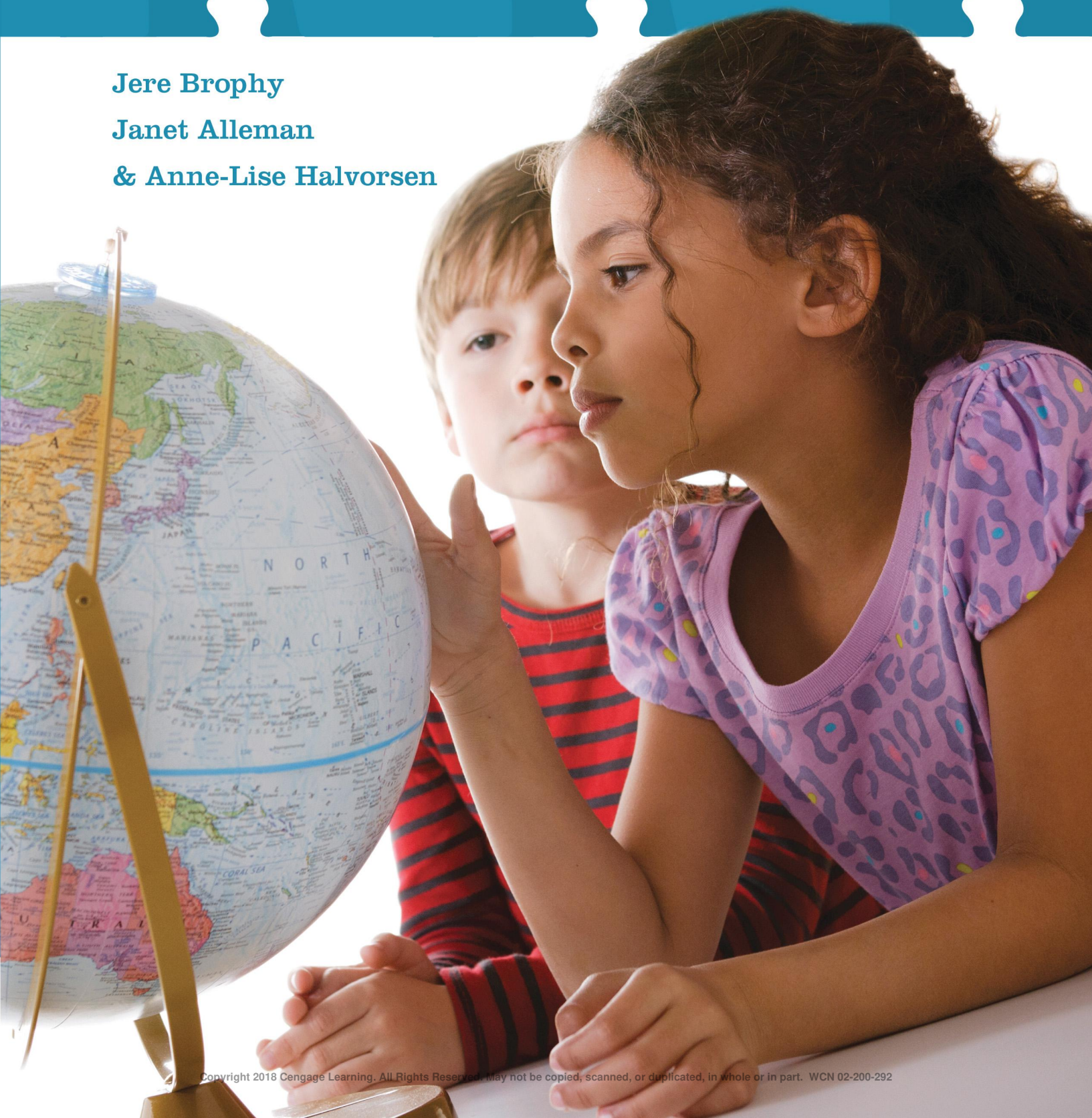
Powerful Social Studies
FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS 4th Edition

Jere Brophy
Janet Alleman
& Anne-Lise Halvorsen



Powerful Social Studies

FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

FOURTH EDITION

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***Powerful Social Studies for Elementary Students*, Fourth Edition**
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In memory of Jere Brophy, and in honor of his wife, Arlene Brophy.

In memory of George Trumbull, late husband of Janet Alleman.

About the Authors

JERE BROPHY was a University Distinguished Professor of Teacher Education at Michigan State University from 1990 until 2009. The author, coauthor, or editor of more than 20 books and 250 scholarly articles, chapters, and technical reports, he is well known for his research on teacher expectations, teacher-student relationships, teacher effects on student achievement, classroom management, student motivation, and, most recently, elementary social studies curriculum and instruction. In addition, he was a member of the Task Force on Social Studies Teaching and Learning that prepared the National Council for the Social Studies position statement entitled "A Vision of Powerful Teaching and Learning in the Social Studies: Building Social Understanding and Civic Efficacy."

JANET ALLEMAN is professor emeritus of teacher education at Michigan State University. She has focused on curriculum content and instruction methods, as well as issues in teaching social studies. She has coauthored a host of books, including an award-winning title with Jere Brophy, *Children's Thinking About Cultural Universals*. Other books coauthored with Jere Brophy and Barbara Knighton include *Inside the Social Studies Classroom* and *A Learning Community Within a Primary Classroom*. Currently, she serves as a consultant and teacher coach in K–12 schools.

ANNE-LISE HALVORSEN is an associate professor of teacher education at Michigan State University, specializing in social studies education. Her research and teaching interests are elementary social studies education, project-based learning, the history of education, the integration of social studies and literacy, and teacher preparation in social studies. She is a former kindergarten teacher and a former curriculum writer for the state of Michigan.

Brief Contents

Contents

Preface

This book is intended for preservice and in-service elementary teachers and for social studies teacher educators. It offers a perspective on the nature and functions of elementary social studies and presents principles and illustrative examples designed to help teachers plan social studies instruction that is coherently organized and powerful for producing desired student outcomes. It offers in-depth treatment of selected issues that we consider crucial for teachers to work through if they are to develop powerful social studies programs in their classrooms.

The book is designed to accomplish two primary purposes. First, we seek to help elementary teachers develop a clear sense of social studies as a coherent school subject organized to accomplish social understanding and civic efficacy goals. Teachers need to understand the nature and purposes of social studies in order to plan and teach the subject effectively.

Second, we seek to prepare elementary teachers to identify significant social studies education goals that are appropriate for their students and then use these goals to guide them in their planning by selecting content, developing it through classroom discourse, integrating a range of instructional strategies, and using it in authentic application activities and assessments. To illustrate the application of our suggested guidelines, the book includes extended examples, in the form of detailed plans for topically organized curricular units structured around powerful ideas. In addition, the book addresses assessment, curricular integration, and homework as they apply to social studies teaching, and it suggests ways to encourage classes of students to function as learning communities engaged in the social construction of knowledge.

Outline of Chapters and Changes

The fourth edition retains the most enduring and important content from the previous three editions (although in a reshaped form) and updates that material to incorporate the significant events, trends, and latest research of the last few years. We also have designed a number of new tables and figures to illustrate the points that we make in the text. Some of the major reshaping features include a revision of Chapter 2 to include the latest research in social-emotional learning, differentiation, and culturally relevant pedagogy; Chapter 6, which includes an updated focus on the global perspective; Chapter 8, an expanded chapter on discourse that includes a sample dialogue of a substantive classroom discussion; and Chapter 12, which incorporates the latest research on curricular integration. The new social studies standards in the College, Career, and Civic Readiness (C3) Framework of State Social Studies Standards are interwoven throughout the book.

A host of other changes, additions, and enhancements related to the content are reflected in our fourth edition. In an attempt to make the text clearer regarding the purposes of each chapter, we have included (1) learning objectives that are aligned with sections of the chapter; (2) an overarching question for the reader to ponder; and (3) a Big Ideas box that summarizes the major "takeaways" of the chapter. We also identify the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) teacher standards aligned with each chapter. Each chapter has been updated with new photographs and images that represent content "in action." As authors, we encourage you and your students to study the table of contents carefully prior to reading any of

the chapters. Our intent is that the levels of detail provided there will serve as a road map for locating specific topics.

Our book reflects recent classroom research on teaching school subjects for understanding, appreciation, and application. It also reflects position statements by the NCSS concerning the purposes and goals of social studies as a school subject and the principles involved in teaching it with coherence and power. Finally, although it deals in depth with fundamental issues, the book casts teachers in the role of key decision makers in planning, implementing, and assessing powerful social studies instruction. It encourages teachers to be proactive in identifying suitable social studies goals for their students; in adapting or supplementing the content, questions, and activities that their textbook series offer; and in drawing upon local resources (including the students' home cultures and personal experiences) as sources of content and sites for application of social studies learning. Teachers who study the book thoughtfully will gain from it clear conceptions for the nature and purposes of social studies teaching with social understanding and civic efficacy goals in mind.

We begin Chapter 1 by characterizing the nature of social studies as a school subject organized to support students' progress toward social understanding and civic efficacy goals. We offer descriptions of several curricular and instructional approaches that show the range of ways that social studies educators teach the subject. We also describe the traditional sequence used for elementary social studies: the expanding communities.

Chapter 2 addresses the professional development concerns of most teachers that involve classroom community, management, diverse learners, and student motivation. We have included new sections on social-emotional learning; differentiation, including a focus on Universal Design for Learning (UDL); and culturally responsive pedagogy. The childhood unit has been retained in an effort to help readers understand and appreciate the ways that generic management and motivation principles can be implemented within particular subject-matter contexts and embrace the range of learner assets, interests, experiences, and abilities.

Chapter 3 focuses on goal-oriented planning and selecting and representing content. When social studies instruction is focused on important topics, and when topics are developed with an emphasis on powerful ideas, the result is a coherent social studies program.

Chapter 4 emphasizes how elementary social studies, more than most other subjects, requires a lot of independent planning and decision making on the part of teachers in order to create powerful teaching. We show how good planning begins with establishing powerful goals, big ideas, and content before designing activities and selecting resources. It then introduces the tools available to teachers as they carry out these responsibilities (standards, textbooks, supplemental materials, trade books, children's literature, the Internet, and so forth), and develops principles for using these tools productively to generate or adapt instruction to meet the needs of one's students. In subsequent chapters, an expanded understanding of these tools becomes apparent.

A great deal of the content taught in social studies is drawn from the disciplines of history, geography, and the social sciences. The fourth edition maintains its focus on issues and strategies involved in selecting and teaching content drawn from these disciplines, and also expands its emphasis on skills unique to each of them. Chapter 5 characterizes the nature of history, describes it, identifies places

where historical content is typically taught in the elementary grades, and presents findings from research on developments in children's historical knowledge and thinking. It includes new research and strategies in history education. The chapter describes issues surrounding historical content and pedagogy, introduces national standards for history teaching, and offers guidelines for and examples of effective history content and activities. Chapter 6 offers similar coverage of geography and anthropology (which are grouped together because they share a focus on culture) and adds a new section on the global perspective. Chapter 7 addresses the rest of the social sciences (i.e., psychology, sociology, economics, and civics and government). The length and composition of our treatment of each of these disciplines varies with the available scholarly literature and the extent of their presence within the elementary social studies curriculum. At minimum, however, our treatment addresses developments in children's knowledge and thinking about content related to the discipline, the NCSS Curriculum Standards, the C3 Framework, and other national standards (if available) for teaching content drawn from the discipline, as well as guidelines for effective lessons and activities.

Chapter 8 is expanded to consider the full range of students' construction of meaning through listening, speaking, reading, and writing experiences, and includes a sample dialogue from a substantive discussion. Here and elsewhere, the book emphasizes the importance of planning instruction to connect to students' prior knowledge, both building on valid understandings and addressing misconceptions. The chapter offers supports for facilitating substantive and productive discourse in elementary classrooms.

Chapter 9 focuses on assessment. In this chapter, we underscore the importance of addressing assessment throughout the planning process (it comes prior to the chapters on strategies and activities in this book). The discussion pays attention to the idea of authenticity, including the use of student work. It also discusses issues of validity as it relates to assessment and describes how to design and use rubrics to communicate expectations to students and to evaluate performance.

Chapter 10 focuses on strategies, expanding coverage to include project-based learning. Chapter 11 describes various instructional activities and the criteria by which to select them for teaching powerful social studies in your classroom. These chapters introduce appreciation of the unique advantages that alternative formats offer, but at the same time, they continue to emphasize that strategies and activities are not ends in themselves, but vehicles for accomplishing curricular goals.

