

# Social studies

## Draft K-6 curriculum

---

### Social studies overview

Social studies looks at people in relation to each other and the world. It draws from history, geography, civics, economics, and other areas of study.

Students learn about the events, people, developments, and ideas that have shaped Alberta, Canada, and the world. By studying connections between people, places, and environments, students develop understanding and appreciation for different viewpoints and experiences. They also consider how money, labour, businesses, and governments impact personal finances and the economy.

Some careers that have roots in social studies include law, politics, psychology, market research, community health, archaeology, and many others.

### Shifts in K-6 social studies

These are the main shifts in knowledge and skill requirements from the current K-6 social studies curriculum to the draft:

#### Disciplinary knowledge and skills

- Current – History, geography, civics, economics, and other social studies-related disciplines are not addressed in a consistent way across every grade.
- Draft – Explicitly organized into knowledge-rich sections on history, geography, civics, financial literacy, and economics.
- Draft – Parents will know what every child will be learning and all children will have a common shared basis for critical thinking that builds from year to year.

#### Citizenship (civic literacy)

- Current – Focus on civic literacy varies by grade.
- Draft – Students in every grade must develop civic literacy by learning about citizenship and the ways governments and communities work at every level of government and compared with alternative systems of government.

#### Specific themes or topics

- Current – Some grades have narrow themes or topics that can limit learning experiences.
- Draft – Rich knowledge in chronological order develops critical thinking and deeper understanding of cultures, institutions, and local, national, and world history.

#### First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives

- Current – First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives are not addressed consistently across grades.
- Draft – Students learn about Indigenous histories, contributions, and perspectives in all grades that build understanding from year to year, including treaty rights and agreements, Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and the history of residential schools.

#### Francophone perspectives

- Current – Focus on Francophone perspectives varies from grade to grade.
- Draft – Students learn about Alberta and Canada's Francophone history, contributions, and perspectives in every grade that builds from grade to grade.

#### Black history

- Current – Only one reference to Black history (in Grade 5).
- Draft – Starting in Grade 3, students will learn about Black history in a very comprehensive way

---

Find out more at [alberta.ca/curriculum](https://alberta.ca/curriculum)

©2021 Government of Alberta | Published: March 2021 | Subject Fact Sheet: Page 1 of 3



focusing on prominent Black Albertans, settlements, and contributions.

### **Multiculturalism and inclusion**

- Current – References to diversity and inclusion vary from grade to grade.
- Draft – Students learn well-sequenced knowledge, understanding, and skills about many linguistic, cultural, and ethnic groups in Canada across all grades.

### **Racism**

- Current – References to racism are not consistently addressed in every grade.
- Draft – Students will learn about racism, racial discrimination, and human rights in all grades.

### **Belief systems**

- Current – References to belief systems vary from grade to grade.
- Draft – Students will learn about belief systems in all grades emphasizing tolerance and respect.

### **Financial literacy**

- Current – No emphasis on financial literacy.
- Draft – Students will develop financial literacy in every grade by learning to handle their own money and understand how it affects the economy.

### **Economics and entrepreneurship**

- Current – Focus on economics and entrepreneurship varies by grade.
- Draft – Students learn the fundamentals of economics and entrepreneurship across all grades.

## **Draft K-6 social studies snapshot**

In social studies, students will learn about history, civics, geography, economics and financial literacy.

### **Kindergarten**

- Exploring my world and understanding timelines.
- Understanding civics: responsibilities, expectations, and fairness.
- An introduction to maps and globes.
- Basic human needs and wants.
- The concept of money and value.

- Explore cultural and ethnic diversity in the classroom, school, and community.

### **Grade 1**

- Early peoples and civilizations.
- First Nations and Inuit traditions, including early Indigenous principles of value in bartering, trade, conservation, and sharing resources, cooperative relationships.
- Ways early civilizations were governed.
- Migration and settlement of ancient civilizations.
- How people meet needs and wants.
- Being money-wise involves making decisions about priorities.

### **Grade 2**

- Foundations of modern civilization.
- Origins of democracy.
- Belief systems associated with Islam, Judaism, and Christianity and how they helped to shape the current world.
- The origins of the Silk Road trading route and the connections between cultures and religions across the area between Europe and China.
- Ideas and culture around the world.
- How trade and business work.
- Value of money and goods, managing your money.

### **Grade 3**

- History of New France.
- Arrival of First European explorers to North America and early contact with Indigenous peoples.
- The significance Indigenous ways, languages and practices had in shaping Canadian culture.
- Government of New France.
- People of New France and connection with today's Francophonie communities.
- Resources and products in Canada.
- How to make responsible financial choices, including saving and spending.

### **Grade 4**

- Alberta's history and the expansion of the west
- Francophone contributions to Alberta history.
- History of varied ethnic settlers in Alberta, including Chinese, Sikh, Ukrainian, and Hutterite communities.

Find out more at [alberta.ca/curriculum](https://www.alberta.ca/curriculum)

- Places, location, and boundaries in Alberta.
- Black settlements in Alberta and the contributions of early Black pioneers.
- How trade and transportation are related.
- World trade, transportation, and the distribution of goods and services.
- Métis settlements in Alberta and Treaties 6, 7, and 8.
- Understanding and creating a business plan.

### Grade 5

- History of early Canada.
- Comparing forms of government in Canada past and present.
- An introduction to the world economy.
- Understanding budgeting.
- Restrictive immigration policies in Canadian history.
- Geography of Canada.
- Migration of people, conflicts and changes in North America, past and present.
- Economic regions of Canada.
- Understanding loans and borrowing.

### Grade 6

- Comparing the histories of Canada and the United States.
- American “Indian wars”, the displacement of Indigenous peoples in America, and American Residential Schools.
- Racial segregation in America.
- Inequality of voting rights affecting Indigenous peoples and people of colour.
- Comparing political systems of Canada and the United States.
- Migration of people, conflicts and changes in North America.
- An introduction to the world economy.