Powerful Social Studies Instructional Practices

Teacher Behaviors	Student Behaviors	Artifacts

1. An inquiry-focused summative task engages students in completing a standards-based, text-dependent and content-specific product.

The teacher:	The students:	Classroom resources:
• Develops compelling and supporting questions that align with a grade-level subject's theme or content • Designs engaging summative and formative performance tasks and alternative products that directly support the mastery of state content and inquiry standards and encompass the 10 thematic strands of social studies[i] • Chooses grade-level or higher disciplinary sources that contain the content or concepts students need to answer guiding or supporting questions and complete performance tasks • Gives students "voice and choice" in developing compelling and supporting questions, as appropriate • Designs standards-aligned scoring rubrics and allows student input, as appropriate, to develop appropriate criteria	• Develop compelling and supporting questions as a foundation for the inquiry process • Can explain the purpose of assignments and the steps they need to take to complete them successfully • Can connect related assignments and products to social studies themes • Find appropriate and relevant sources when conducting independent research or when responding to a task	• Include alternative products that allow students flexibility when demonstrating their understanding on performance tasks • Explain summative performance tasks and offer criteria for assessing the quality of students' work • Include disciplinary sources that students can use to complete tasks. These may include print, oral and digital primary and secondary texts, written transcripts, letters, political cartoons, photographs, audio recordings, prints, maps, statistics, graphs, charts, paintings, sculptures, etc. • Include introductory, engaging lesson plans that stage compelling questions and spark students' interest and curiosity

2. The lesson plan sequence supports or scaffolds learning, enabling students to deepen their understanding and apply disciplinary tools and concepts.

The teacher:	The students:	Instructional plans:
• Plans a series of lessons that develop students' knowledge, disciplinary skills and ability to complete performance tasks • Provides varied opportunities for students to engage with disciplinary tools and concepts[ii] • Selects educational tools that support learning • Strategically selects and teaches the disciplinary skills and literacy strategies needed for students to read, interpret and find evidence from sources to complete written tasks	• Make connections to other disciplines or previous knowledge • Use inquiry skills[iii] to develop questions and engage with disciplinary tools and sources as part of the learning cycle • Use educational tools to collect and organize new concepts • Work individually and collaboratively, using literacy strategies and inquiry skills, to read and interpret grade-level texts and sources and complete assignments	• Outline the sequence of instruction to support concept development and retention • Include scaffolding outlines that connect prior learning targets within the unit • Incorporate educational tools, such as graphic organizers, note-taking formats and digital learning tools, like interactive whiteboards, mapping technology and educational technology applications (e.g., Kahoot!, Nearpod, Flipgrid, Quizizz)[†]

† SREB does not endorse specific technology tools or vendors.

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3. Clear, measurable learning targets are continuously communicated to students and serve as the foundation for formative assessments and related feedback.

The teacher:
- Posts, explains and refers to the daily lesson's learning targets
- Links the lesson's learning target with the formative or summative performance task and state inquiry and content standards
- Uses frequent checks for understanding to monitor students' skills and content knowledge and adjusts instruction accordingly
- Provides appropriate, descriptive feedback on daily lessons, assignments and formative and summative performance tasks

The students:
- Can summarize the learning target and explain how it relates to the summative assignment or performance task
- Use evidence from sources to demonstrate their learning in varied ways
- Self-assess their work using standards-aligned criteria, reflect on their progress and determine next steps
- Revise their work based on feedback from peers and the teacher

Classroom artifacts:
- Include posted student-friendly learning targets relating to the specific lesson being taught
- Show evidence that completed formative assessments include descriptive student and/or teacher feedback
- Demonstrate how students revise their work based on peer or teacher feedback
- Include student reflection logs

4. Engaging learning strategies enable students to use disciplinary and interdisciplinary sources to develop questions, evaluate sources and gather evidence.

