

South Carolina Department of Education Social Studies Inquiry Unit Guide

The goal of the Office of Standards and Learning is offering educators a suggested set of inquiry units, designed by educators, that represents classrooms from around the state. The inquiry units are accessible to assist educators in creating their daily lesson plans for inquiry and skills-based instruction to support the [*2019 South Carolina Social Studies College - and Career-Ready Standards*](#). The development of these units is the work of these educators with the intent of continuous revisions based on classroom application.

The development of these documents was facilitated by the Division of College and Career Readiness through the Office of Standards and Learning under the direction of David Mathis, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent, Division of College and Career Readiness; Anne M. Pressley, Ph.D. Director, Office of Standards and Learning; and Dawn Hawkins, Ed.D., Team Lead, Office of Standards and Learning.

The following South Carolina Department of Education staff members assisted in the design and development of these documents:

Stephen P. Corsini
K-12 Social Studies Education Associate
Office of Standards and Learning

Kellyn Finley
Unit Development Consultant

Christopher M. Turpin, Ed.D.
K-12 Social Studies Education Associate
Office of Standards and Learning

The following educators from South Carolina school districts were the main authors of the primary (K-2) instructional units:

Kelli Bellant
Clarendon School District 2

Jamee Childs
Lexington County School District One

Saudah Collins

Richland School District Two

Tammy Igo
Darlington County School District

Albert Robertson
Lexington County School District One

*All units are created to support the **Overarching Inquiry Question**. Inquiry-Based Learning supports the **Profile of the South Carolina Graduate** where students use skills to explore their inquiries related to the content as indicated in the standards instead of the teacher merely providing the information. The unit sequence follows a progression to scaffold student thinking. Guiding questions are provided to help students answer the Overarching Inquiry Question. The suggested inquiry activities may take multiple class sessions, or could span an entire year. Do not feel that each lesson sequence should be completed in one class period.*

There are several options as you embark on the social studies journey through civics and government, history, geography, and economics in the primary grades. Some of the practices and routines to consider as you work to set up your classroom for the year are highlighted for each grade. There are several great ways to help your students with concepts and skills of social studies all year long.

Primary Inquiry Instructional Units
<p><i>Kindergarten - The Community Around Us</i></p> <p>The first unit in social studies, civics and government, begins with establishing norms and routines. You will construct several anchor charts with your students throughout this unit. You will want to keep these up as you establish routines and reorient your students to these after breaks, etc. At first glance this unit seems lengthy, but there are many ideas to help you set up classroom rules and procedures using social studies, particularly in the first portion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider integrating your school’s “civic dispositions” (some call them leadership traits, etc.) into your classroom routines. Compassion (Concern for others), Cooperation (Working together and working through disagreements), Empathy (To understand how someone else is feeling), Honesty (Being truthful with yourself and to others) and Respect (Treating yourself, others, and all things with kindness). What does it mean to be a good listener, a respectful classmate, or a good student? ● Create a “Civic Dispositions Wall” on which you put students’ names, book characters’ names, and names of people in the news, etc. Similar to a word wall, a Civic Dispositions Wall will help your students track examples of people who have these characteristics. ● Allow students to help come up with classroom rules that are fair for everyone, and create a classroom management system that celebrates students who uphold those rules, stand up for one another, and exemplify good citizenship. ● Brainstorm with your teammates some excellent examples of experts who may be able to come and share with students how they use civic dispositions in their own jobs.

Primary Inquiry Instructional Units

The second unit in social studies is history. A major focus in this unit is the use of evidence.

- Track student growth throughout the year through pictures and artifacts. This will be useful when you arrive at the history unit. Pictures from the first day of school, for example, can be useful when they begin looking at how they change and stay the same over time, compare themselves to others, etc.
- Setting up displays and routines for your class to measure student growth (a growth chart, a “teeth lost” bulletin board, etc.) will also help students to see how they change and stay the same over time.

The third unit in social studies is geography.

- Create a “center” or a bin in your reading center dedicated solely to maps. Maps of the local zoo, your town, the mall, the school, etc. can be very helpful as students begin learning about the basics of geography. Point out that there is a fire-escape map in the classroom, and be intentional to make connections when you map the setting of a book, when you go on a field trip, etc. Consider simply showing students, at the outset, what Google Earth is and having a station simply for exploring places in Google Earth. There are many possibilities with this digital resource.
- Another key part of this unit is looking at human-made versus natural features. Begin priming students to recognize the human-made features are items made by people and natural features are items found in nature.

The fourth unit in social studies is economics.

