NATIONAL BOARD
for Professional Teaching Standards®

Social Studies–History Standards

Second Edition

for teachers of students ages 7–18+

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Table of Contents

Preface 4

- About the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards 4
- About the Standards 6
- About Certification 7

Foundation of National Board Certification for Teachers 8

- Five Core Propositions 8
- Architecture of Accomplished Teaching 11

Standards 12

- Introduction 12
- Social Studies–History Standards Statements 17
  - Knowing Students, Purpose, and Content 19
    - Standard I: Knowing Students 19
    - Standard II: Developing Social Understanding, Engagement, and Civic Identity 24
    - Standard III: Content 28
  - Teaching in Context 44
    - Standard IV: Instruction 44
    - Standard V: Diversity 51
    - Standard VI: Learning Environments: Classroom and Communities 55
  - Developing as a Professional 59
    - Standard VII: Professional Growth 59
    - Standard VIII: Reflection 61

Standards Committees 64

Acknowledgments 66

Preface

About the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (National Board) is a not-for-profit professional organization, created and governed by practicing teachers and their advocates. The founding mission of the National Board is to advance the quality of teaching and learning by

- maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do;
- providing a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these standards; and
- advocating related education reforms to integrate National Board Certification into American education and to capitalize on the expertise of National Board Certified Teachers.

Recognized as the “gold standard” in teacher certification, the National Board believes higher standards for teachers means better learning for students.

Founded in 1987, the National Board began by engaging teachers in the development of standards for accomplished teaching and in the building of an assessment—National Board Certification—that validly and reliably identifies when a teacher meets those standards. Today, there are 25 certificate areas that span 16 content areas and four student developmental levels. The essence of the National Board’s vision of accomplished teaching is captured in the enduring document *What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do*, at the heart of which are the Five Core Propositions:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

The National Board believes that board certification should become the norm, not the exception, and should be fully integrated into the fabric of the teaching profession. In other professions, such as medicine, engineering, and architecture, board certification has helped to create a culture of accomplished practice and is a major reason why those professions are held in such high regard by the public. Those professions did what teaching must now do: strengthen the coherent pipeline of preparation that begins in pre-service and continues through board certification and beyond, with each step engineered to help teachers develop toward accomplished. More than 110,000 teachers had achieved board certification by 2014, a number which represents the largest group of identified teaching experts in the country. Given the size of the teaching workforce, however, this sizable number represents fewer than 3 percent of teachers.

For most children that means they go through their entire schooling without being taught by a board-certified teacher. Each teacher who pursues board certification helps to close this gap, strengthening the profession and the quality of teaching and learning. In a world where board certification is the standard that all teachers aspire to and most achieve, students experience accomplished teaching throughout their schooling, unleashing their potential.

About the Standards

Every child deserves an accomplished teacher—one who is qualified to equip students with the skills to succeed in a global community. The core mission of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is to create field-specific standards for accomplished teaching that are grounded in the Five Core Propositions and that articulate the actions that accomplished teachers employ to advance student learning. Each standards document represents a professional consensus on the attributes of practice that distinguish accomplished teaching in that field. Many school systems use the standards as the basis for ongoing professional development, and many colleges and universities incorporate the standards into their undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs.

Standards are developed and revised by a committee of 12–15 members who are representative of accomplished professionals in their field. A majority of standards committee members are practicing Board certified teachers. Other committee members are experts in academic content and child development, including teacher educators, researchers, and other professionals in the relevant field. Standards are disseminated widely for public comment and subsequently revised as necessary before adoption by the National Board's Board of Directors.

Throughout the development of both the standards and the certification process, the National Board ensures broad representation of the diversity that exists within the profession; engages pertinent disciplinary and specialty associations at key points in the process; collaborates closely with appropriate state agencies, academic institutions, and independent research and education organizations; and establishes procedures to detect and eliminate instances of external and internal bias.

National Board Standards and certifications are defined by the developmental level of the students and by the subject or subjects being taught. Teachers select the subject area that makes up the substantive focus of their teaching. They may choose Generalist certificates if they do not focus on one particular subject area in their practice. The four overlapping student developmental levels (listed below) indicate the age of the majority of their students.

- Early Childhood (EC)—ages 3–8
- Middle Childhood (MC)—ages 7–12
- Early Adolescence (EA)—ages 11–15
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood (AYA)—ages 14–18+

About Certification

National Board Certification® is a voluntary, standards-based process designed for teachers to transform the Five Core Propositions into practice. In order to be eligible for certification a teacher must

- Hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution[1];
- Have a minimum of three years' teaching experience at the early childhood, elementary, middle school, or high school level; and
- Where it is required, hold a state teaching license.

The assessments, aligned with the Five Core Propositions and the standards, are designed so that teachers demonstrate their practice by providing evidence of what they know and do. The evidence-based assessment honors the complexities and demands of teaching.

In 2014, the National Board initiated revision of the assessment to make the process more flexible, affordable, and efficient for teachers. In all certificate areas, candidates for National Board Certification are now required to complete four components: three portfolio entries, which are submitted online, and a computer-based assessment, which is administered at a testing center. Teachers develop portfolio entries that require analysis of their practice as it relates to student learning and to being a reflective, effective practitioner. Designed to capture what a teacher knows and is able to do in real time and in real-life settings, the portfolio consists of description, analysis, and reflection focused on student learning that is captured on video and in student work samples. The process requires teachers to reflect on the underlying assumptions of their practice and the impacts of that practice on student learning.

Teachers also demonstrate content knowledge by responding to open-ended and multiple choice questions delivered at a secure testing site. The assessment center component complements the portfolio, validates that the knowledge and skills exhibited in the portfolio are accurate reflections of what a candidate knows, and provides candidates with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills not sampled in the portfolio.

Assessments are based on the standards and are developed for every certificate area by educators who specialize in the same content and student developmental level as the candidates. Educators who are themselves practitioners in the certificate area score the submitted portfolio entries. They must successfully complete intensive training and qualify for scoring on the basis of their understanding of National Board Standards and scoring guidelines.

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[1] Candidates registering for the Career and Technical Education certificate are required to hold a bachelor's degree only if their state required one for their current license.

Foundation of National Board Certification for Teachers

Five Core Propositions

The National Board framework for accomplished teaching was established in its 1989 publication, *What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do*. The Five Core Propositions serve as the foundation for all National Board standards and assessments, defining the level of knowledge, skills, abilities, and commitments that accomplished teachers demonstrate. Teachers embody all Five Core Propositions in their practices, drawing on various combinations of these skills, applications, and dispositions to promote student learning.

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.

Accomplished teachers base their practice on the fundamental belief that all students can learn and meet high expectations. They treat students equitably, recognizing the individual differences that distinguish one student from another and taking account of these differences in their practice. They adjust their practice based on observation and understanding of their students' interests, abilities, skills, knowledge, language, family circumstances, and peer relationships. They view students' varied backgrounds as diversity that enriches the learning environment for every student.

Accomplished teachers understand how students develop and learn. They consult and incorporate a variety of learning and development theories into their practice, while remaining attuned to their students' individual contexts, cultures, abilities, and circumstances. They are committed to students' cognitive development as well as to students' ownership of their learning. Equally important, they foster students' self-esteem, motivation, character, perseverance, civic responsibility, intellectual risk taking, and respect for others.

2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.

Accomplished teachers have a rich understanding of the subject(s) they teach and appreciate how knowledge in their subject is created, organized, linked to other disciplines, and applied to real-world settings. While maintaining the integrity of disciplinary methods, content, and structures of organization, accomplished teachers develop the critical and analytical capacities of their students so they can think for themselves.

Accomplished teachers command specialized knowledge of how to convey and reveal subject matter to students. They are aware of the preconceptions and background knowledge that students typically bring to each subject and draw upon pedagogical and subject matter understandings to anticipate challenges, modify their practice, and respond to students' needs. They also demonstrate a commitment towards learning about new strategies, instructional resources, and technology that can be of assistance. Their instructional repertoire and professional judgment allow them to generate multiple paths to knowledge in the subjects they teach, and they are adept at teaching students how to pose and solve their own problems so they can continue exploring and advancing their understanding.

3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.

Accomplished teachers view themselves as facilitators of student learning within dynamic instructional settings. They create, enrich, maintain, and alter learning environments while establishing effective ways to monitor and manage those environments and the student learning that occurs within them. They possess a comprehensive knowledge of instructional methods, know when each is appropriate, and can implement them as needed. They use instructional time constructively and efficiently, customizing physical layout, resources, and instructional methods. They enlist the knowledge and support of a wide range of stakeholders to provide their students with enriched opportunities to learn. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of pedagogical approaches they may take, as well as the suitability of these approaches for particular students.

Accomplished teachers know how to engage students in varied settings and group configurations. They create positive and safe learning environments that guide student behavior and support learning, allowing the schools' goals for students to be met. They are adept at setting norms for social interaction among students and between students and teachers. They understand how to motivate students and value student engagement, supporting them as they face and learn from challenges.

Accomplished teachers assess the progress of individual students as well as that of the class as a whole. They apply their knowledge of assessment to employ multiple methods for measuring student growth and understanding. They use the information they gather from monitoring student learning to inform their practice, and they provide constructive feedback to students and families. They collaborate with students throughout the learning process and help students engage in self-assessment.

4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.

Accomplished teachers possess a professional obligation to become perpetual students of their craft. Committed to reflective learning, they are models of educated persons. They exemplify the virtues they seek to inspire in students—curiosity, honesty, fairness, respect for diversity and appreciation of cultural differences—and the capacities that are prerequisites for intellectual growth: the ability to reason and take multiple perspectives, to be creative and take risks, and to adopt an experimental and problem-solving orientation.

Accomplished teachers draw on their knowledge of human development, subject matter, and instruction, and their understanding of their students to make principled judgments about sound practice. Their decisions are not only grounded in established theories, but also in reason born of experience. They engage in lifelong learning, which they seek to encourage in their students.

Accomplished teachers seek opportunities to cultivate their learning. Striving to strengthen their teaching and positively impact student learning, teachers use feedback and research to critically examine their practice, seek to expand their repertoire, deepen their knowledge, sharpen their judgment and adapt their teaching to new findings, ideas and theories.

5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

Accomplished teachers participate actively in their learning communities to promote progress and achievement. They contribute to the effectiveness of the school by working collaboratively with other professionals on policy decisions, curriculum development, professional learning, school instructional programs, and other functions that are fundamental to the development of highly productive learning communities. They work collaboratively and creatively with families and the community, engaging them productively in the work of the school and cultivating students' connections with the opportunities, resources, and diversity they afford.

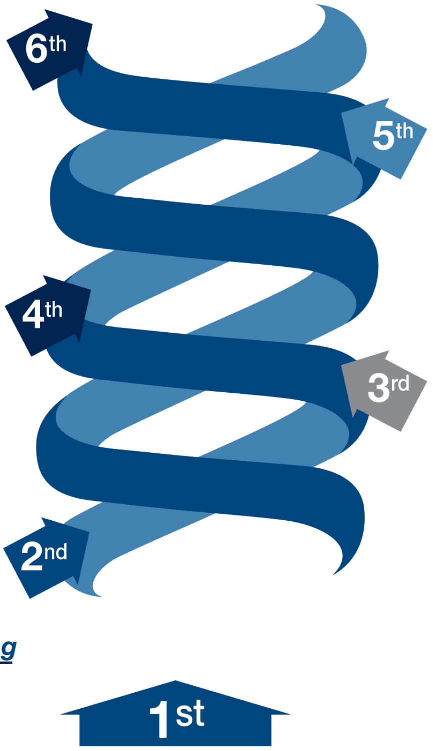
Accomplished teachers can evaluate school progress and the allocation of school resources in light of their understanding of state and local educational objectives and their knowledge of student needs. They are knowledgeable about and can advocate for specialized school and community resources that can be engaged for their students' benefit, and are skilled at employing such resources as needed.

Architecture of Accomplished Teaching

The Architecture of Accomplished Teaching provides a view of how the use of the Five Core Propositions and the standards that are developed from them result in student learning. As depicted in the Architecture of Accomplished Teaching illustration, shown below, one strand represents teaching practice as grounded in the Five Core Propositions, while the other strand represents the teacher's impact on students and their learning.

The Architecture of Accomplished Teaching:

What is underneath the surface?



Set new high and worthwhile goals that are appropriate for these students at this time

Reflect on student learning, the effectiveness of the instructional design, particular concerns, and issues

Evaluate student learning in light of the goals and the instruction

Implement instruction designed to attain those goals

Set high, worthwhile goals appropriate for these students, at this time, in this setting

***Your Students** - Who are they? Where are they now? What do they need and in what order do they need it? Where should I begin?*

Five Core Propositions

- **Teachers are committed to students and their learning**
- **Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students**
- **Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning**
- **Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience**
- **Teachers are members of learning communities**

The National Board program certifies accomplished teachers who positively influence student learning through effective teaching practice. The process includes the core propositions for all teachers, a common set of accomplished teaching standards specific to the content field and students' developmental levels, and a set of evidence-based assessments specific to the field that certify what accomplished teachers know and do.

Standards

Introduction

Social studies–history teachers deal with big issues: Who are we, and where do we come from? Why do people believe the things they do, and how do they find meaning in their lives? Why have people organized their societies, economies, and environments in so many different ways, and why do they still? What causes conflict, and how can it be prevented—or should it be? What accounts for poverty and inequality, prejudice and discrimination, or the success and failure of nations? What influences the choices people make? How can we treat each other more humanely, and how can we communicate across our differences? And how do we come to know the answers to any of these questions? In exploring such issues, social studies–history teachers engage students in the most fascinating, exhilarating, maddening, and even confusing topics known to humanity: The origin and spread of scientific ideas, religions, and ideologies; the nature of people, places, and environments; the meeting of cultures and the exchange of ideas; changes in love, marriage, and the family; the rise of democracies and dictatorships. Students learn about the Holocaust, civil rights, women's suffrage, slavery, torture, natural disasters, immigration, Confucius, international trade, the Enlightenment, human rights, Hiroshima, gender roles, Crazy Horse, the end of apartheid, Normandy, the printing press, Thomas Jefferson, revolutions, disease, and even rock and roll.

What ties all this together? Social studies–history teachers prepare students for participation in the public life of a democratic society. Public schools in the United States arose in the forge of the young republic's experiment with democracy. As a result, public education in this country has aspired to prepare students for their lives as democratic decision-makers. This charge imposes demands on teachers of all subjects, as well as on the very structure of schools, but nowhere are these responsibilities more evident than in the work of social studies–history teachers. All educators are expected to teach with democratic practices, but social studies–history teachers must also teach for and about democracy. This involves more than teaching the structure of government. It also means teaching students about the nature of social life, today and in the past; it means preparing them to inquire into social issues and to reach decisions on matters of public importance; it means helping them learn how to deliberate and collaborate with others from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives.

