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# KNOWLEDGE AND EMPLOYABILITY SOCIAL STUDIES GRADES 8 AND 9

**Policy:** Knowledge and Employability courses provide students who meet the criteria with opportunities to experience success and become well prepared for employment, further studies, citizenship and lifelong learning (*Knowledge and Employability Courses Policy 1.4.2*).

## VISION

Through Knowledge and Employability courses, students become active and responsible citizens, achieve their educational and career goals, improve quality of life for themselves and their families and positively impact their communities.

Knowledge and Employability courses assist students in:

- transitioning from school to the workplace and community
- preparing for responsible citizenship
- gaining recognition, respect and value from employers and further education providers.

## PHILOSOPHY AND RATIONALE

The development of the Knowledge and Employability courses was based on input received from consultations with education stakeholders throughout the province. The distinctive sequence of courses was designed to meet the educational needs of students who learn best:

- when focusing on the development and application of reading, writing and mathematical literacy,<sup>1</sup> and on essential employability skills
- through experiential learning activities
- when meaningful connections are made between schooling and personal experiences.

Knowledge and Employability courses promote student skills, abilities and work ethics, including:

- academic and occupational skills of a standard determined by the workplace to be necessary for success
- practical applications through on- and off-campus experiences and/or community partnerships
- career development skills to explore careers, develop a career-focused portfolio and assess career skills
- interpersonal skills to ensure respect, support and cooperation with others.

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1. Mathematical literacy: Selecting and applying appropriate mathematical operations, problem-solving strategies, tools and technology, and communicating using mathematical vocabulary in home, workplace and community experiences.

### **Aboriginal Perspectives and Experiences**

For historical, constitutional and social reasons, an understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) experiences and perspectives, and recognition that First Nations, Métis and Inuit students have particular needs and requirements, is necessary to enable all students to be respectful and responsible citizens.

Knowledge and Employability courses serve to facilitate positive experiences that will help Aboriginal students better see themselves in the curriculum and assist non-Aboriginal students to develop a better understanding of Alberta's First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.

### **GOALS OF KNOWLEDGE AND EMPLOYABILITY COURSES**

Knowledge and Employability courses provide students with practical and applied opportunities to develop competencies necessary to meet or exceed the following goals. Knowledge and Employability courses prepare students to:

- earn a senior high school credential
- enter the workplace upon leaving school with employability and occupational skills that meet industry standards
- make successful transitions to other courses or to further education and training
- become responsible and contributing members of society.

### **CROSS-CURRICULAR, COMMUNITY AND WORKPLACE CONNECTIONS**

Programs of study and resources for Knowledge and Employability courses are distinctive, in part, because they promote cross-curricular, community and workplace connections.

#### **Cross-curricular Connections**

Knowledge and Employability courses promote the integration of subjects to emphasize their interrelationships and connections to other school subjects. The philosophy of Knowledge and Employability courses is that students learn best when they can clearly recognize, in their course

work, connections, applications and relevance to a variety of everyday experiences. Organizing for instruction may include thematic units, subject integration within units and/or projects in other subjects.

#### **Community and Workplace Connections**

Knowledge and Employability courses provide students with practical and applied opportunities to develop basic reading, writing and mathematical literacy. Community and workplace connections ensure learning within applied contexts, connecting the school with environments beyond school, and may include tours to local businesses and industries, mentorships, job shadowing and work experience.

Knowledge and Employability courses promote the development of career portfolios that help students connect their school experience to the world beyond school. Each portfolio will include exemplars of the student's on- and off-campus experiences and can be used when the student is seeking employment or further education/training opportunities. Items appropriate for inclusion in career portfolios include résumés, samples of written work, awards and/or their representations, teacher and self-evaluation checklists, workplace assessment tools and employer letters of recommendation.

### **SAFETY**

Safety is emphasized and relevant information is incorporated throughout Knowledge and Employability courses, including basic safety rules and guidelines and information regarding the safe use of tools, equipment and materials in school, home, community and workplace settings.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

Because technology is best learned within an applied context, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) outcomes, and the use of computers and other technologies, are included in Knowledge and Employability courses. This technology integration will help students make the transition to the world beyond school.

## ESSENTIAL UNIVERSAL SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Knowledge and Employability courses emphasize the universal skills and strategies that are essential to all students, including the following:

- Interpersonal skills promote teamwork and respect for, support of and cooperation with others.
- Critical thinking promotes the analysis and appropriate applications of information.
- Creative thinking promotes the identification of unique connections among ideas and insightful approaches to questions and issues.
- Decision-making processes promote the making of timely and appropriate decisions.
- Problem-solving processes promote the ability to identify or pose problems and apply learning to consider the causes and dimensions of, and the solutions to, problems.
- Metacognition<sup>2</sup> enables students to become more aware of, and have greater control over, their own thinking and learning processes.

## RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES

Each Knowledge and Employability course is consistent with the rationale, philosophy, program foundations and organization of other secondary courses. This consistency enables students, as appropriate, to progress through the Knowledge and Employability course sequence and/or to other secondary courses.

## ENROLLMENT IN KNOWLEDGE AND EMPLOYABILITY COURSES

Students may take one or more courses in the sequence at any time during grades 8 through 12. Students may be enrolled in only Knowledge and Employability courses or in a combination of Knowledge and Employability and other secondary courses.

Information regarding the identification of students for enrollment in one or more courses can be accessed in the *Knowledge and Employability Courses Policy 1.4.2* and in the *Information Manual for Knowledge and Employability Courses, Grades 8–12, 2006*.

## RATIONALE AND PHILOSOPHY OF KNOWLEDGE AND EMPLOYABILITY SOCIAL STUDIES

Social studies provides opportunities for students to develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge that will enable them to become engaged, active, informed and responsible citizens. Recognition and respect for individual and collective identity is essential in a pluralistic and democratic society. Social studies helps students develop their sense of self and community, encouraging them to affirm their place as citizens in an inclusive, democratic society.

