

Third Grade Social Studies Course Description: Community and Culture

In the third grade, students will explore the concept of community, learning about the development of cultures, systems of governance, how communities and cultures interconnect both locally and globally, and how the world around them has changed over time. Students will learn about individual rights and responsibilities as well as opportunities for active participation in the life of the community.

While the primary focus is on the local community, students will also learn more about the larger world. Geographic skills development will result from comparisons of local communities with communities both near and far. Students will learn more about the geography and richness of indigenous communities and their cultures both in the Americas and around the world.

Third graders should begin to use historical thinking skills and the interpretation of primary sources. Local resources, including newspapers and other primary sources could serve to further develop the awareness of the many parts of a community.

The most important goal: a well-lived life

Excitement, wonder, inquiry, delight, and puzzlement are central to meaningful learning in social studies. Social studies should be fun and intriguing for all students, and provide opportunities to make important life-long connections between the past, present, and future. Students who appreciate the sacrifices that have been made in the past and understand the challenges that lie ahead can make better decisions in the present.

A Note on Indicators and the Use of e.g. and i.e.

e.g. means *for example*, and therefore the examples are just that, examples to use when necessary

i.e. means *that is*, so when i.e. is used the words or concepts following the i.e. are considered essential aspects of the indicator, extensions of the idea that must be included when teaching that indicator

Third Grade Standard I: Students will understand how geography influences community location and development.

Benchmark: The geography of a community influences the cultural development of the humans who inhabit the community. There are relationships between climate, natural resources, and other geographic characteristics and a community's cultural development. The unique characteristics of an area influence where and how communities develop, their relative wealth and power, and how they adapt to changes.

Objective 1: Determine the relationships between human settlement and geography.

Indicators:

- a. Identify the geographic features common to areas where human settlements exist.
- b. Use map features to make logical inferences and describe relationships between human settlement and physical geography (*e.g.* population density in relation to latitude, cities' proximity to water, utilization of natural resources).
- c. Compare the shapes and purposes of natural and human-made boundaries of cities, counties and states.

Objective 2: Describe how various communities have adapted to existing environments and how other communities have modified the environment.

Indicators:

- a. Describe the major world ecosystems (*i.e.* desert, plain, tropic, tundra, grassland, mountain, forest, wetland).
- b. Identify important natural resources of world ecosystems.
- c. Describe how communities have modified the environment to accommodate their needs (*e.g.* logging, storing water, building transportation systems).
- d. Investigate ways different communities have adapted into an ecosystem.

Objective 3: Analyze ways cultures use, maintain, and preserve the physical environment.

Indicators:

- a. Identify ways people use the physical environment (*e.g.* agriculture, recreation, energy, industry).
- b. Compare changes in the availability and use of natural resources over time.
- c. Describe ways to conserve and protect natural resources (*e.g.* reduce, reuse, recycle).
- d. Compare perspectives of various communities toward the natural environment.
- e. Make inferences about the positive and negative impacts of human-caused change to the physical environment.

Social Studies language students should know and use:

latitude, longitude, compass rose, north, south, east, west, continents, ocean, key, equator, desert, plain, tropic, tundra, grassland, mountain, forest, wetland, natural resources, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover, economic development, community development, recreation, natural resource extraction, agriculture

Third Grade Standard II: Students will understand cultural factors that shape a community.

Benchmark: All people exist within cultures, or the way of life of a group of people. All human communities have cultural attributes. These attributes change over time in response to changes in the world around them. Indigenous cultures in North and South America demonstrate these attributes, and teachers are encouraged to select examples from these rich cultural traditions.

Objective 1: Evaluate key factors that determine how a community develops.

Indicators:

- a. Identify the elements of culture (*e.g.* language, religion, customs, artistic expression, systems of exchange).
- b. Describe how stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture.
- c. Compare elements of the local community with communities from different parts of the world (*e.g.* industry, economic specialization)
- d. Identify and explain the interrelationship of the environment (*e.g.* location, natural resources, climate) and community development (*e.g.* food, shelter, clothing, industries, markets, recreation, artistic creations).
- e. Examine changes in communities that can or have occurred when two or more cultures interact.
- f. Explain changes within communities caused by human inventions (*e.g.* steel plow, internal combustion engine, television, computer).

Objective 2: Explain how selected indigenous cultures of the Americas have changed over time.

Indicators:

- a. Describe and compare early indigenous people of the Americas (*e.g.* Eastern Woodlands, Plains, Great Basin, Southwestern, Arctic, Incan, Aztec, Mayan).
- b. Analyze how these cultures changed with the arrival of people from Europe, and how the cultures of the Europeans changed.
- c. Identify how indigenous people maintain cultural traditions today.

Social Studies language students should know and use:

indigenous cultures, American Indian, Eastern Woodlands, Plains, Great Basin, Southwestern, Arctic, language, religion, customs, artistic expression, Europe, economic specialization, exchange systems, markets

Third Grade Standard III: Students will understand the principles of civic responsibility in classroom, community, and country.

Benchmark: There are purposes and roles of representative government. People are elected in this nation to represent the views of other people. There are rights people have within this government. There are multiple functions and services of government. Community members have rights, and with those rights come responsibilities. For a community to function effectively, community members must understand and accept those responsibilities. Recognizing and considering the viewpoints of others is essential in a community.

Objective 1: Describe the rights and responsibilities inherent in being a contributing member of a community.

Indicators:

- a. Identify how these rights and responsibilities are reflected in the patriotic symbols and traditions of the United States (*i.e.* Pledge of Allegiance, flag etiquette).
- b. List the responsibilities community members have to one another.
- c. Identify why these responsibilities are important for a functioning community (e.g. voting, jury duty, taxpaying, obedience to laws).

Objective 2: Identify ways community needs are met by government.

Indicators:

- a. Differentiate between personal and community needs.
- b. Identify roles of representative government (*e.g.* make laws, maintain order, levy taxes, provide public services).
- c. Research community needs and the role government serves in meeting those needs.

Objective 3: Apply principles of civic responsibility.

Indicators:

- a. Engage in meaningful dialogue about the community and current events within the classroom, school, and local community.
- b. Identify and consider the diverse viewpoints of the people who comprise a community.
- c. Demonstrate respect for the opinions, backgrounds, and cultures of others.

Social Studies language students should know and use:

right, responsibility, symbol, tradition, patriotic, government, civic, respect