

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Social Studies Overview 2025 - 2026

**This document is designed provide parents/guardians/community an overview of the curriculum taught in the FBISD classroom. It includes pacing, TEKS, unit overviews, big ideas, essential questions, concepts for each unit, and the S.S. Instructional Model.**

### Definitions

Overview– The content in this document provides an overview of the pacing and concepts covered in a subject for the year.

TEKS – Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are the state standards for what students should know and be able to do.

Process Standards – The process standards describe ways in which students are expected to engage in the content. The process standards weave the other knowledge and skills together so that students may be successful problem solvers and use knowledge learned efficiently and effectively in daily life.

Unit Overview – The unit overview provides a brief description of the concepts covered in each unit.

Big Ideas and Essential Questions – Big ideas create connections in learning. They anchor all the smaller isolated, facts together in a unit. Essential questions (questions that allow students to go deep in thinking) should answer the big ideas. Students should not be able to answer Essential Questions in one sentence or less. Big ideas should be the underlying concepts, themes, or issues that bring meaning to content.


Concept – A subtopic of the main topic of the unit

Instructional Model – The structures, guidelines or model in which students engage in a particular content that ensures understanding of that content.

### Parent Supports

The following resources provide parents with ideas to support students’ understanding. **All resources are available through 1Link on the Fort Bend ISD website.**

Resource	Description
Google Earth	This site allows students to view 3D representations of the Earth. Students can view satellite images and aerial photographs of various cities and landscapes from different angles.
Britannica School	This is an information resource for elementary students. It has encyclopedia articles, multimedia, primary sources, games, and other learning resources that support student learning.
World Book Online	World Book contains thousands of informational articles with illustrations, videos, interactive maps, and activities.
Learn 360	This online resource provides access to a wide variety of videos to help in learning more about social studies concepts.

Pebble Go	This resource provides access to books for reading and learning more about concepts in the social studies content.	
<p><b>Instructional Model</b></p>  <p>This model is an inquiry-based approach to learning Social Studies with a focus on critical thinking skills. Students start with a thought-provoking question, which frames the lesson and flows throughout. After students make predictions based on the question, students will gather and interpret information to build his/her understanding of the standard(s) addressed by the question. Next, students will communicate the knowledge gained and demonstrate understanding by engaging in communication and application skills. Finally, students will reflect and assess their understanding.</p>		
<p><b>Process Standards</b></p> <p>3.14A gather information, including historical and current events and geographic data, about the community using a variety of resources;</p> <p>3.14B differentiate and compare the information about a specific issue or event provided in primary and secondary sources;*</p> <p>3.14C interpret oral, visual, and print material by sequencing, categorizing, identifying the main idea, distinguishing between fact and opinion, identifying cause and effect, comparing, and contrasting;</p> <p>3.14D interpret and create visuals, including graphs, charts, tables, timelines, illustrations, and maps;</p> <p>3.14E identify the central claim in a primary or secondary source;*</p> <p>3.14F develop and communicate a claim and supporting evidence visually, orally, or in writing related to a social studies topic.*</p> <p>3.15A use social studies terminology correctly;</p> <p>3.15B create and interpret timelines;</p> <p>3.15C apply the terms year, decade, and century to describe historical times;</p> <p>3.15D express ideas orally based on knowledge and experiences;</p> <p>3.15E create written and visual material such as stories, pictures, maps, and graphic organizers to express ideas.</p> <p>3.15F apply foundational language skills to engage in civil discourse about social studies topics, including those with multiple perspectives.*</p> <p>3.16A use democratic procedures to simulate making decisions on school, local, or state issues;*</p> <p>3.16B use problem-solving and decision-making processes to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution</p>		