### Vision

The Alberta Knowledge and Employability social studies course sequence reflects the nature of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. It has at its heart the concepts of citizenship and identity in the Canadian context. The courses reflect multiple perspectives, including Aboriginal and Francophone, that contribute to Canada's evolving realities. They foster the building of a society that is pluralistic, bilingual, multicultural, inclusive and democratic. The courses emphasize the importance of diversity and respect for differences as well as the need for social cohesion and the effective functioning of society. Social studies promotes a sense of belonging and acceptance in students as they engage in active and responsible citizenship at the local, community, provincial, national and global levels.

Central to the vision of the Alberta social studies program is the recognition of the diversity of experiences and perspectives and the pluralistic nature of Canadian society. Pluralism builds upon Canada's historical and constitutional foundations that reflect the country's Aboriginal heritage, bilingual nature and multicultural realities.

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2. Metacognition: Learning-to-learn strategies; awareness of processes and strategies one uses when learning.

A pluralistic view recognizes that citizenship and identity are shaped by multiple factors; e.g., culture, language, environment, gender, ideology, religion, spirituality and philosophy.

### **Definition of Social Studies**

Social studies is the study of people in relation to each other and to their world. It is an issues-focused and inquiry-based interdisciplinary subject that draws upon history, geography, ecology, economics, law, philosophy, political science and other social science disciplines. Social studies fosters students' understanding of and involvement in practical and ethical issues that face their communities and humankind. Social studies is integral to the process of enabling students to develop an understanding of who they are, what they want to become and the society in which they want to live.

### **The Role of Social Studies**

Social studies develops the key values, attitudes, knowledge, understandings, skills and processes necessary for students to become active and responsible citizens, engaged in the democratic process and aware of their capacity to effect change in their communities, society and world.

### **Values and Attitudes**

Social studies provides learning opportunities for students to:

- value the diversity, respect the dignity and support the equality of all human beings
- demonstrate social compassion, fairness and justice
- appreciate and respect how multiple perspectives, including Aboriginal and Francophone, shape Canada's political, socio-economic, linguistic and cultural realities
- honour and value the traditions, concepts and symbols that are the expression of Canadian identity
- thrive in their evolving identity with a legitimate sense of belonging to their communities, Canada and the world
- demonstrate a global consciousness with respect to humanity and world issues

- demonstrate a consciousness for the limits of the natural environment, stewardship for the land and an understanding of the principles of sustainability
- value lifelong learning and opportunities for careers in the areas of social studies and the social sciences.

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

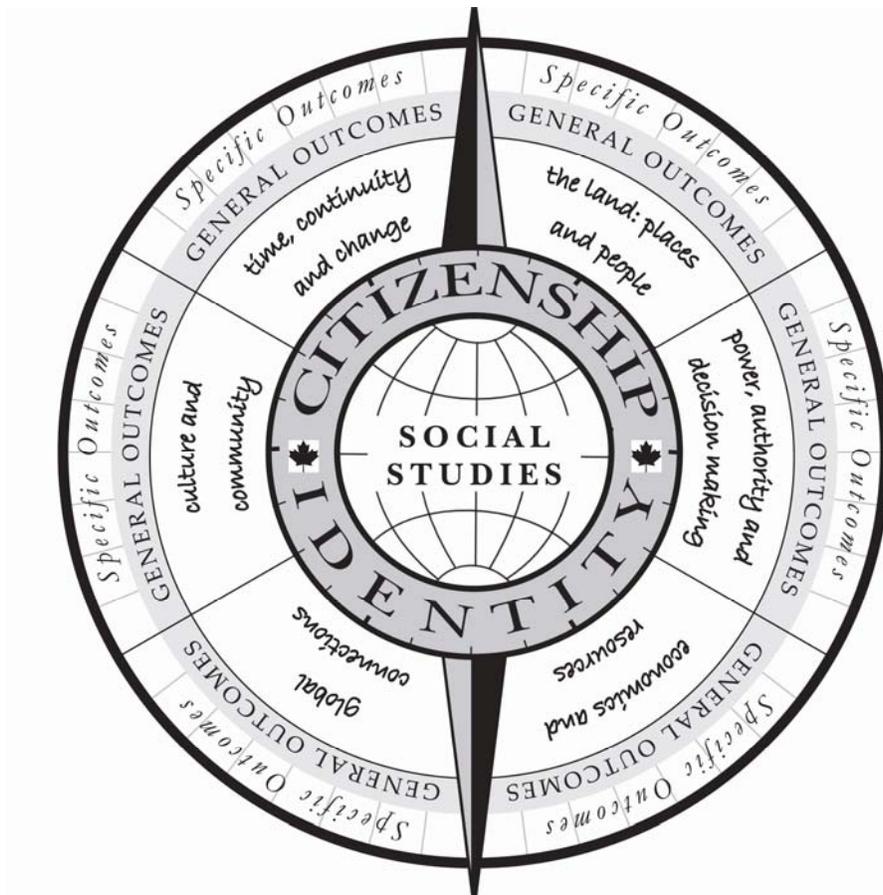
Social studies provides learning opportunities for students to understand:

- their rights and responsibilities in order to make informed decisions and participate fully in society
- the unique nature of Canada and its land, history, complexities and current issues
- how knowledge of the history of Alberta, of Canada and of the world contributes to a better comprehension of contemporary realities
- historic and contemporary issues, including controversial issues, from multiple perspectives
- the diversity of Aboriginal traditions, values and attitudes
- the contemporary challenges and contributions of Aboriginal peoples in urban, rural, cultural and linguistic settings
- the historical and contemporary realities of Francophones in Canada
- the multi-ethnic and intercultural makeup of Francophones in Canada
- the challenges and opportunities that immigration presents to newcomers and to Canada
- how social cohesion can be achieved in a pluralistic society
- how political and economic distribution of power affects individuals, communities and nations
- the role of social, political, economic and legal institutions as they relate to individual and collective well-being and a sustainable society
- how opportunities and responsibilities change in an increasingly interdependent world
- that humans exist in a dynamic relationship with the natural environment.