- Consider beginning a classroom-based economy in which you tie your classroom management style in with a system of rewards for students and options for them to “purchase” using the classroom money.
- Needs and wants are the focus of the economics unit. This concept can be difficult for students. Reminding students to think about this as they go through the line in the cafeteria, as they make choices inside and outside of the classroom, etc. will help when you get to this unit.
- Another component of this unit involves tracking products over time. Perhaps you consider making a classroom purchase (a new habitat for the classroom pet, new furniture for a center, a new book for the classroom library, etc.). Have students take part in looking at prices from various companies and tracking the price over time to see how it changes. Consider looking for similar products in different geographic locations.

Unit Number and Title	Overarching Inquiry Question	Unit Overview
<u><i>Unit 1 - Civics and Government</i></u> <u><i>“We are citizens of our classroom, school, and community”</i></u>	How can we overcome our differences in order to make a difference in my classroom, school, and community?	As students explore similarities and differences between themselves and their classmates, traits unique to each student will emerge. With those diversities present in their classroom, and through classroom practices and routines developed by the teacher, students will begin practicing civic dispositions to identify and solve problems.
<u><i>Unit 2 - History</i></u> <u><i>“We are Similar, We are Unique”</i></u>	How am I an important part of my school and my community?	Historical inquiry begins in kindergarten by prompting students to inquire about the differences and similarities between themselves and others. These differences and similarities can then be explored over various periods of time, allowing for continuities and changes to be examined. In an effort to act as young historians, Kindergarten students will begin to use various sources as evidence about themselves and their community to support various claims.
<u><i>Unit 3 - Geography</i></u> <u><i>“Where We Live is Special”</i></u>	How do the human-made and natural features of our community make it special?	Geographic literacy begins with inquiring about the purpose of maps and beginning to recognize how the parts of maps are used to gain information about topics being explored. Using a variety of maps can allow students to inquire about different human-made and natural features people have access to in their communities. Students will explore how communities have features unique to them.
<u><i>Unit 4 - Economics</i></u> <u><i>“Our Choices Matter”</i></u>	How does our community help to provide our needs and wants?	All of us have needs and wants that may vary from person to person. These needs and wants will change for different reasons, at different points in time. By exploring personal needs and wants, the differences between them, and the means for acquiring them, students will explore how these decisions affect the community and their everyday choices as they work to identify a want or need at their school or in their community and propose a solution to meet it.

Grade 1 - Life in South Carolina

The first unit in social studies, civics and government, students will engage in an inquiry around the question, “How can we overcome our differences in order to make a difference in South Carolina?” This unit begins with a focus on civic dispositions demonstrated by the students and others, including notable South Carolinians. By the end of the unit, the students will utilize those civic dispositions to identify a local or state issue and develop a plan to resolve it.

- Consider integrating your school’s “civic dispositions” (some call them leadership traits, etc.) into your classroom routines. Compassion (Concern for others), Cooperation (Working together and working through disagreements), Empathy (To understand how someone else is feeling), Honesty (Being truthful with yourself and to others) and Respect (Treating yourself, others, and all things with kindness). What does it mean to be a good listener, a respectful classmate, or a good student?
- Create a “Civic Dispositions Wall” on which you put students’ names, book characters’ names, and names of people in the news, etc. Similar to a word wall, a Civic Dispositions Wall will help your students track examples of people who have these characteristics. Include South Carolinians, past and present. Update and revisit this wall throughout the year.
- As students investigate civil responsibilities, consider working closely with your grade level team to identify and invite local or state representatives.
- Throughout the unit, have the students document various issues that impact South Carolina. During the conclusion of this part of the inquiry, students will select an issue and develop a plan for addressing the issue.

The second unit in social studies is history and focuses on utilizing evidence to engage in historical inquiry. The focus of this inquiry is, “How has our state changed and stayed the same over time?”

- Create a collection of materials (art, maps, brochures, images, newspaper or magazine articles, news stories, oral histories, etc.) from communities throughout South Carolina that illuminate change over time. This may take some time. So, begin curating this collection as early in the school year as possible. Ask colleagues and families to contribute.
- Consider having a space in your classroom dedicated to current events that you and your students find particularly interesting. Consider having a space in your classroom dedicated to current events that you and your students find particularly interesting. Read the news and discuss South Carolina current events reports throughout the year. Identify multiple credible sources to examine the same events. Discuss how those events may impact the future.
- It is often difficult to find news that is written on a first grade reading level. The teacher should discern when it is necessary to read aloud, close read, or even rewrite news articles to help the students comprehend. Be intentional to seek out articles about students who do service projects throughout our state. This ties in well with the Civics and Government unit as well as the Economics unit.

The third unit in social studies is geography and focuses on the question, “How do human and physical features make South

Carolina's communities unique?"

