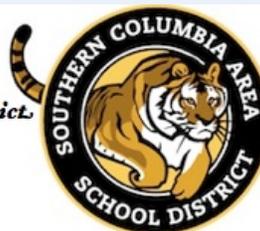Save   Close   ✏ Edit Curriculum Map Data

📅 Last updated:**4/1/2014**

Southern Columbia Area School District
8oo Southern Drive
Catawissa, PA 17815
570-356-2331

Title:

ELA Grade 5 Module 6

Subject	Grade	Module	Suggested Timeline
English Language Arts	5	6	5 weeks

Grade Level Summary

In fifth grade, students broaden and deepen their understanding of informational and literary text through comparing and contrasting. Students reflect on their skills and adjust their comprehension and vocabulary strategies to become better readers. They use textual evidence and quote accurately to support their analyses and interpretations. Using evidence from multiple texts, students discuss, reflect, and respond to a wide variety of literary genres and informational text. Students read for pleasure, choosing books based on personal preference, topic, genre, theme, or author. Students develop a strong personal voice in their writing beginning in fifth grade. This is demonstrated by the way they sometimes inject humor into their narratives and support their opinions with credible reasons. Students use precise, specialized vocabulary appropriately in content-area writing. Students develop their writing craft with an emphasis on pacing and an awareness of style. They experiment with sentence length and complex sentence structures and vary leads and endings. Students are able to summarize and synthesize important works to include in their compositions.

(Adapted from Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements)

Grade Level Modules

Module 1: Becoming a Close Reader and Writing to Learn
Module 2: Researching to Build Knowledge and Teaching Others (emphasis on narrative text types and writing)
Module 3: Researching to Build Knowledge and Teaching Others (emphasis on informational text types and writing)
Module 4: Considering Perspectives and Supporting Opinions (emphasis on opinion writing comparing texts)
Module 5: Considering Perspectives and Supporting Opinions (emphasis on opinion writing explaining with textual reasons)
Module 6: Gathering Evidence and Speaking to Others
Module 7: Literary Analysis

Module Title

Module 6: Gathering Evidence and Speaking to Others

Module Overview

Through close reading, interpretation, and analysis of fiction and nonfiction texts, students synthesize their understanding of multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting the important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent. Students draw on the information from multiple sources to demonstrate understanding and form opinions.

Students thoroughly cultivate their opinions through collaborative discussions and building on others' ideas, while expressing their own clearly. They continue to write opinion pieces with a clear topic, supported by facts and details from credible sources. Students group related opinions, facts, and details. They enhance their writing through an awareness of style, precise vocabulary, and conventions.

Module Objectives

At the end of this module, students will be able to independently use their knowledge to:

- Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent

- Draw on information from multiple print and digital sources, demonstrating the ability to provide text based evidence to answer questions or to solve problems efficiently

- Determine how an author supports particular points in a text through reasons and evidence

- Integrate information from several texts on the same topic to demonstrate understanding of that topic

- Write opinion pieces that introduce a clear topic

    ○ Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details from credible sources to support the opinion on the topic

    ○ Group related opinions, facts, and details utilizing an appropriate organizational structure, including an introduction and conclusion related to the opinion

- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflections, and research in narrative writing

- Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished writings, and provide a list of sources

Focus Standards Addressed in this Module

CC.1.2.5.D -	Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
CC.1.2.5.I -	Integrate information from several texts on the same topic to demonstrate understanding of that topic.
CC.1.3.5.D -	Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
CC.1.4.5.G -	Write opinion pieces on topics or texts.
CC.1.4.5.H -	Introduce the topic and state an opinion on the topic.
CC.1.5.5.A -	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade level topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Important Standards Addressed in this Module

CC.1.1.5.E -	Read with accuracy and fluency to support comprehension: - Read on-level text with purpose and understanding. - Read on-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. - Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.
CC.1.2.5.F -	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in grade level text, including interpretation of figurative language.

CC.1.2.5.J -	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships.
CC.1.2.5.L -	Read and comprehend literary non-fiction and informational text on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.
CC.1.3.5.A -	Determine a theme of a text from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.
CC.1.3.5.C -	Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.
CC.1.3.5.I -	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 5 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies and tools.
CC.1.3.5.K -	Read and comprehend literary fiction on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.
CC.1.4.5.T -	With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
CC.1.4.5.X -	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes and audiences.
CC.1.5.5.F -	Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.
CC.1.5.5.G -	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English when speaking based on grade 5 level and content.