In pursuit of these goals, social studies–history teachers deal with some of the most enduring—and vexing—issues that face humanity. Their subject includes the rise, fall, and transformation of societies; the nature of human motivation and behavior; and the geographic and economic principles that affect our lives. These are issues that have been facing humanity for a very long time and will continue to engage and inspire us for many years to come, for they are at the very heart of our individual and collective identities. But at the same time that teachers deal with concerns that have engaged humanity since ancient times, they also help students understand contemporary society in all its dynamic variety. They not only deal with enduring issues, but they also help students understand the immediate impact and importance of those issues. Each day's headlines are the content of the subject; every war or revolution, every social movement or election, every change in the economy or environment cries out for the contextualization that social studies–history can provide. At school, students learn to inquire not only into the distant past but also into the present-day world, as they seek information and reach conclusions on contemporary social, economic, political, and geographic issues. While all teachers deal with the impact of societal shifts such as changes in demographic patterns or gender roles, for example, it is the job of the social studies–history teacher to help students understand those very changes—to see what it means to be part of a society whose makeup is changing. Teachers not only engage students in considering what it means to be human, but what it means to be me, and us, right now, in this place.

This means that teachers have to know more than content; they have to know their students. Accomplished teachers know how children and adolescents think about subject matter, they know how to get them interested in a variety of content topics, and they understand the extent of students' background knowledge and academic skills. Teachers also recognize the challenges that face young people as a result of their quest for identity, acceptance, and community, as well as the impact of demographic changes, technological developments, and new economic patterns on the lives of today's youth. Moreover, teachers understand the diversity of ways in which each of these cognitive, affective, and social factors affects students. They never see students as simple stereotypes but instead recognize that each student is unique, and they strive to understand individuals in all their richness and complexity and the ways they identify in groups. This requires that teachers interact with young people not just in the classroom but in other school and community settings, so that they can better appreciate students' cares, concerns, and capabilities.

The very importance of social studies–history—its connection to both enduring and contemporary social concerns and the development of civic identity—makes it among the most controversial subjects. Many people have strong opinions on what it means to be human, not to mention on contemporary social, economic, and political issues, and they can feel threatened by the idea of having young people consider controversial topics on their own. When students investigate historical or political issues, they may reach conclusions that differ from the opinions of their families, communities, or national leaders. Once they examine material for bias and underlying assumptions, they may turn their critical gaze toward all the sources they encounter. Moreover, the idea of considering multiple perspectives thoughtfully and sympathetically—the very heart of democratic life—can be upsetting to some. By providing a safe haven for students, teachers create a forum for the expression of contrary opinions, assurance that voices will be heard, and the celebration of differences.

The perception of social studies–history teachers in the wider community may also be diminished by the broad and somewhat ambiguous nature of social studies–history as a school subject. Those outside the profession sometimes have trouble identifying just what "social studies" includes, especially when the connection between the subject and university academic disciplines is indirect. Although students at all grade levels may learn about history, economics, and geography, for example, they usually do so in a combined "social studies" class before high school, when more specific courses begin to dominate. Learning about government, meanwhile, is part of social studies at all levels of schooling, but the content of the curriculum is only partly connected to the work of political scientists. Teacher preparation programs, meanwhile, vary from state to state and across grade levels. Some teachers receive "broad field" licensure or certification after taking courses in several academic disciplines, while others specialize in a single field or focus on several "areas of concentration" within the wider field. Elementary teachers often take only introductory courses in history and the social sciences, and middle school teachers sometimes combine their coursework with a second area of preparation in language arts, mathematics, or science. This variety of preparation may add to confusion over the focus and boundaries of social studies–history as a school subject.

The importance of social studies–history teaching, combined with its potentially controversial nature and public confusion over its focus, makes standards like these indispensable. These standards clarify the essential understandings of history, economics, geography, and civics and government that accomplished teachers must have regardless of specialization, while nonetheless recognizing that many teachers—particularly at the high school level—may have greater depth of expertise in just one or two content areas. They also make clear that accomplished teachers do not avoid difficult and potentially controversial issues but often place them at the core of their teaching, and that they systematically teach students to engage in inquiry, critical reflection, evidence-based reasoning, and public deliberation—no matter where those activities may lead them, and no matter how much their conclusions may conflict with the expectations of others in the school or community. Accomplished teachers of social studies–history must know their students and their subjects, and they must know how to bring the two together—through careful inquiry into the social world that avoids both indoctrination or unthinking adherence to the content of textbooks or curriculum guides. They help students learn to use multiple sources, confront multiple perspectives, and make their own decisions. The health of our democracy depends on such teachers.

Accomplished teachers combine their understanding of students, subjects, and contexts in order to create meaningful learning experiences. In addition, throughout their careers they pursue opportunities for professional growth so that they can continually deepen and enrich their understanding of each of these aspects of their work and can share their expertise with others. They also systematically reflect on the effectiveness of their efforts and on the larger social, cultural, and political contexts of their work. Such teachers will see themselves in these standards: They will see the complex environments in which they work, the complicated lives of the students they teach, and the multifaceted nature of their subject matter. They will know these standards are not easy to live up to. Yet with the kind of systematic reflection that National Board Certification requires, teachers will be able to use these standards to enhance their teaching so that they can improve their students' learning and prepare young people for participation in the public life of our democratic society. That, after all, is what accomplished teachers do.

Changes from the Previous Social Studies–History Standards

Philosophically, these standards share a great deal with their predecessors. In their organization and content, however, they look somewhat different. Several standards, for example, have been collapsed into more inclusive groupings. Categories such as promoting social understanding, developing civic competence, and advancing disciplinary knowledge and understanding have been rewritten and combined into a single standard, "Developing Social Understanding, Engagement, and Civic Identity," to emphasize that these are not separate aspects of social studies–history but rather three goals that structure all elements of teachers' work. Similarly, "Instruction" now deals with each of the ways in which teachers make decisions about how to engage students with content through selecting resources, structuring learning activities, and assessing student learning. "Family Partnerships" is no longer a separate standard, not because its content is unimportant, but because it is critical to so many areas of teaching—thus it now receives attention, along with community partnerships, in the standards about diversity, knowing students, and instruction. Although shorter in length, "Reflection" and "Professional Growth" remain separate from other standards because of their central importance in distinguishing accomplished teachers from their colleagues.

One of the most readily apparent changes is in the nature of detail found in the content standard. The standards committee retains a commitment to subject matter knowledge as an indispensable characteristic of accomplished social studies–history teachers, and in this standard we have laid out core concepts, principles, and habits of mind that structure the most commonly taught areas of social studies–history—U.S. history, world history, economics, geography, and civics and government. However, we have not tried to identify all the content that teachers in these fields need to master, such as specific topics, periods in history, or characteristics of world regions with which teachers should be familiar. We have avoided this temptation for two principal reasons: First, the length of these standards does not permit comprehensive coverage of any of the fields within social studies–history; in order to learn more about these areas—and about expectations for teaching specific topics within them—teachers will need to continue reading professional literature in their field, as well as to consult the various standards documents developed for each area within social studies–history. Second, most teachers work within the content guidelines established by their state or district; these are the guidelines for which they and their students are held accountable. There would be little point in a standard requiring adherence to a particular outline of topics or periods when those may not be the ones that normally structure teachers' work. Thus while we have included numerous specific examples in the standards, these are meant to illustrate the application of the ideas that underlie the social studies–history curriculum—not to prescribe particular content. Accomplished teachers know how to connect state and local guidelines to important concepts and principles so that the curriculum reflects the current and evolving nature of each subject area.

Developing High and Rigorous Standards for Accomplished Practice

Social Studies–History Standards describes what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. The standards are meant to reflect the professional consensus at this point about the essential aspects of accomplished practice. The deliberations of the Social Studies–History Standards Committee were informed by various national and state initiatives on student and teacher standards that have been operating concurrently with the development of NBPTS Standards. As the understanding of teaching and learning continues to evolve over the next several years, these standards will be updated again.

An essential tension of describing accomplished practice concerns the difference between the analysis and the practice of teaching. The former tends to fragment the profession into any number of discrete duties, such as designing learning activities, providing quality explanation, modeling, managing the classroom, and monitoring student progress. Teaching as it actually occurs, on the other hand, is a seamless activity.

Everything an accomplished teacher knows through study, research, and experience is brought to bear daily in the classroom through innumerable decisions that shape learning. Teaching frequently requires balancing the demands of several important educational goals. It depends on accurate observations of particular students and settings, and it is subject to revision on the basis of continuing developments in the classroom.

The paradox, then, is that any attempt to write standards that dissect what accomplished teachers know and are able to do will, to a certain extent, misrepresent the holistic nature of how teaching actually takes place. Nevertheless, the fact remains: Certain identifiable commonalties characterize the accomplished practice of teachers. The standards that follow are designed to capture the knowledge, artistry, proficiency, and understandings—both deep and broad—that contribute to the complex work that is accomplished teaching.

The Standards Format

Accomplished teaching appears in many different forms, and it should be acknowledged at the outset that these specific standards are not the only way it could have been described. No linearity, atomization, or hierarchy is implied in this vision of accomplished teaching, nor is each standard of equal weight. Rather, the standards are presented as aspects of teaching that are analytically separable for the purposes of this standards document but that are not discrete when they appear in practice.

The report follows a two-part format for each of the standards:

- **Standard Statement**—This is a succinct statement of one vital aspect of the practice of the accomplished teacher of social studies–history. Each standard is expressed in terms of observable teacher actions that have an impact on students.
- **Elaboration**—This passage provides a context for the standard, along with an explanation of what teachers need to know, value, and do if they are to fulfill the standard. The elaboration includes descriptions of teacher dispositions toward students, their distinctive roles and responsibilities, and their stances on a range of ethical and intellectual issues that regularly confront them.

In addition, throughout the document are examples illustrating accomplished practice and demonstrating how decisions integrate various individual considerations and cut across the standard document. If the standards pull apart accomplished teaching into discrete elements, the examples put them back together in ways more clearly recognizable to teachers. Because the National Board believes there is no single “right” way to teach students, these examples are meant to encourage teachers to demonstrate their own best practices.

Social Studies–History Standards Statements

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) has organized the standards for accomplished teachers of social studies–history into the following eight standards. The standards have been ordered to facilitate understanding, not to assign priorities. They each describe an important facet of accomplished teaching; they often occur concurrently because of the seamless quality of accomplished practice. These standards serve as the basis for National Board Certification in social studies–history.

Knowing Students, Purpose, And Content

Standard I: Knowing Students

Accomplished social studies–history teachers are knowledgeable about students as individuals and as members of families and communities and use their knowledge to strengthen relationships and increase student achievement. Teachers are also knowledgeable about students' development and their conceptualization of social studies–history.

Standard II: Developing Social Understanding, Engagement, and Civic Identity

Accomplished social studies–history teachers develop students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for social understanding and civic engagement and facilitate students' development as decision makers involved in public discourse and action at the local, national, or global levels.

Standard III: Content

Accomplished social studies–history teachers ground their teaching practice in a sound foundation of content knowledge.

Teaching in Context

Standard IV: Instruction

Accomplished social studies–history teachers recognize that excellent instruction depends on skilled organization and creative interweaving of curricula, varied instructional strategies, meaningful assessment, and supporting resources that engage students with content, provide meaningful and instructive feedback, and promote a love of learning.

Standard V: Diversity

Accomplished social studies–history teachers consider diversity a fundamental and deliberate component of excellent teaching. Teachers recognize the importance of student diversity, equity in instruction, and pluralism in the curriculum.

Standard VI: Learning Environments: Classroom and Communities

Accomplished social studies–history teachers actively create and cultivate safe and dynamic learning environments characterized by respectful peer interactions, facilitation of multiple perspectives, and collaborative partnerships with families and with students' greater communities.

Developing as a Professional

Standard VII: Professional Growth

Accomplished social studies–history teachers pursue professional growth activities and experiences to develop themselves, their colleagues, schools, and districts, and to benefit the larger field of social studies–history education.

Standard VIII: Reflection

Accomplished social studies–history teachers engage in purposeful reflection as a systematic self-examination of all aspects of their teaching to extend knowledge, improve teaching, and refine their practice and their philosophy of education.

Knowing Students, Purpose, and Content

The first three standards form the foundation of accomplished teaching for social studies–history teachers and are the basis for all other standards. Knowing individual students, their families, and communities enables the accomplished teacher to form relationships and engage students in the rich concepts and material of history, economics, geography, and civics and government. In purposefully seeking to develop students' social understandings and civic engagement, teachers facilitate students' shaping of their own civic identities.

Standard I
Knowing Students

Accomplished social studies–history teachers are knowledgeable about students as individuals and as members of families and communities and use their knowledge to strengthen relationships and increase student achievement. Teachers are also knowledgeable about students' development and their conceptualization of social studies–history.

Introduction

Accomplished social studies–history teachers[1] strive to make personal connections with each of their students to increase student achievement. Teachers bear in mind students' cognitive, social, physical, and emotional development in making instructional decisions. Teachers consider that the variety of student backgrounds contributes positively to classroom learning, and teachers work to expand and develop students' abilities, perspectives, and knowledge. Teachers are knowledgeable about how students function in the classroom setting; how they interact with teachers, other students, and wider communities; and their varied interests and ways of learning. Teachers treat all students as individuals, yet they also recognize that students are part of families and larger social groups that may significantly influence their ideas and behaviors. Teachers know how students conceptualize their membership in society and how that idea influences their learning of social studies–history content.

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[1] All references to *teachers* in this document, whether stated explicitly or not, refer to accomplished teachers of social studies–history.

Knowing the Individual Student

Accomplished teachers capitalize on their knowledge of students' cognitive, social, physical, and emotional development. Teachers stay abreast of current research regarding students' developmental levels, using it to plan as well as to guide students in examining their life stages and membership in society. Teachers combine knowledge of general development with knowledge of individual students to design and provide appropriate instruction. They also choose the most effective classroom procedures to stretch and challenge students at all levels of ability.

Accomplished teachers draw upon students' backgrounds, experiences, and interests to motivate and engage them in the study of social studies–history. Teachers focus on the richness of students' experiences and their diverse backgrounds to create a safe place where students can take academic risks. Teachers recognize that learning requires students to develop new skills, form hypotheses, and learn from successes and errors. Teachers look for specific places in their curriculum for students to find themselves within the subject matter. For example, teachers may use students' experiences with spending to explore economic trade-offs, or they might use students' conceptions of and experiences with authority to introduce particular periods in U.S. or world history. Teachers utilize students' background knowledge in areas related to the curriculum, and they encourage students to share what they know in a reasoned and informed manner. When possible and appropriate, teachers give students choices in the topic of study or method of presentation so they can explore individual areas of interest while using the tools of that subject area.

To gain a better recognition of students' needs and strengths, accomplished teachers may look at students' previous academic records and cumulative files or speak to their family[1] members, other classroom teachers, or other appropriate school personnel. Teachers use formal and informal methods to assess students' knowledge and skill levels as well as to inform their teaching practices. For example, teachers may issue a pre-test of subject matter and skills, examine student writing samples, or survey students' content background knowledge regarding the content. (See Standard IV—*Instruction*.)

