

## **Chapter 2: How Do Students Engage in Powerful and Meaningful Social Studies?**

### **Objectives**

1. Explain the importance of understanding students' prior knowledge about social studies content or skills to be taught.
2. Describe the effect of prior knowledge on learning new social studies knowledge.
3. Explain how rote memory social studies learning differ from meaningful social studies learning.
4. Describe how students begin to understand social studies content, skills, and attitudes.
5. Describe a planning strategy that can be used to facilitate meaningful social studies learning.
6. Select activities for the various phases of a powerful social studies lesson.
7. Describe the essential parts of each phase of the learning cycle.
8. Explain why each phase of the learning cycle must be included for successful student learning.
9. Construct appropriate activities for each phase of the learning cycle.

Chapter 2 explains relationships between learning theories and the design of the learning cycle. Students tend to have difficulty with separating the characteristics of each of the three phases of the lesson, and at first, focus on the names of the three phases. You may wish to reproduce copies of Figure 2.1 and Table 2.1 to use as you review these ideas with your students. At the Companion Website there are activities that ask students a series of questions requiring reflection on the sample middle school learning cycle: National Memorials and the Display of Power available on the Companion Website. Having students share their responses concerning this lesson will help you assess their understanding of teacher tasks in planning and teaching a lesson. Additional exercises in the chapter focus on teacher behaviors appropriate for use at specific times throughout the instructional process and the choices teachers have to make in planning a learning cycle. Discussion of the reasons for the choices made should focus on appropriate student and teacher behaviors for each of the phases of the learning cycle. Assure students that, as subsequent chapters address the learning cycle in the teaching of skills, generalizations, and values, they will come to better understand the characteristics of each phase of the learning cycle and observe the flexible use of teaching strategies. Figure 2.4 with the questions that teachers should ask as they plan a learning cycle deserves consideration and students should be referred to again when students write their own learning cycle lessons. At the common website there are a number of expansion/application activities, with detailed explanations, that ask students to apply what they are learning in the chapter. These would make good individual, small-group, or class activities to further learning or use as an assessment. The learning cycle and its various phases are complex concepts and students will clarify their understanding over time and with practices using, examining, and writing learning cycles throughout the course. The textbook provides many examples and asks the students to reflect on the learning cycle. Instructors also need to encourage these behaviors with their students throughout the course.

### **Class Activities**

1. Review several questions from the Time for Reflection: What Do You Think? portions of the textbook.

2. Compare the teacher actions and the student actions consistent with the learning cycle strategy with the inconsistent actions. Use Tables 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 to help you with this.
3. Carefully examine the learning cycle lesson plan in the chapter on pages 34-35. Circle the teacher behaviors on the plan. Then compare them with the list of behaviors in the table. Follow this with checking on the student actions. Circle these in a different color.
4. In the instructor's manual there are discussion guides designed to examine in detail the learning cycles in Chapter 5 of the textbook. You might have small groups of the students complete one of these discussion guides now.

### **Test Questions**

#### *Multiple-Choice Questions*

1. Designing a lesson as a learning cycle adapts instructional procedures to help students:
  - A. create a freestanding item of knowledge.
  - B. construct new knowledge and restructure existing knowledge.
  - C. apply their knowledge in situations similar to the one in which it was learned.
  - D. recall previous knowledge.

ANSWER: B

2. Which of the following is NOT a major purpose of the exploratory introduction?
  - A. Relate prior knowledge to the new social studies idea or skill.
  - B. Bring out and make public students' prior knowledge about the lesson topic.
  - C. Get students to give correct answers to questions about the topic.
  - D. Introduce a new social studies idea or skill.

ANSWER: C

3. Which of the following is a teacher behavior consistent with teaching an exploratory introduction for a lesson or unit?
  - A. Provide definitions and explanations of the new ideas to be learned.
  - B. Point out the best evidence and data students have in the materials they are using.
  - C. Guide students in how to use their skills to solve the problems they are confronting.
  - D. Observe and listen to students' comments and questions.

ANSWER: D

4. Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of the development phase of the learning cycle?

- A. It explains social studies through a variety of teaching methods.
- B. It has students seek more information so they can better explain ideas.
- C. It summarizes or provides a closure on the learning of new ideas.
- D. It accepts all students' ideas without questioning their accuracy.