Misconceptions

Students tend to think the teacher is the only person who will be reading their writing and is the audience for whom they write to.

Following an organizational structure is boring and uncreative.

Proper Conceptions

Authentic writing experiences require students to be aware of many different audiences (teachers, classmates, the community, etc.). Writing is more exciting when it is shared.

Following an organizational structure helps to form a writer's thoughts based on textual evidence while communicating intentions to an audience.

Concepts

Analysis Across Texts

Point of View

Point of View

Focus for Writing

Collaborative Discussion

Competencies

Integrate information from several texts on the same topic to demonstrate understanding of that topic.

Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

Informational: Identify and introduce the topic clearly. Opinion: Introduce the topic and state an opinion on the topic. Narrative: Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters.

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade level topics and texts, building on others 'ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Vocabulary

Assessments

The assessments below include summative assessments (formative assessments are included in the "suggested strategies to support design of coherent instruction" section). The sample summative assessments below ask students to engage in a Literacy Design Collaborative Task (LDC) in which they demonstrate the ability to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Literacy Design Collaborative Task

LDC template tasks are fill-in-the-blank "shells" built off the Common Core standards. They allow teachers to insert the text to be read, writing to be produced, and conten to be addressed. When filled in, template tasks create high-quality student assignments that develop reading, writing, and thinking skills in the context of learning Science History, English, and other subjects.

Grade 5 Task Template Opinion/Description:
(Insert question) After reading _____ (literary or informational text/s), write a/n _____ (product) in which you identify _____(concept, term) and argue

_____(content).

[Insert optional question] After reading _____ (literary or informational text/s), write a/n _____ (product) in which you discuss how _____ (content) contributes to an understanding of _____ (content). Give _____ (an, several, or #) example/s from _____ (text/s) to support your discussion.

Examples:

Task ELA Example
After reading selected articles, write an opinion essay in which you identify the lunch choice option you would add to the school menu and argue why you think this choice would be a delicious and nutritious addition to the menu. Give several examples from the resources to support your discussion.

Task Science Example:
After reading informational texts on various alternative forms of energy, write an argument in which you discuss a form of energy contributes to an understanding of conservation of our resources. Give several examples from the resources to support your discussion.

Additional Resources:

http://borchardtlibrary.edublogs.org/2011/09/25/5th-grade-alternative-energy-inquiry-activity/

Link to alternative energy inquiry activity (online activity)

LDC Rubric: **http://www.literacydesigncollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/LDC-Elementary-Template-Tasks-v1.pdf**

Reference: **www.literacydesigncollaborative.org**

OR

PSSA Grades 3-5 Opinion Scoring Guidelines (includes link to PSSA rubric)
http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_assessment_system/20965/pennsylvania_system_of_school_assessment_%28pssa%29/11905

Sample Performance Task for Opinion
Students will participate in groups to prepare arguments and evidence for a class debate on the best use of our resources in regards to alternative energy. (CC1.5.5.A)

Students will write a letter to the president describing and defending their point of view as to the best use of alternative energy for the United States. (CC.1.4.5.G and CC.1.4.5.H)

Students will write a letter to the editor revealing their favorite restaurant. They will give evidence and examples to support their opinion as to why this restaurant should be rated top choice in the area. (CC.1.4.5.G and CC.1.4.5.H)

Sample Multiple Choice Question
The question below is an example that focuses on gathering evidence.

Suggested Strategies to Support Design of Coherent Instruction
Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching: Domain 3 Instruction

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts. Introduce the topic and state an opinion on the topic.

Detail Detective
Students gather details to strengthen their opinion on the assigned topic. They may use various media sources to find updated information. Students will organize information by main idea and supporting details.

Stand and Deliver
Students research a topic and find 2-3 supporting details. They stand on a chair to introduce their topic and state the supporting details.

Formative Assessment Strategies

Brochure Presentation
Using various media, students will create a brochure which includes their lunch choice addition. They will use the main ideas and supporting details previously constructed.

during the detail detective activity. A technology component in their presentation can also be utilized. (ex: Prezzie, Wordle, Haiku Deck, Powerpoint, Keynote).

