Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum

Social Studies

FOUNDATION

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Table of Contents

Vision

The Atlantic Canada social studies curriculum will enable and
encourage students to examine issues, respond critically and creatively,
and make informed decisions as individuals and as citizens of Canada
and of an increasingly interdependent world.

Introduction

*T*he *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum* provides a framework for social studies programs in the Atlantic provinces. The framework reflects current provincial, national, and international research and theory on the nature and scope of a powerful and meaningful social studies curriculum and on what all students must learn to be considered literate in social studies. It provides a coherent view of the curriculum, which is integrative, active, and experiential.

This document provides an outline of the nature of social studies education in the Atlantic region; outcome statements of what students are expected to demonstrate at key stages in their social studies education; principles of assessment and evaluation; and a description of the learning environment that will foster inquiry, reflection, and decision making within the communities of classroom and school.

This document is intended to advance social studies education and to improve social studies teaching and learning, while recognizing and validating the effective practices that already exist in many classrooms.

This document is not intended to be used as a curriculum guide.

CURRICULUM FOCUS

*A*n effective social studies curriculum prepares students to achieve all essential graduation learnings. In particular, social studies, more than any other curriculum area, is vital in developing citizenship. Social studies embodies the main principles of democracy, such as freedom, equality, human dignity, justice, rule of law, and civic rights and responsibilities. The social studies curriculum promotes students' growth as individuals and as citizens of Canada and of an increasingly interdependent world. It provides opportunities for students to explore multiple approaches that may be used to analyse and interpret their own world and the world of others. Social studies presents unique and particular ways for students to

Within this context, the *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum* has three purposes:

1. to serve as a framework for social studies program design from entry through grade 12 that will guide and direct the subsequent development of detailed social studies curriculum guides

2. to provide a framework of curriculum outcomes to which educators and others can refer when making decisions concerning learning experiences, instructional techniques, and assessment strategies in social studies

3. to inform both educators and members of the general public of the philosophy and scope of social studies education in the Atlantic provinces

view the interrelationships among Earth, its people, and its systems. The knowledge, skills, and attitudes developed through the social studies curriculum empower students to be informed, responsible citizens of Canada and the world and through participation in the democratic process improve society.

THE NATURE OF SOCIAL STUDIES

The social studies curriculum integrates concepts, processes, and ways of thinking drawn from the diverse disciplines of the humanities, social sciences, and pure sciences.

Social studies provides co-ordinated, systematic study, drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and the natural sciences. Social studies recognizes and validates the importance of the individual disciplines in providing avenues and perspectives to help students understand issues and problems.

The social studies curriculum provides the multidisciplinary lens through which students examine issues affecting their lives from personal, academic, pluralistic, and global perspectives.

This curriculum is designed to help each learner construct a blend of personal, academic, pluralistic, and global perspectives. Social studies helps students construct a personal perspective as they consider the implication of events and issues for themselves, their families, and their communities. Students construct an academic perspective through the study and application of the social studies disciplines. Students construct a pluralistic perspective as they respect diversity of identity, beliefs, and practices and incorporate diverse points of view into their understanding of issues. Students construct a global perspective as they seek equitable, sustainable, and peaceful solutions to issues that confront our culturally diverse world.

In addition to the development of each learner's own perspectives, this curriculum emphasizes development of the individual's capacity to listen, understand, and respect the perspectives of others.

A COMMON APPROACH

*I*n 1993, work began on the development of common curricula in specific core programs. The Atlantic ministers' primary purposes for collaborating in curriculum development are to

- improve the quality of education for all students through shared expertise and resources

- ensure that the education students receive across the region is equitable

- meet the needs of both students and society

Under the auspices of the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, development of Atlantic common core curricula follows a consistent process. Each project requires consensus by a regional committee at designated decision points; all provinces have equal weight in decision making. Each province has established procedures and mechanisms for communicating and consulting with education partners, and it is the responsibility of the provinces to ensure that stakeholders have input into regional curriculum development.

Each foundation document includes statements of essential graduation learnings, general curriculum outcomes for that core program, and key-stage curriculum outcomes (entry–grade 3, grades 4–6, grades 7–9, grades 10–12). Essential graduation learnings and curriculum outcomes provide a consistent vision for the development of a rigorous and relevant core curriculum.

General curriculum outcomes
are statements that identify what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in a curriculum area.

Key-stage curriculum outcomes
are statements that identify what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of grades 3,6, 9, and 12, as a result of their cumulative learning experience in a curriculum area.

Outcomes

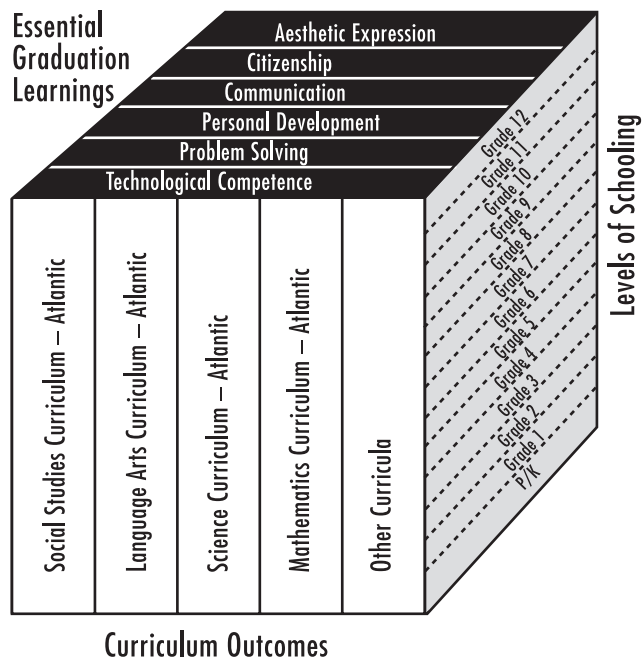### *Essential graduation learnings*

are statements describing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes expected of all students who graduate from high school. Achievement of the essential graduation learnings will prepare students to continue to learn throughout their lives. These learnings describe expectations not in terms of individual school subjects but in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes developed throughout the curriculum. They confirm that students need to make connections and develop abilities across subject boundaries if they are to be ready to meet the shifting and ongoing demands of life, work, and study today and in the future. Essential graduation learnings are cross-curricular, and curriculum in all subject areas is focussed to enable students to achieve these learnings. Essential graduation learnings serve as a framework for the curriculum development process.

Curriculum outcomes

are statements articulating what students are expected to know and be able to do in particular subject areas. These outcome statements also describe what knowledge, skills, and attitudes students are expected to demonstrate at the end of certain key stages in their education as a result of their cumulative learning experiences at each grade level in the entry-graduation continuum. Through the achievement of curriculum outcomes, students demonstrate the essential graduation learnings.

FIGURE 1 – Relationship among Essential Graduation Learnings, Curriculum Outcomes & Levels of Schooling

*G*raduates will be able to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the following essential graduation learnings. Provinces may add additional essential graduation learnings as appropriate.
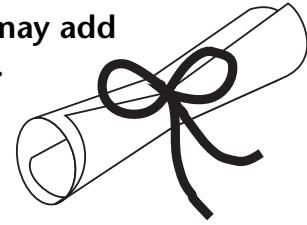
Social studies provides diverse opportunities to achieve the essential graduation learnings. The following gives a rationale and examples of key-stage curriculum outcomes to demonstrate the close links between the essential graduation learnings and social studies outcomes.

Aesthetic Expression

G raduates will be expected to respond with critical awareness to various forms of the arts and be able to express themselves through the arts.

Graduates will be expected for example, to

- use various art forms as a means of formulating and expressing ideas, perceptions, and feelings

- demonstrate understanding of the contribution of the arts to daily life, cultural identity and diversity, and the economy

- demonstrate understanding of the ideas, perceptions, and feelings of others as expressed in various art forms

- demonstrate understanding of the significance of cultural resources such as theatres, museums, galleries, cinemas, and libraries

Social studies provides numerous opportunities to realize outcomes related to aesthetic expression. In social studies classes, students can be encouraged to express their views on social issues through various forms of the arts beyond the traditional written format. In addition, they are provided opportunities to examine how artists have expressed their views about the world over time. Whether analysing historical artifacts or interpreting music and literature from various countries, and cultures, students develop an appreciation of the role the arts play in interpreting our world and the world of others.