### Skills and Processes

Social studies provides learning opportunities for students to:

- engage in active inquiry and critical and creative thinking
- engage in problem solving and conflict resolution with an awareness of the ethical consequences of decision making
- apply historical and geographic skills to bring meaning to issues and events
- use and manage information and communication technologies critically
- conduct research ethically using varied methods and sources; organize, interpret and present their findings and defend their opinions
- apply metacognition skills, reflecting upon what they have learned and what they need to learn
- recognize and responsibly address injustices as they occur in their schools, communities, Canada and the world
- communicate ideas and information in an informed, organized and persuasive manner.



## **PROGRAM FOUNDATION**

The program of studies provides a foundation of learning experiences that addresses critical aspects of social studies and its application. These critical areas provide general direction for the program of studies and identify the major components of its structure.

## **CORE CONCEPTS OF CITIZENSHIP AND IDENTITY**

The dynamic relationship between citizenship and identity forms the basis for skills and learning outcomes in the program of studies.

The goal of social studies is to provide learning opportunities for students to:

- understand the principles underlying a democratic society
- demonstrate a critical understanding of individual and collective rights
- understand the commitment required to ensure the vitality and sustainability of their changing communities at the local, provincial, national and global levels
- validate and accept differences that contribute to the pluralistic nature of Canada
- respect the dignity and support the equality of all human beings.

The sense of being a citizen, enjoying individual and collective rights and equitable status in contemporary society, impacts an individual's sense of identity. Individuals need to feel that their identities are viewed as legitimate before they can contribute to the public good and feel a sense of belonging and empowerment as citizens.

Social studies provides learning opportunities for students to:

- understand the complexity of identity formation in the Canadian context
- understand how identity and self-esteem are shaped by multiple personal, social, linguistic and cultural factors
- demonstrate sensitivity to the personal and emotional aspects of identity

- demonstrate the skills required to maintain individuality within a group
- understand that with empowerment comes personal and collective responsibility for the public good.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES AND ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES**

For historical and constitutional reasons, an understanding of Canada requires an understanding:

- of Aboriginal perspectives
- of Aboriginal experiences
- that Aboriginal students have particular needs and requirements.

Central to Aboriginal identity are languages and cultures that link each group with its physical world, worldviews and traditions. The role of Elders and community leaders is essential in this linkage.

The social studies program of studies provides learning opportunities that contribute to the development of self-esteem and identity in Aboriginal students by:

- promoting and encouraging balanced and holistic individuality and strengthening individual capacity
- honouring and valuing the traditions, concepts and symbols that are the expression of their individual identities
- providing opportunities for students to express who they are with confidence as they interact and engage with others
- contributing to the development of active and responsible members of groups and communities.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES AND FRANCOPHONE PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES**

For historical and constitutional reasons, an understanding of Canada requires an understanding:

- of Francophone perspectives
- of Francophone experiences
- that Francophone students have particular needs and requirements.

Social studies occupies a central position in successful Francophone education in Alberta. Francophone schools are a focal point of the Francophone community. They meet the needs and aspirations of parents by ensuring the vitality of the community. For students enrolled in Francophone schools, the social studies program will:

- strengthen Francophone self-esteem and identity
- encourage students to contribute, actively, to the flourishing of Francophone culture, families and communities
- promote partnerships among the home, community and business world
- engage students in participating in the bilingual and multicultural nature of Canada.

## **PLURALISM: DIVERSITY AND COHESION**

One of the goals of the social studies program is to foster understanding of the roles and contributions of linguistic, cultural and ethnic groups in Canada. Students will learn about themselves in relation to others. Social studies helps students to function as citizens in a society that values diversity and cohesion.

A key component of effective social organizations, communities and institutions is recognition of diversity of experiences and perspectives. The program of studies emphasizes how diversity and differences are assets that enrich our lives. Students will have opportunities to value diversity, to recognize differences as positive attributes and to recognize the evolving nature of individual identities. Race, socio-economic conditions and

gender are among various forms of identification that people live with and experience in a variety of ways.

Social studies addresses diversity and social cohesion and provides processes that students can use to work out differences, drawing on the strengths of diversity. These processes include:

- a commitment to respecting differences and fostering inclusiveness
- an understanding and appreciation for shared values
- a respect for democratic principles and decision-making processes; e.g., dialogue and deliberation.

Diversity contributes to the development of a vibrant democratic society. Through the interactions of place and historical processes of change, diversity has been an important asset in the evolution of Canadian society. Some key manifestations of this diversity include:

- First Nations, Inuit and Métis cultures
- official bilingualism
- immigration
- multiculturalism.

Accommodation of diversity is essential for fostering social cohesion in a pluralistic society. Social cohesion is a process that requires development of the relationships within and among communities. Social cohesion is manifested by respect for:

- individual and collective rights
- civic responsibilities
- shared values
- democracy
- rule of law
- diversity.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES: LEARNERS AND LEARNING**

Students bring their own perspectives, cultures and experiences to the social studies classroom. They construct meaning in the context of their lived experience through active inquiry and engagement with their school and community. In this respect, the infusion of current events, issues and concerns is an essential component of social studies.

Social studies recognizes the interconnections and interactions among school, community, provincial, national and global institutions.

The Knowledge and Employability program of studies for social studies provides learning opportunities for students to develop active and responsible citizenship skills and the capacity to inquire, make reasoned and informed judgements and arrive at decisions for the public good.

Students become engaged and involved in their communities by:

- asking questions
- making connections with their local community
- writing letters and articles
- sharing ideas and understandings
- listening to and collaborating and working with others to design the future
- empathizing with the viewpoints and positions of others
- creating new ways to solve problems.

