



PA Academic Standards: Social Studies

The 2020–21 school year presents a unique set of opportunities and challenges due to the disruption to instruction in spring 2020 as well as the uncertainty as the school year unfolds. Educators know that every school year there are students who require support in addressing unfinished learning from prior grades, a challenge that will be felt more prominently in the 2020–21 school year. It is vitally important that educators are supported to make deliberate instructional choices that allow all students to effectively engage with grade-level work.

The most effective and equitable way to support students in their learning is to ensure that the vast majority of time is spent engaging with grade-level content, remediating with precision and accelerating as needed. It is entirely possible to hold high expectations for all students while addressing unfinished learning in the context of grade-level work. Since time is a scarce commodity in classrooms — made more limited by anticipated closures and remote or hybrid learning models in the fall of 2020 — strategic instructional choices about which content to prioritize must be made.¹

Assessing students at the start of the year will identify learning gaps and provide data to inform grade level instruction — as well as incorporating both remediation and acceleration along the way. Diagnostic assessments determine student strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills. Diagnostic assessments allow teachers to adjust the curriculum to meet the unique needs of all students. While some concepts have greater emphasis in a particular year, all standards deserve a defined level of instruction. Neglecting concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of a later grade.

This guidance document is designed to identify and define areas of high-level focus in Social Studies instruction supported by key PA Academic Standards. Note that while all standards deserve a defined level of instruction, neglecting key concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of a later grade.

The focus areas detailed in each Social Studies domain center around Long Term Transfer Goals that enable students to independently use their learning to:

- Support the ideals of civic rights and responsibilities as set forth in the Preamble of the United States Constitution in regard to their local, state, nation and international relationships with actions and deeds. (Civics and Government)
- Make economic choices which impact self and others in personal, local, state, national and international governments. (Economics)
- Make decisions at personal, local, state, national, and international levels which will impact freedoms and liberties of self and others (Geography)
- Study the past struggle of balancing liberty and freedom to influence decisions that will impact their future at personal, local, state, national and international levels. (History)

¹ Adapted from 2020–21 Priority Instructional Content in English Language Arts/literacy and Mathematics, Student Achievement Partners/Achieve the Core. May 2020

CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION (2020-2021)

This guidance document is designed to identify and define areas of high-level focus in Social Studies instruction supported by key PA Academic Standards. Note that while all standards deserve a defined level of instruction, neglecting key concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of a later grade.

Focus Areas of Instruction	PA Academic Standards
<p>Principles and Documents of Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws and government • Documents and ideas that shape Pennsylvania and US Government • Individual rights 	<p>5.1.9.B./5.1.W.B./5.1.9.C.B/5.1.12.B <i>Employ historical examples and political philosophy to evaluate the major arguments advanced for the necessity of government.</i></p> <p>5.1.9.D/5.1.U.D/5.1.C.D/5.1.12.D <i>Evaluate state and federal powers based on significant documents and other critical sources. •Declarations of Independence •United States Constitution •Bill of Rights •PA Constitution</i></p>
<p>Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civics rights and responsibilities • Conflict and resolution 	<p>5.1.9.E/5.1.C.E/5.1.12.E <i>Analyze and assess the rights of people as written in the PA Constitution and the US Constitution.</i></p> <p>5.2.9.A/5.2.U.A/5.2.W.A/5.2.C.A, 5.2.12.A <i>Evaluate an individual’s civil rights, responsibilities, and obligations in various contemporary governments.</i></p>
<p>How Government Works</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure, organization, and operation of governments • Elements of the election process • Media influences 	<p>5.2.9.B/5.2.U.B/5.2.W.B/5.2.C.B/5.2.12.B <i>Examine the causes of conflicts in society and evaluate techniques to address these conflicts.</i></p> <p>5.3.9.B/5.3.C.B/5.3.12.B <i>Compare and contrast policy-making in various and contemporary world governments.</i></p> <p>5.3.9.E/5.3.C.E/5.3.12.E <i>Evaluate the fairness and effectiveness of the United States electoral processes, including the electoral college.</i></p>
<p>How International Relations Function</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries and conflicts • Tools of foreign policy 	<p>5.3.9.H/5.3.C.H/5.3.12.H <i>Evaluate the role of mass media in setting public agenda and influencing political life.</i></p> <p>5.4.9.A/5.4.U.A/5.4.C.A, 5.4.12.A <i>Examine foreign policy perspectives, including realism, idealism, and liberalism.</i></p> <p>5.4.9.B/5.4.C.B/5.4.12.B <i>Evaluate the effectiveness of foreign policy tools in various current issues confronting the United States (e.g., diplomacy, economic aid, military aid, sanctions, treaties).</i></p>

HISTORY FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION (2020-2021)

This guidance document is designed to identify and define areas of high-level focus in Social Studies instruction supported by key PA Academic Standards. Note that while all standards deserve a defined level of instruction, neglecting key concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of a later grade.