Example: In the curriculum outcomes that follow, by the end of grade 3, students will be expected to identify the material and non-material elements of a culture. In another example, by the end of grade 6, students will be expected to describe how a culture is preserved, modified, and transmitted.

Citizenship

G raduates will be expected to assess social, cultural, economic, and environmental interdependence in a local and global context.

Graduates will be expected for example, to

- demonstrate understanding of sustainable development and its implications for the environment

- demonstrate understanding of Canada's political, social, and economic systems in a global context

- demonstrate understanding of the social, political, and economic forces that have shaped the past and present and apply those understandings in planning for the future

- examine human rights issues and recognize forms of discrimination

- determine the principles and actions of just, pluralistic, and democratic societies

- demonstrate understanding of their own and others' cultural heritage and cultural identity and the contribution of diverse cultures to society

Social studies plays a prominent role in enabling students to develop as responsible citizens. By its very nature, social studies provides numerous opportunities to develop the various elements of citizenship education. From the social studies disciplines come the integral features of citizenship education—students' acceptance and fulfilment of roles as active and informed citizens in a pluralistic and democratic society.

As students develop an understanding of the forces that shape society, they develop a frame of reference to consider the future. They are led

Citizenship (continued)

to consider the principles of human rights and study the variety of beliefs and practices that exist in the world. They develop criteria for a just, pluralistic, and democratic society and learn to recognize the hybrid nature of their culture and the interdependent nature of our world.

Example: The curriculum outcomes anticipate that, by the end of grade 3, students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of equality, human dignity, and justice. In another example, by the end of grade 12, students will be expected to analyse major issues involving the rights, responsibilities, roles, and status of individual citizens and groups in a local, national, and global context.

Communication

G raduates will be expected to use the listening, viewing, speaking, reading, and writing modes of language(s), as well as mathematical and scientific concepts and symbols, to think, learn, and communicate effectively.

Graduates will be expected for example, to

- explore, reflect on, and express their own ideas, learnings, perceptions, and feelings
- demonstrate understanding of facts and relationships presented through words, numbers, symbols, graphs, and charts
- present information and instructions clearly, logically, concisely, and accurately for a variety of audiences
- demonstrate a knowledge of the second official language
- access, process, evaluate, and share information
- interpret, evaluate, and express data in everyday language
- critically reflect on and interpret ideas presented through a variety of media

Social studies requires the student to listen critically to others; to evaluate and respond to their arguments; to read for comprehension; to understand cause and effect; to heighten their visual literacy through viewing pictures, videos, and artifacts; to distinguish between the relevant and the irrelevant; and to identify perceptions and bias. Students are required to take positions on past and current issues and to defend those positions in writing, through discussion, and through presentations using various mediums. The communication process is a key requirement of social studies. Social studies students are asked to speak, listen, read, view, think, write, dramatize, and articulate their thoughts.

Example: The curriculum outcomes expect that, by the end of grade 3, students will identify and use primary and secondary sources to learn and communicate about the past and that, by the end of grade 6, students will be expected to use maps, globes, pictures, models, and technologies to represent and describe physical and human systems.

Personal Development

G raduates will be expected to continue to learn and to pursue an active, healthy lifestyle.

Graduates will be expected for example, to

- demonstrate preparedness for the transition to work and further learning

- make appropriate decisions and take responsibility for those decisions

- work and study purposefully both independently and in groups

- demonstrate understanding of the relationship between health and lifestyle

- discriminate among a wide variety of career opportunities

- demonstrate coping, management, and interpersonal skills

- demonstrate intellectual curiosity, an entrepreneurial spirit, and initiative

- reflect critically on ethical issues

Personal development requires that individuals first know who they are—that they have a sense of identity, and that they know where they fit in the scheme of things. Social studies topics contribute much to the development of these concepts. As students explore immediate and expanding environments, they learn about themselves in the context of the world around them. Many of the ethical issues that confront today's students must be examined from the critical perspective provided through the social studies. An appreciation of the changing nature of our world is implicit in this study.

Example: By the end of grade 6, students will be expected to describe the influences that shape personal identity; while, by the end of grade 9, students will be expected to analyse the personal, social, and economic implications of paid and unpaid labour.

Problem Solving

G raduates will be expected to use the strategies and processes needed to solve a wide variety of problems, including those requiring language, mathematical, and scientific concepts.

Graduates will be expected for example, to

- acquire, process, and interpret information critically to make informed decisions

- use a variety of strategies and perspectives with flexibility and creativity for solving problems

- formulate tentative ideas and question their own assumptions and those of others

- solve problems individually and collaboratively

- identify, describe, formulate, and reformulate problems

- frame and test hypotheses

- ask questions, observe relationships, make inferences, and draw conclusions

- identify, describe, and interpret different points of view and distinguish fact from opinion

Social studies provides a laboratory in which to explore the possible consequences of various policies in response to particular problems. Through this process, a frame of reference is developed that enables students to analyse contemporary problems. An examination of such problems requires that students examine their assumptions, recognize the variety of perspectives that have to be considered in developing an acceptable solution, separate relevant from irrelevant information and bias from fact, as well as frame and test hypotheses. Social studies helps students to respond as citizens to the problems that confront the world today, with reference to their historical, social, economic, political, and geographic context.

Example: By the end of grade 9, students will be expected to explain how values and perspectives influence interactions among people, technology, and the environment, and by the end of grade 12, students will be expected to propose and evaluate strategies that will promote a preferred future.

Technological Competence

Graduates will be expected to use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems.

Graduates will be expected for example, to

- locate, evaluate, adapt, create, and share information, using a variety of sources and technologies

- demonstrate understanding of and use existing and developing technologies

- demonstrate understanding of the impact of technology on society

- demonstrate understanding of ethical issues related to the use of technology in a local and global context

Social studies provides opportunities for students to explore and employ various technological sources and tools. As students use word processing, CD-ROMs, the Internet, and various multimedia resources to discover the world past and present, they will experience the role of technology in our own age and weigh the relative merits of this technology. The means by which they explore various social studies topics will illustrate the critical role that technology plays today and has played through history.

Social studies is replete with opportunities to study the effect technological development has on society. Students are required to analyse the social and economic consequences of technological innovation from the influence of the wheel and the impact of gunpowder to the implications of genetic engineering. Recognizing the complex issues raised by old and new technologies is critical to achieving technological competence.

Example: By the end of grade 6, students will be expected to identify and describe examples of positive and negative interactions among people, technology, and the environment. By the end of grade 12, students will be expected to select and use appropriate geographic representations, tools, and technologies to evaluate problems and issues.

The framework for the social studies curriculum outlines general curriculum outcomes, organized in terms of conceptual strands, as well as processes, with attitudes embedded within both.

This organization clarifies for students, teachers, parents, and administrators the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that students are expected to develop at key stages in their education.