## **ISSUES-FOCUSED APPROACH TO TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES**

A focus on issues through deliberation is intrinsic to the multidisciplinary nature of social studies and to democratic life in a pluralistic society. An issues-focused approach presents opportunities to address learning outcomes by engaging students in active inquiry and application of knowledge and critical thinking skills. These skills help students to identify the relevance of an issue by guiding them to develop informed positions and respect for the positions of others. This process enables students to question, validate, expand and express their understanding; to challenge their presuppositions and to construct their own points of view.

The program of studies is designed to promote metacognition through critical reflection, questioning, decision making and consideration of multiple perspectives on issues. Through this process, students will strive to understand and explain the world in the present and to determine what kind of world they want in the future.

## **Current Affairs**

Social studies fosters the development of citizens who are informed and engaged in current affairs. Accordingly, current affairs play a central role in learning and are integrated throughout the program. Ongoing reference to current affairs adds relevance, interest and immediacy to social studies issues. Investigating current affairs from multiple perspectives motivates students to engage in meaningful dialogue on relevant historical and contemporary issues, helping them to make informed and reasoned decisions on local, provincial, national and global issues.

An issues-focused approach that incorporates multiple perspectives and current affairs helps students apply problem-solving and decision-making skills to real-life and controversial issues.

In order to allow opportunities for students to engage in current affairs, issues and concerns of a local nature, the program of studies provides the flexibility to include such topics within the time allotted for social studies.

Opportunities may include:

- current events in local communities
- issues with local, provincial, national and/or global relevance
- cultural celebrations
- visits from dignitaries
- special events.

## **Controversial Issues**

Controversial issues are those topics that are publicly sensitive and upon which there is no consensus of values or beliefs. They include topics on which reasonable people may sincerely disagree. Opportunities to deal with these issues are an integral part of social studies education in Alberta.

Studying controversial issues is important in preparing students to participate responsibly in a democratic and pluralistic society. Such study provides opportunities to develop the ability to think clearly, to reason logically, to open-mindedly and respectfully examine different points of view and to make sound judgements.

Controversial issues that have been anticipated by the teacher, and those that may arise incidentally during instruction, should be used by the teacher to promote critical inquiry and teach thinking skills.

## **STRANDS OF SOCIAL STUDIES**

Learning related to the core concepts of citizenship and identity is achieved through focused content at each grade level. The six strands of social studies reflect the interdisciplinary nature of social studies. The strands are interrelated and constitute the basis for the learning outcomes in the program of studies.

### **Time, Continuity and Change**

Understanding the dynamic relationships among time, continuity and change is a cornerstone of citizenship and identity. Considering multiple perspectives on history, and contemporary issues within their historical context, enables students to understand and appreciate the social, cultural and political dimensions of the past, make meaning of the present and make decisions for the future.

### **The Land: Places and People**

Exploring the unique and dynamic relationship that humans have with the land, places and environments affects decisions that students make and their understanding of perspectives, issues, citizenship and identity. Students will examine the impact of physical geography on the social, political, environmental and economic organization of societies. This examination also affects students' understanding of perspectives and issues as they consider how connections to the land influence their sense of place.

### **Power, Authority and Decision Making**

Examining the concepts of power, authority and decision making from multiple perspectives helps students consider how these concepts impact individuals, relationships, communities and nations. It also broadens students' understanding of related issues and perspectives and their effect on citizenship and identity. A critical examination of the distribution, exercise and implications of power and authority is the focus of this strand. Students will examine governmental and political structures, justice and laws, fairness and equity, conflict and cooperation, decision-making

processes, leadership and governance. This examination develops a student's understanding of the individual's capacity in decision-making processes and promotes active and responsible citizenship.

### **Economics and Resources**

Exploring multiple perspectives on the use, distribution and management of resources and wealth contributes to students' understanding of the effects that economics and resources have on quality of life around the world. Students will explore basic economic systems, trade and the effects of economic interdependence on individuals, communities, nations and the natural environment. Students will also critically consider the social and environmental implications of resource use and technological change.

### **Global Connections**

Critically examining multiple perspectives and connections among local, national and global issues develops students' understanding of citizenship and identity and the interdependent or conflicting nature of individuals, communities, societies and nations. Exploring this interdependence broadens students' global consciousness and empathy with world conditions. Students will also acquire a better comprehension of tensions pertaining to economic relationships, sustainability and universal human rights.

### **Culture and Community**

Exploring culture and community allows students to examine shared values and their own sense of belonging, beliefs, traditions and languages. This promotes students' development of citizenship and identity and understanding of multiple perspectives, issues and change. Students will examine the various expressions of their own and others' cultural, linguistic and social communities.

## **GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OUTCOMES**

The general and specific outcomes provide an organizational structure for development and assessment of student progress in the social studies program. Outcomes follow the progression of learning that occurs at each grade level. Key questions guide the development of outcomes.

## General Outcomes

General outcomes identify what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of a grade.

## Specific Outcomes

Specific outcomes identify explicit components of values and attitudes, knowledge and understanding and skills and processes that are included within each general outcome within each grade. Specific outcomes are building blocks that enable students to achieve general outcomes for each grade.

## OUTCOMES RELATED TO VALUES AND ATTITUDES

Social studies provides an environment for the development of values and attitudes that enables students to participate actively and responsibly as citizens in a changing and pluralistic society. Attitudes are an expression of values and beliefs about an issue or topic. Respect, a sense of personal and collective responsibility and an appreciation of human interdependence are fundamental to citizenship and identity within local, national and global communities. Developing an ethic of care toward self, others and the natural world is central to these commitments.

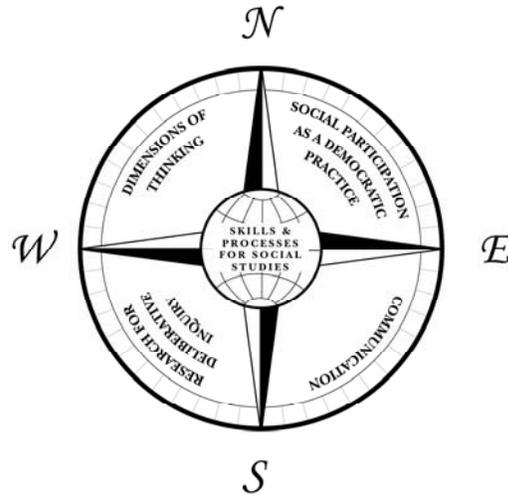
## OUTCOMES RELATED TO KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

Outcomes related to knowledge and understanding are fundamental to informed decision making. Knowledge and understanding involve the breadth and depth of information, concepts, evidence, ideas and opinions.