ANSWER: D

5. Which of the following is NOT a teacher behavior consistent with the development phase?

- A. Help students to link previous experience to the social studies being studied.
- B. Focus mainly on creating interest in the topic being studied.
- C. Lead students step by step to define a new social studies concept.
- D. Explain how to work step by step to learn a new skill.

ANSWER: B

6. Which of the following is NOT a behavior desired from students involved in a lesson's expansion?

- A. Ask related questions that encourage future investigation.
- B. Apply newly learned definitions and skills.
- C. Take a written test on what they have learned.
- D. Draw reasonable conclusions from new evidence.

ANSWER: C

7. In the exploratory introduction phase of the learning cycle, teachers:

- A. define all new concepts and terms of the lesson or unit.
- B. provide minimal guidance for student interactions with the content.
- C. go over the objectives of the lesson or unit.
- D. control students' reactions with carefully selected materials.

ANSWER: B

8. Which of the following questions is NOT one that a teacher would ask when planning the development phase of the learning cycle?

- A. How should the social studies idea, skill, or attitude be practiced, modeled, or demonstrated?
- B. What activities can be provided to help special learners or to provide additional practice for those who may need it?
- C. What other social studies concepts or generalizations are related to our topic of study?
- D. What strategies or techniques can be used to assess the level of all students' understanding of the social studies idea, skill, or attitude?

ANSWER: C

9. A teacher creates an activity that presents students with a confusing situation. Students realize they are only partially familiar with the situation. This is an ideal type of activity for which phase of the learning cycle?

- A. Exploratory introduction
- B. Lesson development
- C. Expansion
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

ANSWER: A

10. Meaningful learning in social studies is an active process. Students are involved in:

- A. recalling memorized knowledge so that they can answer a question.
- B. reviewing the definitions of major concepts.
- C. accessing both prior experiences and prior knowledge and applying them to a problem on which they are working.
- D. all of the above.

ANSWER: C

11. Traditional teaching focuses on:

- A. the presentation of material by an authority, usually the teacher and/or the textbook.
- B. facilitating students' efforts to make connections between their prior knowledge and new experiences.
- C. using activities that convince students their existing idea does not work so they need to use the new idea built in the lesson.
- D. confronts students' existing knowledge by helping them find it does not work in the new situation in which they find themselves.

ANSWER: A

12. As the social studies learning cycle begins, students should be engaged in:

- A. taking a pretest that will enable the teacher to find out just what they know about the lesson's topic.
- B. a task that involves them in applying their prior knowledge to a task that reveals to the students that they need different knowledge to solve the task.
- C. listening to the reading of a book on the lesson's topic that will be of interest to them and will affirm the ideas they have.
- D. writing down a list of everything they know about the topic.

ANSWER: B

13. The middle part of the learning cycle is teacher guided as students:
- A. are first presented with the definitions on which the lesson focuses.
  - B. read the textbook and avoid interacting with classmates.
  - C. are given one example of the lesson's topic to memorize.
  - D. are involved in activities that explain the content and provide multiple examples of it.

ANSWER: D

14. The last part of the learning cycle social studies lesson is the expansion. In this phase of the lesson, students:
- A. use the newly learned ideas in situations that are different from the one in which it was learned.
  - B. do a "fun" food or art activity that is somewhat related to the lesson's topic but mainly allows student to relax.
  - C. take a test on the new concept to help the teacher be sure they have learned it.
  - D. do follow-up homework that involves them in individually reviewing the concept.

ANSWER: A

15. Which of the following is NOT a student behavior consistent with instructional strategies use in the exploratory introduction?
- A. Think freely about the topic.
  - B. Suspend judgment.
  - C. Form new predictions.
  - D. Seek one solution.

ANSWER: D

16. Which of the following is NOT a teacher behavior consistent with the exploratory introduction?
- A. Generate curiosity.
  - B. Provide definitions and answers.
  - C. Ask probing questions to redirect students' investigation.
  - D. Observe and listen to students' interactions.

ANSWER: B

17. Which of the following is NOT a student behavior appropriate to do in the lesson development phase?
- A. Question others' explanations.
  - B. Examine data resources.
  - C. Listen critically to others' explanations.
  - D. All of the above are proper student behaviors.