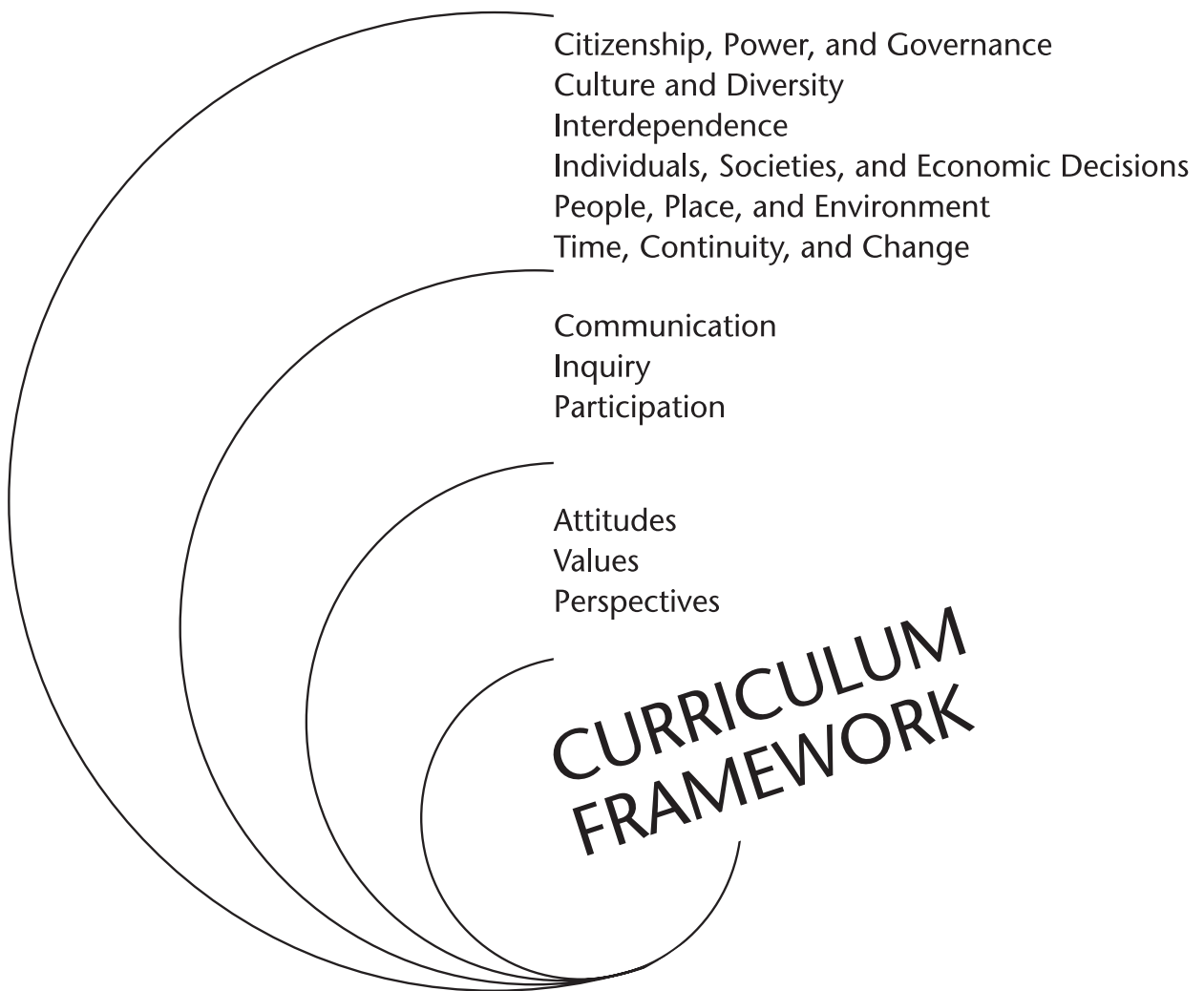*Attitudes* relate to the ways in which people view something or behave toward it, often in an evaluative way. Social studies fosters the understanding of how attitudes are formed and how they influence individual behaviour. In Atlantic Canada, social studies promotes the development of attitudes that value citizenship, the democratic process, fundamental human rights and freedoms, diversity, and the learning process. Students clarify these attitudes as they examine issues, communicate, and participate with each other within their schools and their local, national, and global communities.

Knowledge may range from specific facts to complex concepts. Knowledge is constructed by learners as they incorporate new understandings into their existing knowledge base. In social studies, curriculum draws widely from a number of disciplines to relate new knowledge to existing understandings.

Skills consist of abilities and actions that are used to acquire and utilize understandings. Skills should be used as an interconnected framework in which each skill is dependent upon and enriched by all other skills. They are more than a fragmented list of things students should do, and they can not be effectively acquired in isolation. Skills are integral to the development of conceptual understanding. They will prepare students to face the challenges of the information explosion and better equip them to be lifelong learners.

Social studies is composed of these three interrelated and inseparable components. In this document knowledge is organized within six conceptual strands. Skills are organized and elaborated upon in three processes. The development and understanding of attitudes is embedded within both the strands and the processes.

Citizenship, Power, and Governance
Culture and Diversity
Interdependence
Individuals, Societies, and Economic Decisions
People, Place, and Environment
Time, Continuity, and Change

Communication
Inquiry
Participation

Attitudes
Values
Perspectives

CURRICULUM
FRAMEWORK

The above diagram illustrates the relationship between the conceptual strands, the processes, and the attitudes, values, and perspectives, that are inextricably linked throughout the social studies curriculum.

The general curriculum outcomes (GCOs) for the social studies curriculum are organized around six conceptual strands. These general curriculum outcomes statements identify what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in social studies.

CITIZENSHIP, POWER, AND GOVERNANCE

GCO: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the origins, functions, and sources of power, authority, and governance.

INDIVIDUALS, SOCIETIES, AND ECONOMIC DECISIONS

GCO: Students will be expected to demonstrate the ability to make responsible economic decisions as individuals and as members of society.

PEOPLE, PLACE, AND ENVIRONMENT

GCO: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the interactions among people, places, and the environment.

CULTURE AND DIVERSITY

GCO: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of culture, diversity, and world view, recognizing the similarities and differences reflected in various personal, cultural, racial, and ethnic perspectives.

INTERDEPENDENCE

GCO: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the interdependent relationship among individuals, societies, and the environment—locally, nationally, and globally—and the implications for a sustainable future.

TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE

GCO: Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the past and how it affects the present and the future.

PROCESSES

The skills for the social studies curriculum are organized and elaborated upon in the processes of communication, inquiry, and participation.

COMMUNICATION

Communication requires that students listen to, read, interpret, translate, and express ideas and information.

Students will be expected for example, to

- read critically
- employ active listening techniques
- communicate ideas and information to a specific audience
- express and support a point of view
- select media and styles appropriate to a purpose
- use a range of media and styles to present information, arguments, and conclusions
- present a summary, report, or argument
- use various forms of group and interpersonal communication, such as debating, negotiating, establishing consensus, clarifying, and mediating conflict

INQUIRY

Inquiry requires that students formulate and clarify questions, investigate problems, analyse relevant information, and develop rational conclusions supported by evidence.

Students will be expected for example, to

- frame questions or hypotheses that give clear focus to an inquiry
- solve problems creatively and critically
- apply a variety of thinking skills and strategies
- recognize significant issues and perspectives in an area of inquiry
- identify sources of information relevant to the inquiry
- gather, record, evaluate, and synthesize information from a range of primary and secondary sources and a range of media
- interpret meaning and the significance of information and arguments
- analyse and evaluate information for logic and bias
- test data, interpretations, conclusions, and arguments for accuracy and validity
- draw conclusions that are supported by evidence

PARTICIPATION

Participation requires that students act both independently and collaboratively in order to solve problems, make decisions, and negotiate and enact plans for action in ways that respect and value the customs, beliefs, and practices of others.

Students will be expected for example, to

- engage in a variety of learning activities that include both independent study and collaboration
- function in a variety of groupings, using collaborative and co-operative skills and strategies
- reflect upon, assess, and enrich their learning process
- use appropriate conflict resolution and mediation skills
- relate to others in peaceful, respectful, and non-discriminatory ways
- respond to class, school, community, or national public issues
- relate to ecosystems in sustainable ways and promote sustainable practices on a local, regional, national, and global level

The processes of inquiry, communication, and participation will be introduced, developed, and further refined as students work toward achievement of the key-stage curriculum outcomes in the conceptual strands.

Key-stage curriculum outcomes are statements that identify what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of grades 3, 6, 9, and 12, as a result of their cumulative learning experiences in social studies.

