

inquirED



Literacy in Social Studies

Materials Review Rubric | inquirED



Literacy in Social Studies

Introduction to the Materials Review Rubric

Social studies education provides a powerful opportunity for students to develop their literacy skills and build deep background across the disciplines of history, civics, economics, and geography.

On average, elementary students who receive an additional 30 minutes of social studies instruction per day outperform students with less social studies time by 15 percent on fifth-grade standardized reading assessments (Tyner & Kabourek, 2020). However, teachers cannot be expected to bridge the gap between literacy and social studies instruction without the right resources. They need high-quality instructional materials that integrate literacy and social studies instruction to ensure rigorous, coherent learning experiences. The Literacy in Social Studies Materials Review Rubric helps educators systematically evaluate their curriculum, highlighting areas for improvement and ensuring effective integration of literacy and social studies practices.

How to Use the Rubric

The Literacy in Social Studies Materials Review Rubric is a comprehensive tool designed to evaluate how your curriculum integrates literacy practices. It provides criteria for assessing materials across reading, writing, and communication skills, ensuring that social studies instruction builds essential literacy competencies. Here's how to get started:

- **Evaluate Current Materials:** Use the rubric to assess your existing curriculum, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Adapt the Rubric:** Access the editable version of the rubric to tailor it to your school or district's specific needs and goals. [View the editable rubric [here](#) – and make a copy to adapt.]
- **Make Informed Decisions:** Leverage the rubric to guide curriculum revisions or future adoptions, ensuring your materials align with best practices in literacy and social studies integration. For examples of how inquiredED integrates literacy practices, [view our guide](#).

About inquiredED

inquiredED works to support every teacher with high-quality instructional materials that make joyful, rigorous, and transferable learning possible for every student. Our elementary and middle school social studies curricula are used in schools and districts across the country to help students develop deep social studies content knowledge and build the inquiry skills that are essential for a thriving democracy.

Literacy in Social Studies Materials Review Rubric

Reading Comprehension

Core Literacy Competency	Social Studies Materials Practices and Supports
<p>Key Ideas and Details</p> <p>Students will read closely to understand and make inferences from texts, identify central ideas, and cite textual evidence to support conclusions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Close reading strategies (ex. annotation, note-taking, text markup, etc.) scaffolded through think-alouds, modeling, and gradual release <input type="checkbox"/> Text previews to spark thinking, elicit questions, and prompt predictions <input type="checkbox"/> Writing to learn activities to support comprehension (ex. annotation, note-taking) scaffolded through think-alouds, modeling, and gradual release <input type="checkbox"/> Targeted tools (ex. graphic organizers, mind mapping, outlines, etc.) to record relevant evidence and organize conclusions
<p>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</p> <p>Students will integrate and evaluate content from diverse media and formats, delineate and evaluate arguments and claims, and analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Primary and secondary sources included across media types (ex. maps, documents, photographs, websites, videos, paintings, personal narratives) <input type="checkbox"/> Activities that call on students to think across related texts to build knowledge of topics and concepts and topics
<p>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</p> <p>Students will read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Students engage in the shared reading of rich, complex texts to build knowledge in social studies <input type="checkbox"/> Instruction that supports students as they comprehend, analyze, and express understanding of texts <input type="checkbox"/> Metacognitive strategies that promote independent learning (ex. KWL, predictions, reflections) <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for independent investigations

Writing Composition

Core Literacy Competency	Social Studies Materials Practices and Supports
Writing Form and Purposes Students will support written claims using valid reasoning and relevant evidence; they will write informative texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information.	<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities to construct claims and explanations, supported by evidence, in every unit <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizers to collect and organize evidence <input type="checkbox"/> Prompts and guided practice regularly support students in using evidence to support claims and explanations
Production and Distribution Students will produce writing appropriate to task, purpose, and audience through a process of planning, revising, editing, and rewriting.	<input type="checkbox"/> Rubrics that support the development of work, based on the task, purpose, and audience <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities to draft and revise work <input type="checkbox"/> Structured protocols that support peer feedback of in-progress work <input type="checkbox"/> Final products that target a specific audience and purpose
Research to Build and Present Knowledge Students will research complex questions with evidence from multiple sources, assessing the credibility and accuracy of each source.	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent, short group or independent research and writing tasks <input type="checkbox"/> Investigations center on complex questions that require authentic, evidence-based conclusions <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing, frequent opportunities to analyze sources, considering origin, viewpoint, purpose, and/or credibility
Range of Writing Students will write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent writing tasks for a variety of purposes, connected to module topics, content, and texts <input type="checkbox"/> Open-ended writing tasks (ex. quick writes, etc.) that prompt personal reflection and expression of understanding about topics <input type="checkbox"/> Informal writing tasks that scaffold toward more complex writing tasks <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-writing activities to support the synthesis of text evidence

Speaking, Listening, and Language

Core Literacy Competency	Social Studies Materials Practices and Supports
<p>Comprehension and Collaboration</p> <p>Students will participate in a range of conversations and collaborations; they will integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher guidance supports students in creating an inclusive classroom community that prioritizes student discourse <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent opportunities to engage in purposeful dialogue and discourse with peers; many opportunities for students to engage in both informal (ex. turn-and-talk) and formal discussions to deepen comprehension, analyze perspectives, and construct meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Multimedia resources (ex. audio, video, interactive presentations) that provide opportunities for active listening <input type="checkbox"/> Resources like sentence frames and sentence stems to support discussion
<p>Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas</p> <p>Students will present information, findings, and supporting evidence to listeners; they will make strategic use of digital media and displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for speaking and discussion involving real-world contexts (ex. presenting to stakeholders, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Rehearsal and feedback sessions in each unit to improve presentation skills <input type="checkbox"/> Final product options that use digital media and displays to support presentation of findings
<p>Vocabulary Acquisition and Use</p> <p>Students will acquire and use a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prioritization of specific content knowledge, allowing key vocabulary words to be revisited across multiple texts and student-facing instructional materials (ex. prompts, questions/sentence stems) <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary words that are introduced via context and through student-friendly descriptions, explanations, or examples <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional activities that deepen students' understanding and support vocabulary usage

References

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