

**ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Grade Two Social Studies Program**  
*Long Ago and Far Away*

**DESCRIPTION**

Students compare life in Acton today with life in Acton around 1900. This study will track Acton's evolution from a small farming enclave, to an industrial community, and finally into a suburban town which is very much a part of the global community. Framing this inquiry will be the identification of our community's basic needs and the methods used to fulfill those needs. Also included should be interdisciplinary activities that explore leisure pursuits and culture. A variety of historical literature will be woven throughout.

A second study will be done comparing Acton today to a contemporary community in a far away place. Similarly, the focus of this study will be on identification and attainment of needs, as well as an in-depth exploration of the culture. An African location, such as Kenya or Ghana, is recommended.

**TEACHING STRATEGIES**

Social Studies is the systematic study of people and societies, past and present. It integrates concepts from all of the disciplines and invites students to explore topics, to practice skills in meaningful contexts, and to make connections between their learning and the world in which they live. In the Acton Public Schools a variety of social studies lesson formats will be employed to engage the students in active learning. Activities will include class discussions, journal writing, map and globe skills, role-playing, art and music activities, and investigations of primary sources. Students will also engage in reading topic-related historical fiction and non-fiction and will be encouraged to think critically and answer questions. An in-depth discussion of social studies teaching practices can be found in the Massachusetts State Framework for History and the Social Sciences.

**HABITS OF MIND FOR SOCIAL STUDIES**

The goal of the Acton Public Schools Social Studies curriculum is to help students develop ways of reflecting, inquiring, and acting, often referred to as “habits of mind,” which they will carry with them beyond their formal education. How do we approach new situations? What kinds of attitudes do we bring to things we see and do? What kind of responsibility do we see ourselves having in relation to society?

Our teaching will encourage students to:

1. Ask rigorous questions, try new things, act on beliefs, resist peer pressure, and take other appropriate risks.
2. Recognize the importance of multiple viewpoints for understanding people, events and issues.
3. Empathize with people of different historical periods, places, and backgrounds.

4. Make connections and look for patterns to construct meaning from historical and current events.
5. Learn that most issues encountered in social studies are complex, need thoughtful analysis, and may lack simple solutions.
6. Form and express opinions by weighing information and evidence but be willing to revise these opinions in light of additional information and perspectives.
7. Inquire into the costs and benefits of competing alternatives.
8. Visualize a better future and become active and responsible members of their communities.
9. Use peaceful and just strategies for resolving strongly conflicting opinions.

### **ORGANIZING QUESTIONS**

1. How have the various components of our community changed over time?
2. What are our community's basic needs?
3. How were these needs fulfilled in the past, as compared to today?
4. How does one read a map and globe?
5. What are the rights and responsibilities of students as citizens of the school?
6. What are the qualities and attributes of good leaders and citizens?

### **STRANDS: HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, ECONOMICS**

#### **HISTORY**

##### Concepts

- Community
- History/Long ago/Change over time
- Generation
- Similar/Different

##### Essential Questions

1. What are the components of our community?
2. How has our community changed over time?
3. What are the changes the students can see in the lifestyle of each generation of their family?

4. What attracts people to live in Acton?
5. What are some reasons people chose to live in Acton long ago?

### Outcomes

#### *Students will:*

1. Use correctly words and phrases related to time (*now, in the past, in the future*), changing historical periods (*other times, other places*), and causation (*because, reasons*).
2. Explain the information that historical timelines convey and then put in chronological order events in the student's life (e.g., the year he or she was born, started school, or moved to a new neighborhood) or in the history of countries studied.
3. Identify the people and places that provide for the basic life necessities.
4. Identify the people and places that provided for basic life necessities in the past.
5. Construct a related pictorial timeline.
6. Investigate reasons why people in the past chose to live in Acton and how those reasons compare to today.

### **GEOGRAPHY**

#### Concepts

- Globes
- Maps
- Topography
- Cardinal directions

#### Essential Questions

1. How is a globe a representation of the earth?
2. How do maps represent places?
3. What are the distinguishing physical features that can be identified on a map or globe?
4. How do cardinal directions help in locating a place?

### Outcomes

#### *Students will:*

1. Describe how maps and globes depict geographical information in different ways.
2. Read globes and maps and follow narrative accounts using them.
3. Demonstrate skills in making, interpreting and using maps.
4. Be able to find their own house on a town map.

