

Baseline Course Design: Suggested Curricular Approaches for Social Studies 8-10 in SD57

Purpose: this is not a prescription for how to design or teach Social Studies. It is a set of suggested approaches, based on the consideration of experienced teachers and stakeholders in the curriculum process, and is intended as a point of departure for reflection by individual teachers and discussion by groups of teachers or school departments. This Discussion Guide has been prepared as a School District 57 Summer Curriculum project by teacher Glen Thielmann. The views and assumptions contained here do not necessarily reflect the positions of the school district, and is published without prejudice for the consideration of local teachers.

The BC Ministry curriculum documents and the history of implementation at all levels in BC suggest that there is no single way to approach Social Studies course design within the revised curriculum. Whether “thinking like a historian” is the goal, or fluency with motifs and key events from history, or active citizenship, or a sense of identity, or a myriad other values, content, skills, and concepts that can guide a Social Studies class, there is considerable flexibility to create unique approaches to course design. This latitude, however, begs the question about whether there is some core content that each student should be expected to learn, be that for its use in working with historical or geographical thinking concepts, the material that helps makes sense of “Big Ideas,” or knowledge for its own sake -- an inheritance as a citizen of Canada and the World.

Therefore, we propose that a student completing the required courses Social Studies 8, 9, and 10, regardless of the particular emphasis or approach by which the teacher plans and delivers these courses, will have acquired a broad knowledge base around selected Canadian and Global historical events from the course bookends, and a knowledge of geographical contexts related to these events as well as current events that support or develop course themes. As a result in working with course-relevant content, the student has an understanding of the Big Ideas of the course (role and influence of ideas, environment, power, and identity), and is able to use Social Studies skills and processes, including the six connected Curricular Competencies (i.e. significance, evidence, continuity, causality, perspectives, and judgement) to inquire into, analyze, and solve problems related to the course content.

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The successful SS9 student will have acquired a broad knowledge base around selected Canadian and Global historical events from 1750-1919, and a knowledge of geographical contexts related to these events as well as current events. The student has an understanding of the four Big Ideas of the course (role and influence of ideas, environment, power, and identity), and is able to use Social Studies skills and processes, including the six connected Curricular Competencies (significance, evidence, continuity, causality, perspectives, and judgement) to inquire into, analyze, and solve problems related to the course content.

BIG IDEAS	
Emerging ideas and ideologies profoundly influence societies and events.	These ideas will emerge in each of the content standards, and can provide a basis for contextualizing the competencies, organizing units, or course themes. They can also form their own study topics or frameworks for assessment.
The physical environment influences the nature of political, social, and economic change.	
Disparities in power alter the balance of relationships between individuals and between societies.	
Collective identity is constructed and can change over time.	

CONTENT STANDARDS	TOPICS TO COVER	THRESHOLD CONCEPTS
political, social, economic, and technological revolutions	at least one internal rebellion that impacted Canada. e.g. Upper/Lower Canada Rebellions, Red River Resistance, Northwest Resistance (note: these can also double as a local/regional conflict)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tipping points for political action • leader sacrifice • the nature of leadership • the role of technology in change • the role of capital and natural resources in change • context for advancement in scientific and social change (inventions), e.g. role of education, wealth, privilege, opportunity, resources
	at least one revolution external to Canada that impacted Canada or has had lasting importance, e.g. The Enlightenment, (2nd) Agricultural Revolution, Industrial Revolution, American or French Revolution, technological changes associated with WWI, Russian Revolution (note: some of these can also double as a local/regional conflict). Could also explore a modern revolution e.g. space age, proliferation of technology in late 20th century, Arab Spring, etc, or trace a revolutionary commodity, e.g. plastic, tobacco, cotton	
the continuing effects of imperialism and colonialism on indigenous peoples in Canada and around the world	at least one instance of Indigenous interaction and/or colonialism within Canada, e.g. inland fur trade, coastal fur trade, treaty process in various locations, Indian Act (particularly related to residential schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assimilation • cultural superiority (social darwinism) • mercantilism
	at least one additional instance of colonial interaction from above, or another instance of colonialism or imperialism, in or out of Canada, e.g. Aftermath of Seven Years War, Manifest Destiny in USA, Scramble for Africa, Global Slave Trade, Tea Trade, could look for overlaps with “discriminatory policies” standard	

