



Suggested Kindergarten Social Studies Curriculum Framework

The instructional framework was created in order to provide a sample of how the 2020 New Jersey Students Learning Standards for Social Studies performance expectations may be organized and implemented in each grade to facilitate a progressive understanding of the content area. In kindergarten, the units may be taught in any order. It is encouraged to teach the units by infusing them into other content areas. Social studies should not be confined only to the designated social studies time. For example, the Ourselves unit best aligns with ELA, the Our Choices unit can be infused with mathematics and the Environment unit is best taught in conjunction with science. The instructional framework may guide the development of curricula as well as assist in lesson planning.

Social Studies Practices

The social studies practices presented in the standards identify skills that social scientists and citizens need to successfully navigate the world around them. There are seven social studies practices or skills that can be organized into three categories: investigating, sensemaking, and communicating and taking action. These are skills that must be explicitly taught in the social studies classroom from kindergarten through twelfth grade, increasing in complexity and rigor each academic year.

Social studies instruction should be driven by the development and acquisition of skills, also known as practices. The practices identify the skills students need to construct knowledge within the content area. These seven practices are embedded throughout the performance expectations and are integrated into the student learning objectives to demonstrate grade-appropriate implementation. In addition, we have provided standards-based activities in each unit to ensure the modeling and use of these explicit skills.

Investigating	Sensemaking	Communicating & Taking Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Developing questions and planning inquiry <input type="checkbox"/> Gathering and evaluating sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking diverse perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Developing claims and using evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Presenting arguments and explanations <input type="checkbox"/> Engaging in civil discourse and critiquing conclusions <input type="checkbox"/> Taking informed action



Grade Kindergarten – Unit: Our School

Rationale

In this unit, students will establish a foundational understanding of the benefit of rules and structure in relation to their classroom and school communities. This provides the basis for student comprehension of society as a whole, as it reflects the dynamic and roles of citizens, laws and government. Students will reflect on their role as members of the classroom and school to identify their responsibilities as members of these communities. Then they will share what they would like others to do or not do; the teacher will use this information to facilitate the creation of classroom rules. In a classroom discussion, students will be asked the questions “Why does our classroom/school need rules? Whose job is it to make sure the rules are followed? What should happen if someone doesn’t follow the rules?” With the goal of students coming to the collective understanding that “rules and people who have authority, aka teachers/principal, are necessary to keep everyone safe, resolve conflicts and treat people fairly.”

As a classroom member, it is the responsibility of the student to be able to navigate their classroom and school. In order to assist student’s ability to successfully participate in their classroom and school, they will use maps to navigate learning centers in the classroom and/or school fire-drill map. Students will describe the purpose of the maps and how they aid them as members of the classroom and school. Though taught in the beginning of the school year, rules, routines as well as student responsibilities are naturally reinforced throughout the school year. In doing so, educators should draw connections to the core ideas throughout various lessons and content-areas in order to demonstrate how rules, routines and student responsibilities exist in all contexts and are reflective of how the larger society functions.

Core Idea	Performance Expectation	Student Learning Objectives Students will be able to...
Rules and people who have authority are necessary to keep everyone safe, resolve conflicts, and treat people fairly.	6.1.2.CivicsPR.3: Analyze classroom rules and routines and describe how they are designed to benefit the common good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify the classroom rules and routines● Follow the classroom rules and routines● Define the term “common good”● Describe the purpose of rules and routine



Certain character traits can help individuals become productive members of their community.	6.1.2.CivicsCM.1: Describe why it is important that individuals assume personal and civic responsibilities in a democratic society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify their responsibilities as members of the classroom● Describe the roles of the student, teacher and principal in the classroom/school community
A map is a symbolic representation of selected characteristics of a place.	6.1.2.Geo.SV.2: Describe how maps are created for a specific purpose (e.g., school fire-drill map, route from home to school, learning centers in a classroom).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Navigate using a map● Determine the purpose of a map by analyzing keys, features and words

Compelling & Supporting Questions

❖ *Why do we need rules?*

- What could happen if we didn't have rules in our classroom?
- What rules should we have for our classroom? Why?
- Who has the authority to make and enforce rules in our classroom/school/community? Why?

❖ *What are our responsibilities as citizens/members of our class and community?*

- What does it mean to be a member of a community?
- What character traits help make someone a good community member?



Sample Skills-Based Activities

The following suggested activities are designed to support the integration of the 2020 NJSL-SS Social Studies Practices through the designated performance expectations.

