Effective Social Studies Teaching Strategies
To Insure Student Success

Use interest surveys to learn more about student’s skills and learning styles.

Analyze primary and secondary source documents using Building Success –
S.O.A.P.S strategies: Subject, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Speaker

Model skills and strategies with students.

Use College Board Building Success strategies to focus on writing using primary
and secondary documents.

Use higher level (analysis/synthesis/evaluation) questions during classroom
discussions and on assessments.

Use graphic organizers for reading for content, review, critical thinking, notetaking,
assessments.

Incorporate writing into lesson plans:
Interactive journals-free write, opinions, illustrate readings, debrief “5 W’s”
Assessments-diary entry, letters, pamphlets, “dumping” (items listed)
Analogy—Thinking in Three

Using photography or short movie clip as “hook” to start unit, as enrichment, to
use as a review or to analyze historical accuracy.

Use music: to analyze lyrics, write lyrics, perform, and as assessments
In geography, use silhouettes or mental mapping activities.

To practice sequencing, use human timelines, paper plate/note card timelines,
mix/match/pair.

When working on point of view or bias, take opposite stand or viewpoint and
defend. Use “Take a Stand” activity.

In economics, use simulations such as “Mr. Goodbar”, “Industrial Revolution-Then
And Now”, “Material World”, and real world applications to study.

Simulations, role play and classroom plays can be used in all social studies
classrooms, such as: Constitutional Convention, Colonial/Oregon Trail
Survival, debates between U.S. and World leaders, trials (Andersonville,
Santa Anna, Boston Massacre, Nuremberg), court cases (Dred Scott, Brown,
Miranda).

Develop interview skills to incorporate higher order questioning, listening and
writing skills. Interviews could be used in oral history projects, guest
speakers or in simulating interviews with past historical figures.

Creating technology assessments using social studies strands, such as: power points,
videos, digital photography, CD’s, music.

Classrooms and halls should visually reflect student works and the TEKS with
timelines, maps, quotes, charts/graphs, projects, letters, diaries, posters, etc.

Students can use their book covers to illustrate TAKS/TEKS emphasis: time lines,
key events/dates/people/vocabulary illustrations.

The Constitution can be studied as a evolving, living document by decades,
leadership (Presidents & Chief Justices), amendments, court cases.
Lessons and assessments should be developed to incorporate the eight Social Studies TEKS strands: history, government, geography, economics, cultures, citizenship, science/technology and social studies skills.

Assessments, projects, daily work should reflect TAKS-Tested Social Studies Skills:
- Analyzing graphic data: bar, line, circle graphs
- Using cartographer’s tools: compass rose, scale, keys, grids
- Analyzing and interpreting political, historical, physical maps.
- Analyzing and interpreting photos, posters, political cartoons, drawings.
- Identifying main ideas and summarizing
- Sequencing according to time, size or priority.
- Understanding cause and effect and making predictions
- Drawing inferences and conclusions
- Making valid generalizations while maintaining accuracy
- Distinguishing fact and opinion that reflect a personal viewpoint
- Compare and contrast: ideas, objects, historical figures, and situations
- Analyzing primary sources for accuracy, tone, viewpoint, and reference
- Recognizing bias and propaganda
- Identifying frame of reference and point of view
- Decision-making and problem-solving
- Transferring information from one medium to another
- Locating, evaluating and using reliable information for a variety of purposes
- Synthesizing information to draw a conclusion or create a new presentation
- Supporting a position using evidence and reasoning