## OUTCOMES RELATED TO SKILLS AND PROCESSES

Outcomes for skills and processes provide opportunities for students to apply their learning to relevant situations and develop, practise and maintain essential skills as their learning evolves within a grade and from grade to grade. The skill outcomes are organized into the following categories.

- Dimensions of Thinking
- Social Participation as a Democratic Practice
- Research for Deliberative Inquiry
- Communication



### Dimensions of Thinking

In social studies, students acquire and develop thinking strategies that assist them in making connections to prior knowledge, assimilating new information and applying learning to new contexts. The following dimensions of thinking have been identified as key components in social studies learning.

#### *Critical Thinking*

Critical thinking is a process of inquiry, analysis and evaluation resulting in a reasoned judgement. Critical thinking promotes the development of democratic citizenship. Students will develop critical thinking skills that include distinguishing fact from opinion; considering the reliability and accuracy of information; determining diverse points of view, perspective and bias and considering the ethics of decisions and actions.

#### *Creative Thinking*

Creative thinking occurs when students identify unique connections among ideas and suggest insightful approaches to social studies questions and issues. Through creative thinking, students generate an inventory of possibilities, anticipate outcomes and combine logical, intuitive and divergent thought.

### ***Historical Thinking***

Historical thinking is a process whereby students are challenged to rethink assumptions about the past and to re-imagine both the present and the future. It helps students become well-informed citizens who approach issues with an inquiring mind and exercise sound judgement when presented with new information or a perspective different from their own. Historical thinking skills involve the sequencing of events, the analysis of patterns and the placement of events in context to assist in the construction of meaning and understanding. These skills can be applied to a variety of media; e.g., oral traditions, print, electronic text, art and music.

Historical thinking allows students to develop a sense of time and place to help define their identities. Exploring the roots of the present ensures the transmission and sharing of values and helps individuals to realize that they belong to a civil society. Historical thinking develops citizens willing to engage in a pluralistic democracy and promote and support democratic institutions.

### ***Geographic Thinking***

Possessing geographic thinking skills provides students with the tools to address social studies issues from a geographic perspective. Geographic thinking skills involve the exploration of spatial orders, patterns and associations. They enable students to investigate environmental and societal issues using a range of geographic information. Developing these spatial skills helps students understand the relationships among people, events and the context of their physical environment. This understanding will assist them to make choices and act wisely when confronted with questions affecting the land, water and connected resources.

### ***Decision Making and Problem Solving***

Students develop the ability to make timely and appropriate decisions by identifying the need for a decision and then weighing the advantages, disadvantages and consequences of various alternatives. Decision making involves reserving judgements until all the options and perspectives have been explored, seeking clarity for a variety of choices and perspectives, examining the cause-and-effect relationship between choices and

basing decisions on knowledge, understandings, values and beliefs.

Problem-solving processes in social studies help students develop the ability to identify or pose problems and apply learning to consider the causes and dimensions of problems. These skills help develop thinking strategies, allowing students to determine possible courses of action and the consequences of potential solutions for a problem that may have multiple or complex causes and that may not have a clear solution. Activities such as simulations, debates, public presentations and editorial writing foster the development of these skills.

### ***Metacognition***

Metacognition is “thinking about thinking.” It involves critical self-awareness, conscious reflection, analysis, synthesis, monitoring and reinvention. Students assess the value of the learning strategies they have used, modify them or select new strategies and monitor the use of re-invented or new strategies in future learning situations. In this respect, students become knowledge creators and contribute to a shared understanding of the world we live in—a key feature of democratic life and commitment to pluralism.

### ***Social Participation as a Democratic Practice***

Social participation skills enable students to develop effective relationships with others, to work in cooperative ways toward common goals and to collaborate with others for the well-being of their communities. Students will develop interpersonal skills that focus on cooperation, conflict resolution, consensus building, collaborative decision making, the importance of responsibility and the acceptance of differences. Development of these skills will enhance active participation in their communities. Activities in this regard could include social action, community projects, school/community partnerships, e.g., church groups, Red Cross, Amnesty International, Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders), and world agencies that assist children/families facing natural or political challenges.

### **Research for Deliberative Inquiry**

Purposeful deliberation and critical reflection are essential skills and processes for democratic citizenship and problem solving. In social studies, the research process develops students who are independent, self-motivated problem solvers and cocreators of knowledge. Developing research skills prepares students for the world of work, post-secondary opportunities, lifelong learning and citizenship in a complex world. These skills also enhance and enrich the process of identity formation as students critically reflect on their sense of self and their relationship to others. The foundations of the research process are the application of acquired skills, the selection of appropriate resources and the use of suitable technology.

### ***The Infusion of Technology***

Technology encompasses the processes, tools and techniques that alter human activity. Information and communication technology provides a vehicle for communicating, representing, inquiring, making decisions and solving problems. It involves the processes, tools and techniques for:

- gathering and identifying information
- representations of dominant texts
- expressing and creating
- classifying and organizing
- analyzing and evaluating
- speculating and predicting.

Selected curriculum outcomes from Alberta Education's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) program of studies are infused throughout the Knowledge and Employability social studies program of studies and are indicated by this symbol ➤. Further information regarding the Information and Communication Technology program of studies is included within that program of studies.

### **Communication**

Communication skills enable students to comprehend, interpret and express information and ideas clearly and purposefully. These skills include the language arts of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing, as well as the use of communication technologies for acquiring and exchanging information and ideas.