Chapter 12 expands the third edition's chapter on curricular integration to view this topic in the light of recent developments of standards (in English/language arts and literacy, math, and science), as well as suggesting guidelines for selecting and using children's literature and technology resources as instructional materials for social studies. This chapter reveals the potential value of literacy and other subject areas in promoting the meaningfulness of social studies. In addition to cautioning readers against unproductive forms of curricular integration—a trap that is so easy to fall into when trying to find all the necessary time to cover content in multiple areas—the chapter offers guidelines for making decisions regarding effective integration.

Chapter 13 emphasizes the importance of student assets that include bringing students' home cultures into the classroom as the ideal way to address diversity and multicultural issues. It also shows how the social studies curriculum can be extended into the home and community through assignments that engage students

in communicating about and constructing understandings of social studies content through interactions with family and community members. Unlike conventional homework, these assignments encourage family involvement and are designed to generate discussions and produce data that can contemporize the in-school curriculum. Our hope is that students will find the learning opportunities informative, meaningful, and enjoyable.

Chapter 14 serves as the foundation for our text. It looks back at the approach to powerful elementary social studies developed throughout the book and considers it in the context of two potential sets of guidelines for instructional planning: the recent emphasis on high-stakes testing in some content areas that has culminated in state and federal legislation; and the research on effective teaching for understanding, appreciation, and life application that has emerged over the last 50 years. The chapter characterizes the former as counterproductive and the latter as the key to powerful teaching of all school subjects (not just social studies). This chapter offers a synthesis of these research findings, organized around 12 principles that comprise a network of powerful ideas within which to subsume most of the principles and strategies recommended in the text as a whole. A new addition is a chart at the end of this chapter that indicates what chapters of this book highlight which principles and includes examples of what the principles look like in practice.

Features

Teacher Voice and Photographs

The chapters begin with comments by novice and experienced teachers who share their views on the content developed in the chapters. We also include photographs that feature the applications of the chapter's content in practice. These photographs have been updated for this edition.

Technology Tips

This edition continues to include "Technology Tips" boxes that provide suggestions for using technology effectively and meaningfully to develop and teach social studies units and lessons. We have updated them for this edition.

Research Base

Each chapter highlights principles of good teaching in a "Research Base" box, which are indicated by the symbol of a puzzle piece (when all the pieces of the principles of good teaching are put in place, powerful teaching results). These principles serve to make social studies, as well as other content areas, powerful and meaningful.

Your Turn

Each chapter ends with one or more "Your Turn" sections, in which readers are invited to apply the chapter's key understandings to scenarios involving planning for teaching.

NCSS Icon

As in the third edition, the 2010 NCSS Curriculum Standards have been incorporated throughout the text, and an icon designates areas where they are discussed or exemplified.

Ancillaries

Finally, more material from instructional units developed by authors is included as examples, mostly woven throughout the chapters. In addition, based on recommendations from our students, the two resource units focusing on popular unit topics are retained in this edition and are included as appendices. As noted previously, material related to the development of a powerful unit on government is included as Appendix A and suggested to accompany the planning chapter.

To the Instructor

We have reorganized this revision based on the recommendation of our preservice and in-service teachers. We encourage you to assign chapters in a different order if that is better suited to your style and organizational scheme. We also encourage you to take your cues from your preservice and in-service teachers. Embracing their ideas can make all the difference!

To the Student

To be successful in using our text, we encourage you to begin by studying the table of contents carefully. Feel free to read any chapter or section before it is assigned. The chapters are arranged in an order that makes sense to us; however, you might have a different organization in mind. For example, if you want to learn more about NCSS Curriculum Standards early in the course, we encourage you to turn to Chapter 4. If integration comes up in an early discussion as a means of finding time for social studies, skip to Chapter 12 to learn about our perspective.

View the "Your Turn" sections as opportunities to apply what you are reading and discussing in class. Some of you will be taking a course that uses this text early in your teacher education sequence, while others will be using it during student teaching or an internship, or as part of a graduate program. If you have your own classroom, it will be easy to do the activities that we suggest. However, it's not the end of the world if you don't have your own students. We recommend that you observe social studies teaching even if it is not a course requirement. Practice doing the exercises, including the design of units, either for hypothetical students or for those in one of the classes that you are observing. Share your work. Often, classroom teachers will offer you the opportunity to coteach or to serve as a guest instructor.

Our hope is that you will apply what you are learning throughout the course. Your engagement with the content and the suggested activities will make the experiences much more memorable.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **How do you view your textbook?**
   Our book, not unlike any other textbook for students or teachers, is not intended to be a single source. While it might be the only social studies text that you are asked to purchase, we encourage our readers to expand their repertoire of perspectives by locating articles and books referenced at the ends of chapters, searching the Internet, reviewing selections suggested by other professionals, and so on. We hope that this book will be a useful resource well

beyond the teacher preparation program, serving as a guide for both new and experienced teachers alike. Chapter 14 provides an in-depth explanation of the 12 principles of good teaching that apply across the content areas, along with a chart that illustrates what the principles look like in a social studies setting. We hope that it will serve as a springboard and guide as you launch your daily practice.

2. **What does your text offer teachers in the early grades?**
   We are convinced that children have untapped capacity. Our research on children's thinking about cultural universals, for example, has been encouraging and eye opening. It suggests, for example, that these are viable topics for young children. Their interest surrounding these topics is high, but they lack networks of connected knowledge and possess lots of misconceptions. Other researchers have found other similar patterns. Knowing about how children think about social studies topics can help teachers both to connect with and build on their accurate prior knowledge and to address their misconceptions. We include several curricular and instructional approaches for your consideration. We encourage you to go beyond the textbook, become an entrepreneur, and combine approaches for a truly robust program.

   The text provides K–3 teachers with expanded and more sophisticated approaches to social studies. We promote depth over breadth and also recommend the use of a range of activities, strategies, assessments, and out-of-school learning opportunities, always with an eye on the goals and big ideas.

3. **What does this book offer for teachers of grades 4–6?**
   Typically, the curriculum at these levels is overloaded with content that is fractured and factually dense. We promote depth over breadth and emphasize big ideas, offering several curricular and instructional approaches. We provide lots of examples for making the content more authentic, with questions and activities that enable students to connect what they are learning to their lives outside school.

   We include an explanation, laced with examples, illustrating the importance of balancing and shifting between teaching and learning during the instructional process. While this is obviously necessary in the early grades, we view it as necessary at all levels. We advocate teacher modeling, facilitating, and debriefing opportunities using a host of strategies, activities, assessments, and home assignments, always with an eye on the goals and big ideas.

4. **Why do you provide separate chapters on history and geography/anthropology, but cluster all the other social science disciplines within a single chapter?**
   The literature is much more highly developed in history, geography, economics, and civics/government than in psychology, anthropology, or sociology (as applied to elementary social studies). Also, some of these areas are emphasized more within the elementary curriculum than others. In any case, we promote a pan-disciplinary approach that features the holistic study of unit topics. In designing a unit on the community, for example, we would begin with the local community and study its history, its geography within the five themes, past and present economic conditions, its political or governmental structure, and sociological aspects such as the roles of community members in their work, as citizens, and so on.

5. **How are you treating multicultural education in this text?**
   We take the term *multicultural* to refer not to a separate topic or set of lessons, but to pervade all aspects of powerful social studies teaching. It begins with establishing a learning community that celebrates diversity as an asset and reaches out to students' families and home cultures. It implies that history will be taught with attention paid to multiple perspectives on significant events and the stories of people whose histories are often ignored. It assumes teaching about regions, countries, states, and other locations, with attention focused on their cultures along with their geographic and economic characteristics. More generally, it means teaching social studies topics in ways that help students come to understand local and familiar practices within global and multicultural perspectives that "make the strange familiar" and "make the familiar strange." Finally, we highlight human activities related to cultural universals because it facilitates teaching with a focus on commonalities rather than differences. This emphasis not only can be applied to the lower grades, but also can be woven into studies of states and regions in the upper grades. This promotes empathy and helps redirect children's tendencies toward presentism in thinking about the past and chauvinism in thinking about other cultures. This edition also includes a new section on culturally relevant pedagogy and how to apply its principles to a learning community and to social studies education.
6. **How is technology treated in your textbook?**
   Throughout our book, we reference websites that fit naturally with the content. We encourage teachers to use technology when it matches the goals and enhances the development of the big ideas within the unit, but caution against technology-based activities that lack goal relevance or effectiveness. The guiding principles for selecting, implementing, and evaluating activities emphasized in Chapter 11 apply as much to technology-based activities as to more conventional activities. The instructor's manual provides additional sources. In the fourth edition, we have kept the "Technology Tips," which provide suggestions for websites or technological tools to enhance your social studies teaching.
7. **Why is there so much more attention given to units than to individual lessons?**
   We are proponents of depth of development of powerful ideas over breadth of coverage. We want to illustrate for the reader the value of networks of connected knowledge structured around powerful ideas that can be learned with understanding and retained in ways that make them accessible for application. In contrast, disconnected bits of information presented as isolated lessons are likely to be learned only through low-level processes such as rote memorization.
8. **What are your views on assessment?**
   We view assessment as an integral part of ongoing teaching and learning. Different forms and times for assessment should be determined by the purpose of the learning situation, the kind of information acquired, and how it will be used to accomplish social studies goals. Learning activities play an important role, as they are both curriculum components, which need to be assessed as such; and mechanisms for eliciting indicators of student learning.

   Currently, teachers are faced with many obligations, responsibilities, and frustrations regarding assessment. To aid with these challenges, we acknowledge,

describe, and provide examples to illustrate how state and national standards can inform instructional planning. Chapter 9 features guidelines for designing paper-and-pencil tools, as well as a range of informal measures. Special attention is given to authentic instruments for serving our diverse learners.

9. **How much attention do you give to inquiry?**
   Throughout the text, we discuss the C3 Framework's use of the Inquiry Arc, an organizing framework for conducting inquiry and pursuing knowledge.

   We describe inquiry teaching in Chapter 10 and include examples that draw on this approach throughout our book. Inquiry can be effective for introducing new topics, processing information, and constructing and deconstructing knowledge. It also can be valuable for promoting curiosity and engaging learners in the instructional process. The key is for the teacher to "rein in" multiple responses in order to promote understanding of the big ideas and at the same time promote further investigation.

10. **What role does literacy play?**
    Literacy is threaded throughout the textbook and is emphasized in Chapters 8 and 12. While we are well aware that social studies is often justified because of its literacy connections, our intent is to provide a text that emphasizes subject-matter knowledge and uses reading, writing, speaking, and listening for developing that content. We recommend that literacy skills be taught during instruction time allocated for that subject and then used during social studies time to serve social education goals.

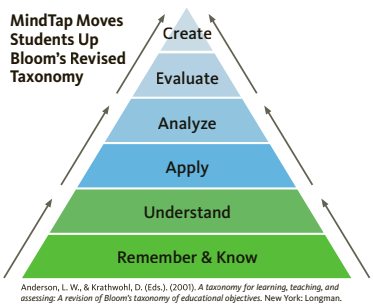
    We encourage the use of authentic children's literature and informational texts, and we provide chapters on discourse and integration that shed further light on the importance of literacy. Chapter 12 offers guidelines for making decisions regarding effective integration.

11. **How do you think about social action within the elementary social studies program?**
    We view social action and service learning as integral parts of the elementary social studies program and important parts of developing citizenship. Social action and service learning activities should match the goals and big ideas of the unit and be authentic and appropriate for the grade level.

    Social action and service learning initiatives also promote self-efficacy. There is nothing more satisfying for a child than feeling that she or he is making a difference. Service learning as an instructional approach is described in Chapter 1. Lessons within the shelter and government units and examples described in Chapter 13 focusing on home-school connections illustrate social action possibilities for the elementary grades.

12. **How do you suggest social studies be given the instructional attention that it deserves?**
    With emphasis placed on literacy and mathematics in the elementary grades, most recently as a result of the mandates of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act, time for social studies in the elementary school day is in jeopardy. We recognize this dilemma (it is particularly acute for teachers in low socioeconomic settings due to the pressures associated with testing), and in Chapters 8 and 12 (and elsewhere throughout the book), we suggest ways that social studies can be integrated into other subjects in a manner that preserves rich social education

goals. We encourage you to leverage real-life situations and embrace out-of-school time for engaging and powerful social studies lessons. Incorporating authentic homework into your practice may be the best-kept secret for keeping social studies alive, motivating students, and involving families—all keys to higher achievement.



Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. (Eds.). (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives.* New York: Longman.