Class Newspaper
Compile student essays/editorials into one newspaper. Publish and share with school community.
http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/Printing_Press/ (Link to online resource for easy newpaper formatting)

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade level topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Graffiti
Various poster boards are set around the room with headings based on topics of your choice (ex: four alternative energy sources). Students rotate from poster to poster and add details to each sheet. Use credible articles and text as a resource.

Peer Critique
Working in partners, students peer edit and revise opinion essays. Students give suggestions and help develop arguments based on their partner's opinions.

Formative Assessment Strategies

Mini Debate

Students will participate in groups to prepare arguments and evidence for a class debate. Class Debate can be based on any of the opinion pieces previously stated in th
module. (ex. energy sources, restaurant, or lunch choice)

Online Discussion
Set up an online discussion forum for your class using a site such as **todaysmeet.com**. Have students login using a laptop or iPad; the discussion can also be projected
using an LCD projector. As the teacher, post an initial question to spur student opinions and discussion. Allow the students time to discuss the topic, asking questions ar
responding to each other. At the end of the discussion you can print a transcript.

Integrate information from several sources (digital and print) on the same topic to demonstrate understanding

Resource Crosswalk
Students are given a print and digital resource on the same topic. (For example, Hurricanes: Earths Mightest Storms by Patricia Luaber, and National Geographics Webs
- Hurricane Facts
http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/natural-disasters/hurricane-profile/). Using a graphic organizer, students identify the supporting details
from both sources and the overall main idea.

Post-It Power
Give students three resources (digital or print) on the same topic and three post-its for each resource. (Total of nine post-its.) As students read each resource they will
find three supporting details and record one detail per post-it.

Formative Assessment Strategies

Crosswalk Composition
Building on the Resource Crosswalk, students will use the information from both sources to compose an informational writing piece describing the overall main idea of bo
sources.

Post-It Power Project
Using the organized information they gained from the post-it power activity, students will create an informational project (poster, brochure, advertisement, webpage).

Differentiation

Strategies for Struggling Learners

- For students needing additional support, consider letting students draw small pictures or images that represent words. This helps students to process language even when the
  cannot read the words.

- For students needing additional supports producing language, consider offering a sentence frame, sentence starter, or a cloze sentence to assist with language production an
  provide the structure required.

- Asking students what they think they know encourages them to stay open to new thinking.

- Narrowing the number of questions students focus on helps those who have difficulty processing and transferring a lot of language at once.

- Increase interactions with vocabulary in context. This increases rate of vocabulary acquisition.
  - Allowing students who struggle with language to just contribute to the discussion orally and not write down summaries, or provide a scribe for them to dictate to,
    ensures they are active participants.

ensures they are active participants.

- Multiple means of representation, such as drawing, is a principle of Universal Design for Learning that helps more students engage more fully with the content.

- All students developing academic language will benefit from direct instruction of academic vocabulary. Increased interactions with vocabulary in context increases the rate of vocabulary acquisition

- Struggling readers benefit from a clear purpose and narrowed focus. Consider numbering the paragraphs and asking struggling readers to focus in on one paragraph in each section that carries a great deal of meaning related to the concept.

- Consider partnering an ELL with a student who speaks the same L1, when discussion of complex content is required. This can let students have more meaningful discussions and clarify points in their L1.

- Refer to the ELL Overlay documents for more guidance on differentiation. **http://www.pdesas.org/module/sas/curriculumframework/elloverlay.aspx**

Strategies for Advanced/Gifted Learners

- Abstraction: Content that goes beyond surface detail and facts to underlying concepts, generalizations, and symbolism.

- Active Engagement: Instructional strategies that result in relevance and engagement for students.

- Agendas: A personalized list of tasks that a particular student must complete in a specified time

- Choice: Provide opportunities for choices and flexibility. Many GT students love the opportunity for choice and given an opportunity will construct their own differentiated choices.

- Choice boards, Tic-tac- toe: Students make a work selection from a certain row or column. Teachers can provide for student learning needs while giving students choice.

- Most difficult first: Students can demonstrate a mastery of a concept by completing the five most difficult problems with 85 percent accuracy. Students who demonstrate mastery do not need to practice any more.

