

5th 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

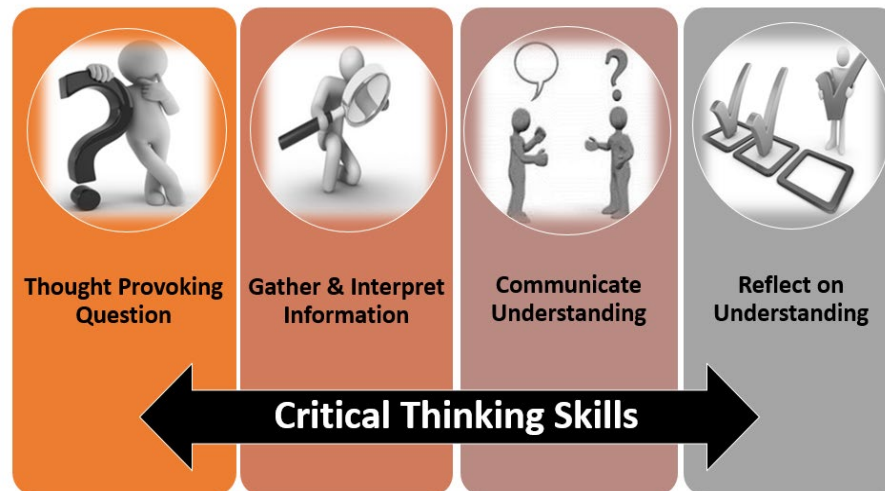
Instructional Model – The structures, guidelines or model in which students engage in a particular content that ensures understanding of that content.

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.

Instructional Model



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.

Process Standards

- 5.23A differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; documents; and artifacts to acquire information about the United States;
- 5.23B identify and ask questions about the credibility of different kinds of primary and secondary sources;*
- 5.23C analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;
- 5.23D organize and interpret information in outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps;
- 5.23E identify different points of view about an issue, topic, historical event, or current event; and
- 5.23F identify the historical context of an event;
- 5.23G identify the central claim in a primary or secondary source;*
- 5.23H develop and communicate a claim and supporting evidence visually, orally, or in writing related to a social studies topic.*
- 5.24A apply mapping elements, including grid systems, legends, symbols, scales, and compass roses, to create and interpret maps;
- 5.24B interpret geographic data, population distribution, and natural resources into a variety of formats such as graphs and maps.
- 5.25A use social studies terminology correctly;
- 5.25B incorporate main and supporting ideas in verbal and written communication
- 5.25C express ideas orally based on research and experiences;
- 5.25D create written and visual material such as journal entries, reports, graphic organizers, outlines, and bibliographies
- 5.25E apply foundational language skills to engage in civil discourse about social studies topics, including those with multiple perspectives.*
- 5.26A use democratic procedures to simulate making decisions on school, local, or state issues;*

5.26B 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: U.S. Geography

Estimated Date Range: 8/12 – 9/5

Estimated Time Frame: 18

Assessments		
State Assessments	District Assessments	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs)
N/A	NWEA Map Growth Reading BOY (9/4)	N/A

Unit Overview:

This unit is important because it incorporates knowledge and skills that are essential to being a productive citizen. In the 1st concept, students will learn about the 50 States and the regions. As part of the focus on this knowledge, students will explore why it is important to have knowledge of places in our country. In the 2nd concept, students will learn about geographic factors that influence settlement and population distribution. In the 3rd concept, students will learn how people have adapted to and modified the environment. Throughout this unit, students will apply map skills such as using a compass rose, scale, and legend. This unit will help prepare students for 6th grade where they apply their geography knowledge and skills to a world focus.

Big Ideas:

- A region is defined by an area of land with common features such as physical characteristics.
- Physical features, climate, precipitation, and a water source influence settlement.
- Modifying the environment helps meet our needs, but it also has some negative consequences.