MindTap™: The Personal Learning Experience

MindTap for *Powerful Social Studies for Elementary Students,* fourth edition, represents a new approach to teaching and learning. A highly personalized, fully customizable learning platform with an integrated e-portfolio, MindTap helps students to elevate thinking by guiding them to:

- Know, remember, and understand concepts critical to becoming a great teacher
- Apply concepts, create curriculum and tools, and demonstrate performance and competency in key areas in the course, including national and state education standards
- Prepare artifacts for the portfolio and eventual state licensure in order to launch a successful teaching career
- Develop the habits to become a reflective practitioner

  As students move through each chapter's Learning Path, they engage in a scaffolded learning experience, designed to move them up Bloom's Taxonomy from lower- to higher-order thinking skills. The Learning Path enables preservice students to develop these skills and gain confidence by doing the following:

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  - Checking their comprehension and understanding through "Did You Get It?" assessments, with varied question types that are autograded for instant feedback
  - Applying concepts through mini-case scenarios—students analyze typical teaching and learning situations, and then create a reasoned response to the issues presented in the scenario
  - Reflecting about and justifying the choices they made within the teaching scenario problem

MindTap helps instructors facilitate better outcomes by evaluating how future teachers plan and teach lessons in ways that make content clear and help diverse students learn, assessing the effectiveness of their teaching practice, and adjusting teaching as needed. MindTap enables instructors to facilitate better outcomes by doing the following:

- Making grades visible in real time through the Student Progress app so that students and instructors always have access to current standings in the class
- Using the Outcome Library to embed national education standards and align them to student learning activities, and also allowing instructors to add their state's standards or any other desired outcome

- Allowing instructors to generate reports on students' performance with the click of a mouse against any standards or outcomes that are in their MindTap course
- Giving instructors the ability to assess students on state standards or other local outcomes by editing existing or creating their own MindTap activities, and then by aligning those activities to any state or other outcomes that the instructor has added to the MindTap Outcome Library

MindTap for *Powerful Social Studies for Elementary Students,* fourth edition, helps instructors easily set their course because it integrates into the existing Learning Management System (LMS) and saves instructors time by allowing them to customize fully any aspect of the learning path. Instructors can change the order of the student learning activities, hide activities they don't want for the course, and—most important—create custom assessments and add any standards, outcomes, or content they do want (e.g., YouTube videos or Google Docs). Learn more at www.cengage.com/mindtap.

Instructor Supplements for the Fourth Edition

Instructor's Manual

An online Instructor's Manual accompanies this book. It contains information to assist you in designing the course, including in-class activities, technology resources, learning objectives, and homework and assessment suggestions.

Test Bank

For assessment support, a test bank includes true/false, multiple-choice, and essay questions for each chapter.

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Acknowledgments

We wish to thank the colleagues, students, and teachers who have collaborated with us and enriched our understanding of social studies. We are grateful to our reviewers for their suggestions and critiques. We also express our appreciation to the elementary social studies instructional team at Michigan State University for their insights on the use of this textbook in their methods courses. Finally, we wish to acknowledge Jere Brophy, whom we dearly missed on this project, but whose wisdom was ever-present throughout the process.

1

Elementary Social Studies:

What Is It? What Might It Become?

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

1-1 Understand that the major purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good, as citizens of a culturally diverse society in an interdependent world.

1-2 Describe the role and function of national, state, and local organizations in curriculum and instructional decision making.

1-3 Describe and prepare to implement the curricular and instructional approaches that are most congruent with the content designated for your grade level and that most effectively meet the needs of your students.

1-4 Describe what is meant by a scope and sequence and the challenges associated with the expanded community framework.

1-5 Explain what you will consider when designing the social studies curriculum to meet the needs of your students.

Teacher Voice Dominic Knighten, Teaching Intern

In order to support my claim on how this textbook has opened my eyes to not only teaching, but the art of successfully teaching social studies, I have to first paint the picture of my approach to using teacher education course textbooks prior to this one. The books were—well, let's just say books. They were required textbooks on the course syllabus that I would purchase and place to one side, with no anticipation to crack open, unless the dreaded word *quiz* arose. I assumed that any information I needed to retain would be provided during class discussion. With this mentality, I began my senior year with this "social studies" course as the first on my agenda. Social studies? "How am I supposed to teach social studies?" I would ask myself, as I looked at my course schedule, dreading that first session. Our first meeting came and we talked about how the term *social studies* encompasses so much more than I initially believed. I found out it included history, economics, geography, psychology, anthropology, political science, and so forth. My mind raced with concern about my ability to teach social studies as the professor described the range of instructional strategies that will be addressed in the course. How can I do this? Is teaching really the career for me? I was constantly asking myself such questions those first few weeks of class. There is more to it than having kids read out of their textbook.

Admittedly, I was glad to see that Brophy, Alleman, and Halvorsen validated my dissatisfaction with the traditional social studies textbook as the sole informational source. While reading about the various curricular and instructional approaches make much more sense than what I remember experiencing, I still wasn't convinced that social studies was very important—or that I could possibly make social studies instruction for

NCSS Teacher Standards

› **NCSS.PS.1.1.** Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to provide learning opportunities at the appropriate school levels that support learners' intellectual, social, and personal development.

my students very engaging—until my professor gave us an assignment called "Social Studies Is Everywhere." Initially (and I won't lie), I thought it was one more example of busy work. Boy, was I wrong!

The professor indicated that the overall goals were to understand and appreciate the world through a social studies lens, to create meaning, and to experience memorable learning in ways heretofore not imagined. Thank goodness that we, as a class, brainstormed ideas before we set out on this adventure. I remained hesitant until I landed my idea and launched into the experience.

Since my girlfriend and I were getting a dog, and the related decisions would consume a big chunk of time, why not use that? I won't bore you with the details, but I will confess that the learning experience was awesome. We had to locate the Humane Society (geography); buy all the animal supplies, including food, feeding dish, dog collar, and sweater, and pay the veterinarian for shots (economics); follow the regulations

Keith Knighton

established by the apartment's management for having a pet (political science); and so forth. It was astounding and never-ending. Believe me, I was pumped to share my experience with my peers. Guess what! I got to the next class session early! All of our stories were unique—and each seemed to be more compelling than the previous one. Examples ranged from opportunity costs (Do I go camping on the weekend or stay home and study?), planning a parent's milestone birthday party (history), having wisdom teeth pulled and figuring out where the food and drugs consumed during the misery came from (geography), and so forth.

Somewhere in the middle of our class session, it struck me like a ton of bricks. Social studies really does explain how the world works. What could be more important? It really is everywhere! Who cares if the textbooks are very limited? It doesn't give me an excuse to write off social studies. I have come to realize that authentic examples of social studies are unlimited. For me, social studies has gone from the least liked and least important subjects to the top of my list.

While it sounds corny, I encourage you to do the "social studies is everywhere" exercise–even if the professor doesn't assign it. I promise you, you'll never again say social studies is boring–and besides, finally as an adult, you'll figure out what it is!

Don't let your fears hold you back from cracking open this book, or the belief that this is "just another college textbook." It is much more than that. It's the first step to helping you make social studies come to life in the classroom and opening up the minds and imaginations of students. Motivation is the heart of the matter!

Dominic Knighten, Classroom Teacher, Four Years Later

Without a shadow of a doubt, I know I still love what I'm doing, but as I look back on my previous contributions to this book, I can't help but question what happened to the fire I had. Is it still there? Where has my zeal to bring social studies to life gone? In a way, it's almost embarrassing to write today, four years later, as an educator who in many ways has found himself blending into the scene. Some may ask what's wrong with blending into the scene and doing things like everyone else. But that's not why I went into education. This isn't why anyone should go into education. I came into the classroom believing that all subject matter has to be brought to life, especially social studies. In only a matter of four short years, that's all fading away, but the urge to do it is still there. Perhaps outside pressures are forcing me to devote more time in other areas and spend less time with social studies. Or maybe it's that I've become so accustomed to curricula outlining the course of action for you that I've forgotten that genuine social studies instruction needs to not follow a scope or sequence. Best practices come from intuitive teachers, who understand their students and create dynamic lessons that connect the students. Educators must draw on their intuition and look for ways to enrich what they are teaching through the use of authentic assignments that allow students to explore communities outside the classroom. It's at this point that students begin to see that social studies is everywhere, not just an isolated window of learning during the week. Although I've grown in leaps and bounds in my teaching, reviewing my previous thoughts remind me that I'm still passionate about teaching social studies.

Listen in on the conversations of educators, and you may hear the disgruntled view regarding the time allotted to literacy and math, and how that excludes spending any substantive time on the arts and sciences. We see the importance of the latter, but in an assessment-driven culture, those "other" subject areas are devalued, despite research that promotes their social and democratic importance.

There's no denying the limitations of time in the day of an educator. However, it's used almost as an excuse, serving as the preventive measure to stunt the development of socially aware minds. On average, students spend roughly 37 hours a week in school, and in situations such as my own, only 1 hour of that is devoted to explicit social studies instruction. So you might assume that since I know all this, my thrill for the

social sciences, and instilling within my students the four fundamentals of social studies (history, geography, economics, and political science), would yield an amazing hour a week for my students. It still does not.

I'll admit that I find myself spending less time teaching social studies in the way that I envisioned it being done, in a very engaging, thought-provoking, and authentic manner. I came into teaching believing that I'd be a front runner, a soloist—not hindered by the issue of time like other teachers, but with the creative ability to infuse social studies into all my lessons, regardless of the subject area. I wanted to use social studies as an opportunity to enrich the lives of my students, as they're able to explore the world.

Do we let limitations prevent the exploration of social studies in the 21st-century classroom? Absolutely not! I used to believe that the social studies curriculum that we use in the classroom was a limitation in teaching this vital subject. The content was bland, and it didn't promote the type of enriched lives that social studies teaching can provide. The problem with how social studies is still being taught is that it's carved into isolated blocks of time, as if it doesn't exist in every capacity of teaching and life—life that extends far beyond the limitations of a 37-hour school week. During college, I had grand visions of how I would go about integrating the subject matter that I was so passionate about, but the rigor and other demands once you're in the classroom can easily distract you from holding to these values.

What I propose is a more radical idea: creating communities of practice outside school for students to learn social studies. Let the world, and their communities, be their classroom, and whatever block of time that's allotted for social studies instruction during the week can become another community where they can showcase their ideas. Educators are teaching a 21st-century learner, with a desire to explore, so why not capitalize on the opportunities that the world beyond school provides?

Take, for example, how we launch the exploration of the four foundations of social studies in my own classroom. Students are asked to put on their respective hats (such as a geographer's hat) and they begin to think like a geographer. *Students, today we're going to learn about relative and absolute location. Who can describe some landmark features of their neighborhood?* Discussion begins among the students, examples are shared, and in this enriched dialogue, the meanings of *relative* and *absolute location* are created by the students.

Now, you may be thinking, "Great class, objective met, the half-hour is up, and we'll meet again in a few days for another half-hour." There are so many ways to connect the outside world to the classroom and allow the students to use what they see in their lives as teaching tools. If you want to get students involved, do some investigative work in advance. Go explore their neighborhoods, find out where they live, take photos of landmarks in their neighborhood, and shock them on the day of the activity when you use their community as the examples in the room. Go through the same lesson, but this time, send them back out into the world to do the same thing you did.

Students need to see that social studies is everywhere! I know this myself, but still get so caught up in the "other" work of the week that I lose sight of the opportunities that quality social studies instruction can provide. This is the case not only with social studies, but also the overall opportunities that can engage the learner through authentic discussion, collaborative learning, and meaningful activities to connect life outside school to the classroom.

As I write this, I'm inspired again, and filled with visions of how to bring to life our curriculum and our upcoming unit on economics. One of the 56 intermediate school districts in our state has crafted a social studies curriculum that we use in the classroom. Educators with a focus and interest in social studies have designed lessons, nine of these being an economics unit for fourth graders, drawing from different resources.

As I prepare to start this unit in the upcoming weeks, I know that I want to bring it to life by making it belong to the students and using their experiences in their community to drive the discussions both inside and outside the classroom. With big ideas of scarcity, supply, demand, and a marketplace economy in mind,

I've decided to launch the unit by hooking the students right away—say, by bringing in a coveted object such as an iPhone and telling the students that this is for all of them. Without formally introducing them to the vocabulary, I'll ask the students what the problem is if my intent is for each of them to have a device. Conversation within our classroom community, which is student driven, will bring out the big ideas. To bring in the idea of the marketplace economy, for example, I'll use the analogy of visiting a grocery store, to find that there is only one of everything. Why might there be only one particular item that is made available for everyone? Students can talk about the fact that there may not be enough demand for that item, or that perhaps not enough of the item has been made (scarcity).

The rich community assignment outside of school will be found in what I'll have them do at home. I ask the students to bring their families a small piece of candy, along with a note:

Please enjoy this candy—it's for all of you!

It's a simple enough thing, but it will get a conversation going, as students will document how their family responds to the idea of sharing such a scarce commodity. Their home becomes a market economy, and eventually becomes a classroom as well, as this assignment is pushed even further. Students are encouraged to talk with their families about scarcity issues in their lives. What is there a demand for? Why are they unable to get what they want?

The "why" part of that situation will fuel the discussion the next time we meet in class, as their ideas lie at the center of the lesson. The students have now become active learners in their own authentic contexts, through exploration in real-life communities of practice.

