

New BC Curriculum: Rebuilding a Social Studies 8 Outline

Current Social Studies 8		
Skills & Processes - varied, applied in context and applicable across most of the content, and similar from grade to grade while expanding in scope. Examples include critical thinking, interpretation of primary and secondary evidence, research and inquiry techniques, representation (multiple forms), presentation (multiple forms), assess and defend positions, assess bias and accuracy, practice active citizenship, individual and group problem-solving. These remain important as they evolve into competencies, and continue to be embedded with big ideas, course themes, content and contexts.	Competencies Ministry curriculum site has many examples of how these interplay with content.	
What's in the News - Current Events. present day controversies, conflicts and interesting, relevant stories. Stuff students come up with. Random storytelling about history, geography, society, identity, law, culture, heritage, politics, disasters, etc. Critical and creative thinking activities not tied to specific content.	continues in one form or another	
Topic Areas	change	context
Global geography, map skills, latitude, longitude, direction, scale, specific geographic studies related to relevant locations and historic times and places, e.g. ocean currents, desert landforms	ENVI	HEP
Chinese culture, changes, dynasties from the Sui (581 CE) or Tang (618 CE) onwards to Qing (1644) or beyond: culture, power, accomplishments, legacy	CULT, SOCI, POLI, TECH, ECON, GEOG, IDEA (all)	COL, TRA, HEP, WOR, CLA
Early Civilizations - India after Muslim presence 643 onwards, perhaps to the Mughal Empire: religion, power and regional conflict, culture, changes to environment		
Arab World, Birth 610 CE, spread, and Golden Age of Islam 750-1258, Umayyad, invading Spain, Abbasid, Ottoman eras, science, trade, geography, politics, etc.		
Early Middle Ages in Europe from last Merovingians (after Clovis) or Carolingians 754 on; the story and role of Vikings, resurgence of Latin West, Norman Invasion		
High and Late Middle Ages - feudalism, role of religion, Norman conquest, power, identity, Crusades, trade, plagues, guilds, technology, warfare, change		
Medieval Japan, introduction Buddhism 538, Nara & Heian periods 710-1192, feudalism, bushido, Mongol invasions, later shogunates, contact and isolation		
African Empires empires, trade, war, geography - many choices, e.g. Ghana, Great Zimbabwe, Benin, Songhai, etc.	CULT, ECON, GEOG	TRA, HEP, CLA
Central and South American civilizations, usually later ones such as Inca and Aztec, adaptations to environment, expressions of culture	CULT	HEP
Maps and Geography of Europe (and/or the World), Capes and bays, cities, mountains, rivers, countries - setting the stage for various events	GEOG	HEP
Italian Renaissance, physical and human factors, art & culture, trade, wealth, humanism, social change, Northern Renaissance, printing press, Science	CULT, SOCI, TECH, ECON, IDEA	TRA, HEP
Reformation and Counter-Reformation, conditions for emergence of nation-states, reaction to scientific discoveries, use of religion for colonization	CULT, POLI, TECH, IDEA	CLA
Age of Exploration - reasons, technology, results, etc. Portuguese, British, French, Dutch, Spanish, mapping the globe, conquest of the Americas	TECH	EXP, CON, COL, HEP, WOR, CLA
Conditions in England 1600s-1700s, Farming, Enclosure Movement, the Agricultural Revolution, comparison to other Agrarian revolutions, Cottage industries	ECON, GEOG	TRA, HEP
Enlightenment Philosophy re: gov't, rights & responsibilities of individuals, kings, nations, views of human nature	POLI, IDEA	WOR
Divine Right of Kings, English Civil War, Glorious Revolution, Bill of Rights, types of power, representation, and government	POLI	CLA
Aboriginal Peoples of Canada/North America: origins, distribution, characteristics, adaptations (shelter, food, culture), ways of knowing, human-environment dynamic, legacy & continuity	CULT, SOCI, POLI, TECH, ECON, GEOG (all)	COL, TRA, HEP, WOR, CLA
Early European Exploration of Canada (North America) Vikings (c. 1000), others c. 1490s-1500s including Cabot and Cartier, Newfoundland fishing camps, attempt to establish St. Croix	CULT, POLI, ECON, GEOG	CON, COL, TRA, HEP, CLA
Champlain, settlement of New France 1600-1670s, French Fur Trade & explorers, relations between French, British, First Nations	CULT, ECON, GEOG	EXP, CON, COL, TRA, WOR
Radisson and Groseilliers, Rupert's Land, rivers and drainage basins, British fur trade, HBC 1670-1700s (Stay by the Bay period), early Arctic exploration: Frobisher, Davis, Hudson, etc.	TECH, ECON, GEOG	EXP, TRA, HEP
Royal Colony of New France 1663-1754: roles (e.g. Gov/Bishop/Intendant), institutions (e.g. church), and impact on landscape (e.g. seigneuries), struggles, changes to fur trade, life for habitants, filles du roi, coureur de bois, etc.	CULT, SOCI, POLI, ECON, GEOG	EXP, CON, COL, TRA, HEP

