

4th 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>Instructional Model</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>Process Standards</p> <p>4.19A differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as technology; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; documents; and artifacts to acquire information about Texas;</p> <p>4.19B differentiate and compare the information about a specific issue or event provided in primary and secondary sources;*</p> <p>4.19C analyze information by applying absolute and relative chronology through sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;</p> <p>4.19D organize and interpret information in outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps; and</p> <p>4.19E identify different points of view about an issue, topic, historical event, or current event.</p> <p>4.19F identify the central claim in a primary or secondary source;*</p> <p>4.19G develop and communicate a claim and supporting evidence visually, orally, or in writing related to a social studies topic.*</p> <p>4.20A apply mapping elements, including grid systems, legends, symbols, scales, and compass roses, to create and interpret maps; and</p> <p>4.20B interpret geographic data, population distribution, and natural resources into a variety of formats such as graphs and maps.</p> <p>4.21A use social studies terminology correctly;</p> <p>4.21B incorporate main and supporting ideas in verbal and written communication;</p> <p>4.21C express ideas orally based on research and experiences; and</p> <p>4.21D create written and visual material such as journal entries, reports, graphic organizers, outlines, and bibliographies.</p> | | |

4.21E apply foundational language skills to engage in civil discourse about social studies topics, including those with multiple perspectives.*
4.22A use democratic procedures to simulate making decisions on school, local, or state issues;*
4.22B 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.*

**State Standards that were added starting in the 2024-2025 School Year*

Grading Period 1

Unit 1: Texas Geography

Estimated Date Range: 8/12 – 9/12

Estimated Time Frame: 23

| Assessments | | |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| State Assessments | District Assessments | Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) |
| N/A | NWEA MAP Growth Reading BOY (9/3) NWEA MAP Growth Math BOY (9/9) | N/A |

Unit Overview:

This unit is important because students will learn about how the geography of our state influences our lives. Students will learn about how geographic factors such as climate and physical features affect settlement. Students will look closely at the regions of Texas and on characteristics of each region. Lastly, students will learn about why we adapt to and modify the environment and the impact that it has. Throughout this unit, students will apply what they learned in this unit to historical time periods.

Big Ideas:

- Physical features and climate influence where people live.
- Landforms, climate, and resources define a geographic region.
- Modifying the environment helps meet our needs, but it also has some negative consequences.

Essential Questions

- What influences where people live?
- What defines a region?
- Do the benefits of human modification outweigh the costs?

| Concepts within Unit #1 | TEKS Link to TEKS |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Concept #1: Places in Texas | 4.7A, 4.7B, 4.14C |
| Concept #2: Regions in Texas | 4.6A, 4.6B, 4.11A, 4.11B, 4.17A |
| Concept #3: Adapting and Modifying the Environment | 4.8A, 4.8B, 4.8C |

Unit 2: American Indians in Texas (Includes Celebrate Freedom Week)

Estimated Date Range: 9/15 – 10/10

Estimated Time Frame: 19

| Assessments | | |
|--|---|---|
| State Assessments N/A | District Assessments NWEA MAP Growth Science BOY (9/16) | Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A |
| Unit Overview: This unit is important because it gives the foundation for understanding the history of our state. The unit will start by exploring the origins of American Indian groups in Texas. As part of this concept, they will focus on how early groups adapted in order to survive. In the 2 nd concept, students will learn about the characteristics of culture such as food, clothing, shelter, technology, customs/traditions, etc. of such groups as the Karankawa, Caddo, Jumano, Lipan Apache, Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, and Kickapoo. An emphasis will be on how the geographical features affect the way of life. Students will build on the knowledge they gained about American Indians in the European Exploration and the Growth and Change Units. | | |
| Big Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People survive in a new place by adapting to the environment. • Economic activities, food, and shelter are all shaped by geography. | | |
| Essential Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do people survive when they settle in a new place? • How does a geographic region affect the way people live? | | |
| Concepts within Unit # 2 | | TEKS Link to TEKS |
| Concept #1: Origins of American Indian Groups | | 4.1A, 4.8A, 4.8B |
| Celebrate Freedom Week | | 4.13C |
| Concept #2: Comparing Indian Groups | | 4.1B, 4.1C, 4.1D, 4.8A, 4.8B, 4.9A, 4.12A |
| Grading Period 2 | | |
| Unit 3: European Exploration and Settlement of Texas | | |
| Estimated Date Range: 10/21 – 11/14 | | |
| Estimated Time Frame: 19 days | | |
| Assessments | | |
| State Assessments N/A | District Assessments N/A | Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A |
| Unit Overview: In this unit, students will examine and summarize who explored Texas and their motivations for their colonialization of North America and Texas. In addition, the students will study the early settlement areas, the significance of explorers and their accomplishments, and life in the missions. The students will identify and explain the economic motivations and impact of significant empresarios. Lastly, students will learn about where and why the Spanish established missions and explain what people did to make a living in the area where they settled. | | |
| Big Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration leads to settlement. • Settlements lead to a mix of cultures that impact future generations. | | |

- Economic motivations are a major reason for people leaving their homelands.

