

# Grade Four Social Studies Curriculum Overview Document

## AASD Instructional Framework for Social Studies

The answers to tomorrow’s problems cannot be found in the back of a textbook. The skills needed in the modern workplace are not practiced on a worksheet. In the Appleton Area School District, inquiry-based social studies is a student-centered learning process that differentiates learning and assessment while promoting a growth mindset through self and peer reflection. Inquiry starts with a compelling question, moves through a rigorous investigation and culminates in an argument or action. The inquiry-based curriculum develops the skills and builds content knowledge students need to succeed in the present and the future. An inquiry classroom supports teachers to regularly scaffold students, therefore students are engaged and gain greater independence in the use of these skills. Student voice and choice is honored and fosters a culture of equity and collaboration.

The intentionally-designed curriculum contains rigorous standards-based content in an authentic context that is interesting to students, elevates student work by ensuring a public platform for presentation and encourages lifelong learning. (for example: students are encouraged to think as; economists, historians, political scientists etc...). Teachers are empowered to implement a scope and sequence aligned to the Wisconsin State Social Studies Standards that is integrated with Wisconsin English Language Arts Standards and the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Competencies. The curriculum promotes: the reading of complex texts(primary and secondary), building academic vocabulary, evaluating sources and using evidence when writing from sources.

The social studies curriculum is comprehensive and is built in a model of change that includes; practice-based professional learning, blended curriculum and assessment, instructional leadership, and professional learning communities which helps teachers develop their practice of inquiry. Each unit of inquiry targets 21st century skills, which are designed to ensure students are prepared to thrive in college, career, and civic life.

**Board Approved**

May 2007

**Revised**

June 2020

## Required Assessments

### Social Studies Balanced Assessment System

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Pre-Assessment         | The inquiry units contain pre-assessment tasks that provide teachers the opportunity to gauge the prior knowledge and skills of students. These pre-assessments occur at the beginning of the Launch of every unit.   |
| Formative Assessments  | The inquiry units include formative assessment tools in every lesson, from teacher checklists to student-created responses. Assessment tools contain or connect to specific look-fors that align to lesson objectives and build toward the objectives of the Inquiry Question. These tools assess understanding and skills across a diverse set of tasks, including written claims, creative responses, and others.               |
| Checkpoint Assessments | Checkpoint Assessments are aligned to the objectives of the Inquiry Question and are designed to check understanding of concepts and development of skills throughout that set of lessons. These tools prompt students to draw conclusions and demonstrate understanding in diverse ways, often through formal performance tasks.   |
| Summative Assessments  | The product rubric serves as the summative assessment tool for an Inquiry unit. This rubric is co-created with students at the beginning of the Taking Informed Action Module according to a specific process described in a detailed lesson plan. As part of this process, teachers should incorporate into the success criteria, key social studies concepts or content that align with school, district or state expectations. |

## Resources

[Wisconsin Standards for Social Studies](#)

[Grade 4 AASD Essential Social Studies Standards](#)

[inquirED Inquiry Journeys Scope and Sequence](#)

**inquirED Platform- Lesson materials and resources for each social studies unit**

**inquirED Embedded Learning- Research-based strategies and support for teachers inside every lesson.**

## AASD Guiding Principles for Teaching and learning K-6 Social Studies

- Inquiry is at the heart of social studies and surrounds the content
- Social studies prepares our students for work, life, and citizenship
- Creativity, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, problem solving are valued
- Social studies should be intra and interdisciplinary with explicit integration with ELA, complimenting each other
- Social studies must regain a more balanced and elevated role in K-12 curriculum

## AASD Foundations for K-6 Social Studies

**Inquiry-** Teaching social studies content incorporating the inquiry arc offers students the opportunity to investigate questions in a deep and engaging manner, and offers our students the opportunity to work collaboratively, as well as individually, on significant questions within the social studies disciplines. Inquiry can and should be used within all social studies disciplines and, as such, is an “umbrella strand” covering all content strands. The proper use of the inquiry arc within our classrooms, along with other thoughtful social studies strategies, will help

our students build the intellectual habits of mind that will be with them long after the content is forgotten. It can create in our students the confidence in their own skills to make sense of an increasingly complex world.