- Open-ended assignments: Providing students with tasks and work that do not have single right answers or outcomes. The tasks may have timelines and a sequence of activities to be accomplished, but outcomes will vary for each student.

- Orbital study: Independent investigations, generally of three to six weeks. They orbit or revolve around some facet of the curriculum. Students select their own topics for the orbital, and they work with guidance and coaching from the teacher to develop more expertise on the topic as well as learning the skills of an investigator.

- Pre-assessment: An array of pre-assessment options can guide instruction. By regularly pre-assessing students, teachers can flexibly group students by ability and readiness levels. Pre-assessment is also essential for compacting.

- Problem-based learning: A student-centered instructional   strategy in which students collaboratively solve problems and reflect on their experiences. Learning is driven by challenging, open-ended problems. Students work in small collaborative groups. Teachers take on the role as "facilitators" of learning.

- RAFT: Provides students choice in a writing assignment varying Role, Audience, Format, and Topic.

- Subject integration "Theme-based" units: Uniting   two or more disciplines and their content through a conceptual theme, such as "origins," "change" or "friendship."

- Tiered assignments: Varied levels of tasks to ensure that students explore ideas and use skills at a level that builds on what they already know and encourages growth. All students explore the same essential ideas but work at different levels of depth and complexity.

- Vary levels of complexity: Books and instructional materials at different levels of complexity allow students to study the same concepts but at levels of depth and complexity to fit their learning needs.

- Vary pacing: plan to accommodate varied pacing allowing students to move through content at a pace appropriate for their learning needs.

- Vary tasks: provide different homework options, journal prompts, and questions

- Compacting: This strategy should be done at all levels to prevent repetition and re-teaching of content students have already mastered. To compact the teacher must pre-test students in the content to be presented. Students mastering, or nearly mastering the content, then move on to an advanced level of difficulty. According to research done by Dr. Karen Rogers, compacting has a .83 effect size, particularly when math and science content is compacted.

- Conceptual Discussions: High level discussions of themes, concepts, generalizations, issues, and problems, rather than a review of facts, terms and details.

- Extensions: Offer relevant extension options for learners who need additional challenges.

- Flexible Assessments: Offer different assessment options   that allow students to demonstrate their mastery of new concepts, content, and skills.

- Flexible tasks: Allowing students to structure their own projects and investigations according to their strengths and interests.

- Flexible project deadlines: Students negotiate for more or less time to complete a learning experience and its matching product or assessment.

- Grouping: Regular opportunities to work in whole groups, small groups, with a partner, or in an independent setting.

- Higher-order thinking skills: Questioning in discussion or providing activities based on processing that requires analysis, synthesis, evaluation, or other critical thinking skills.

- Independent study: Students research a teacher or self-chosen topic, developing either traditional or non-traditional products to demonstrate learning.

- Jigsaw/Cooperative learning: Just as in a jigsaw puzzle, each piece-each student's part is essential for the full completion and full understanding of the final product.

- Learning centers or stations: Activity stations that demonstrate awareness of different academic needs and learning style preferences.

- Learning contracts: Students negotiate individually with teacher about what and how much will be learned and when product will be due; often connected with an individual or independent project

- Learning programs: Computer programs or websites to meet learners' needs.

- Mini-lessons: Mini-lessons provide levels of scaffolding, support and challenge as needed for students of like ability/need.

  http://opi.mt.gov/pub/RTI/Resources/RTI_Gifted_Talented.pdf

Interdisciplinary Connections

Shared responsibility for students' literacy development
The Standards insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language be a shared responsibility within the school. The K–5 standards include expectations for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language applicable to a range of subjects, including but not limited to ELA. The grades 6–12 standards are divided into two sections, one for ELA and the other for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. This division reflects the unique, time-honored place of ELA teachers in developing students' literacy skills while at the same time recognizing that teachers in other areas must have a role in this development as well.

Part of the motivation behind the interdisciplinary approach to literacy promulgated by the Standards is extensive research establishing the need for college and career ready students to be proficient in reading complex informational text independently in a variety of content areas. Most of the required reading in college and workforce training programs is informational in structure and challenging in content; postsecondary education programs typically provide students with both a higher volume of such reading than is generally required in K–12 schools and comparatively little scaffolding.