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global demographic shifts, including patterns of migration and population growth	at least one related Canadian topic, e.g. slavery in Canada, push/pull factors for 18th and 19th century immigration to Canada, case study such as Irish Potato Famine & Canada, Chinese Railway workers, US-Canada underground railway, and/or gold rushes (Fraser/Caribou, Yukon), Loyalist settlement in Canada, Last Best West; could also include a study of immigrant experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • immigration changes the character and identity of immigrants and the host nation • push/pull factors • pooling tendency: conglomeration of immigrant cultures in new lands • demographic transition models and population pyramids (unless this is a feature of SS11 Explorations at your school)
	at least one additional instance of demographic shift from above, or another related global topic, e.g. impact of Industrial Revolution on population change and migration, global impact Spanish Flu, Global SlaveTrade, historic (or modern) famines	
nationalism and the development of modern nation-states, including Canada	process and problems of Canada becoming a country within the context of growth of democracy/responsible government, territorial expansion, the drive towards Confederation, and the aftermath (1830s to 1905) in particular impact on Indigenous People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible government • role of a constitution • political ideology and the political spectrum(s) • role of conflict in unifying groups • wall theory • nationalism vs patriotism • imperialism • significance of individual contributions & influences (leadership) • choice of governmental systems • polarization (e.g. liberal/conservative cultural war)
	either a more comprehensive exploration of Confederation (and the contexts above) or a separate case study on nation-building, e.g. French Revolution, German unification, political evolution of China, Independence movements in Latin America or elsewhere, selected topics in history of British Columbia from Contact to Confederation	
local, regional, and global conflicts	at least one conflict directly involving Canada, e.g. Seven Years War, Chilcotin War, Fraser Canyon War, World War I (unless this is a feature or SS10 at your school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • role of technology in war • relationship between war and economy (including impact on supply and demand) • government policies and power during wartime (leadership), including suspension of civil liberties • ideology/ militarism • imperialism/colonialism • military and political alliances and associated agreements • diplomacy • chain reactions in wartime • displacement from war • rebuilding from war, foreign and domestic contexts • human rights violations and war crimes
	at least one global conflict, with or without a Canadian connection, e.g. American Civil War, Boxer Rebellion, Crimean War, Opium Wars, Wars of Independence in Latin America	

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discriminatory policies, attitudes, and historical wrongs	a collection, timeline, overview of events and attitudes related to this topic; criteria is a connection to Canada, e.g. head tax, potlatch ban, residential schools, Asiatic Exclusion League, Komagata Maru Incident. List can also include evolution of rights, e.g. women’s suffrage, labour rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discrimination based on social norm and values • systematic discrimination • creation of an “other” • methods of associating problems with race or other identifying characteristics • tendency for cultures to insulate from alternate perspectives vs open themselves to cultural transfer • power differentials • systematic discrimination
	a focused study of one or more of these events or attitudes from this set; can be tied to other contextual studies (e.g. residential schools might be tied to the legacy of Confederation and the Indian Act)	
physiographic features of Canada and geological processes	a coherent and integrated survey of Canada’s physiography, incorporating knowledge of underlying geological or geomorphological processes (e.g. tectonic forces, glacial action, river action) and physical features (i.e. topography, physiographic regions), associated or parallel characteristics (e.g. vegetation or climate regions, distribution, use of natural resources), and issues related to natural resources (e.g. natural disasters, climate change, habitat loss)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plate boundary interactions • anthropogenic climate change • continental and alpine glaciation • weathering and erosion • river (fluvial) processes • streams: direction of flow, tributaries, deltas • mutual impact of humans and environment • role of resources in shaping economic activities • environmental determinism (and limits to)
	a focused case study of one or more locations that allow exploration of the topics above, or a focused study of one or more of the topics above in a variety of contexts/locations (e.g. earthquakes). Alternately, an exploration of modern	
grade appropriate geographical context for content and current events	Canadian political features -- provinces, territories, and their capitals, some other major cities such as Ottawa, Montreal, Calgary, Vancouver), locations, features, and characteristics as they come up in local, regional, and national studies (e.g. Barkerville, transportation networks, territorial evolution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • geopolitical relationship between provinces and the nation • heartland/hinterland • Exclusive Economic Zone (UN Law of the Sea) • drainage basin • latitude, the Equator, Tropics, and Arctic Circle • longitude, the Prime Meridian • Time Zones and the International Date Line • climate regions • resource concentration
	Canadian physical features -- major rivers (e.g. Fraser, Columbia, N/S Saskatchewan/Nelson, Peace/Mackenzie, St. Lawrence, major lakes (e.g. Great Lakes, Athabaska, Great Bear, Great Slave, Williston Reservoir), major coast features (e.g. Hudson Bay, Str of Juan de Fuca (or Salish Sea), Gulf of St. Lawrence, Baffin Island) major mountain ranges (e.g. Coastal, Rockies, Appalachians), other features or regional characteristics as necessary (e.g. climate regions, resource concentrations, areas affected by climate change)	

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	context for global connections -- location of countries (and their capitals) as they come up, e.g. Britain/UK, France, China, Russia, etc.), major global features such as the oceans, continents, prime meridian, equator, some rivers (e.g. Nile, Amazon), mountains (e.g. Andes, Himalayas, Alps), and water bodies (e.g. Mediterranean)	
Regional and Local Content	some BC, Central Interior, and/or Prince George History and Geography, at least one topic, case study, or exercise related to both history and geography.	
Key Dates to know	1763 Treaty of Paris, 1867 Confederation, 1876 Indian Act, 1885 Completion of CPR/Northwest Resistance, 1914 start of WWI	