- Understand world patterns of resource distribution and utilization.
- Understand the role of technology in resource acquisition and use, and its impact on the environment.
- Understand the development and widespread use of alternative energy sources have an impact on societies.
- Understand physical and human geographic factors have influenced major historic events and movements.

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 6 Priorities - Details and Example

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand historical patterns, periods of time and the relationships among these elements.*

Examples:

- Understand concepts such as chronology, causality, change, conflict, and complexity.
- Understand historical periods and patterns of change within and across cultures, such as the rise of civilizations, the development of transportation systems, the growth and breakdown of colonial systems, and others.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand how and why people create, maintain or change systems of power, authority, and governance.*

Examples:

- Understand political events that shaped the development of governments.
- Understand patterns of nationalism, state-building, religious and social reform.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the role of culture and cultural diffusion on the development and maintenance of societies.*

Examples:

- Understand ways groups, societies, and cultures have met human needs and concerns in the past.
- Understand how information and experiences from the past may be interpreted by people from diverse cultural perspectives and frames of reference.
- Understand language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors have contributed to the development and transmission of culture.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the role of individuals and groups within a society as promoters of change or the status quo.*

Examples:

- Understand that specific individuals and the values those individuals held had an impact on history.
- Understand significant events and people, including women and minorities, in the major eras of history.

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the effects of geographic factors on historical events.*

Examples:

- Understand that historical events have been influenced by, and have influenced, physical and human geographic factors in local, regional, national, and global settings.
- Understand the forces of cooperation and conflict that shaped the divisions of Earth's surface.
- Understand geography is used to interpret the past.

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

Examples:

- Understand technology has influenced the course of history through revolutions in agriculture, manufacturing, sanitation, medicine, warfare, transportation, information processing, and communication.
- Understand the impact of new inventions and technological developments in various regions of the world.

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.

****None of the Political Science/Civic Literacy Essential Concepts and Skills are PRIORITIES for 6th grade.****

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