### ***Oral, Written and Visual Literacy Skills***

Through the language arts, individuals communicate thoughts, feelings, experiences, information and opinions and learn to understand themselves and others. Speaking, writing and representing are used in the social studies program to relate a community's stories and to convey knowledge, beliefs, values and traditions through narrative history, music, art and literature.

Reading, listening and viewing in social studies enables students to extend their thinking and knowledge and increase their understanding of themselves and others. These skills provide students with a means of accessing the ideas, perspectives and experiences of others.

The language arts enable students to explore, organize and clarify thoughts and to communicate these thoughts to others.

### ***Media Literacy Skills***

Contemporary texts often involve more than one medium to communicate messages, have multilayered meanings and are often complex. Information texts include visual elements such as charts, graphs, diagrams, photographs, tables, pictures, collages and timelines. Media literacy skills involve accessing, interpreting and evaluating mass media texts; e.g., newspapers, television, the Internet and advertising. Media literacy in social studies explores concepts in mass media texts; e.g., identifying the key messages and multiple points of view that are being communicated, detecting bias and examining the responsibility of citizens to respond to media texts.

## **SCOPE AND SEQUENCE**

Within the Knowledge and Employability social studies program of studies, the analysis of key issues at each grade level leads to an understanding of concepts, values and attitudes and the skills and processes necessary to explore solutions and make decisions. The structure provides continuity and linkages from grade to grade. In addition, key questions provide focus for the development of the general outcomes within each grade level.

Grade	Grade Title and Topics	Linkages and Sequencing
8	<p><b>Worldviews Examined</b></p> <p>8.1 Isolation and Adaptation</p> <p>8.2 Exploring the Origins of a Western Worldview</p> <p>8.3 Contact Among Cultures in the Americas</p>	<p>Grade 8 expands on the concept of intercultural contact. Students will examine issues related to contact between societies with differing worldviews. Students will explore elements of worldviews as expressed by people living in different times and places. Through this inquiry, students will reflect on their own worldviews and assess the influence the past has on the present.</p>
9	<p><b>Canada: Opportunities and Challenges</b></p> <p>9.1 Canada: Governance and Citizenship</p> <p>9.2 Canada and the United States: An Economic Relationship</p>	<p>Grade 9 focuses on citizenship, identity and quality of life. Students will examine the relationship between Canada's political and legislative processes and their impact on issues pertaining to governance, rights, citizenship and identity. Students will also explore issues of economics and their impact on quality of life, citizenship and identity in Canada and the United States.</p>



# Grade 8: Worldviews Examined

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## Overview

Students will examine issues related to contact between societies with differing worldviews. Students will explore elements of worldviews as expressed by people living in different times and places. Through this inquiry, students will reflect on their own worldviews and assess the influence the past has on the present. Examples of worldviews may be drawn from Japan, Renaissance Europe and Spanish and Aztec societies.

Community partnerships and the study of local and current events provide additional opportunities to enhance citizenship by connecting in-school learning experiences to everyday living experiences outside of school.

Community partnerships may include inviting guest speakers into the classroom, hosting cultural awareness activities, visiting community agencies/businesses and taking part in community events/activities.

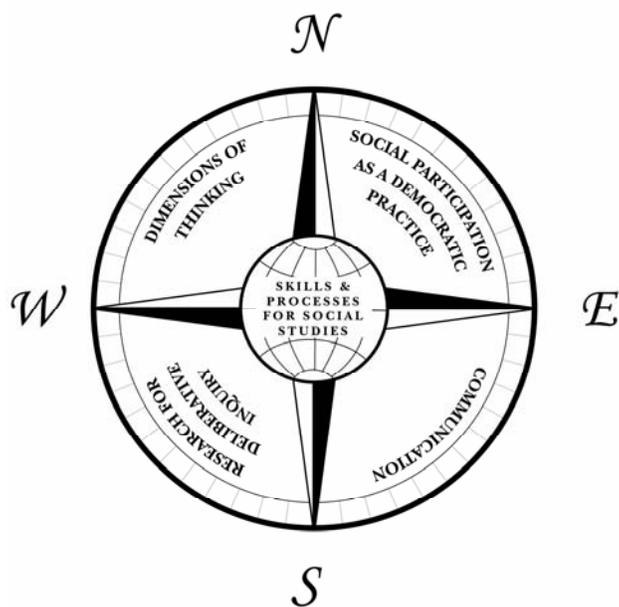
## Rationale

To become active and responsible citizens, it is important for students to learn how intercultural contact between societies leads to significant change and alters each society's worldview.

## Terms and Concepts

adaptation, contact, humanist, imperialism, intercultural, isolation, Renaissance, social structures, society, worldview

<b>General Outcome 8.1</b> <b>Isolation and Adaptation</b>	<b>General Outcome 8.2</b> <b>Exploring the Origins of a Western Worldview</b>	<b>General Outcome 8.3</b> <b>Contact Among Cultures in the Americas</b>
Through an exploration of Japan, students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the ways in which beliefs, values and knowledge shape worldviews and contribute to a society's isolation and adaptation.	Through an exploration of Renaissance Europe, students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the ways in which the exchange of ideas and knowledge contributed to the shaping of the worldview of the western world.	Through an exploration of Spanish and Aztec societies, students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the ways in which intercultural contact impacts the worldviews of societies.
<b>Local and Global Current Affairs</b>		
In order to allow opportunities for students to engage in current events, issues and concerns of a local nature, the program of studies provides the flexibility to integrate current affairs within the time allotted for social studies.		



### Benchmark Skills and Processes

The following benchmark skills and processes are outcomes to be achieved by the end of Knowledge and Employability Social Studies 9.