ANSWER: D

18. Which of the following behaviors is NOT consistent with the teacher's behaviors during the lesson development phase?

- A. Accept student explanations without justifications.
- B. Help students link previous experiences to the topic.
- C. Encourage students to explain ideas in their own words.
- D. Provide explanations and new labels for concepts.

ANSWER: A

19. As a result of the exploratory introduction, the teacher might discover that:

- A. students have many misconceptions to modify before the generalization can be learned.
- B. students will need more structure in your assignments to teach the generalization.
- C. students will need more concrete materials or examples than anticipated if they are to learn the generalization.
- D. students will need all of the above.
- E. students will need none of the above.

ANSWER: D

*True and False Questions*

20. When teachers base their instructional decisions on knowledge of how students learn, they increase their ability to develop social studies lessons through which students will successfully learn.

ANSWER: TRUE

21. When teaching meaningful social studies teachers should not replace all memorization of facts, but severely reduce it.

ANSWER: TRUE

22. Because social studies content is based on how people live, it is possible that students can learn about a social studies topic in another time period or place about which they have no or very little knowledge.

ANSWER: TRUE

20. In the exploratory introduction there is minimal guidance or expectations on the part of the teacher.

ANSWER: TRUE

23. The expansion phase of the lesson includes a review or demonstration of learning from the lesson development phase.

ANSWER: TRUE

24. The expansion phase of the lesson has students work independently to produce a product illustrating their learning.

ANSWER: FALSE

25. The expansion phase seeks to stabilize learning and assure that it is stored in the long-term memory.

ANSWER: TRUE

26. The expansion phase provides additional time and experiences that may modify what was learned in the development phase of the lesson and bring about conceptual change.

ANSWER: TRUE

27. The exploratory introduction may ask the student to address only a part of the new social studies idea to be studied in the lesson or unit.

ANSWER: TRUE

28. The best exploratory introductions ask students to begin the lesson by making a list or diagram of their present knowledge of the topic for study.

ANSWER: FALSE

29. The activities of the expansion may also serve as assessments of student learning.

ANSWER: TRUE

30. Teachers who use the learning cycle design for their lessons and units have no reason to use multiple-choice or true-false test questions.

ANSWER: FALSE

31. When planning lessons teachers need to incorporate clear examples of social studies ideas for students to study.

ANSWER: TRUE

32. When using the learning cycle, teachers do not provide guided practice through step-by-step procedures.

ANSWER: FALSE

33. During the development phase teachers may explain ideas through the use of analogies or reenactments.

ANSWER: TRUE

34. Failure to include related expansion activities in a lesson or unit may result in the students forgetting what has been learned in the previous phases of the learning cycle.

ANSWER: TRUE

35. The expansion phase may be short or may involve out-of-school activities, or homework.

ANSWER: TRUE

36. Because students like to use computer programs that include sounds, music, and animation, teachers should use computers when teaching social studies so students will be interested in the lesson.

ANSWER: FALSE

37. Depending on the program selected, electronic media can be used in all phases of the learning cycle.

ANSWER: TRUE

38. Because of their refined skills from watching television, students automatically obtain accurate facts and information from film and video presentations.

ANSWER: FALSE

### *Essay Questions*

39. You have been working on the concept of taxation with your fifth-grade students. You are planning on setting up a system of three to five taxes that students would pay during a weeklong “expansion” of your learning cycle lesson. What classroom taxes might you implement? How will students pay the taxes (through the use of “play” money, by working off their taxes on jobs)? Discuss in detail these two sub-questions and explain how this weeklong activity might be expected to help students expand their concept of taxation in a new context and might deepen their understanding of taxation.

40. If you are going to teach the concept of taxation to fifth-grade students, describe an activity you might use in the exploratory introduction to access your students' prior knowledge and to confront that knowledge and to help them realize they need to know more about taxation.

41. Explain why a lesson should not simply end with a closure, but really needs to include an expansion phase.

## Chapter 3: How Are Social Studies Inquiry Skills Learned?

### Objectives

1. Explain the importance of planning for the development of social studies inquiry skills.
2. Describe types of skills needed by students in order to develop meaningful social studies learning.
3. Describe the difference in emphasis in planning for social studies inquiry skills at the early childhood and middle childhood levels.
4. Describe the process of teaching social studies inquiry skills.
5. Identify conditions necessary for effective teaching of social studies inquiry skills.
6. Describe methods for assessing social studies inquiry skills during a lesson or unit.

