



CKEC Social Studies Teacher Leadership Network March 2014



"Our Democratic Republic will not sustain unless students are aware of their changing cultural and physical environments; know the past; read, write, and think deeply; and act in ways that promote the common good." ~The College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography and History p. 5

CKEC Social Studies Network Meeting – March 25th, 2014 Agenda

What is your vision for Social Studies?

Introduction – network purpose and pillars: How are you being a change agent?

--Which Formative Assessment Strategies have you used to improve instruction?

--Why is Fostering a Growth Mindset an important part of social studies instruction?

What the Heck is Social Studies?

--Breaking Bad Social Studies, and C3 Instructional Shifts for Social Studies

--Why do I have to learn this? reader's theater

--Why are we still reading about Lincoln?

-disciplinary questions, characteristics of compelling questions and supporting questions

Concurrent Mini-sessions:

--Is the Common Core Good for Social Studies?

What are the CCSS/KCAS literacy standards for social studies?

--Why is doing a Close Reading of primary source documents important? -Gettysburg Address

--What can we learn from Lincoln about leadership, vision and mindset?

LUNCH

--Who is on your district leadership team? Planning your Impact

Breakout sessions – Elem, MS, & HS:

--Analyzing and evaluating lessons and units based on the C3 framework.

What makes a lesson/unit "C3-like?"

--How do I improve my current lessons to be more "C3-like?"

--Complete the online Evaluation before you leave – we need your feedback!

Homework:

1. Teach the lesson you worked on today to be more "C3-like."
2. Bring back student work samples that show evidence a C3 indicator.
3. Read one of the assessment articles to prepare for a Socratic circle on assessment in Social Studies.
4. Complete the online Balanced Assessment Survey you will receive via email.
5. Be ready to share how you have used formative assessment and other strategies in your classroom.

CKEC Social Studies Network Facilitators

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Today's Materials can be accessed at:

www.debbiewaggoner.com/mar-2014-social-studies.html

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Update on Social Studies Standards Work in Kentucky – March 2014

Senate Bill 1 (2009) requires that Kentucky revise all required content standards to reflect the necessary knowledge and skills needed to ensure all students are college and career ready. SB 1 suggests that all standards should be rigorous, world class, and internationally benchmarked, while also allowing for deeper engagement around fewer concepts/topics. Adoption of the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics was the first step taken to address SB 1. Despite the fact that the ELA standards include a section for Literacy in History/Social Studies, there is still a need for a set of Social Studies standards that fully addresses the needs of Kentucky's 21st century learners.

In February of 2013, a team of elementary, middle, high school, higher education, and key Social Studies advocacy group representatives was established to begin setting a vision for and drafting new social studies standards for the Commonwealth. These new standards will be informed by a document called the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies. The C3 Framework is not a set of standards, but rather was designed to assist states in updating, revising, or reinventing their state social studies standards.

The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Inquiry in Social Studies State Standards, developed by the National Council on Social Studies (NCSS)—led by University of Kentucky's Kathy Swan (who is also on the team mentioned above) --focuses on the disciplinary and multidisciplinary concepts and practices that make up the process of investigation, analysis, and explanation. It is designed to have explicit connections to the Common Core ELA standards. Work on the C3 Framework began in 2010. Members of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO's) Social Studies Assessment, Curriculum, and Instruction (SSACI) collaborative (of which Kentucky is a member) provided feedback and guidance to this process. The C3 Framework was released on Constitution Day last year—September 17, 2013.

The KY team has been working with a near-final draft of the C3 Framework since late spring 2013 and has been able to begin some prioritization of desired characteristics/elements for a new set of Kentucky social studies standards—and has even begun to draft some models of what the new standards might be. Small writing groups will work to capture the thinking of the team and the intent of the Framework to draft a complete set of standards throughout 2014. During this period other key stakeholders and experts in various related fields will be asked for comments and feedback to ensure the quality of the work.

Teacher, School, and District Leaders participating in Kentucky's Leadership Networks for Social Studies (launched in January 2014) will focus on developing capacity of all participants to effectively translate the Literacy in History/Social Studies standards into practice while considering the C3 Framework's implications for teaching and learning. The participants will have multiple opportunities to provide input/feedback on the standards revision work, too, as they will have the most extensive knowledge of all the pieces—alongside their practical experience of supporting students' understanding of the social studies.

The goal is to have a solid, defensible, world-class draft of college/career- ready standards to present to the Kentucky Board of Education in the fall of 2014. Progress updates will continue on a regular basis during Network meetings and in KDE's ISN Newsletters and Webcasts.

3 The ideal learning culture

6 *Motivation is the most important factor in determining whether you succeed in the long run. What I mean by motivation is not only the desire to achieve, but also the love of learning, the love of challenge and the ability to thrive on obstacles. These are the greatest gifts we can give our students. 9*

(Dweck, 2006)

Over the years during which our understanding and practice of formative assessment have so far evolved, it has been clear that strategies and techniques have very little impact if the *culture of the classroom* does not support the philosophy or ethos of the key principles. We can list the component parts or key messages of formative assessment, but the appropriate learning culture consists of less tangible elements. The elements which most often arise in discussion in my learning teams and in other continuing research are dealt with in this chapter. What seems to matter the most are:

- How teachers and pupils view ability and consequently their learning potential;
- What teachers and pupils think the ideal learning environment should consist of, and effective strategies to create and sustain that learning culture.

How teachers and pupils view ability and their learning potential

Much research carried out by Carol Dweck and others (e.g. Dweck, 1975, Weiner, 1984; Weiner, Heckhausen and Meyer, 1972) shows that pupils differ in whether they regard their successes and failures as the

result of certain factors. Boys are more likely to attribute their successes to ability and their failures to lack of effort and bad luck. Girls, on the other hand, are more likely to attribute their successes to effort and their failures to lack of ability. Girls, especially, if they feel unsuccessful, are liable to suffer from low confidence which, if it continues, results in what Dweck (1975) calls 'learned helplessness'.

Dweck built on this work and has now established – through thirty years of studies involving thousands of children and adults from all walks of life – that what matters the most, in terms of motivation, is whether we see ability as *fixed* (an entity learner) or *growth* (an incremental learner). In short, people with a 'fixed' mindset will only tackle tasks which they know, in advance, they will succeed at. People with a 'growth' mindset not only willingly tackle difficult tasks, but thrive on them. Examples of both mindsets, in terms of their characteristics and the repercussions, are given below. Our aim, of course, must be to develop a *growth* mindset – for ourselves, for all adults involved in working with children, for parents and all our pupils.

The 'fixed' mindset

Characteristics of a 'fixed' mindset	Repercussions
My intelligence is a fixed trait – I have a certain amount of it and that's that.	I worry about how much intelligence I have and it makes me interested in looking and feeling as if I have enough. I must look clever and, at all costs, not look stupid.
I feel clever when things are easy, where I put in little effort and I outperform my peers.	Effort, difficulty, setbacks or higher performing peers call my intelligence into question, even if I have high confidence in my intelligence, so I feel stupid.
I need easy successes to feel clever.	Challenges are a threat to my self-esteem, so I won't engage with them.
I don't want to have my inadequacies and errors revealed.	I will withdraw from valuable learning opportunities if I think this might happen.
Even if I'm doing well initially, I won't be able to cope with a problem or obstacle.	I readily disengage from tasks when obstacles occur.

