

JCPS Social Studies Overview for Elementary School Families

The North Carolina Standard Course of Study in Social Studies provides elementary students the opportunity to study history through the lenses of inquiry; behavioral sciences; civics and government; economics; and geography. As students develop cognitively, these disciplines become more focused based on the grade-level content and thinking skills. Classrooms are structured with highly collaborative activities that allow students to engage in conversations and study rich academic topics. Resources provide an opportunity for reading, writing, speaking, and listening through a variety of instructional strategies. Grade level summaries and links to get additional information are provided in the following three pages.

What will my elementary student(s) do in class?

All Grade Levels

In all elementary classrooms, we will use a textbook called *Into Reading* as part of our English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum. Social Studies will be integrated into ELA instruction through *Into Reading's* texts, activities, and inquiry projects. This blended instruction will allow students to build their reading, writing and speaking skills, as well as their knowledge of Social Studies concepts and the skills related to those concepts.

Each unit of study in *Into Reading* is called a module. Family Connect Letters will be sent home at the beginning of each module so that families can continue the study of what students will be learning in the classroom. These letters will outline the topics and themes that are covered in each module.

Kindergarten: *The World Around Us*

In Kindergarten, students will learn how they are connected to the world around them. Students will also have the opportunity to look for ways that they can be civic-minded and make change happen within their own classroom and school.

First Grade: *People, Places, and the Environment*

In first grade, students will learn more about how they are connected to the world around them. Students will become acquainted with diverse cultures and how values and beliefs help shape the communities in which we live. Students will further develop a sense of purpose regarding their role and the role of other citizens within the community and world.

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Second Grade: *America: Our Nation*

In second grade, the focus of learning will shift to learning about America and how it fits into the global community. Students will complete the second grade with an understanding that there are many factors that contribute to the development of our national identity.

Third Grade: *Our Community and State*

In third grade, students will focus on what exists around them and how they play a role in their community each and every day. Students will complete third grade with an understanding that there are many factors that contribute to the development of local communities and regions.

Fourth Grade: *North Carolina History*

In fourth grade, students will study North Carolina history from pre-colonial times through the present day. Students will examine North Carolina's economy, geography and historic events to prepare for their role as responsible and informed citizens.

Fifth Grade: *United States History*

In fifth grade, students will study the same time period as in fourth grade, but will transfer their understanding from the state to the national level. Students will examine change and continuity in United States history from pre-colonial times through the present day.

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What can I do to support my elementary student(s) with Social Studies?

Engage in conversations by asking probing questions about your child's learning experience related to the topic of focus in the classroom, such as:

- What new information did you learn about?
- What does this new learning remind you of?
- What do you wonder about?
- How can I help you find out more?
- What questions do you have?

Read your child's writing and work sent home or have your child read his/her writing or work aloud to you. Not only will you as a parent or guardian begin to understand your child's thinking, but you can also help your child clarify his/her own thinking by talking through the process with him/her.

Ask your child what he/she is doing for research around the topic.

Support your child with independent reading

- Encourage your child to go to the school's media center.
- Visit the public library.
- Make time and space for independent reading at home.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

Please reach out to your child's teacher with any questions you might have.

Resources from the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI)

[NCDPI Newly Approved K-12 Social Studies Standards](#)

[2021 Social Studies CROSSWALK Documents K-12](#)

[Approved 2021 Social Studies UNPACKING Documents K-12](#)