Essential Questions

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

Concepts within Unit #1	TEKS Link to TEKS
Concept #1: Places and Regions in the U.S.	5.6A, 5.6B, 5.6C, 5.6D, 5.7B, 5.12A, 5.16D
Concept #2: Geography Influences Settlement	5.6A, 5.6C, 5.7B, 5.7C, 5.12B
Concept #3: Adapting and Modifying the Environment	5.8A, 5.8B

Unit 2: European Colonization of North America (Includes Celebrate Freedom Week)

Estimated Date Range: 9/8 – 10/10

Estimated Time Frame: 24

Assessments		
State Assessments	District Assessments	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs)
N/A	NWEA Map Growth Math BOY (9/10) NWEA MAP Growth Science BOY (9/16)	N/A

Unit Overview:

This unit is important because students will learn about early American history through the study of explorers, settlements, and colonies. First, students will learn about important explorers of the New World with a particular emphasis on why Europeans were searching the New World. This concept will focus on the Spanish in North America, and students will learn about St. Augustine. From there, they will learn about other countries who created settlements in America. Leaders and the system of government in Jamestown and Plymouth will be a focus in this concept. Lastly, students will learn about how America grew to become 13 Colonies. In this concept, students will compare and contrast the various colonial regions. This unit will form a strong foundation in early American history, which is crucial to understanding the next unit on the American Revolution.

Big Ideas:

- People who live in different locations may have different values, goals, and lifestyles.
- Strong leaders and a representative government help a community succeed.
- The geographic region influences economic activities and jobs.

Essential Questions

- How do different groups experience the same event?
- How do you establish a new community?
- How does the geographic region you live in affect your life?

Concepts within Unit # 2	TEKS Link to TEKS
Concept #1: The Spanish in North America	5.1A
Concept #2: The English, French, and Dutch in North America	5.1A, 5.1B, 5.13A, 5.13B
Concept #3: Life in the Colonies	5.1A, 5.1B, 5.6A, 5.7B, 5.9A, 5.9B, 5.10A, 5.12A, 5.12B, 5.22A

Grading Period 2

Unit 3: Creation of the United States

Estimated Date Range: 10/21 – 11/14

Estimated Time Frame: 19 Days

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

Unit Overview:

This unit is important because students will learn about how America changed from colonies to an independent country. In the 1st concept, students will learn about the causes of the American Revolution with a focus on the Boston Massacre and the Boston Tea Party. In the 2nd concept, they will focus on important events during the war such as the winter at Valley Forge. In the last concept, students will learn about the Treaty of Paris as well as complete a culminating activity where they create a timeline of the American Revolution. This unit sets the stage for the next two units. First, it leads nicely into the fact that after a society creates their country, then they must create a government to manage their independent country. It also leads to the unit on Westward Expansion as this unit ends with America growing to the Mississippi River.

Big Ideas:

- Conflict and new ideas can bring about change.
- Motivation and leadership can play a significant role in the outcome of war.
- Wars bring new opportunities and challenges.

Essential Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What causes change?• How can a small army defeat a mighty army?• What are the outcomes of war?		
Concepts within Unit # 3		TEKS Link to TEKS
Concept #1: Causes of the American Revolution	5.2A, 5.2B	
Concept #2: American Revolution	5.2A, 5.2B, 5.14A, 5.20A, 5.20B	
Concept #3: Results of the American Revolution	5.2C	
Unit 4: Building the Government of the United States Estimated Date Range: 11/17 – 12/19 Estimated Time Frame: 20		
State Assessments N/A	Assessments District Assessments Social Studies DLA 1 (12/8 – 12/19)	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A
Unit Overview: <p>This is an important unit because students should be taught at an early age to be an engaged citizen, and in order to do that, they need to be aware of the basic history and structure of our government. Students will first learn about the failures of the Articles of Confederation and the creation of the Constitution that came as a result. This will lead to a study of the purpose of the Constitution which is outlined in the Preamble. As part of the study of the Constitution, students will learn about the three branches of government and the relationship between national and state governments. The last part of this unit will focus on amendments to the Constitution, namely the Bill of Rights and how those rights still affect our lives today. This unit will help students in other units as government is a theme throughout the year, and it will also help in 8th grade where knowledge of the Constitution and our government are important.</p>		
Big Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The goal of our government is to create a free, fair, and peaceful society.• Individuals have a duty to learn about how our government works, to educate oneself about important issues, and to participate in civic affairs.• Protecting individual rights and limiting the power of the federal government help our government endure.		
Essential Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What should be the goal of government?• What is the duty of individuals in a democracy?• What helps governments endure?		
Concepts within Unit # 4		TEKS Link to TEKS
Concept #1: Creation of the Constitution	5.3, 5.14B, 5.15B, 5.16C	
Concept #2: Framework of Government	5.15A, 5.15B, 5.15C, 5.16A, 5.16D, 5.17A, 5.17C, 5.17B, 5.18A, 5.18B	
Concept #3: Bill of Rights	5.14C, 5.19	