- Have a large, blank map of South Carolina ready to display and use during this unit. Locate a globe to have available for use by the class.
- Create multiple text sets of maps for use throughout this entire inquiry, Map Baskets, similar to Book Baskets to include in your classroom library. You will need several baskets of maps to use for small group and partner work in addition to the map basket that is in your classroom library. Include paper maps from travels, atlases, local venues, the solar system, topography, a globe, etc. Also include maps of various shapes (oval shaped world (Robinson Projection), for example, on a flat map). Maps can often be obtained free of charge from local venues and rest areas. The Chamber of Commerce in your area should be a first stop.

The fourth unit in social studies is economics and investigates the question, "What goods or services are available to our school, community, and state?"

- Consider beginning a classroom-based economy in which you tie your classroom management style in with a system of rewards for students and options for them to "purchase" using the classroom money.
- Local manufacturers, business owners, and service providers (government and private business) make great contributions to our state! Invite them to visit the classroom to talk about the goods and services that they provide to the state. Begin calling these community members as early in the school year as possible. Ask colleagues and families to provide ideas and possible contacts.
- Field trip/field studies to entities that manufacture goods and provide services are a great way to make connections to authentic learning experiences.

Unit Number and Title	Overarching Inquiry Question	Unit Overview
<p><u><i>Unit 1 - Civics and Government</i></u> <u><i>“We are Citizens of South Carolina”</i></u></p>	<p>How can we overcome our differences in order to make a difference in South Carolina?</p>	<p>South Carolina’s population is diverse when considering such attributes as age, ethnicity, family, gender, religion, and socioeconomics. Because of this diversity, civic dispositions are essential in governmental operations and day to day interactions between various groups. In this unit, students will be exploring local and state governments as well as determining their functions. Students should identify that different leaders exist at local and state governments and that each has a set of rules and laws that govern them. Governments at different levels support one another in order to make positive change in our communities and across our state.</p>
<p><u><i>Unit 2 - History</i></u> <u><i>“South Carolina Then and Now”</i></u></p>	<p>How has our state changed and stayed the same over time?</p>	<p>The similarities and differences within South Carolina, and the exploration of associated patterns between them, allow students to develop the foundational understanding that history involves continuities and changes in people from all backgrounds, and that patterns of history develop over time.</p>
<p><u><i>Unit 3 - Geography</i></u> <u><i>“South Carolina, Our Unique State”</i></u></p>	<p>How do human and physical features make South Carolina’s communities unique?</p>	<p>Knowing where South Carolina is located, identifying key physical and human features in our state using a variety of primary and secondary sources, and understanding the different types of communities (rural, urban, and suburban) in South Carolina is essential for responsible citizenship. In this unit, students will explore the advantages and disadvantages of living and working in each type of community in our state, while also examining the beautiful features and places that make South Carolina a unique and wonderful place.</p>

<p><u>Unit 4 - Economics</u> <u>“Goods and Services in South Carolina”</u></p>	<p>What goods or services are available to our school, community, and state?</p>	<p>Building off what students learned about needs and wants in Kindergarten, first grade students are now ready to explore how goods and services meet those needs and wants. By inquiring about goods and services in the school, the community, and South Carolina, students will identify goods as items for purchase and services as actions that benefit others. Civic dispositions are integrated into the identification of economic wants or needs and collaborating on possibilities to create a good or service to meet them.</p>
<p><i>Grade 2 - Life in the United States</i></p>		
<p>The first unit in social studies is civics and government and investigates the question, “How can we overcome our differences in order to make a difference in our nation?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before your year begins, examine the cultural and ethnic groups represented in your classroom. Consider the texts in your classroom library to ensure that students are represented and, if not, add in texts that include characters representative of your students’ backgrounds. Even if you are teaching in an area with more of a homogenous population, make sure to expose students to texts that explore the cultural contributions of the following major US groups (European Americans, Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans/ Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans/ Alaskan Natives. A number of book titles are found in the instructional guidance and resources section throughout this unit. • Consider integrating your school’s “civic dispositions” (some call them leadership traits, etc.) into your classroom routines. Compassion (Concern for others), Cooperation (Working together and working through disagreements), Empathy (To understand how someone else is feeling), Honesty (Being truthful with yourself and to others) and Respect (Treating yourself, others, and all things with kindness). What does it mean to be a good listener, a respectful classmate, or a good student? • Create a “Civic Dispositions Wall” on which you put students’ names, book characters’ names, and names of people in the news, etc. Similar to a word wall, a Civic Dispositions Wall will help your students track examples of people who have these characteristics. • Create a class “Constitution” for the year with your students when you are creating rules. It would also be helpful to put up a poster of the US Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Bill of Rights, as you will be referring to these at certain points in this unit. 		

- Curate texts about the historical figures students will research in this unit. This is a heavy lift, but it will pay off once the year starts.

The second unit in social studies is history and investigates the question, “How has America changed and stayed the same over time?” A major focus in this unit is the use of evidence.