<i>*State Standards that were added starting in the 2024-2025 School Year</i>		
Grading Period 1		
Unit 1: Citizenship Estimated Date Range: 8/12 – 9/11 Estimated Time Frame: 22		
State Assessments N/A	Assessments District Assessments NWEA Map Growth Reading (9/4)	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A
Unit Overview:  This unit is important because students will learn from outstanding citizens as well as how they can be an engaged citizen. Students will learn about the characteristics of good citizenship and individuals who have been good citizens such as Ruby Bridges, Helen Keller, and Clara Barton. Several characteristics of good citizenship such as justice and equality will be described as well as individuals in the past and present who have exemplified good citizenship. From there, students will learn about actions people take to improve their communities through examples of civic organizations. The knowledge gained in this unit will be helpful in future grades as students learn more about good citizens from our past and how they can be more engaged in their communities.		
Big Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The success of our country depends on good citizens engaging in acts of civic responsibility.</li><li>Individuals form, support, and/or participate in civic organizations that serve the common good.</li><li>Good citizens from the past can help us make better choices in our own lives.</li></ul>		
Essential Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Why are good citizens important to the success of our country?</li><li>What do individuals help improve their community?</li><li>What can we learn from good citizens in the past?</li></ul>		
Concepts within Unit #1	TEKS <a href="#">Link to TEKS</a>	
Concept #1: Characteristics of Good Citizenship	3.9A, 3.9C, 3.9E	
Concept #2: Civic Organizations	3.1A, 3.9C, 3.9D	
Concept #3: Historical Figures as Good Citizens	3.9A, 3.9B, 3.9C	
Unit 2: Government (Includes Celebrate Freedom Week) Estimated Date Range: 9/12 – 10/10 Estimated Time Frame: 20		
State Assessments N/A	Assessments District Assessments NWEA Math Growth Science BOY (9/16)	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A

**Unit Overview:**

This unit is important because government and our founding documents are relevant to students' everyday life. Students will first analyze the purpose of government as it is outlined in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. From there, they will learn about the basic structure and services of local, state, and national government. As part of the study on the different levels of government, they will learn about important officials at each level. This unit will form the foundation for government standards covered in 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade social studies.

**Big Ideas:**

- Freedom is the theme throughout our founding documents.
- The government is divided into three branches and each branch has a specific job.
- Cities and towns have local governments that provide services people in the community use every day.

**Essential Questions**

- What is the main purpose of the founding documents of our country?
- How does our government work together?
- What is the relationship between government and our local community?

Concepts within Unit # 2	TEKS <a href="#">Link to TEKS</a>
Concept #1: Founding Documents	3.7A, 3.8A, 3.8B
Concept #2: State and National Governments	3.7A, 3.7B, 3.7C
Concept #3: Local Community	3.2A, 3.2B, 3.7A, 3.7B, 3.7C

**Grading Period 2**

**Unit 3: Geography**

Estimated Date Range: 10/21 – 12/5

Estimated Time Frame: 29

Assessments		
State Assessments N/A	District Assessments N/A	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A

**Unit Overview:**

This unit is important because students learn and apply map skills to their everyday life. In the 1<sup>st</sup> concept, students will focus on interpreting maps of various places and on constructing their own maps. In this concept, students will learn about intermediate directions and using a scale for the first time. For the maps they create, they will incorporate various map elements such as a compass rose, a scale, legend, and grid system. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> concept, students will learn about variations in the physical environment such as climate, landforms, natural resources, and natural hazards. In the last concept, students will how people adapt to and modify the environment. Students will build on this unit in 4<sup>th</sup> grade where they will analyze how people adapt and modify in a historical context. This unit will also help prepare students for 4<sup>th</sup> grade and beyond where map skills are incorporated into every unit of study.

**Big Ideas:**

- Maps need a title, compass rose, scale, grid system, and legend with symbols to represent real-life places.
- There are many types of climate, landforms, natural resources, and natural hazards in the world.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We adapt to and modify the physical environment where we live.</li> </ul>		
<b>Essential Questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can I make a map of a place?</li> <li>What makes our physical environment diverse?</li> <li>How do variations in the physical environment affect our lives?</li> </ul>		
Concepts within Unit # 3		TEKS <a href="#">Link to TEKS</a>
Concept #1: Map Skills		3.4A, 3.4B, 3.4C
Concept #2: Similarities and Differences in the Physical Environment		3.3A, 3.4C
Concept #3: Adapting to and Modifying the Physical Environment		3.2B, 3.3B, 3.3C
<b>Unit 4: Cultural Celebrations</b> Estimated Date Range: 12/8 – 12/19 Estimated Time Frame: 10		
State Assessments N/A	<b>Assessments</b> <b>District Assessments</b> Social Studies DLA 1 (12/8 – 12/19)	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A
<b>Unit Overview:</b>  In this unit, students will first learn about cultural celebrations. They will explain the significance of various ethnic and/or cultural celebrations in the local community and other communities. As part of this, they will compare various ethnic and cultural celebrations from their community to other communities.		
<b>Big Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celebrations help people remember important people or events from their culture.</li> </ul>		
<b>Essential Questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why are cultural celebrations important?</li> </ul>		
Concepts within Unit # 4		TEKS <a href="#">Link to TEKS</a>
Concept #1: Cultural Celebrations		3.10A, 3.10B