These ideas draw from two lessons from the curriculum that I described, but I've taken the pages in our curriculum notebooks, brought them to life, and have put the learning into the students' hands. In a digital world, access to information is at the students' fingertips. They are seekers of knowledge, not vessels that can sit in the classroom for 30 minutes, soaking up information. The tools that we use to teach social studies must not only spark students' interest, but allow them the opportunity to tap into their exploratory nature. My own son spends countless amounts of time searching for things on YouTube when he's looking for answers, or for entertainment.

As educators, we must give our students opportunities to seek things out, in order to enrich their learning. I'm not discrediting the workbook pages that we've assembled from a great online resource bank for social studies instruction, but if we only think of them as pages, they'll become like every other part of our mapped-out day.

Social studies cannot be seen as just another block of time in our already busy day, but rather as an opportunity to bring the world to life and help students understand how the world works so that they can be intelligent decision makers. To do this requires something more out of us as educators, and the reading of this book is a start. It can cause you to tap back into the interests that made you get into teaching in the first place. Ask yourself what these interests are. What inspires you to teach social studies? How can you use it as a tool to create more meaning in life? How can social studies become meaningful in the lives of your students? In order to answer these questions, we have to get creative and use our imaginations.

Social studies is the hardest thing you could ever ask me to explain. I guess social studies is a class where you learn about different things that happen around the world, and do reports on stuff that happens around the world, or things like that.

A fifth grader quoted by Stodolsky, Salk, & Glaessner (1991, p. 98)

When I first started teaching social studies to young children (five-, six-, and seven-year-olds), I felt like I needed to start by explaining and defining social studies to them. To do that well, I began with some very broad, general definitions. Literacy is learning about words and letters and how they work to help people share ideas.

Math is learning about numbers and shapes and how to solve problems with them. Science is learning about the things in the world around us. Social studies is learning about people and the world we've created to live in.

When you think about people, social studies includes groups of people, how they live together, their needs, and the rules that help them to survive. It includes learning about the culture and traditions of people, as well as the places that they live. Social studies also encompasses the world around us as it relates to how people live, how they've adjusted to their environment, as well as how they've changed the world to meet their own needs. We learn all of these things in the context of the present day, as well as learning about people who have lived in the past and speculating about those who will live in the future. Throughout all of these discussions and lessons, the focus is on the logic of it all, making sense of the decisions individuals and groups have made. At its most basic level, social studies is figuring out why people do what they do everyday and making sense of the world.

Therefore, if we are expecting our students to be productive and contributing members of society in the future, we must *teach social studies so that they can learn how the world works. Without social studies, students fail to understand and have an appreciation for the lives and decision making of others. Students with a strong social studies education can begin to understand how people are alike and develop a broader understanding of why people in other countries, cultures, and religions are different and appreciate those differences. With our world becoming smaller due to globalization, this is a crucial skill to begin to develop early on.*

A fourth-grade teacher

To me, social studies does not always occur in a predetermined 30- or 45-minute block of time during the day. Instead, social studies experiences that motivate my students to greater understanding often expand the required "basics" by integrating multiple subjects, utilizing learning possibilities outside of school, and valuing students as necessary contributors to the curriculum. Social studies is an opportunity for me to genuinely connect my students' personal and collective concerns, questions, and interests about their lives to the wider concerns, questions, and interests of our community. These connections between self and world are often described in social studies standards, but I value the real social studies teaching and learning as the unique process of making generic, but important, content become worthwhile and exciting in the minds of my students.

The purpose of social studies is to provide a goal-oriented sequence for students and classrooms to (1) become aware of current or past social issues or problems; (2) investigate these social studies concepts by employing and being deliberate in using specific inquiry skills, such as asking questions, identifying problems, collecting data, etc.; and (3) take action with their learning by creating a product or service for others that demonstrates their increased social studies understanding. Social studies should give students the chance to assert themselves and their thinking in the context of something real, but real as defined by the students, [to realize] the impact of their new knowledge on their lives, and to [increase] their efforts to want to learn more.

A fourth-grade teacher

Quite simply, social studies education helps students understand the world around them. Not the physical world, as science does; rather, the relationships, people, and systems that surround and impact their everyday lives. At the youngest grades, social studies is the first content area that pushes students to look beyond themselves and past their egocentric sensibilities. For the first time, young learners look at their families, schools, and communities and begin to see themselves as a part of something bigger. As this awareness spreads past their doorstep and beyond their classroom walls, it becomes the building blocks for nurturing the next generation of citizens, leaders, problem solvers, and thinkers. By focusing on the connections among people, places, and systems, social studies education allows students to make sense of a very complex world and gives them the tools to make positive changes today, tomorrow, and long into their futures.

A second-grade teacher

Social studies is a way to connect every discipline. It allows us to explain who we are and why we are here—what problems we have now and how we might look to the past to explore solutions and steer away from potential land mines. Social studies is such a rich area for understanding and exploring language and culture, but also numbers and science and music and logic. It allows students who might not succeed in other subjects to be creative and demonstrate their ability to master complex material in unique ways.

A fifth-grade teacher

Social studies is an ongoing process by which students learn about the world around them and how they are a part of it. They learn about how their interactions with others and the environment, as well as the decisions they make, affect the world they live in by studying the major focus areas of the subject. I believe that the major purpose of social studies is to teach students how to make decisions that promote the values of our democratic society; moreover, how to critically think and make rational, informed decisions that will positively affect their lives and the lives of others. Social studies is nothing if there is no life application.

A fifth-grade teacher

As these quotes illustrate, there is a common belief that social studies education is about making sense of what happens in the world. Beyond that commonality, however, there are varying views about social studies and its nature as a school subject. Lacking a clear sense of social education purposes and goals to be enacted within a limited space in the school curriculum, many teachers are uncertain about how to teach social studies (Thornton, 2005). Often, they downgrade its importance in the curriculum or offer fragmented programs because they select activities for convenience or student interest, rather than for their value as a means of accomplishing clearly formulated social education goals. Such confusion is readily understandable.

The history of social studies has been marked by ongoing debates over the nature, scope, and definition of the field (Armento, 1993; Evans, 2004; Halvorsen, 2013; Seixas, 2001). Social studies educators often disagree on both the general purposes of social studies to be accomplished within the school day and how to achieve particular goals effectively. Consequently, social studies instructional materials differ considerably, not only in the general content included (e.g., history or geography), but also in their approach to common topics (e.g., which tribes are covered in units on Native Americans, which countries are featured in units on geographical regions).

Fortunately, most competing points of view can be understood as contrasting combinations of a few basic ideas about the purposes and goals of social education. Once you understand these ideas, you can clarify your own position, recognize the thinking behind social studies curriculum guides and instructional materials prepared by others, and, if necessary, adapt them to better serve your students' social studies needs.

Although competing ideas about social studies exist, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), the leading national professional organization for social studies education, provides a definition that we think you should know and be able to apply to your practice. NCSS (2010, p. 3) defines social studies as "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."

Besides clarifying and taking a position regarding social studies, elementary school teachers face the challenge of limited time devoted to social studies. Research confirms this trend, which is attributable in large part to the requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation passed in 2002 and its Adequate Yearly Progress benchmarks (Fitchett & Heafner, 2010). Throughout the book, and particularly in Chapter 12, we describe how social studies can partially address the time issue through integration with other subjects. (It is, by nature, an interdisciplinary subject since it comprises history and many social science disciplines.) We show how other subjects can be integrated effectively with social studies and how social studies content can be taught in conjunction with other subjects such as literacy, science, and math.

In this initial chapter, we introduce you to the research base that informs ideas about powerful social studies teaching. We briefly describe social studies and its history, with the intent of helping you think about what it can become for you and your students. We describe the major approaches to social studies in general and elementary social studies in particular.

THE **BIG** IDEA

Overarching Questions

What is social studies, and what curricular and instructional approach(es) will I use to make it meaningful and contribute to students' development of social understanding and civic efficacy?

1. Social studies can be viewed as citizenship education for its purpose is to help young people make reasoned and informed decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse society in an interdependent world.
2. While educational decisions in the United States are generally made at the state and local levels, national organizations provide guidance.
3. Curricular approaches such as cultural literacy and cultural universals refer to the content that is taught, and instructional approaches such as inquiry and narrative refer to the way that the content is taught.
4. *Sequence* refers to the way the curriculum builds or progresses from one unit to another and from one grade level to another, and *scope* refers to developing the topics and big ideas.
5. Given the standards and content expectations as a framework, teachers are encouraged to personalize the social studies curriculum to meet the needs of their students.

The Research Base that Informs Ideas about Powerful Social Studies Teaching

Chapter 14, the last chapter of this book, describes 12 research-based principles of effective teaching of all subjects. These principles include a supportive classroom climate, coherent content, thoughtful discourse, and strategy teaching. We suggest that you peruse Chapter 14 before reading the other chapters to obtain an introduction to important research about powerful and effective teaching. But we put this chapter last to help you integrate everything you have learned in the book (practice, theory, research, and your own ideas about social studies education). Throughout each of the rest of the chapters, we highlight one or more principles closely aligned to the chapter topic to help you bridge theory and practice. When all 12 principles are put together, the puzzle of powerful social studies teaching is complete.

1-1 Visions of Social Studies as Citizen Education

Social studies education is not as old a subject as the disciplines that it includes. Children learned lessons in history, geography, and political science long before there was "social studies" (Evans, 2004; Halvorsen, 2013). The emergence of social studies as an interdisciplinary school subject is often credited to an influential committee report issued by the National Education Association in 1916. This report called for incorporating content from previously disconnected courses in history, geography, and civics within a curriculum strand to be called "social studies."

Its primary purpose would be social education, and its content would be selected based on its personal meaning and relevance to students and its value in preparing them for citizenship. This same vision is emphasized by leading social studies educators and organizations. NCSS (2010, p. 3) states that the "primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world."

It wasn't until the 1920s, however, that the subject became a part of the school curriculum, and even then, it was often taught with separate foci on each of the disciplines. By the 1930s, however, social studies developed as its own comprehensive, pan-disciplinary approach at the elementary level. Topics began to replace the disciplines. Elementary social studies (Grades K–6) did in fact develop along the lines envisioned in the 1916 report. The curriculum drew from history, geography, civics, and economics, and later from sociology, anthropology, and psychology as well. Furthermore, the content was taught as interdisciplinary social studies organized by topic, rather than as school-subject versions of the academic disciplines taught as separate courses. Gradually, the *expanding communities* sequence became the dominant framework for structuring the elementary social studies curriculum. Also known as the *expanding horizons* or the *expanding environments* approach, this framework begins with the self and others in kindergarten and then, gradually, expands its purview to the family and school in first grade, the neighborhood in second grade, the community in third grade, the state and region in fourth grade, the nation in fifth grade, and the hemispheres or world in sixth grade.

Curricular historian Herbert Kliebard (2004) noted that curriculum debates in all school subjects, including social studies, reflect continuing struggles among supporters of four competing ideas about what should be the primary basis for K–12 education. The first group believes that schools should equip students with *knowledge that is lasting, important, and fundamental* to the human experience. This group typically looks to the academic disciplines, both as storehouses of important knowledge and as sources of authority on how this knowledge should be organized and taught.

The second group believes that *the natural course of child development* should be the basis for curriculum planning. This approach would key the content taught at each grade level to the interests and learning needs associated with its corresponding ages and stages.

The third group works backward from its perception of *society's needs,* seeking to design schooling to prepare children to fulfill adult roles in society. With this approach, students are often "tracked" into specific roles in life based upon their family background.

Finally, the fourth group seeks to use the schools to *combat social injustice and promote social change.* Consequently, it favors focusing curriculum and instruction on social policy issues. Many past and present curricular debates in social studies can be understood as aspects of the ongoing competition among these four general approaches to K–12 curriculum development.

1-2 National, State, and Local Roles in Curriculum and Instructional Decision Making

Who decides which elementary social studies program is used in your school? In the United States, educational decisions are generally made at the state and local levels. However, national organizations provide guidance. Earlier in this chapter,

we explained that the leading national professional organization for social studies education is the NCSS, which includes scholars, administrators, supervisors, and teachers. NCSS was founded in 1921 with the purpose of resolving conflicts over the content and purpose of social studies, addressing teacher certification requirements, introducing new social studies courses, and fostering smooth communications between education professors and discipline professors (Thornton, 2005). In 1994, and again in 2010, NCSS published curriculum standards for grades K–12 (NCSS, 2010). It organized the standards around what it identifies as the *10 themes of social studies*:

1. Culture
2. Time, Continuity, and Change
3. People, Places, and Environments
4. Individual Development and Identity
5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
6. Power, Authority, and Governance
7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
8. Science, Technology, and Society
9. Global Connections
10. Civic Ideals and Practices

NCSS lists purposes, knowledge, and processes for each of the 10 themes that students should be expected to learn at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. It also lists products for each of the 10 themes that students could create to demonstrate understanding. These are curriculum standards, which are intended to provide a framework for implementing content standards (NCSS, 2010, p. 12). As social studies is a pan-disciplinary subject, the NCSS themes also draw from multiple disciplines. For example, "people, places, and environments" draws from relevant content in anthropology, geography, and sociology. We suggest that you examine these curriculum standards (which can be found at www.socialstudies .org/standards/ strands).

