

Third Grade Standards: SOCIAL STUDIES

*Note: This information has been adapted from the 2020 Colorado State Standards as presented on the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) website. It is *not* an exhaustive or detailed list. All standards mentioned represent skills grade-level students should have mastered by the end of the grade-level year. If you desire further information, please visit the Standards page on the CDE website: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/standards>

This document provides tiered support in addressing the academic standards. Families can choose to approach their curriculum selection and content-area instruction in one or all of three categories: a general **Overview** of expectations and “social studies” behaviors, **Learning Objectives** (a “fly by” glance of concepts a student masters throughout the school year) and **Guiding Questions** and **Specific Skills** (expanded ideas to guide and explain the learning objectives). As you consider lesson planning for each grade level, use the “Overview” and “Learning Objectives” checklists to help you plan out your year. (Note that specific time periods/social studies content to cover is not explicitly stated (except for some guidelines pertaining to Colorado history). Therefore, we highly recommend using the Core Knowledge Sequence ([click here](#)) to help you in your planning.) Start with the end in mind: If my child needs to know how to _____ by the end of the school year, what learning activities can be implemented to introduce and then reinforce the concepts? Think next about smaller steps in learning that your child needs to master in order to reach that end goal. Also keep in mind that most objectives are not learned in isolation, meaning learning objectives are often combined. You don’t need to ensure your child has mastered learning objective #1 before moving on to the next. Combining two or more objectives in a week’s lesson plan can make for more creative and integrated learning. If you are using a reputable and research-based curriculum, then your child will most likely be working his/her way through these learning objectives in a well-paced and consistent manner. (A brief sampling of solid curriculum options can be found on the CSP website under “Homeschool Resources.”)

Overview

Expectations for 3rd Grade Students:

- **History:** Distinguish historical facts from myths/fiction; sequence events within their region or community into chronological order; use artifacts and documents as historical evidence.
- **Geography:** Identify similarities and differences among places, including their region, community, and neighborhood; analyze patterns to identify the connections among those places.
- **Economics:** Define producer, consumer, goods, and services; describe how goods are exchanged. **Personal Financial Literacy:** Identify a short-term financial goal, including the steps necessary to reach that goal.
- **Civics:** Demonstrate how to engage in discussions in a respectful manner; identify the origins and structure of local government, including the types of services provided by local government.

Throughout 3rd Grade You May Find Students:

- Comparing past and present situations and events; creating a chronological sequence of events in the community or region; discussing important events and the diverse cultures and people that have shaped the history of their region and community.
- Reading and interpreting maps to locate geographic features in the community, state, neighboring states, and the world; identify the factors that make a region unique, such as cultural diversity, industry, agriculture, and landforms.
- Developing short-term money goals (saving and spending) and writing steps for achieving a money-related goal; demonstrating how the exchange of goods and services offered benefits the community.
- Discussing local forms of government (city councils); explaining what local governments do, how they started, who participates, and how they work.

Learning Objectives

History:

1. Understand the nature of historical knowledge as a process of inquiry that examines and analyzes how history is viewed, constructed, and interpreted.
2. Analyze historical time periods and patterns of continuity and change, through multiple perspectives, within and among cultures and societies.

Geography:

3. Apply geographic representations and perspectives to analyze human movement, spatial patterns, systems, and the connections and relationships among them.
4. Examine the characteristics of places and regions, and the changing nature among geographic and human interactions.

Economics:

5. Understand the allocation of scarce resources in societies through analysis of individual choice, market interaction, and public policy.
6. Apply economic reasoning skills to make informed personal financial decisions.

Civics:

7. Express an understanding of how civic participation affects policy by applying the rights and responsibilities of a citizen.
8. Analyze the origins, structures, and functions of governments to evaluate the impact on citizens and the global society.

