

Unit 1: Becoming a Social Scientist
7th Grade Social Studies
15 Class Meetings

Updated June 2022

Essential Questions

- What influences our perspectives?
- Is everyone's truth the same?

Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals

EU 1: Social scientists examine evidence in history, geography, economics, politics, and culture to better understand human society and take steps to improve it.

- Describe the five different subsets of social studies
- Explain the social and individual benefits of learning social studies

EU 2: Social scientists consider the source of evidence and seek out multiple perspectives to corroborate evidence to find the most likely conclusion, though the truth may remain elusive.

- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources
- Explain why and how to corroborate evidence
- Use evidence to support an argument about the earliest humans

Standards

CT Social Studies Frameworks Standards:

- **INQ 6-8.5:** Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources.
- **INQ 6-8.6:** Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.
- **INQ 6-8.8:** Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations.
- **INQ 6-8.9:** Develop claims and counterclaims while point out the strengths and limitations of both.
- **INQ 6-8.10:** Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments.
- **INQ 6-8.11:** Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequences, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations
- **INQ 6-8.13:** Critique arguments for credibility.
- **INQ 6-8.14:** Critique the structure of explanations.

Common Core State Standards:

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.1A:** Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

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- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.1B:** Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.1E:** Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.5:** With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.9:** Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

ISAAC Vision of the Graduate Competencies

Competency 1: Write effectively for a variety of purposes.

Competency 2: Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner.

Competency 3: Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team.

Competency 4: Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively.

Competency 5: Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community.

Unit Content Overview

1. Introduction to Social Sciences

- Apply the five different ways social scientists study the world around them to their classroom
- Connect social studies to real-world, student-identified issues
- Determine class community values and norms using data analysis
- Vocabulary & key terms: social studies, geography, culture, government, economics, politics, history, society, values

2. Evaluating Evidence

- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources
- Analyze the impact of perspective on evidence
- Practice corroborating evidence to understand pre-civilization humans
- Write and revise an argumentative essay about pre-civilization humans
- Vocabulary & key terms: civilization, perspective, hunter-gatherer, nomad, primary source, secondary source, corroboration

Interdisciplinary Connection:

- Language Arts – reading informational texts and writing persuasive, argumentative responses

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Daily Learning Objectives with *Do Now Activities*

Students will be able to...

- Apply the methods of different social scientists to study classmates
 - *Who are you? Write down the three most important facts about you as a person.*
- Analyze social science data to make conclusions about the role of kindness in human history and civics
 - *Who are we? Look around the classroom. Write down three things you think you have in common with everyone else in the room.*
- Compare our class values and norms to recent social science research on humans around the world
 - *“Values” are those things we think are most important in life. What do you “value”?*
- Analyze different student perspectives to determine the impact of perspective on “truth”
 - *Use optical illusions to begin a discussion on different perspectives*
- Evaluate primary and secondary sources to decide which is more useful to social scientists
 - *Compare a primary and secondary source on the same topic and identify which seems more trustworthy and why*
- Analyze different student perspectives to determine the impact of perspective on “truth”
 - *Use optical illusions to begin a discussion on different perspectives*
- Use close-reading skills to infer evidence about paleolithic life
 - *What are the skills of a good reader?*
- Use corroboration to solve a mystery about the earliest pre-civilization humans
 - *On a timeline representing all of human history, indicate where you think we discovered fire, started farming, and built our first cities*
- Use RACES to create an argument.
 - *Read the following arguments and identify which is the strongest, and why.*
- Apply the RACES strategy to create responses to document-based questions.
 - *Arrange these sentences to create a RACES paragraph. Be ready to defend your answer in an accountable talk discussion.*
- Revise an argument using the literacy rubric and scoring guide
 - *Review your response from last class. What are you proud of? What do you think needs more work?*
- Analyze and apply elements of accountable talk
 - *What is the difference between “debating,” “arguing,” and “accountable talk”*
- Apply debate skills in a collaborative game
 - *What does a successful accountable talk discussion look like?*

Instructional Strategies/Differentiated Instruction

- Whole group instruction
- Guided notes
- Paragraph frames and sentence starters
- Student-led instruction

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- Student choice
- Written feedback
- Cornell notes
- Accountable talk
- Homework
- Anchor charts
- Small group instruction
- Conferencing
- Text and video chunking with guiding questions
- Close reading with text-dependent questions

EL Differentiation Strategies

- Word walls with visuals
- TWPS (think, write, pair, share)
- Pre-reading strategies
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Explicit teacher modeling
- Key vocabulary
- Graphic organizers
- Strategic grouping
- Non-verbal assessments

Assessments

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Do Now
- Student discussions and responses
- Exit Slips
- Accountable Talk Discussions
- Completed notes
- Completed graphic organizers
- Homework
- Unit Task- “Was life better before civilization?”
 - Accountable Talk Rubric #1

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Creating class guidelines based on collected data (EU 1)
- Writing and revising an argumentative essay about pre-civilization humans identifying the strengths and weaknesses of different sources (EU 2)
 - Literacy Rubric #1
- Unit Task – Debate: Was life better before civilization?

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Unit Task

Unit Task Name: Debate: Was life better before civilization?

Description: In this task, students will work in small groups to debate whether life was better for humans before the rise of civilizations. Students will use the data they gathered about their classmates (EU 1), along with different sources about the lifestyles of humans before the rise of civilization. Students must evaluate the sources for bias, perspective, and authority (EU 2), and are free to use their own anecdotal evidence to rebut other claims. Students will be tasked with recording and reflecting on their classmate's contributions before crafting their own academic responses. Students will be evaluated on their participation in the debate as well as their notes and graphic organizers created in preparation for the debate.

Evaluation: Summative Assessment, Literacy Rubric, and Accountable Talk Rubric

Unit Resources

- Stanford History Educational Group <https://sheg.stanford.edu/>
- UNICEF's <https://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/>
- Affirming important values: https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/affirming_important_values
- Culture & values:
https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/which_values_make_you_happy_it_might_depend_on_where_you_live
- Other humans at home
- Laptops or notebooks to capture notes
- Graphic organizers
- Worksheets
- Readings