

Blackhawk School District

CURRICULUM

Course Title:	Current Issues
Course Number:	0241
Grade Level(s):	10-12
Length of Period:	45 minutes
Length of Class:	1 Semester
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SOCIAL STUDIES MISSION:

The purpose for learning social studies is to prepare students to be responsible, productive citizens who possess an awareness of local, regional and global issues. Students will use problem-solving, critical thinking and analytical skills based upon knowledge of the past in order to successfully impact the present and the future. By building a frame of reference, students will learn to understand and appreciate overarching concepts in literature, film, art and science.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Current Issues is designed to make students aware of what is happening in the world today. Students will be able to analyze the major current issues facing the U.S. and other world nations.

Note to Teacher: Curriculum will consist of a semester course that is aimed at addressing breaking news issues; therefore, the scope and sequence is flexible and subject to change.

PA Common Core Standards for Reading and Writing in Social Studies:

Pennsylvania Department of Education has released standards that describe what students in the social studies classroom should know and be able to do with the English language in reading and writing, grade 6 through 12. The standards provide the targets for instruction and student learning essential for success in all academic areas, not just language arts classrooms. Although the standards are not a curriculum or a prescribed series of activities, Blackhawk School District has used them to develop this social studies curriculum.

The standards for Reading are available at:

http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/PA_Common_Core_Standards_for_Reading_in_History_and_Social_Studies_8-7-12.pdf

The standards for Writing are available at:

http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/PA_Common_Core_Standards_for_Writing_in_History_and_Social_Studies_8-7-12.pdf

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

Essential questions are the heart of the curriculum. Essential questions are conceptual commitments that teachers will use to guide instructional decision-making. In addition, they are kid friendly so that students can easily understand them. Essential questions are meant to be shared with students in either discussion or posting in the classroom.

Essential questions provide the focus for teaching and learning. The following are the Essential Questions for this class:

1. **How does the past inform the present?**
2. **What developing trends and issues will affect our collective future?**
3. **How should we order current events on the historical continuum?**

Assessing Essential questions is key to a robust curriculum. If Essential Questions are the focal point of learning, how then do we assess students? The following is an overview of recommended assessments to the Essential Questions. In addition, Differentiated learning opportunities are embedded as well (noted by DI).

Methods of Assessment:

1. Tests/Quizzes
2. Simulations with large group debates
3. Projects/presentations
4. Continuous analysis of emerging world events, in discussion-based and written feedback.

D.I.:

- Multiple modes of content delivery (teacher vs. student-based, text, music, multimedia, video, etc.)
- Tiered readings with specific content
- Differentiation of projects' product based on artistic ability, technological facility, etc.

ROBUST VOCABULARY:

Robust vocabulary words are Tier 2 words, meaning that they are complex, powerful, and generalizable. Robust vocabulary words support language development of both lower and high level learners. In addition, robust vocabulary instruction helps prepare students for SATs, upper level high school classes, and college. "Studies showed that robust instruction was quite effective not only for learning the meanings of words but also for affecting reading comprehension." (p. 2 *Bringing Words to Life*)

Teachers are asked to commit to teaching and students USING these words throughout the entire year. Using a variety of instructional strategies, students will learn the meaning of these words in a deep and meaningful way in this content and across other content areas.

The Robust Vocabulary for this class are: **Libertarian, Empirical, Controversy, Qualitative, Perspective**