Guiding Questions and Specific Skills

History

1. Understand the nature of historical knowledge as a process of inquiry that examines and analyzes how history is viewed, constructed, and interpreted.
 - A. **Guiding Questions**
 - How do historical fact, opinion and fiction uniquely influence an individual's understanding of history?
 - How do historical thinkers determine the accuracy of history?
 - What types of questions do historians ask about the past?
 - Why do historians use multiple sources in studying history?
 - B. **Specific Skills**
 - Compare primary and secondary sources when explaining the past.
 - Compare primary sources with works of fiction about the same topic.
 - Use a variety of primary sources such as artifacts, pictures, and documents, to help determine factual information about historical events.
 - Compare information from multiple sources recounting the same event.
 - Articulate the most effective kinds of historical sources to access information needed for understanding historic events.
 - Ask questions to develop further understanding of reliability of various kinds of historical sources.

- Understand that historical thinkers distinguish fact from fiction when used to make informed decisions. For example, consumers must critically analyze advertisements for facts, and nonfiction writers must verify historical accuracy.
- Understand that historical thinkers compare information provided by different historical sources about the past.
- Understand that historical thinkers infer the intended audience and purpose of a historical source from information within the source itself.
- Understand that historical thinkers use information about a historical source, including the author, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose to judge the extent to which the source is useful.
- Understand that historical thinkers make inferences about the intended audience and purpose of a primary source from information within the source itself.

2. Analyze historical time periods and patterns of continuity and change, through multiple perspectives, within and among cultures and societies.

A. Guiding Questions

- How have different groups of people both lived together and interacted with each other in the past?
- What types of questions do people ask to learn about the past?
- How has the region changed and yet remained the same over time?

B. Specific Skills

- Understand that people in the past influence the development and interaction of different communities or regions.
- Compare past and present situations and events.
- Give examples of people, events, and developments that brought important changes to a community or region.
- Describe the history, interaction, and contribution of the various peoples and cultures that have lived in or migrated to a community or region and how that migration has influenced change and development.
- Recognize how members of a community rely on each other and interact to influence the development of their communities.
- Understand that historical thinkers use context and information from the past to make connections and inform decisions in the present. For example, the development and traditions of various groups in a region affect the economic development, tourist industry, and cultural makeup of a community.
- Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.
- Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

Geography

1. Apply geographic representations and perspectives to analyze human movement, spatial patterns, systems, and the connections and relationships among them.

C. Guiding Questions

- What questions do geographers ask?
- How does the geography of where we live influence how we live?
- How do physical features provide opportunities and challenges to regions?

- How have the cultural experiences of groups in different regions influenced practices regarding the local environment?

D. Specific Skills

- Use geographic tools to develop spatial thinking.
- Read and interpret information from geographic tools and formulate geographic questions.
- Locate oceans and continents, major countries, bodies of water, mountains, urban areas, the state of Colorado, and neighboring states on maps.
- Describe the natural and man-made features of a specific area on a map.
- Identify geography-based problems and examine the ways that people have tried to solve them.
- Articulate the most effective geographic tools to access information needed for developing spatial thinking, such as where to locate a business or park and how to landscape a yard.
- Understand that spatial thinkers develop the skills to organize and make connections such as reading a map and understanding where you are, where you want to go, and how to get to the destination.
- Understand that geographic thinkers use maps, satellite images, photographs, and other representations to explain relationships between the locations of places and regions and their environmental characteristics.

2. Examine the characteristics of places and regions, and the changing nature among geographic and human interactions.

A. Guiding Questions

- Are regions in the world more similar or different?
- Why do people describe regions using human or physical characteristics?
- What are geographic characteristics of a region?
- How do cultures lead to similarities and differences between regions?