**Behavior Sciences-** Learning about the behavioral sciences helps students understand people in various times and places. By examining cultures, students are able to compare our ways of life and those of other groups of people in the past and present. As citizens, students need to know how institutions are maintained or changed and how they influence individuals, cultures, and societies. Knowledge of the factors that contribute to an individual's uniqueness is essential to understanding the influence on self and on others.

**Economics-** Individuals, families, businesses, and governments must make complex economic choices as they decide what goods and services to provide and how to allocate limited resources for distribution and consumption. In a global economy marked by rapid technological change, students must learn how to be better producers, consumers, and economic citizens.

**Geography-** Students gain geographical perspectives of the world by studying the earth and the interactions of people with places where they live, work, and play. Knowledge of geography helps students to address the various cultural, economic, social, and civic implications of life in earth's many environments.

**History-** Students need to understand their historical roots and those of others, and how past events have shaped their world. In developing these insights, students must know what life was like in the past and how things change and develop over time. Reconstructing and interpreting historical events provides a needed perspective in addressing the past, the present, and the future.

**Political Science-** Knowledge about the structures of power, authority, and governance and their evolving functions in contemporary society is essential if young citizens are to develop civic responsibility. Young people become more effective citizens and problem solvers when they know how local, state, and national governments and international organizations function and interact.

### Social Studies Inquiry Overview

**Grade 4****Unit 1: Natural Resources of the US**

Each region of the United States is unique; together, they provide people with the different resources they need to survive. In this Unit, students explore the rich natural resources across the US, how people use them, and the ways everyone can help sustain them.

**Inquiry Question: How should we use the natural resources of the United States?**

**Investigation Modules:****How is each region of the US unique?**

Students are introduced to the five regions of the country, investigating each region's unique geography, natural resources, and agricultural products.

**How can we use natural resources responsibly?**

Students investigate natural resources, gathering evidence to support claims that advocate for the responsible use of a selected resource. Students design Mini-Posters to support their position.

**What happens when the pillars of sustainability are stressed?**

Students continue their investigation into sustainability and the use of natural resources by investigating contemporary and historical case studies in which the three pillars of sustainability are stressed. They learn about the Dust Bowl of the 1930s by exploring a range of sources. Furthermore, students are challenged to think critically about the sources they encounter, asking themselves, "How does this source support my investigation goals?"

**What actions support sustainability?**

Students investigate actions that individuals, communities, and industries can take to promote sustainability. Students conclude this module by reviewing the key learning from the unit to help them prepare to take action. They work together to develop an Inquiry Challenge Statement that describes the action they will take, the product they will create, the people they will affect, and the goals they will work toward in the Action Module.

**Social Studies Performance Indicators**

**Inquiry:** Inq1.a.i, Inq1.b.i, Inq2.a.i, Inq2.b.i, Inq3.a.i, Inq3.b.i, Inq3.c.i, Inq4.a.i, Inq4.b.i, Inq5.a.i

**Behavioral Science:** BH1.a.4, BH1.b.4, BH2.a.4-5, BH4.a.i

**Economics:** Econ1.b.4, Econ2.a.3-4, Econ2.b.4

**Geography:** Geog1.a.4-5, Geog1.b.i, Geog1.c.4-5, Geog2.d.4-5, Geog3.b.4, Geog5.a.3-4

**History:** Hist1.a.i, Hist1.b.i, Hist2.a.i, Hist2.c.i, Hist3.a.i, Hist3.b.i, Hist3.c.i, Hist4.a.i, Hist4.b.i, Hist4.c.i, Hist4.d.i

**Political Science:** PS2.c.4-5, PS4.a.i

**Unit 2: Our State's History**

The historical roots of state and local history are not buried, but alive in the artifacts, monuments, and buildings around us, as well as the stories that we tell. In this unit, students learn about the first peoples to live in their state and the major events at the roots of their state's history. They explore a variety of historical sources and the various perspectives reflected in them.