5. Use relative terms when locating places on a map (near to, across from, beyond).
6. Use cardinal directions to describe how you might get to a specific place and by what means.
7. Identify streets, railroads and rivers on current and historical local maps.

## ECONOMICS

### Concepts

- Needs & Wants
- Goods & Services
- Bartering

### Essential Questions

1. Give examples of people in the school and community who are both producers and consumers.
2. Explain what buyers and sellers are and give examples of goods and services that are bought and sold in their community.
3. What is the difference between a need and a want?
4. What are the goods and services that provide for our needs and wants?
5. Who provides goods and services in our community?
6. What were the needs and wants of people living in Acton long ago?
7. How did people living in Acton provide for their needs and wants long ago?
8. What needs and wants do people living in a contemporary village or city elsewhere (i.e. Africa) have?
9. How do people living in a contemporary village or city elsewhere provide for their needs and wants?

### Outcomes

#### *Students will:*

1. Demonstrate the difference between a need and a want.
2. Gather and interpret survey data on why people live in Acton.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of family and community in providing for basic economic needs and wants.
4. Discuss and compare different dwellings, identifying similarities and differences of current houses with houses of long ago.
5. Compare Acton today with a contemporary village or city elsewhere. The comparison will include dwellings, food, government, clothing, language, climate.

6. Compare Acton dwellings with those of a contemporary village or city elsewhere.
7. Compare bartering with use of money for procuring goods and services.
8. Demonstrate an understanding that there are families who may seem “poor” relative to our society's standards but whose basic needs are being met.
9. Demonstrate an appreciation that people do not need a wealth of material goods in order to be happy and fulfilled.

**Grade 2 Concepts and Skills** (from MA History/Social Science Curriculum Framework, August 2003)

*Students should be able to apply the following concepts and skills learned in previous grades:*

**HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY**

1. Use a calendar to identify days, weeks, months, years, and seasons. (H)
2. Use correctly words and phrases related to time (*now, in the past, in the future*), changing historical periods (*other times, other places*), and causation (*because, reasons*). (H)
4. Describe how maps and globes depict geographical information in different ways. (G)

**CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT**

6. Define and give examples of some of the rights and responsibilities that students as citizens have in the school (e.g., students have the right to vote in a class election and have the responsibility to follow school rules). (C)
7. Give examples of fictional characters or real people in the school or community who were good leaders and good citizens and explain the qualities that made them admirable (e.g., honesty, dependability, modesty, trustworthiness, courage). (C)

**ECONOMICS**

8. Give examples of people in the school and community who are both producers and consumers. (E)

**Grade 2 Learning Standards** (from MA History/Social Science Curriculum Framework, August 2003)

*Building on knowledge from previous years, students should be able to:*

- 2.1 On a map of the world, locate all of the continents: North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and Antarctica. (G)
- 2.2 Locate the current boundaries of the United States, Canada, and Mexico. (G)
- 2.3 Locate the oceans of the world: the Arctic, Atlantic, Indian, Pacific, and Southern Oceans. (G)
- 2.4 Locate five major rivers in the world: the Mississippi, Amazon, Volga, Yangtze, and Nile. (G)

- 2.5 Locate major mountains or mountain ranges in the world, such as the Andes, Alps, Himalayas, Mt. Everest, Mt. McKinley, and the Rocky Mountains. (G)
- 2.6 Explain the difference between a continent and a country and give examples of each. (G)
- 2.7 On a map of the world, locate the continent, regions, or countries from which students, their parents, guardians, grandparents, or other relatives or ancestors came. With the help of family members and the school librarian, describe traditional food, customs, sports and games, and music of the place they came from. (G, C)
- 2.8 With the help of the school librarian, give examples of traditions or customs from other countries that can be found in America today. (G, C)
- 2.9 With the help of the school librarian, identify and describe well-known sites, events, or landmarks in at least three different countries from which students' families come and explain why they are important. (H, G, C)
- 2.10 After reading or listening to a variety of true stories about individuals recognized for their achievements, describe and compare different ways people have achieved great distinction (e.g. scientific, professional, political, religious, commercial, military, athletic, or artistic). (H)