Notes: one of the challenges with the new Social Studies 8 is to find a way to make the Big Ideas useful as course organizers, or at least to make them clear enough to be useful as a way of explaining what the course is about. There is also the possibility that the Big Ideas and Competencies are too complicated for students to deal with directly without some distillation. The chart on the left shows old familiar topics from SS8 and SS9 that now fall under the historical bookends for the new SS8 (7th Century CE - 1750). One could build a course outline for SS8 starting here, or one could start with the new curriculum document itself and set aside what was done in the past until these topics become justified within the new course and competencies (as many of them will). The business on the right is just one example of how a new SS8 course outline might emerge. It uses a timeline as a structure to learn about themes and work on competencies (as opposed to using a series of themes). The intention is to embed "Geography" throughout rather than feature a stand-alone unit on geo skills. The next step might be to develop fresh focus questions for each of the topics (the 2012 edition of "Pathways: Civilizations Through Time" uses focus questions throughout - a good place to start). One might also discard old specific content for new specific content that shows itself to be useful with the competencies. The goal of the course should be for students to learn that the development of global cultures and civilizations is not random, it is a function of relationships: geographic, economic, ecological, technological, cultural, social, military, and so on, and indeed for students to learn how to recognize these relationships when they are embedded in various forms of evidence. From here, it is a natural extension for students to see that their own lives, too, are guided by many of these same relationships, some of which they can even change! There is an essential question about identity lurking in the Social Studies 8 curriculum.

SS8 Competencies (edited):
1. Conduct effective inquiry and research
2. When faced with different kinds of geographic or social data, and evidence or perspectives about historical content or currents events, be able to determine the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> what is significant, where are the turning points? what makes a source credible and adequate? what's the social context (influence of society)? is there a right and wrong and so what?

SS8 Big Ideas (published)
Contacts and conflicts between peoples stimulated significant cultural, social, political change.
Human and environmental factors shape changes in population and living standards.
Exploration, expansion, and colonization had varying consequences for different groups.
Changing ideas about the world created tension between people wanting to adopt new ideas and those wanting to preserve established traditions.

distill big ideas into useful course organizers or themes

SS8 Course Themes (interpreted)
Different kinds of changes and consequences (relationships): cultural, social, political, technological, economic, geographical, ideological
codes: CULT, SOCI, POLI, TECH, GEOG, ENVI, IDEA
Different kinds of contexts: exploration, contact, colonization, trade, human-environment processes, worldview, conflicts (clashes)
codes: EXP, CON, COL, TRA, HEP, WOR, CLA

Find the new themes in the old content: are they there? Do they make sense as a way to navigate content or use content to develop competencies?

Realign content to allow the themes to be developed and competencies to be practiced - some by direct instruction and class lessons, some by student discovery and project work. Maybe spend some time near the end to deconstruct the unit titles.

New Social Studies 8 Outline		
UNIT 1 The Rise, Fall, and Rise Again of Global Civilizations		
Japan (focus on "medieval" period) use as case study to "do some geography," introduce & practice competencies, and introduce the relationships that affect the development of civilizations (cultural, social, political, technological, economic, geographical, ideological)	some direct instruction for each civilization and critical thinking prompts related to the relationships that affect their development, followed by project work (PBL)	6*
China		2
India		2
Islamic World		2
Africa		2
Central and South America		2
Time for current events, project work, extra lab time, review, assessment. Project: integrated project-based learning around a driving question and a chosen civilization		10
UNIT 2 Darkness & Light in Europe: Middle Ages to the Enlightenment		
The Middle Ages: feudalism, religion, crusades, trade, vikings, etc.		10
Reformation and Renaissance		10
Agricultural Revolution, Enclosure, Cottage Industries		2
Enlightenment: directions in philosophy, incl. divine right of kings		3
Time for current events, project work, extra lab time, review, assessment. Project: historical fiction, castle defense, decoding a work of renaissance art, 3D printed printing press, role-plays and simulations (guild, village, hierarchy, etc.)... so many others!		6
UNIT 3 The "Grand" Exchange: Old World / New World		
The Age of Exploration: global expansion, colonization, and exchange		7
Aboriginal Peoples of North America: ethnology and appreciation		7
European exploration of North America, contact, early claims on Canada, and comparison of worldviews		6
Time for current events, project work, extra lab time, review, assessment. Project: explorer's map and journal, building "contact" exhibits from both sides, First Nations chart, role-plays and simulations (re: contact, life aboard a ship, etc.)		6
UNIT 4 The Roots of Canada, or it that Les Racines?		
Forts and Furs: the early attempts at colonization		5
New France and Acadia: making a mark on the land		8
Time for current events, project work, extra lab time, review, assessment. Project:		4

* Hours of instruction - typical course design based on 100 hours