Grading Period 3		
Unit 5: Cultural Heritage		
Estimated Date Range: 1/8 – 2/6 Estimated Time Frame: 21		
State Assessments	Assessments	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs)
STAAR Field Test (2/2 – 2/6)	District Assessments NWEA MAP Growth Reading MOY (1/22) NWEA MAP Growth Math MOY (1/28) NWEA MAP Growth Science MOY (2/3)	N/A
<b>Unit Overview:</b>  This unit is a continuation of the culture unit, but the focus is on cultural heritage. In concept 1, students will learn about the impact of heroes like Harriet Tubman and Todd Beamer. In the 2nd concept, students will focus on the significance of various writers and artists like Laura Ingalls Wilder and Kadir Nelson. This unit is important because students will gain a broader understanding of one's culture.		
<b>Big Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heroes help shape a culture.</li> <li>Paintings, poems, stories, and statues reflect a culture's heritage.</li> </ul>		
<b>Essential Questions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the impact of heroes on a culture?</li> <li>Why is the work of writers and artists important?</li> </ul>		
Concepts within Unit # 5		TEKS <a href="#">Link to TEKS</a>
Concept #1: Impact of Heroes		3.11A, 3.11B
Concept #2: Impact of Writers and Artists		3.12
Unit 6: History		
Estimated Date Range: 2/9 – 4/2 Estimated Time Frame: 31 (22 days in GP3 and 9 days in GP4)		
State Assessments	Assessments	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs)
TELPAS (2/16-3/27)	District Assessments N/A	N/A
<b>Unit Overview:</b>  This unit is important because it helps students understand how the present is shaped by the past. Students will learn about communities in the past with an emphasis on the people in the TEKS who have shaped or created new communities. Creating timelines and cause and effect will be a major part of this as well as making a connection from communities in the past to our lives today. This unit will help students in 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> grade where students will be going much more in depth to historical analysis and how historical events impact the present.		
<b>Big Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals create communities out of a need for security, laws, religious freedom, and material well-being.</li> <li>Individuals, events, and ideas change communities.</li> </ul>		

- New technology and scientific breakthroughs have changed the way we live and improved our lives.

**Essential Questions:**

- Why do people create new communities?
- Why do communities change?
- How have new technology and scientific breakthroughs shaped the world we live in today?

Concepts within Unit # 6	TEKS <a href="#">Link to TEKS</a>
Concept #1: Creating Communities	3.1A, 3.1B, 3.1C, 3.2A, 3.4C
Concept #2: Changing Communities	3.1A, 3.2A, 3.2B
Concept #3: Impact of Technology and Scientific Breakthroughs	3.1A, 3.2B, 3.13A, 3.13B

## Grading Period 4

### Unit 7: Economics

Estimated Date Range: 4/6 – 5/28

Estimated Time Frame: 38

Assessments		
State Assessments	District Assessments	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs)
STAAR RLA (April 7 – 9) STAAR Math (April 21 - 23)	NWEA MAP Growth Reading EOY (5/6) NWEA MAP Growth Math EOY (5/13) NWEA MAP Growth Science EOY (5/19) Social Studies DLA 2 (5/11 – 5/22)	N/A

**Unit Overview:**

This unit is important because it forms the foundation of students' understanding of economics and the free enterprise system. The unit starts off with earning, spending, saving, and donating money. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> concept, students will define and describe key economic terms such as supply and demand. From there, students will explore how a business operates and successful individuals who have started a business. In the last concept, students will review key concepts associated with every unit throughout the year. The review will center around how all strands of social studies covered during the school year are important because the knowledge and skills gained are relevant to their lives. This unit will help students understand historical periods better in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> as in those grades they will be learning economics through a historical lens.

**Big Ideas:**

- To be a responsible citizen, it is important to create a budget to allocate money for spending, saving, and donating.
- Businesses and consumers make choices based on the supply and demand of goods and services.
- Businesses make decisions about the production and selling of their goods or services with the goal of making a profit.
- Social Studies is important because it is relevant to our lives.

**Essential Questions**

- How do manage your money?
- What influences what consumers buy and what businesses make?
- How does a business work?
- Why is social studies important?

Concepts within Unit # 7	TEKS
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	<a href="#">Link to TEKS</a>
Concept #1: Earning, Spending, Saving, and Donating Money	3.5A, 3.5B
Concept #2: Free Enterprise	3.6A, 3.6B, 3.6C
Concept #3: How Businesses Operate	3.6A, 3.6B, 3.6C, 3.6D
Concept #4 Year in Review	3.1A, 3.4C, 3.6A, 3.7A, 3.9C, 3.10A, 3.13B