In 2009, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers collaborated to begin work developing K–12 standards known as the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). They are written and reviewed by a range of teachers, administrators, and subject-matter experts. A total of 42 states and the District of Columbia have adopted the CCSS. They are research-based standards that reflect what college and workforce training programs expect of their students and workers, respectively. There are completed standards for the areas of English-language arts and literacy and mathematics. The CCSS for ELA and Literacy address content literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects.

There are no CCSS for social studies. However, a social studies framework has been developed by individual state leaders in social studies education, in collaboration with 15 professional organizations representing the four core areas of civics, economics, geography, and history. This framework, *The College, Career, and Civic Life Framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History* (NCSS, 2013), was developed to help guide states in revising their social studies standards to help prepare students for successful participation in college, careers, and civic life. This framework, known as the C3 Framework, is intended to be a guide, not a set of complete content standards. As such, it does not include content necessary for a social studies program; it does not feature disciplines beyond civics, economics, geography, and history, and it does not attend to the different abilities children bring to school. The framework has strong connections to the CCSS for ELA/Literacy. It is organized around an "Inquiry Arc"—an approach to learning that features the four dimensions in social studies:

1. *Developing Questions and Planning Investigations:* Students develop questions (both compelling questions and supporting questions) and plan inquiries.
2. *Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools:* Students determine the content needed in the disciplines of civics, economics, geography, and history, to answer questions.
3. *Gathering, Evaluating, and Using Evidence:* Students develop skills for analyzing and evaluating sources to answer their questions and back their claims with evidence.
4. *Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action:* Students engage in a range of means (e.g., discussion, video productions, and writing) to communicating their preliminary and final conclusions to their inquiries and take constructive, collaborative action.

Two recent NCSS publications, *Social Studies for the Next Generation: The C3 Framework for Social Studies* (NCSS, 2013) and *Teaching the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework: Exploring Inquiry-Based Instruction in Social Studies* (Swan, Lee, Mueller, & Day, 2014), are indispensable guides for classroom teachers interested in implementing framework. Additionally, sample inquiries spanning grade levels and topics can be found at the Inquiry Design Model website: (http://www.c3teachers.org/inquiry-design-model/)

States often designate committees comprised of subject matter experts (e.g., professors, administrators, and teachers) to write what students should achieve by the end of each grade level. While the NCSS organizes content by theme (e.g., time, continuity, and change), states generally move to the next level of specificity, organizing content by discipline (e.g., civics, history, geography, and economics). State assessments are written with the intention of alignment with the content and are used to measure adequate yearly progress for schools and to learn the areas in which students struggle. Students generally do not take standardized assessments in social studies until the upper elementary grades or middle school.

States that decide to use the C3 Framework to guide the creation of their standards need to engage in a rigorous local process of selecting appropriate content to ensure that students are prepared. New York, for example, has accepted the challenge, resulting in the creation of a K–12 Social Studies Toolkit with an emphasis on the Inquiry Arc, which is central to the C3 Framework (Swan, Grant, & Lee, 2015).

Local districts then tailor the curriculum to their needs and decide the appropriate instructional practices to help teachers fulfill the state content expectations. Teachers sometimes write their own curriculum based on the state content expectations and tailor it to their particular students' needs and interests.

Explore your state's social studies content expectations. What social science disciplines are included? What knowledge, skills, and values are students expected to acquire?

1-3 Curricular and Instructional Approaches

Now that you have some background on the history of this subject and have gained a sense of the decision making associated with it, it is important to understand the various curricular and instructional approaches implemented in classrooms. While the distinctions among them are often blurry, we attempt to distinguish them.

Curricular approach refers to the content that is taught. It is often also referred to as the *scope*. John Dewey (1902, p. 190), known as the father of progressive education, described the curriculum as "the cumulative outcome of the efforts, the strivings, and the successes of the human race generation after generation … not

as a mere accumulation, not as a miscellaneous heap of separate bits of experience, but in some organized and systematized way." Thus, the curriculum is the knowledge about subjects that experts have developed and refined over time and organized into concrete pieces for children to learn and understand. As we describe the curriculum, we refer to what is called the *formal curriculum,* which is what states, school districts, and textbooks recommend that children should know and understand. However, curriculum also includes an informal component, or what is also called the *hidden curriculum,* referring to what is taught unintentionally.

Nieto (2002, p. 28) defines the hidden curriculum as the "subtle or not-so-subtle messages that are not part of the intended curriculum." Teachers should think about the subtle, often unintentional messages or lessons that are conveyed through their teaching of formal curriculum. This includes what content is selected and what content is left out. For example, often sources provide only one perspective, and interpretations are usually subjective. To the best of their ability, teachers should provide multiple perspectives on historical events and public issues.

Instructional approach is the way in which the curriculum is taught. We consider instructional approach as a guide that a teacher uses in his or her decisions about the different ways of teaching content. Will the students learn through intensive, hands-on work with globes and maps? Will they learn history primarily through biography? Will they learn through case studies or narratives? These decisions are guided in part by the social science discipline being taught. In addition to the broad instructional approaches that we describe in this chapter, we describe many particular instructional strategies in subsequent chapters.

1-3a. Curricular Approaches

Although there are many curricular approaches to elementary social studies education, we limit our discussion here to only a few examples. Most elementary schools do not follow one curricular approach entirely; generally, they draw from several approaches.

1-3b. Cultural Literacy/Core Knowledge

E. D. Hirsch, Jr. (1987) proposed cultural literacy as the basis for curriculum development. He produced a list of over 5,000 items of knowledge that he believed should be acquired in elementary school as a way to equip students with a common base of prior knowledge to inform their social and civic decision making. Subsequently, educators inspired by Hirsch's book have used it as a basis for developing the Core Knowledge Sequence, which encompasses language arts, world history and geography, American history and geography, visual arts, music, mathematics, and science.

Children study the disciplines of *history and geography.* First graders study ancient Egypt and the early American civilizations (Mayas, Incas, and Aztecs). Second graders study ancient India, China, and Greece, along with American history up to the Civil War, as well as immigration and citizenship. Third graders study ancient Rome and Byzantium, the Vikings, various Native American tribal groups, and the 13 English colonies prior to the American Revolution. You can learn more about the Core Knowledge Sequence at www.coreknowledge.org/.

As a content base for social studies, we think that the Core Knowledge Sequence has some potential for powerful social studies teaching and learning. However, we believe that teachers need to be skilled at helping students connect the discrete pieces of factual knowledge by making clear the powerful ideas that connect them. We believe the study of cultural literacy has potential, but it is critical to build on children's prior knowledge and experience when using it.

1-3c. Cultural Universals

Cultural universals are defined as basic human needs and social experiences found in all societies, past and present. If these topics are taught with an appropriate focus on powerful ideas, students will develop a basic set of connected understandings about how the social system works, how and why it got that way over time, how and why it varies across location and cultures, and what all of it might mean for personal, social, and civic decision making. While Alleman and Brophy (2001, 2002, 2003b) developed this curricular approach for the early grades, it can be applied to many of the topics covered in the middle or upper elementary grades.

The cultural universals approach is based on the premise that children can understand and appreciate historical episodes described in narrative form, with emphasis on the motives and actions of key individuals; and that they can understand aspects of customs, culture, economics, and politics that focus on universal human experiences and on adaptation problems that are familiar to them and for which they have developed schemas or routines. It also unveils the "mysteries" that the social world presents (from the children's perspective), helping them view the cultural practices under study as rational means of meeting needs and pursuing wants. For more information about the cultural universals as a curricular approach, see *Excursions,* a three-volume series of field-tested units aligned with NCSS themes (Alleman & Brophy, 2001, 2002, 2003b).

1-3d. Learning in History and the Social Sciences

Most elementary social studies content expectations are organized by discipline: history and the core social science disciplines (anthropology, civics, economics, and geography). Separate content expectations are listed for each discipline for the early grades, middle grades, and high school. This approach reflects a commitment to teaching the particular content and processes (skills) associated with each discipline. The purpose of this approach is not to make "mini-historians" (Levstik & Barton, 2005) or mini-economists, but to engage students in authentic tasks that adults perform to make sense of the human condition (Newmann, Marks, & Gamoran, 1995). One feature of this approach is the potential that it offers for rich, substantive learning of the unique knowledge and skills of each discipline.

In history, for example, it is important for students to examine primary sources and compare competing sources of evidence to draw well-founded tentative conclusions. In geography, students need opportunities to construct and analyze a variety

of maps (physical and political) and to assess migration patterns for push-pull factors. In economics, students should experience firsthand that scarcity is the result of living in an environment with seemingly unlimited human needs and wants, but limited resources. In political science (civics), students should learn how people, in the past and present, have interpreted ideas in core documents, such as the U.S. Constitution, in fundamentally different and often conflicting ways.

Joy Hakim's *A History of US* series of books (2007) is an example of a text focused on particular disciplinary content and processes in history education. Hakim is a former journalist who set out to make history textbooks lively, engaging, and relevant to children. She draws upon primary sources (e.g., core documents, diary entries, advertisements, maps, and photographs) and invites readers to interpret these primary materials themselves. The *Freedom: A History of US* series comprises 10 chronologically organized volumes presenting material from the very beginning of the United States to the present. For more information, see www.joyhakim.com.

While this approach has the potential for learning in both the content and processes of each discipline, one of its drawbacks is that it can lead to the study of each discipline independent of one another, rather than in the integrated manner in which real-life issues and problems are framed. This challenge reflects a perennial dilemma in social studies education: whether to teach by discipline or by topic. Your goals and what you want social studies to become in your classroom should guide your decision making.

1-3e. Instructional Approaches

There is a wide range of instructional approaches that teachers can select to make the curricular content meaningful and memorable. Again, the decision begins with your goals, your vision for social studies education, and the nature of the content that you are teaching. We describe several widely used instructional approaches in the next sections.

Inquiry-based approach. Inquiry teaching, a set of processes that can be applied to a wide range of curricular approaches, has been around for a long time. In fact, in his classic book, *How We Think* (1910), John Dewey outlined the basic steps of inquiry teaching, which are still followed in principle. These steps include describing the key features of a problem or situation, suggesting possible explanations or solutions, gathering evidence that can be used to test the accuracy of the explanations or solutions, evaluating the solutions or explanations, and developing tentative conclusions. Students ask questions, formulate hypotheses, collect data to answer the question, analyze the data, and answer the questions posed. More discussion of inquiry-based approaches is given in Chapter 10.

All inquiry approaches share a common feature of asking and answering questions scientifically. Inquiry connotes "minds-on" learning—asking questions and exploring possibilities. It requires pulling ideas apart, analyzing them, and putting them back together. It can be used at all grade levels; however, more guidance is needed in the early grades. While many experts characterize inquiry teaching as student centered, we believe it requires balance to be effective, with the teacher playing an active role throughout the process.

Narrative approach. In a narrative approach, children ask questions, conduct research, and answer questions about social science concepts in the context of an engaging story (either based on actual events or based on general community and economic structures, such as neighborhoods or local businesses). Storypath is an example of this approach, which draws upon inquiry and problem solving. The intent is for students to create meaning from experience. Students actually "live the story," as they coconstruct the story plot with their teacher and acquire deep

understandings of the people and events in a particular time and place. All students are included in the story, as they create believable characters and grapple with real problems. The approach engages students, and through personalizing, it makes the experience meaningful and memorable (McGuire & Cole, 2010, pp. 25–27).

Storypath offers a way to organize social science understandings into meaningful learning experiences, challenging students to consider the value dimensions and implications of their decisions. It combines students' imaginations with real-life experiences through an inquiry process and structurally uses the story form of setting, characters, and plot. The story can be based on historical events or on typical structures that children encounter on a daily basis (e.g., local communities and businesses). Storypath uses a narrative structure that helps students grasp concepts in a meaningful context (McGuire & Cole, 2010, pp. 25–26).

The idea of Storypath was developed over 40 years ago in Scotland. More recently, Margit E. McGuire refined it, based upon years of experience with teachers and students. Currently, sixteen units are available for elementary students. Examples of topics include "Safari," "Great Barrier Reef," "Oregon Trail," and "Life in Ancient Egypt." For more information, see fac-staff.seattleu.edu/mmcguire/web/.