Outcomes at the four key stages reflect a continuum of learning. While there may appear to be similarities in outcomes at different key stages, teachers will recognize the increase in expectations for students at the various key stages, according to

- the developmental nature of the learning process

- students' maturity of thinking and interests

- students' increasing independence as learners

- the complexity and sophistication of ideas, issues, tasks, and resources

- the level or depth of students' engagement with ideas, issues, tasks, and resources

- the range of personal and social experiences and the repertoire of strategies and skills students apply to those experiences

For each key stage, the ordering of outcomes is not intended to suggest any priority, hierarchy, or instructional sequence. While these outcomes provide a framework on which educators may base decisions concerning instruction and assessment, they are not intended to limit the scope of learning experiences in any key stage. Although it is expected that most students will be able to attain the key-stage curriculum outcomes, some students' needs and performance will range across key stages. Teachers should take this variation into consideration as they plan learning experiences and assess students' achievement of the various outcomes. Students' attitudes, experiences, knowledge, abilities, and engagement in learning will also influence their ability to achieve the key-stage curriculum outcomes.

Citizenship, Power, and Governance

Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the origins, functions, and sources of power, authority, and governance.

Elaboration:
The empowered Canadian citizen understands personal rights and responsibilities and the interplay among authority systems, citizens, and public policy. An understanding of the various ideologies and forms of power; the origins, functions, and sources of government power; and the roles played by individuals and groups is critical to informed citizenship. Students will examine how power is gained, used, and justified and how the protection of individual rights and freedoms is ensured within the context of constitutional democracy.

By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to	*By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 3 and will also be expected to*
identify examples of their rights and responsibilities as citizens	identify and explain the rights and responsibilities of individual citizens in a local, national, and global context
demonstrate an understanding of equality, human dignity, and justice	give examples of the influence of freedom, equality, human dignity, justice, and civic rights and responsibilities in Canadian society
recognize power and authority in their lives	identify the distribution of power and privilege in Canadian society and the sources of authority in the lives of citizens
select examples of decisions that are made by governments that affect their personal lives	describe the purpose, function, powers, and decision-making processes of Canadian governments
recognize that laws influence their personal lives	recognize the purpose of laws within the Canadian context
demonstrate how individuals and groups can influence decision making	explain ways that individuals and groups can influence public policy in Canada
recognize that individuals and groups have different perspectives on public issues	recognize how and why individuals and groups have different perspectives on public issues
	describe the main features of the Canadian constitution
take age-appropriate actions to demonstrate their responsibilities as citizens	take age-appropriate actions to demonstrate their responsibilities as citizens

Citizenship, Power, and Governance

Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the origins, functions, and sources of power, authority, and governance.

Elaboration:

The empowered Canadian citizen understands personal rights and responsibilities and the interplay among authority systems, citizens, and public policy. An understanding of the various ideologies and forms of power; the origins, functions, and sources of government power; and the roles played by individuals and groups is critical to informed citizenship. Students will examine how power is gained, used, and justified and how the protection of individual rights and freedoms is ensured within the context of constitutional democracy.

By the end of grade 9, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 6 and will also be expected to	*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 9 and will also be expected to*
identify and explain persistent issues involving the rights, responsibilities, roles, and status of individual citizens and groups in a local, national, and global context	analyse major issues involving the rights, responsibilities, roles, and status of individual citizens and groups in a local, national, and global context
explain the origins and continuing influence of the main principles of Canadian democracy	analyse the origins, development, and current condition of the main principles of democracy
analyse the distribution of power and privilege in society and the sources of authority in the lives of citizens	compare and evaluate the distribution of power in societies and the sources of authority in the lives of citizens
explain the origins, purpose, function, and decision-making processes of Canadian governments and how their powers are acquired, used, and justified	analyse the origins, purpose, function, and decision-making processes of Canadian governments and how their powers are acquired, used, and justified
explain how the Canadian political and legal system establishes order and manages conflict while meeting the needs and desires of citizens	analyse and evaluate how Canadian and other political and legal systems establish order and security while meeting the needs and desires of citizens
explain, analyse, and compare the effectiveness of various methods of influencing public policy	identify and evaluate various strategies for influencing public policy
analyse and explain various perspectives on selected public issues	evaluate public issues, taking into account multiple perspectives
explain the origins and main features of the Canadian constitutional system	analyse different political systems and compare them with Canada's
take age-appropriate actions to demonstrate their responsibilities as citizens	take age-appropriate actions to demonstrate their responsibilities as citizens

Culture and Diversity

Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of culture, diversity, and world view, recognizing the similarities and differences reflected in various personal, cultural, racial, and ethnic perspectives.

Elaboration:

Social studies provides students with a lens through which they can examine the cultural experiences of people in their neighbourhoods, Canada, and the world. Appreciation of culture is integral to an understanding of one's self, of one's country, and of others who share the world. The study of culture opens to students a diversity of perspective about traditions, beliefs, and values. With this understanding, students are better equipped to recognize the similarities of their cultural traditions to those of others and to understand the reasons for the differences. A study of culture enables students to evaluate how cultures are formed, sustained, and transformed by power structures, systems, and individuals within society.

By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to	*By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 3 and will also be expected to*
identify some characteristics unique to one's self and other characteristics that all humans share	describe the influences that shape personal identity
identify groups to which they belong	identify examples of informal and formal groups to which they belong and describe the function of those groups
give examples of how groups, institutions, and media influence people	describe how groups, institutions, and media influence people and society
identify the material and non-material elements of a culture	use examples of material and non-material elements of culture to explain the concept of culture
identify similarities and differences in the ways cultures meet human needs and wants	explain why cultures meet human needs and wants in diverse ways
give examples of how experiences are interpreted differently	describe how perspectives influence the ways in which experiences are interpreted
give examples of stereotypes, discrimination, and pressures to conform and how they affect an individual	discuss why and how stereotyping, discrimination, and pressures to conform can emerge and how they affect an individual
give examples of how culture is transmitted	describe how culture is preserved, modified, and transmitted
give examples of contributions made to Canada by various individuals, groups, and cultures	describe the multicultural, multiracial, and multi-ethnic character of Canadian society

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Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of culture, diversity, and world view, recognizing the similarities and differences reflected in various personal, cultural, racial, and ethnic perspectives.

Elaboration:

Social studies provides students with a lens through which they can examine the cultural experiences of people in their neighbourhoods, Canada, and the world. Appreciation of culture is integral to an understanding of one's self, of one's country, and of others who share the world. The study of culture opens to students a diversity of perspective about traditions, beliefs, and values. With this understanding, students are better equipped to recognize the similarities of their cultural traditions to those of others and to understand the reasons for the differences. A study of culture enables students to evaluate how cultures are formed, sustained, and transformed by power structures, systems, and individuals within society.

By the end of grade 9, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 6 and will also be expected to	*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 9 and will also be expected to*
explore the factors that influence one's perceptions, attitudes, values, and beliefs	analyse the factors that contribute to the perception of self and the development of a world view
analyse how individuals and formal and informal groups can influence each other	analyse how the function of a group may be influenced by such factors as ethnicity, age, gender, and status
analyse how groups, institutions, and media influence people and society	evaluate group, institutional, and media influences on people and society in both historical and contemporary settings
compare examples of material and non-material elements of culture in different societies	explain why cultures develop various expressions of material and non-material culture
compare the ways cultures meet human needs and wants	analyse and explain the ways cultures address human needs and wants
explain how and why perspectives influence the ways in which experiences are interpreted	evaluate the causes and consequences of differing world views
demonstrate acceptance of self and others by considering alternative views and strategies for coping with situations that arise from conflicting values and beliefs	analyse cases and personal values regarding stereotyping, discrimination, and conformity and how they affect individuals and groups
compare and analyse how culture is preserved, modified, and transmitted	evaluate patterns for preserving, modifying, and transmitting culture while adapting to environmental or social change
explain the concept of multiculturalism as it applies to race, ethnicity, diversity, and national identity in Canadian society	evaluate the policy of multiculturalism and its implication for Canada

Individuals, Societies, and Economic Decisions

Students will be expected to demonstrate the ability to make responsible economic decisions as individuals and as members of society.

Elaboration:
Social studies provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to make personal economic decisions and to participate in the process of societal economic decision making. Students will assess the difficulties and dilemmas in developing private or public policies and the need to achieve individual and societal goals. The study of economic concepts, principles, and systems enables students to understand how economic decisions affect their lives as individuals and members of society.