Focus Areas of Instruction	PA Academic Standards
<p>Historical Analysis and Skill Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact, opinion, and points of view 	<p>8.1.9.B./8.1.U.B./8.1.W.C.B/8.1.C.B/8.1.12.B Evaluate the interpretation of historical events and sources, considering the use of fact versus opinion, multiple perspectives, and cause and effect relationships.</p>
<p>PA History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical documents, artifacts, and places 	<p>8.2.9.B/8.2.U.B/8.2.C.B/8.2.12.B Evaluate the impact of historical documents, artifacts, and places in Pennsylvania which are critical to U.S. history and the world.</p>
<p>US History/World History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions of individuals and groups • Continuity and change 	<p>8.3.9.A/8.3.U.A/8.3.C.A/8.3.12.A Evaluate the role groups and individuals from the U.S. played in the social, political, cultural, and economic development of the world.</p> <p>8.3.9.C/8.3.U.C/8.3.C.C/8.3.12.C Evaluate how continuity and change in U.S history are interrelated with the world. •Belief systems and religion •Commerce and industry •Technology •Politics and government •Physical and human geography •Social organizations</p> <p>8.4.9.A/8.4.W.A/8.4.C.A/8.4.12.A Evaluate the role groups and individuals played in the social, political, cultural, and economic development throughout world history.</p>
<p>World History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions of individuals and groups • Continuity and change 	<p>8.4.9.C/8.4.W.C/8.4.C.C/ 8.4.12.C Evaluate how continuity and change have impacted the world today. •Belief systems and religion •Commerce and Industry •Technology •Politics and government •Physical and human geography •Social organization</p>

ECONOMICS FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION (2020-2021)

This guidance document is designed to identify and define areas of high-level focus in Social Studies instruction supported by key PA Academic Standards. Note that while all standards deserve a defined level of instruction, neglecting key concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of a later grade.

Focus Areas of Instruction	PA Academic Standards
<p>Scarcity and Choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scarcity and choice 	<p>6.1.9.A/6.1.U.A/6.1.W.A/6.1.C.A/6.1.12.A <i>Predict the long-term consequences of decisions made because of scarcity.</i></p>
<p>Markets and Economics Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goods and services Market competition Economic health 	<p>6.2.9.A/6.2.U.A/6.2.W.A/6.2.C.A/6.2.12.A <i>Evaluate the flow of goods and services in an international economy.</i></p> <p>6.2.9.B/6.2.12.B <i>Analyze the effect of changes in the level of competition in different markets.</i></p> <p>6.2.9.E/6.2.U.E/6.2.W.E/6.2.C.E/6.2.12.E <i>Evaluate the health of an economy (local, regional, national, global) using economic indicators.</i></p> <p>6.3.9.B/6.3.U.B/6.3.W.B/6.3.C.B/6.3.12.B <i>Assess the government’s role in regulating and stabilizing the state and national economy.</i></p>
<p>Functions of Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government involvement in the economy 	<p>6.4.9.A/6.4.U.A/6.4.W.A/6.4.C.A/6.4.12.A <i>Evaluate the comparative advantage of nations in the production of goods and services.</i></p>
<p>Economic Interdependence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialization Trade 	<p>6.4.9.B/6.4.W.B/6.4.12.B <i>Assess the growth and impact of international trade around the world.</i></p> <p>6.4.9.D/6.4.U.D/6.4.W.D/6.4.12.D <i>Analyze how changes in transportation, communication networks, and technology affect economic interdependence around the world in the 21st century.</i></p>
<p>Income, Profit, and Wealth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic interdependence 	

GEOGRAPHY FOCUS OF INSTRUCTION (2020-2021)

This guidance document is designed to identify and define areas of high-level focus in Social Studies instruction supported by key PA Academic Standards. Note that while all standards deserve a defined level of instruction, neglecting key concepts may result in learning gaps in student skill and understanding and may leave students unprepared for the challenges of a later grade.

Focus Areas of Instruction	PA Academic Standards
Geographic Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global impact of physical changes 	7.1.12.B <i>Assess how physical changes to a region may have global impact.</i>
Physical and Human Characteristics of Places and Regions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interrelationships • Significance 	7.2.12.B <i>Analyze the significance of physical processes in shaping the character of places and regions.</i> 7.3.12.A <i>Analyze the human characteristics of places and regions using the following criteria: •Population •Culture •Settlement •Economic activities •Political activities</i>
Interactions Between People and the Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Effects 	7.4.12.B <i>Analyze the global effects of human activity on the physical systems.</i>