The 'growth' mindset

Characteristics of a 'growth' mindset	Repercussions
Intelligence is something I can increase through my own efforts.	I am keen to work hard and learn as much as I can.
I acknowledge that there are differences between people in how much they know and how quickly they master things.	I believe that everyone, with effort and guidance, can increase their intellectual abilities.
I love to learn something new.	I will readily sacrifice opportunities to look clever in favour of opportunities to learn something new.
I am excited by challenge.	Even if I have low confidence in my intelligence, I throw myself into difficult tasks – and stick with them. I set myself goals and make sure I have strategies to reach them.
I feel clever when . . .	I am fully engaged with a new task, exerting effort to master something, stretching my skills and putting my knowledge to good use (e.g. helping other pupils learn).

People with a fixed mindset need to constantly prove their ability, proving that they are special or even superior, whereas people with a growth mindset believe that intelligence can be developed through learning something which brain research has proved to be true. In one study (Dweck, 2006), people were asked hard questions and given feedback about their answers. Their brain waves were monitored to see where they were interested and attentive. People with a fixed mindset were only interested when the feedback reflected their ability, when they were told whether they were right or wrong. When they were presented with information which could help them learn, they showed no sign of interest, even when given the right answer for something they had got wrong. Only people with a growth mindset paid close attention to information that could stretch their knowledge. For them, learning was a priority. Even for people with a growth mindset, failure can still be painful, but the big difference between them and people with a fixed mindset is that they don't believe that failure defines you. It is rather a problem to be faced, dealt with and learnt from.

Self-esteem

Before I outline strategies for encouraging a growth mindset in ourselves and our pupils, we need to be clear about our understanding of self-esteem. All parents, hopefully, want their children to have a basic sense of self-worth – to know that they have our respect and love, but after that self-esteem is something *they* are in charge of and we can only facilitate. High self-esteem happens for those with a growth mindset when they are using their abilities to the fullest in something they value, rather than showing that they are better than someone else.

Strategies for developing a growth mindset – for teachers, parents and all involved in education

Modelling a growth mindset

We need to model our own growth mindset and love of learning by emphasising processes of learning, the importance and excitement of meeting challenges, putting in effort and using strategies which help us learn. We need to teach children that intelligence can be developed. We need to transform 'difficulty' into 'new or deeper learning' and avoid expressing sympathy when children encounter failure or difficulty. We need to show enthusiasm about challenging tasks and ensure that failure is followed up by celebration of what has been learnt by the experience, in terms of new strategies needed. By doing this, we help ensure that challenge and effort are things that *enhance* self-esteem rather than threaten it.

Teachers with a fixed mindset often give lower achievers less demanding work in order to preserve their self-esteem – making sure they succeed, telling them how clever they are . . . and dooming them to fall further behind. This approach also ensures that these pupils will only feel successful when they can do things easily.

With a growth mindset, you tell pupils the truth. If they don't have skills or knowledge, or if they are underachieving, this is not a sign of something shameful, but a sign that they need to work harder or be helped to find new strategies. By giving pupils greater access to tasks (i.e. increasing the level of support within the task itself), for instance, they instantly have greater access to the success criteria used in formative assessment.

Praising effort and achievement rather than ability or personal attributes

Praising pupils' intelligence harms their motivation and their performance. Children love to be praised for their intelligence and talent, but if this is the norm, the minute they encounter an obstacle their confidence drops. If success means they are clever, then failure can only mean they are not! This hooks them neatly into a fixed mindset. Dweck (2006) gives some examples of well-meaning comments and what pupils actually hear:

'You learned that so quickly! You're so clever!
If I don't learn something quickly I'm not clever.

'Look at that drawing! Is he the next Picasso or what?'
I shouldn't try drawing anything hard or they'll see I'm not.

'You're so brilliant! You got an A without even studying!'
I'd better stop studying or they won't think I'm brilliant.'

Any feedback we give pupils clearly needs to support a view of ability as incremental rather than fixed. We need to praise pupils for **what they have accomplished and the strategies used**, such as practice, research, persistence, evaluating and making improvements: '*Well done, that is a beautiful rainbow, especially the way you've worked so carefully at blending the colours*', '*Fantastic. You worked so hard at that problem.*'

With my own three-year-old daughter, I have been able to see at first hand the impact of the language used to encourage and praise. Before I read *Mindset*, by Dweck, I was more likely to absent-mindedly tell her how clever she was at all her infant achievements, like crawling and walking. Luckily, those things are now mastered and are no longer part of a learning journey. When she first completed an easy jigsaw, however, I again told her how clever she was – and saw the exact repercussions described by Dweck. The moment she now encounters any form of difficulty with a jigsaw, she expresses displeasure and says '*You do it!*' She refuses to have a go if I tell her to try again. We now only use the word *clever* to describe something inanimate, rather than to describe her ability ('*The way that hot air balloon works is so clever*') and again, she copies our use of the word ('*That's clever! The cooker rings a bell!*'). I have found it particularly effective to focus my praise on learning, telling her how good it is that she is learning to write, read, use paints, cut out, use a potty, etc. She copies this language about things she still has to work at, with pride and enthusiasm ('*Look Daddy! I am learning to wind the tape measure*'). The words we use clearly form attitudes and beliefs.

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So what *do* you say when someone completes something quickly and perfectly? At home, you would just acknowledge that it had been achieved, with no mention of any related intelligence. Dweck states that speed and perfection are the enemy of difficult learning, so, in the classroom, we would respond by apologising for wasting their time in giving them something which was not challenging enough. Children need further learning experiences, rather than to do things they find easy.

A set of commonly devised strategies for dealing with challenge can be a useful visual prompt for enabling pupils to be self-sufficient, such as:

When something really makes you think . . .

1. Don't worry or panic.
2. Remind yourself that, if it makes you think, you are learning.
3. Read the success criteria again and check exactly where you are having difficulties.
4. Look at any finished examples to see what other pupils have done.
5. Ask your talk partner for advice.
6. Use class resources to help solve the problem, such as a thesaurus or number line.

Avoiding external rewards

The fixed mindset is perpetuated by the use of external rewards, mistakenly given to pupils to boost their self-esteem, when the opposite actually results. A considerable number of studies (e.g. Dweck, 1989; Elliot and Dweck, 1988) show that *performance goals* – such as house points, gold stars, class ranking or comparison with others, smiley faces, wanting to win positive judgements about your performance, and so on – lead to pupils who:

- avoid challenge when they have doubts about their ability compared with others;
- tend to create an excuse for failure;
- tend to see ability as fixed;
- concentrate much of their task analysis on gauging the difficulty of the task and calculating their chances of gaining favourable ability judgements;
- attribute difficulty to low ability;
- give up in the face of difficulty;
- become upset when faced with difficulty or failure.

Lepper and Hodell (1989) found that external rewards have a detrimental effect on intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic rewards can be seen as a 'bribe' which skew motivation. They adversely affect performance, encouraging pupils to complete tasks as quickly as possible, and include only those features which are needed in order to gain the reward. Children who are used to rewards tend in future not to choose activities where there are no rewards to be had, and also prefer less demanding tasks. Intrinsic motivation, or a growth mindset, promotes more effective, deeper and longer-lasting learning.

Gerry Miller, the coordinator of the North Tyneside Learning Team for 2007, was particularly interested in the implications of fixed and growth mindsets and had introduced teachers to Carol Dweck's work before the team first met. As a result of the extra experimentation in schools which stemmed from this focus, I asked both Gerry and one of the teachers involved in working with her class on developing a growth mindset to write about their findings for this book. Gerry Miller's interesting account is given first, followed by Angi Gibson's, a Deputy Head and Year 6 teacher (11 year olds).

