

RHODE ISLAND'S SOCIAL STUDIES CONTENT STANDARDS

OVERVIEW

The Rhode Island Social Studies Content Standards identify the social studies content students in Rhode Island are expected to learn from kindergarten through high school. When designing instruction and teaching, teachers are also expected to keep the anchor standards front and center to inform students' exploration of and engagement with concepts and topics within the content standards.

The social studies content standards are organized by grade-level from kindergarten through eighth grade and include five courses of study for high school. Although Rhode Island's Secondary Regulations require students to take three credits of Social Studies in high school for graduation, RIDE has provided standards progressions for five high school courses in Social Studies. RIDE understands that many high schools also provide electives in Social Studies to complement the requirements. Below is an outline of the K-8 grade level topics and the five high school courses:

Kindergarten – Grade 8

- Kindergarten – Living and Working Together in Schools, Families, and Neighborhoods
- Grade 1 - Living and Working Together in Local Communities
- Grade 2 - Living and Working Together in Global Communities
- Grade 3 - Living and Working Together in the Regions of the United States
- Grade 4 - Living and Working Together in Rhode Island
- Grade 5 - United States History: Pre-European Contact to Reconstruction
- Grade 6 - Ancient to Medieval World History and Geography
- Grade 7 - Early Modern to Modern World History and Geography
- Grade 8 - Government and Civic Life in the United States and Rhode Island

High School

- Civics
- United States History I: Pre-European Contact to Reconstruction
- United States History II: Late 19th Century to the Present
- World History I: Ancient to Medieval
- World History II: Early Modern to Modern

HOW TO READ THE STANDARDS

Every grade level and high school social studies course is organized in a similar fashion. First, each course has a clear title highlighting the focus of inquiry for that course. Within each course, content is organized into inquiry topics and subtopics. For each subtopic there is a single standard with additional guidance that is designed to help teachers understand and make decisions about how to teach the provided content. To assist with this, each subtopic is presented in table form. A sample table is provided below. Following it is a brief description of each element in the table.

SAMPLE STANDARD TABLE

Each course of study for social studies follows the same format. Each course is divided into Inquiry Topics, and each inquiry topic has multiple standards. Below is a sample table used for each content standard that illustrates how the content standards within each course are displayed and organized.

Inquiry Topic 1: Families

Compelling Question: Are all families the same?

SSK.1.1 Members of and roles in families Explain families, family roles, and family rules through looking at their own, those of classmates, and those represented in literature	Connections to the Rhode Island Anchor Standards											
	CG.P	CG.RL	CG.RR	H.CC	H.HP	H.IG	G.HPE	G.HSP	G.WST	E.SA	E.PC	E.EG
	X	X	X		X	X					X	
Guiding Questions for Instruction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In what ways are families unique or similar? What are examples of family units? What are the roles of different people in a family? How are the roles within families similar and/or different from one another? How do members of a family work together to help each other? 	Learning Assessment Objectives: Students demonstrate an ability to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify examples and configurations of a family unit and explain the characteristics of what makes a family (e.g., adopted families, foster families, heterosexual couple families, families with same sex caregivers, interracial families, families with a single caregiver, extended families) Identify roles people have in a family unit and explain how the roles relate to each other Identify what rules and norms families have and explain who makes them and why they exist Explain responsibilities that members of a family have to the family unit (including to pets) Explain ways to help at home 											

Inquiry Topic

Each grade level and high school course consists of multiple inquiry topics. Each inquiry topic is numbered, titled for easy reference, and includes a compelling question. Each inquiry topic also includes multiple content standards, each of which has its own table.

Compelling Question

Each inquiry topic includes a compelling question that is intended to provide an overarching focus of study across the topic of inquiry. Compelling questions are not designed to have simple answers and students should be able to make a range of valid evidence-based arguments in response to these questions after they have completed the topic of inquiry.

Content Standard

The box in the top left-hand corner of each table identifies the content standard. Each table has only one standard and is numbered based on the grade, topic, and standard. For example, the standard SSK.1.1 refers to *Social Studies Grade Kindergarten, Inquiry Topic 1, Standard 1*. All content standards use the four verbs emphasized in the anchor standards. In addition, in most cases the level of rigor in any content standard matches the highest level of rigor in the learning assessment objectives.

Connections to the Rhode Island Anchor Standards

Adjacent to the content standard is information that identifies which anchor standards align with and inform the content standard for the subtopic. Teachers should keep these in mind when using the content standard, guiding questions for instruction, and learning assessment objectives to design instruction and assessment tasks.

Guiding Questions for Instruction

The guiding questions for instruction provide teachers with suggested questions to help prompt student inquiry into the subtopic. They align with the learning assessment objectives.

Learning Assessment Objectives

The learning assessment objectives are designed to help teachers know what to look for when students demonstrate their learning as it relates to the content standards. These objectives also function as indicators of what effective demonstration of the standard would look like. In a sense, the objectives are an ‘unpacked’ version of the content standard. The levels of rigor in the learning assessment objectives align with those of the anchor standards and point to the anchor standards levels that students are expected to achieve.