

Discovering Our Past, A History of the United States to the Revised NCSS Thematic Strands

The revised standards continue to be focused on ten themes, like the original standards. They represent a way of categorizing knowledge about the human experience, and they constitute the organizing strands that should thread through a social studies program.

Theme and Learning Expectation	Student Edition Chapter/Lesson
1. Culture	
1. "Culture" refers to the socially transmitted behaviors, beliefs, values, traditions, institutions, and ways of living together for a group of people	Ch 1 L2–3; Ch 4 L3; Ch 12 L2; Ch 21 L3
2. Concepts such as beliefs, values, institutions, cohesion, diversity, accommodation, adaptation, assimilation, and dissonance	Ch 2 L3; Ch 12 L2; Ch 14 L2, L4; Ch 19 L3; Ch 22 L2
3. How culture influences the ways in which human groups solve the problems of daily living	Ch 1 L2–L3; Ch 3 L1; Ch 4 L3; Ch 14 L4
4. That the beliefs, values, and behaviors of a culture form an integrated system that helps shape the activities and ways of life that define a culture	Ch 1 L2–L3; Ch 3 L2–L3; Ch 4 L3; Ch 14 L4
5. How individuals learn the elements of their culture through interactions with others, and how individuals learn of other cultures through communication and study	Ch 3 L1; Ch 4 L3; Ch 10 L2
6. That culture may change in response to changing needs, concerns, social, political, and geographic conditions	Ch 2 L3; Ch 11 L2; Ch 12 L2; Ch 22 L1–L3; Ch 25 L3–L4; Ch 26 L3; Ch 30 L3
7. How people from different cultures develop different values and ways of interpreting experience	Ch 1 L3; Ch 2 L3; Ch 10 L2; Ch 19 L3; Ch 21 L1
8. That language, behaviors, and beliefs of different cultures can both contribute to and pose barriers to cross-cultural understanding	Ch 2 L3; Ch 10 L2; Ch 21 L1; Ch 25 L4
2. Time, Continuity, and Change	
1. The study of the past provides representation of the history of communities, nations, and the world	Ch 4 L3; Ch 5 L2; Ch 10 L2; Ch 17 L5
2. Concepts such as: chronology, causality, change, conflict, complexity, multiple perspectives, primary and secondary sources, and cause and effect	Ch 4 L3; Ch 5 L4; Ch 6 L1–L4; Ch 17 L5; Ch 22 L3; Ch 27 L2

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3. That learning about the past requires the interpretation of sources, and that using varied sources provides the potential for a more balanced interpretive record of the past	Ch 5 L3 WDYT; Ch 7 L2 WDYT; Ch 13 L2 WDYT; Ch 16 L3 WDYT; Ch 21 L1 WDYT ; Ch 22 L2–Lit; Ch 26 L2 WDYT; Ch 26 L3–Lit; Ch 27 L4–Lit
4. That historical interpretations of the same event may differ on the basis of such factors as conflicting evidence from varied sources, national or cultural perspectives, and the point of view of the researcher	Ch 5 L3 WDYT; Ch 7 L2 WDYT; Ch 13 L2 WDYT; Ch 16 L3 WDYT; Ch 21 L1 WDYT; Ch 26 L2 WDYT
5. Key historical periods and patterns of change within and across cultures (e.g., the rise and fall of ancient civilizations, the development of technology, the rise of modern nation-states, and the establishment and breakdown of colonial systems)	Ch 2 L1; Ch 6 L1–L4; Ch 17 L5; Ch 24 L2–L3; Ch 32 L1–L2
6. The origins and influences of social, cultural, political, and economic systems	Ch 2 L3; Ch 9 L1; Ch 10 L1; Ch 25 L4
7. The contributions of key persons, groups, and events from the past and their influence on the present	Ch 5 L1, L3–L4; ; Ch 6 L1–L4; Ch 10 L1; Ch 15 L1–L3; Ch 16 L2–L3; Ch 17 L2–L4; Ch 24 L2; Ch 26 L2, L4; Ch 27 L4; Ch 29 L1, L3
8. The history of democratic ideals and principles, and how they are represented in documents, artifacts and symbols	Ch 5 L4; Ch 7 L2–L3; Ch 8 L1; Ch 9 L1; Ch 29 L1, L3
9. The influences of social, geographic, economic, and cultural factors on the history of local areas, states, nations, and the world	Ch 2 L1, L4; Ch 7 L1; Ch 10 L2; Ch 14 L2, L4; Ch 16 L3; Ch 22 L4; Ch 25 L1, L4; Ch 28 L4
3. People, Places, and Environments	
1. The theme of people, places, and environments involves the study of the relationships between human populations in different locations and geographic phenomena such as climate, vegetation, and natural resources	Ch 1 L1, ; Ch 2 L1–L2; Ch 3 L1; Ch 11 L2; Ch 13 L1–L2, L4; Ch 19 L2–L3; Ch 26 L3
2. Concepts such as: location, region, place, migration, as well as human and physical systems	Ch 3 L1; Ch 13 L1–L2, L4; Ch 19 L2
3. Past and present changes in physical systems, such as seasons, climate, and weather, and the water cycle, in both national and global contexts	Ch 1 L1; Ch 3 L1–L2, L4; Ch 19 L2–L3; Ch 26 L3
4. The roles of different kinds of population centers in a region or nation	Ch 13 L1–L2, L4; Ch 14 L2, L4; Ch 18 L3; Ch 19 L2