B. Specific Skills

- Understand that the concept of region is developed through an examination of similarities and differences in places and communities.
- Observe and describe the physical, cultural, and human-made characteristics of a local region, for example the Eastern Plains, San Luis Valley, Pikes Peak, Northwest, Front Range, South Central, Southwest, and Western Slope.
- Identify the factors that make a region unique, such as cultural diversity, industry and agriculture, and landforms.
- Give examples of places that are similar and different from a local region.
- Characterize regions using different types of features such as physical, political, cultural, urban, and rural attributes.
- Understand that geographic thinkers compare and contrast characteristics of regions when making decisions and choices such as where to send children to school, what part of town to live in, what type of climate suits personal needs, and what region of a country to visit.
- Understand that geographic thinkers can explain how natural and human-made catastrophic events in one place affect people living in other places.

Economics

1. Understand the allocation of scarce resources in societies through analysis of individual choice, market interaction, and public policy.

A. Guiding Questions

- Why do people exchange goods and services?
- What would happen if there was no such item as money?
- What would happen if consumers did not want what a producer made?
- What would the world look like if there was no transportation that could move goods more than 50 miles?

B. Specific Skills

- Understand that producers and consumers exchange goods and services in different ways.
- Describe the difference between producers and consumers and explain how they need each other.
- Describe and give examples of forms of exchange (i.e. monetary exchange and barter).
- Describe how the exchange of goods and services between businesses and consumers affects all parties.
- Recognize that different currencies exist and explain the functions of money.
- Cite evidence to show how trade benefits individuals, businesses, and communities and increases interdependency.
- Understand that economic thinkers realize that production, consumption, and the exchange of goods and services are interconnected in the world. For example, vegetables from California are sold at Colorado markets, and an ice storm in Florida affects orange juice supplies for the world.

2. Apply economic reasoning skills to make informed personal financial decisions.

A. Guiding Questions

- What would happen if an individual spent all earnings on entertainment?
- Why do individuals give away money?
- Why is personal financial goal setting important?
- How does an individual know when a good short-term goal is well-written?

B. Specific Skills

- Create a plan to meet a financial goal.
- Give examples of short-term spending and savings goals.
- Identify jobs that children can do to earn money to reach personal financial goals.
- Differentiate the role of income and expenses when creating a budget.
- Create a plan with specific steps to reach a short-term financial goal.
- Model strategies to achieve a personal financial goal using arithmetic operations.
- Understand that financially capable individuals understand that personal financial goal setting is a lifelong activity and short-term goal setting is essential to that process, such as saving for a fish aquarium or skateboard.
- Understand that financially capable individuals understand that an analysis of various options and creating short- and long-term goals for borrowing is a lifelong skill. For example, adults may borrow money to buy a car or go on a vacation.

Civics

1. Express an understanding of how civic participation affects policy by applying the rights and responsibilities of a citizen.

A. Guiding Questions

- What are the essential elements of compromise that enable conflict to be transformed into agreement?
- Why is personal advocacy important in a community with diverse views?
- What would a community be like if individuals from various groups did not respect each other's rights and views?

B. Specific Skills

- Respect the views and rights of others.
- Identify and apply the elements of civil discourse. For example: listening with respect for understanding and speaking in a respectful manner.
- Identify important personal rights in a democratic society and how they relate to others' rights.
- Give examples of the relationship between rights and responsibilities.
- Restate the view or opinion of others with their reasoning when it is different from one's own.
- Appropriately express one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and identify how they influence behavior.
- Regulate reactions to differing perspectives.
- Identify and explain a different perspective when exploring events or ideas.
- State a position and reflect on possible objections to assumptions and implications of the position.

2. Analyze the origins, structures, and functions of governments to evaluate the impact on citizens and the global society.

A. Guiding Questions

- How are local governments and citizens interdependent?
- How do individuals get involved in their local government?
- How do local governments and citizens help each other?
- Why do people create governments?
- How do people, places, and events help us understand the ideals of democratic government?

B. Specific Skills

- Identify the origins, structures, and functions of local government.
- Identify and explain the services local governments provide and how those services are funded.
- Identify and explain a variety of roles leaders, citizens, and others play in local government.
- Describe how local government provides opportunities for people to exercise their rights and initiate change.