Grading Period 3		
Unit 5: Expanding the United States Estimated Date Range: 1/8 – 1/30 Estimated Time Frame: 16		
State Assessments N/A	Assessments District Assessments NWEA MAP Growth Reading MOY (1/22) NWEA MAP Growth Math MOY (1/28)	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A
Unit Overview: In this unit, students will first learn about key events in Westward Expansion such as the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Students will also learn about reasons why people moved west as well as challenges, opportunities, and contributions of various American Indian and immigrant groups. In addition, students will learn about the War of 1812 and the Star-Spangled Banner as that happened during this time period. This unit will help students to better understand the causes to the Civil War as at the same time our country was expanding it was also becoming more divided.		
Big Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful expeditions lead the way to future explorers and settlers. • Works of art such as music are reflective of the time when they were created. • People who live in different locations may have different values, goals, and lifestyles. . 		
Essential Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact does exploration have on a society? • What do works of art have to do with the past? • How do different groups experience the same event? 		
Concepts within Unit # 5		TEKS Link to TEKS
Concept #1: Exploring the West		5.4C
Concept #2: War of 1812		5.4A, 5.4C, 5.16B, 5.20B
Concept #3: Moving West		5.4C, 5.4F, 5.8A, 5.12C, 5.20A, 5.20B, 5.22B
Unit 6: A Divided United States Estimated Date Range: 2/2 – 2/27 Estimated Time Frame: 18		
State Assessments STAAR Field Test Grade 5 (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 the Civil War and its effects shape the country we live in today. Students will start this unit by analyzing the sequence of events that led to the Civil War. Students will then learn about the war itself where they will read various primary sources such as the Gettysburg Address. The last part of the unit will focus on reconstruction with an emphasis on the 13 th , 14 th , and 15 th Amendments. In the last concept, students will learn about the convict leasing system here in Fort Bend		

County and about the Sugar Land 95. This unit will form a strong foundation for when students learn about the Civil War again in 8th grade.

Big Ideas:

- Events in one time-period influence events in later time-periods.
- Wars have social, political, and economic effects.
- Wars bring new opportunities and challenges.

Essential Questions

- Why do conflicts develop?
- How does war affect society?
- What are the outcomes of war?

Concepts within Unit # 6	TEKS Link to TEKS
Concept #1: Causes of the Civil War	5.4B, 5.4D, 5.7B, 5.11B, 5.12A, 5.12B, 5.22A
Concept #2: The Civil War	5.4E, 5.18A, 5.18B, 5.22C
Concept #3: Reconstruction	5.4E, 5.18A, 5.18B, 5.21B
Concept 4: Fort Bend County following Emancipation	5.4E, 5.19, FB1

Grading Period 4

Unit 7: Growth and Change in the United States

Estimated Date Range: 3/2 – 4/2

Estimated Time Frame: 18 (9 days in GP3 and 9 days in GP4)

Assessments		
State Assessments TELPAS (2/16 – 3/27)	District Assessments N/A	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A

Unit Overview:

This unit picks up with the changes that were emerging as part of the Industrial Revolution before the Civil War. After the Civil War, changes that resulted from the industrial revolution intensified. In the 1st concept, students will learn about important inventors, inventions, and big business. The focus will be on the impact of the various technological innovation. Next, the focus will be on immigration where students will learn about the immigrant experiences from five different places. In the last concept, students will learn about the frontier with an emphasis on the settlement in those states during this time and the impact it had on American Indians. Students will be able to build on the knowledge and skills they learn in this unit when they are in 6th grade and the focus is on World Cultures.