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5. The concept of regions identifies links between people in different locations according to specific criteria (e.g., physical, economic, social, cultural, or religious)	Ch 4 L1; Ch 7 L1; Ch 13 L1–L2, L4; Ch 18 L3
6. Patterns of demographic and political change, and cultural diffusion in the past and present (e.g., changing national boundaries, migration, and settlement, and the diffusion of and changes in customs and ideas)	Ch 2 L1–L4; Ch 3 L2; Ch 7 L1; Ch 11 L2; Ch 12 L1–L2; Ch 13 L1–L2, L4; Ch 28 L4; Ch 32 L5
7. Human modifications of the environment	Ch 11 L2; Ch 13 L1–L2, L4; Ch 19 L2
8. Factors that contribute to cooperation and conflict among peoples of the nation and world, including language, religion, and political beliefs	Ch 2 L1, L4; Ch 3 L2; Ch 4 L1; Ch 6 L1, L4; Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 12 L2; Ch 13 L3; Ch 17 L1; Ch 19 K3; Ch 30 L1, L3; Ch 31 L2, L4
9. The use of a variety of maps, globes, graphic representations, and geospatial technologies to help investigate the relationships among people, places, and environments	Ch 1 L1–L3; Ch 2 L1; Ch 10 L2; Ch 13 L1–L3; Ch 17 L1
4. Individual Development and Identity	
1. The study of individual development and identity helps us know that individuals change physically, cognitively, and emotionally over time	Ch 2 L3–L4; Ch 4 L1; Ch 15 L2
2. Concepts such as: development, change, personality, learning, individual, family, groups, motivation, and perception	Ch 1 L2–L3; Ch 4 L3; Ch 5 L2; Ch 11 L2; Ch 21 L3
3. How factors such as physical endowment, interests, capabilities, learning, motivation, personality, perception, and beliefs influence individual development and identity	Ch 2 L3–L4; Ch 5 L3; Ch 6 L2
4. How personal, social, cultural, and environmental factors contribute to the development and the growth of personal identity	Ch 2 L3; Ch 11 L2; Ch 14 L4
5. That individuals' choices influence identity and development	Ch 2 L2–L3; Ch 3 L1
6. That perceptions are interpretations of information about individuals and events, and can be influenced by bias and stereotypes	Ch 9 L3; Ch 12 L1; Ch 21 L1; Ch 22 L4; Ch 24 L4