Investigating	Sensemaking	Communicating & Taking Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Developing questions and planning inquiry <input type="checkbox"/> Gathering and evaluating sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking diverse perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Developing claims and using evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Presenting arguments and explanations <input type="checkbox"/> Engaging in civil discourse and critiquing conclusions <input type="checkbox"/> Taking informed action
<p><i>Read a scenario about a problem caused when someone doesn't follow a rule. Ask students what rule was broken and how the situation could be fixed. 6.1.2.CivicsPR.3</i></p>	<p><i>Have students propose a rule and interview classmates to determine if it is fair. 6.1.2.CivicsPR.3</i></p>	<p><i>Have students draw a picture showing themselves following a classroom rule. Ask them to explain their drawing and why it's important to follow the rules. 6.1.2.CivicsPR.3</i></p>
<p><i>Read stories about characters with both positive and negative traits. Discuss how different traits impact communities. 6.1.2.CivicsCM.1</i></p>	<p><i>Set up scenarios where students role play what happens when someone does not take responsibility (littering, not following directions, etc.) and then act out how to fix it. Discuss the importance of civic responsibility. 6.1.2.CivicsCM.1</i></p>	<p><i>Give examples of classroom responsibilities. Ask students to give a thumbs up/down if it is their responsibility. 6.1.2.CivicsCM.1</i></p>
<p><i>Go on a walk around school using a map. Stop and ask students to identify rooms, locations, features on the map and to add missing locations. 6.1.2.Geo.SV.2</i></p>	<p><i>Have students compare two different maps to determine the purpose for each map and when/who would use the map. 6.1.2.Geo.SV.2</i></p>	<p><i>Have students design a map of the school to help new students. Create a map key and include important locations. 6.1.2.Geo.SV.2</i></p>



NJ Council for the Social Studies

Resources

- [What if Everyone Did That?](#) by Ellen Javernick
- [What if Everyone Said That?](#) by Ellen Javernick
- [Who Works at Hannah's School?](#) by Lisa Bullard
- [Scholastic News School Rules Lesson Plan](#)
- [Map Lesson Plans](#)
- [Rules](#) iCivics video

Interdisciplinary Connections

- ★ *Draw upon examples of the performing arts, sports, games, and driving in order to make generalizations about the purpose of rules. e.g. safety, equality, order, etc.*



Grade Kindergarten – Unit: Our Environment

Rationale

In this unit, students will explore how the physical environment and climate of different regions impacts how people live. Students will make observations and develop questions regarding the weather they experience and the decisions that they make based on weather, such as clothing and activities. Students will then draw conclusions about the weather in other regions of the United States by evaluating pictures and pointing to evidence that indicates the climate the region experiences. Using a large map of the United States, students will collectively make determinations about the type of weather for each region and create a corresponding symbol to be placed on the map. Then students will evaluate pictures of different regions of New Jersey to identify different environmental features (coastline, mountains, farmland, etc.) and place corresponding symbols on a map of New Jersey. Students will be asked what environmental features are found in their community. Students will compare their own community to other regions in New Jersey and the United States.

Core Idea	Performance Expectation	Student Learning Objectives Students will be able to...
The nature of history involves stories of the past preserved in a variety of sources.	6.1.2.Geo.HE.1: Explain how seasonal weather changes, climate, and other environmental characteristics affect people's lives in a place or region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify the seasons and describe typical weather conditions (e.g. winter is cold and snowy).● List activities people do during different seasons (e.g. swimming in summer, sledding in winter).● Recognize that different regions have different seasonal weather patterns (some places don't have snow in winter).
Environmental characteristics influence how and where people live.	6.1.2.Geo.HE.3: Identify cultural and environmental characteristics of different regions in New Jersey and the United States.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify features of their local environment● Describe different climates of regions of the US.● Compare their community to a different region in the US



Compelling & Supporting Questions

- ❖ **How does the weather and climate where we live impact our daily lives?**
 - What kinds of weather and seasonal changes do we experience where we live?
 - How does the weather affect what clothes we wear and activities we can do?

- ❖ **How is where we live similar and different to other regions in New Jersey and the United States?**
 - How does weather differ in different regions of New Jersey (coastline, mountains, farmland, cities)?
 - How does New Jersey experience weather differently than other parts of the country?

Sample Skills-Based Activities

The following suggested activities are designed to support the integration of the 2020 NJSLSS Social Studies Practices through the designated performance expectations.