The importance of a growth mindset in raising achievement and aspirations

Gerry Miller, North Tyneside EAZ director

When I came across Carol Dweck's research in her book *Self-Theories: Their Role in Motivation, Personality & Development* (2000), I realised that we need to overtly promote the growth mindset if we are to develop truly resilient, self-sufficient learners.

If I had known of Carol Dweck's work when I was teaching in secondary schools, I would have said to the bottom set I used to teach something like this:

'This is set 3 out of three. You are in this group mainly because of some poor literacy skills. We are going to work extra hard to improve your literacy skills at the same time as we learn about history, and have some fun along the way. We are going to do the same work as the higher sets, and our aim is to do better than many of those in set 2. If you achieve that, you will have the chance to move up. The best way for us to be successful is to work together and support each other so that everyone will be successful.'

It was interesting to note that, when asked what these students found useful in lessons, they often said things like: 'Learning how to spell key words as I'm not a good speller' or 'Learning where to put the apostrophe'. This was useful feedback to me, as it told me that they valued help with literacy skills and recognised this was where they needed to improve the most.

In my dealings with pupils now, mainly Year 5 and 6 (10 and 11 year olds), I use the following strategies to encourage 'fixed mindset' learners to become 'growth mindset' learners:

1. Ask children to discuss with talk partners **what we mean by intelligence**.

Some will come up with **fixed mindset ideas**, such as:

- *How smart you are.*
- *Inborn ability to learn complex ideas.*
- *The ability to survive with the least effort while still doing really well.*

Others will come up with **growth mindset ideas**, such as:

- *Studying hard.*
- *The amount of knowledge you possess and how you use it.*
- *How much effort you put into something.*

2. Ask them when they **feel smart**:

Fixed mindset ideas:

- *When I don't make mistakes.*
- *When I finish my work first.*
- *When I get easy work.*

Growth mindset ideas:

- *When I don't know how to do it and it's pretty hard and I figure it out without anyone telling me.*
- *When I'm doing school work because I want to learn to get smart.*
- *When I'm reading a hard book.*

3. Use Dweck's list of **characteristics of the different mindsets** to stimulate discussion with children on what it means to be an Entity Learner or an Incremental Learner.
4. Explain how the view on **intelligence** has changed over the last ten years – many people used to think it was fixed, but most educationists now see it as something that can be changed through learning.
5. Discuss the **importance of challenge** and having a go at difficult tasks – we shouldn't be afraid to get things wrong, because that's how we learn. If work is easy, it means we are not learning – if it's hard, we need to keep trying, as that is how we learn.
6. Discuss **role models** with children of people who have achieved success through hard work. Children often equate success with innate ability rather than hard work and imagine that clever or skilful people can be successful without working hard. An example is English footballer Alan Shearer – not considered one of the most skilful players when he was in junior teams, but very hard-working, determined and focused: he believed he would succeed and was prepared to put the effort in to get there.
7. Discuss possible **pressures on us not to work hard**. Some people think it is 'cool' not to work hard. These people are unlikely to achieve much. 'Swot' is a four-letter word!

8. Discuss the **importance of resilience**. Many children want to give up when the work gets hard, or want the teacher or Teaching Assistant to come and help them as soon as they get stuck. The more they can learn to use a variety of strategies to overcome difficulties without help from an adult, the more they are likely to succeed in more difficult tasks as they get older. We should celebrate mistakes and praise those who stick at a task and don't give up.
9. **Compare our brain with our muscles** – the more we use it, the stronger it gets.
10. **When we move up to High School** it will help if we are incremental learners because:
 - *We will probably find some subjects harder than others. It is important that we don't give up when we find it hard.*
 - *We will be out of the 'comfort zone' of our primary classroom – this is when those with a fixed mindset sometimes struggle.*
 - *We will have lots of different teachers – we want to show them that we are willing to have a go, and that we don't need an adult to help us whenever the work gets difficult.*

Becoming Incremental Learners

Angi Gibson – Deputy Head at New York Primary School, North Tyneside

New York Primary is recognised as being within a super output area of deprivation, with the highest percentage of NEETs (16–18 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training) recorded. Once pupils enter education they soon assume an attitude that they are as they are, and what we see is as good as it gets. These low aspirations are confirmed within the family, often supported by anecdotes that mother, father, brother and sister were also 'no good' at school – and so the myth perpetuates. This mindset must be challenged, as the school faces a raising standards agenda.

With my Year 6 class, it became clear that until some of my pupils' self-worth and personal capacity issues were tackled, success and achievement would remain out of their reach.

I first asked my pupils to complete the *Implicit Theories of Intelligence Scale for Children – Self-Form questionnaire*, included by Carol Dweck in her book *Self-theories* (2000). The results, as of September 2006, were as we feared: **only 18% of the class had a growth mindset, 11% were borderline and 71% had a fixed mindset**. These results were proof of the need to change!

I began my journey by realising very quickly that there was **NO** one-step method to success! I found that the best way to promote the growth mindset with my children was through an amalgamation of various strategies.

The techniques that I used to implement change were first and foremost:

1. Building self-esteem and belief in self-ability

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2. Reinforcing and encouraging steps of learning

3. Celebrating an awareness of self-recognition

These three strategies were promoted and adopted through using the following teaching techniques:

- Target setting (SMART)
- Peer teaching (buddies)
- Assessment for learning
- Meaningful praise – recognising how their learning was moving on
- Recognising wrong answers as being a positive thing, something to learn from
- The 5 R's for learning: Resilience, Responsibility, Resourcefulness, Reasoning and Reflectivity-Reflexivity (Smith and Call, 1999)
- Less teacher talk – more pupil talk
- Positive self-narrative and visualisation
- Increasing roles of responsibility within and around school through increasing the pupils' sense of belonging, self-worth and importance
- Managing the moment of impulse – good questioning techniques, etc
- Problem-solving, mind-mapping/templates, hierarchy of questions
- Collecting facts before making judgements
- Regular review, post-analysis of work and emphasis on perfect practice.

I began to record our incremental learning journey into a checklist:

- Goal-setting through visualisation
- Using all data to target-set for incremental improvement
- Share and negotiate the curriculum with the pupils
- Give parents knowledge of the curriculum (in parent speak)
- Share national curriculum targets with pupils and parents
- Use posters and visual resources as aids for incremental learning
- Check regularly how familiar pupils are with content of posters
- Realistic tests practice throughout the year
- Teach skills of how to mark and assess own work (learning/success criteria)
- Talk about emotions during learning and tests
- Teach relaxation and have a range of movements and/or techniques (brain gym/take 10/activate body and mind)
- Use music for mood and atmosphere
- Morale-boosting self-talk before tests
- Celebrate all successes.

Through training, the majority of my pupils were noted to be incremental learners when re-tested in January 2007. The results were as follows:

- 85% growth mindset
- 4% borderline
- 11% fixed mindset

The effect of this on their learning was phenomenal! The majority of my pupils were now totally tuned into learning – hungry for it, even. They were no longer just content with finishing a piece of work: it had to challenge them. Their newly-found learning goals and standards enabled them to think like an incremental learner. Their mindset is now:

- I thrive on challenge
- I throw myself into difficult tasks
- I am self-confident
- I have learning goals
- I like feedback on my performance so that I can improve
- I react to failure by trying harder
- I engage in self-monitoring
- I can ignore the low aspirations of my peers
- I believe that intelligence is not fixed
- My intelligence can be improved through learning.