The Standards are not alone in calling for a special emphasis on informational text. The 2009 reading framework of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) requires a high and increasing proportion of informational text on its assessment as students advance through the grades.

http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/introduction/key-design-consideration

Module Focus: Gathering Evidence and speaking to Others

Science: *What are some critical perspectives?*
Education is not preparing students for a world that is static and fixed. Rather, education must prepare learners to cope with changes that will increase in complexity throughout their lives and many of which cannot be foreseen at this time. Most learners will probably deal with several job changes, move to several different locations, be involved in complex social changes, and other such issues. Education cannot give learners all the information that they need to know, but rather it must provide the tools for continuing to learn.

In a society in which education has focused on transmitting "what we know," it is a challenge to develop a widespread view that "how we come to know" is very important modern society.

There is a very deeply held view on the part of many educators, parents, and other members of society that inquiry learning takes too much time and that it is much more efficient for students simply to be given the information they need to know. This point of view is strongly reinforced by the kinds of things students are expected to know to pass the majority of tests they are given. There are those educators and discipline experts who feel they have known and continue to know what knowledge is most important.

There are also those who feel strongly that there is a "core knowledge," or elements of cultural literacy, that should be the emphasis of education. E. D. Hirsch, a noted literary analyst and educator, strongly advocates a sequenced K-12 curriculum in which students cover a larger number of specific topics and concepts for each year of school. Howard Gardner 1 describes this approach in THE DISCIPLINED MIND: "At other schools, often in the same neighborhood as efforts like the Key School, students work on a core curriculum, perhaps one inspired by E. D. Hirsch or the privately funded Edison Project. At each age and grade level, there are prescribed lists of concepts, words, and spheres of knowledge that children should know or acquire. Youngsters are regularly tested on this information, rewarded when it has been acquired, and encouraged to study harder when their familiarity with it proves spotty."

1. Many, especially older, people have not mentally moved past the time when our country was an industrial, or even an agrarian, place. Those were times that moved

more slowly and did not require workers and companies to constantly "work smarter" to stay ahead of global competitors. Older members of society learned that it was important to study hard -- which often meant the memorization of content -- to get good grades, graduate, get a job, work hard, and move up a relatively stable career ladder to achieve success. This general approach has much merit still today, but the focus on what to "work harder" on has shifted.

Most people -- those graduating from high school and from colleges and those who will not graduate -- eventually will enter the world of work. Even for the small number who do not enter the workforce, all will have to resolve ever increasingly complex problems throughout life. The business world is fast recognizing that to be successful in modern society it is essential to work smarter. The attributes, described earlier, that are essential for life-long learning have to be the emphasis in education.

Surveys of business communities regarding workforce skills reveal interesting findings. Workforce skills are not specific job skills but rather more broad understandings th provide one the abilities to quickly adapt to new job-skill demands. Some examples of skills essential for the modern workforce are:

- The work requires one to research possible causes of problems.

- The work requires one to isolate factors that are possible causes of problems.

- The work requires one to arrive at resolutions to problems by brainstorming with other people.

- The work requires one to search for information stored in computer files by using electronic data research skills.

- The work requires one to write clearly to convey complex information to other people to describe situations or events and to make recommendations.

- The work requires one to interpret correlations by comparing two sets of data.

Several dozen more examples could be stated. You will notice there is very little stress on knowing specific kinds of content information. This omission is probably influenced by the fact that content knowledge is changing very rapidly, and little content knowledge is retained if it is not constantly used. However, the workforce skills competencies deal with attributes that permit one to continue to learn.

www.thirteen.org

Social Studies: What We Know

Meaningful learning in the social studies involves not just mastering the content, but understanding the nature and purpose of the discipline (Levstik and Barton 2001, p. 13). In the *Academic Content Standards: K-12 Social Studies*, social studies skills and methods is described in the following manner:

Students collect organize, evaluate and synthesize information from multiple sources to draw logical conclusions. Students communicate this information using appropriat social studies terminology in oral, written or multimedia form and apply what they have learned to societal issues in simulated or real-world settings (Ohio Department of Education 2003, p. 12).

This standard provides the opportunity to enrich student's lives by becoming skilled in obtaining information, thinking and organizing data, communicating information and problem-solving.

What does the research state about *obtaining information* and *thinking and organizing*?

