



Social Studies Curriculum – Early Childhood

May 2007

Introduction

Social Studies Curriculum

The Early Childhood Program at Baker Demonstration School encourages many frames for viewing the individual, immediate and global community in the Social Studies curriculum.

The child's interaction with the environment and community is the basis for the Social Studies curriculum. Through well-designed curricular frameworks and through teacher facilitation involving ten different but overlapping strands, the child is supported in the process of interpreting, understanding and respecting the many diverse components in both the immediate and global community, be they historical or contemporary.

Curricular instruction reflects individual learning styles, so that a more comprehensive understanding of human relations is achieved over time.

Concepts

Ten Strands

Culture

Culture helps us to understand ourselves as both individuals and members of various groups.

In democratic and multicultural societies, students need to understand multiple perspectives that derive from different cultural vantage-points (classroom, family, community, and world).

Cultures are dynamic and ever changing.

Time, Continuity and Change

Human beings seek to understand their roots and to locate themselves in time.

Knowing how to read and reconstruct the past allows one to develop a historical perspective and recognize the relationships between human decisions and consequences.

Knowledge of history allows one to make informed choices and decisions in the present.

Skills and Processes

- Explores and describes similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures address similar human needs and concerns
- Can give examples of how experiences may be interpreted differently by people from diverse cultural perspectives and frames of reference
- Can describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, and performing/ fine arts serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture
- Compares ways in which people from different cultures think about and deal with their physical environment and social conditions
- Gives examples and describes the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups
- Can demonstrate an understanding that different people may describe the same event or situation in diverse ways, citing reasons for the differences in views
- Demonstrates an ability to use correctly vocabulary associated with time such as past, present, future, and long ago; reads and constructs simple timelines; can identify examples of change; and can recognize examples of cause and effect relationships
- Compares and contrasts different stories or accounts about past events, people, places, or situations, identifying how they contribute to our understanding of the past
- Can identify and use various sources for reconstructing the past, such as documents, letters, diaries, maps, textbooks, photos and others
- Demonstrates an understanding that people in different times and places view the world differently
- Uses knowledge of facts and concepts drawn from history, along with elements of historical inquiry, to inform decision-making about and action-taking of public issues

Concepts

People, Places and Environments

The study of people, places, and human environmental interactions assists learners as they create their spatial views and geographic perspectives of the world.

Geographic concepts make people aware of global connections and expand their knowledge of diverse cultures both historical and contemporary.

Individual Development and Identity

Human behavior reflects social norms.

One needs to develop social processes.

Human beings learn through discourse, interactions and cooperative groups.

Young learners develop their personal identities in the context of families, peers, schools, and communities.

Individuals, Groups, and Institutions.

Institutions such as schools and families are an organized body to further the core social values of those who comprise them.

People make up the institutions

Skills and Processes

- Constructs and uses mental maps that demonstrate understanding of relative location, direction, size and shape
- Interprets, uses and distinguishes various representations of the earth, such as maps, globes and photographs
- Uses appropriate resources and geographic tools to generate, manipulate, and interpret information
- Estimates distance
- Locates and distinguishes among varying landforms and geographic features, such as mountains, plateaus, islands and oceans
- Describes and speculates about physical system changes, such as seasons, climate and weather, and the water cycle
- Describes how people create places that reflect ideas, personality, culture, and wants and needs as they design homes, playgrounds, classrooms, and the like
- Examines the interaction of human beings and their physical environment, the use of land, building of cities, and ecosystem changes in selected locales and regions
- Explores ways that the earth's physical features have changed over time in the local region and beyond and how these changes may be connected to one another
- Observes and speculates about social effects of environmental changes and crises resulting in phenomena such as floods, storms, and drought
- Considers existing uses and propose and evaluates alternative uses of resources and land in home, school, community, the region, and beyond
- Describes personal changes over time, such as those related to physical development and personal interests
- Describes personal connections to place, especially place as associated with immediate surroundings
- Describes the unique features of one's nuclear and extended families
- Shows how learning and physical development affect behavior
- Can identify and describe ways family, groups, and community influence the individual's daily life and personal choices
- Explores factors that contribute to one's personal identity such as interests, capabilities, and perceptions
- Analyzes a particular event to identify reasons individuals might respond to it in different ways
- Works independently and cooperatively to accomplish goals
- Can identify roles as learned behavior patterns in group situations such as student, family member, peer play group member, or club member
- Can give examples of and explain group and institutional influences such as religious beliefs, laws, and peer pressure, on people, events and elements of culture

Concepts

and therefore they are adaptable and ever changing.