Accomplished teachers proactively work to ensure that students with exceptional needs have full access to the depth of content. As appropriate, teachers implement instructional strategies, develop concepts, and organize the curriculum to tailor it for students with exceptional needs. For English language learners, teachers diligently integrate language-learning considerations and objectives and provide appropriate materials to allow access to the depth of content and full participation in the life of the classroom. An economics teacher, for example, might provide practice in using terms and concepts with specialized disciplinary meanings that differ from their use in conversational speech or informal writing, such as the differences among money, income, currency, and wealth.

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[1] *Family* is used in this document to refer to the people who are the primary caregivers, guardians, and significant adults of children.

Accomplished teachers know their students' academic needs and strengths and provide a variety of resources, activities, and assessments that match students' ways and levels of learning. Teachers differentiate lessons so that all students rise to their highest potential. They engage students in multiple modalities of learning, for example, by providing visual representations along with written texts on the Han, Gupta, Aztec, Greek, and Roman empires. Similarly, when possible, teachers may give students choices in demonstrating their knowledge or competency; for example, they may allow students to give oral presentations; write essays, letters, or poems; or create movies or posters. Teachers find ways to engage students who have lower reading levels or who require specialized plans. For example, teachers may find varied reading materials, audio books, or graphic novels about other cultures; use graphic organizers and other forms of scaffolding; or partner with other in-school support programs.

Accomplished teachers actively pursue professional growth opportunities and seek resources to integrate all students into classroom life. Teachers adapt and modify their practices for students with different needs and continually reflect on how to meet the needs of all learners. If specialized teaching techniques, equipment, materials, or specialists are needed, teachers work within school communities to locate such resources and to see they are used effectively. For example, teachers might seek professional development on topics such as accommodating students with exceptional needs.

Accomplished teachers know the unique needs of students and make use of specialized staff and programs to support them. For example, the teacher may ask the school psychologist to conduct group discussions on issues of interpersonal respect when students are facing harassment and bullying. Teachers may partner with the English language learning program coordinator and local community groups to assist students who are new to the country to learn about the local school system and how to navigate it. Teachers recognize the limit and scope of their influence both inside and outside the classroom and proactively seek assistance to facilitate students' achievement.

Accomplished teachers know that students are social beings. They acknowledge factors that have shaped students outside the classroom as well as the relational dynamics in the classroom and school at large. Teachers respond to these forces purposefully and strategically by being deliberate about the physical environment of the classroom and student seating arrangements; by carefully grouping students in cooperative tasks; and by creating opportunities for all students to develop respectful interactions with one another. Teachers are particularly attuned to ways that students develop their own social hierarchies, and they create a social and academic safety net for all students.

While working to develop personal responsibility and a habit of persistence in their students, accomplished teachers work with each student to define and create a plan to achieve goals. Teachers know students sometimes face frustrations and challenges. They instill in students the ideas that learning can be difficult; that experimentation is essential; that people learn from false starts and failures; that as much can be learned from making mistakes as from providing the right answer; and that fully grasping a subject requires recognizing its complexity. Teachers are aware of effective ways to offer encouragement and constructive criticism. They also recognize that progress and accomplishment are key components to students' feelings of self-worth and academic success. For example, teachers may confer with students to jointly decide pacing and assessment of a project or unit.

Knowing Families and the Community

Accomplished teachers recognize that to know students well is to know and collaborate with their families and communities. Teachers not only get to know individual family members and caregivers of their students but also examine the larger communities and cultures within which students function. When students come from backgrounds where the nature of education and the role of teachers differ from those of the school, teachers provide clear information regarding expectations and how students can succeed in the classroom and school setting. Teachers look for opportunities to orient students' families to the school, and they help them connect to and become comfortable with the classroom and the larger educational community. For example, teachers may reach out to families by making positive telephone calls, using a third-party language line or interpreter, meeting at nontraditional and neutral sites such as community centers, or partnering with other teachers for a meet-and-greet dinner or dessert social event.

Accomplished teachers assist families by serving as advocates for students within the school. For example, they discuss with students course selection and consequences of such decisions, including the importance of planning for the next level of education. Families are central to students' learning and success, and teachers strive for ways to partner with them. Teachers know which families need special assistance in functioning and communicating within the educational environment, and teachers seek resources to bridge barriers through use of interpreters, translated reports, and other adaptations.

Accomplished teachers know students, their families, and the nature of their communities and are articulate and proactive in educating them about curriculum and instructional practices. This knowledge is especially important if potentially controversial topics are studied. For example, in a community that tends to be homogeneous in terms of religion, teachers may explain to students and families that the purpose of studying other religions is not to influence beliefs but to recognize factors that influence history, cultural practices, or politics in world regions. Teachers recognize the school and community in which they teach can sometimes determine which topics might be considered controversial. They respect that students may enter the classroom with particular views shaped in part by their families or communities.

Without making students feel threatened in their beliefs, teachers examine with students the value of considering multiple perspectives on controversial topics. For example, teachers might encourage students to analyze a variety of perceptions and consequences of economic inequality, environmental regulation, alternative family structures, or other social issues.

Knowing How Students Conceptualize Social Studies–History

Accomplished teachers know how students make sense of social studies–history content, and that their knowledge increases and deepens with maturity and experience. Teachers build on students' ideas and experiences in addition to addressing their misconceptions. For example, teachers know that students frequently underestimate the effect of societal forces, events, and institutions when considering individuals' abilities to create change. Teachers, therefore, emphasize ways in which individuals are affected by cultural norms, economic forces, or political institutions. In teaching about gender roles in the U.S. antebellum period, for example, teachers could facilitate students' exploration of the idea that women's participation in public life was not solely a result of their personal choices, but also was constrained by popular conventions and legal restrictions regarding men's and women's roles in areas such as voting and property ownership. Through experience with subject matter and knowledge of their students, teachers anticipate areas in the curriculum where misconceptions may occur and plan instruction to refine students' interpretive and analytic skills.

Accomplished teachers address various factors that may affect students' knowledge of social studies–history content. Therefore, teachers provide opportunities for students to reflect on the influence of their own backgrounds and perspectives as well as those of others. For example, teachers know that students may perceive world regions differently, so they have students examine reasons for their judgments and consider new ways of thinking about the world. Teachers are aware of their own filters in preparing and presenting materials. In addition, teachers facilitate students' abilities to identify their own schema and recognize how differing worldviews not only affect individual perspectives and actions, but also shape, for example, government policy, treatment of social groups, declaration of war, the effect of resource use on the environment, and the content of textbooks.

Standard II
Developing Social Understanding, Engagement, and Civic Identity

Accomplished social studies–history teachers develop students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for social understanding and civic engagement and facilitate students' development as decision makers involved in public discourse and action at the local, national, or global levels.

Introduction

Accomplished social studies–history teachers teach their students and the content with purpose. Teachers recognize that students are not blank slates and that they enter the classroom with perspectives, attitudes, and beliefs. Teachers provide students with opportunities to develop key traits associated with purposeful civic decision making, including using evidence, placing ideas and events in historical context, demonstrating open-mindedness, dealing with complexity, and committing to informed civil discourse and diversity. In order to develop and refine students' voices, teachers engage them in a process of defining, shaping, and refining democratic civic ideals by serving as active participants in their communities.

Developing Social Understanding

Accomplished teachers facilitate students' ability to analyze and value the role of the individual in complex social systems. Teachers guide students in recognizing that the overall nature of society is tied to the identities of individuals and social groups within it and that there are multiple perspectives on both the nature of social systems and the responsibilities of individuals within them. Teachers facilitate students' abilities to incorporate higher-order thinking processes to understand complex social systems. For example, teachers examine how the choices we make as consumers affect global employment patterns, international trade, and environmental sustainability. Teachers provide students with opportunities to examine the impact of their choices on themselves and on others locally, nationally, and globally.

Accomplished teachers facilitate students' understandings of how societies operate and how this applies to their lives and communities. Teachers structure activities and provide tools to deepen students' understandings of their social and civic identities. For example, during a unit of study on the historic rates of voter participation in the United States or other countries, a teacher might have students research the voting patterns in a recent local election for comparison and analysis of spatial and demographic characteristics of voter participation.

Accomplished teachers recognize that the ideas and skills students learn through individual study; in discussion; and in heterogeneous, cooperative work are an important part of how young people come to know their society and the ways it operates. Teachers know the ways in which values, ethics, and ideals can provide guidance for societies and for people in these societies. Classrooms are places where students see connections between the past and the communities they live in today. Teachers use their content knowledge to contextualize their students' strategic thinking about critical issues of the communities in which they are members.

Fostering Reasoned Decision Making and Engaging in Public Discourse

Accomplished teachers prepare students to be reflective thinkers and decision makers. Teachers employ a variety of activities to engage students with content, including reasoning, disciplined inquiry, and conceptual understanding. Teachers know students need to become reflective citizens who use evidence to scrutinize their own and others' actions, frames of reference, and ways of thinking. In order to advance civic discourse, teachers provide opportunities for students to develop disciplinary thinking skills, such as problem solving; critical questioning; comparing; drawing inferences; and synthesizing ideas and opinions in a creative, cogent, and persuasive manner. For example, teachers might assign students to survey their communities and determine the needs of a particular group, such as senior citizens, teenagers, or pre-schoolers. Students then identify a problem, research possible solutions, and develop a cost-benefit analysis of long- and short-term effects. Next, students establish a campaign to ask critical questions; draw comparisons from other similar communities; create petitions; write supportive letters to a local newspaper; invite media coverage; and design, develop, and deliver a formal presentation to appropriate stakeholders.

Accomplished teachers model and practice with students the kinds of reasoned decision making that conscientious citizens are called upon to do, and they encourage students to reflect on how their own beliefs, insights, and knowledge guide their thinking. Teachers provide opportunities for students to see that the kinds of judgments they are called upon to make do not take place in isolation from other persistent public policy issues, nor do they exist in an ethical vacuum. Teachers place before students real cases in which two or more legitimate social goals are in conflict so that students can begin to appreciate that multiple parties in many debates may each be arguing from responsible, principled positions. Teachers encourage students to develop reasoned conclusions even when they differ from the teachers' own.

Accomplished teachers recognize the critical importance of public discourse in the civic life of the nation and invite students to practice and model the skills necessary to participate effectively in respectful public conversations. Teachers may engage students in deliberations about the medical, legal, economic, and ethical issues of bioengineering, for example. Teachers might invite local legislators into the classroom for a conversation about a controversial piece of legislation or about the process of debate and compromise required to reach consensus. Teachers create forums for authentic discussion and debate of controversial public issues in which students construct informed positions, express these positions orally and in writing, and justify them with reasoned arguments.

Facilitating Civic Engagement

A democratic society depends on citizens' participation in public life and the exercise of their rights and duties as citizens. Accomplished teachers facilitate students' understandings of the rights established in the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, state and local laws, and international documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Convention. Teachers also guide students' understandings of how these rights provide a foundation for ongoing civic engagement in today's world, and how reality often fails to match the ideals expressed in these documents. Teachers develop students' abilities to engage in a variety of forms of civic action to preserve valued social institutions and practices, as well as to bring about desired social changes.

Accomplished teachers know it is important for students to feel a sense of personal responsibility and agency in their communities and provide opportunities for students to recognize that individuals, acting both alone and with others, can make a difference in schools and the larger community. For example, a teacher may help the school's human rights club organize a benefit showing of a movie on child soldiers to raise students' awareness of the issue and to allow them to make personal connections to the world history and geography curricula. Teachers work with students to broaden their definition of civic engagement beyond politics per se to include social clubs, religious groups, community action organizations, and any of the many groups that are part of the nation's civic fabric.

Voting is a critical part of civic engagement, but so too are other forms of participation, such as political activity, social advocacy, and community organization. Students may have the opportunity to participate in a range of civic activities such as engaging in volunteer work, organizing petitions, writing letters to the editor, or serving on or testifying before advisory boards. For instance, after investigating a local environmental issue, a class could develop policy suggestions and mobilize community support through posters, public speaking, and community events. Teachers also encourage students to take responsibility and become involved in leadership and governance of the school community and other organizations.

Teachers facilitate students' understandings of the variety of ways in which established democratic institutions and procedures can be used to effect lawful social change. They create opportunities for students to understand how the legal system and an independent judiciary can be used to uphold the ideals expressed in the U.S. Constitution. Teachers may provide students with opportunities to support, oppose, or suggest legislation by contacting local, state, or national legislators. They might also encourage students to contact or become involved in governmental regulatory commissions and agencies. For example, a teacher may help students apply for a summer internship on a state public utilities commission.

Teachers also examine the role of organized, purposeful dissent in the life of a democratic community. They allow students to explore the variety of ways people have expressed dissent, such as civil disobedience and public expression, in both historical and contemporary settings. For example, students might study how the U.S. Civil Rights movement was part of a broader, worldwide effort to bring about social and political equality and how it inspired and was inspired by similar movements around the globe.

Providing a Framework for Civic Identity

Accomplished teachers assist students in developing an understanding of the complex nature of U.S. identity. This identity includes a deep understanding of our national heritage, ideals, and founding principles, as well as the knowledge, values, and skills important to functioning in a pluralistic democratic society. Teachers provide opportunities for students to explore how national identity involves appreciation of the ideals of democracy and a willingness to strive for their realization. For example, teachers might have students identify the principles found in the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist papers, and the Constitution, and then discuss how the application of these ideals has changed over time and how these ideals apply to current issues. Students could also look at changing definitions of U.S. identity throughout the nation's history.

Accomplished teachers help students recognize that they are not only national citizens, but also members of larger communities for which they have responsibilities. Teachers know the world students will enter as adults is characterized by economic, political, and cultural connections. Teachers recognize students' lives will be shaped by these dynamics; moreover, students themselves will have a growing impact not only in their local community and nation but also upon people around the world. Therefore, it is important that teachers foster students' awareness of customs, values, needs, and rights of others outside their immediate community and society.

Accomplished teachers provide opportunities for students to consider their shared humanity with others at home and around the world, as well as the nature of their responsibilities for those within and beyond national borders. Teachers assist students in developing a body of knowledge about the world, its people, and its history that will develop the habits of mind and abilities important for living and acting in this interconnected world. For example, teachers might have students analyze how the demand for oil in North America affects the environment, economy, and people of oil-producing countries, including their standards of living, human rights, political structures, social and cultural interactions, and environmental degradation. Teachers engage students in activities that lead them to an awareness of the complexity of global economic, environmental, and social issues and the ways in which they can address such issues, including making daily decisions as consumers, listening to other points of view, and planning solutions and actions.

Standard III
Content

Accomplished social studies–history teachers ground their teaching practice in a sound foundation of content knowledge.

Introduction

Accomplished social studies–history teachers base their teaching practices on a deep knowledge of content[1] that evolves throughout their careers. Through their training, background, and knowledge of the core concepts of the multiple content areas that compose social studies–history, teachers exhibit a range of content knowledge and are able to facilitate substantive learning opportunities for their students. This content familiarity, and in many cases expertise, allows teachers to rely not on simplistic content delivery but on creating continued and significant opportunities for students to engage in the complexity of concepts and material of history, economics, geography, and civics and government.

