

Glossary for Iowa's Social Studies Standards

This glossary provides the reader with an introduction to some of the terminology used in the Iowa Core Social Studies standards. Although not exhaustive, the terms listed can be shared with teachers, students, and parents to better understand the intention of the standards.

Term	Definition
21st Century Skills	A collection of skills which have been identified as essential for students to be college, career, and civic ready. In the Iowa Core Standards the 21st century skills include civic literacy, financial literacy, employability skills, health literacy, and technology literacy.
Anchor Standards	Broader standards which provide continuity across the grade levels, but which are more specifically defined at each level. The anchor standards are not themselves designed to be assessed, but to provide an organizing feature across all grade levels.
Argumentation	Process of making a claim and supporting that claim with evidence and reasoning
Behavioral Sciences	Includes components of the disciplines of anthropology, psychology, and sociology
C3 Framework	Written in collaboration with fifteen professional development organizations and published by the National Council for the Social Studies, the document is centered around an inquiry arc of four dimensions: • Dimension 1--Developing questions and designing inquiries, • Dimension 2--Applying disciplinary concepts and tools (for Civics, Economics, Geography, and History), • Dimension 3--Evaluating sources and using evidence, • Dimension 4--Communicating conclusions and taking informed action. The C3 Framework is available in a free downloadable pdf.

Capital	One of the factors of production; can refer to money used to start or invest in a business; can also refer to the physical machines, tools, and/or buildings needed to produce a good or service
Causation	An historical thinking skill that asks students to identify and analyze cause and effect relationships
Change and Continuity	An historical thinking skill which expects students to identify and analyze what changes over time and what stays the same; included in this historical skill is being able to explain why some things change and others do not
Chronological Thinking	An historical thinking skill which involves the analysis of when events occurred and their relationship to other events
Chronology	A list of events that are organized by the date in which the events occurred, typically with the most recent events at the bottom of the list--compare to a timeline
Civics	The study of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizenship.
Civic Institutions	Institutions that exists separate from the State and the Market. A civil institution is one that is not engaged in governance or business. This includes parks, libraries, and other public buildings or places which facilitate group activities or add to individual's personal enjoyment.
Civic Problem	Issue or concern which affects a community, state, or nation and needs to be addressed or resolved collectively
Civic Virtues	Personal qualities associated with the effective functioning of the civil and political order, or the preservation of its values and principles (Britannica.com)
Claim	A statement which identifies an individual's position or argument regarding a question or debate; sometimes referred to as a thesis

Compare/Contrast	An historical thinking skill which asks students to examine and analyze the similarities and differences among events, people, places, objects, ideas in order to identify patterns and unique qualities
Compelling Questions	Focus on enduring issues and concerns. They deal with curiosities about how things work; interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts; and unresolved issues that require students to construct arguments in response. Example: Was the American Revolution revolutionary? --also see <i>supporting questions</i>
Consensus Building	Is essentially mediation of a conflict which may involve many parties. Usually, the conflict also involves multiple, complex issues. (also called collaborative problem solving or collaboration)
Context	The chronological and geographical parameters in which events take place; used by historians to analyze why certain events happen when and where they do; can include social, political, economic, historical context
Culture	The beliefs, values, and practices that are specific to a group of people and which are used to guide behavior of the group members as well as define the group's identity; includes food, dress, art, music, dance as well as social mores and taboos
Deliberative Procedures	Process for using group discussion or dialogue to consider the reasons for or against an action or decision
Democratic Procedures	Process for allowing and encouraging participation in the decision-making process by all participants
Demographics	The statistical data of a population, especially those showing such things as average age, income, education, etc.

Disciplinary Skills	The skills used by professionals in the social studies disciplines; for example, historians use particular sourcing skills in order to evaluate the usefulness and reliability of historical materials or the methods used by sociologists when conducting observations.
Disciplinary Concepts and Tools	Moving beyond the simple knowledge of famous people, places, facts, and things. Disciplinary concepts are the big ideas that engage students in critical thinking within a respective field. (Examples: scarcity, authority, change and continuity, power)
Domestic	Refers to events, issues, or objects that occur within the boundaries of a single nation (eg. domestic policy); 2. Refers to activities and processes which occur within the household (eg. domestic labor)
Economics	The economic standards promote the concepts and tools necessary for economic decision making in order to help understand the interaction between buyers and sellers in markets, workings of the national economy, and interactions within the global marketplace.
Evidentiary Limitations	The lack of sufficient evidence to make a case; documents/artifacts which tend to prove an outcome
Factors of Production	Basic principle in economics which refers to the components needed to produce goods and services; includes human labor, capital, raw materials/natural resources, and entrepreneurship
Financial Institutions	Organizations which assist individuals or businesses in managing and/or investing their money; includes banks, credit unions, and stock brokerages
Financial Literacy	The financial literacy standards promote the goal of financial capability. The standards focus on setting goals, saving and spending, credit and debt, investing, and measuring financial risk