What was truly amazing was the fact that I, the teacher, was seen as the last resort (instead of the first) that the pupils would approach for help. The first was now their buddy, then their table buddies, and finally the teaching and non-teaching staff. It freed us up tremendously! It gave us the time that we once never had, yet should have had, to guide and keep the pupils on track.

Due to the changes implemented, the pupils absolutely thrived upon the programme: their confidence and self-belief was overwhelming, they were not scared of challenges any more – they were welcoming them! They were learners with a growth mindset!

What the ideal learning environment should consist of, and effective strategies to create and sustain it

William (2006) states that the key features of an effective learning environment are that it creates **pupil engagement** and it is **well-regulated**. In the context of learning, *well-regulated* refers to **guiding learning to the appropriate goal**. We can also add to this the importance of **dialogue and active reflection**.

Active pupil engagement is an indicator of real learning taking place. Pupils learn best when they have a slightly difficult task which they have to work at (Vygotsky's '*zone of proximal development*', 1978), which leads them into a state of 'flow'. Knowing they can cope with difficulties makes pupils seek challenges and overcome further problems. 'Flow' is an interesting term which usefully describes how engaged a person is in an activity, the level of absorption, how rapt or engaged they are in their learning (Claxton, 2002).

Establishing the requirements for learning

In order to ensure effective engagement, reflection, dialogue and appropriate guidance, we need to create, with pupils, the best environment for those elements and therefore for effective learning to take place. As with all formative assessment, pupils need to be actively involved in deciding, with teachers, what they need.

The best place to start exploring the ideal learning environment is by talking to pupils about their lives and their learning. This is Diana Pardoe's (2005) advice in her publication *Towards Successful Learning*, which I recommend as an excellent resource for this purpose. Her work involves a model of successful learning, synthesising formative assessment and the Critical Skills Programme as well as her own substantial work with teachers and pupils. Following her aim of '*teachers and learners engage together in high quality learning conversations*', she suggests the following questions are asked of pupils to begin the process of establishing a positive climate for learning:

1. *What do you want your teacher to be like?*
2. *What do you want the classroom to be like?*
3. *So what are you going to do (in order to enable your teacher and classroom to be as you wish)?*

Pupils could decide the answers to these questions alone, through jottings, through talk partners – and then, critically, the answers must be *shared* so that everyone can see them and a class list of answers established.

The next step is for pupils to work in small groups to identify what *helps* them to learn (movers) and what *stops* them from learning (blockers).

What helps you learn? (Three minutes to brainstorm ideas and a further three minutes to discuss and then prioritise the top three ideas from the group.)

What stops you from learning? (Again, three minutes to brainstorm ideas and a further three minutes to discuss and then prioritise the top three ideas from the group.)

It is very important that those engaged in this activity respond to the questions from their own perspective as learners. For example, when teachers are working together, they need to consider how they feel as adult learners, not how they think the children in their classes feel about learning. From the lists created, group members then explore together what successful learners do (see Fig. 3.1).

It is important that the question is phrased '*What does a successful learner do?*' so that the responses given include a verb, such as *listens, thinks, tries hard, asks questions* or *reads*. This emphasises that specific actions are required to become successful in learning. From the verbs used, specific observable behaviours can then be identified that illustrate the action. For example:

You have said that a successful learner listens.

What does that look like/sound like in our classroom/staffroom/school?

You have said that a successful learner takes care of things.

What does that look like/sound like in our classroom setting?

You have said that a successful learner makes sure he/she understands what to do.

What does that look like/sound like in our classroom/school?

(reproduced from Pardoe, 2005, by kind permission of Continuum)

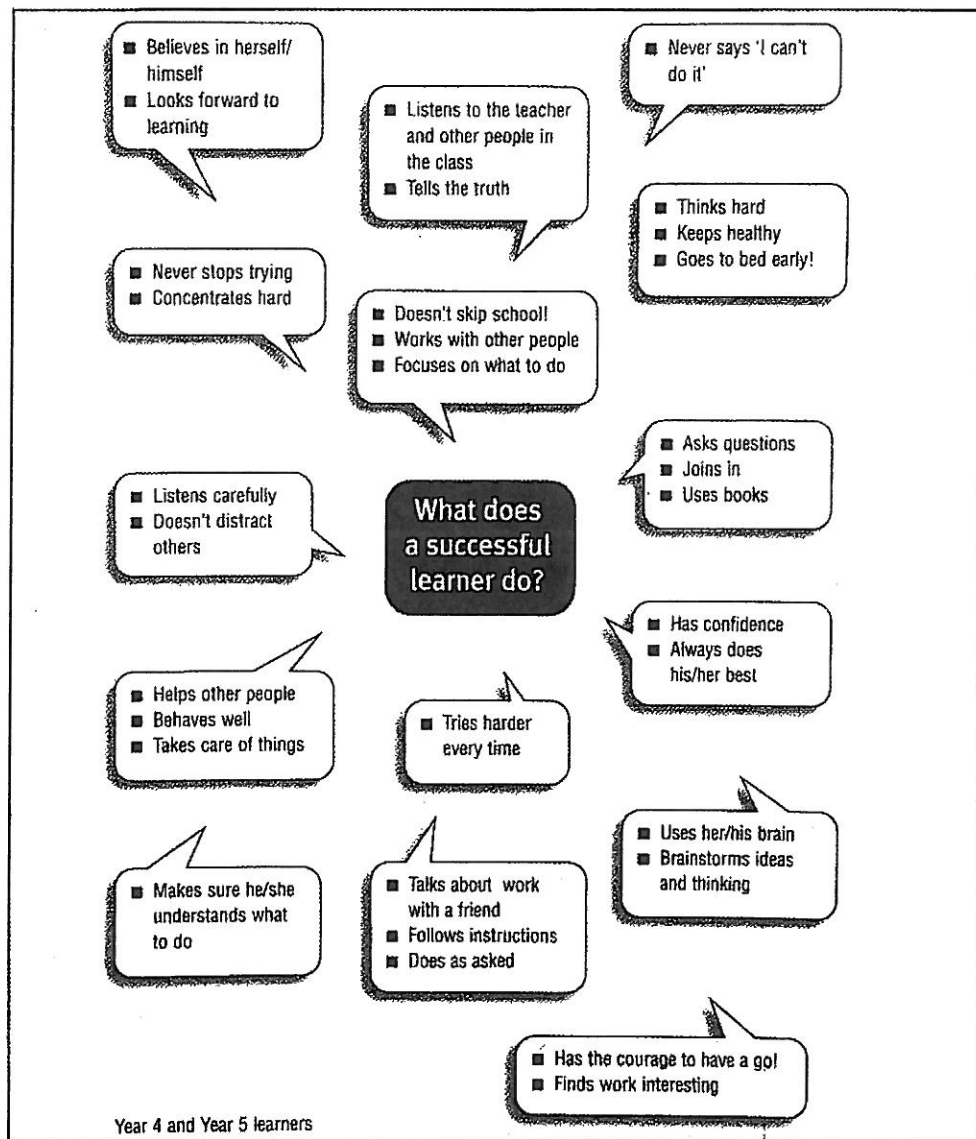


Fig. 3.1 Children's responses (from Pardoe, 2005)

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Taking it further: learning how to learn

Pupils

Much research has been done in the last decade about the importance of pupils learning about learning, or *meta-cognition*. **Pupils need not only the ideal learning environment, but also the skills to be able to control their own learning.**

David Hargreaves (2004) outlined three significant gateways to 'personalised learning': student voice, assessment for learning and learning to learn. He defines 'student voice' as: '*How students come to play a more active role in their education and schooling as a result of teachers becoming more attentive, in sustained or routine ways, to what students say about their experience of learning and of school life.*'

In Chapter 4 there are a number of quotes from pupils about their experiences and opinions of having talk partners. They are excellent examples of pupils actively exercising 'student voice'.