Accomplished teachers have a solid foundation of content including themes, conceptual structures, and core organizing strategies that undergird the teaching of history, economics, geography, and civics and government—both as discrete content areas and in an interdisciplinary fashion. Teachers also have a solid foundation in disciplinary ways of thinking, including the application of quantitative and qualitative analysis of a variety of forms of data and evidence. Teachers strike a careful balance between an extensive focus on content material and the need to provide students with opportunities to navigate, organize, and analyze content material in a structured, integrated, and meaningful manner.

Accomplished teachers are aware of the breadth and depth of material within the different content areas that compose social studies–history and adjust their content focus and level of detail for students at the elementary, middle, or secondary levels.

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[1] The organization of social studies–history content into world history, United States history, economics, geography, and civics and government is not intended to suggest a hierarchical order for the study of social studies–history. The content sections are not meant to suggest specific content knowledge, but rather broad themes, habits of mind, and ways of thinking about social studies–history. Because the behavioral sciences, such as anthropology, psychology, and sociology are less frequently part of school curricula, these standards do not identify specific subject matter for these disciplines that share the same broad themes, habits of mind, and ways of thinking about social studies–history but are an integral part of the content sections identified in these standards.

Accomplished teachers are aware that the content areas encompassing social studies represent a translation and selection of content informed by, but not limited to, the academic fields of history, economics, geography, and political science. Teachers recognize that compartmentalization and integration of content areas at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels may represent a challenge; however, teachers skillfully navigate this challenge.

History

For accomplished social studies–history teachers, history provides an opportunity for students to explore narratives of the past, analyze their complexity, examine the lives and actions of groups and individuals, and take part in ongoing and contested interpretations of the historical record. History thus provides a rich context for understanding the development of human society and the multiple groups that compose it. Rather than a static record of the past, history is rich in themes, contradictions, accomplishments, and cautionary tales. Teachers make history relevant and important to their students by showing that they, too, are part of this ongoing development of the human story.

Accomplished teachers demonstrate facility in bringing out the human experience, highlighting the lives, roles, successes, and foibles of individuals. Moreover, teachers concentrate on relationships of individuals to their contemporaries in historical time and, by extension, their relationships to small groups, larger communities, and society as a whole. History becomes more than an unchanging story of events, dates, and deeds of the famous; it becomes a set of developing narratives of individual choices, human relationships, and complexity of relating to others—the multifaceted intersection and interchange of real people, and groups of people, in real places. As such, history reveals narratives beyond the famous and bold-printed individuals of consequence. Teachers bring to life the often neglected lives of ordinary people in different times and places, and they see such people as actors, not merely as the invisible or acted upon.

Accomplished teachers use history to demonstrate the connectedness between local, regional, national, international, and global histories. Teachers facilitate identification of themes and events that reveal themselves as affecting the lives of individuals and groups of people at varying levels of scale.

Accomplished teachers know history is more than “a story well told,” and that students will develop a meaningful understanding of the subject only if they have systematic and ongoing opportunities to engage in historical thinking. Teachers provide such opportunities by engaging students in regular analysis and comparison of a variety of primary and secondary sources. They provide opportunities for students to identify what can and cannot be learned from these sources, and how their form and content have been influenced by the context of their creation. Rather than presenting isolated exercises in source analysis, teachers help students use sources as evidence in creating their own defensible historical accounts, or to confirm or complicate the accounts of others. For example, by drawing on oral histories, newsreels, photographs, correspondence, and government-produced posters and brochures, students may develop varied conclusions about the lives and work of women during World War II. Teachers facilitate students' analyses of differences in how these sources represent women's experiences during this era, and they help students create defensible accounts of women's lives based on critical examination of multiple pieces of evidence.

Accomplished teachers also engage students in historical thinking by systematically examining and comparing historical perspectives. Teachers help students understand the contexts in which historical actions, events, and processes occurred, as well as the ways they have been interpreted over time. Rather than presenting human actions and motivations as though they were the same in all times and places, teachers help students see how the viewpoints of people during the time under study were influenced by societal norms, attitudes, and beliefs; how different groups and individuals saw events at the time; and how those perspectives compare to the interpretations of later generations. In studying conflicts between Christians and Muslims from the 11th through the 13th centuries, for example, teachers help students examine how military leaders' ideas about warfare were influenced by religious precepts, cultural norms, and political or territorial goals, and how their experiences differed from those of civilian populations affected by conquest. To help students understand how changing perspectives have led to reinterpretation of these conflicts, teachers might lead students in comparing textbook accounts from the early 20th century and today. Students also could compare references to these events in contemporary political rhetoric.

Accomplished teachers further engage students in historical thinking through attention to historical agency. Rather than presenting historical events as inevitable, teachers highlight the complicated ways in which groups and individuals in history took action to change or conserve their ways of life and the forces that assisted or hindered them in doing so. The focus on agency involves considering the complex goals that motivated historical actors, their conflicts and alliances with others, the institutional structures within which their actions took place, and criteria for evaluating the success or failure of their efforts, including both intended and unintended consequences. In studying desegregation of U.S. schools, for example, teachers help students understand how African American communities provided educational opportunities before *Brown v. Board of Education*; consider the individual and collective efforts involved in legal challenges to school segregation; debate whether integration or equality of school funding were most likely to serve the needs of African Americans; and examine the impact of desegregation on both white and African American communities.

World History

The study of world history tells the story of connections and interactions among human societies. Through examination of world history, teachers explore patterns of continuity and change that transcend any one society, nation, or empire. Using global and interregional patterns, as well as contextualized comparisons and case studies, world history crosses boundaries and links systems in the human past.

Accomplished teachers facilitate students' understandings of multiple and often competing narratives in world history. Teachers assist students in examining large global patterns, making connections across time and space, using comparison, investigating shifting boundaries over time, and analyzing contextualized case studies. Teachers engage students in concepts such as migration and periodization. Teachers are able to shift between different scales from local to regional to global, depending on the object of inquiry or temporal period of study.

Accomplished teachers facilitate students' abilities to analyze how events, people, institutions, ideas, and environmental issues throughout history provide context for later developments and the present-day world. For example, teachers could provide students with opportunities to interpret primary sources and maps as evidence of the Islamic Empire's domination of major overland and sea trade routes in Eurasia and the Indian Ocean in the 14th and 15th centuries in order to analyze reasons for the shift to Atlantic trade routes. In studying the Roman Republic, teachers may have students compare descriptions of the Roman government from the writings of the Roman historian Polybius on the separation of powers with relevant sections from Montesquieu's *Spirit of Law* and Hamilton's "Federalist Paper Number 9."

Accomplished teachers create opportunities for students to develop a global understanding and respect for the diverse and sometimes divergent narratives of regions and peoples around the world. Teachers balance this respect for diversity with knowledge of large interregional and global patterns and ways in which local or regional events either do or do not connect to those patterns at different periods of time. Teachers recognize similarities and differences between regions in terms of continuities and changes in human societies and corresponding patterns of organization and connections. For example, although areas of the world have undergone agricultural revolutions, teachers know that these revolutions did not happen in the same time period or in exactly the same manner for all regions. In discussing changes in Neolithic agricultural settlements, teachers can compare different regions and also connect regional changes to larger patterns of economic and societal shifts in agricultural communities.

Accomplished teachers explore with students how boundaries and borders—such as ethnic and racial, political, religious, economic, or geographic—have developed and shifted over time. Frontiers develop along borders distant from places of authority and can become places of innovation, change, and conflict. For example, teachers may examine kingdom, state, and colonial borders and boundaries before and after European imperialism in the African continent and examine effects of these shifting borders on various African peoples, including resistance, nationalism, and the Pan-Africa movement. Teachers emphasize the spread of ideas and goods across boundaries and frontiers. For example, they might investigate why the Central Asian invention of the stirrup spread rapidly and, consequently, radically changed the use of horses in warfare.

Accomplished teachers adeptly identify significant principles, innovations, and societal patterns of organization that extend beyond the borders of societies or cultural groups. Teachers emphasize the manner in which different cultures over time have influenced one another in ways that have shaped the story of human history. For instance, teachers recognize the two-way contact and exchange of plants, animals, and pathogens between hemispheres during the Columbian Exchange—one example of which was the effect the South American potato had on the demography of Western Europe. Teachers can also connect this exchange to the nineteenth century Irish potato fungus, the migration of the Irish to the United States, and the effect this plentiful, cheap supply of labor had on early industrialization.

Through comparison, accomplished teachers analyze different regions or cultures and connect those to patterns at different scales. For example, teachers might connect Cold War experiences of countries such as Cuba, Congo, Iran, Nicaragua, Vietnam, and Korea to larger patterns of Soviet and U.S. ideological and military competition. Teachers might use comparison to have students analyze to what extent Marxist ideas of gender roles and gender equality reflected the realities of communist life in China, the Soviet Union, and Poland throughout the twentieth century.

Accomplished teachers know large global and interregional patterns and develop lessons that allow students to see these larger patterns. Those patterns could include urbanization patterns; trading systems throughout time; or the roles of global, international, and non-governmental organizations in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries such as the United Nations, European Union, NATO, the African Union, International Red Cross and Red Crescent, or Greenpeace. For example, teachers might guide students in an analysis of the commonalities and differences in the emergence and growth of the European Union and MERCOSUR, a South American trade organization.

Accomplished teachers can develop or use contextualized case studies to exemplify larger interregional or global patterns. For example, teachers may engage students in studying the development of railroads in Argentina or India in the mid-nineteenth century to analyze larger patterns of industrialism and global trade. Teachers recognize that shifting scales from local to global is necessary in world history, and they know the appropriate time to use a contextualized case study to facilitate students' knowledge of larger patterns.

Accomplished teachers employ their deep understanding of content to lead students in evaluating the impact of major human migrations and the resulting global diffusion of peoples, ideas, goods, plants, and pathogens in world history. This evaluation includes the effects of these movements over time and distinguishes between nomadic, semi-nomadic, and sedentary groups and their adaptation to and alteration of the environment. This study may include movements of the Bantu, Aryan, central and east Asian, and Native American peoples, and the settlement of areas that later evolved into cities, city-states, and early empires such as Harappan, Nubian, Mediterranean, Olmec, and Andean. Teachers provide opportunities for students to identify multiple causes and complex push and pull factors that shape migrants and the choices they are given or are denied. Teachers illuminate differences between voluntary and involuntary emigration and immigration that are based on causes as varied as food supplies, civil conflicts, and religious persecution. Teachers distinguish among and identify examples of slavery, diasporas, missionary conversion, colonial expansion, and the search for increased economic opportunity.

Accomplished teachers know there are many ways to periodize the history of the world because of multiple and often competing narratives. They know that engaging students in the exploration of different periodization schemes allows them to examine the historical tools of chronology and significance and grapple with complexities in world history, including simultaneity and events occurring over long periods of time, as well as possible political and social implications of periodization. For example, teachers might provide opportunities for students to consider how developments in world history could be organized differently based on technology, economic production, political dynasties, demographic patterns, or religious developments, as well as ways in which each of these might be viewed differently by people in various regions of the world.

United States History

United States history is the study of settlement, expansion, and development of the country—geographically, culturally, socially, politically, and economically. It explores the nation's ideas, ideals, and identities, as well as social and reform movements that have involved the quest for a more perfect union. Accomplished teachers recognize that while the United States is now and has always been a pluralistic society, the country's story involves many people with broad interpretations of widely shared ideals. They know the U.S. American story is unfinished, and many of its ideals and aspirations are not yet fully realized.

Accomplished teachers know the origins of U.S. history are rich and complex and involve native peoples, European explorers, missionaries, colonists, and enslaved people. Teachers are able to connect periods of exploration, encounter, conquest, and colonization to the continuities and changes experienced by native populations. They explore early demographic shifts involving voluntary and involuntary migrations, and they analyze how a composite U.S. society was created out of such diversity. For example, teachers might examine the complex effects of European colonization and the interaction among Native American populations as they were forced westward.

Accomplished teachers know the events, traditions, and people that influenced the founding of the United States and their lasting implications, achievements, and consequences. They know how philosophical influences on the founders played out in developing founding documents and the impact those documents had on U.S. history. For example, teachers know how slavery was and was not addressed in the Constitution and the impact this treatment had on the Union. Teachers assist students in identifying core ideals, such as justice, rights of minorities, individual rights, freedoms, and responsibilities. Teachers can trace how founding documents have been translated into governmental institutions and how those institutions have shaped U.S. history. Teachers understand that the many disagreements that occurred during the founding period are similar to disagreements throughout U.S. history and continue today, such as states' rights versus federal power. Although teachers provide opportunities for students to explore how founding ideals have developed in U.S. history, they do not gloss over complexities and contradictions in meeting these ideals. They acknowledge historical, social, economic, and geographical factors that have continued to challenge these ideals, such as racial and social inequality and religious intolerance. Teachers assist students in seeing challenges and opportunities inherent in establishing and continuing to perfect a constitutional democracy.

Accomplished teachers know U.S. history is the story of ideas and ideals that have played a central role in shaping unique identities throughout the country's history. They facilitate students' explorations of debates around powerful ideas such as the notion of American Exceptionalism, which suggests the United States is unique among nations of the world in its origins, ideals, religious and political freedom, equality of opportunity, and standing in the world. Teachers also examine U.S. ideals such as the value of individuals' abilities to shape their own futures and determine their own success. Teachers can define these ideas and ideals in the ways they have shaped U.S. identities on both national and regional levels. For example, teachers might explore with students the ways in which the ideas of Yankee ingenuity and the ideal of the Puritan work ethic shaped the lives of New Englanders during colonial times and how it manifests in some modern-day practices.

Accomplished teachers lead students to discover how activism in the form of social reform movements helped shape U.S. history by, for example, expanding access and extending rights to groups denied equal political, economic, or social rights and opportunities. Early movements to abolish slavery, allow women to vote, grant workers the right to organize, support farmers, and eliminate poverty represented a persistent belief in continuing progress toward the American Dream of access to opportunity, self-determination, and prosperity for all. Teachers can provide opportunities for students to analyze the struggle to create a more perfect society, which served as a safety valve that prevented widespread disruption and even political revolution. Students might also evaluate the extent of success and failure over time in achieving a more perfect society.

Accomplished teachers facilitate students' knowledge of the ways in which different ideas about U.S. culture have entered the national consciousness. Teachers explore with students differences between memory and history. Teachers recognize that the country has been selective in ways it has chosen to remember certain events from the past. They distinguish with their students events that occurred in the past and ways in which we choose to commemorate them. For example, secondary teachers might ask students to view and analyze clips of the film *Birth of a Nation* and appropriately guide students in analyzing the way in which the country for many years remembered the Reconstruction Era and how popular memory influenced public policy during most of the twentieth century. Teachers might ask students to examine local and national memorials and reasons why individuals and groups sought to preserve certain events rather than others.