Social scientific issues analysis. Issues analysis is an instructional approach suggested by social studies educators who believe that debating social and civic issues is the most direct way to develop a disposition toward critical thinking and reflective decision making in our citizens (Engle & Ochoa, 1988; Evans & Saxe, 1996). Most proposals for issues-centered social studies have focused on the secondary grades, but some have suggested that primary-grade social studies should engage students in inquiry and debate about social policy issues. Reflective discussion of social issues and related decision-making opportunities should be included in teaching social studies at all grade levels, although it is important to consider the age-appropriateness of both the content of the issue and the method of discussion.

With issues analysis, students deliberate about matters of public concern about which there is reasonable disagreement. Issues can be historical or contemporary. For example, they might focus on the effects of natural disasters on humans. Through the study of earthquakes, students could analyze their causes and consequences, how human rights are both abused and protected during earthquakes, and how countries can help each other during disasters (Pang, Fernekes, & Nelson, 2010). As another example, students could debate whether drivers should be allowed to text-message while driving, or whether school uniforms should be required. To teach issues analysis effectively, children need practice in reading material related to the topic, taking a stand and defending their position with evidence or logic, considering other points of view, and listening to others' perspectives (Harris, 2002). Most teachers do not use this approach in the elementary classroom because it is time-intensive, often requires background reading, and departs from traditional approaches. However, issues-centered education offers rich opportunities for children to learn valuable content and to see themselves as future citizens.

Project-based learning Project-based learning (which is a kind of problem-based learning) actively involves students in studying a topic that has meaning and application to the world beyond school (Katz & Chard, 2000). The topic can be generated by the teacher or by students. The approach represents a form of "learning by doing" that has been hailed by many advocates of progressive pedagogy. Historically, teachers using this approach selected topics based upon children's perceived interests. It involves exploration (often through data collection) of the topic, structured by the teacher in the form of learning centers, art projects, investigations, surveys, visits from local experts, field trips, and other activities. With project-based

learning, students often collaborate on a project over an extended period of time, producing an artifact or final project such as writing and presenting a play, producing a newspaper, creating a marketing brochure, or making a presentation to the public.

One example of project-based learning, developed by Halvorsen and Duke (2012), is a project about making improvements to a community park. Students visit the park, take photographs, and make observations about what needs improvement. They learn about how both citizens and the local government are responsible for maintaining and improving the park. They survey community members to determine which proposed improvements are most important. They then present the results of their survey and offer their suggestions for enacting their improvements to members of the city's parks and recreation department. The teacher provides explicit teaching and scaffolding of target skills within the context of the project, making teaching and learning relevant to students' everyday lives and grounded in their prior knowledge and experiences—characteristics that appear to lead to deeper learning and engagement in social studies.

Service learning. The idea behind service learning is that students serve their communities as a way of learning. Their work is related to the school curriculum (e.g., core knowledge, cultural universals, or disciplinary knowledge), and as a result of their efforts, they acquire insights into their local communities. The main distinction between service learning and community service is that service learning puts the emphasis on learning, while community service emphasizes service. Service learning integrates community service into classroom instruction. The content is drawn from the disciplines, core knowledge, cultural universals, or other specified curricular approaches, while community service focuses on volunteering and may or may not be connected to the school curriculum (Boyle-Baise, McClain, & Montgomery, 2010).

In 1988, the National Service-Learning Cooperative (1998) identified Essential Elements of Service Learning, which included clear goals for learning, interaction with community members, collaboration, reflection, and diversity. In 2001, Rahima Wade (2001) added a set of guidelines known as Principles of Social Justice–Oriented Service Learning. In her recommendations, students are at the center; issues must be relevant to them, and they should participate in the development of the service learning project. Boyle-Baise (2002) has proposed still another way of approaching service learning, emphasizing social justice through a multicultural lens. It emphasizes service for change that builds community, affirms diversity, and questions inequality. Boyle-Baise's stance regarding multicultural service learning embodies the notion of working with, not for, community people on projects they define; values diversity in its topics, relationships, and partnerships; and promotes service projects that are antiracist, inclusive, and socially just (Boyle-Baise, McClain, & Montgomery, 2010, p. 41). For more information on this example of service learning, examine the Banneker History Project (Boyle-Baise & Binford, 2005). Service learning is not monolithic. Academic goals are primary, and while the focus is on integrating service and classroom instruction, it includes service as charity, for civics, and for change. The challenge is to engage students in ways that can make a difference in the world.

Table 1-1 displays the ways in which a curricular approach can be taught in conjunction with two instructional approaches, with a focus on a basic human need: food. In the first column, we explore the powerful ideas associated with food through the cultural universals curricular approach. In the second and third columns, we show how two instructional approaches, narrative and service learning, can be used to teach the powerful ideas about food.

Table 1-1 A Curricular and Instructional Approach for Teaching About the Cultural Universal of Food

CURRICULAR APPROACH CULTURAL UNIVERSALS POWERFUL IDEAS EXAMPLES	NARRATIVE (STORYPATH) "THE SOUP COMPANY"
Food is a basic human need.	How do humans in different geographic places satisfy the basic human need for food? Soups come in many different forms and from many places. Begin by learning about soups eaten at home. *Create the setting:* the Soup Company.
People around the world tend to eat food from the same basic food groups, although the foods may look quite different due to culture, geography, personal preferences, and other factors.	Why do humans in different geographic places eat different kinds of food? Why do children in our class eat different kinds of soup? Create the characters. *Context Building*: Learn about soup and a healthy diet.
Locally grown food has many possible advantages, such as lower costs and sustaining the local economic environment by providing income to the producers.	What are the advantages and disadvantages of locally produced food? *Critical Incidents:* Troubles in the Soup Company.

1-4 The Expanding Communities Framework: A Traditional Scope and Sequence

The term *sequence* refers to the way the curriculum builds or progresses from one unit to another and from one grade level to another. Effective pedagogy involves teachers building upon students' prior knowledge, so it is important for teachers to know what content the children have already been taught. Often, a curriculum follows a spiral sequence, whereby students revisit content at progressively more sophisticated levels as they grow older. *Scope* refers to the depth of developing the topics and big ideas. Textbook publishers and teachers traditionally have relied on the expanding communities framework for organizing the elementary social studies curriculum. Figure 1-1 shows a depiction of the expanding communities for kindergarten through sixth grade.

For a time, this framework and the content scope and sequence associated with it were almost universal in U.S. elementary schools, and it still is used in many of

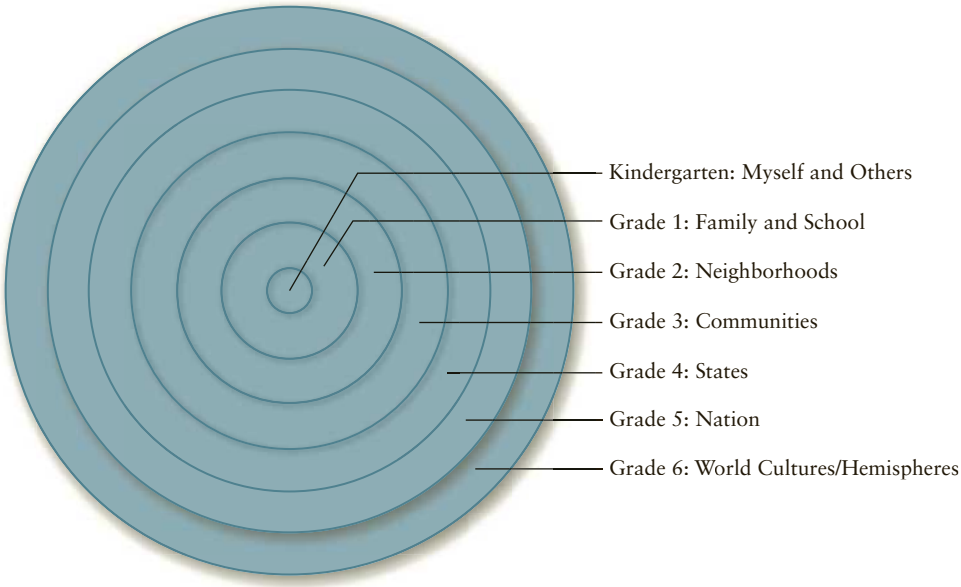


Figure 1-1 The expanding communities framework.

them. We suggest that you check your own state's content expectations regarding what topics are taught. The following topics are typically addressed in K–6 social studies programs:

- ***Kindergarten*:** *Self, home, school.* Discovering myself (Who am I? How am I alike and different from others?), school (my classroom; benefits of school), working together, living at home, community helpers, children in other lands, rules, and celebrating holidays.
- ***Grade 1*:** *Families and schools.* Family membership, recreation, work, cooperation, traditions, families in other cultures, how my family is alike and different from others, family responsibilities, the family at work, our school and other schools, and national holidays.
- ***Grade 2*:** *Neighborhoods.* Workers and services in the neighborhood; food, shelter, and clothing; transportation; communication; living in different neighborhoods; my role within the neighborhood; neighborhoods and communities in other cultures; farm and city life; and protecting our environment.
- ***Grade 3*:** *Communities.* Communities past and present, different kinds of communities, changes in communities, community government and services, communities in other countries, cities, careers, urban problems, business and industry, and pioneers and Native Americans.
- ***Grade 4*:** *Geographic regions.* World regions, people of the world, climatic regions, physical regions, population, food. Also, state studies (if not taught in the third grade). Our state government, state history, people of our state, state laws, state workers, and communities past and present. (Note: K–6 or K–8 social studies series typically cover geographic regions in their fourth-grade texts. However, local districts often omit or minimize the use of these texts and instead mandate that fourth grade be devoted to studying the state, using state-specific textbooks.)
- ***Grade 5*:** *U.S. history and geography.* The first Americans, exploration and discovery, colonial life, revolution and independence, westward movement, the Civil War, immigrants, lifestyles in the United States, values of the American people, and the United States as a world power. U.S. history is usually only covered up to the Civil War in fifth grade, with later history taught in middle school. Also, some fifth-grade texts include units on U.S. regions, Canada, and Mexico.
- ***Grade 6*:** *World cultures/hemispheres.* Political and economic systems, land and resources, people and their beliefs, comparative cultures. Western Hemisphere: Early cultures of South America, the major contemporary South American countries, Central American countries, Canada, Mexico, historical beginnings of the Western world. Eastern Hemisphere: Ancient Greece and Rome, Middle Ages, Renaissance, Middle East, Europe, Africa, India, and China.

Paul Hanna (1963), a former professor of education and the author of numerous articles and books about social studies education, who is most widely credited with developing and promoting the expanding communities approach, rationalized it as being logical, in that it starts with the family and then moves outward toward progressively wider human communities. This idea was viewed as convenient because it allowed for a holistic, coordinated approach to the study of people living in societies. He recommended that students study the ways that people in each community carry out basic human activities (cultural universals), such as providing for their physical needs, transporting goods and people, communicating with one another, and governing their societies.

Children would begin with small, familiar communities and then study the same issues in larger, less familiar communities. If implemented as Hanna envisioned, the expanding communities approach would produce systematic social studies instruction structured around powerful ideas. However, elementary social studies texts that supposedly implement the model have been criticized as ill-structured collections of factual expositions and skills exercises that follow the letter, but not the spirit, of Hanna's recommendations.

The expanding communities approach also has been criticized for being dull and boring; being too traditional and middle-class oriented in its treatment of families and communities; being sequenced according to adult rather than child logic (for example, a state is just as abstract a concept as a nation, so there is no reason why children must study the state before studying the nation); fragmenting the curriculum so that students do not get enough opportunity to see relationships that exist across communities; and failing to integrate skills instruction with instruction in content (Akenson, 1989; Frazee & Ayers, 2003).

Recently, efforts to interpret the expanding communities approach more broadly have led to shifts in content coverage (e.g., from a focus on Me and My Community to My Community and Other Communities in the Nation and World) in some of the newer curriculum documents around the country. Yet the expanding communities approach remains fairly entrenched. It is familiar to teachers, and so far it has proven adaptable enough to incorporate new content, embrace a range of curricular and instructional approaches, and respond to some criticisms without changing its basic structure.

Whether or not the expanding communities approach as spelled out in the textbook is identified as the culprit, there is widespread dissatisfaction with the curriculum content and instructional materials associated with this framework. Most of this criticism is focused on the primary grades and the textbooks that typically define the curriculum. Critiques of instructional materials, including the teachers' guides, indicate that its content is not driven by coherent social education goals (Haas & Laughlin, 2001; Howard, 2003; VanFossen, 2005). There is broad agreement that the content base of K–3 social studies is thin and redundant, and that most of this content (at least as it is presented in the textbooks) is trite, uninteresting, and either already known by students or likely to be learned by them through everyday experience (and thus not worth teaching in school).