Investigating	Sensemaking	Communicating & Taking Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Developing questions and planning inquiry <input type="checkbox"/> Gathering and evaluating sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking diverse perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Developing claims and using evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Presenting arguments and explanations <input type="checkbox"/> Engaging in civil discourse and critiquing conclusions <input type="checkbox"/> Taking informed action
<p><i>Have students record and analyze local weather over a period of time by making observations, taking measurements, and recording data in a pictograph or chart. Then discuss how the weather affects their daily lives and routines. 6.1.2.Geo.HE.1</i></p>	<p><i>Provide photos, books, or videos showing people from different climates around the world. Have students analyze the types of clothing worn and develop claims regarding the types of climates in those regions. 6.1.2.Geo.HE.1</i></p>	<p><i>Have each student draw a picture of their favorite season and write a sentence explaining how that season affects their life. Display these pictures in the classroom as a reminder of the impact of seasonal changes on our lives. 6.1.2.Geo.HE.1</i></p>
<p><i>Have students cut out images of people from magazines/newspapers then as a class have students develop questions that would help the student's learn about the cultural and environmental characteristics of where the person lives. 6.1.2.Geo.HE.3</i></p>	<p><i>Bring in food items grown or produced in different regions of the U.S. Discuss how climate and environment affect food. 6.1.2.Geo.HE.3</i></p>	<p><i>Provide clay, play dough, blocks etc. for students to model key landforms from different regions of the U.S. Have them present and describe key features. 6.1.2.Geo.HE.3</i></p>



Resources

- [Homes Around the World](#) by Lisa Herrington
- [Schools Around the World](#) by Brenna Maloney
- [Nature Map Explorer](#)
- [National Geographic Kids](#)

Interdisciplinary Connections

- ★ *Track daily weather patterns and create a bar graph of the number of days it was rainy, snowy, sunny, and cloudy.*
- ★ *Have students discuss how the weather affects plants and animals. Why do some people not see flowers in the winter and others do?*
- ★ *Go on a nature walk and collect artifacts of our physical environment then create a collage.*



Grade Kindergarten – Unit: Our Choices

Rationale

In this unit, students will learn foundational economic concepts including the difference between needs and wants, making choices when resources are limited, and how goods and services can be exchanged. Students will explore the differences between needs and wants then discuss how to make decisions when resources are limited and they cannot get everything they want. Finally, students reflect on how their parents obtain their needs and wants and compare it to stories of how individuals obtained items in the past. Students will gain financial literacy skills that will help them understand why and how we make choices.

Core Idea	Performance Expectation	Student Learning Objectives Students will be able to...
Individuals make decisions based on their needs, wants, and the availability of resources.	6.1.2.EconET.1: Explain the difference between needs and wants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Categorize pictures of items as either "needs" or "wants"● Explain why food, water, and shelter are needs● give examples of personal wants
Individuals make decisions based on their needs, wants, and the availability of resources.	6.1.2.EconET.2: Cite examples of choices people make when resources are scarce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify situations where they have to make choices due to limited resources (e.g., choosing one toy at a store● Explain that making choices often involves prioritizing needs over wants.
Goods and services are produced and exchanged in multiple ways.	6.1.2.EconEM.3: Identify the ways in which people exchange(d) goods and services today, and in the past (e.g., purchase, borrow, barter/trade).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Recognize forms of exchange like purchase, borrow, and barter/trade● Role play different methods of exchange through a classroom store● Compare current exchanges to past methods like bartering/trading



Compelling and Supporting Questions

- ❖ *What's the difference between things we need and things we want?*
 - What are some things I need to live and be healthy?
 - What are some things I want but don't necessarily need?
 - Can some things be both a need and a want? (e.g., clothes in cold weather)

- ❖ *When we can't have everything, how do we decide what to get?*
 - What are some choices I've had to make between wants?
 - What steps can I take to make a tough choice?

- ❖ *How do people get their needs and wants?*
 - What does your family use when they buy items from a store?
 - What jobs do people in our family or community have? How does this help provide needs/wants?
 - How is getting needs today different from long ago? How did people long ago get food, water, homes?

Sample Skills-Based Activities

The following suggested activities are designed to support the integration of the 2020 NJSL-SS Social Studies Practices through the designated performance expectations.

Investigating	Sensemaking	Communicating & Taking Action
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<p><i>Divide students into pairs and ask them to find examples of needs and wants in the classroom, school, or playground. Discuss their findings as a class, emphasizing the difference between them. 6.1.2.EconET.1</i></p>	<p><i>Provide pictures of various items (food, toys, clothes, entertainment) and have students sort them into "needs" and "wants" categories. Encourage them to explain their choices using evidence (e.g., "We need food to grow strong, but we don't need a robot toy"). 6.1.2.EconET.1</i></p>	<p><i>Have students bring an item from home that represents a need and want. Each student shares their item and explains why it's a need or want. Encourage classmates to ask clarifying questions. 6.1.2.EconET.1</i></p>



<p><i>Have students create "Would you rather?" questions with scenarios involving needs, wants, and resource limitations.</i></p> <p>6.1.2.EconET.2</p>	<p><i>Read the book 'Can't Have It All' by Lisa Jahn-Clough. Have students discuss times they couldn't have everything they wanted. Ask them to explain why resources are limited.</i></p> <p>6.1.2.EconET.2</p>	<p><i>Read scenarios where students have limited resources and must make a choice. Have them discuss in pairs what they would choose and why.</i></p> <p>6.1.2.EconET.2</p>
<p><i>Show examples of people purchasing, borrowing, and bartering. Have students match to the correct term. Then role play the scenarios.</i></p> <p>6.1.2.EconEM.3</p>	<p><i>Read a story showing past bartering/trading practices. Compare to how students get items today. Discuss how and why it has changed.</i></p> <p>6.1.2.EconEM.3</p>	<p><i>Set up centers where students role play different exchanges. For example, a store center where they "purchase" items with play money, a library center where they can "borrow" books, and a dramatic play center where they can "barter" toys and snacks.</i></p> <p>6.1.2.EconEM.3</p>