Accomplished teachers know U.S. history is centrally defined by characteristics of diversity and pluralism, descriptors that reflect ways in which the nation has developed in its shifting patterns of exclusion toward inclusion, as well as a cultural flowering, ranging from architectural styles to cuisine to music. Teachers facilitate students' examination of ways, for instance, in which diversity of race, ethnicity, political persuasion, or socioeconomic status are central indicators reflecting national growth, sectional tensions, or the movement towards full participation and access within U.S. society. Teachers further explore the pluralistic nature of U.S. society and provide opportunities for students to identify the different ways in which the nation's history has been defined by tensions involving shifting patterns of exclusion, assimilation, and ideas of a pluralistic society. For example, teachers might explore with students the expanding definition of citizenship throughout U.S. history and the eventual movement to include, for instance, common men, women, African Americans, American Indians, Latinos, and immigrants—ultimately examining how each progressive phase of inclusion has shaped the notion of a common society.

Accomplished teachers help students understand how the lived experiences of people in the United States have changed over time. Teachers explore technological developments and their effect on industry and daily life; changing methods of transportation and their impact on work and leisure; evolution of gender expectations and their influence on family life, economic opportunities, and sexuality; ways in which the environment has affected settlement, architecture, and the use of resources, as well as how people have transformed their environment; changing religious beliefs and their effect on U.S. identity; shifts from primarily rural to urban patterns of settlement, and from a primarily agricultural to an industrial and mixed economy; and the variety of ways in which literature and the arts have been used to explore individual and collective experiences. For example, teachers could use songs such as Billie Holliday's "Strange Fruit," Randy Newman's "Rednecks," and the Civil Rights anthem "We Shall Overcome" to analyze interpretations of race relations in the twentieth century.

Accomplished teachers examine the innovative spirit of entrepreneurs of the United States as the country moved from an agrarian economy toward industrialization and globalization with international expansion and sharing of cultures. For example, teachers are able to compare the effects of the multitude of inventions accompanying the Industrial Revolution with the effects of the explosion of technological innovation of the late twentieth century.

Accomplished teachers provide students multiple opportunities to explore forces driving dynamic spatial and demographic patterns of population in the United States. Teachers examine origins, destinations, motives, and pathways of immigration at different periods of time in different regions of the United States to explore cultural, social, economic, and political effects of both rural and urban in- and out-migration. At a different scale, teachers may map significant regional migrations—such as movement of members of the Church of Latter Day Saints to the Great Salt Lake, the post-World War I Great Migration of African Americans, or movement of farmers to the West Coast during the Dust Bowl—and use these migrations to discuss push and pull factors behind migration. By tracing changes in U.S. demographic characteristics, such as birth, marriage, and death rates; life expectancy; and family size at different periods of time, teachers assist students in observing connections among population growth, economic development, and development of institutions. For example, in studying westward expansion into and settlement of the Great Plains, students might compare census data from 1860 to 1900 in order to consider the impact of migration on the social structure and culture of the region. Teachers can use relationships among the environment, industrialization, and urbanization to recognize distribution and density of population in the United States in the past and today, as well as the forces driving urban growth, decline, and evolution of new forms of settlement in the United States. In a contemporary context, teachers can use sources such as online telephone books to observe unique characteristics of regions of the United States to show, for example, the prominence of surnames in particular regions and the distribution of houses of worship, and connect these patterns to past and recent migrations.

Accomplished teachers recognize that one event in history can encompass multiple components, and teachers weave these components into a complex examination of an event. For example, an event such as the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1871 will lend itself to exploration of competing interests, such as power and politics; economics and technology; and culture, identity, and society. Students should understand that the transcontinental railroad was made possible by the intersection of various interests, such as those of entrepreneurs and engineers and by the labor of different groups such as the Chinese, Mormons, Irish, and African Americans.

Accomplished teachers know U.S. history takes place in a larger global context and that the country's history has also been defined by its relations with other societies and nations. Foreign policy is a history of interactions and relationships with foreign powers since the time of the American Revolution. Teachers lead students to examine the shifting role, responsibility, and presence of the United States on the world stage and to analyze the position of the United States in relation to other nations of the world in the present day. This study provides an opportunity for students to examine and contextualize how U.S. involvement in military conflict affects and is affected by its relationships with other countries. For example, as students study the Civil War, they can research how other countries used observations about the military conduct of this conflict to shape their own countries' policies, ultimately affecting the strategies of World War I. Students might also examine the relationship between changing views of the political role of the United States on the world stage and the use of its military to uphold a particular political stance. For example, teachers might explore the use of the Roosevelt Corollary to justify intervention in Latin American countries. Teachers might also examine the United States' role in the Marshall Plan, the United Nations, and the World Bank.

Economics

The study of economics examines how decision makers use, allocate, and distribute scarce resources and how they arrive at the choices they make. Individuals make decisions in a variety of contexts on behalf of themselves, households, firms, governments, and other organizational structures. The exploration of economics examines the extent to which costs, both intended and unintended, arise from economic choices. While the U.S. economic system is primarily organized around a market system, societies throughout history have used a variety of economic structures to organize production, distribution, and consumption.

Accomplished teachers have in-depth knowledge of an extensive range of economic concepts. They know the central economic problem involves the desire to make optimal choices in a world in which resources are scarce and uncertainty prevails. Teachers have comprehensive knowledge of economic topics across a range of areas, including voluntary exchange, markets and prices, competition and market structure, economic growth, measurement of economic performance, fiscal policy, monetary policy, income inequality, economic role of government, market failure, and productivity and economic efficiency, among other things. Teachers are able to use the economic way of thinking to analyze economic costs and benefits as a means of making purposeful decisions, for example, in determining the ideal level of production for a firm.

On the other hand, accomplished teachers know economics is a distinct content area with its own set of concepts, processes, and tools. Teachers engage students of all ages and backgrounds to develop an economic way of thinking. The economic way of thinking connects economic principles to the ways in which people make informed decisions, solve problems, and reason through complex issues. A student using an economic way of thinking is able to intellectually organize economic theories that can be applied to make predictions, draw inferences, and solve real-world problems. Teachers are able to inspire students to internalize this economic way of thinking to employ economic considerations whenever decisions are made. Teachers are able to make connections between the study of economics and students' personal lives. For example, teachers may have students create a cost-benefit analysis for coming to school. Teachers at the secondary level, in particular, would be able to use a cost-benefit analysis to evaluate more complex problems, such as why the U.S. government should or should not ration a resource like oil in times of crisis or why a community should or should not offer tax incentives to encourage businesses to relocate.

Accomplished teachers know economics has multiple applications and points of entry into the rest of the social studies. As a content area that examines how scarce resources are allocated and distributed, economics can assist in informing students' knowledge of historical events and issues. For example, the accomplished U.S. history teacher is able to connect the economic, political, and social forces that influenced the founding of the Federal Reserve in 1913 to the financial crises of 1907 and 2008. Teachers are also able to incorporate their understanding of the ways in which people respond to incentives to make inferences about the nature of causal economic relationships. For example, teachers can engage students to use higher-order thinking processes to examine why the incentive structure associated with the organization of production in the command economy of the former Soviet Union led to an inefficient distribution of resources and that nation's ultimate failure as an economic system. An accomplished world history teacher might examine hyperinflationary experiences of interwar Germany in 1923.

Accomplished teachers are able to make connections between content that is central to the study of economics and the processes and concepts found in other subjects. For example, they may explore the economic context that centrally influenced the writing and framing of the U.S. Constitution and analyze various clauses that make it, among other things, an economic document. In a geography unit, teachers can engage students to think creatively about the ways in which trends associated with the growth of the service sector can contribute to an altered and evolving pattern of trade over time and across regions.

Accomplished teachers are familiar with a range of economic theories, such as how growth in money supply affects price level in the long run. Teachers are also able to compare and contrast views of different schools of economic thought such as those of Classical, Keynesian, Monetarist, and Supply Side economists. Teachers are able to weigh theoretical arguments for and against protectionist policies that limit free trade. They can apply economic models of supply and demand to make predictions about variation of prices and quantities exchanged. They are able to analyze different views of the impact of tax cuts on short- and long-run economic performance.

In order to solve problems and make purposeful decisions, accomplished teachers guide students to use key tools and measurement methods, such as analyzing real world data; interpreting or creating tables, charts, and graphs; and making economic and financial calculations. For example, in the study of geography, a social studies–history teacher could use measurement tools of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Per Capita GDP to examine differences between absolute and relative poverty. Teachers might take a step further and evaluate the use of market tools, such as property rights and division of labor, to make recommendations on how to better economic conditions in countries suffering from absolute poverty. To demonstrate the importance of economic interdependence, teachers might use a diagram to explain circular flow of economic activity and apply the diagram to models of social cooperation. Teachers may assign students to conduct an inquiry into a local economic problem, such as whether a municipality should provide its own waste removal services, by collecting, interpreting, and analyzing economic data.

Accomplished teachers in subject areas such as world and U.S. history, geography, and civics and government often address economic issues when dealing with topics focused on social consequences of economic practices or on attempts by groups and individuals to overcome economic circumstances that affect their lives. Such topics include union organizing, economic boycotts, labor relations, warfare and conflict, governmental corruption, individual and community poverty, homelessness, international trade, exploitations of sex workers, impact of extractive industry on local communities, and many others. For example, in examining the West Virginia Mine Wars of the 1920s, teachers may engage students in considering factors that led to development of the mining industry; employment practices of mining companies; living conditions of workers; and how competing interests of miners and owners led to union organizing, labor strikes, physical and economic retaliation, and involvement of local, state, and national governments. Similarly, teachers may facilitate students' ability to examine reasons behind the fair trade movement that began in mid-twentieth century, including foundational, social, and economic principles of the movement; factors influencing its success and limitations; and its impact on self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Geography

Geography is the study of people, places, and environments through two perspectives—spatial and environmental. Spatial perspective is concerned with geography's essential issue of "whereness"—Where is it? Why is it there? So what? Environmental perspective is framed by the understanding that people and environments in which they live are connected in complex relationships—people depend upon the environment for food, water, and all other resources; they modify environments with intended and unintended consequences; and they adapt to environmental conditions and changes in culturally varied ways. Teachers know both perspectives are equally important in geography, and both are used to interpret and explain phenomena on earth. The study of geography encompasses recognizing spatial patterns and processes on earth and comprehending that the earth is composed of complex webs of relationships within the environment and between environments and societies. Key concepts of the discipline of geography include space, place, scale, regionalization, interdependence, patterns, and processes.

Accomplished teachers know how geography—human geography, in particular—functions as a social science, allowing multiple applications and points of entry to the rest of the social studies. Geographic applications to history, economics, and civics and government abound. Teachers may use maps and narrative accounts to trace historic events in a spatial context, such as reading accounts of Paul Revere's ride and following his route on a map, noting the role physical and human geography played in the event. In a political context, students might explore the issue of gerrymandering, as it was coined in early nineteenth century Massachusetts, and political redistricting today as a way to manipulate electoral representation and either boost or limit the relative voice or efficacy of a particular demographic group. As an example of integration across social studies, the study of the geography of sports might incorporate concepts of economics, history, regionalism, and civics as students map locations of teams at different periods of time, discuss shifts in population and economic resources that influenced these changes, and roles that regional identity and pride play in gaining or losing a sports team.

Accomplished teachers know the mechanisms of many processes, from the physical activities that shape the environment, to the processes of economic development, urbanization, migration, and cultural change. For example, students may be given opportunity through an analysis and interpretation of geographic information systems (GIS) data to examine underlying processes that shape patterns of where residents of certain socioeconomic backgrounds reside in a major metropolitan area and how those choices might influence the quality of life and organization of the city's resources.

Accomplished teachers demonstrate how people and societies in the past and present exist not only in time but also in place and space. For example, teachers may engage students in an analysis of site location factors that shape development of places, such as access to transportation routes and resources, and how these factors influence growth of cities in different regions and different periods of time. In addition, in a unit on water, teachers might bring to life the relationship between place, space, and time by developing a classroom simulation and debating the effects of population growth on the local watershed, including water quality; on animals in the ecosystem; and on the economy, health, and overall quality of life in the community. Issues of increased sanitation needs, eminent domain, paving of agricultural land, greater consumption of water, and simultaneous pollution are all considered as students craft mock county policy.

Accomplished teachers know that many important issues facing modern society are consequences of human modifications of the environment. It is also clear and reflected in their teaching that people are able to live in various environments in very different ways, and the nature of the environment plays a role in the development and conditions of human systems. Teachers know physical systems and environmental characteristics do not determine human activities. Environment, however, can place limitations on societies—limitations often mitigated in modern times by technologies such as central heating and cooling or improved transportation networks, which allow people to live in previously inaccessible regions. Teachers encourage students to identify positive and negative, intended and unintended consequences of human action and technologies on the environment at a range of scales, from the local community to global patterns of changes in physical systems such as climate, oceans, vegetation, and animals. Teachers facilitate students' awareness and knowledge about causes and implications of different kinds of pollutions, resource depletion, and land degradation and effects of agriculture and industry on the environment. They also assist students in recognizing sustainable ways to ameliorate such conditions through positive personal and collective action. Teachers provide opportunities for students to examine relationships among population growth, urbanization, economic development, and stress on the environment and guide students in making wise decisions that balance human needs with the resilience of the physical environment.

Accomplished teachers incorporate tools of geographic understanding, especially maps, and effectively teach students how such tools allow an individual to interpret and analyze the world and people's complex relationship with it. For example, elementary teachers might introduce mapping to students by assigning them to create a working map of their classroom or their neighborhoods designed to solve a geographic problem or to illustrate a geographic relationship. Secondary teachers might utilize GIS mapping software or online resource portals to observe patterns in the amount of air pollutants that are emitted by countries relative to their population and level of industrialization. Teachers also guide students in viewing maps and geographic representations critically as social constructions. For example, students may evaluate a range of maps from local, national, and international sources and different periods of time to question the maps' social and political purposes, perspectives, biases, and possible distortions.

Accomplished teachers know geography is for life—past, present, and future—and not simply an exercise for its own sake. As the world becomes more complex and interconnected—as a result of globalization, improvements in transportation and communication technologies, changes in physical systems, and increased cooperation—the need for geographic knowledge, skills, and perspectives increases among the world's people. Teachers emphasize the value and power of geography in comprehending current events and planning for the future in geographically appropriate and sustainable ways.

Civics and Government

The study of civics and government deals with relationships among citizens and between citizens and states, as well as with the theoretical underpinnings, founding documents, political institutions, public policies, and methods of participation that influence individual and group behavior in the public sphere of society. The exploration of civics and government differs from other areas of the social studies by being less directly shaped by a single academic discipline. Although the content of civics and government is informed by political science, it is also related closely to the overall civic mission of schools—enabling students to participate fully in the life of a democratic society.

Accomplished teachers know that civics and government is a distinct content area with its own major concepts, frameworks, and ways of thinking. It includes basic concepts of comparative government and examines how differing systems of government can provide alternative ways of achieving valued social aims. Such concepts include centralization and decentralization of authority; levels of government; political party systems; and the processes of elections, voting, and citizen behavior. These core concepts, among others, describe the complexity of political ideals, institutions, and practices and their impact on individuals, groups, and society at large. This content area also provides opportunities for teachers to examine the translation of law into social policy, evaluate the desirability and effectiveness of different forms of governmental power, and explore the range of possible citizen action in response to authority.