**Inquiry Question: How can we help tell the story of our state?**

**Investigation Modules:****How do connections to the land shape ways of life?**

Students learn how people of the region were connected to the land before the arrival of Europeans, and consider contemporary Native American connections to the land. They compare their findings about Native American culture and history with the depictions in the timeline and the Exploring the States book from the hook activity to consider how a single source cannot capture a complete story.

**How did European exploration and settlement shape the story of our state?**

Students explore events of European exploration, colonization, and expansion in their state. They investigate the causes and impacts of historical events on different groups of people.

**How is the struggle for freedom part of our story?**

Students take a closer look at issues related to rights and freedom during the eras they learned about in the previous modules, connecting their state's history to the national story.

**Why is it important to ask critical questions about historical sources?**

Students investigate how the content of an historical source is impacted by the perspective of its maker. They learn how critical questions can help them dig beyond the surface, then conclude the module by reviewing the key learning from the unit to help them prepare to take action. They work together to develop an Inquiry Challenge Statement that describes the action they will take, the product they will create, the people they will affect, and the goals they will work toward in the Action Module.

**Social Studies Performance Indicators**

**Inquiry:** Inq1.a.i, Inq1.b.i, Inq2.a.i, Inq2.b.i, Inq3.a.i, Inq3.b.i, Inq3.c.i, Inq4.a.i, Inq4.b.i, Inq5.a.i

**Behavioral Science:** BH1.a.4, BH2.a.4-5, BH2.b.4, BH4.a.i

**Economics:** Econ1.b.4

**Geography:** Geog1.c.4-5, Geog2.d.4-5, Geog4.a.4

**History:** Hist1.a.i, Hist1.b.i, Hist2.a.i, Hist2.b.i, Hist3.a.i, Hist3.b.i, Hist4.a.i, Hist4.b.i, Hist4.d.i

**Political Science:** PS4.a.i

**Unit 3: Economic Choices**

Students explore the concept of economics and how it relates to every aspect of their lives. People have unlimited wants and limited resources; therefore, they must make choices constantly. Students build a foundation of financial literacy while gaining an understanding about the interdependence and relationships in an economy and the role each of us plays in the system. Throughout the unit, they investigate how each of us has the power to make economic choices that can have a positive impact on our communities today and in the future.

**Inquiry Question: How can we make economic choices that have positive impacts?**

**Investigation Modules:****How do the parts of an economy work together?**

Students investigate how a market economy works by learning about the people and parts that play a role in an economy, and how they interact together. They explore the relationships between goods, services, producers, and consumers in order to see how they are all interconnected.

**How do producers both shape and reflect their communities?**

Students imagine themselves as producers who aim to create a plan for providing a good or service that meets local needs or wants. They learn more about how producers use available resources to address market demands by investigating historical industries, businesses, and entrepreneurs that have both shaped and been shaped by their regions

**How can we make economic choices?**

Students explore how and why people make economic decisions, including the factors that may influence these choices. They explore what it means to be an informed consumer, along with concepts such as benefits vs. opportunity costs, incentives, and how different people determine value or worth.

**How do people work toward economic goals?**

Students investigate the role of today's economic choices in achieving tomorrow's personal, financial, and community goals. They explore how thoughtful choices about where to spend limited resources like time and money can play a part in achieving goals and developing one's human capital. Students conclude this module by reviewing the key learning from the unit to help them prepare to take action. They work together to develop an Inquiry Challenge Statement that describes the action they will take, the product they will create, the people they will affect, and the goals they will work toward in the Action Module.

**Social Studies Performance Indicators**

**Inquiry:** Inq1.a.i, Inq1.b.i, Inq2.a.i, Inq2.b.i, Inq3.a.i, Inq3.b.i, Inq3.c.i, Inq4.a.i, Inq4.b.i, Inq5.a.i

**Behavioral Science:** BH4.a.i

**Economics:** Econ1.b.4, Econ2.a.3-4, Econ2.b.4-5, Econ3.a.4, Econ4.b.4-5

**Geography:** Geog1.a.4-5

**History:** Hist4.a.i, Hist4.b.i

**Political Science:** PS1.a.i, PS2.a.i, PS2.c.4-5, PS3.b.3-4, PS3.c.4-5, PS4.a.i