COURSE OUTLINE PROPOSED TIME RESOURCES	OBJECTIVES (PA standard)	LESSON REFLECTION (for future revisions)
	<p>HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ANALYSIS SKILLS The skills noted below are skills that students need to practice using to fully understand the concepts found in the social sciences. These general skills should be applied when teaching the content standards. Students should be able to demonstrate the following intellectual, reasoning, reflection, and research skills:</p> <p>Chronological and Spatial Thinking</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned. 2. Analyze how change happens at different rates at different times; understand that some aspects can change while others remain the same; and understand that change is complicated and affects not only technology and politics, but also values and beliefs. 3. Use a variety of maps and documents to interpret human movement, including major settlement patterns, the frictions that develop between population groups, and the diffusion of ideas, technological innovations, and goods. 4. Relate current events to the physical and human characteristics of places and regions. <p>Historical Research, Evidence, and Point of View</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distinguish valid arguments from fallacious arguments in historical interpretations. 2. Identify bias and prejudice in historical interpretations. 3. Evaluate major debates among historians concerning alternative interpretations of the past, including an analysis of authors' use of evidence and the distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications. 4. Construct and test hypothesis; collect, evaluate, and employ information from multiple primary and secondary sources; apply it in oral and written presentations. <p>Historical Interpretation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show the connections, casual and otherwise, between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments. 2. Recognize the complexity of historical causes and effects, including the limitations on determining the cause and effect. 3. Interpret past events and issues within the context in which an event unfolded rather than solely in terms of present-day norms and values. 4. Understand the meaning, implication, and impact of historical events and recognize that events could have taken other directions. 5. Analyze human modifications of landscapes and examine the resulting environmental policy issues. 6. Conduct cost-benefit analyses and apply basic economic indicators to analyze the aggregate economic behavior of the U.S. economy. 7. Relate current events to the physical and human characteristics of past events on places and regions. <p>*Students shall complete one social studies response per 9-week period (refer to Appendix I for Social Studies Reading Response Form). The response must be scored using the Social Studies Rubric in Appendix II.</p>	

COURSE OUTLINE PROPOSED TIME RESOURCES	OBJECTIVES (PA standard)	LESSON REFLECTION (for future revisions)
I. Criminal Justice II. Race and Gender Relations III. Politics IV. Media V. Economy VI. Health and Society	<p>The objective of this course is to incorporate the latest materials to make connections between historical events and contemporary global issues. At the heart of each topic is range of contrasting viewpoints. By exploring a spectrum of alternative views, students will be able to articulate their own views as well as opposing views on pressing issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine events affecting the United States and the world. • Describe the political actions at the local, state, and federal levels. • Discuss the relevance of current (pending) judicial cases on American society. • Analyze the impact of technology on our lives. • Explore issues pertaining to health (e.g., drug and alcohol abuse, STDs, teen suicide, AIDS). • Recognize the impact of the media on news. Students will distinguish fact from opinion. • Analyze political cartoons as they pertain to specific issues. • Synthesize information through the use of multiple primary and secondary sources to create unit projects. • Demonstrate mastery of a particular issue through the use of an oral presentation. • Understand the variables and dynamics of the American economy and trace its response to world events. 	
VII. Global Issues VIII. Domestic Issues IX. Local News	<p>A. Law and Order</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find current events that support the necessity of laws and how it promotes a stabilizing factor to society. 2. Discuss problems with certain laws and policies; see how they affect different parts of society. 3. Identify issues of the court system that demonstrate their role in the American justice system. 4. Identify issues of society that may force the courts to set precedents, thus a necessitation to study their impact. 5. Discuss how laws and punishment fit within the framework of state rights and constitutional issues. 	
X. Environment <u>Proposed Time</u> 80 Days Divided equally among content units included in the course outline (approx. 8 days per unit).	<p>B. Race and Gender Relations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss issues that impact the races and genders of American society. 2. Explore the impact of certain policies of the race and gender relations in America (i.e., racial profiling, affirmative actions). 3. Compare American race relations with other countries, exploring different policies and methods that may or may not be successful. 4. Analyze historical events within the last year that support current events concerning the rights of minorities, women, and gays. 5. Develop a methodology that promotes acceptance and tolerance of people of different races, religions, genders, or orientation. 	
<u>Resources</u> ➤ Pittsburgh Post-Gazette ➤ Beaver County Times ➤ NY Times ➤ Up Front magazine	<p>C. Politics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the fundamental difference between the two major political parties of the United States. 2. Examine actions taken by the two parties in the recent past to explain the bipartisanship that exists today. 3. Explore the impact of third parties of elections in the past ten years and note their relevance today. 4. Discuss current campaigns and their candidate, analyzing tactics, statements, platforms, and appeal to Americans. 5. Students will analyze events that demonstrate the relationship between the three branches of the government as well as their functioning under the umbrella of the constitution. 6. Describe the political actions at the local, state, and federal levels. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teacher Generated materials ➤ Internet ➤ Various News Periodicals ➤ Videos of taped news programs ➤ Maps 	<p>D. Media.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will examine and critically analyze recent trends in media to attract younger, more affluent viewers and consumers. 2. Explain the media’s role in coverage of current events looking for differing viewpoints and possible bias in their coverage. 3. Research editorial to examine the difference between a news item and a columnist’s views. 4. Discuss the public’s fascination with such issues. 	
	<p>E. Economy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will study the difference between American and world businesses. They will look through the business section searching to see how businesses are successful and the practices they employ. 2. Examine the varied aspects of unemployment and impact of society. Discuss the historical impact unemployment has had on the Pittsburgh/Beaver County region. 3. Calculate income tax rates, interpret data tables and tax tables, and critically analyze article detailing the tax cut plan. After a certain period of time, write intelligently about how student’s calculations and research led them to their opinions on important topics. 	
	<p>F. Health and Society</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine drugs and alcohol in a scientific context as well as a social issue. Discuss articles about drug and alcohol abuse; explain the physiological effects of drugs and alcohol on the body. 2. Teach students about the multi-dimensions of abstinence from a global to a local perspective. Expose students to information and standards from various national resources. 3. Engage in learning about the AIDS epidemic and focus on the importance of HIV prevention, at home and abroad. 4. Discuss the cultural influences on use of club drugs. Identify specific club drug characteristics and ways they are used. Evaluate drug information sources for reliability and increase community awareness of issues surrounding club drugs. 5. Understand some of the problems and fears faced by the uninsured through data collection. Learn about the various issues surrounding the problems of the uninsured. Explore possible solutions and problems with each of these issues. Gain a deeper understanding of issues that await students who will be entering the workforce. Appreciate the insight given to the issues from varying perspectives of the health care system through interviews with various people involved in the issue. 6. Gain an appreciation for the networks within the health care systems internationally. Learn about the new diseases, such as Sever Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). Learn about new disease, such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). Learn about the World Health Organization and its work with communicable disease surveillance and response. 	