Chapter 3 presents a strong case for the need to teach the dispositions and attitudes of inquiry to young students. It addresses the many skills as they apply to the teaching of social studies and provides benchmarks for progress in skill learning at various grade levels. Method students do not readily recognize the skills or the importance of teaching skills to students because instruction in social studies skills has largely been neglected in the past. Therefore, reviewing Tables 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.7 and Figure 3.2 in discussion will be helpful to your students in understanding the chapter and the role of teaching social studies inquiry skill in the elementary and middle school. The skills listed on tables in Chapter 3 are general in nature and represent a sample of the possible skills students must apply when learning social studies content. There are additional tables in Chapters 5, 6, 11, 12, and 13 addressing the individual content disciplines that specifically identify skills needed to study those disciplines and themes. You might want to point these out to reinforce the need to teach skills. Call attention to Table 3.8 that focuses on modifications in the characteristics of development and expansion phases of a learning cycle with the purpose of teaching an inquiry skill. The expansion of this chapter is a scenario of an inquiry lesson accompanied by reflection questions on its procedures. It may be helpful to examine one of the sample learning cycles in another chapter that focuses on the teaching of a skill. These lessons include From Tree to Paper about sequencing in Chapter 1, the lesson on latitude and longitude in Chapter 12, and the scenario in the exploratory introduction of Chapter 11 using skills in picture analysis.

### Class Activities

1. Review several questions from the Time for Reflection: What Do You Think?
2. Examine any of the learning cycle lessons in this chapter or in Chapter 12 on teaching latitude and longitude of this textbook that focus on the teaching of a skill. Locate in the lessons the characteristics of the skill lesson identified in Table 3.8, Teaching Inquiry Skills Using the Learning Cycle.
3. Use the **Social Studies Process and Inquiry Skills: A Class Exercise** as the basis for a small-group or whole-class discussion.

4. Have students locate a lesson plan in the teacher's guide of a K–8 social studies book or on the Internet. Examine these lessons to see if they have the characteristics the textbook describes need to be included in a skills lesson. Have the students modify the lesson to include all of the necessary parts of a learning cycle social studies skill lesson.

### **Test Questions**

#### *Multiple-Choice Questions*

1. Which of the following data-gathering skills might best be used in a project that involves a class of fourth-graders in determining the average amount of trash their family disposes of each week?

- A. library, interviewing, and graphing skills
- B. graphing, Internet, and interviewing
- C. surveying, questioning, and mapping skills
- D. interviewing, surveying, and questioning

ANSWER: D

2. What data-organizing skill is being used when students take data gathered about the weekly allowances of their classmates and tally it by how many students receive each of the following allowances: seventy-five cents, one dollar, one dollar and fifty cents, two dollars?

- A. Classifying
- B. Ordering observations
- C. Finding patterns
- D. Inferring

ANSWER: A

3. Which of the following is NOT a requirement for doing critical thinking?

- A. Respecting evidence
- B. Being willing to search for more evidence
- C. Tolerating ambiguity
- D. Staying with your conclusion

ANSWER: D

4. The emotional aspect or implications of a problem often prompt or stimulate the study of a social studies topic. Which of the following is least likely to have been stimulated by concerns that are a part of the affective domain?

- A. A study of Presidents' Day
- B. A study of where to locate a new hospital for the community
- C. A study of life in another country
- D. A study of what to do with an abandoned railroad line that runs through parts of the city

ANSWER: D

5. Which of the following would be the most appropriate expansion activity in a lesson focusing on making inferences about life in New Orleans in the 1830s?
- A. Describing the location of New Orleans in North America with the help of a world map
  - B. Examining photographs of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina
  - C. Examining a New Orleans' newspaper dated July 4, 1837
  - D. Reading an account of the contribution of the citizens of New Orleans to the Confederacy during the Civil War

ANSWER: C

6. Observing is a fundamental inquiry skill that involves:
- A. sequencing the characteristics of a set of objects from large to small, short to tall, or in some other systematic way.
  - B. identifying what a set of characteristics tell us, for example, wrinkles on a person's face tell us that person is older than someone who does not have wrinkles.
  - C. predicting where we will see a particular characteristic again.
  - D. identifying characteristics of an object that we can see, feel, touch, hear, and/or taste.