The teacher:
- Chooses literacy and inquiry strategies and disciplinary tools that scaffold reading, writing, speaking, listening and thinking skills related to the mastery of content and concepts
- Communicates the purpose for the learning strategy and how it relates to learning targets and performance tasks
- Selects grade-level or higher print, oral and digital resources that allow students to interact with interdisciplinary resources from both the humanities and the fine arts

The students:
- Work together and independently to practice reading, writing and inquiry strategies
- Develop additional guiding or supporting questions to understand and investigate disciplinary or interdisciplinary sources
- Use strategies to collect, organize, evaluate and write about important sources, content and concepts

Classroom artifacts:
- Include disciplinary sources that students can use to complete assignments and performance tasks, such as print, oral and digital primary and secondary texts, written transcripts, letters, political cartoons, photographs, audio recordings, prints, maps, statistics, graphs, charts, paintings, sculptures, etc.
- Include focused guiding questions developed by students
- Include student products related to the use of specific learning strategies, such as graphic organizers, marked-up texts, brainstorming notes, etc.

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5. Civil discourse helps students deepen their understanding of content and analyze various viewpoints and beliefs to problem-solve and take informed action.		
The teacher:	**The students:**	**Classroom discussions:**
• Strategically creates opportunities for students to discuss, debate or summarize their understanding of content and concepts	• Ask each other questions and actively listen to deepen their understanding of the content and concepts they are examining and the different perspectives of their peers	• Are based on sources, relate to summative performance tasks and include structures and techniques like student-led discussions, debates, Socratic seminars, fishbowls, etc.
• Embeds structures in classroom discussions that help students interact with sources and draw informed conclusions	• Examine different sides of an issue, as appropriate	• Include evidence of multiple perspectives during student discussions and in written products
• Creates a safe environment for students to ask questions and collaborate appropriately in a discussion and takes active steps to involve all students in active listening and speaking	• Engage in collaborative learning by assuming different individual roles and taking accountability for each other's learning	• Are supported by classroom resources that directly communicate expectations for behavior (e.g., referenced classroom norms, question starters, agree or disagree statement starters, discussion anchor charts, etc.)
• Understands regional, state and national biases and viewpoints on privilege as related to the social studies theme or concept	• Hold discussions using techniques like the Four As (already know, agree, argue, analyze), talk moves or accountable talk sentence frames, provocative prompts, final word, etc. [iv]	
	• Understand personal bias and privilege so they can understand and relate to others	
6. Interdisciplinary connections inspire student effort by making learning relevant across places, cultures, history and systems.		
The teacher:	**The students:**	**Assignments:**
• Creates opportunities for students to explore connections that prepare them for civic life	• Analyze and express the connections they make across places, cultures, history and systems [v]	• Include place-based, project-based or service-learning projects and products
• Uses the community as a setting for student learning, as appropriate	• Identify and build their knowledge and understanding of the characteristics and causes of local, regional or global problems	• Showcase students' ability to apply their research and decision-making skills to take informed action and promote the well-being of their community, their classroom or their school
• Identifies local civic or business examples to support learning or reinforce concepts	• Evaluate multiple perspectives about issues as well as the opportunities they have to take informed action	
• Highlights current events or news sources to engage students with civic issues	• Determine potential actions to address problems and decide if or how to take informed action	
• Provides opportunities for students to apply social studies knowledge and concepts across places, cultures, history and systems		

i   National Council for the Social Studies. (2010). Chapter 2: The themes of social studies. *National curriculum standards for the social studies*. Silver Spring, MD: Author.

ii National Council for the Social Studies. (2013). *College, career and civic life (C3) framework for social studies standards*. Silver Spring, MD: Author.

iii NCSS, 2013.

iv Burdick, D. (2011). *Small group discussion protocols: 20 examples*. Beverly, MA: Center for Teaching Excellence. Teaching & Learning Lab. (2017). *Discussion protocols*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Graduate School of Education.

v   NCSS, 2010.

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Powerful Social Studies Instructional Practices Model

Interdisciplinary Connections

Summative Task

Lesson Plan Sequence

Measurable Learning Targets

Engaging Strategies

Civil Discourse