By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to	*By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 3 and will also be expected to*
distinguish between needs and wants	give examples that show how scarcity and opportunity cost govern the economic decisions made by individuals and governments
give examples of economic decisions made by individuals and families	give examples of various institutions that make up economic systems
recognize that producers have to consider what they will provide (goods or services), how they will produce it, and who will buy it	explain the role of the private and public sectors in the production and distribution of goods and services
give examples of paid and unpaid work	examine and explain the role of paid and unpaid work in our economy
explain the role of money in everyday life and give examples of how people earn, save, and spend income	explain why people's incomes may change and the impact of that change on their lifestyle
give examples of goods and services provided by governments	explain how a government's policies affect the living standards of all its citizens
describe the relationship of price to supply and demand	explain how supply and demand affect their lives
identify various factors that influence their decisions as consumers	analyse their decisions as informed consumers
	explain some consequences of Canada's connections to the global economy

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By the end of grade 9, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 6 and will also be expected to	*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 9 and will also be expected to*
explain how economic decisions are made by individuals, organizations, and governments, based on scarcity and opportunity cost	analyse how economic decisions are made by individuals, organizations, and governments, based on scarcity and opportunity cost
explain the roles of economic institutions and examine their impact on individuals and on private and public organizations	assess the role played by economic institutions and examine their impact on individuals and on private and public organizations
explain how societies have developed economic systems that guide production, distribution, and consumption	evaluate the differences among traditional, command, and market economic systems and explain the development of "mixed" economies
analyse the personal, social, and economic implications of paid and unpaid labour	analyse the personal, social, and economic implications of paid and unpaid labour
explain how economic factors affect people's incomes	evaluate factors that influence the distribution of wealth locally, nationally, and internationally
explain how government policies, expenditures, regulations, and trade agreements influence productivity and living standards	analyse how government monetary and fiscal policies, regulations, and trade agreements influence production and distribution of wealth
use economic concepts to help explain economic development in their province, the Atlantic region, Canada, and the world	apply knowledge of economic concepts in developing a response to current economic issues such as disparity and sustainability
explain how consumer decisions affect the economy	evaluate the consequences of the consumer-oriented society
explain the concept of the market in the local, national, and global economy	analyse the dynamics of the market in the local, national, and global economy
	identify the criteria that one might use to judge the health or success of the economy

Interdependence

Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the interdependent relationship among individuals, societies, and the environment—locally, nationally, and globally—and the implications for a sustainable future.

Elaboration:
Social studies provides students with opportunities to analyse, appreciate, and act on the global challenges of an increasingly interdependent world. It offers students an avenue and perspective from which to survey the impact of technological change on societies and the environment. Through social studies, students learn to appreciate the environment and develop a disposition toward protection and wise use of resources so as to ensure a sustainable future. As students recognize the interdependence of Earth's peoples and the finite nature of Earth's resources, they develop strategies and systems that respect diversity and promote collaborative problem solving.

By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to	*By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 3 and will also be expected to*
recognize and describe the interdependent nature of relationships	recognize and explain the interdependent nature of relationships among individuals, societies, and the environment
identify and explore interactions among individuals, groups, and societies	examine and explain the causes and consequences of interactions among individuals, groups, and societies
identify and describe some human organizations and natural systems	explain the interrelationships within selected human organizations and natural systems
identify and describe examples of interactions among people, technology, and the environments	identify and describe examples of positive and negative interactions among people, technology, and the environment
demonstrate an understanding of the concept of sustainability	identify and explain the key characteristics of sustainable practices
explore and describe universal human rights and other selected global issues	identify causes, consequences, and possible solutions to universal human rights and other selected global issues
plan and evaluate age-appropriate actions to support peace and sustainability in our interdependent world	plan and evaluate age-appropriate actions to support peace and sustainability in our interdependent world

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By the end of grade 9, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 6 and will also be expected to	*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 9 and will also be expected to*
explain the complexity that arises from the interdependent nature of relationships among individuals, nations, human organizations, and natural systems	analyse and evaluate the opportunities and challenges of an increasingly interdependent world
analyse examples of societies' responses to interactions among individuals, groups, and societies	evaluate and propose possible solutions to issues resulting from interactions among individuals, groups, and societies
analyse and explain the interrelationships among selected organizations	assess the effectiveness of interrelationships within and among selected organizations and systems
explain how values and perspectives influence interactions among people, technology, and the environment	evaluate current technological developments and their potential impact on society and the environment
analyse selected issues to illustrate the interdependence among society, the economy, and the environment	articulate and justify a personal vision of a sustainable future
analyse causes, consequences, and possible solutions to universal human rights and other selected global issues	evaluate causes, consequences, and possible solutions to universal human rights and other selected global issues
plan and evaluate age-appropriate actions to support peace and sustainability in our interdependent world	plan and evaluate age-appropriate actions to support peace and sustainability in our interdependent world

People, Place, and Environment

Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the interactions among people, places, and the environment.

Elaboration:
Social studies examines the interaction of humans within their spatial environments and the effects on the location and development of place and region. The study of humans and their environments in the social studies is focussed on answering four primary questions: Where is it? Why is it there? How is it organized? and Why is that significant?

By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to	*By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 3 and will also be expected to*
ask basic geographic questions; acquire, organize, and analyse geographic information; and answer geographic questions at an age-appropriate level	ask geographic questions; acquire, organize, and analyse geographic information; and answer geographic questions at an age-appropriate level
use maps, globes, and pictures to describe location and place	use maps, globes, pictures, models, and technologies to represent and describe physical and human systems
use location, distance, scale, direction, and size to describe place	use location, distance, scale, direction, and size to describe where places are and how they are distributed
identify some of the basic physical processes that have shaped the earth	explain how physical processes have shaped and affected the landscape and human systems
describe some of the physical and human characteristics of their local communities	identify and describe how people create places that reflect human needs, values, and ideas
identify ways people depend on, modify, and are influenced by the physical environment	describe how the environment affects human activity and how human activity endangers or sustains the environment
describe the movement of goods, people, and ideas within their community	identify and explain how goods, people, and ideas move among communities

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By the end of grade 9, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 6 and will also be expected to

ask complex geographic questions; acquire, organize, and analyse geographic information; and answer geographic questions

use geographic tools, technologies, and representations to interpret, pose, and answer questions about natural and human systems

use location, distance, scale, direction, density, shape, and size to describe and explain the location and distribution patterns of physical and human phenomena

describe and analyse how ecosystems are created, influenced, and sustained by physical processes

use multiple criteria to identify and define types of regions

analyse the influences of human and physical systems on the development of distinctive characteristics of place

analyse how the movement of people, goods, and ideas have shaped, and continue to shape, political, cultural, and economic activity

analyse ways in which social, political, economic, and cultural systems develop in response to the physical environment

By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 9 and will also be expected to

evaluate complex issues by asking and answering geographic questions and by acquiring, organizing, and analysing geographic information

select and use appropriate geographic representations, tools, and technologies to evaluate problems and issues

use spatial concepts and models to interpret and make decisions about the organization, distribution, and interaction of physical and human phenomena

evaluate issues concerning the diversity and sustainability of Earth's ecosystems

analyse the interactions within and between regions

evaluate how physical and human systems shape the features, uses, and perceptions of place

evaluate how movement patterns create and affect interdependence

analyse the causes and consequences of human modification of the environment on systems within the environment

evaluate the role of perspective, power, and authority in the use of and development of policies to manage Earth's resources

Time, Continuity, and Change

Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the past and how it affects the present and the future.

Elaboration:
An understanding of the dynamics of change is critical in social studies. A study of time, continuity, and change enables students to understand their Canadian heritage, who they are, and why their society espouses the values it does through its governments, its institutions, and its culture. History is to society what memory is to the individual. It provides a frame of reference for testing the merits of ideas, philosophies, and beliefs. Through its study, students learn to recognize and evaluate different perspectives and biases in historical writing.

Understanding develops through critical analysis of the events of the past, their effects on today, and their ties with the future. Historical study develops capacities for critical and creative thinking, issues analysis, values clarification, and an examination of perspective. In essence, history provides a window on Canada and the world, serving to broaden our understanding of the interdependent nature of society on a national and global level.

