

Chapter 1

Dynamic Social Studies: The Subject You Will Teach

Maxim
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What Is Social Studies?

Social Sciences: Refers to several multifaceted disciplines that seek knowledge about societies and the relationships of individuals within societies

Social Studies: Is the title for the school subject that provides for a systematic study of the social sciences in a coordinated, integrated fashion

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The Social Sciences

- 1. Geography:** The study of people and places, the natural environment, and the capacity of the earth to support life
- 2. History:** The systematic research, analysis, and interpretation of the past
- 3. Civics (Political Science):** The study of the origin, development, and operation of political systems and public policy

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The Social Sciences, con't

- 4. Anthropology:** The study of people to find out about their physical, social, and cultural development
- 5. Sociology:** The study of society and social behavior by examining groups and social institutions such as the family, government, religion, business, or school
- 6. Economics:** The study of the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services

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Why Is Social Studies Important?

- NEA's 1916 initiative: helping prepare youth for constructive participation in society
- Participatory Citizenship
- Preservation of Democracy

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Major Goals of Elementary Social Studies

- **Values and Beliefs:** help children understand the core civic principles
- **Knowledge:** help children construct meaning by connecting new learning to previous experiences
- **Thinking Skills:** help children acquire and process information to investigate problems and make informed decisions

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Dynamic Social Studies?

Placing children in a classroom environment that encourages them to rediscover the young social scientists within

1. Functional content
2. Constructivist teaching practices
3. Intrinsic motivation
4. Cross-curricular integration
5. Respect for diversity

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Functional Content Curriculum Scope and Sequence

Expanding Environment Curriculum

- **Kindergarten: Myself and Others**
- **1st grade: School and Family**
- **2nd grade: Neighborhood**
- **3rd grade: Community**
- **4th grade: Region and State**
- **5th grade: United States and Close Neighbors**
- **6th grade: Eastern Hemisphere**
- **7th grade: Western Hemisphere**
- **8th grade: The United States History**

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Functional Content NCSS Curriculum Standards

- **Culture**
- **Time, Continuity, and Change**
- **People, Places, and Environment**
- **Individual Development**
- **Individuals, Groups, and Institutions**
- **Power, Authority, and Governance**
- **Production, Distribution, and Consumption**
- **Science, Technology, and Society**
- **Global Connections**
- **Civic Ideals and Practices**

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Constructivist Teaching Practice

- Instruction that is child-centered in approach and focuses on knowledge construction, not knowledge reproduction
- Emphasizes that students interpret new objects and events by trying to alter or modify existing mental structures that had formed as a result of their previous life experiences

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Intrinsic Motivation

An internal impulse that provokes us to action or keeps us absorbed in certain activities

Factors

- **Interest**
- **Pleasure**
- **Competence**
- **Self-determination**

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Cross-Curricular Integration

- Seeking ways to bring together the various subject areas and relating the content to a central theme
- Working with obvious connections between the arts, humanities, and physical sciences

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Respect for Diversity

- Adapting instruction to meet the special needs, talents, and interests of all students
- Keen awareness and consideration of each youngster as a distinct individual