Members of institutions work through change for a common purpose

Skills and Processes

- Can identify and describe examples of tensions between and among individuals, groups, or institutions, and explain how belonging to more than one group can cause internal conflicts
- Can identify and describe examples of tensions between an individual's beliefs and government policies and laws
- Can identify examples of institutions and describe the interactions of people with institutions
- Gives examples of the role of institutions in furthering both continuity and change
- Shows how groups and institutions work to meet individual needs and promote the common good, and can identify examples of where they fail to do so

Leadership and Governance

Members of a just society have rights and responsibilities

- Examines the rights and responsibilities of the individual in relation to his or her social group, such as family, peer group, and school class
- Explains the purpose of government
- Gives examples of how government does or does not provide for the needs and wants of people, establish order and security, and manage conflict
- Recognizes how groups and organizations encourage unity and deal with diversity to maintain order and security
- Distinguishes among local, state, and national government and can identify representative leaders at these levels such as mayor, governor, and president
- Can identify and describe factors that contribute to cooperation and cause disputes within and among groups and nations
- Explores the role of technology in communications, transportation, information processing, weapons development, or other areas as it contributes to or helps resolve conflicts
- Recognizes and gives examples of the tensions between the wants and needs of individuals and groups, and concepts such as fairness, equity, and justice

Production, Distribution and Consumption

People organize for the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services

- Gives examples that show how scarcity and choice govern our economic decisions
- Distinguishes between needs and wants
- Can identify examples of the various institutions that make up economic systems such as families, workers, banks, labor unions, government agencies, small business, and large corporations
- Describes how we depend upon workers with specialized jobs and explores the ways in which they contribute to the production of goods and services
- Describes the influence of incentives, values, traditions, and habits on economic decisions
- Explains and demonstrates the role of money in every-day life
- Uses economic concepts such as supply, demand, and price to help explain events in the community and nation

Concepts

Science, Technology and Society

Relationships exist among science, technology and society

Global Connections

Human beings are part of the global community.

Civic Ideals and Practices

Members of ideal communities have principles and practices which foster peace.

Skills and Processes

- Can apply knowledge of economic concepts in developing a response to a current local economic issue, such as how to reduce the flow of trash into a rapidly filling landfill
- Explores examples in which science and technology have changed the lives of people, such as care of the home, childcare, work, transportation, and communication
- Explores examples in which science and technology have led to changes in the physical environment, such as the building of dams and levees, offshore oil drilling, medicine from rain forests, and loss of rain forests due to extraction of resources or alternative uses
- Explores instances in which changes in values, beliefs, and attitudes have resulted from new scientific and technological knowledge, such as conservation of resources and awareness of chemicals harmful to life and the environment
- Explores examples of laws and policies that govern scientific and technological applications, such as the Endangered Species Act and environmental protection policies
- Suggests ways to monitor science and technology in order to protect the physical environment, individual rights, and the common good
- Explores ways that language, art, music, belief systems, and other cultural elements may facilitate global understanding or misunderstanding
- Gives examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among individuals, groups, and nations
- Examines the effects of changing technologies on the global community
- Explores causes, consequences, and possible solutions to persistent, contemporary, and emerging global issues, such as pollution and endangered species
- Examines the relationships and tensions between personal wants and needs and various global concerns, such as environmental protection
- Investigates concerns, issues, standards, and conflicts related to universal human rights
- Can identify key ideals such as individual human dignity, liberty, justice and equality and discuss their application in specific situations
- Can identify examples of rights and responsibilities of citizens in our community and classroom
- Can apply information about an issue of public concern from multiple points of view
- Can identify and practice selected forms of discussion and participation consistent with the ideals of citizens in a community or a classroom
- Recognizes that a variety of formal and informal actions influence and shape public policy
- Examines the influence of public opinion on personal

Concepts

Skills and Processes

decision-making and government policy on public issues

- Explains how public policies and citizen behaviors may or may not reflect the stated ideals of a community or a classroom
- Describes how public policies are used to address issues of public concern
- Recognizes and interprets how the “common good” can be strengthened through various forms of citizen action