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5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions	
1. This theme helps us know how individuals are members of groups and institutions, and influence and shape those groups and institutions	Ch 4 L3–L4; Ch 5 L4; Ch 6 L4; Ch 17 L1
2. Concepts such as: mores, norms, status, role, socialization, ethnocentrism, cultural diffusion, competition, cooperation, conflict, race, ethnicity, and gender	Ch 1 L3; Ch 2 L4; Ch 4 L4; Ch 16 L1; Ch 22 L3
3. Institutions are created to respond to changing individual and group needs	Ch 7 L1–L3; Ch 9 L1–L3; Ch 17 L3; Ch 19 L4; Ch 20 L3; Ch 21 L3
4. That ways in which young people are socialized include similarities as well as differences across cultures	Ch 4 L3; Ch 11 L1; Ch 15 L1; Ch 21 L1, L3
5. That groups and institutions change over time	Ch 1 L2–L3; Ch 2 L3; Ch 4 L1–L3; Ch 7 L1–L3; Ch 21 L2–L3; Ch 26 L2, L4
6. That cultural diffusion occurs when groups migrate	Ch 2 L1, L3; Ch 4 L3–L4; Ch 21 L1; Ch 28 L2
7. That institutions may promote or undermine social conformity	Ch 4 L3; Ch 7 L1; Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 16 L1; Ch 17 L1
8. That when two or more groups with differing norms and beliefs interact, accommodation or conflict may result	Ch 2 L1, L3; Ch 9 L3; Ch 10 L3–L4; Ch 12 L2; Ch 16 L1; Ch 24 L2, L5
9. That groups and institutions influence culture in a variety of ways	Ch 4 L3; Ch 7 L1; Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 11 L3; Ch 21 L3
6. Power, Authority, and Governance	
1. Rights are guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution, the supreme law of the land	Ch 7 L1–L3; Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 18 L2; Ch 30 L2; Ch 31 L2
2. Fundamental ideas that are the foundation of American constitutional democracy (including those of the U.S. Constitution, popular sovereignty, the rule of law, separation of powers, checks and balances, minority rights, the separation of church and state, and Federalism)	Ch 7 L1–L3; Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 9 L1; Ch 18 L2
3. Fundamental values of constitutional democracy (e.g., the common good, liberty, justice, equality, and individual dignity)	Ch 7 L1–L3; Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 18 L2; Ch 29 L2

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4. The ideologies and structures of political systems that differ from those of the United States	Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 10 L3–L4; Ch 18 L1, L3–L4; Ch 23 L3; Ch 27 L1; Ch 28 L1; Ch 30 L1
5. The ways in which governments meet the needs and wants of citizens, manage conflict, and establish order and society	Ch 9 L1–L2; Ch 12 L2; Ch 16 L2; Ch 18 L1–L3; Ch 26 L1–L2, L4; Ch 32 L1–L4
7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption	
1. Individuals, government, and society experience scarcity because human wants and needs exceed what can be produced from available resources	Ch 2 L1, L3; Ch 11 L1; Ch 17 L3; Ch 19 L4; Ch 20 L3–L4; Ch 24 L4; Ch 26 L1
2. How choices involve trading off the expected value of one opportunity gained against the expected value of the best alternative	Ch 10 L1, L4; Ch 20 L3; Ch 25 L3; Ch 27 L3
3. The economic choices that people make have both present and future consequences	Ch 3 L4; Ch 4 L1; Ch 12 L1–L2; Ch 14 L1, L3; Ch 18 L4; Ch 19 L1; Ch 20 L3; Ch 27 L3
4. Economic incentives affect people’s behavior and may be regulated by rules or laws	Ch 10 L3; Ch 11 L3; Ch 14 L1, L3; Ch 18 L4; Ch 19 L1, L4; Ch 20 L3–L4; Ch 24 L4; Ch 25 L3
5. That banks and other financial institutions channel funds from savers to borrowers and investors	Ch 11 L3; Ch 12 L3; Ch 26 L1
6. The economic gains that result from specialization and exchange as well as the trade-offs	Ch 11 L1; Ch 14 L1; Ch 20 L2, L4; Ch 25 L3
7. How markets bring buyers and sellers together to exchange goods and services	Ch 3 L4; Ch 4 L1; Ch 11 L1; Ch 19 L4
8. How goods and services are allocated in a market economy through the influence of prices on decisions about production and consumption	Ch 9 L1; Ch 10 L3; Ch 11 L1; Ch 24 L4; Ch 28 L2
9. How the overall levels of income, employment, and prices are determined by the interaction of households, firms, and the government	Ch 9 L1; Ch 10 L3; Ch 26 L1