<b>Dimensions of Thinking</b>	
<i>critical and creative thinking</i>	Use an issue-analysis model to identify an issue or question, state the question or issue, recognize different positions on an issue, offer reasons for each position, adopt a personal position and explain the reasons for their choice.
<i>historical thinking</i>	Examine selected issues and problems from the past, placing people and events in a context of time and place.
<i>geographic thinking</i>	Interpret and create maps to investigate economic and political issues.
<i>decision making and problem solving</i>	Use a problem-solving model to identify the problem/issue, identify alternative solutions and their consequences and identify which action to implement.
<b>Social Participation as a Democratic Practice</b>	
<i>cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building</i>	Work positively and collaboratively with others, considering their needs and perspectives, using a variety of strategies to resolve conflicts peacefully and equitably.
<i>age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement</i>	Develop leadership skills, assuming specific roles and responsibilities in organizations, projects and/or events within the community as appropriate.
<b>Research for Deliberative Inquiry</b>	
<i>research and information</i>	Reflect on changes of perspective or opinion based on information gathered or research conducted.
<b>Communication</b>	
<i>oral and textual literacy</i>	Communicate in a persuasive and engaging manner through a variety of strategies, e.g., speeches, multimedia presentations, written and oral reports, and consider particular audiences and purposes.
<i>media literacy</i>	Examine the nature of various media and techniques used to influence an audience.

## SKILLS AND PROCESSES

The following skills and processes are to be developed within the contexts of the general and specific outcomes included in 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3.

Alberta Education's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) curriculum is infused throughout social studies. Selected ICT outcomes are indicated by this symbol ➤.

## SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

### Dimensions of Thinking

*Students will:*

#### **develop skills of critical and creative thinking:**

- use an issue-analysis model to identify an issue or question, state the question or issue, recognize different positions on an issue, offer reasons for each position, adopt a personal position and explain the reasons for their choice
- identify and re-examine their personal assumptions and opinions to broaden their understanding of a topic or issue
- determine the validity of information based on context, bias, source, objectivity, evidence and reliability to broaden their understanding of a topic or issue
- develop an awareness of how perspectives can shape understanding
- demonstrate the ability to identify local and current events that connect to social studies issues
- generate creative ideas and strategies in individual and group activities
- access diverse viewpoints on a particular topic by using appropriate technologies.

*Students will:*

#### **develop skills of historical thinking:**

- distinguish cause, effect, sequence and correlations in historical events
- summarize and chronologically display key events and people in selected cultures and societies, using historical and community resources, technology and other strategies as appropriate
- identify patterns in organized information.

*Students will:*

#### **develop skills of geographic thinking:**

- interpret historical maps to broaden their understanding of events
- use thematic maps to describe cultural and political regions
- use, construct and interpret maps to broaden their understanding of given topics
- investigate geographic problems and issues and create geographic questions
- access and operate multimedia applications and technologies from stand-alone and online sources, as appropriate; e.g., Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

*Students will:*

#### **demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving:**

- use a problem-solving model to identify the problem/issue, identify alternative solutions and their consequences and identify which action to implement
- articulate clearly a plan of action to use technology to solve a problem
- identify the appropriate materials and tools to use in order to accomplish a plan of action.

## Social Participation as a Democratic Practice

*Students will:*

### **demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building:**

- identify and use a variety of strategies to resolve conflicts peacefully and fairly
- consider the needs and perspectives of others
- reflect upon personal and others' past actions when determining future actions and choices
- use networks, as appropriate, to brainstorm, plan and share ideas with group members.

*Students will:*

### **demonstrate age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as respectful and responsible citizens contributing to their community:**

- respond respectfully to the inherent meaning of stories told in the oral tradition and to artistic, musical, literary and other representations
- use peer and self-evaluation to set attainable goals to improve learning and behaviour
- demonstrate respect and acceptance of identities while participating in community partnerships and other activities.

## Research for Deliberative Inquiry

*Students will:*

### **apply research processes:**

- create and categorize questions to direct inquiry and research processes
- demonstrate responsible and ethical use of information and technology
- locate information by using various parts of an information source; e.g., the glossary, table of contents, index and home page of a Web site
- access and select information from a variety of sources; e.g., documents, art, songs, artifacts, narratives and oral stories
- plan and conduct a search, using a wide variety of electronic sources as appropriate
- refine searches to limit sources to a manageable number
- access, retrieve and share information from electronic sources; e.g., common files
- identify the main ideas in information sources
- recognize that information serves a variety of purposes and that accuracy or relevance may require verification
- compare various interpretations of events using a variety of evidence; e.g., photographs, artifacts, interviews and media reports
- reflect on the ways in which shared stories connect to personal experiences
- make generalizations about the significance of the art, drama and literature of an ancient society as an expression of worldview and beliefs
- connect newly learned concepts to previously learned concepts to broaden understanding
- draw conclusions based on research and evidence
- recognize the need to reflect upon and evaluate their point of view, decision or inference, based on new evidence
- evaluate the relevance of electronically accessed information to a particular topic
- organize and analyze information to create a product.

## Communication

*Students will:*

### **demonstrate skills of oral, visual and textual literacy:**

- use communication skills to clarify, respond and interact appropriately with others during discussions and other group activities
- listen to others to understand their perspectives
- use strategies, e.g., summarizing and giving examples, to determine understanding
- communicate ideas and actions using a variety of strategies, e.g., speeches, multimedia presentations, written and oral reports, and consider particular audiences and purposes
- access available databases for images to support communication
- create a multimedia presentation, incorporating visual images (clip art, video clips), sounds (live recordings, sound clips) and animated images, as appropriate to a specific audience and purpose.

*Students will:*

### **develop skills of media literacy:**

- identify techniques used to enhance the authority and authenticity of media messages
- examine the values, lifestyles and points of view represented in media messages
- recognize the impact of television, the Internet, radio and print media on a particular current affairs issue.