By the end of grade 3, students will be expected to	*By the end of grade 6, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 3 and will also be expected to*
use basic concepts and vocabulary associated with time, continuity, and change	demonstrate an understanding of the concepts and vocabulary associated with time, continuity, and change
identify and use primary and secondary sources to learn and communicate about the past	identify, evaluate, and use appropriate primary and secondary sources to learn and communicate about the past
demonstrate an understanding that views of the past are shaped by diverse perspectives	research and describe historical events and ideas from different perspectives
ask questions associated with historical methodology to answer: What happened? How do we know what we know? and Why is it important?	apply historical methodology to interpret and understand time, continuity, and change at an age-appropriate level
demonstrate an understanding of cause and effect and change over time	describe examples of cause and effect and change over time
use knowledge of the past to assist in decision making	identify and compare events of the past to the present in order to make informed, creative decisions about issues
communicate ideas about their vision for the future	identify trends that may shape the future

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By the end of grade 9, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 6 and will also be expected to	*By the end of grade 12, students will have achieved the outcomes for entry–grade 9 and will also be expected to*
identify and use concepts associated with time, continuity, and change	apply concepts associated with time, continuity, and change
identify, evaluate, and use primary and secondary sources to investigate historical questions	identify and use primary and secondary sources to evaluate questions
demonstrate an understanding that the interpretation of history reflects perspectives, frames of reference, and biases	demonstrate an understanding that historians are selective in the questions they seek to answer and the evidence they use and that this influences their interpretation of history
apply historical methodology to interpret and understand time, continuity, and change at an age-appropriate level	apply historical methodology to interpret and understand time, continuity, and change at an age-appropriate level
analyse and explain the effects of causality and change over time	interpret and predict patterns of causality and change over time
analyse and evaluate historical and contemporary developments in order to make informed, creative decisions about issues	analyse and compare events of the past to the present in order to make informed, creative decisions about issues
identify and analyse trends that may shape the future	propose and evaluate strategies that will promote a preferred future

Contexts for Learning and Teaching

PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

Empowering and effective social studies is *meaningful*, *significant*, *challenging*, *active*, *integrative*, and *issues-based*.

Meaningful social studies discourages the memorization of disconnected pieces of information and encourages students to learn through purposeful experiences designed around stimulating ideas, social issues, and themes.

Significant social studies is student-centred and age-appropriate. Superficial coverage of topics is replaced by emphasis on the truly significant events, concepts, and principles that students need to know and be able to apply in their lives.

Challenging social studies occurs when teachers model high expectations for their students and themselves, promote a thoughtful approach to inquiry, and demand well-reasoned arguments.

Active social studies encourages students to assume increasing responsibility for managing their own learning. Exploration, investigation, critical and creative thinking, problem solving, discussion and debate, decision making, and reflection are essential elements of this principle. This active process of constructing meaning encourages lifelong learning.

Integrative social studies crosses disciplinary borders to explore issues and events, while using and reinforcing informational, technological, and application skills. This approach facilitates the study of the physical and cultural environment by making appropriate, meaningful, and evident connections to the human disciplines and to the concepts of time, space, continuity, and change.

Issues-based social studies considers the ethical dimensions of issues and addresses controversial topics. It encourages consideration of opposing points of view, respect for well-supported positions, sensitivity to cultural similarities and differences, and a commitment to social responsibility and action.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

With the accelerating pace of change, today's students cannot expect facts learned in isolation to equip them for life. Problem solving, critical and creative thinking, and informed decision making are essential for success in the future. The social studies learning environment must support the development of these critical attributes to prepare students as lifelong learners.

Today's students come with increasingly diverse backgrounds and experiences. An effective instructional environment must incorporate principles and strategies that support this diversity, while recognizing and accommodating the varied learning styles, multiple intelligences, and abilities of individual students.

Teaching approaches and strategies must actively engage all students in the learning process, through their involvement in a wide variety of experiences. The nature and scope of social studies provide unique opportunities to do this.

Therefore an effective social studies learning environment must be

- student centred

- inviting and inclusive

- respectful of diversity

- participatory, interactive, and collaborative

- engaging and relevant

- integrative

- challenging

- inquiry based and issues oriented

- reflective

To establish and maintain such an environment, teachers must

- recognize students as being intelligent in a number of different ways and encourage them to explore other ways of knowing, both inside and beyond the classroom

- value the inclusive classroom and engage all learners in meaningful activities

- acknowledge and value the ways in which gender, race, ethnicity, and culture shape particular ways of viewing and knowing the world

- incorporate new approaches, methodologies, and technologies with established effective practices

- have an extensive repertoire of strategies from which to select those most appropriate to the specific learning task

- use varied and appropriate resources to help students achieve the outcomes in a particular learning situation

- provide opportunities to integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes

- provide repeated opportunities for reflection so that it becomes an integral part of the learning process

As a result, an effective social studies learning environment ensures student achievement by

- enhancing students' understanding, knowledge, and valuing of their own heritage and cultural backgrounds

- emphasizing inquiry and discovery by students rather than teacher presentation of information, facts, and conclusions

- encouraging student responsibility for involvement and participation in the learning process

- providing students with direct and vicarious experiences and opportunities to develop and to apply social studies skills, strategies, and processes in real, purposeful situations

- teaching students how to process and act upon information about the world in a rational and critical manner

- encouraging the effective use of various technologies and of community, media, and print resources in appropriate situations

RESOURCE-BASED LEARNING

Effective social studies teaching and learning are resource based. Resource-based learning actively involves students, teachers, and teacher librarians in the effective use of a wide range of print, non-print, and human resources.

Resource-based learning fosters the development of individual students by accommodating their diverse backgrounds, various learning styles, needs, and abilities. Students who use a wide range of resources in various mediums of learning have the opportunity to approach a theme, issue, or topic of study in ways that allow for differences in learning styles and abilities.

Resource-based learning supports students as they develop information literacy. Information literacy is the ability to access, interpret, evaluate, organize, select, produce, and communicate information in and through a variety of media technologies and contexts to meet diverse learning needs and purposes. When students engage in their own research with appropriate guidance, they are more likely to take responsibility for their learning and to retain the information they gather for themselves.

In a resource-based learning environment, students and teachers make decisions about appropriate sources of information, tools for learning and how to access them. A resource-based approach raises the issues of

selecting and evaluating a wide variety of information sources. The development of the critical skills needed for these tasks is essential to the social studies processes.

Resource-based learning implies the need to provide appropriate resources and professional development for teachers. Guidelines and policies for the selection of appropriate materials should also be in place.

It is necessary that administrators, teachers, teacher librarians, other library/resource/media centre staff, parents, and community agencies collaborate to ensure students' access to available resources to support resource-based teaching and learning.

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

The Atlantic Canada social studies curriculum is designed to meet the needs and interests of all students. The curriculum should provide for the inclusion of the interests, values, experiences, and language of each student and of the many groups within our local, regional, national, and global communities.

The society of Atlantic Canada, like all of Canada, is linguistically, racially, culturally, and socially diverse. Our society includes differences in race, ethnicity, gender, ability, values, lifestyles, and languages. Schools should foster the understanding of such diversity. Social studies curriculum promotes a commitment to equity by valuing, appreciating, and accepting the diverse and multicultural nature of our society, as well as by fostering awareness and critical analysis of individual and systemic discrimination.

In a school setting characterized by mutual trust, acceptance, and respect, student diversity is both recognized and valued. All students are entitled to be respected and valued and are responsible for respecting and valuing all other people. All students are entitled to an educational system that affirms their gender, racial, ethnic, and cultural identity. The educational system should promote the development of students' positive self-image that includes pride in their identity. Educators should ensure that classroom practices

and resources positively and accurately reflect diverse perspectives and reject prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory behaviours.