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	<p>G. World/Terrorism Issues</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the key factors in the Middle East crisis. Determine the common elements of disputes and the challenges in resolving them. Analyze a past peace plan for resolving Arab/Israeli crisis. Design a peace plan to resolve the Mid-Ease conflict. 2. Learn what identifies a bomb as a dirty bomb. Identify threats and responses specific to dirty bombs. Appreciate the government and medical preparedness for dealing with dirty bombs. 3. Provide a forum for discussion and reflection on the impact of the September 11, 2001 attacks, noting the impact. 4. Examine the changes to Iraq in the past few years, noting the changes the regime change will have on the Iraqi people. Discuss postwar challenges to United States forces occupying and rebuilding the country. 	
	<p>H. Skills</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze political cartoons as they pertain to specific issues. 2. Teach students the definition of plagiarism and how to avoid plagiarism in their own work. Debate scholarly ethics and the correct method of citation in popular works of history. 3. Synthesize information through the use of multiple primary and secondary sources to create unit projects. 4. Demonstrate mastery of a particular issue through the use of an oral presentation. 	
	<p>8.1.12 A Evaluate chronological thinking.</p> <p>8.1.12 B Synthesize and evaluate historical sources</p> <p>8.1.12 C Data presented in maps, graphs and tables.</p> <p>8.1.12 D Evaluate historical interpretation of events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of opinions in the perception of facts. • Issues and problems in the past. • Multiple points of view. • Connections between causes and results. • Author or source of historical narratives' points of view. • Central issue. <p>8.1.12 E Synthesize historical research.</p> <p>8.2.12 C Identify and evaluate how continuity and change have influenced Pennsylvania history from the 1890's to present.</p> <p>8.3.12 A Identify and evaluate the political and cultural contributions of individuals and groups to United States history from 1890 to present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political leaders (e.g., Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt). <p>8.3.12 C Evaluate how continuity and change has influenced United States history from 1890 to present.</p> <p>8.3.12.D Identify and evaluate conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations in United States history from 1890 to the present.</p> <p>8.4.12 A Evaluate the significance of individuals and groups who made major political and cultural contributions to world history since 1450.</p> <p>8.4.12 C Evaluate how continuity and change throughout history has impacted belief systems and religions, commerce and industry, innovations, settlement patterns, social organization, transportation and roles of women since 1450.</p>	