Guy Claxton's (2002) book *Building Learning Power* is well known amongst teachers for his four learning-power dispositions:

Resilience: *absorption, managing distractions, noticing and perseverance*

Resourcefulness: *questioning, making links, imagining, reasoning and capitalising*

Reflectiveness: *planning, revising, distilling and meta-learning*

Reciprocity: *interdependence, collaboration, empathy and listening, imitation*

In order to become higher-order thinkers in a modern world, Claxton believes children need to be helped to develop the power of learning in these four areas. In analysing the four areas, I was able to link them all with different aspects of formative assessment:

- **Resilience:** the ethos of an incremental mindset and engagement as active learners.
- **Resourcefulness:** talk partners, effective formative questions to pupils which result in high-quality thinking and discussion; pupils engaged in peer- and self-evaluation and class analysis of what constitutes excellence; success and improvement against criteria; and pupils involved in deciding what and how they want to learn at initial planning stages and throughout a unit of work.
- **Reflectiveness:** all the evaluative reflective processes involved in formative assessment.

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- **Reciprocity:** talk partners and following ground rules for those; evaluating talking and listening and making improvements; talking and listening skill-building.

One teacher from the Moray Learning Team, Julie Oatridge, describes exactly how she uses Claxton's dispositions alongside principles of formative assessment:

Learning Muscles

The children in my class are used to working with learning intentions and success criteria, but I felt that some of their working habits needed to be improved. Having looked at Guy Claxton's learning dispositions and the four 'capacities' into which they are subdivided, I felt my class really needed to do work on **resilience**, particularly **managing distractions** and **absorption**. I spent ten minutes introducing Claxton's work to the children by using his analogy of going to the gym to work on muscles and strengthen them, and how it is the same with our learning muscles. By strengthening our learning muscles, it will help us to be better learners.

I showed them all the dispositions and the capacities, but said we would just focus on a few to start with. I have all these component parts of the four learning dispositions laminated on individual labels and colour-coded. **Managing distractions** was chosen first, as I felt some pupils were distracted easily. For 20 minutes with talk partners we discussed what distractions there were in the classroom: these were listed, and then we acted out how we could manage these distractions and the effectiveness of these strategies.

On our learning wall, where our learning intentions and success criteria are, we now have 'Our learning muscle is . . .' and then the 'managing distractions' laminated label. During the lesson I will remind the children that we are focusing on 'managing distractions' and ways that we can do that. I also give encouragement if I see a child managing a distraction well.

'Well done, I saw that Michael was trying to distract you, but you said you were busy and went back to your own learning.'

'Thank you, brain break manager, you could see we needed a break and engaged us in a brain gym activity to refocus us.'

Just as we talk about our learning intentions and success criteria, I just add in about the learning muscle we are working on. At the end of a lesson I ask the children on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being brilliant) how effective they were at working at a particular muscle. The children then show me with their hands their score. I then ask a few children how it felt working this muscle. Responses show that they felt they were more focused on their work and more in control of their learning, and were pleased that they had used tactics to keep them on task.

After a week I introduced another capacity – **absorption**. Again we discussed the capacity with talk partners and came up with reasons why we needed to focus on this capacity. The

label was added to our learning wall and was again mentioned in lessons, and encouragement was given when I saw children totally absorbed. We discussed how it felt to be totally absorbed and how the lesson just flew by when they were totally engrossed.

As each week goes by, I add another capacity. We are at the stage now where the capacities we have focused on are still on the learning wall under their disposition, and I now ask the children which particular muscle they are going to focus on to help with their learning. This is done at the beginning of each lesson. Some muscles relate more to some lessons than others, so they are the ones we specifically focus on. Children like the fact that they are in control of improving their learning, so instead of just being in class they are now working to become better learners. I also give examples of how, as an adult, I still have to use these muscles, and which ones I am working on.

Teachers and other educators

This book aims to help teachers see themselves as equal learners in every aspect of formative assessment. It seems incongruous to attempt to create the ideal learning environment for pupils if these principles are not also reflected in the learning environment for all adults working in the school. Andy Hind (2007) lists the following ingredients of 'an emotionally intelligent organisation':

Motivation of all individuals regularly monitored	Work/life balance encouraged and monitored	A culture of 'openness' and 'security'	Clear and agreed direction for future developments	Individuals demonstrate 'awareness' and 'responsibility' for development
Change handled effectively and welcomed by all	Clear and effective communication	Every member feeling valued and respected	Trust and challenge flow throughout	Shared and agreed values regarding core purpose

He describes change in three ways:

Shallow change impacts on policies, documents and resources.

Deep change impacts on skills and knowledge.

Profound change impacts on attitudes and behaviours.

This certainly resonates with the wealth of teacher feedback I have collated over the last ten years. Formative assessment strategies and techniques in place indicate only shallow change unless teachers' skills and knowledge are developed and, ultimately, they change or hone their attitude and behaviour regarding *the role of the pupil and the teacher*, so that active learning through formative assessment can flourish.

Letting go . . .

Control in the classroom features regularly in feedback discussions on Learning Team feedback days. For many teachers, getting pupils to generate success criteria which are then used by them to evaluate their work, and discussing questions asked with a talk partner, significantly changes the locus of control. Instead of the *teacher* doing most of the talking, and telling, it is the *pupils*. Having success criteria and being involved in the constant process of analysis – whether of previous pupils' work or reviewing existing work – means there is a continual handover from teacher to pupil. One secondary teacher from the Birmingham Learning Team described his development, after one term of introducing success criteria and talk partners, as follows:

'The whole process has helped me learn that I am still becoming a teacher. I started off teaching by just surviving and making sure that I was totally in control. Now, nine years down the road, I have for the first time realised that I can give some of that control to the students. I am now letting them in on the secret and letting go of my own insecurities in my teaching.'

Reflection

- Do you have a fixed mindset (an entity learner) or a growth mindset (an incremental learner)?
- What about your pupils?
- Can you think of what might have made you develop either a fixed or growth mindset from your past: e.g. the phrasing of praise or encouragement, or the message that ability was fixed for good, or that you were 'intelligent'?
- Do you think that external rewards really work in making pupils effective self-motivated learners?
- How much say do your pupils have in determining the ideal learning environment?
- Which of Claxton's four learning dispositions are most in need of attention in your class/es or school?
- How far have you let pupils have control of the learning in your own classroom?

19

What the heck is Social Studies?

Social Studies is _____.

When I think of those two words, I think

_____.

The famous people I most associate with Social Studies

are _____.

Most people who are not Social Studies teachers probably

think _____.

because _____.

If Social Studies is taught using the C3 Framework, parents

will _____.

The future of Social Studies teaching is _____ because

of _____.

The C3 Framework and the Inquiry Arc will _____

my students _____.