The goal of *obtaining information* and *thinking and organizing* is to assist students in becoming critically literate. This encompasses how students see and interact with the world and having the skills and desire to evaluate society and the world (Wolk 2003, p. 102). Research shows that students and adults need to exercise critical literacy in aspects of their lives, at home and school. Wolk reminds us that the purpose of critical literacy is to empower students with the ability to understand multiple perspectives and question concepts based on their previous knowledge (2003, p. 102).

Research in social studies stresses the importance of allowing students to develop the intellectual skills necessary to use primary sources and work with data when investigating past and present issues (Doolittle and Hicks 2003, p. 73). Wade supports the position that students succeed when provided opportunities to actively create their own meaning of the world based on their prior knowledge, experiences, interests, motivation and values (2003, p. 75). Thornton concludes that the goals of social studies instruction will fall short of success if the active construction of knowledge and analysis of information are not addressed (Seixas 2001, p. 549).

Social studies is often seen as the school subject that integrates knowledge from various disciplines (Seixas 2001, p. 549). Social studies has the potential to be interdisciplinary in that it blends with English language arts, science, the arts and mathematics. Seixas notes that social studies content is selected as a means of accomplishing larger purposes and goals (2001, p. 558). This includes developing information-processing skills that are critical to student success. The processing of

information entails a search for patterns based on multiple data sources, a summarization of the data and a transformation of the data into usable patterns for understanding (Sunal 1990, p. 8). Students will use their information-gathering skills, along with thinking and organizing skills, to seek answers to questions from all disciplines. In the study of history, students will use their information-processing skills to understand that history is interpretive, explained through narrative and is causally related (Levstik and Barton 2001, p. 5).

Levstik and Barton find that students need to be guided in how to ask and answer social studies questions (2001, p. 14). To be able to ask and research quality questions about the past or present, students need to know how to find information, evaluate sources, reconcile conflicting accounts, and create interpretive summaries. In "History-The Past as a Frame of Reference," Rogers notes that "historical inquiry cannot be carried on without context, while at the same time, context is what one's previous stud of history has largely provided" (1987, p. 8). Shemilt agrees that context is critical, but notes that students rarely ask "How do we know?" Students often take knowledge about the past for granted because they have seldom worked with multiple forms of information (Shemilt 1987, p. 43). Levstik and Barton stress the need for a vibrant

social studies curriculum that engages students in investigating significant themes, asking questions and making choices as a focus of study (2001, p. 3).

The impact of the textbook in social studies is the focus of a number of researchers. Students need to understand that the first and often most important source they shou consult for information is their textbook. Yet, researchers identify a concern that many textbooks present obstacles to student learning. Levstik and Barton note that the expository text used in most classroom textbooks emphasizes "greater degrees of abstraction while trying to maintain a neutral stance," causing students to distance themselves from history (2001, p. 110). Beck and McKeown found that students have difficulty making sense of their textbooks because the books often lack explanations and connections among ideas and events (2002, p. 44). Wineburg finds that the textbooks sift through the evidence for students, causing them to view textbooks as fact rather than an interpretation of events (2001). Wineburg recommends that students be taught to read textbook accounts for their subtext, their authenticity and to question their conclusions (2001, p. 169).

How do *obtaining information* and *thinking and organizing* look in the classroom?

Levstik and Barton identified four skills critical for students to participate in a sustained conversation about history: 1) ask questions that are worthy of discussion; 2) ident questions that do not have simple or single answers; 3) gather sufficient and appropriate data for analysis; 4) use imaginative entry into the past (2001, p. 24).

General consensus from the research shows that elementary children can understand and use information and data when the application is modeled by the teacher (Alleman and Brophy 2003, p. 107). Teachers of elementary students need to assist students in identifying information and data. Reading techniques, such as how to distinguish fiction from non-fiction, could provide students with the ability to construct their own fictional or non-fiction historical accounts (Brophy and VanSledright 1997, p 19). Sunal states, "A good early childhood program allows for exploration, experimentation and inquiry, all within a structured yet creative environment" (1990, p. 74).