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	<p>8.4.12 D Evaluate how conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations impacted world history from 1450 to present in Africa, Americas, Asia and Europe.</p> <p>7.1.12 B Analyze the location of places and regions.</p> <p>7.2.12 B Analyze the significance of physical processes in shaping the character of places and regions.</p> <p>7.3.12 A Analyze the significance of human activity in shaping places and regions by their population characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of movement on human systems (e.g., refugees, guest workers, illegal aliens) <p>7.3.12 B Analyze the significance of human activity in shaping places and regions by their cultural characteristics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural conflicts (e.g., over language (Canada), over political power (Spain), over economic opportunities (Mexico)). <p>7.3.12 D Analyze the significance of human activity in shaping places and regions by their economic activities at the global scale (e.g., patterns of agriculture, forestry, mining, retailing, manufacturing, services)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in spatial distribution of economic activities at the global scale (e.g., patterns of agriculture, forestry, mining, retailing, manufacturing, services) • Forces that are reshaping business (e.g., the information economy, business globalization, the development of off-shore activities) • Effects of changes and movements on factors of production (e.g., resources, labor, capital) <p>7.3.12 E Analyze the significance of human activity in shaping places and regions by their political characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial patterns of political units in the global system. • Role of new political alliances on the international level (e.g., multinational organizations, worker’s unions, United Nations’ organizations). • Impact of political conflicts (e.g., secession, fragmentation, insurgencies, invasions). <p>7.4.12 B Analyze the impacts of people on physical systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How people develop international agreements to manage environmental issues (e.g., Rio de Janeiro Agreement, the Law of the Sea, the Antarctica Treaty) • How local and regional processes can have global effects (e.g., wind and hydroelectric power transmitted across regions, water use and irrigation for crop production) • Sustainability of resources (e.g., reforestation, conservation). • World patterns of resource distribution and utilization (e.g., oil trade, regional electrical grids) <p>5.1.12 B Analyze the sources, purposes, and functions of law.</p> <p>5.1.12 C Evaluate the importance of the principles and ideals of civic life.</p> <p>5.1.12 F Analyze and assess the rights of the people as listed in the Pennsylvania Constitution and the Constitution of the United States.</p> <p>5.1.12 I Analyze historical examples of the importance of the rule of law explaining the sources, purposes and functions of law.</p> <p>5.1.12 J Analyze how the law promotes common good and protects individual rights.</p> <p>5.1.12 L Analyze Pennsylvania and United States court decisions that have affected principles and ideals of government in civic life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Rights 	

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commerce | |
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judicial Review • Federal Supremacy <p>5.1.12 M Evaluate and analyze the importance of significant political speeches and writings in civic life (e.g., <i>Diary of Anne Frank, Silent Spring</i>).</p> <p>5.2.12 A Evaluate an individual’s civic rights, responsibilities and duties in various governments.</p> <p>5.2.12 B Evaluate citizens’ participation in government and civic life.</p> <p>5.2.12 C Interpret the causes of conflict in society and analyze techniques to resolve those conflicts.</p> <p>5.2.12 D Evaluate political leadership and public services in a republican form of government.</p> <p>5.2.12 F Evaluate how individual rights may conflict with or support the common good.</p> <p>5.2.12 G Evaluate what makes a competent and responsible citizen.</p> <p>5.3.12 A Analyze and evaluate the structure, organization and operation of the local, state, and national governments including domestic and national policy-making.</p> <p>5.3.12 B Analyze the responsibilities and powers of the national government</p> <p>5.3.12 E Evaluate the roles of political parties in election campaigns.</p> <p>5.3.12 F Evaluate the elements of the election process.</p> <p>5.3.12 G Evaluate how the government protects or curtails individual rights and analyze the impact of supporting or opposing those rights.</p> <p>5.3.12 J Evaluate the role of media in political life in the United States and explain the role if the media in setting the public agenda.</p> <p>5.4.12 B Analyze the United States’ interaction with other nations and governmental groups in world events.</p> <p>5.4.12 E Compare the purposes and functions of international organizations.</p> <p>6.1.12 C Assess the strength of the regional, national and/or international economy and compare it to another time period based upon economic indicators.</p> <p>6.1.12 D Describe historical examples of expansion, recession, and depression internationally.</p> <p>6.2.12 D Evaluate changes in economic institutions over time (e.g., stock markets, non-government organizations).</p> <p>6.2.12 F Identify and analyze forces that can change price.</p> <p>6.2.12 I Evaluate government decisions to provide public goods.</p> <p>6.4.12 D Explain how the location of resources, transportation and communication networks, and technology has affected international economic patterns.</p> <p>6.5.12 A Analyze the factors influencing wages.</p>	