Accomplished teachers help students understand principles of the U.S. constitutional framework, why each is important, and how they have developed historically. Such principles include, but are not limited to, the rule of law, popular sovereignty, separation of powers, due process, personal liberty, equal protection, and federalism. Teachers aptly navigate the complexity of such concepts and their translation into practice. When engaging students in discussing individual rights, for example, teachers might explore the complexity of shifting tensions between individual liberty and group security, between majority will and minority rights, and between those in positions of power and those who may be politically silenced. While examining issues of the rule of law, teachers might guide students through an understanding not only of strengths, but also of limitations, of the law and court system as a manner of challenging practices of Jim Crow segregation in the early twentieth century United States. Such an examination might also be coupled with a critical examination of the intensifying Civil Rights movement of the 1960s that created the necessary social pressure to turn legal precedent and *de jure* rights into *de facto* civil rights. Teachers recognize that grounding students in the context of democratic traditions is central to developing them as civic-minded, engaged, and active citizens.

Accomplished teachers recognize that the study of civics and government addresses civil rights, civil liberties, and civil responsibilities and, by extension, examines human rights and concepts of global citizenship. Teachers facilitate students' examination of the many ways in which U.S. and global citizenship and identity have been defined, restricted, and expanded over the years. Teachers also help students examine the relationship between the rights and responsibilities arising from national identity and those based on ethnic, religious, or cosmopolitan commitments.

In pursuit of these core concepts, frameworks, and ways of thinking, accomplished teachers provide opportunities for students to develop tools and dispositions for participating in a variety of local, national, and global political contexts, as well as for making sense of the ways individuals relate to the government and to one another. Teachers guide students to recognize the variety of ways in which people work together to bring about or resist political change, both now and in the past, ranging from the judicial process to political advocacy to organized social protest. Teachers help students focus on the process of decision making by guiding them in evaluating competing sources of information, in working with one another to reach consensus, and in presenting and defending arguments on issues of public concern.

In addition to teaching specialized units or courses on civics and government, accomplished teachers use their knowledge of content in this area when teaching history, economics, and geography. For example, teachers might compare the rise of nation states and empires in different time periods and areas of the world and look at particular circumstances that gave rise to their unique trajectories. Teachers might also guide students in analyzing how the ability to control or appeal to the population has contributed to the rise and fall of societies, such as the Mongol Empire, Mayan Empire, Ashanti Empire, Chinese Dynasties under the Mandate of Heaven, and the Soviet Union.

Accomplished teachers might turn a general introduction of various forms and types of government or political theories into an enriched discussion that examines ways in which ideals often translate messily into social reality or reflect the historical context in which they are launched. For example, teachers might engage students with an analysis of Marxist ideals of communism, while guiding students in the ways these ideals played out in China, Cambodia, or the former Soviet Union. Teachers might also examine constitutional documents of the United States and Cuba to illustrate historic tensions between these nations, paying particular attention to the language of the Cuban preamble that directly references this context.

Accomplished teachers also create opportunities for students to study social dynamics not only among individuals and groups in the wider society or in the past, but also in the context of their own lives. For example, in introducing concepts and tools for measuring demographic data, teachers might create an opportunity for students to use these tools in examining the demographic complexity of their own school or neighborhoods. Teachers might guide students in developing tools to gather information on the civic life of their own communities by looking, for example, at the demographic characteristics of the school population, neighborhood leadership, and the local board of education. Similarly, in an examination of historic social movements in various nations, teachers might introduce tools of power analysis or strategy mapping and then apply these same tools to a contemporary social issue of students' choice in a participatory action research project. (See Standard II—*Developing Social Understanding, Engagement, and Civic Identity*.)

Teaching in Context

The way accomplished teachers design and implement meaningful instruction provides the most visible demonstration of excellence in teaching. The following three standards focus on the ways teachers prepare and enact instruction by attending to the diversity within classrooms and ensuring students thrive in safe, dynamic learning environments.

Standard IV
Instruction

Accomplished social studies–history teachers recognize that excellent instruction depends on skilled organization and creative interweaving of curricula, varied instructional strategies, meaningful assessment, and supporting resources that engage students with content, provide meaningful and instructive feedback, and promote a love of learning.

Introduction

Accomplished social studies–history teachers recognize they are facilitators of student learning. To that end, teachers innovatively and creatively provide and help students connect with content. As a result, teachers consistently make careful, thoughtful decisions as they organize curriculum, locate and evaluate resources, select and implement instructional strategies, and develop multiple forms of assessment. From data collected using formal and informal assessments, teachers reexamine their curricular choices and adjust instruction as necessary. They make decisions based on their deep understanding of students, subject matter, and standards and curriculum requirements; their involvement in professional associations and collaborations; their familiarity with educational theory and research; and their knowledge of students' experiences in and outside the classroom.

Curriculum

Accomplished teachers recognize that curriculum must be intentional, structured, and purposeful to engage students in learning. Teachers use the social studies–history curriculum to address students' background knowledge and experiences, including their misconceptions. Teachers also incorporate other disciplines into the social studies–history curriculum.

Accomplished teachers plan, structure, and organize curriculum that links both to academic disciplines and to standards and curriculum requirements in order for instruction to be meaningful for students. Using deep content knowledge, teachers are able to identify how to go beyond the given curriculum to enhance students' knowledge. For example, in teaching the American Revolution, teachers might have students explore the transatlantic effects of the revolution on other political movements such as the French and Haitian Revolutions. In comparing these revolutions, teachers might ask students to examine multiple perspectives of participants such as enslaved and formerly enslaved peoples, indigenous Americans, men and women, and people from different social classes. Students might also examine how ideas of popular sovereignty and nationalism played out in different ways, as well as how the roles of minorities evolved in newly developed nations.

Accomplished teachers ensure curriculum builds upon their students' background knowledge, concerns, and experiences. For example, teachers may take into account students' knowledge of place when discussing local geography. At a school near a major shipping port, teachers may ask students to examine global connections through trade and transportation to their city and region. At a school near a national border, teachers may deal with the laws, social justice, employment, and security of legal and illegal immigration. These connections may not only deal with close physical and temporal proximity, but also may connect to students' conceptual interests and concerns. For example, teachers could use students' conceptions of leadership as an entry point to studying power hierarchies in Tokugawa Japan.

When possible, accomplished teachers organize curriculum around multi-disciplinary themes within social studies–history and with other content areas such as English, science, and mathematics. They recognize social studies–history cannot be taught effectively in a vacuum, and the more connections students make among the various social studies–history disciplines, other academic content areas, and the world around them, the more engaged students will be and the more meaningful and enduring students' learning will become. When teaching about immigration, for instance, a teacher may ask students to research, graph, map, and analyze historical trends and how they affected the economy at different periods in history.

Instructional Strategies

With goals for student learning always in mind, accomplished teachers choose and combine questioning techniques, employ a variety of strategies, scaffold instruction, access student background information, and incorporate literacy and numeracy strategies.

Accomplished teachers know that questions and problems play a central role in instruction. Lessons, units, and courses often begin with an essential question. For example, what causes societies to thrive, collapse, or transform throughout world history? How has the geographic distribution of natural resources shaped patterns of trade or conflict? Why study economic principles? Who benefits from this perspective? How could we look at this differently?

Accomplished teachers use a variety of instructional strategies that are designed to motivate students and that are congruent with specific learning goals. Teachers not only expose students to rich content but also provide them with opportunities to construct deep conceptual understanding of the curriculum, develop expertise in the skills and thinking strategies of social studies–history, and pursue their own interests. Instructional strategies may include inquiry, cooperative learning, research projects and presentations, discussion and deliberation, role play and simulations, instructional games, journaling, interactive lectures, Socratic questioning, concept development, and essay development. Teachers draw creatively and flexibly from this repertoire of strategies and seize upon teachable moments. Teachers select strategies closely aligned with instructional goals. For example, teachers know that concept development strategies are suited for complex ideas, such as imperialism or diffusion; that inquiry is tailored to developing warranted assertions; and that deliberation is appropriate for decision making.

Accomplished teachers scaffold students' participation in instructional activities so that learners are supported as they encounter new content, skills, and thinking strategies. Teachers gradually release responsibility to students as they become more knowledgeable and skilled, and teachers purposefully demonstrate for students how to be more efficient, independent learners. For example, teachers might model source interpretation by "thinking aloud" as they analyze and evaluate a primary source document for the whole class; provide a graphic organizer for students to record their observations and ultimately create their own organizers; work with individuals or small groups to assist in applying strategies previously modeled; and call students' attention to areas they have mastered and those in need of improvement.

Accomplished teachers consider the range of students' academic achievement and background knowledge when planning and implementing instruction so that all students have an opportunity to develop their understanding and expertise in social studies–history. Teachers ensure that uneven previous academic achievement or preparation does not prevent students from engaging in higher-order intellectual activities. Toward that end, teachers seek materials written at a variety of reading levels and supplement these with visual and auditory sources. Also, teachers provide open-ended assignments that allow students to respond in a variety of ways to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Teachers may provide opportunities for cooperative work in which students take on different roles and support one another in learning. In making connections to students' background knowledge, teachers plan activities in which students can draw from diverse experiences to make connections to content. For example, a unit on symbolism in Asian art may begin with a discussion of a variety of symbols with which students are familiar.

Accomplished teachers use a variety of literacy and numeracy strategies to support students' reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and quantifying in social studies–history and beyond. Using these strategies, teachers provide students opportunities to engage in various formal and informal forms of writing and speaking; make within- and between-text comparisons of both primary and secondary sources; analyze, evaluate, construct, and interpret written and multimedia communications, such as texts, charts, graphs, maps, film, and digital tools; learn to write and present persuasive arguments that include the use of evidence; and access information from a variety of sources. Rather than expecting students already to have mastered such skills, teachers deliberately and systematically incorporate literacy and numeracy instruction and meaningful practice into their lessons, when appropriate, and provide regular feedback to students on their accomplishments in these areas.

Accomplished teachers are able to model the steps in the reasoning process, such as solving problems, interpreting data, reaching conclusions, and making predictions. They understand and value skillful writing and can guide students through research projects. Teachers know the importance of writing in the learning process and are able to assess students' progress and misconceptions. Teachers guide students in gaining mastery in writing analytically in social studies–history. For example, students practice and improve their skills in making arguments based on evidence. Teachers help students interpret, categorize, and make inferences and generalizations from documents, data, and other types of evidence, and lead them in creating an analytical thesis.

Accomplished teachers prepare students with instructional strategies that apply not only in their own classrooms, but also look ahead to the next educational level and equip students with skills necessary to ease their transition and prepare them for increasing levels of complexity in social studies–history coursework. For example, a teacher at the elementary or middle level may teach students to access tools of nonfiction writing or introduce students to note taking and citation in research. Secondary teachers prepare students for post-secondary education by teaching specific note taking strategies for a lecture-style format, as well as strategies for gathering and evaluating a range of primary source materials or other data to support high-level research of their own design.

Assessment

Accomplished teachers use formal and informal assessments for a variety of purposes and can determine when a particular type of assessment best aligns with students' learning goals. As teachers develop these formal and informal assessments, they keep in mind that students must be prepared for national, state, or district assessments. To ensure the effectiveness of assessments, teachers provide prompt and specific feedback to students.

Accomplished teachers understand how formal and informal assessments contribute to achieving instructional goals. Teachers use formal methods, such as performance assessments or essays, accompanied by specific scoring guidelines in order to gain systematic, comprehensive insights into student learning. Informal assessment methods also provide insight into student learning and might include students’ opinions or arguments, inventories, self-assessments, observations, or pre- and post-tests. For example, prior to beginning a unit about the New Deal, teachers may have students complete an individual attitudinal assessment to have them gauge their beliefs regarding the level and extent to which the federal government should or should not actively intervene during times of financial crisis. Teachers might then incorporate data from those surveys to design particular lessons, both historic and contemporary, to broaden students’ perspectives and knowledge of such governmental policies. Teachers may include informal assessments during a lesson or unit by asking students to identify main ideas in “quick write” paragraphs or to discuss how they would apply concepts in new settings.

Accomplished teachers employ various types of assessments and know valid measures are not only evaluative but are also learning tools for the teacher. Teachers know ongoing assessment of student progress is the linchpin of effective instruction. Teachers implement ongoing assessments to determine the continuum of student learning over the course of a lesson, unit, semester, or year. For example, teachers may continually assess students’ abilities to interpret primary sources and create historical accounts based on those sources. As well, teachers frequently assess students’ increasing knowledge and ability to incorporate vocabulary and tools specific to their discipline, such as mapping, explaining supply and demand, or analyzing political cartoons within their historical and cultural contexts. Teachers implement summative assessments to evaluate student learning, communicating this information to students and other stakeholders. Assessment informs teachers for short- and long-term curricular decision making. For example, a teacher might find that all students missed a particular question or section on an exam and might examine it with care to determine if it was a poorly written question or if a topic was not adequately learned during the unit.

Accomplished teachers emphasize students’ growth and learning over time, not simply with a final score or test result. When external mandates such as state standardized tests are required, teachers equip students with appropriate strategies and tools but do not focus on teaching to the test. Instead, they provide opportunities for students to develop skills, as well as ways of thinking and learning that go beyond standardized assessments. Accomplished teachers differentiate and tailor assessments to curricular goals, creating their own or modifying existing assessment tools. Teachers incorporate technology, when available, in appropriate and purposeful ways to enhance instructional and assessment goals. For example, teachers might assign students the task of creating digital scavenger hunts using mobile technology, if available, to assess their learning during a geography unit.

Accomplished teachers carefully consider ways they implement, both formally and informally, assessments for students with exceptional needs and with English language learners. Teachers go beyond merely following requirements of students’ educational plans to find creative ways of preparing them and accommodating their needs. With knowledge of their students, including their exceptional needs, teachers develop classroom assessments that allow students to demonstrate learning in a variety of ways. For example, students might write poetry, participate in debate, develop a script for a play, or write a social action letter to a legislator. When possible, English language learners might work with peer interpreters to enable them to participate in class activities. Teachers make accommodations that allow for multiple ways of demonstrating competence yet provide opportunities for students to practice and further develop skills in their areas of need. Teachers readily collaborate with resource staff to discuss strategies, conduct task analysis, and identify common learning barriers and strategies for individual students, as well as for specific groups of students. Teachers do not wait until students are struggling or are bored; they proactively seek the best ways to accommodate and assess students, regardless of where they fall on the spectrum of learning needs. (See Standard I—*Knowing Students*.)

Accomplished teachers recognize the value of providing constructive feedback for student learning. Teachers know that well-stated and appropriate praise can boost a student's self-esteem and confidence. Thus, they look for ways to celebrate each student's accomplishments. When providing correction, teachers do so in a manner that does not diminish the student's sense of self-worth. Teachers ensure that each student realizes that a failure to understand need be only temporary and that the remedy may be a different approach, not resignation or acceptance of low performance. Teachers help students learn to recognize their own accomplishments. Teachers draw on their knowledge of the subject to determine where misconceptions and gaps in a student's knowledge may have occurred, and they work with each student to determine a course of action for improvement that focuses on a manageable number of areas. Effective assessment can increasingly empower students to advocate for their own learning and to assist in instruction. For example, teachers reflect on data collected from an assessment and, sometimes with the student, consider whether the student is ready to move on or if a discrete skill or concept may need to be re-taught. Teachers use the results of informal and formal assessments to help students understand their strengths and weaknesses, and teachers provide essential feedback to support students' continual commitment to learning.