A major reason for these problems is that the textbook series fail to articulate K–3 social studies as a coherent subject designed to develop connected sets of fundamental understandings about the social world and to move students toward clearly identified social education goals. As a result, many elementary teachers view (and teach) social studies as a collection of disconnected content and skill clusters, rather than as a coherent, goal-oriented curriculum composed of connected networks of knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions to action. A different set of problems arises with upper-grade social studies, as typically the content here is dense, laden with isolated facts, and with few authentic connections to students' everyday lives.

1-5 Guiding Questions for Selecting an Approach to Teaching Social Studies

As you can see, there are many competing ways that social studies is taught. In your own classroom, how you teach social studies will be guided by your position regarding your perspective and goals for social studies; by your state's, school district's, and school's approaches; and by the materials at your disposal. We strongly encourage you to personalize the curriculum in ways that meet the needs of your students and that fit your own educational philosophy, yet maintain the integrity of your school's expectations. While standards and content expectations provide a framework for what content you are expected to address, you have the ability to influence the curriculum and instructional approaches you implement. To assist you in the process, we offer some guiding questions. We encourage you to develop others as you work with your colleagues in creating the optimal social studies program for your students:

1. Does the approach have the capacity to help students become active, committed young citizens who are equipped with the tools and desire to make change for the common good?

2. Does the approach have the capacity to teach the history and core social science disciplines using powerful ideas that deepen students' knowledge, skills, and values?
3. Does the approach have the capacity to engage all learners intellectually by making content relevant, meaningful, and active?
4. Does the approach have the capacity to integrate social studies content with other subject areas?
5. Does the approach parallel the standards, curriculum guidelines, curriculum strands, or framework that the school system has adopted?
6. If the approach and materials you use do not follow these guidelines, how can you change them so that they do?

Whatever curricular and instructional approaches you follow, and whatever guidelines you develop for yourself, it is critical that they focus on powerful ideas rather than the trivial or insignificant. We define powerful ideas and give examples of them in Chapter 3.

With the national attention on math and literacy over the past several years, social studies has been waning; however, with the publication of the *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards* by the NCSS in 2013, the field has been reenergized. The document emphasizes the role of social studies in preparing students to be effective participants in our democracy. It goes without saying that this is vital. Our democratic republic will not be sustained unless students are aware of their changing cultural and physical environments; know the past; read, write, and think deeply; and act in ways that promote the common good.

This compelling document, as well as the robust materials becoming available to support it, will undoubtedly bring new life to your social studies teaching, and perhaps nudge you to let go of some of your past practices and replace them with more contemporary, compelling, and student-empowering learning opportunities.

Technology Tips

The C3 Framework is accessible online at www.socialstudies.org/c3. Other sources that expand on this initiative include S. Lazar, *C3 and the NY Project:* "How Far We've Come" (C3 Teachers, 2015). Accessible at www.c3teachers.org/c3-and-the-ny-project/ and "The Open Source Way" (Open Source.com 2015). Accessible at http://opensource.com/open-source-way.

Summary

Social studies is a pan-disciplinary subject that focuses on the social aspects of the human condition. It is informed primarily by history, geography, and the social sciences, but it also draws on content from the humanities, physical sciences, local connections, current events, and other sources. In addition to academic learning goals, social studies bears special responsibility for citizen education—promoting civic competence by helping 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.

Most social studies educators (including the NCSS, the leading national organization devoted to social studies education) share the commitment to improving the human condition and promoting civic competence, but they may differ in their views about what should be the primary purposes, goals, and content of the social studies curriculum.

In this chapter, we offered descriptions of several curricular and instructional approaches that show the range of ways in which social studies educators teach the subject, all of which have the capacity to meet this commitment. We also described the traditional sequence used for elementary social studies: the expanding communities. The problem with the expanding communities approach lies with the often-superficial treatment of lesson topics within it, featuring parades of trivial facts and low-level activities instead of the goal-oriented development of powerful ideas applied authentically.

The approach taken throughout this book emphasizes three key points: shifting from the expanding communities sequence to basic understandings about the human condition as the major rationale for selecting content, focusing on disciplinary knowledge and processes, and structuring this content around powerful ideas that are developed with the emphasis on their connections and applications.

The resurgence of social studies as the result of the C3 Framework speaks directly to our approach. It reemphasizes the importance of preparing our students to be effective participants in our democracy by ensuring that they are aware of their changing cultural and physical environments, know the past, read and think deeply, and act in ways that promote the common good.

Reflective Questions

1. Given your current priorities concerning social studies purposes and goals, what are the implications for your teaching?
2. Given what you have just read in Chapter 1, what was the most powerful insight you have acquired? What is one thing you still wonder about?
3. Imagine that the local school board is recommending that the teaching of social studies be temporarily suspended. How will you respond? Why?
4. Imagine that an interviewer asks you to compare the priorities of your former K–6 social studies teachers (based on what you recall from their instruction) to your own priorities. How would you respond?
5. As you reflect on your current social studies vision and what the authors had to say in this chapter, what will you consider adding or modifying? Explain.

Your Turn: What Is Social Studies?

For most people, trying to put together a large jigsaw puzzle without any idea of what the finished product should look like would be a pretty frustrating experience. For many children, social studies lessons are like puzzle pieces—they are examined individually but never connected to a big picture. These children experience years of content and learning opportunities without ever understanding, appreciating, or applying any ideas drawn from social studies. Rarely can they articulate what social studies is, why it is important, and how it affects their lives.

We suggest that you prepare a written statement describing what social studies means to you and how you will explain this to your students. Make sure that the statement reflects your social studies purposes and goals and their implications for your teaching. As you develop your plan, take into account the following elements drawn from this chapter:

- *Social studies is a pan-disciplinary subject.*
- *Social studies bears a special responsibility for citizenship education.*
- *Social studies should focus on teaching fundamental and powerful ideas about the human condition.*
- *Social studies should be coherent and goal-oriented and help students make sense of their world.*

There are many curricular and instructional approaches for social studies, most of which are tangentially connected to the longstanding sequence of expanding communities. These approaches embrace citizenship; address disciplinary knowledge and data-gathering skills; emphasize opportunities to examine, critique, and rethink past traditions, existing social studies practices, and methods of problem solving; and provide personal development, with the emphasis on a positive self-concept and a sense of personal efficacy. There are unlimited ways that you can help students grasp what social studies is all about and how it connects to their heads and hearts.

One teacher whom we have observed does a remarkable job introducing to her class the meaning of social studies. She uses the globe, maps, charts, and cultural artifacts; vignettes involving real-life problems, historical documents, and so on, explaining how her students throughout the year will come to make sense of these as a part of life's story. As a result of analyzing this information and the values connected to it, they will be prepared to make informed decisions about geographic, social, historical, civic, and other issues that affect their lives now and in the future.

Another teacher connects content examples with student projects from the previous grade. She then spends time reflecting on the content covered, insights acquired, and so on, and begins showing how those prior experiences are connected to this year's social studies curriculum. At the end of the year, the students are interviewed by the upcoming teacher about what they have learned, and the teacher helps them begin to form links with the social studies subject matter that will be addressed next year.

After you have carefully planned your approach on paper, collect visuals to illustrate your key points. Share your plan with a peer and elicit feedback. Remember that if we want our students to be excited about social studies, we need to fill them in on what it is and why it is important, using more than just words. Knowing what that picture on the puzzle box will look like—at least in broad terms—will go a long way toward creating a desire to participate in "making meaning" from it.

2

How Can I Build A Learning Community in My Classroom?:

Strategies for Including All Children

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

2-1 Explain why creating a learning community in your classroom is critical and develop ideas for how to create and launch a learning community.

2-2 Develop approaches for developing and sustaining a learning community.

2-3 Use cooperative learning strategies in social studies instruction in meaningful ways.

2-4 Understand the importance of social-emotional learning in general, as well as ways that it can be integrated with social studies education.

2-5 Explain the role of motivation in social studies learning and community building.

2-6 Grasp and apply the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

2-7 Apply principles of culturally relevant pedagogy to develop a learning community.

Teacher Voice Matt Robydek, Second-Year Teacher

Picture this scenario. It's the morning of the first day of school and, more important, the first day of your new teaching career. This is the day that your numerous years spent in college will finally come to fruition. You take a look around the room. Name tags on desks? Check. Calendar up? Check. Student materials prepared on desks? Check. Intricately decorated bulletin boards? Check. Encouraging greeting on the board? Check. Clever seating arrangement that easily allows for group work *and* individual work? Check. Standards and benchmarks and content expectations memorized? Check. You're positive that this year will be a success. I mean, how could it not be?

Zoom in to the 100th day of school in your classroom and, more important, the 100th day of your teaching career. All the preparation that you put into your classroom—the materials, the name tags, the seating arrangements, the bulletin boards—now seem to mean nothing. The classroom is in shambles. The students constantly argue and continuously disagree. The phrase "so and so did this" is beginning to test your patience. Almost every student is missing at least one homework assignment, and the students seem to be merely going through the motions, showing little to no enthusiasm or interest in your classroom or the subject matter. How could this have happened? Well, I have the answer, and it can be expressed in two powerful words: learning communities.

You're probably thinking, "Well, if learning communities are so integral to a classroom, why didn't one of my dozen professors ever mention this little tidbit of knowledge?" Problem is, they most likely did. You were probably just too busy daydreaming to hear it. Learning communities are an ageless wonder; they

NCSS Teacher Standards

- **NCSS.SMS.A.1 1.** Culture and Cultural Diversity: Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to organize and provide instruction at the appropriate school level for the study of culture and cultural diversity.
- **NCSS.PS.1.1.** Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to provide learning opportunities at the appropriate school levels that support learners' intellectual, social, and personal development.
- **NCSS.PS.1.2.** Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to create at the appropriate school levels learning experiences that fit the different approaches to learning of diverse learners.
- **NCSS.PS.1.4.** Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to create at the appropriate school levels learning environments that encourage social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- **NCSS.PS.1.5.** Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to use at the appropriate school levels verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques that foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

work in all classrooms regardless of the time period. Learning communities should be considered the "make it or break it" factor. However, I seem to have forgotten all the necessary steps in building one.

You see, I recently was this new teacher described here. Luckily, I remembered learning communities, the power that they hold, and the potential that they can unlock in each and every student. A strong learning community turns a regular classroom into something magical, and I was able to witness it firsthand. I believe that the final step (returning to your initial picture) of creating a learning community is the most crucial. Bringing your students into this never-ending process, and keeping them engaged there, are key. Doing this lets them know that you value their ideas and opinions. Consequently, it empowers the students and makes them feel like they are in charge of their learning and the learning community. They will feel like they are now a stakeholder in their

education, rather than solely relying on their teacher to tell them what to do and what not to do.

Incorporating home assignments that match the goals or big ideas of the lessons that you create also helps deepen the learning community and involves outside voices that wouldn't normally be heard in the classroom. It constructs a new level of understanding for the students and at the same time, helps them see the real-world context of the material that they are learning. It is a genuine way of engaging all students and their families in the learning process and shows the students that the information they bring to school is worthwhile and important.

When you have a strong learning community up and running, the sky is the limit. Students consistently go above and beyond your expectations, which inherently deepens their understanding, and the entire classroom benefits. Students become more independent in their learning, and their involvement, self-efficacy, and motivation skyrockets. Creating a strong learning community is difficult, but not impossible. The numerous examples in the chapter are a terrific guide to achieving a strong learning community, and I hope that you use these examples in your own classroom. I encourage you not to wait for the 100th day either! A strong learning community takes thought, time, and energy to build and maintain. It should be an integral part of every day, beginning from the moment school starts.

Keith Knighton

A Scenario

The week before school starts, Mrs. Paul's students receive a letter from her, personally prepared, signed, and mailed. This letter is important to them because it comes from their new teacher. It fills them with anticipation, hope, and dreams. They are eager to join her in Room 104 to begin collectively building a learning community. Her letter has given them a preview of the formal curriculum—the content to be experienced and the overarching goals to be achieved, the planned field trips and visits from local experts and community members, and so on. It also has communicated Mrs. Paul's high expectations for all learners. Most important, it has addressed the "hidden" curriculum—her expectations concerning the overall classroom climate and students' orientation toward learning, the teacher, and one another. Celebrating differences, fairness, rights and responsibilities, caring, and sharing among students in the class, it offers a vision that the new students will find compelling and curious. They think that Room 104 sounds special, but they wonder, "Will we really play a role in making all of that happen?"

Anxiety, optimism, and uncertainty are written on the students' faces as they come to Room 104 on the first day of school. Unlike in previous years, this day

greets students with a welcome mat, soft music, a partially decorated room that includes a special bulletin board depicting the personal history of the teacher, and other trappings that reflect the communal voice that is about to be introduced and allowed to grow.