Wineburg makes an analogy for the study of history, but it is true for all of the social studies disciplines. He writes, "Our encounter with history presents us with a choice: t learn about rhinoceroses or to learn about unicorns. We naturally incline toward unicorns-they are prettier and more tame. But, it is the rhinoceros that can teach us far more than we could ever imagine" (2001, p. 24). Learning about the difficult subject, or the "rhinoceros," would necessitate providing multiple resources, teaching critical thinking skills, assisting children in identifying the relationships among people, places and the environment, and encouraging children to infer the limitations that scarce data imposes (Sunal 1990, p. 162). This challenge often turns classroom discourse towards the "unicorn," avoiding questions like "Why?" and "How do we know?"

Research on reading education addresses the concept of building understanding. Instruction is moving deeper into this area with the technique called "Questioning the Author" (Beck and McKeown 2002, p. 44). This instructional approach focuses students' attention on building understanding of ideas through the use of questioning skills. Like Wineburg, Beck and McKeown suggest having children question the subtext and meaning of what they are reading, especially textbooks. The use of this technique allows children to grapple with ideas while they read and dig in to make sense of new information. Research studies on reading contend that students use three sources t build understanding: texts, queries and discussion (Beck and McKeown 2002, p. 44). The "questioning the author" technique encourages young readers to perceive the process of understanding as a challenge. The questions the students (the teachers in kindergarten and grade one) develop are then discussed by the class, bringing students to the third source of understanding, keeping in mind that understanding is from the students' perspective.

Students need help in seeing how the information they find relates to the questions they have developed. The use of graphic organizers to assist in organizing informatior provides an opportunity for teachers to model skills associated with the social studies (Levstik and Barton 2001, p. 84). By developing thinking and questioning skills, students will be able to answer the "Why?" and "How do we know?" questions.

How do *communication* and *problem-solving* look in the classroom?

Incorporating decision-making and critical thinking skills into the social studies curriculum can be effective, dynamic and interesting (Morton 1987, p. 210). To be successf problem-solving lessons should contain the following three components: a) students understand the question being asked and have enough prior knowledge to critically assess the problem; b) students role-play and develop alternative positions to solve the problem; c) students use divergent thinking toward and critical assessment of the alternative proposals (Armento 1987, p. 181).

Active learning opportunities find students engaging in discussions of issues and taking part in activities that put a "real life" perspective on what is learned (Levstik and Barton 2001, p. 21). Presentations, simulations, mock trials, debates and classroom discussions are ways to involve students in the creation of their own knowledge. To prepare students for society and political involvement, students need to be encouraged to take part in groups and engage in activities that promote the good of their community (school, home, local community, etc.). When participating in social networks (class discussions, community forums, interschool activities such as model United Nations, etc.), students need to be respectful toward familiar and unfamiliar individuals and their beliefs. Students need to have the skills for acquiring knowledge and the capacity to present their findings in a manner appropriate to their audience (Torney-Purta and Damon 1999).

Observational research reports identify little evidence in classrooms of concerted work on higher-order thinking skills. To many students, social studies is not seen as a serious or challenging subject during their kindergarten through grade 12 years (Seixas 2001, p. 550). As a result of the research, greater attention is being made to move social studies to the forefront by promoting engagement for understanding, higher-order thinking skills, and teaching that allows students to see their agency (power to ac in their educational development (Seixas 2001, p. 558; Levstik and Barton 2001, p. 125). Social Studies Skills and Methods provides students with opportunities to collect organize, evaluate and synthesize information from multiple sources and to draw logical conclusions. Communicating this information using an appropriate form and forur supports the skills needed to participate as an active citizen in American society. Research in social studies stresses the importance of allowing students to develop the intellectual skills necessary to use primary sources and work with data when investigating past and present issues (Doolittle and Hicks 2003, p. 73). Wade supports the position that students succeed when provided opportunities to actively create their own meaning of the world based on their prior knowledge, experiences, interests, motivation and values (2003, p. 75). Thornton concludes that the goals of social studies instruction will fall short of success if the active construction of knowledge and analysis of information are not addressed (Seixas 2001, p. 549).