Essential Questions

- What impact does exploration have on a place?
- What is the lasting impact of interaction between cultures?
- Why do people leave their homelands?

| Concepts within Unit # 3 | TEKS Link to TEKS |
|---|--|
| Concept #1: Europeans Explore Texas | 4.2A, 4.2B |
| Concept #2: Early Settlements and Missions | 4.2A, 4.2C, 4.11C, 4.14A |
| Concept #3: Mexican Independence, Empresarios, and New Settlers | 4.2A, 4.2D, 4.2E, 4.7A, 4.7B, 4.9B, 4.10C, 4.11A, 4.11C, 4.12B |

Unit 4: Revolution in Texas

Estimated Date Range: 11/17 – 12/19
Estimated Time Frame: 20

| Assessments | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| State Assessments N/A | District Assessments Social Studies DLA 1 (12/8 – 12/19) | Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A |

Unit Overview:

In this unit students will analyze the causes including the Law of April 6, 1830 and Texas's grievances against Mexico. Students will then focus on how conflict leads to Revolution by learning about important events like the Battle of Gonzales and the Texas Declaration of Independence. From there, they will focus on key events such as the Battle of the Alamo, the Runaway Scrape, and the Battle of San Jacinto. In the last concept, students will focus on analyzing the Treaty of Velasco.

This unit will help students make connections as they learn about the causes and effects of the American Revolution in 5th grade.

Big Ideas:

- Conflict and different interests can bring about change.
- Leadership is important to the outcome of conflicts.
- Events in one time-period influence events in later time-periods.

Essential Questions

- What causes change?
- How do leaders shape a nation?
- How are our lives shaped by past events?

| Concepts within Unit # 4 | TEKS Link to TEKS |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Concept #1: Conflict Leads to Revolution | 4.3A, 4.3B, 4.3C, 4.13A, 4.14D, 4.15D |
| Concept #2: From the Alamo to San Jacinto | 4.3A, 4.3B, 4.14A, 4.14B, 4.15A |
| Concept #3: Effects of the Texas Revolution | 4.3A, 4.3B, 4.3C |

Grading Period 3

Unit 5: Republic of Texas

Estimated Date Range: 1/8 – 1/28

| Estimated Time Frame: 14 | | |
|---|---|---|
| Assessments | | |
| State Assessments N/A | District Assessments NWEA MAP Growth Reading MOY (1/21) NWEA MAP Growth Math MOY (1/27) | Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A |
| <p>Unit Overview:</p> <p>This unit is important because the Republic of Texas is a unique period in the history of our state and there are many relevant issues that can be applied to the present throughout this unit. In this unit, students will gain an understanding of how the Republic of Texas struggled with establishing a new government, debt, potential threat from Indians, threat from Mexico, and other issues including protecting the frontier. In the 2nd concept, students will learn about how annexation was the ultimate solution to many of the problems Texas faced as an independent republic. This will lead directly into the next unit about new challenges for Texas.</p> <p>Big Ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a new country creates economic, political, and social challenges. • Events in one time-period influence events in later time-periods. <p>Essential Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is it difficult to create a new country? • What causes change? | | |
| Concepts within Unit # 5 | TEKS Link to TEKS | |
| Concept #1: Problems and Successes of the Republic of Texas | 4.3C, 4.3D, 4.13A, 4.13B | |
| Concept #2: Annexation of Texas | 4.3D, 4.3E, 4.11C | |

| Unit 6: New Challenges for Texas Estimated Date Range: 1/29 – 2/27 Estimated Time Frame: 20 | | |
|--|--|---|
| State Assessments NAEP Reading Grade 4 (Late Jan.-Early March) STAAR Field Test Grade 4 (2/2 – 2/6) TELPAS (2/16-3/27) | Assessments District Assessments NWEA MAP Growth Science MOY (2/3) | Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A |
| Unit Overview: This unit is important because it introduces students to two major events during the 1800s – the Mexican American War and the Civil War. In the 1 st concept, students will learn about the role of Annexation in leading the U.S. Mexican War and about the impact of the war. Then, students will learn about the Civil War. The emphasis in that concept is how the Civil War impacted Texas. In the last concept, students will learn about Reconstruction. As part of this concept, students will learn about the origins and significance of Juneteenth. This unit will help students better understand Westward Expansion and the Civil War when they are in 5 th grade, and, in turn, understand how those events shaped the country we live in today. Big Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wars can have long-term effects. Wars have social, political, and economic effects. Wars bring new opportunities and challenges. Essential Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the impact of war? How does war affect society? What are the outcomes of war? | | |
| Concepts within Unit #6 | | TEKS Link to TEKS |
| Concept #1: The U.S.-Mexican War | | 4.3E |
| Concept #2: The Civil War | | 4.4A, 4.14D, 4.18A |
| Concept #3: Reconstruction in Fort Bend County and Texas | | 4.4A, 4.15D, FB1 |
| Grading Period 4 Unit 7: Growth and Change in Texas Estimated Date Range: 3/2 – 4/2 Estimated Time Frame: 18 (9 days in GP3 and 9 days in GP4) | | |
| State Assessments NAEP Reading Grade 4 (Late Jan.-Early March) TELPAS (2/16-3/27) | Assessments District Assessments N/A | Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A |