Big Ideas:

- Mass production, free enterprise, and technological innovations influence economic growth.
- Immigrants bring their languages and traditions and contribute to a more diverse American life.
- Economic growth creates new opportunities, but it also creates new challenges.

Essential Questions

- What causes growth and change?
- How does immigration shape our country?
- What impact does economic growth have?

Concepts within Unit # 7		TEKS Link to TEKS
Concept #1: Inventors, Inventions, and Big Business		5.10B, 5.10C, 5.11A, 5.11B, 5.12D, 5.16A, 5.22A, 5.22C
Concept #2: Immigration		5.4F, 5.12A, 5.12D, 5.16D, 5.21A, 5.21B
Concept #3: American Frontier		5.4F, 5.11B, 5.12B, 5.12C, 5.12D, 5.22B
Unit 8: Challenges at Home and Abroad for the United States		
Estimated Date Range: 4/6 – 5/1 Estimated Time Frame: 20		
State Assessments	Assessments	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs)
STAAR RLA (4/7 – 4/9) STAAR Science (4/14) STAAR Math (4/21-4/23)	District Assessments N/A	N/A
Unit Overview: This unit is important because it gives students an overview of the first half of the 20 th Century and how those events shaped the country we live in today. This unit starts off by learning about the significance of WWI and about the contributions of women in creating the 19 th Amendment. From there, students will learn about how American life was affected by the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl. In the last concept, students will learn about the significance of WWII and important individuals and groups during the war. The content covered in this unit will form the foundation for students' understanding of the previous century in American history, which won't be studied again until high school.		
Big Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflict and new ideas can bring about change. Economic depressions can greatly affect society, business, and people's choices. Major events can be turning points in history that shape the future. 		
Essential Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What causes change? What impact does an economic crisis have? Can one event change things forever? 		
Concepts within Unit #8		TEKS Link to TEKS
Concept #1: World War I and Women's Suffrage		5.5A, 5.5C
Concept #2: The Great Depression		5.5A, 5.5C
Concept #3: World War II		5.5A, 5.5C, 5.12D
Unit 9: Post WWII to Today in the United States		
Estimated Date Range: 5/4 – 5/28 Estimated Time Frame: 18		
Assessments		

State Assessments N/A	District Assessments MAP Growth Reading EOY (5/6) MAP Growth Math EOY (5/13) MAP Growth Science EOY (5/19) Social Studies DLA 2 (5/11 – 5/22)	Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) N/A
<p>Unit Overview:</p> <p>This unit is important because it focuses on the most recent American history and goes right up until the present. Students will learn about two major events that came about following the end of WWII – the Civil Rights Movement and the Cold War. For each of those concepts, students will explain the significance of each event and identify the accomplishments of key individuals such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ronald Reagan. In the last concept, students will learn and think about the lasting impact of significant events thus far in the 21st Century.</p> <p>Big Ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals and groups can bring about change in society through social action. • Different economic and political systems can lead to conflict between nations. • Events in our present century will shape our future. <p>Essential Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are effective methods for creating social change? • Why do conflicts develop between nations? • What determines the lasting impact of events? 		
Concepts within Unit #8		TEKS Link to TEKS
Concept #1: The Civil Rights Movement		5.5A, 5.5C, 5.19, 5.21B
Concept #2: The Cold War		5.5A, 5.5C, 5.10B, 5.10C, 5.11A, 5.12D, 5.22A, 5.22B, 5.22C
Concept #3: The 21 st Century		5.5B