

3rd Grade Social Studies

Key Instructional Activities

In third grade, students begin a three-year study of United States history in which all four strands (history, geography, civics/government, and economics) are integrated. In this first year of study, students learn about American Indian cultures and the exploration and colonization of North America. The geography strand emphasizes the influence of geography on early U.S. history. In the civics/government strand, students learn about the elements of our representative democracy and their rights and responsibilities as good citizens. Students will extend and apply their understanding of basic economic concepts. Map and Globe and Informational Processing Skills Matrices are integrated as a foundation for students to locate, analyze, and synthesize information related to social studies topics.

The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards enhance the rigor in K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History studies. This framework enhances rigor, builds critical thinking, problem solving, and participatory skills necessary for students to become engaged citizens. The C3 Framework serves as the foundation of the Georgia Standards of Excellence.



The C3 Framework emphasizes the acquisition and application of knowledge to prepare students for college, career, and civic life. The Four Dimensions center on the use of questions to spark curiosity, guide instruction, deepen investigations, acquire rigorous content, and apply knowledge and ideas in real world settings to enable students to become active and engaged citizens in the 21st century.



Along with content knowledge, students will be introduced to the following skills through a broad range of topics

- Using a compass rose to identify cardinal and intermediate directions
- Using a letter/number grid system to determine location
- Using latitude and longitude to determine location
- Comparing and contrasting the categories of natural, cultural, and political features found on maps
- Using map key/legend to acquire information from historical, physical, political, resource, product, and economic maps
- Identifying main idea, detail, sequence of events, and cause and effect in a social studies context
- Identifying and using primary and secondary sources
- Interpreting and constructing timelines, charts and tables
- Analyzing artifacts, graphs, diagrams

(More information on the skills matrices can be found as an appendix to the GSE at Georgiastandards.org)

The C3 Social Studies Classroom

Inquiry-based approaches...provide students with opportunities to authentically engage in social studies with intellectual, student-centered learning activities. Through inquiry, students can be motivated to explore their curiosities and build their knowledge using approaches beyond simple recitation and memorization of facts (Dague, 2020).

Inquiry Based Practices

1. Teachers and students balance their thoughts, beliefs, and practices.

- Teachers strike a balance between their expertise by allowing students to learn and do on their own with support from the teacher.
- Students actively construct knowledge rather than passively receive it.
- Students engage with featured sources to construct their arguments with support from the teacher.
- Students construct content knowledge and make arguments independently and collaboratively.

2. Teachers and students balance assessment needs.

- Teachers develop assessments through formative and summative performance tasks that give students opportunities to learn by doing.
- Teachers create a variety of performance tasks (e.g., T-charts, debates, structured discussions, claim-making, arguments).
- Teachers focus on process and product when supporting students' arguments.
- Students are independent in their work with supporting scaffolding.
- Students develop ideas freely and provide support for all of their ideas.

3. Teachers provide students with scaffolding to complete the complex academic work of inquiry.

- Teachers provide constant feedback and support students' learning as they navigate questions, tasks, and sources.
- Students consider multiple perspectives to deepen their knowledge.

4. Teachers develop practices that are considerate of students' interest and skills.

- Teachers to stage the compelling question to promote students' interest.
- Teachers to encourage students to take their ideas beyond the classroom.
- Students to work with sources that spark their curiosity and interest in the topic.

Content and Skills Integration



FROM A Social Studies Classroom Where...

TO A Social Studies Classroom Where...

Students experience an additional nonfiction reading class or textbook-focused instruction.

Students learn to read, discuss, and write like social scientists.

Students develop literacy skills and social studies practices separately.

Students develop disciplinary literacy skills and social science practices in tandem.

Students learn content knowledge.

Students integrate and apply concepts, skills, and content knowledge.

3rd Grade Social Studies System Pacing Overview



This guide provides an overview of what your student will learn in his or her third grade social studies course. It focuses on the key skills your student will learn, which will build a strong foundation for success in social studies throughout elementary, middle, and high school. This guide is based on the state-adopted Georgia Standards of Excellence.

August - September

Unit 1: Connecting Themes

The focus of this unit is to familiarize students with the 9 connecting themes and their associated enduring understandings that will provide meaning and structure to their social studies coursework this year. Activities will focus on relating beliefs and ideals; conflict and change; distribution of power; human environmental interaction; individuals, groups, and institutions; location; scarcity; production, distribution, and consumption; and time, change, and continuity

September -October

Unit 2: Geography

This unit builds a strong foundation of understanding about the geography of the area we know as the United States, including the major rivers and mountain ranges listed in the standards. Also introduced and reinforced are essential map/globe concepts related to the imaginary lines that we use to establish absolute location and the direction words we use to describe relative location. These geographic basics will be useful in all subsequent units.

