

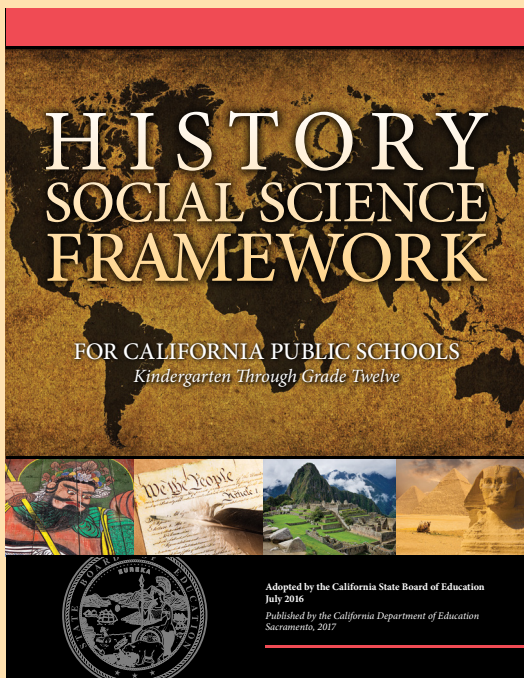
# Optional Survey

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# An Overview of the New History–Social Science Framework for California Public Schools

## THE ELEMENTARY GRADES



**This pamphlet is part of a series that provides a brief summary of the main instructional shifts in the curriculum framework adopted by the State Board of Education on July 14, 2016. The framework provides guidance for teachers and administrators in implementing a rigorous, standards-based, and student-focused curriculum in history–social science.**

## Content

The California curriculum framework incorporates new scholarship and recent state mandates such as the Fair, Accurate, Inclusive, and Respectful (FAIR) Act. The course descriptions for kindergarten through grade five have been completely rewritten to tell a story that reflects the contributions of many diverse groups to the development of California and the United States.

## Inquiry

This framework is rooted in a strong emphasis on student inquiry. The goal is not just to tell students **about** history–social science but to teach them the skills to **do** history–social science. The framework calls upon students to conduct research (both guided and independent), evaluate primary and secondary sources, develop arguments, and make presentations.

## Literacy

The framework views the development of student literacy as a shared enterprise, not something that is just limited to the language arts classroom. The curriculum includes an emphasis on giving all students access to the academic vocabulary and skills necessary for success in college, careers, and civic life.

## Citizenship

The history–social science curriculum places a strong emphasis on democratic values in the relations between citizens and the state. It encourages teachers to help their students practice the skills of engaged citizenship.

## Early Elementary (K–3)

The early elementary grades have a common theme, focusing on basic concepts of citizenship, geography, and economics. Students study key American symbols and heroes through grade-appropriate literature, songs, and images. The framework includes many suggestions for resources that teachers can use to teach the content standards for these grades, such as the books *Dear Juno* by Soyung Pak and *The Boy with Long Hair* by Pushpinder Singh.

The framework includes more than 30 **classroom examples**. As part of the framework's emphasis on literacy development, these sample lessons include correlations to the California history–social science standards, the California Common Core language arts and literacy standards, and the California English language development standards. The classroom examples for the early elementary grades are:

- ▶ Kindergarten: Being a Good Citizen
- ▶ Grade One: Schools in the Past and Today
- ▶ Grade Two: Heroes Making a Difference
- ▶ Grade Three: Classroom Constitution

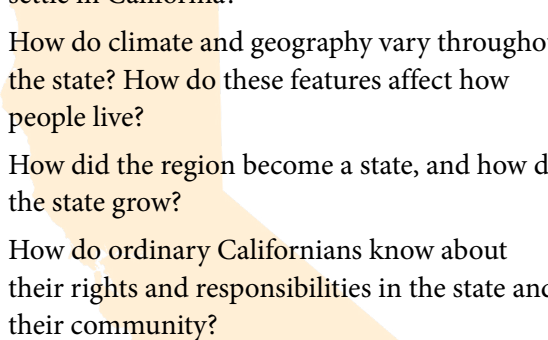
Students should leave the early elementary grades with the knowledge and skills needed for success in the later grades.



## Grade Four

Grades four and five move away from the thematic approach of the early elementary grades into a more narrative look at the histories of California and the colonial United States, respectively. One of the unifying themes of this grade level is the story of the many diverse peoples who came to California both before and after it became a part of the United States.

The framework uses **guiding questions** at each grade level to direct instruction toward student investigation and research, allow students to explore topics in depth, and to answer important questions for themselves. These guiding questions are part of the inquiry-based approach of this framework. Some of the guiding questions from grade four include:

- ▶ Why did different groups of people decide to settle in California?
  - ▶ How do climate and geography vary throughout the state? How do these features affect how people live?
  - ▶ How did the region become a state, and how did the state grow?
  - ▶ How do ordinary Californians know about their rights and responsibilities in the state and their community?
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## Grade Five

In grade five, students study the history of colonial America, the American Revolution, and the development of the new nation until 1850. This grade level includes a strong focus on the founding documents of the United States, including the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

The framework places a great deal of emphasis on students learning through exposure to primary sources, studying history through the words of the people who lived it. The grade five course description includes the following passage:

*Wherever possible, the past should be explored through the eyes of women, men, and children from a variety of historical groups. Viewing the past from the perspectives of those that lived it is best done through a variety of primary sources. Throughout the year students should be introduced to sources presented in different formats. They should begin to understand that people in the past had different perspectives, and that one goal of learning history is to understand why people in the past lived the way they lived. It is also intended for students to begin to understand why the current world is structured the way it is.*

The grade five course description includes classroom examples that focus on the reasons for the American Revolution and interpreting the Preamble to the Constitution.

## The Role of the Framework

The role of a curriculum framework is to provide guidance to teachers and administrators. While some of the content in the current framework is mandated by state law, the majority of decisions that affect classroom instruction are made at the local level by the school and district administrators and the governing board of the school district.



You can find more information about the framework on the California Department of Education History–Social Science Curriculum Frameworks Web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/hs/cf/>.

The *California History–Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools* can be viewed and downloaded at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>.

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