Introductions and organizational matters are soon followed by references to the learning community that was promised in the letter. Mrs. Paul begins with a description, accompanied by visuals, of her ideal learning community. She is quick to say that this is her "sketch," her "vision," and that she wants to hear from the children about theirs. A lengthy conversation ensues. References are made to real communities, to gardens, and to other natural places where there are plans for building something special with common goals, hopes, and dreams and where diversity is appreciated. The teacher's storyline is inspiring, authentic, and presented with direction and purpose, yet it contains room for allowances that children would view as important and engaging.

Mrs. Paul goes on to explain herself as the teacher who receives a paycheck for her job as head educator, who orchestrates learning opportunities for all students. She makes no apologies for being the designated leader in charge, but she likens her role to that of the president of the United States, who needs a lot of help to be an effective leader of our country. She explains that a teacher needs cooperation and assistance from everyone in the class in order to promote democracy in the classroom.

The president has a cabinet, and Mrs. Paul plans to have one too. Health, education, welfare, and social relations are among the communal functions that she draws upon for organization, attachment, and action. Initially, she assigns a committee chair and appoints members to each area. Over the next two or three weeks, the committees will engage in dialogue about their roles, rights, and responsibilities, how they will function, and how they will monitor their performance. Individual committee meetings coupled with large-group discussions are the secret to effective planning and well-executed efforts. Individual committee role and function descriptions, students' rights and responsibilities, expectations, and so on are developed and posted around the room to ensure effective communication and encourage life applications.

During the course of Mrs. Paul's storyline about learning community and cabinet member efforts from the past year, she shares that the welfare committee wanted to support students with special needs. Consequently, they decided to offer lunch money on an emergency basis for students who had no lunch—either because they forgot to bring one or lacked the resources to purchase one. This group felt that these students should "work off' their loans, so the welfare committee found school tasks that the students could get paid to do in order to reimburse the committee. This committee also held fundraisers (e.g., selling used books, popcorn, and baked goods) to generate resources. Last year's welfare committee also created a supply trunk with hats, shoelaces, mittens, and other clothing, collected during a donation drive for the purpose of applying "good citizen" actions toward peers.

Note: We believe that elementary teachers should be willing to address socioeconomic and other family circumstance differences that affect their students rather than pretend that they did not exist. However, it is important to acknowledge such differences matter-of-factly and respond to them within the spirit of learning community norms. Talk and act in terms of coping (and helping others to cope) with special needs, not labeling or pitying those who have them.

THE **BIG** IDEA

Overarching Question

How can I design and sustain a community in my classroom that is supportive of all learners?

- Launching a learning community in your classroom builds a foundation of support for students for the entire school year.
- Multiple approaches exist to develop and sustain a learning community; approaches that are collaborative, respectful, sensitive to difference, flexible, and consistent are most effective.
- Social-emotional learning is a separate, but related area to social studies education: Authentic connections can be made between the two areas, such as respect for differences and appreciation of different perspectives.
- Intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation explains the role of motivation in social studies learning and community building.
- Meeting the needs of all students requires deliberate and purposeful differentiation using approaches such as UDL.
- Classrooms should be responsive to the languages, literacies, and cultural practices of diverse students.

Supportive Classroom Climate, Cooperative Learning, and Achievement Expectations

Principle 1: Supportive Classroom Climate: *Students learn best within cohesive and caring learning communities*. The teacher establishes a positive learning community, in which students are encouraged to take risks and use mistakes as opportunities to learn. The teacher cares about students as individuals and attends to their emotional and social development as well as their academic development.

Principle 10: Cooperative Learning: *Students often benefit from working in pairs or small groups to construct understandings or help one another master skills.* Cooperative learning promotes students' social and emotional development and has the capacity to promote students' academic growth. Students learn from each other when they share knowledge with each other and teach each other skills.

Principle 12: Achievement Expectations: *The teacher establishes and follows through on appropriate expectations for learning outcomes.* Teachers' expectations about students' abilities play a role in students' sense of self-efficacy or what they feel capable of doing. The teacher holds high expectations for students, coupled with strong support for students to achieve those expectations.

Please see Chapter 14 for a more in-depth description of each principle.

2-1 Launching a Learning Community

You may want to begin your school year as Mrs. Paul does, by putting forth a vision of your classroom as a learning community in collaboration with her students, using past class events, work samples, and personal stories to engender early interest and provide meaning and context. Each new class, however, would be encouraged to generate its own ideas. You would plan carefully to ensure that every child has classroom (departmental) responsibilities that are within his or her capacity,

match committee goals, and fit the community vision. You also would set aside periodic committee and total-class reflection time to ensure that learning community efforts are contributing to social understanding and personal and civic efficacy.

How do you envision the first day with your students? We suggest that at the start of the school year, you do the following:

- Establish a vision of your classroom as a learning community. Make sure that it is specific (i.e., if the word respect is used, make sure that it is defined).
- With students, write a set of guidelines or principles regarding how the classroom will be run.
- Plan carefully to ensure that every child has responsibilities within his or her capacity.
- Change students' responsibilities regularly so that they have varied opportunities, and have the student who has just had a certain responsibility teach the incoming student "the ropes" of the responsibility.

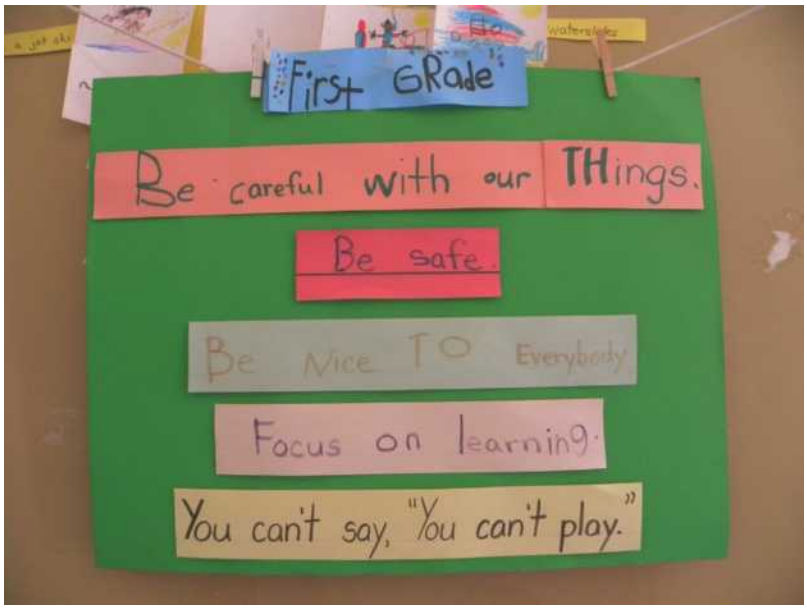
Instead of using the president's office and cabinet as your metaphor, you could use the governor of a state with a supportive cabinet, a family, a sports team, or a neighborhood to build context and structure into your learning community. The main idea is to let your students get a sense of what it means to satisfy their needs and wants and to participate in a community where their rights and responsibilities are exercised in ways that allow community members to feel in control of their destinies. There is probably no better way to build a sense of personal efficacy—a contributing factor to student achievement.

The classroom community provides a forum for living informal social studies in a safe, orderly, and enjoyable environment. It serves as a natural way to connect cognitive, socioemotional, and moral development. It also facilitates Dorsett's (1993) concept of a good curriculum as one that respects and balances the need to educate "three people" in each individual: the worker (in this case, a student whose "job" is to attend school), the citizen, and the private person. All of these dimensions can be experienced firsthand in a laboratorylike setting in your classroom community.

The story of Mrs. Paul launching her community is intended to position your thinking about a powerful teaching and learning opportunity that considers knowing, understanding, appreciating, and applying a hands-on approach to democracy in your classroom (a microcosm of society). If you decide to give your community a name, be sure that it does not distract from the values and expectations that you want your microcosm to represent.

Your learning community, as well as the strategic moves you make as you develop it, pave the way for building an environment that addresses social studies and its foundational academic disciplines. For example, every child in the community has a place in space (geography); a cultural background (anthropology); a set of experiences across time (history); needs and wants (economics); roles, norms, and expectations (sociology); the need to be guided or governed (political science); and a developing personal identity (psychology). Through structured discourse, students will begin to realize that social studies is a dynamic, integral part of their lives—even without leaving the classroom.

The remainder of this chapter expands on the notion of developing a sense of community, presents a series of steps for creating it, and discusses how to ensure that the learning community meets the needs of all learners. It also describes a lesson on specialness from a unit on childhood (adolescence for upper grades) and explains how the unit can provide a natural segue into substantive social studies content, yet also deepen the students' understanding and appreciation of their community and its members. This chapter addresses strategies for motivating students to learn within the learning community context, paying particular attention to student diversity and the value of culturally responsive pedagogy. It also discusses the importance of social-emotional learning.



2-2 Sustaining a Learning Community

Once you have launched your learning community, you and your students will need to be proactive about sustaining it: ensuring that members are adhering to principles, revisiting principles that are no longer working, and developing strategies for working together collaboratively and responsibly. This section describes ways to sustain the learning community in the context of social studies learning.

2-2a. Productive Communication and Interaction Patterns

Research on powerful social studies teaching underscores the importance of establishing a productive context for learning by encouraging the class to function as a learning community. This involves articulating and following through on expectations relating to both teacher-student and student-student interaction patterns. A learning community atmosphere is an open and supportive one, in which students are encouraged to speak their minds without fear of ridicule of their ideas or criticism for mentioning taboo topics or voicing forbidden opinions. Students appreciate that the purpose of reflective discussion of the meanings and implications of content is to work collaboratively to deepen understanding. Consequently, they are expected to listen carefully and respond thoughtfully to one another's ideas and to work together to solve problems collaboratively.

In both advancing their own ideas and responding critically to others, they are expected to build a case based on relevant evidence and arguments and to avoid inappropriate behavior. They are challenged to come to grips with controversial issues, to participate assertively but respectfully in group discussions, and to work productively with partners or groups of peers in cooperative learning activities. They are expected to assume individual and group responsibilities for managing instructional materials and tasks and to develop an ethic of caring for the personal, social, and academic needs of every child and adult who is part of the classroom.

2-2b. Four Steps for Creating a Learning Community

The first step in this process is formulating overall classroom goals specific to a social education learning community. These goals will cut across the spectrum of cognitive, socioemotional, and moral development. For example, a cognitive goal might be for students to acquire knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of cultural diversity and apply what they learn from their social studies units to life in the classroom and to their lives outside the classroom as well. A socioemotional goal might be to develop the ability to question opinions in responsible ways, and a moral goal might be to treat one another with respect.

In the second step, you focus on the physical environment: creating and maintaining a classroom climate that features shared responsibility, promotes tolerance and appreciation of diversity, and provides the support needed for the realization of intended learning outcomes. Use of physical space, accessibility of instructional materials, and availability of visual aids (such as charts, schedules, and the daily agenda and calendar of events) all contribute to the setting; so do visual materials that promote learning of unit content or provide pictorial support for academic, socioemotional, and moral responsibility. Plants, music, rugs, special chairs, identifiable spaces for reading and writing, manipulative materials, maps, globes, and computers all build a sense of engagement and connection to the classroom milieu.

The third step in building the learning community includes the establishment of rules, norms, roles, and procedures. These include communicating with parents to beginning the school day, managing individual and group work, resolving peer conflicts, and promoting appropriate behavior in the classroom, as well as on the playground, in the lunchroom, and on the school bus.

The fourth step involves returning to your initial metaphor or picture and, as a class, creating a vision for how all of this will function. As part of the dialogue, pose questions such as: "What should our classroom look like to us?" "What should it look like to a passerby?" "What should it sound like?" "Feel like?" Responses can be captured in words, pictures, and photographs to be displayed as reminders of the class's goals and as self-monitoring aids for achieving them.

Your style as a teacher, your prior experiences, and your unique teaching situation and students will all contribute to how you begin "growing" your learning community. The four steps are elaborated during daily dialogues that focus on the learning community as it is evolving. Questions that might be a part of these conversations include: What is going well? What needs to be modified? Why? How do we need to change a procedure? Does the physical setting need modification? Do we need more or fewer students on a given committee? Are the tasks clearly defined? Does everyone understand his or her role?

Much attention needs to be given to the maintenance of learning community ideas and expectations. Be careful about moving too quickly. After creating an overall vision and plan with the class, work on one facet of the community at a time, such as rules or guiding principles. Then move on, but continuously loop back to previous steps, procedures, and practices. Think of your learning community as an ongoing growth process that has existing expectations but is always moving to new heights of understanding and positive action. See Resource 2-1 at the end of this chapter for a description of a childhood unit as your content vehicle.

2-3 Cooperative Learning in a Community Setting

Once the students begin to feel comfortable with one another and interact in ways that reflect learning community norms, they are ready to work collaboratively. Cooperative learning formats are often used in social studies because they fit so well with the