Unit Overview:

This unit is important because it focuses on a time period in our history that shaped the state we live in today. Students will explore, identify, summarize, and analyze how the cattle industry, railroads, and the discovery of oil affected the economy and growth of Texas. In 5th grade, students will build on what they learned in this unit by focusing on how the nation was changing during this same time period.

Big Ideas:

- Economic growth creates new opportunities, but it also creates new challenges.
- Innovations in transportation influence economic activities.
- New discoveries benefit individuals and society.

Essential Questions

- What impact does economic growth have?
- How does improved transportation change our lives?
- What is the impact of new discoveries?

| Concepts within Unit #7 | TEKS Link to TEKS |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Concept #1: Cattle Industry | 4.4B, 4.10A, 4.10B, 4.10C, 4.11C, 4.18A |
| Concept #2: Railroad Industry | 4.4C, 4.4D, 4.9A, 4.10A, 4.10B, 4.10C, 4.11C, 4.11D |
| Concept #3: Texas Oil Boom | 4.5B, 4.10A, 4.10B, 4.10C, 4.11B, 4.11C |

Unit 8: Good Times and Hard Times in Texas

Estimated Date Range: 4/6 – 5/1

Estimated Time Frame: 20

| Assessments | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| State Assessments | District Assessments | Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) |
| STAAR RLA (4/7-4/9) STAAR Math (4/21-4/23) | N/A | N/A |

Unit Overview:

This unit is important because it covers important events in the past century that were instrumental in shaping the world we live in today. Students will discover how the economy can affect the way people live. Economic growth such as what occurred during the early 1900's brought about great change for other Texas industries resulting in more jobs, inventions and innovations, and a trend towards the urbanization of Texas that continues today. Soon thereafter, the Great Depression occurred. Students will also explore how this affected the lives of Texans. In the last concept, students will learn about how World War II affected life in Texas. This unit will form the foundation for understanding important events in the 20th Century that will be further studied in 5th grade.

Big Ideas:

- Economic growth creates larger cities, new industries, new types of jobs, and new ways of living.
- Economic depressions can greatly affect society, business, and people's choices.
- Wars have social, political, and economic effects.

Essential Questions

- What impact does economic growth have?

- What impact does an economic crisis have?
- How does war affect society?

| Concepts within Unit #8 | TEKS Link to TEKS |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Concept #1: Roaring Twenties | 4.5A, 4.5B, 4.10B, 4.11D, 4.17B |
| Concept #2: Difficult Times | 4.5A |
| Concept #3: World War II | 4.5A, 4.7B |

Unit 9: Texas Today

Estimated Date Range: 5/4 – 5/28
Estimated Time Frame: 18

| Assessment | | |
|-------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| State Assessments | District Assessments | Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) |
| N/A | NWEA MAP Growth Reading EOY (5/5) NWEA MAP Growth Math EOY (5/12) 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 gives students an overview of our state today and prepares students to be informed and engaged citizens. Students will learn about ways individuals can participate voluntarily. In addition, they will learn about their representatives at all three levels of government and explain how they can contact them. Then, students will learn about economic activities in our state, the free enterprise system, and important innovations and inventions that have benefited our state. In 5th grade, students will use the knowledge of government, economics, and citizenship they gained in 4th grade and apply it to a focus on our country rather than our state.

Big Ideas:

- The success of our country depends on individuals actively participating in the democratic process.
- Free enterprise, scientific discoveries, trade, and innovations are important to the development of our economy.

Essential Questions

- Why are good citizens important to the success of our state?
- What economic activities help communities?

| Concepts within Unit 9 | TEKS Link to TEKS |
|---|--|
| Concept #1: Being a Good Citizen in Texas Today | 4.13B, 4.15B, 4.15C, 4.15D, 4.15E, 4.15F, 4.16A, 4.16B |
| Concept #2: The Economy of Texas Today | 4.10A, 4.10B, 4.11A, 4.11B, 4.11C, 4.11D, 4.18A, 4.18B |