Resources

Accomplished teachers align their selection of resources with curricular and instructional goals. They evaluate resources for instructional soundness and student engagement and ensure a variety of resources are used throughout instruction.

Accomplished teachers select, adapt, and create rich and varied resources aligned with their curricular goals in social studies–history, integrating them deliberately into instruction. Teachers constantly seek to build a rich collection of quality resources that enables them to improve student engagement and learning. Teachers use available textbooks as one resource, but also look beyond them to consider how a variety of people and materials, including current technology, might be enlisted to benefit student learning. Teachers are aware of how the right document, artifact, map, music, or illustration can powerfully illuminate an important idea for students.

Accomplished teachers evaluate the soundness and appropriateness of instructional resources and preview all material for content, perspective, and underlying assumptions. They select resources that present differing ideas, accounts, or perspectives of the same event, issue, topic, or location. They may ask students, for instance, to analyze diary entries, news articles, paintings, illustrations, or other resources.

Accomplished teachers incorporate a variety of resources to enhance instruction. These may include a mixture of primary sources and secondary documents; educational games and puzzles; authentic or replicated artifacts; or community resources such as colleagues, universities, conferences, professional organizations, and local and online learning communities. Teachers search for resources from around the world. They seek to enhance their instruction through grants or professional fellowships. Teachers who find themselves in situations where resources are meager and funds are limited seek to make the most of what they have, using their resourcefulness to locate or create additional resources.

Accomplished teachers consider students' communities and the larger community around the school as essential resources. Teachers may access expertise from students' families and communities, as well as from local historical associations, museums, or libraries. Teachers recognize richness in their own communities and take full advantage of partnerships with local colleges, universities, organizations, or businesses for information, local history, or physical resources. Teachers seek meaningful ways for resources to contribute to student learning and to overall school goals. (See Standard VI—*Learning Environments: Classroom and Communities*.)

In an effort to equip students with knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary for success in the twenty-first century, accomplished teachers thoughtfully integrate current technology, when possible, as a critical component of their instructional strategies. Teachers help students to implement technologies as tools to support learning; encourage collaboration; solve problems; answer questions; or design, publish, and present work. Technology uses may take the form of helping students to use GIS to better examine the physical world, or assigning student projects involving creation and publication of an online newsletter. Teachers recognize that current technologies can provide a powerful means of collaborating with others near and far. For example, teachers could establish digital connections to engage in virtual tours, explore the lives of students in other communities and cultures, or gain knowledge about the daily life of another society.

Standard V
Diversity

Accomplished social studies–history teachers consider diversity a fundamental and deliberate component of excellent teaching. Teachers recognize the importance of student diversity, equity in instruction, and pluralism in the curriculum.

Introduction

Accomplished social studies–history teachers know that diversity is a fundamental and deliberate component of educational practices and that the social studies classroom lends itself to exploring, addressing, and debating topics related to cultural pluralism. They recognize that diversity means more than demographic representation of students in the classroom. Teachers recognize the divergence of opinion, student needs, and teachers' own biases as central considerations that inform content and curricular choices. They incorporate diverse perspectives and experiences in the curriculum and use instructional strategies that aid in achieving equity among students. Teachers also acknowledge that students bring diverse perspectives and experiences to the classroom, and teachers find approaches that maximize students' contributions and thereby enrich the classroom as a whole. Teachers create inclusive classrooms where differences are respected and similarities are acknowledged.

Student Diversity

Accomplished teachers recognize many forms of student diversity, which may include language background; culture; ethnicity; gender; sexual orientation; socioeconomic status; religious affiliation; political ideology; social, physical, and cognitive strengths; literacy and numeracy experiences; patterns of communication; regional and national origins; background knowledge; and academic achievement. For instance, teachers know students may have different ideas about sharing personal experiences; communicating interpersonally, contacting others physically, building trust, collaborating in groups, recognizing punctuality, accepting assistance willingly, and making independent decisions. Students may also have varying ideas about discipline and control. For example, coming from a country where lectures and note taking are the norm and where the teacher is seen as the ultimate authority, some immigrant students may struggle when asked to participate in cooperative learning involving partner or peer review. Teachers will respectfully acknowledge a student's hesitation but explain the rationale behind teaching strategies. They may adapt their approaches to interaction, communication, or instruction so that all students are able to access content.

Accomplished teachers know students read and write at varying levels and use different patterns of communication. They know that students' understandings of and contributions to the formal curriculum vary, and that students have different degrees of access to the curriculum related to economic, geographic, political, and historical patterns. For example, a student interested in a world sport such as soccer may bring knowledge about countries from around the world. Teachers tap into this interest so that it serves as an entry point to geography or world history.

Accomplished teachers know some students may have strong beliefs about the nature of family structures, political decision making, human evolution, historical developments, knowledge, gender expectations, and the role of disagreement in public. Knowing that students may resist learning about alternative perspectives or cultural patterns related to these issues, teachers provide structures necessary to facilitate exploration of other viewpoints while honoring students' convictions.

Accomplished teachers know students may be interested in particular aspects of history or geography that they perceive as particularly relevant to their own identities. Teachers capitalize on students' differing interests and backgrounds to motivate and engage them in the study of social studies–history. For example, teachers may have students work in self-selected groups to investigate world religions, world civilizations, or geographic regions with which they most identify. Similarly, in studying a topic such as World War I, students may be given the option of writing from the perspective of a supporter of the Allied Powers, a soldier in the Ottoman Empire, or a woman on the home front who is opposed to war. In studying struggles for expanded civil rights in U.S. history, students may work individually or in groups to examine the experiences of women, immigrants, African Americans, gays and lesbians, and other groups. In each case, teachers also encourage students to investigate and to compare experiences and perspectives of groups with whom they are less familiar.

Equity in Instruction

Accomplished teachers recognize that students may have different levels of access to resources, such as current technologies, printed materials in the home, and opportunities to travel to locations such as libraries. Teachers look for ways to provide time, space, and access to tools that students need for success. When options are limited, teachers identify ways to assess students' learning using alternative methods instead of penalizing them for not completing a given task. Teachers advocate for students who lack academic support and may communicate with their families to suggest ways to assist their children academically. Teachers find ways to maintain academic rigor while recognizing the realities of many students' lives. For example, the families of some students depend on them to assist with bills and domestic responsibilities, and these expectations may challenge students' ability to complete homework, participate in extra-curricular activities, or attend school consistently. To address this need, teachers might provide extended time to complete assignments, flexibility in meeting times, and alternative forms of assessment such as portfolios.

Accomplished teachers accommodate students by differentiating instruction and assessment to facilitate students' abilities to reach learning goals in the social studies–history classroom. (See Standard IV—*Instruction*.) Teachers employ a range of strategies to recognize students' diversity, to create a learning environment in which all students feel valued and affirmed, and to provide opportunities for students to achieve equitable outcomes. Teachers are aware of the expectations they have, for example, for females and males or for English language learners and native English speakers. Teachers expect full participation from all students and model democratic principles. Classrooms are organized in ways that provide all students access to information and allow them to speak and to be heard. Teachers employ strategies, such as Socratic seminars and silent debates, so that all students can participate in discussions.

By establishing a safe environment, accomplished teachers respect and encourage dissenting viewpoints. In a diverse classroom, teachers are an authority, but are not an authoritarian, and students feel comfortable exploring multiple perspectives. Teachers guide students, providing tools and encouragement, in dissecting complicated issues in history and current society.

Accomplished teachers allow students to express themselves through a variety of dialects and in a variety of oral, written, and visual formats. However, teachers also model academic language, and they teach students when particular types of expression are more appropriate than others.

Accomplished teachers have high expectations for all learners but acknowledge that the entry point and path to success may differ for each student. They teach to students' strengths, incorporate students' backgrounds and experiences, and use a variety of strategies to meet a wide range of student needs. Teachers choose texts that draw from a range of perspectives and represent an array of experiences. They are aware of potential biases found in textbooks and are able to create lessons that counter such biases. For example, in some history texts, women and ethnic minorities may be missing altogether, or their roles and contributions may be marginalized. Teachers with knowledge of such omissions are able to compensate for these biases and create a more realistic, balanced picture of the past. They lead students through texts and show how to examine omissions, biases, and multiple perspectives.

Accomplished teachers are aware of subtle messages exhibited in body language, facial expressions, and responses or non-responses by students during discussions. In some cultures, for example, it is considered rude for a young person to look an adult in the eyes when addressing them. Aware of this, teachers recognize that such behavior is not evasive.

Pluralism in the Curriculum

Accomplished teachers highlight diversity and pluralism in all areas of curriculum. They adapt or create curriculum to recognize the pluralistic nature of societies, past and present. Teachers are thoughtful in selecting topics of study that make the diverse nature of societies clear. For example, they expand attention devoted to African Americans beyond slavery, civil rights, and the Harlem Renaissance to include African American involvement in westward expansion, the labor movement, scientific and technological developments, and other topics. Similarly, teachers avoid portraying historical civilizations or contemporary world regions as possessing monolithic cultures or patterns of social organization. They consistently engage students in investigating perspectives and experiences, for example, between men and women; among members of differing religions, economic backgrounds, abilities, and adherents to various social or political ideologies; and within and among generations.

Accomplished teachers provide opportunities for students to examine how topics can be approached in different ways; how disciplines have been constructed historically; and how conceptual categories are gendered or racialized, such as how race is socially constructed. Teachers recognize how choices of topics, or approaches within topics, are often influenced by personal preference, familiarity, and experience. They facilitate students' explorations of how contemporary societal categories and expectations have been developed historically and vary cross-culturally, rather than portraying racial categories, gender expectations, or patterns of segregation and interaction as timeless and unproblematic. The offspring of many recent African or Caribbean immigrants, for instance, although "black" as part of a social category, may carry assumptions and expectations about U.S. society that differ substantially from those "black" people who have been in the United States for several generations. Teachers might also lead students to explore the varied ethnicities and cultures that are encompassed by terms, such as "Latino," "Asian," and "Native American."

Accomplished teachers facilitate students' examination of the nature of diversity, including diversity within diversity. Teachers help students understand the different attributes that might reside in a single individual and that individuals have overlapping identities and experiences. Teachers understand that as a nation, the United States represents a single fabric with many strands that cannot be isolated into single categories. Members of U.S. society overlap in many ways among complex layers of religion, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and political beliefs. Teachers also create opportunities for students to compare differing perceptions and expectations related to diversity within and across cultures, such as the varied meanings of the hijab and other forms of religious expression; the variety of ways in which diverse sexualities are both expressed and suppressed; the unevenness of racial boundaries and their fluidity in different societies; or the development of formal and informal communication.

In order to analyze fairness, equity, stereotype, and prejudice within social studies–history, accomplished teachers study what equity means within each subject area. For example, within economics and geography teachers might have students analyze spatial patterns of differential pay for women and men or differing levels of educational attainment and salary by ethnicity and region. In government, students could discuss different levels of political participation, both voluntary and involuntary; percentage of men and women in government; proportion of minorities and poor people in jail; and tradeoffs between individual- and group-based political rights. (See Standard III—*Content*.)

Standard VI
Learning Environments: Classroom and Communities

Accomplished social studies–history teachers actively create and cultivate safe and dynamic learning environments characterized by respectful peer interactions, facilitation of multiple perspectives, and collaborative partnerships with families and with students' greater communities.

Introduction

Accomplished social studies–history teachers create safe and dynamic learning environments in which students are intellectually challenged and fully engaged in learning. These environments are characterized by such qualities as respect, integrity, trust, equity, openness, and risk-taking. Teachers encourage both independent thinking and collaborative learning. Teachers create environments in which students respectfully discuss and weigh multiple perspectives. Teachers use the content of social studies–history to engage students in discussions of issues in a safe, respectful, and intellectual environment in which students with different points of view or backgrounds are treated respectfully. Teachers recognize students' emotional and intellectual development is not confined to physical boundaries of the classroom. Teachers establish relationships with families and connections to the community and recognize that both are essential to student development and growth.

Creating a Safe and Dynamic Learning Environment in the Classroom

Accomplished teachers establish a productive, open, and enriching learning environment characterized by secure, active students who successfully interact with information and with one another. Teachers use knowledge of social groupings and relational dynamics within the classroom as a basis for students' collaboration and for democratic, equitable interactions. Teachers model for students a love of learning. Teachers strive to create a learning environment that develops students' confidence. In their classrooms, teachers emphasize academic honesty, integrity, acceptance, and open-mindedness. They seize teachable moments while connecting to curriculum and maintaining an environment that meets students' needs. For example, sensing students' anxiety or confusion about a current event such as a war, an environmental issue, or an economic crisis, teachers may modify planned lessons so that students can discuss and better understand the issue and its connection to the social studies–history curriculum.

Accomplished teachers create and manage a structured, equitable, and safe environment by establishing clear and attainable academic and behavioral expectations. Teachers encourage students to take intellectual risks. Teachers know how to channel students' natural energies and enthusiasm into a dynamic, equitable learning environment. Teachers ensure that all students feel safe and accepted. Teachers model a tone of respect and understanding by establishing an environment that supports a variety of intellectual, cultural, religious, familial, socioeconomic, and sexual and gender identities.

Accomplished teachers also manage an equitable, safe environment by monitoring students' engagement and making appropriate adjustments to learning opportunities as necessary. Classroom management is natural, transitions flow easily, and teachers encourage a steady flow of energy in the classroom. They are continually aware of the classroom environment and respond quickly and efficiently to potential or actual disruptions.

Accomplished teachers recognize that not all students will participate in the same way or to the same degree, and they actively work to involve all students in the learning environment. Teachers capitalize on students' strengths to elicit responses while maintaining an academically safe environment. In order to involve students in class discussions, teachers might create differentiated roles of participation that deliberately build students' capacities in areas of weakness.

Accomplished teachers recognize that both independent thinking and collaborative learning are important components of a strong learning environment. Teachers model and teach skills necessary to work effectively as part of a team, and they discuss benefits of such learning, including opportunities to learn from one another, examine multiple viewpoints, and develop social skills. They encourage students to participate in group processes and provide ample opportunities for students to practice skills in the course of learning. For example, teachers might have students conduct research, give a presentation, participate in a jigsaw activity, or take notes and ask clarifying questions on a topic presented by peers. To facilitate peer interaction, teachers might lead students through role-plays of appropriate and inappropriate feedback, group interaction, and teamwork activities.

Accomplished teachers create an environment in which students are willing to voice and consider multiple perspectives. Teachers facilitate students' exploration of the intellectual rewards that come from taking other viewpoints seriously, and they assist students in analyzing their own and others' perspectives for evidence, logic, and underlying values and beliefs. Teachers draw on the diversity of ideas within the classroom and expand the range of viewpoints to which students are exposed by using a variety of resources, including a range of media. For example, in studying a proposed economic stimulus plan, teachers give students the opportunity to express their ideas about the most appropriate policy options and also have students examine opinions expressed by a range of stakeholders and community leaders. Teachers do not avoid exposing students to perspectives that may directly challenge their own ideas or those that are dominant within the community, yet they remain sensitive to students' potentially strong opinions.