## 8.1 ISOLATION AND ADAPTATION

### General Outcome

Through an exploration of Japan, students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the ways in which beliefs, values and knowledge shape worldviews and contribute to a society's isolation and adaptation. -

### Specific Outcomes

#### Values and Attitudes

*Students will:*

- appreciate the roles of time and geographic location in shaping a society's worldview (C, I, TCC)
- appreciate how a society's worldview can foster the choice to remain an isolated society (C, I, TCC)
- appreciate how models of governance and decision making reflect a society's worldview (C, I, TCC)
- appreciate how a society's/community's worldview shapes individual citizenship and identity (C, I, TCC)

#### Knowledge and Understanding

*Students will:*

- explore aspects of the cultural isolation of a community by examining the following questions and issues
  - In what ways was Japan isolated? (LPP, CC, PADM)
  - How did the physical geography of Japan affect its worldview? (LPP, PADM, TCC)
- explore the effects that rapid adaptation has had on traditionally isolated Japan, examining the following questions and issues
  - What factors motivated Japan to change? (ER, CC, PADM)
  - How did the community adapt to change brought on by exposure to another culture? (ER, GC, CC, TCC)
  - How did the changes resulting from adaptation affect Japan economically, politically and socially? (ER, CC, PADM, TCC)
  - What challenges emerged for Japan in maintaining traditional cultural aspects while undergoing change; e.g., maintaining language, religion, spiritual beliefs, music, art? (C, I, CC, PADM, TCC)
  - What challenges and opportunities emerged for the Japanese as a result of change? (C, I, GC, CC, PADM, TCC)
- explore the ways in which First Nations, Métis and Inuit worldviews been influenced by other worldviews; e.g., language, spiritual belief, relationship to land, contemporary examples (C, I, LPP, GC, CC, TCC)

	C	Citizenship		I	Identity		
ER	Economics and Resources	LPP	The Land: Places and People	GC	Global Connections		
CC	Culture and Community	PADM	Power, Authority and Decision Making	TCC	Time, Continuity and Change		

## 8.2 EXPLORING THE ORIGINS OF A WESTERN WORLDVIEW

### General Outcome

Through an exploration of Renaissance Europe, students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the ways in which the exchange of ideas and knowledge contributed to the shaping of the worldview of the western world.

### Specific Outcomes

#### Values and Attitudes

*Students will:*

- appreciate how Renaissance Europe formed the basis for the worldview of the western world (I, GC, TCC)
- demonstrate a willingness to consider differing beliefs, values and worldviews (C, I)
- recognize how beliefs and values are shaped by time, geographic location and societal context (C, TCC)

#### Knowledge and Understanding

*Students will:*

- explore the factors that shaped the European worldview by examining the following questions and issues
  - What was the Renaissance? (LPP, TCC)
  - How did the Renaissance spark the growth and exchange of ideas and knowledge across Europe; e.g., astronomy, mathematics, science, politics, religion, arts? (ER, GC, PADM, TCC)
  - How did the physical geography of Renaissance Europe impact trade among and competition between European countries? (LPP, TCC)
  - In what ways did exploration and intercultural contact during the Renaissance, through trade, affect the citizenship and identity of Europeans; e.g., government; family structure; roles of men, women and children; technology; transportation; occupations/livelihood; religion; language? (C, I, LPP, GC, TCC)

	C	Citizenship		I	Identity		
ER	Economics and Resources	LPP	The Land: Places and People	GC	Global Connections		
CC	Culture and Community	PADM	Power, Authority and Decision Making	TCC	Time, Continuity and Change		

## 8.3 CONTACT AMONG CULTURES IN THE AMERICAS

### General Outcome

Through an exploration of Spanish and Aztec societies, students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the ways in which intercultural contact impacts the worldviews of societies.

### Specific Outcomes

#### Values and Attitudes

*Students will:*

- appreciate how a society's worldview influences its choices, decisions and interactions with others (C, I)
- appreciate how identities and worldviews were impacted by intercultural contact (I, GC, TCC)
- appreciate and recognize how rapid adaptation can radically change a society's beliefs, values and knowledge (GC, TCC)

#### Knowledge and Understanding

*Students will:*

- explore how the Aztecs were affected by the Spanish worldview by examining the following questions and issues
  - What were the key elements of the worldview of the Aztec civilization prior to contact with the Spanish? (C, I, ER, GC, CC)
  - How were the key elements of the Aztec worldview expressed; e.g., livelihood, art, literature, religion, economics, government, communication, transportation, family life? (C, I, ER, GC, CC, PADM)
  - What key elements of Spain's worldview led to a desire to expand its empire? (I, PADM, TCC)
  - In what ways did technology and disease contribute to the dominance of the Spanish over the Aztec civilization? (ER, LPP)
  - How did the beliefs, identity and practices of the Aztec civilization change as a result of contact; e.g., livelihood, spirituality, language, health, education, politics, economics, communication, transportation? (GC, CC, PADM, TCC)

	C	Citizenship		I	Identity		
ER	Economics and Resources	LPP	The Land: Places and People	GC	Global Connections		
CC	Culture and Community	PADM	Power, Authority and Decision Making	TCC	Time, Continuity and Change		

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS—GRADE 8

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The following terms and concepts are included within the general and specific outcomes. The definitions are provided to facilitate a better understanding and an effective application of the social studies concepts presented.

<b>adaptation</b>	Changing attitudes and behaviours to suit a new situation.
<b>contact</b>	Connection or interaction, communication, association and relationship.
<b>humanist</b>	Pertaining to humanism: a system of thought that centres on humans and their values, capacities and worth; concern with the interests, needs and welfare of humans.
<b>imperialism</b>	Policy of a country or empire to extend its authority or domination by political, economic or military means and cause another state/government to become dependant on them politically or economically.
<b>intercultural</b>	Of, relating to, involving or representing different cultures.
<b>isolation</b>	Relating to isolationism: foreign policy whereby a nation resists participating in the affairs of the international community by abstaining from any political, economic or international relationship.
<b>Renaissance</b>	The humanistic revival of classical art, architecture, literature and learning that originated in Italy in the 14 <sup>th</sup> century.
<b>social structures</b>	Organization models within a society that reflect the values and interests of the members of that society.
<b>society</b>	Group of persons linked by common activities or interests and sharing public space.
<b>worldview</b>	A collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual or group. The overall perspective from which one sees and interprets the world.