If Social Studies were a car it would be a:

_____.

If Social Studies were a plant it would be a:

_____.

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C3 Framework Instructional Shifts

Swan, K. & Lee, J. (2014) in consultation with the Social Studies Assessment, Curriculum, and Instruction Collaborative

<p>Craft questions that matter.</p>	<p>Dimension 1 of the C3 Framework sets an expectation that individually and collaboratively, students will construct compelling and supporting questions that are suitable for inquiry. Compelling questions represent academic content-based problems and issues in and across the social studies disciplines. Supporting questions often nestle underneath compelling questions, contributing knowledge and insights to the overall inquiry and the C3 expects that students will be able to understand these relationships (D1.4). Set along grade banded pathways of increasing cognitive complexity, three of the four questioning indicators (e.g., D1.1, D1.2, & D1.3) ask students to parse compelling and supporting questions for importance as well as academic context (e.g., what others have said about these questions in the past). The C3 Framework notes that students will need considerable guidance from adults to construct questions suitable for inquiry (p. 24 & 25). Ultimately, the C3 Framework expects that students understand the relevance and importance of the questions under investigation and that this understanding spirals and builds along the inquiry experience.</p>
<p>Rate yourself!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1 ←————— ————— ————— —————→ 5</p>
<p>Establish a collaborative context to support student inquiry.</p>	<p>Collaboration is a key component of the C3 Framework. The C3 makes it clear that students need support from their teachers and from each other to develop skills and knowledge about social studies. Throughout the C3, indicators are prefaced by notion that students will “individually and with others...” accomplish the learning goals set forward. The idea of collaboration is hard-wired into the inquiry arc, but collaboration means more than just pairing up with other students to develop questions or analyze sources. Collaboration is a natural part of civic life. When using an inquiry approach informed by the C3 in the classroom, the importance of collaboration as an element of civic life is clear. Students collaborate to develop questions and rely on one another to examine the importance of those questions. When engaging disciplinary content, students “work together to apply civic virtues and principles in school settings.” Students are expected to communicate their conclusions to a “range of audiences” (p.60), including classmates but also outside the classroom. Students join efforts to critique arguments and explanations (D4.4 and D4.5) and to further refine their understanding. And, perhaps most importantly students assess their individual and collective capacities for addressing problems (D4.7) and then apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures in making classroom decisions (D4.8). In all the places where the C3 emphasizes civic life, collaboration is fundamental to student success.</p>
<p>Rate yourself!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1 ←————— ————— ————— —————→ 5</p>
<p>Integrate content and skills meaningfully.</p>	<p>Dimension 2 of the C3 Framework focuses on disciplinary skills and key conceptual knowledge associated with civics, economics, geography, and history. Thus, Dimension 2 guides but does not prescribe the choice of curricular content necessary for a rigorous social studies program. Curricular content specifies the particular ideas to be taught and the grade levels at which to teach them; conceptual content is the bigger set of ideas in the C3 that will help frame out the curricular content. However, the absence of curricular content in the C3 should not be misinterpreted. Curricular content is critically important to the disciplines within social</p>

	<p>studies, and teachers will need to be thoughtful in selecting appropriate and relevant content to help students ground their inquiries and to help them build up their disciplinary skills and conceptual knowledge. The notion of content as separate from skills is an artificial distinction. Skills, particularly those in the disciplines, exist for the purpose of developing content knowledge. The C3 Framework argues for the active (skilled-based) development and application of content knowledge. In essence, students will come to know disciplinary content as they apply C3 skills to be fully college, career, and civic ready.</p>
<p>Rate yourself!</p>	<p>1 ←————— ————— ————— —————→ 5</p>
<p>Articulate disciplinary literacy practices and outcomes.</p>	<p>The literacies described in the C3 Framework fall into two broad categories: Inquiry and Disciplinary literacies. Inquiry literacies include questioning, developing claims with evidence, and communicating conclusions. While these inquiry literacies represent, in some ways, a new way of thinking about social studies instruction (see shifts 1, 2, and 5), the unique emphasis on disciplinary literacies in the C3 Framework requires a separate consideration. Social studies has long emphasized literacy and social studies teachers recognize that they share the responsibility for literacy instruction in the schools. The Common Core provides a clear accounting for the development of literacies among students. However, the unique disciplinary literacies that emerge in social studies from the disciplines of civics, economics, geography, and history require special attention. The C3 emphasizes these unique disciplinary literacies in the 55 indicators in Dimension 2. These indicators represent a roadmap for students to develop disciplinary literacies as they examine content in civics, economics, geography, and history. Included among these disciplinary literacies are processes such as using deliberative processes, using economic data, reasoning spatially, analyzing cause and effect. With consistent practice, students can become more literate and practiced at thinking in the social studies disciplines and better prepared for college and careers.</p>
<p>Rate yourself!</p>	<p>1 ←————— ————— ————— —————→ 5</p>
<p>Provide tangible opportunities for taking informed action.</p>	<p>Dimension 4 of the C3 Framework closes the inquiry arc with opportunities for students to communicate the results of their inquiries, and in cases where it is curricularly appropriate, to take informed action. The C3 does not prescribe the actions that are appropriate for a particular classroom context or for a specific inquiry. Instead, what these indicators do is focus on being <i>informed</i> when taking action. Students in social studies use their C3 inquiries as a launching pad for action. The indicators in Dimension 4 guide students in doing three things as they move from academic inquiry to the public square: 1) Understand the pervasiveness of the problem as well its complexity (D4.6); 2) Assess options for action given the context of the problem (D4.7); 3) Engage in deliberative processes to move toward an “action” plan (D4.8). These experiences are organized within grade-banded pathways allowing students to grow in the skills that undergird purposeful, informed, and reflective action. According to the C3 Framework, citizenship is not just an ideal or a mantra we trot out for high-minded standards documents. Instead, there is an expectation that social studies students practice citizenship in the same way they practice historical thinking, economic decision-making or geographic reasoning. As a result, students will need tangible spaces in curricula to consider, debate, and plan for action-oriented experiences that would culminate their academic inquiries.</p>
<p>Rate yourself!</p>	<p>1 ←————— ————— ————— —————→ 5</p>

IN THIS TEMPLE
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER

WHY ARE WE STILL READING LINCOLN?

COMPELLING QUESTIONS THROUGH DISCIPLINARY LENSES



Civics



Geography



History



Economics



From Inquiry Arc to Instructional Practice: The Potential of the C3 Framework

S. G. Grant

Students are clear: They do not like social studies.¹ What they dislike, however, is not the civic, economic, geographic, and historical ideas they encounter so much as the instructional practices they experience. And instructional experiences matter: Students who read more than textbooks, who write more than end-of-the-chapter questions, and who have more rather than fewer opportunities to discuss ideas out-perform their peers in more traditional classroom settings.² Smith and Niemi argue that “if faced with a choice of only one ‘solution’ to raise history scores, it is clear that instructional changes have the most powerful relationship to student performance.”³

Although numerous attempts have been made to revitalize social studies, the bulk of them have focused on curricular reforms rather than on instruction.⁴ The Inquiry Arc featured in the C3 Framework is a form of guidance for social studies curriculum writers.⁵ It also represents an approach to instructional planning that moves away from traditional textbook coverage to a model that is more consistent with the research on ambitious social studies teaching.⁶

Overview of the Inquiry Arc

“We begin with the hypothesis,” asserts Jerome Bruner, “that any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development.”⁷

Bruner’s quote is not cited in the C3 Framework, but its spirit runs throughout the document in general and the Inquiry Arc in particular. Defined as a set of interlocking and mutually reinforcing elements, the four dimensions of the Inquiry Arc speak to

the intersection of ideas and learners. Those four dimensions are:

1. Developing questions and planning inquiries;
2. Applying disciplinary concepts and tools;
3. Evaluating sources and using evidence; and
4. Communicating conclusions and taking informed action.