In order to contribute to the achievement of equity and to support diversity in education, the social studies curriculum must

- reflect and affirm the racial/ ethnocultural, gender, and social identities of students

- reflect students' abilities, needs, interests, and learning styles

- provide materials and strategies that reflect accurately and fully the reality of Canada's diversity and that foster an understanding of multiple perspectives and group and individual similarities and differences

- address ability, cultural, racial, gender, lifestyle, linguistic, and socio-economic issues in an accurate, respectful, fair, analytical and balanced manner

- reflect the variety of roles and wide range of experiences available to all members of society

- promote the concept that all people should have equal access to opportunity and outcome

- expect that all students will be successful, regardless of gender; racial, ethnocultural or socio-economic background; lifestyle; or ability

- include assessment and evaluation tools and practices that take into account gender, ability, learning styles, and the diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds of students

Instructional practices must

- foster a learning environment that is free from bias and unfair practices based on ability, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, or socio-economic status

- promote opportunities to develop positive self-images that will enable students to transcend stereotypes and develop as individuals

- promote communication and understanding among those who differ in attitude, knowledge, points of view, and dialect, as well as among those who are similar

- help students explore and understand why different people have different perspectives

- encourage and enable students to question their own assumptions and to imagine, understand, and appreciate realities other than their own

- ensure the equitable sharing of resources, including teacher attention and support

- provide opportunities for students to work co-operatively in a variety of groupings

- enable students to examine and critique age-appropriate materials, resources, and experiences that exhibit bias and prejudice

- use the multidisciplinary lens of social studies to examine historical and current equity and bias issues

- promote opportunities in non-traditional careers and occupations for students of both genders

- encourage students to challenge prejudice and discrimination which result in unequal opportunities for some members of society

The Atlantic provinces, through the APEF and their departments of education, are committed to using accepted equity principles and practices in approving new social studies curricula and resources.

Assessment
is the systematic process of gathering information on student learning.

Evaluation
is the process of analysing, reflecting upon, and summarizing assessment information and making judgments or decisions based upon the information gathered.

INTRODUCTION

Assessment and evaluation are essential components of teaching and learning in social studies. Without effective assessment and evaluation, it is impossible to know whether students have learned, whether teaching has been effective, and how best to address student learning needs. The quality of assessment and evaluation in the educational process has a profound and well-established link to student performance. Research consistently shows that regular monitoring and feedback are essential to improving student learning. What is assessed and evaluated, how it is assessed and evaluated, and how results are communicated send clear messages to students

and others about what is really valued: what is worth learning, how it should be learned, what elements of quality are considered most important, and how well students are expected to perform.

Teacher-developed assessments and evaluations have a wide variety of uses, such as

- providing feedback to improve student learning

- determining if curriculum outcomes have been achieved

- certifying that students have achieved certain levels of performance

- setting goals for future student learning

- communicating with parents about their children's learning

- providing information to teachers on the effectiveness of their teaching, the program, and the learning environment

- meeting the needs of guidance and administration personnel

ASSESSMENT

To determine how well students are learning, assessment strategies have to be designed to systematically gather information on the achievement of the curriculum outcomes. In planning assessments, teachers should use a broad range of strategies in an appropriate balance to give students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Many types of assessment strategies can be used to gather such information, including, but not limited to,

- formal and informal observations

- work samples

- anecdotal records

- conferences

- teacher-made and other tests

- portfolios

- learning journals

- questioning

- performance assessment

- peer and self-assessment

EVALUATION

Evaluation involves teachers and others in analysing and reflecting upon information about student learning gathered in a variety of ways. This process requires

- developing clear criteria and guidelines for assigning marks or grades to student work

- synthesizing information from multiple sources

- weighing and balancing all available information

- using a high level of professional judgment in making decisions based upon that information

REPORTING

Reporting on student learning should focus on the extent to which students have achieved the curriculum outcomes. Reporting involves communicating the summary and interpretation of information about student learning to various audiences who require it. Teachers have the responsibility to explain accurately what progress students have made in their learning and to respond to parent and student inquiries about learning.

Narrative reports on progress and achievement can provide information on student learning that letter or number grades alone cannot. Such reports might, for example, suggest ways in which students can improve their learning and identify ways in which teachers and parents can best provide support.

Effective communication with parents regarding their children's progress is essential in fostering successful home-school partnerships. The report card is one means of reporting individual student progress. Other means include the use of conferences, notes, and phone calls.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In order to provide accurate, useful information about the achievement and instructional needs of students, certain guiding principles for the development, administration, and use of assessments must be followed. *Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada* articulates five basic assessment principles.

- Assessment strategies should be appropriate for and compatible with the purpose and context of the assessment.

- Students should be provided with sufficient opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviours being assessed.

- Procedures for judging or scoring student performance should be appropriate for the assessment strategy used and be consistently applied and monitored.

- Procedures for summarizing and interpreting assessment results should yield accurate and informative representations of a student's performance in relation to the curriculum outcomes for the reporting period.

- Assessment reports should be clear, accurate, and of practical value to the audience for whom they are intended.

These principles highlight the need for assessment that ensures that

- the best interests of the student are paramount

- assessment informs teaching and promotes learning

- assessment is an integral and ongoing part of the learning process and is clearly related to the curriculum outcomes

- assessment is fair and equitable to all students and involves multiple sources of information

While assessments may be used for different purposes and audiences, all assessments must give each student optimal opportunity to demonstrate what he/she knows and can do.

ASSESSING AND EVALUATING STUDENT LEARNING IN THE
SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM

There should be a congruence between what is taught, how it is taught, and the emphasis in the evaluation process. Social studies educators should recognize that " . . . quality programming and instruction are neither content-based nor process-based, but a wise and judicious mixture of both." (Frost 1989 ,11.)
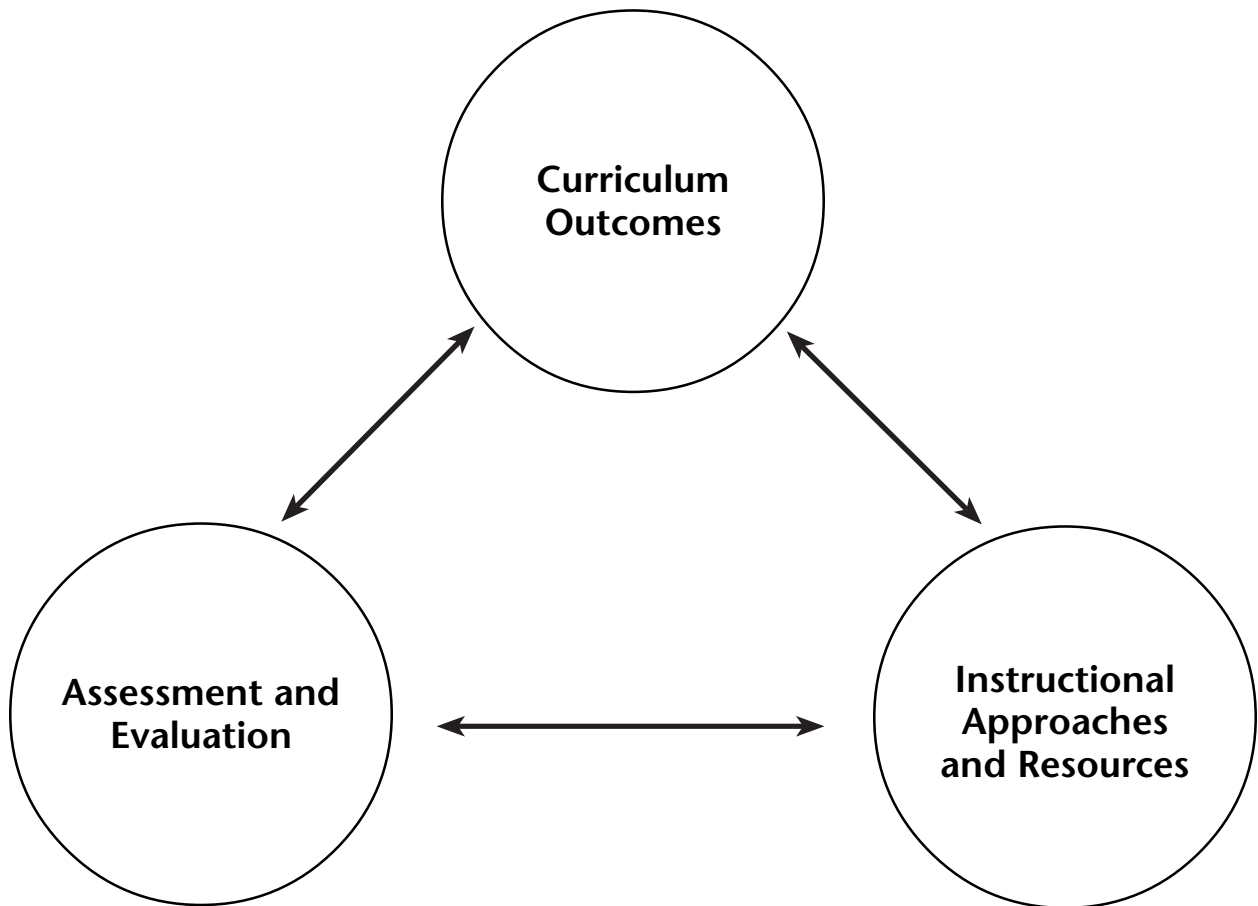
(Adapted from *The Evaluation of Students in the Classroom: A Handbook and Policy Guide,*
Department of Education, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1990)