In order to facilitate students' understandings of controversial or emotion-laden perspectives in meaningful ways, accomplished teachers provide students with clear structures for deliberation rather than relying on free-form discussion. These structures may include Socratic seminars, structured academic controversies, mock trials, simulated United Nations conferences, town hall meetings, and other formats for presenting and considering differing views. Teachers also provide debriefing sessions in which students reflect upon activities, allowing teachers to both assess students' achievement and consider their perceptions of the experiences. Teachers facilitate students' learning of respectful and productive norms of interaction and hold students accountable for adhering to such standards. These norms may include taking turns, summarizing others' ideas, synthesizing group ideas and identifying areas of disagreement, checking for understanding, disagreeing with ideas rather than with people, or asking relevant questions.

Accomplished teachers create a learning environment of inquiry in which experimentation and interaction are encouraged and valued. For example, they may use music and art that elicit questions and curiosity students have about topics of study. The learning community could also include the exploration of virtual environments or the use of digital forums for collaboration and communication. For example, teachers might use online artifacts, simulated excavations, or virtual field trips.

Enhancing Learning through Family and Community Connections

Accomplished teachers value the distinctive roles family and community partners play in creating a supportive learning environment and continually seek opportunities to build strong partnerships with them. Teachers realize learning does not end at the classroom door, and they use resources within their local communities. For example, representatives from a local planning agency may visit a social studies–history classroom to share maps and aerial photographs of the town or region and explain how they are used.

Accomplished teachers respect how the diversity and contributions of students' families influence learning environments. Teachers see collaboration with families as an essential tool in providing students with the support and motivation they need to be successful. Teachers also recognize that students grow up not only in classrooms, but also in communities, and teachers view the neighborhoods and communities that surround the school and students' homes as powerful opportunities for learning. In addition, teachers recognize how global communities—including affinity groups that extend beyond local neighborhoods—influence students. Teachers actively seek to develop opportunities for students to study the dynamics and history of these various communities, as students are taught to value, analyze, and perhaps see in renewed ways how their lives and those of their neighbors are intertwined with the larger history and fabric of the social world.

Accomplished teachers create clear lines of communication with families and encourage involvement in students' learning. Teachers use technology, as appropriate, to communicate with families. Teachers welcome family participation in school activities and take the initiative in inviting families to become active in the school community. Teachers strive to make their classrooms and the school a welcoming environment. Teachers know their role with families is more than providing information. Consequently, they signal clearly through supportive words and actions the importance of families and communities as partners in their children's education. Teachers create a sense of community between the school and students' outside environments and make clear the mutual interest they share with families in seeing students succeed. Teachers offer families suggestions on how to help their children develop good study habits and skills, complete homework, set goals, and improve performance.

Accomplished teachers know learning can be extended outside the classroom. They recognize that students are more engaged when learning is based on authentic situations in which students have a vested interest. Teachers lead students in purposeful research into social issues that affect them, the school, or the community in order to develop solutions that can be presented to appropriate audiences for possible action. Teachers may facilitate partnerships between students and community organizations, service groups, or government entities. These interactions can be as valuable as—or even more valuable than—lessons taught during the school day. Teachers know authentic learning helps to develop students academically and socially.

Developing as a Professional

It is essential for accomplished teachers to continually develop professionally to enhance student learning and the growth of self, colleagues, and the field. The following two standards indicate the vital nature of creating and leveraging opportunities for collaboration and leadership. Reflecting on the effectiveness of self-development, instruction, and student achievement further refines the teacher's educational philosophy and improves teaching.

Standard VII

Professional Growth

Accomplished social studies–history teachers pursue professional growth activities and experiences to develop themselves, their colleagues, schools, and districts, and to benefit the larger field of social studies–history education.

Introduction

Accomplished social studies–history teachers are professionals who hold clear standards for themselves, engage in life-long learning, and commit to continually growing in their effectiveness as educators. Teachers view professional growth as essential to their life as members of learning communities and to student achievement. Accomplished teaching is characterized by a commitment to continuous growth and development of self, colleagues, and the field.

Developing Self

As life-long learners, accomplished teachers are passionate and intellectually curious about the content areas they teach, and they work to keep abreast of the latest research in their field and of ways to teach effectively. They may take graduate classes; read professional journals; attend clinics, institutes, and workshops; participate in learning communities; and synthesize their learning to increase their effectiveness in the classroom. For example, after reading an article about the implementation of museum teaching trunks in the classroom, teachers might write a grant to create trunks to enrich their students' learning experiences. Teachers explore research advances in other disciplines that influence social studies–history learning, such as mathematics, science, technologies, and language arts. For example, teachers may read science journals to access current thinking about changes in global environmental systems or consult research on writing to hone students' skills in expressing social studies concepts and generalizations. Teachers then apply their advanced knowledge of content, pedagogies, and technologies to develop appropriate learning experiences relevant to students. For example, based on research and experiences with local environmental organizations, teachers might develop a unit on natural resources that features a simulation involving a local watershed.

Accomplished teachers are not only intellectually curious; they continue learning to improve their effectiveness as reflective practitioners. A teacher might learn a new teaching strategy and continually refine it to match students' development. Teachers might actively contribute to and learn about the teaching of social studies–history through participation in learning communities and other collaborative forums. They ask questions, invite inquiries, reflect on their practice, and engage in discussions in multifaceted ways to teach content and other issues in the social studies–history classroom. Teachers take ideas from learning communities, workshops, and readings and create innovative lessons to enrich students' learning experiences.

Enhancing the Educational Environment at the School and District Levels

When possible and appropriate, accomplished teachers explore and create opportunities for teacher leadership. Teachers actively collaborate with colleagues for mutual professional growth. Teachers formally or informally share ideas, resources, and innovations they have learned in order to enrich the school learning environment. They engage colleagues in meaningful discussions about curriculum, teaching, and student learning and are invested in improving school and district culture. They may mentor new teachers, serve on curriculum or staff development committees, or engage in strategic planning processes with colleagues. They view effective teaching not as an isolated exercise, but as a systematic practice involving collaboration and decision making with fellow teachers.

Accomplished teachers are knowledgeable about and take active roles in supporting the growth of colleagues and advocate for the best teaching strategies to increase student achievement.

Enhancing Social Studies and History Education

Understanding the importance of social studies–history in preparing tomorrow's leaders, accomplished teachers reach beyond the school and district to enhance social studies–history education on a larger stage. They build on personal and professional growth experiences and share these with extended learning communities. They may write for professional journals, develop curricula, lead institutes and workshops for colleagues, and become active in their state and national professional organizations. Teachers belong to larger communities of colleagues, and they interact with national organizations, advocacy groups, and policy makers—each of which can serve as resources for enhancing and promoting social studies–history.

Standard VIII
Reflection

Accomplished social studies–history teachers engage in purposeful reflection as a systematic self-examination of all aspects of their teaching to extend knowledge, improve teaching, and refine their practice and their philosophy of education.

Introduction

Accomplished social studies–history teachers know reflection is a purposeful, systematic self-examination of all aspects of their teaching and use it to advance and deepen student learning. Teachers reflect on their practice, on students' performance, and on developments in their field so that they can steadily extend their knowledge, improve their teaching, and refine their philosophy of education. While they are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach, they also know gaps may exist in their learning and that teaching social studies–history requires not only a breadth of knowledge but also a depth of knowledge. Therefore, they work to strengthen their knowledge of subject matter, pedagogy, and students. Teachers also recognize how their subject matter connects to other disciplines. Reflection is central to teachers' responsibilities and growth as professionals.

Extending Knowledge

Accomplished teachers question what they need to know in terms of subject matter, new scholarship, and current methodologies. They take steps to expand their knowledge and skills accordingly. Teachers consider prevailing research findings about learning, cognition, and intelligence, and they recognize its application and limitations. Reflective teachers understand contemporary educational theories, emerging practices, current debates, and promising research findings, and use this information to improve their teaching. Teachers reflect on the major controversies in their field. These controversies include depth versus breadth and cursory knowledge versus in-depth application and synthesis.

Improving Teaching

Accomplished teachers engage in reflective thinking to support and enhance their instruction. They recognize reflection is integral to strengthening and deepening their practice. They draw on their strengths to improve students' learning and improve upon their weaknesses to enhance instructional practices. For example, when analyzing results of an assessment, the reflective teacher might associate student achievement with a particular type of instructional strategy or delivery. From this reflection, the teacher might revise future lessons accordingly.

Accomplished teachers' reflective practices take place individually and with peers and other professionals. Teachers regularly reflect with peers through learning communities and a variety of interactions such as analysis and comparison of student work, informal discussions, and non-evaluative peer observations. Observations and discussions can shape teachers' decisions about methods to improve practice. Non-evaluative peer observations, for example, might produce data upon which to design and implement action research. This data can also be used diagnostically to help individual students and improve instructional programs. Working with students, colleagues, parents, and other stakeholders, teachers can pinpoint if, when, and how their practices should change and, thereby, modify less effective practices or replace them with more promising approaches.

Accomplished teachers collect and reflect on evidence from a variety of sources that provide them with insight and direction. Teachers carefully analyze input received from formal and informal conferences with families, students, and others. These observations and discussions influence teachers as they reflect on their planning, monitoring, assessment, and instructional techniques. For example, after conferencing with students regarding their essays, teachers might consider the need for higher-order thinking skills in student writing. Teachers seeking to improve writing instruction might participate in a literacy institute, take a summer course on writing across the curriculum, or engage in action research on writing strategies designed to improve student learning.

Accomplished teachers formulate cogent reasons for curricular decisions that can be explained clearly to students, families, colleagues, administrators, school board members, and the public. For example, a teacher who incorporates discussion of controversial public issues in the classroom can explain the necessity of deliberation in preparing students for participation in a democratic society, and can point to research demonstrating that students who participate in academic controversies develop better understandings of subject matter.

For accomplished teachers, every class and every activity provides opportunities for reflection and improvement. When things go well, teachers think about why the class succeeded and how to adapt lessons learned to other classes. When things do not go as well as expected, teachers reflect on how to improve instruction to avoid differences between teacher expectations and student achievement in the future. As teachers assess work in progress and the final products of their students, teachers assess themselves as well. For example, if students and parents report they have trouble understanding where particular activities fit into the overall course of instruction, a teacher might begin sending home monthly newsletters with a preview of forthcoming lessons and an explanation of their purposes. Teachers might retire an engaging unit or project because it does not meet learning targets, and replace it with an assessment that more directly correlates with a student learning standard or measures competency in a specific skill.

Through reflection, accomplished teachers continually explore ways to heighten student engagement. For example, by incorporating visual arts and music into activities, teachers can engage students with multiple learning styles, helping them to connect to the current topic of study.

Philosophy of Education

Accomplished teachers possess a well-defined yet flexible philosophy of teaching. Teachers' educational purposes correspond with experiences they provide to students, and teachers consistently reflect on achievement of those goals. Whether the teacher's educational ideology consists, for example, of rational humanism, religious orthodoxy, critical theory, progressivism, or cognitive pluralism, the reflective teacher can articulate the intention behind their decisions in organizing educational experiences for students.

Accomplished teachers reflect upon ways their own learning experiences and preferences affect their assumptions about teaching. Teachers are aware of other factors that may drive or influence their practice. For example, reflective teachers know ways in which their own cultural backgrounds, perspectives, values, and personal experiences influence their teaching. They are conscious of their own philosophical filters and consistently evaluate how these influence their expectations, planning, and teaching. As teachers reflect on experiences and assumptions, they refine their philosophy and are able to clearly articulate it to others. They may ask for anonymous feedback in the form of classroom or online surveys that address curricular units, classroom routines, and the teacher's style and characteristics. Reflective teachers are aware of how their actions affect students and their colleagues, and they model reflective practice at all levels.

Accomplished teachers are models of educated individuals, and they continually deepen their knowledge base, expand their repertoire of teaching methods, and sharpen their judgment and philosophy. They exemplify high ideals and embrace the highest professional standards in assessing their practice and learning from experience. By looking at areas in which students have gaps in learning, teachers examine whether there was a deficit in instruction, a lack of adequate student preparation, or a weakness in the teacher's knowledge or skill base. Teachers make decisions and act with integrity, seeking to achieve congruence between their educational philosophies and their practices.

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Acknowledgments

Social Studies–History Standards, Second Edition, derives its power to describe accomplished teaching from an amazing degree of collaboration and consensus among educators from the field. Through the expertise and input of four standards committees; numerous reviews by the board of directors; and two periods of public comment by educators, policymakers, parents, and the like, as well as through the intense study of candidates for National Board Certification who have immersed themselves in the first edition, these second-edition standards emerge as a living testament to what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. *Social Studies–History Standards, Second Edition*, represents the best thinking by teachers and for teachers about advanced teaching practice in the field.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is deeply grateful to all those who contributed their time, wisdom, and professional vision to *Social Studies–History Standards, Second Edition*. Any field grows, shifts, and evolves over time. Standards, too, must remain dynamic and therefore are subject to revision. In 2009, NBPTS convened a fourth Social Studies–History Standards Committee. This committee was charged with achieving both continuity and change, using the first edition of the standards as the foundation for its work but modifying the standards to reflect best practices of the early 21st century. The Social Studies–History Standards Committee exemplified the collegiality, expertise, and dedication to the improvement of student learning that are hallmarks of accomplished teachers. Special thanks go to committee co-chairs, Michele Forman, NBCT, and Robert L. Harris, for their invaluable leadership in making the second edition a reality.

A debt of gratitude is owed to the three original committees (representing three developmental levels), which debated, reflected, and articulated the multiple facets of accomplished teaching in social studies–history to advance the field and to provide a rigorous and sound basis for national certification of teachers. In particular, the National Board appreciates the leadership of the leadership of chairs and vice chairs of previous committees, Jeanne L. Jusaitis, Jesus Garcia, Peggy Allan, David Harris, Earl Bell, and Joseph Onosko, who skillfully led the effort to weave the National Board's Five Core Propositions into field-specific standards of teaching excellence.

The work of the Social Studies–History Standards Committee was guided by the NBPTS Board of Directors. The National Board Certification Council was instrumental in selecting the standards committee, reviewing the current edition of the standards, and recommending adoption of the standards to the full board of directors. Stakeholders from disciplinary and policy organizations, teacher associations, and higher education provided insight into the current status of the field and recommended members for the committee. Jeff Bernstein provided the committee with invaluable content knowledge in the area of political science. Writer Kim Worth, NBCT, and staff members Joan Auchter, Lisa Stooksberry, Mary Lease, NBCT, and Emma Parkerson supported the committee in their task.

In presenting these standards for accomplished social studies–history teachers, NBPTS recognizes that this publication would not have evolved without the considerable contributions of many unnamed institutions and individuals, including the hundreds of people who responded to public comment. On behalf of NBPTS, we extend our thanks to all of them.

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