

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORY  
SOCIAL SCIENCE  
FRAMEWORK

FOR CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
*Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*

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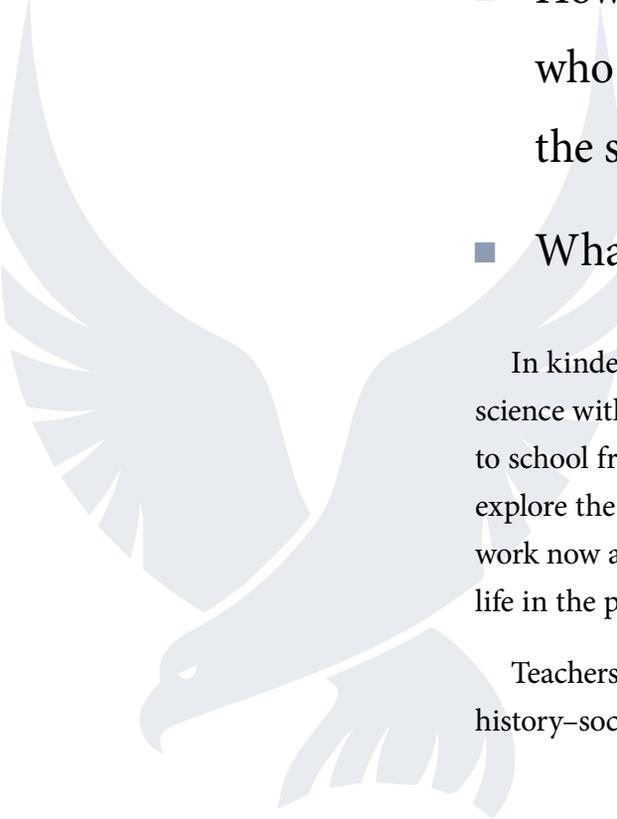
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## CHAPTER 3

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# Learning and Working Now and Long Ago

- How can we learn and work together?
- What does it mean to be an American?
- How are our lives different from those who lived in the past? How are they the same?
- What is our neighborhood like?



In kindergarten, students begin the study of history–social science with concepts anchored in the experiences they bring to school from their families and communities. Students explore the meaning of good citizenship, national symbols, work now and long ago, geography, time and chronology, and life in the past.

Teachers are encouraged to build understanding of history–social science concepts while furthering beginning

literacy skills, as outlined in the *California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* (CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy). For example, shared readings of narrative and informational texts related to the history–social science standards can reinforce academic content vocabulary and provide opportunities for students to work on a variety of reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities. Teachers should also work collaboratively with colleagues who teach grades one through three to avoid repetition. The content themes in kindergarten—such as understanding of and appreciation for American culture and government, geographic awareness, and (starting in grade one) economic reasoning—serve as a multigrade strand that can allow an extended and relatively in-depth course of study.

### Learning and Working Together

In Standard K.1, students explore the meaning of good citizenship by learning about rules and working together, as well as the basic idea of government, in response to the question **How can we learn and work together?** An informational book such as *Rules and Laws* by Ann-Marie Kishel may be used to introduce the topic while teachers use classroom problems that arise as opportunities for critical thinking and problem solving. For example, problems in sharing scarce resources or space with others or in planning ahead and ending an activity on time for the next activity will teach students to function as a community of learners who make choices about how they conduct themselves.

Students need help in analyzing problems, determining why the problem arose, developing alternatives, considering how these alternatives might bring different results, and learning to appreciate behaviors and values that are consistent with a democratic ethic. Students and teachers can dramatize issues and choices that create conflict on the playground, in the classroom, and at home and can brainstorm choices that exemplify compromise, cooperation, and respect for rules and laws. Students must have opportunities to discuss these more desirable behaviors, try them out, and examine how they lead to more harmonious and socially satisfying relationships with others. Literature books such as Kevin Henkes’s *Lily’s Purple Plastic Purse*, David Shannon’s *David Goes to School*, and Laura Vaccaro Seeger’s *Bully* may be used to explore these themes.

Students also need guidance in understanding the purpose of rules and laws

and why a government is necessary. Teachers may discuss rules at home and in school and ask why they are important. What happens when family members choose not to follow rules? Students may help create classroom rules for the purpose of establishing a safe environment where learning can occur. Students may also discuss possible consequences for breaking these rules.