Resources

- [Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day](#) by Judith Viorst
- [Intro to Scarcity](#) EconEd Lesson Plan
- [Junior Achievement Ourselves](#)

Interdisciplinary Connections

- ★ *Have students create artwork using materials they brought from home. Then, have them trade their artwork with another student for a different piece of artwork. This will help them understand the concept of bartering, which was commonly used in the past when there was no money.*
- ★ *Host a classroom store where students can "purchase" items with play money. Provide a variety of items with different values to reinforce counting and comparing numbers.*
- ★ *Have students draw or paint pictures showing needs versus wants.*



Grade Kindergarten – Unit: Our Community

Rationale

In this unit, students will learn about leadership roles and civic responsibilities in their community. Students will identify key community members and their roles and responsibilities. Next, students explore how ordinary citizens contribute to the community, including their role as kids in their family and town. Students will examine how their community has changed over time by reviewing multiple sources, such as first accounts from people, pictures, and monuments. Then discuss why communities change. This unit will provide a foundational understanding of town positions and responsibilities as well as the role of the individual in helping the community.

Core Idea	Performance Expectation	Student Learning Objectives Students will be able to...
Local community and government leaders have roles and responsibilities to provide services for their community members.	6.1.2.CivicsPI.1: Describe roles and responsibilities of community and local government leaders (e.g., mayor, town council).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify key community members and their roles
The actions of individuals and government affect decisions made for the common good.	6.1.2.CivicsPI.4: Explain how all people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Give examples of how kids help at home and school● Identify the jobs of community helpers like teachers, firefighters, doctors● Explain how they can help their family and town
Historical timelines put events in chronological order to help people understand the past.	6.1.2.HistoryCC.1: Use multiple sources to create a chronological sequence of events that describes how and why your community has changed over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Compare past and present photos of their community● Create a timelines of key events in the community's history● Identify one reason the community changed over time



Compelling and Supporting Questions

- ❖ **Who contributes to our community?**
 - Who are key community members? What do they do?
 - Who is the leader of our town? (mayor, town council, etc.)
- ❖ **How does everyone help our town?**
 - How do kids help the community?
 - How do grown-ups have different jobs in our town?
 - How can I help my community?
- ❖ **How has our town changed over time?**
 - What did our town used to look like?
 - How is our community different now than in the past?
 - Why has the town changed?

Sample Skills-Based Activities

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<p><i>Have students imagine they are a specific community leader (e.g., mayor, teacher, police officer.) What questions do they have about their role and duties? What resources would they need to answer those questions?</i> 6.1.2.CivicsPI.1</p>	<p><i>Fill a box with objects representing different community leaders (e.g., firefighter badge, doctor's stethoscope, mayor's gavel). Ask students what these objects tell them about the community. Encourage them to ask questions about the roles and responsibilities of these leaders.</i> 6.1.2.CivicsPI.1</p>	<p><i>Have students write thank-you cards to community leaders expressing appreciation for their contributions. Consider including specific examples of their positive impact.</i> 6.1.2.CivicsPI.1</p>



<p><i>Read books showing different community helpers and jobs. Discuss roles people play.</i> 6.1.2.CivicsPI.4</p>	<p><i>List ways students help at home and school. Draw pictures to illustrate.</i> 6.1.2.CivicsPI.4</p>	<p><i>Have students role play community helpers explaining how their job helps.</i> 6.1.2.CivicsPI.4</p>
<p><i>Take a walk around town and photograph or draw aspects students think are old and new. Discuss the sources.</i> 6.1.2.HistoryCC.1</p>	<p><i>Interview family or community members about what the town was like when they were young.</i> 6.1.2.HistoryCC.1</p>	<p><i>Students draw pictures contrasting old and new aspects of town and explain changes.</i> 6.1.2.HistoryCC.1</p>

Resources

- [The Helpers in Your Neighborhood](#) by Mary McKenna Siddals
- [Do Your Part](#) iCivics Video

Interdisciplinary Connections

- ★ *Each student designs a badge representing a community helper, discussing its significance and symbolism.*
- ★ *Set up areas representing different community spaces (e.g. library, grocery store, doctor's office) and let students enact everyday roles.*
- ★ *Create a mural depicting different people contributing to the community (e.g. doctors, teachers, shopkeepers, families).*