- It would be beneficial for the teacher to create an interactive timeline (put this up like a number line around your classroom and add events, people, observances, dates related to US symbols, etc. throughout the unit) so that students build a foundation of chronology.
- The teacher will need to curate a source set about themselves. This set could include photos, copies of diplomas, certificates, etc. These are primary sources that you will use to have the students glean an idea about your life. It may be helpful to create a timeline that students can use to help them “paint a picture” of your life. You will want to be sure to include some bogus sources so that students begin to discern validity of sources.
- The unit plan suggests the topic of COVID-19 as the topic for an inquiry into a current event and the Civil Rights Movement for a historical event. The teacher has freedom to choose any current or historical event for the respective parts of the unit. Just ensure that the topic is broad enough so that students can adequately engage in an inquiry around the topic of choice.

The third unit in social studies is geography and investigates the question, “How do human features, physical features, and natural resources make the United States unique?”

- Have a large, blank map of the United States ready to display and use during this unit. This can be drawn and displayed on a bulletin board or open wall. Locate a globe to have available for use by the class.
- Create an area or a bin in your reading center dedicated solely to maps. Maps of the local zoo, your town, the mall, the school, etc. can be very helpful as students begin learning about the basics of geography. Point out that there is a fire-escape map in the classroom, and be intentional to make connections when you map the setting of a book, when you go on a field trip, etc. Consider simply showing students, at the outset, what Google Earth is and having a station simply for exploring places in Google Earth. There are many possibilities with this digital resource.
- Another key part of this unit is looking at human-made versus natural features. Begin priming students to recognize the human-made features are items made by people and natural features are items found in nature.

The fourth unit in social studies is economics and investigates the question, “What choices do we make with our money?”

- Consider establishing a classroom economy [perhaps at the beginning of the school year as you are setting up classroom routines and procedures]. This would be a great opportunity to bring in the role of each classroom citizen (jobs and services provided) and determine the salary they will earn. Establish a system of expenses for students. For example, it will cost you \$1.00 to sharpen your pencil, or it will cost \$1.00 for extra iPad time. This will help develop the concept of needing to budget. This will also touch on opportunity cost.
- This unit is an opportunity for students to apply math standards in an authentic way. 2.MDA. 7 (money) & 10 (data

analysis) as well as 2.ATO.1 (solving real world problems) integrate well with topics addressed in this unit and are recommended to be addressed at the same time.

- Locally sourced goods from companies within the area, that are sold nationally or worldwide, make great connections to the study of economics. In the lesson sequence, a Darlington farm business is used to trace their items they sell from crop to finished product. Tracing a BMW car, Mercedes van, a Boeing airplane, etc. is an authentic connection to the topics addressed throughout this unit.

Unit Number and Title	Overarching Inquiry Question	Unit Overview
<p><u>Unit 1 - Civics and Government</u> <u>“E Pluribus Unum (Out of Many, One)”</u></p> <p><u>Appendix 1</u></p> <p><u>Appendix 2</u></p>	<p>How can we overcome our differences in order to make a difference in our nation?</p>	<p>Responsible citizenship, proper civic dispositions, and participation in government are some components needed for the continued success of our country. By exploring civic dispositions (i.e.: empathy, compassion, honesty, respect and cooperation) students can see how these support cooperation within a diverse society such as the United States. Our country’s basic rights build off these dispositions to create a society allowing various historic figures who epitomize these traits to positively affect our country. Ultimately, students should inquire to identify and propose solutions to problems at the national level.</p>
<p><u>Unit 2 - History</u> <u>“The United States: Then and Now”</u></p>	<p>How has America changed and stayed the same over time?</p>	<p>Various individuals and events have affected us and patterns emerge to enable us the ability to infer effects of different events. There are numerous historical events, figures, symbols, and observances that are important to the United States and many mean different things to different people in our diverse society. Making inquiries based on a variety of evidence provides a solid understanding of how and why places, people, and ideas in the United States have changed or stayed the same over time. It is also very important that students learn how to determine the validity of different forms of evidence. In the latter part of this unit students will be exposed to multiple historical events.</p>

<p><u>Unit 3 - Geography</u> <u>“From Sea to Shining Sea”</u></p>	<p>How do human features, physical features, and natural resources make the United States unique?</p>	<p>Knowing where we are in the world, the physical features that make America a beautiful nation and how landforms have shaped American life are important aspects. Human features reflect attitudes and beliefs that change over time. Inquiries into these activities and their relationship to resources help to prepare young learners for living in an increasingly interconnected world, dependent on resource availability.</p>
<p><u>Unit 4 - Economics</u> <u>“Economics and Personal Finance”</u></p>	<p>What choices do we make with our money?</p>	<p>Building on what students have learned in Kindergarten (needs and wants) and first grade (goods and services), second graders will develop financial literacy skills by creating and utilizing budgets. They will analyze components of budgeting for goods and services that meet their wants and needs.</p>