October -November

Unit 3: American Indians: Past and Present

This unit on American Indians: Past and Present builds on earlier learning about Indian cultures in Kindergarten (Thanksgiving), 1st grade (Sacagawea), and 2nd grade (Creeks, Cherokees, and Sequoyah.) By studying the regions of the United States and which cultures settled in each region, students are able to compare/contrast within regions and across regions how tribes used their environments, and their cultural and other contributions to American life. Note that whereas previous standards required that students know specific tribes representing each region, the emphasis here is on broader groups of tribes for each region.

November - December

Unit 4: Let's Go Exploring

This unit focuses on European exploration in North America, and grounds that learning in the accomplishments, conflicts, and cooperation between specific explorers and the American Indians they encountered. There are six specific individuals listed in the standard, but you and your students could examine others in order to make generalizations about why exploration happened when it did, the reasons for and obstacles to achieving goals of the explorers and leaders funding them, and how the explorers changed the environments they explored and how the environments changed them.

December-January

Unit 5: British Colonial America

This unit focuses on the British colonies, the thirteen original colonies that would later become the first thirteen states of the United States. Several understandings are needed beyond the standards to establish the context in which the British colonies developed. One is that other European nations were colonizing at the same time, including the French, Dutch, and Spanish. Understanding why and how these thirteen colonies grew to be British and then how the colonies can be grouped geographically and economically is essential to mastering the standards. In addition, students need to understand various perspectives of individuals who lived and worked within the colonies. These different perspectives will help to lay the foundation for upcoming conflicts in U.S. history. Although we do not have to include economic standards in this unit, since they are covered in their own stand-alone unit later in the year, there are ample opportunities to include economic activities in the colonial period.

February-March

Unit 6: Economics 101

The third grade economics standards are fundamental to understanding how goods and services are produced, provided, and traded. Students should have learned some of this terminology in K-2: goods, services, producers, consumers, opportunity costs, currency (money), and trade. In grade 3, these concepts deepen and become more complex; students will need many opportunities to apply them to their daily lives. Several of this unit's activities are adapted from earlier GaDOE resources related to economics. Note: the source set for Unit 7 introduces and reinforces economics vocabulary from throughout the unit. Use the slides or the entire presentation at several points in the unit in order to build these essential concepts.

March-May

Unit 7: American Government Basics

This unit focuses on our American government and how and why it is organized the way it is. We will explore how the U.S. is both a representative democracy and a republic, and will discuss how we as citizens share certain beliefs and principles. Several of this unit's activities are adapted from earlier GaDOE resources related to American government.

If the young learners of this nation are to become effective participants in a democratic society, then social studies must be an essential part of the curriculum throughout the elementary years. In a world that demands independent and cooperative problem solving to address complex social, economic, ethical, and personal concerns, core social studies content is as basic for success as reading, writing, and computing. Knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for informed and thoughtful participation in society require a systematically developed elementary program focused on concepts from the four core social studies disciplines: civics, economics, geography and history. (NCSS, 2017)

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S SUCCESS?

The adoption of more rigorous standards in Social Studies has led to a change in how social studies is taught in the classroom. As a parent/guardian, you can encourage critical thinking, problem solving, and participatory skills necessary for students to become engaged citizens by asking questions. In each unit, students should have the opportunity to develop their own questions about content, apply disciplinary tools to expand their thinking, evaluate credible sources to gather information, communicate conclusions after inquiries, and determine whether to take action based on new understandings about the world in which we live.

| Dimension of Learning | Questions You Might Ask |
|---|---|
| Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you learning in social studies? • What do you wonder about that? • What feelings and thoughts do you have about this topic? • What sources do you think would be helpful in looking at other points of view? • Why do you think this is important for us to learn? |
| Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historian: How do events compare to in other historical times? How have individuals and groups changed or stayed the same throughout history? What kind of historical sources would be used to explain events in the past? • Geographer: What are the relationships between locations of places and regions and their environment? Why do people move from place to place? How can we describe the people in a location? • Political Scientist: What rights do people have? How do people work together? How does a democracy rely on people's responsible participation? • Economist: Why do individuals and businesses specialize and trade? What are some ways the government pays for the goods and services it provides? What goods and services are being produced and consumed? |
| Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where could you find out more information about the people, places, objects, activities that you are learning about in history? Try to find one or two other sources in print and online. • Who do you think took this photo and where was it? What do you see that could prove where it is located and when it was taken? • What is the author's purpose, main idea, and point of view in a source? Why is this source useful? |
| Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What claim would you make based on these sources? • Has your thinking changed after learning about this topic? • Have you thought about what you can do to take action to help address an issue related to the topic you are studying in class? |

Resources that may help your student in 3rd Grade Social Studies.