Key to the Inquiry Arc is the use of questions. As noted in the Scholarly Rationale of the C3 Framework, “children and adolescents are naturally curious, and they are especially curious about the complex and multifaceted world they inhabit.”⁸ Curiosity drives interest and interest drives knowledge, understanding, and engagement. At heart, social studies is about understanding the things people do. Whether those things are brave, ambitious, and inventive or cowardly, naïve, and silly, social studies is about using questions to direct our investigations into the world

around us. Dimension 1, then, features the development of questions and the planning of inquiries.

If social studies is about understanding why people do the things they do, then Dimension 2—Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools—is a fundamental step in the Inquiry Arc. With a robust instructional question in mind, teachers and students determine the kind of content they need in order to create a plan to address their questions. This process is an artful balancing act; teachers must preload some disciplinary content when developing questions with their students. At the same time, teachers must provide students with enough content to propel their inquiries without quashing their curiosity or, worse yet, doing their work for them.

Children will naturally begin proposing solutions to instructional questions based on their lived experiences. Rich social studies teaching, however, offers students opportunities to answer those questions more thoroughly through disciplinary (civic, economic, geographical, and historical) and multi-disciplinary venues. Dimension 2 sets forth concepts from the disciplines, such as the historian’s habit of accounting for how perspectives of people in the present shape their interpretations of the past. This practice from history and the distinctive habits of thinking from other disciplines inform students’ investigations and contribute to an

instructional framework for teaching social studies.

Instructional questions posed may demand content representing a single discipline. For example, a question like “Which will you buy—lunch or a new video game?” would have teachers and students draw primarily from the concepts of economics. A question that asks, “Has the definition of ‘Americans’ changed over time?” would feature concepts from civics/political science. Many questions, however, can best be explored through the use of multiple disciplines. For example, a contemporary environmental question such as “Should transcontinental pipelines be banned?” demands the use of economic, geographical, historical, and political lenses.

With a question in hand and a sense of the relevant concepts and ideas, the Inquiry Arc turns toward the matter of sources and evidence. Social studies, like science, is an evidence-based field.

The disciplinary concepts represented in Dimension 2 provide a solid base from which students can begin constructing answers to their questions. Equally important, however, is knowing how to fill in the gaps in their knowledge by learning how to work with sources and evidence in order to develop explanations and to make persuasive arguments in support of their conclusions.

Evidence can come in many forms, including historical and contemporary documents, data from direct observation in environments, graphics, economic statistics, and legislative actions and court rulings. Digital sources are now also more readily available than ever via the Internet. That said, not all sources are equal in value and use. Sources do not, by themselves, constitute evidence. Rather, evidence results from the choices made by teachers and students to appropriate information from sources in support of an explanation or argument. Helping students develop a capacity for gathering,

evaluating, and then using sources in responsible ways is a central feature of Dimension 3.

For example, a question like “Was the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s a success?” demands that students examine more than one or two sources. A wide range of perspectives is available in both primary and secondary form, and so having students gather, evaluate, and use a subset of those sources offers teachers opportunities to make key instructional points about the nature of evidence. Those activities also offer students opportunities to demonstrate their abilities to develop explanations and to make and support arguments in answer to their questions.

Breaking the power of the multiple-choice test, developing explanations and making and supporting arguments can take the form of individual essays, group projects, and other classroom-based written assessments, both formal and informal. But they need not be limited to those options for there are any number of ways that students can express the evolution of their ideas. Although there is no substitute for thoughtful and persuasive writing, Dimension 4 of the Inquiry Arc supports expanding the means by which students communicate their findings and conclusions. It also expands the venues in which students participate. Classroom and school sites are important arenas for students as they work through their ideas. But if students are to take informed action—the second aspect of Dimension 4—then they will need to be able to interact in other arenas as well—from cross town to across the globe. Defining questions, seeking the best knowledge available, examining and using source material, and constructing and communicating conclusions are the hallmark qualities of thoughtful and engaged students. Helping students prepare for civic life demands new means of expressing themselves and new settings in which to do so.

In one sense, Dimension 4 closes the Inquiry Arc. Every good teacher knows, however, that teaching and

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learning play off one another—new sources can lead to new disciplinary and multi-disciplinary concepts, new concepts can lead to new questions, and new questions can lead to new audiences. The Inquiry Arc, then, offers teachers multiple opportunities to involve students in powerful learning opportunities and to develop as thoughtful, engaged citizens.

The C3 Framework in general and the Inquiry Arc in particular were designed to help state and local curriculum writers retool their social studies standards. To that purpose, I would offer a second—the Inquiry Arc as an instructional arc, a lesson and unit planning approach that foregrounds the use of teacher- and student-developed questions.

Compelling Questions

Pushed into the classroom, the Inquiry Arc challenges some basic and long-held instructional practices. Perhaps the most challenging element, however, is designing lessons and units around questions.

Teachers have long used questions as part of their pedagogical repertoire. But there is a big difference between using questions to check for student understanding and using questions to frame a teaching and learning inquiry. Good questions can be difficult to create, but they can also help teachers and their students focus their inquiries and produce powerful learning outcomes.

Questions, as envisioned in the Inquiry Arc, are of two types—compelling and supporting. *Compelling questions* address “problems and issues found in and across the academic disciplines that make up social studies.”⁹ They “deal with curiosities about how things work; interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts; and unresolved issues that require students to construct arguments in response.”¹⁰ In short, compelling questions are provocative, engaging, and worth spending time on.

Compelling questions must satisfy two conditions. First, they have to be intellectually meaty. That means that a compelling question needs to reflect an enduring issue, concern, or debate in social studies and it has to draw on multiple disciplines. For example, “Was the American Revolution revolutionary?” works as a compelling question because it signals a continuing argument about how to interpret the results of the Revolution. And, although it sounds like a history question, to address it fully demands that one must look at it through a range of disciplinary lenses—Did the Revolution yield dramatic political change? Economic? Social? All of the above?

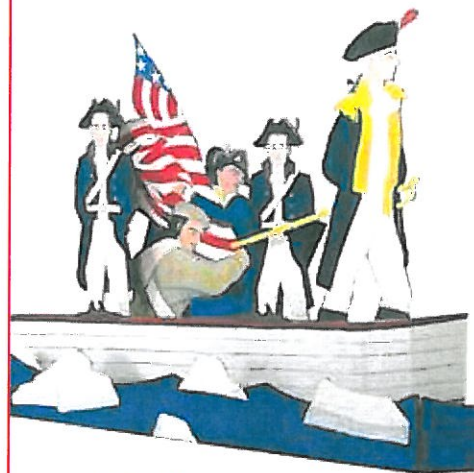
The second condition defining a compelling question is the need to be student-friendly. By student-friendly, I mean a question that reflects some quality or condition that teachers know students care about and that honors and respects students’ intellectual efforts. The American Revolution question above seems to fit these qualifications as well: It brings students into an authentic debate and it offers the possibility that adults may be confused—how could the American Revolution *not* be revolutionary? The latter is a condition that students tend to find especially fascinating.

Quiz time: Which of the following examples fit the criteria for a compelling question?