The assessment of student learning must be aligned with the curriculum outcomes and the types of learning opportunities made available to students.

Evaluation in social studies emphasizes assessment activities that incorporate the skills, perspectives, and knowledge of the many fields and disciplines within the social studies.

Instruction and evaluation are centred around outcomes. Not only are outcomes used in providing structured teaching and learning, but they also provide a framework for assessment and evaluation.

Assessment in the social studies is an integral and ongoing part of the learning process. Assessment can be used to shape instruction to better ensure student success. Assessment strategies should inform the daily instructional process. Moreover, students require frequent opportunities to assess and evaluate their own learning and performance.

In the social studies classroom, there should be a balanced approach to assessment in which emphasis is given to the learning process as well as the products of learning. Assessment in social studies should reflect the following practices:

- assessing rich, well-structured knowledge
- assessing social studies processes
- designing assessment tasks in ways that recognize various learning styles
- engaging students in ongoing assessment of their work and that of others
- assessing the learning process

- assessing a variety of products
- assessing to inform effective planning and instruction

These practices should be reflected in the variety of teaching and assessment strategies that teachers use. The following, in addition to the assessment strategies listed on p. 31, form a non-exhaustive list of methods contributing to balanced assessment practices:

- case studies
- interviews
- rubrics
- simulations
- checklists
- reports
- questionnaires
- oral presentations
- role plays
- debates
- panel discussions
- learning contracts
- demonstrations
- interpretation and creation of graphical representations
- reflective writing
- written forms such as essays

The *Foundation for Atlantic Canadian Social Studies Curriculum* envisions a shift in focus that reinforces and complements the principles underlying social studies and the learning environment that will result in a better balance between process and product.

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Administration of externally prepared assessments is on a large scale in comparison to classroom assessments and often involves hundreds, sometimes thousands, of students, allowing for use of results at the provincial, district, and/or school levels. Depending on the comprehensiveness of the assessment, information can be used for all of the same purposes as classroom-based assessment, but it can also serve additional administrative and accountability purposes, such as for admissions, placement, student certification, educational diagnosis, and program evaluation. External assessments offer common standards for assessment and for administration, scoring, and reporting, which allow for comparison of results over time.

As part of the regional agenda, development of external assessments in the core curriculum areas is being undertaken. Generally, external assessment includes assessments prepared by departments of education, national and international assessment groups, publishers, and research groups. Each provincial department of education makes decisions on whether or not to administer external assessments.

PROGRAM AND SYSTEM EVALUATION

The results from both external and internal assessments of student achievement can be used to varying degrees for program and system evaluation. External assessment results, however, are more comparable across various groups and are therefore more commonly the basis for these types of evaluation.

In essence, the main difference between student evaluation and program and system evaluation is in how the results are used. In program evaluation, marks or scores for individual students are not the primary focus of the assessment—it is the effectiveness of the program that is evaluated, and the results are used to show the extent to which the many outcomes of the program are achieved.

When results are used for system evaluation, the focus is on how the various levels and groups within the system, such as classrooms, schools, districts, and so on, are achieving the intended outcomes. In many ways, student and program evaluation are very much the same, in that both emphasize obtaining student information concerning the extent to which students have achieved curriculum outcomes.

Resources

INTRODUCTION

This framework envisages a network of material and human resources extending throughout the school, into the community and to provincial, national, and global resources accessible through information and communication technologies. No single resource can provide sufficient material to nurture the development of any learner or group of learners for any extended period of time. The range of resources must

- reflect the diversity of learners' interests, needs, abilities, and experiences
- support the achievement of the curriculum outcomes
- be available to all learners

This document emphasizes the diversity of resources that can support and enhance the learning environment of the social studies classroom.

The range of possible resources includes print, visual, experiential, and technological.

PRINT RESOURCES

Print materials are a significant type of resource for social studies teaching and learning. Several categories of print materials are available to social studies teachers and students.

EXAMPLES OF PRIMARY SOURCES

- diaries
- letters
- census reports
- newspapers (first-hand accounts)
- Hansard
- business documents (manifests, ledgers, etc.)
- ships' logs

Primary documents provide opportunities for students to interpret, analyse, and draw conclusions using authentic sources.

EXAMPLES OF SECONDARY SOURCES

- textbooks
- periodicals
- biographies
- literature
- song lyrics
- newspapers (commentary, editorials)

- atlases
- encyclopedias

Secondary sources provide opportunities for students to examine various interpretations by writers.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Documents can be viewed as the recorded history of a society. Visuals, including works of art, charts, satirical cartoons, illustrations, photographs, pictures, prints, film, and architecture, can provide a comprehensive representation of a society. These resources can provide students with the opportunity to study the history, values, and beliefs of society through the products of that society.

Photographs, paintings, and other visual resources can convey immense detail at a glance—detail that would take pages of text to describe. Students need to value them as data sources that can be examined from a critical perspective. They are not only rich sources of information but they also present underlying messages and meanings that can promote inquiry in students.

EXPERIENTIAL RESOURCES

The experiential dimension of social studies is enhanced when students can manipulate the artifacts of a society. Artifacts, whether introduced in the classroom setting or in a museum, can be the starting point for meaningful inquiry and can provide students with a tangible link to a society's past or present.

The community is a key component of experiential resources. Interviews, guest speakers, field studies, and museum visits connect students to people and places in the larger community and broaden students' understanding of themselves, their community, and their relationships.

The use of community resources must be related to curriculum outcomes. Students must have clear purposes in mind when embarking on a community experience and a curricular context in which to place it, in order for the experience to be meaningful and worthwhile.

TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Technology should have a major role in the teaching and learning of social studies.

Computers and related technologies have become valuable classroom tools for the acquisition, analysis, presentation, and communication of data in ways that allow students to become more active participants in research and learning.

Computers and related technology (digital cameras, software, databases, Internet, bulletin board, e-mail, CD-ROM players, videodisk players) afford numerous possibilities for enhancing learning and teaching. Computer and other technologies must enhance the social studies curriculum and not replace essential social studies learning. In that context, technological resources can provide a variety of opportunities.

- CD-ROMs and the Internet increase access to information. This gives teachers and students quicker and easier access to extensive and current information. However, research skills are key to efficient use of these resources. Questions of validity, accuracy, bias, and interpretation must still be applied to information available on the Internet and CD-ROMs.

- Direct e-mail conversations, student-created websites, and listservs provide connections to students and cultures from around the world. This exposure to first-hand information will enable students to directly employ inquiry skills.

- Students can present what they have learned in a wide variety of forms (e.g., graphs, maps, text, graphic organizers, websites, multi-media presentations) that fit their learning styles. These presentations can be shared with others, both in their classroom and beyond.

- opportunities for students to become more actively involved in their learning by allowing for student control of information gathering, processing, and presentation. For example, Geographic Systems (GIS) software can enable students to collect data on a community, plot the data using global positioning systems (GPS), analyze and present their findings by creating maps that demonstrate their learnings.

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