Social studies is often seen as the school subject that integrates knowledge from various disciplines (Seixas 2001, p. 549). Social studies has the potential to be interdisciplinary in that it blends with English language arts, science, the arts and mathematics. Seixas notes that social studies content is selected as a means of

accomplishing larger purposes and goals (2001, p. 558). This includes developing information-processing skills that are critical to student success. The processing of information entails a search for patterns based on multiple data sources, a summarization of the data and a transformation of the data into usable patterns for understanding (Sunal 1990, p. 8). Students will use their information-gathering skills, along with thinking and organizing skills, to seek answers to questions from all disciplines. In the study of history, students will use their information-processing skills to understand that history is interpretive, explained through narrative and is causally related (Levstik and Barton 2001, p. 5).

Levstik and Barton find that students need to be guided in how to ask and answer social studies questions (2001, p. 14). To be able to ask and research quality questions about the past or present, students need to know how to find information, evaluate sources, reconcile conflicting accounts, and create interpretive summaries. In "History- The Past as a Frame of Reference," Rogers notes that "historical inquiry cannot be carried on without context, while at the same time, context is what one's previous stud of history has largely provided" (1987, p. 8). Shemilt agrees that context is critical, but notes that students rarely ask "How do we know?" Students often take knowledge about the past for granted because they have seldom worked with multiple forms of information (Shemilt 1987, p. 43). Levstik and Barton stress the need for a vibrant social studies curriculum that engages students in investigating significant themes, asking questions and making choices as a focus of study (2001, p. 3).

The impact of the textbook in social studies is the focus of a number of researchers. Students need to understand that the first and often most important source they shou consult for information is their textbook. Yet, researchers identify a concern that many textbooks present obstacles to student learning. Levstik and Barton note that the expository text used in most classroom textbooks emphasizes "greater degrees of abstraction while trying to maintain a neutral stance," causing students to distance

themselves from history (2001, p. 110). Beck and McKeown found that students have difficulty making sense of their textbooks because the books often lack explanations and connections among ideas and events (2002, p. 44). Wineburg finds that the textbooks sift through the evidence for students, causing them to view textbooks as fact rather than an interpretation of events (2001). Wineburg recommends that students be taught to read textbook accounts for their subtext, their authenticity and to question their conclusions (2001, p. 169).

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Mathematical Communication

Effective teachers encourage their students to explain and justify their solutions. They ask them to take and defend positions against the contrary mathematical claims of other students. They scaffold student attempts to examine conjectures, disagreements, and counterarguments. With their guidance, students learn how to use mathematical ideas, language, and methods. As attention shifts from procedural rules to making sense of mathematics, students become less preoccupied with finding th answers and more with the thinking that leads to the answers.

Scaffolding attempts at mathematical ways of speaking and thinking

Students need to be taught how to communicate mathematically, give sound mathematical explanations, and justify their solutions. Effective teachers encourage their students to communicate their ideas orally, in writing, and by using a variety of representations. Revoicing is one way of guiding students in the use of mathematical conventions. Revoicing involves repeating, rephrasing, or expanding on student talk. Teachers can use it (i) to highlight ideas that have come directly from students, (ii) to help develop students' understandings that are implicit in those ideas, (iii) to negotiate meaning with their students, and (iv) to add new ideas, or move discussion in another direction.

Effective teachers are able to facilitate classroom dialogue that is focused on mathematical argumentation.

Developing skills of mathematical argumentation

To guide students in the ways of mathematical argumentation, effective teachers encourage them to take and defend positions against alternative views; their students become accustomed to listening to the ideas of others and using debate to resolve conflict and arrive at common understandings.

In the following episode, a class has been discussing the claim that fractions can be converted into decimals. Bruno and Gina have been developing the skills of mathematical argumentation during this discussion. The teacher then speaks to the class:

This teacher sustained the flow of student ideas, knowing when to step in and out of the discussion, when to press for understanding, when to resolve competing student claims, and when to address misunderstandings or confusion. While the students were learning mathematical argumentation and discovering what makes an argument convincing, she was listening attentively to student ideas and information. Importantly, she withheld her own explanations until they were needed.

Suggested readings: Lobato, Clarke, & Ellis, 2005; O'Connor, 2001; Yackel, Cobb, & Wood, 1998. An excerpt from the International Academy of Education. Effective Pedagogy in Mathmetics by Glenda Anthony and Maragaret Walshaw Educational Practices 19

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Additional Resources

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Created By

Emily Goodine, Brittany Hatfield, Emily Lego, Sherry Northcraft (Waynesboro Area School District)

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