### Kindergarten Classroom Example: Being a Good Citizen (Integrated ELA and Civics)

The students in Ms. Miller’s class are familiar with young David’s antics in David Shannon’s picture book *No, David!* They have chuckled with Ms. Miller over the story and illustrations many times. Ms. Miller and her kindergarten students explore what it means to be a good citizen and why rules are important. Ms. Miller reads aloud Shannon’s sequel, *David Goes to School*, in which a young David chooses to break one classroom rule after another. With support, the children identify and discuss, at appropriate points, the main ideas of the narrative conveyed in the text and illustrations.

Ms. Miller asks text-dependent questions to guide the children’s comprehension and critical analysis of the story. She returns to the story with them to locate specific language in the text that addresses these questions:

- What are the school rules in this book?
- Who is the author? Do you think the author believes that it is important to have rules at school and in the classroom? Why?
- What does David think of the rules? Does he think they are important? How do you know?
- What lessons do you think the author wants us to learn about rules that we can apply to our own school?
- Let’s compare the rules in our school with the rules in David’s school. Which are similar and which are different?

**Example** *(continued)*

To further develop students' critical thinking, Ms. Miller asks students to reflect on the rules in their own classroom. She refers to the posted list of classroom rules that the children helped develop early in the school year and encourages brief, small-group conversations to consider whether any rules need to be changed or added. What rules in our classroom would you like to add? Why? What rules in our classroom would you like to change? Why?

Knowing that some of the children need scaffolding to convey their thoughts, she provides an optional sentence frame: "We should add/change \_\_\_\_\_ as a rule because \_\_\_\_\_."

(Ms. Miller considers adding or changing one of the classroom rules so that the children recognize that their input has impact.)

**CA HSS Content Standard:** K.1

**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy:** RL.K.1–3; SL.K.1–2

Students further their study of good citizenship by learning about people who exhibit honesty, courage, determination, individual responsibility, respect for the rights of others, and patriotism in American and world history. Teachers may introduce students to important historical figures who exhibit these traits by reading biographies such as *Now and Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin* by Gene Baretta; *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez* by Kathleen Krull; *The Story of Ruby Bridges* by Robert Coles; *Clara and Davie* [a story of Clara Barton] by Patricia Polacco; and *Malala: A Brave Girl from Pakistan/Iqbal: A Brave Boy from Pakistan* by Jeanette Winter. They can use such biographies to illustrate decisions that those people made.

Stories, fairy tales, and nursery rhymes that incorporate conflict and raise value issues that are both interesting and understandable to young students are effective tools for citizenship education. Students deepen their understanding of good citizenship by identifying the behavior of characters in the stories. They observe the effect of this behavior on others, examine why characters behaved as they did, and consider whether other choices could have changed the results. These collaborative conversations are intended to help them acquire those values of deliberation, informed decision making, and individual responsibility that are consistent with good citizenship in a democratic nation. A few examples of such

stories are “Jack and the Beanstalk,” “Goldilocks and the Three Bears,” selections from *Aesop’s Fables*, Margot Friego’s *Tortillitas para Mama*, Helen Lester’s *Me First*, Gary Soto’s *Too Many Tamales*, and Virginia Hamilton’s *The People Could Fly*.

## National and State Symbols

Kindergarten students explore the strands of national identity and cultural literacy by learning about national and state symbols in Standard K.2, using the question **What does it mean to be American?** Students may investigate the importance of national and state symbols such as the national and state flags, the bald eagle, and the Statue of Liberty and how those symbols relate to America’s cultural and national identity. Students begin to discover the values and principles in these symbols by examining photographs, artwork, poems, as well as literature and informational texts. The teacher may choose to integrate this standard with Standards K.6.1 and K.6.2 and create a larger unit on national symbols, holidays, and important Americans. Literature such as *America the Beautiful* by Katherine Lee Bates; *Fireworks, Picnics, and Flags* by Jim Giblin; and *Purple Mountain Majesties* by Barbara Younger can engage students and develop their understanding of the standards. In addition, songs such as “America the Beautiful,” “The Star-Spangled Banner,” and Woody Guthrie’s “This Land Is Your Land” all support student engagement and learning.