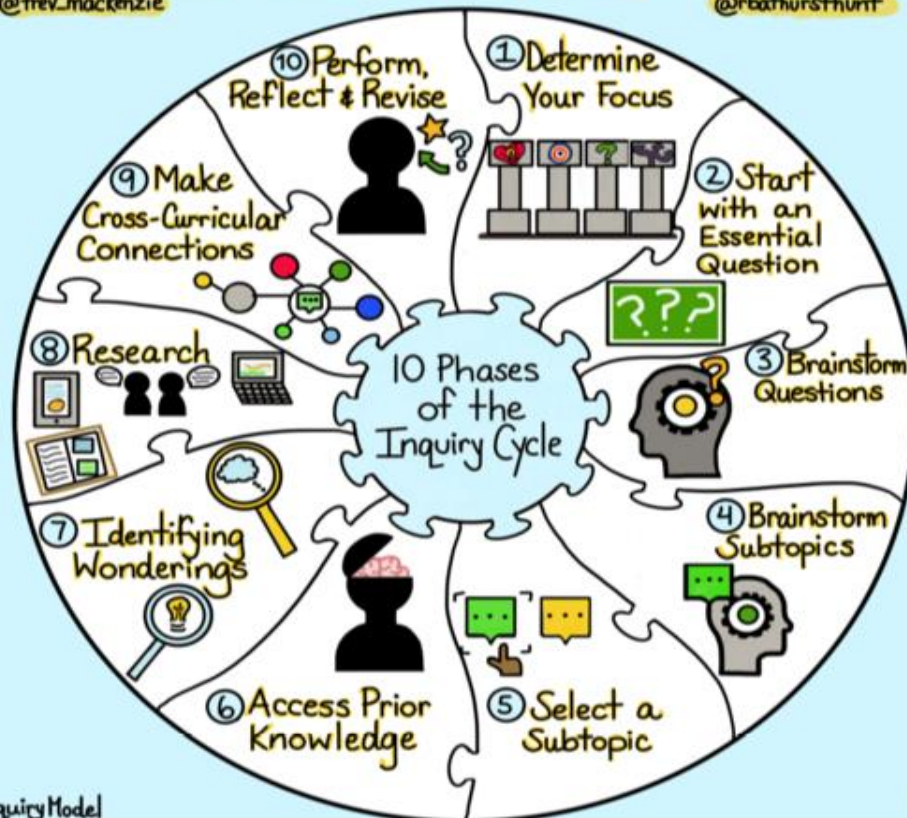
Bring history alive as a family by visiting around the state of Georgia: historic homes and sites, battlefields, forts, local museums and cemeteries. Also, visit additional resources online:

- <https://www.georgiastandards.org/Georgia-Standards/Pages/Social-Studies-K-5.aspx>
- <https://www.icivics.org/>
- <http://gcss.net/uploads/files/gr3socstkidsbooks.pdf>
- <https://bensguide.gpo.gov/>
- <https://www.readworks.org/books/passages#!q:g/t:pt/features/>
- <https://constitutionday.civiced.org/>
- <https://www.americanhistoryforkids.com/>
- <https://www.ducksters.com>

The Inquiry Cycle

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Inspired by: Alberta Inquiry Model

#InquiryMindset

10 Characteristics of the Inquiry Classroom

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- 1 Nurture student passions & talents
 - 2 Empower student voice & honour student choice
 - 3 Increase motivation and engagement
 - 4 Foster curiosity and a love for learning
 - 5 Teach grit, perseverance, growth mindset & self-regulation
 - 6 Make research meaningful & develop strong research skills
 - 7 Deepen understanding to go beyond memorizing facts and content
 - 8 Fortify the importance of asking good questions
 - 9 Enable students to take ownership over their own learning and to reach their goals
 - 10 Solve the problems of tomorrow in the classrooms of today
- Genius Hour**
20% Time
Passion Projects

Information in this brochure has been taken in part from the following sources: Georgiastandards.org, C3 Framework, Trevor McKenzie and the National Council for the Social Studies.