Founding Documents	These documents help citizens better understand the true principles of liberty and acquire the prudence needed to apply them in the varying circumstances of American history and politics. They are considered essential reading for all students, who will have the responsibility of sustaining and administering our republic in the future. i.e. The U.S. Constitution, The Bill of Rights, The Declaration of Independence, The Federalist Papers, etc.
Geographic Models	Simplified representations of reality used by geographers to study people and places; includes maps, globes, scale models, and conceptual models
Geographic Representation	At the elementary level would most likely be a map, chart, and/or diagram
Goods and Services	Essential economic concepts that refer to what an economy produces
Historical Eras	Periods of time historians identify as having unifying characteristics; these characteristics can be social, cultural, political, and/or economic; allows for the chunking of historical time but requires decisions about which unifying feature(s) will be used in organizing historical eras
Historical Sources	Includes primary and secondary sources which are used to examine events in the past; can include text sources as well as images, maps, and material objects
Human resources	Used in economics to refer to the contributions of humans in the production process; can include labor as well as knowledge, skills, education
Immigration	Process of moving to and living in a foreign country; issues related to immigration can be highly-charged and contested, both publicly and politically

Indigenous Peoples	People often defined in international or national legislation as having a set of specific rights based on their historical ties to a particular territory, and their cultural or historical distinctiveness from other populations that are often politically dominant
Inquiry-Based Learning	Process in which students explore academic content by posing, investigating, and answering questions; student questions are intended to be at the center of the process; equal emphasis is placed on the component skills of research and the academic or content knowledge (Center for Inspired Teaching); the social studies standards include elements of the inquiry arc described in the C3 Framework for Social Studies.
Migration	The movement of people, plants, and animals in search of better living conditions; can occur in seasonal or regular patterns
Multiple Perspectives	Refers to a thinking skill that asks students to examine topics/issues from multiple points of view
Natural Resources	Used in economics to refer to resources that are used in production and/or consumed and which are found in nature (eg. lumber, coal, gold, fish)
Norms	The rules of behavior that are considered acceptable in a group or society
Opportunity Cost	An essential concept of economics which refers to the fact that when an individual makes one choice all other choices have to be forsaken and become the cost of making that particular choice (eg. the opportunity cost of choosing to take a nap is missing the broadcast of a particular television show and not completing homework due the next day)
Physical Capital	See capital
Political Institutions	Organizations which create, enforce, and apply laws; often represent the parts of a government which are elected as opposed to the parts which are appointed (i.e. bureaucracy)

PAC (Political Action Committee)	A group formed by individuals or groups to fundraise money in support of political candidates that reinforce the group's' beliefs
Population Distribution	Means the pattern of where people live. World population distribution is uneven. Places which are sparsely populated contain few people. Places which are densely populated contain many people. Sparsely populated places tend to be difficult places to live.
Primary Source	A source created at the time an event took place or by an eyewitness to the event; can include personal letters, diaries/journals, government records, photographs, speeches, newspaper stories and original artifacts, etc.
Push and Pull Factors	Those factors which either forcefully push people into migration or attract them. A push factor is forceful, and a factor which relates to the country from which a person migrates. It is generally some problem which results in people wanting to migrate; pull factors are the positive aspects of some countries that serve to attract more immigrants than others.
Regions	An area or division, especially part of a country or the world having definable characteristics but not always fixed boundaries.
Risk Management	Techniques employed to limit loss for individuals, groups, or business entities.
Scarcity	Basic principle in the study of economics; principle that most resources are available in limited amounts.
Secondary Source	A source created to explain events in the past but are created after the events occurred and by someone who was not present at the time of the events; can include history monographs, newspaper stories, journal articles, and textbooks.

Social Studies	The integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Within the school program, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.
Sociocultural	Combining social and cultural factors
Sociological Perspectives	Perspectives that offer sociologists theoretical paradigms for explaining how society influences people, and vice versa
Standards	Define what students should know and be able to do at each level; can be used as a reference point for planning teaching and learning programs, and for assessing student progress; should help teachers set targets and monitor achievement and develop programs that support and improve student learning.
Statistics	Descriptive statistics uses the data to provide descriptions of the population, either through numerical calculations or graphs or tables. Inferential statistics makes inferences and predictions about a population based on a sample of data taken from the population in question.
Stratification	The arrangement or classification of something into different groups
Supporting Questions	Focus on descriptions, definitions, and processes on which there is general agreement within the social studies disciplines, and require students to construct explanations that advance claims of understanding in response (C3 Framework for the Social Studies)--also see compelling questions

Textual Evidence	Refers to evidence that can be found in or inferred from a text
Timeline	A visual representation of events and the order in which those events occurred; allows for easy analysis of when events occurred in relationship to other events--compare to chronology
Wants and Needs	A basic concept of economics which distinguishes among the goods and services individuals people must have to live and the goods and services which people desire to make life more comfortable or enjoyable

Definition of Verbs Used in Standards

Term	Definition
Analyze	Examine methodically and in detail the constitution or structure of (something, especially information), typically for purposes of explanation and interpretation
Apply	Put to use, or employ
Assess	Evaluate importance, significance, and/or value
Cite	Mention or quote in support of an argument
Compare	Estimate, measure, or note the similarity or dissimilarity between concepts
Contrast	Compare in such a way as to emphasize differences
Construct	Build or erect (something)
Corroborate	Support or confirm by giving additional proof

Critique	Employ reasoned judgement based on evidence
Describe	Give an account in words of (someone or something), including all the relevant characteristics, qualities, or events
Determine	Ascertain or establish exactly, typically as a result of research or calculation
Evaluate	Determine the value, quality, or significance
Explain	Make clear, or known in detail
Identify	Establish or indicate who or what (someone or something) is
Recognize	Identify (someone or something) from having encountered them before; know again
Use	Take, hold, or deploy (something) as a means of accomplishing a purpose or achieving a result; employ