## Work Now and Long Ago

In Standard K.3, students learn about the different types of jobs and work performed by people in their school and local community. This standard may be integrated with Standard K.4; as students construct school and neighborhood maps and talk about neighborhood structures such as the fire station, supermarkets, houses, banks, and hospitals, the jobs and workers can be introduced as well. As students learn about daily life in the past in Standard K.6, they may investigate ways in which work and jobs have changed or remained the same over time by answering the prompt **How are our lives different from those who lived in the past? How are they the same?** The teacher should provide prompting and support as students analyze multiple sources, including primary-source photographs, picture books, and informational books for young readers such as Vicki Yates’s *Life at Work (Then and Now)*. Students should understand that one purpose of school is

to develop their skills and knowledge and that this is as important as any job in the community. Working collaboratively to do tasks, students can practice problem solving, conflict resolution, and taking personal responsibility.

### Geography of the Neighborhood

Students begin the study of geography by exploring the immediate environment of the school and their neighborhood, including its topography, streets, transportation systems, structures, and human activities, in Standard K.4 using the question **What is our neighborhood like?** Teachers guide students'



investigations of their surroundings with questions about familiar features of the environment, where they can be found, and how maps can be used to locate them. Students demonstrate spatial concepts and skills by using a variety of materials such as large building blocks, wood, tools, toys, and other recycled objects to construct neighborhood structures. Such group activities become important beginnings

of map work for young students. Students are encouraged to build neighborhoods and landscapes and to incorporate such structures as fire stations, airports, houses, banks, hospitals, supermarkets, harbors, and transportation lines. As a result of these activities, students are made aware of how stairs and curbs in their neighborhood pose physical barriers for people with mobility impairments such as those who use wheelchairs. Picture files, stories, and informational texts should be used to deepen students' understanding about the places they are creating and the work that is done in these places. Literature such as *The Listening Walk* by Paul Showers, or *Barrio: Jose's Neighborhood* by George Ancona, featuring photos of a Latino neighborhood in San Francisco, may be used to pique students' interest in exploring their environment.

Exploring the environment surrounding their school today and discussing how it is different than when the school was built focuses students on the fact that people in earlier times used many of the same goods and ecosystem services that

are used today, such as lumber, water, and food. They discover that in earlier times, people more directly consumed the goods and ecosystem services from natural systems rather than obtaining them from sources like grocery stores and lumberyards (see appendix G for California Environmental Principle II). Having students reflect on the management and use of natural resources on their campus provides them with a picture of the way resource use has changed over time (see the California Education and the Environment Initiative [EEI] curriculum unit “Some Things Change and Some Things Stay the Same,” K.4.5–K.6.3).

## Time and Chronology

Learning about the calendar, days of the week, and months of the year is an important first step toward understanding time and chronology in Standard K.5. Chronological thinking can be enhanced by constructing timelines of the kindergarten day, practicing sequencing of a story, and learning words such as *first*, *next*, *then*, and *finally* while sequencing story events. In a study of the national symbols, holidays, and times past, the teacher may add selected events and pictures to a large class timeline to further develop students’ sense of chronology.

## Reaching Out to Times Past

In Standard K.6, students take their first vicarious steps into times past to develop historical literacy and explore the themes of continuity and change. Students learn about national holidays and their purposes, as well as the events associated with them. Teachers may read historical accounts of famous Americans, which further establishes students’ understanding of national identity and cultural literacy.

Students also study the past and consider how life was the same as or different from their lives. For example, students may learn that getting water from a well, growing food and raising livestock, and making clothing are examples of how the past may be different from their lives today. Stories from the *My First Little House Books* series and informational books such as Vicki Yates’s *Life at Home* that illustrate the work and daily lives of characters and people in the past can help students develop historical empathy and understand life in the past. Primary sources can be introduced by using photographs of transportation, homes, work,

common household items, and clothing while questions are posed about which aspects of these items have changed, which have remained the same, and what this reveals about life in the past. Students should be encouraged to engage in discussions and write texts about the similarities and differences of daily life today versus daily life long ago by drawing on evidence from the primary-source photographs, informational texts, and literature books used in their studies.