1. Why do we need rules?
2. What are the five largest sources of oil for U.S. markets?
3. Why is Albany the capital of New York?
4. Who are our community helpers?
5. Can Canada and the U.S. be friends forever?
6. Who won the Cold War?

I would argue that numbers 1, 3, 5, and 6 fit the bill as compelling questions. For example, “Can Canada and the U.S. be friends forever?”

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Alex Katz, *Washington Crossing the Delaware: American Flag, Boat, and Soldiers* (detail), 1961.
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satisfies the student-friendly criteria in that it keys off the idea that young people find the notion of friendship intriguing. On the substantive side, the notion of U.S.-Canada relations can be explored on multiple disciplinary dimensions. Think about it: If the U.S. and Canada compete on an economic level, can they still maintain good relationships on the political and/or social level? Similarly, the question, “Who won the Cold War?” qualifies as a compelling question because it meets the intellectually meaty criteria of highlighting a genuine dispute and the student interest criteria because it presumes that students can offer a useful perspective on the question through the arguments they make.

By contrast, “What are the five largest sources of oil for U.S. markets?” and “Who are our community helpers” may be useful in developing a larger inquiry, but on their own, they do not carry the day either in terms of substantive or student interest engagement.

Supporting Questions

From an instructional perspective, if a compelling question helps frame a unit of study, supporting questions can provide the infrastructure for lesson planning.

Supporting questions are “intended to contribute knowledge and insights to the inquiry behind a compelling question.” Furthermore, they “focus on descriptions, definitions, and processes on which there is general agreement.”¹¹ In other words, supporting questions help scaffold students’ investigations into the ideas and issues behind a compelling question.

For the question about the revolutionary elements of the American Revolution, supporting questions could include the following: What were the regulations imposed on the colonists under the Stamp and Townshend Acts? How did colonists respond? What were the arguments for and against the Revolution? What were the political conditions in America before and after the Revolution? What were the economic conditions before and after the Revolution? What were

the social conditions before and after the Revolution? Supporting questions like these offer important pedagogical support, but typically lack either the intellectual heft or the student connections necessary to be considered a compelling question.

Returning to the list of questions in the preceding sections, I would argue that “What are the five largest sources of oil for U.S. markets?” and “Who are our community helpers” could work as supporting questions. For example, identifying the sources of oil would be helpful if students were tackling a compelling question like, “What path should a new transcontinental oil pipeline take?” In similar fashion, “Who are our community helpers” would aid an inquiry into a question such as “Should our community grow?”

Implications for Practice:

Thinking about What Matters

The College, Career, and Civic (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards offers a different way of thinking about curriculum development. Instead of advocating for the creation of long lists of names, dates, and places, the C3 Framework pushes curriculum writers to think about how the meaningful concepts and skills of civics, economics, geography, and history play out across an inquiry arc. Equally important, however, may be the push the C3 Framework offers to teachers who are interested in employing an inquiry approach in their instructional practice.

Taking such an approach calls for a kind of mindfulness that echoes standard teacher practice, but pushes well beyond it. In teaching through inquiry, these six distinct, but inter-related elements matter:

1. *Questions matter.* Successful teaching and learning inquiries are built around powerful questions of two sorts—compelling and supporting. Most teachers and students have extensive experience working with supporting-style questions. Compelling questions,

however, can be a challenge for teachers to create, especially for those who work with younger students. But if the compelling questions offered meet the conditions outlined above, teachers will find that student effort and engagement will soar.

2. *Students’ questions matter.* The C3 Framework argues that questions—both compelling and supporting—can originate from teachers and/or students. It does not advocate turning over the question-developing responsibility to kindergartners, but it does promote the idea that students should play an increasingly prominent role in defining inquiry questions over the course of their school lives. Needless to say, teachers play a key role in helping students identify compelling questions that will work for instructional purposes.

3. *Language matters.* If we are going to take Bruner’s quote at the beginning of this article seriously, then we need to realize that one of the biggest challenges teachers and students will face is at the level of language. This issue has two dimensions. First, although students can grasp almost any social studies construct through their lived experience, they do not always have the language or vocabulary to participate fully in classroom discourse. (Imagine, for example, a student who misses the point of a discussion because he or she does not understand the difference between guerrilla and gorilla warfare.)

The second challenge lies more on the teacher’s side: One of the trickiest parts of being an inquiry-based teacher is learning how to “hear” the kernels of rich ideas in what seems like the fumbling, inarticulate, and confusing things that students of all ages say. Students can be useful partners in constructing compelling questions, but only if we can help them articulate their ideas.

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FROM INQUIRY ARC TO INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

from page 326

4. *Resources matter.* Again, if we are going to take Bruner's view seriously, we need to realize the challenges teachers and kids face at the resource level. Students bring considerable life experience to their understanding of social studies ideas. To help them grow beyond the limits of their own experiences requires a range of high-quality and accessible resources.

5. *Writing matters.* Whether it is in the form of an oral report, an essay, a debate, or a blog, good social studies teaching and learning demands the capacity to write well. Explanations and arguments are at the heart of the ways in which students present their ideas.

6. *Trust matters.* The Inquiry Arc reflects a level of trust between teachers and students that is not part of the traditional pattern of schooling. Good teachers know that students will blunder sometimes as they embrace the greater responsibilities an inquiry approach demands, but they also know that students will not become the kinds of life-long learners that we desire if they are not trusted to take an active role in their own education.

Conclusion

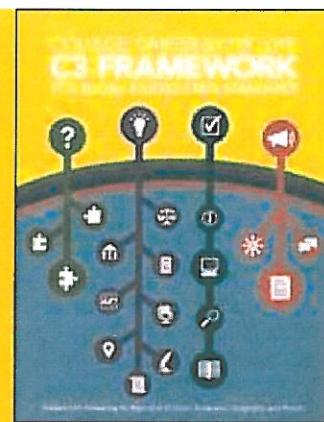
Teaching through an inquiry approach demands the skilled use of questions to frame units of study and to develop the necessary scaffolding so that even young children can examine issues of substance and interest. It is not a teaching approach for the faint hearted, but the research evidence gathered to date that supports the C3 Framework, suggests that students will embrace it.¹²

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11. *Ibid.*
12. Grant, *History Lessons*; Grant and Gradwell, *Teaching History with Big Ideas*; S. Van Hover, "Teaching History in the Old Dominion: The Impact of Virginia's Accountability Reform on Seven Secondary Beginning History Teachers," in *Measuring History: Cases of State-Level Testing across the United States*, ed. S.G. Grant (Greenwich, Conn.: Information Age Publishing, 2010), 195-220; B. VanSledright, *In Search of America's Past: Learning to Read History in Elementary School* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002).

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**College, Career, and Civic Life (C3)
Framework for Social Studies State
Standards: State Guidance for
Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics,
Economics, Geography, and History**

The Framework was developed to offer guidance for state social studies standards. The shared principles that drive the Framework are:

- Social studies prepares the nation's young people for college, careers, and civic life.
- Inquiry is at the heart of social studies.
- Social studies involves interdisciplinary applications and welcomes integration of the arts and humanities.
- Social studies is composed of deep and enduring understandings, concepts, and skills from the disciplines. Social studies emphasizes skills and practices as preparation for democratic decision-making.
- Social studies education should have direct and explicit connections to the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies

The C3 Framework changes the conversation about literacy instruction in social studies by creating a context that is meaningful and purposeful. Reading, writing, speaking and listening and language skills are critically important for building disciplinary literacy and the skills needed for college, career, and civic life.

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