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8. Science, Technology, and Society	
1. Science is a result of empirical study of the natural world, and technology is the application of knowledge to accomplish tasks	Ch 2 L1–L2; Ch 11 L1; Ch 14 L1
2. Society often turns to science and technology to solve problems	Ch 4 L1; Ch 11 L2; Ch 20 L2; Ch 32 L5
3. Our lives today are media and technology dependent	Ch 11 L1–L2; Ch 31 L3; Ch 32 L3, L5
4. Science and technology have had both positive and negative impacts upon individuals, societies, and the environment in the past and present	Ch 11 L1–L2; Ch 14 L1, L3; Ch 20 L1
5. Science and technology have changed peoples' perceptions of the social and natural world, as well as their relationship to the land, economy and trade, their concept of security, and their major daily activities	Ch 2 L1; Ch 11 L1–L2; Ch 14 L1, L3; Ch 20 L2; Ch 32 L5
6. Values, beliefs, and attitudes that have been influenced by new scientific and technological knowledge (e.g., invention of the printing press, conceptions of the universe, applications of atomic energy, and genetic discoveries);	Ch 2 L1; Ch 11 L1
7. How media are created and received depends upon cultural contexts	Ch 4 L3; Ch 15 L1; Ch 21 L3
8. Science and technology sometimes create ethical issues that test our standards and values	Ch 14 L1, L3; Ch 20 L4; Ch 27 L5
9. The need for laws and policies to govern scientific and technological applications	Ch 11 L1; Ch 14 L1; Ch 31 L3; Ch 32 L3, L5
10. That there are gaps in access to science and technology around the world	Ch 2 L2; Ch 14 L1, L4; Ch 32 L3

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9. Global Connections	
1. Global connections have existed in the past and increased rapidly in current times	Ch 2 L1–L2; Ch 4 L1; Ch 30 L1; Ch 31 L1, L3
2. Global factors such as cultural, economic, and political connections are changing the places in which people live (e.g., through trade, migration, increased travel, and communication)	Ch 2 L4; Ch 13 L1–L4; Ch 23 L4
3. Spatial relationships that relate to ongoing global issues (e.g., pollution, poverty, disease, and conflict) affect the health and well-being of Earth and its inhabitants	Ch 2 L3–L4; Ch 4 L3; Ch 23 L3; Ch 27 L2, L4–L5; Ch 30 L4; Ch 32 L4–L5
4. Global problems and possibilities are not generally caused or developed by any one nation	Ch 2 L1–L4; Ch 23 L1–L3; Ch 24 L1; Ch 28 L3; Ch 32 L5
5. Global connections may make cultures more alike or increase their sense of distinctiveness	Ch 2 L1–L4; Ch 4 L1
6. Universal human rights cut across cultures but are not necessarily understood in the same way in all cultures	Ch 2 L3; Ch 15 L2; Ch 30 L2; Ch 31 L1, L3
10. Civic Ideals and Practices	
1. The theme of civic ideals and practices helps us to learn about and know how to work for the betterment of society	Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 15 L1–L3; Ch 18 L1–L2; Ch 29 L1, L4
2. Concepts and ideals such as: individual dignity, liberty, justice, equality, individual rights, responsibility, majority and minority rights, and civil dissent	Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 15 L1–L2; Ch 18 L1–L2; Ch 29 L1, L3
3. Key practices involving the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the exercise of citizenship (e.g., respecting the rule of law and due process, voting, serving on a jury, researching issues, making informed judgments, expressing views on issues, and collaborating with others to take civic action)	Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 15 L3; Ch 18 L1–L2; Ch 22 L1, L3; Ch 29 L3
4. The common good, and the rule of law	Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 10 L1; Ch 29 L3

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<p>5. Key documents and excerpts from key sources that define and support democratic ideals and practices (e.g., the U.S. Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Gettysburg Address, the Letter from Birmingham Jail; and international documents such as the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Children)</p>	<p>Ch 5 L4; Ch 7 L2–L3; Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 15 L3; Ch 22 L2; Ch 29 L3</p>
<p>6. The origins and function of major institutions and practices developed to support democratic ideals and practices</p>	<p>Ch 7 L2–L3; Ch 8 L1–L2; Ch 9 L1; Ch 12 L3</p>
<p>7. Key past and present issues involving democratic ideals and practices, as well as the perspectives of various stakeholders in proposing possible solutions to these issues</p>	<p>Ch 7 L2–L3; Ch 16 L2; Ch 22 L1; Ch 29 L1; Ch 32 L3</p>
<p>8. The importance of becoming informed in order to make positive civic contributions</p>	<p>Ch 5 L3 WDYT; Ch 7 L2 WDYT; Ch 8 L2; Ch 13 L2 WDYT; Ch 16 L3 WDYT; Ch 21 L1 WDYT; Ch 26 L2 WDYT</p>