ANSWER: D

7. Once we have gathered some data by observing, measuring, and questioning, our next step is to:
- A. construct a map of the data.
  - B. organize the data by classifying it, ordering it, or by isolating important variables in it.
  - C. process the data by finding relationships between the items in the data.
  - D. quickly communicate our data by reporting it to the class.

ANSWER: B

8. "When there are no rules for a game, people will start arguing because they can't agree on what to do." This statement is an example of an:
- A. observation.
  - B. inference.
  - C. hypothesis.
  - D. fact.

ANSWER: C

9. "My pencil is not on my desk, so somebody took it!" This statement is an:
- A. observation.
  - B. inference.
  - C. hypothesis.
  - D. fact.

ANSWER: B

10. When doing a predictive study, students might ask a question such as:
- A. how might our play outside on the school playground change if the city puts a public park next to it?
  - B. what beliefs are leading city planners to decide to put a public park next to the school playground?
  - C. how do people's attitudes about public parks result in the city planners choosing to put the public park next to the school playground?
  - D. how much are the other city parks used?

ANSWER: A

11. Certain attitudes and dispositions promote powerful social studies. These include:
- A. selecting a position on an issue because family members believe it is the right position.
  - B. reserving judgment until information has been obtained and considered.
  - C. resisting asking questions.
  - D. realizing that the natural environment is just the way it is and that we can do little to control the events that change it.

ANSWER: B

12. Ms. Lopez, a fourth-grade teacher was working to help her students develop their problem-solving ability. Which of the following was a component that she had to help them learn if they were to become better problem solvers?
- A. Recognize that problem solving means resolving a difficulty.
  - B. Recognize that problem solving identifies the appropriate solution for us so we do not have to try it out.
  - C. Recognize that, once a solution is arrived at, there will be no obstacles.
  - D. Recognize that a general description of a problem rather than a detailed, specific description is preferred.

ANSWER: A

13. Given that inquiry skills all have several stages of development, which of the following is the most appropriate statement concerning teaching skills?
- A. The social studies curriculum should teach an inquiry skill using the same content topic each time to avoid confusing students with different information.
  - B. The social studies curriculum should teach the inquiry skill very well in the early grades because students will then master it and not need additional help to further develop the skill.
  - C. The social studies curriculum should teach an inquiry skill in different grade levels, developing it to a higher level each year it is taught.
  - D. The social studies curriculum should focus on content not on skill development because skills cannot be fully taught in one school year.

ANSWER: C

*True-False Questions*

14. Investigating focuses on learning about a problem and reporting what you have learned.

ANSWER: TRUE

15. Problem solving involves identifying a problem and taking action to solve it.

ANSWER: TRUE

16. Skills require large amounts of practice to learn but once learned will be maintained.

ANSWER: FALSE

17. Teachers are able to determine that a student has learned a skill when the student applies the skill in a new situation.

ANSWER: TRUE

18. One of the first steps in decision making is clearly defining the problem.

ANSWER: TRUE

19. One difference in learning cycles that teach a social studies skill is the optional nature of the exploratory introduction phase.

ANSWER: FALSE

20. The most important skills used in teaching social studies lessons are the making of maps and timelines.

ANSWER: FALSE

21. Making a generalization or conclusion is an easier intellectual skill than describing or explaining what was observed or read.

ANSWER: FALSE

22. It is possible to teach all of the social studies skills in the lower grades so that middle school teachers and high school teachers can concentrate on teaching only social studies knowledge.

ANSWER: FALSE

23. When looking for ways to solve a local problem or investigating a historical event, critical thinking skills are also used.

ANSWER: TRUE

24. Making a database on a computer is an example of a data-gathering skills that elementary students might be taught.

ANSWER: FALSE

25. Observations identify characteristics of objects or events through use of one or more of the senses, which is why students are encouraged to observe and handle learning resources.

ANSWER: TRUE

26. Inquiry lessons are likely to require students to use a number of different skills.

ANSWER: TRUE

27. Asking questions throughout an inquiry lesson is an important way to encourage students in developing their cognitive skills.

ANSWER: TRUE

28. Reflecting on the use of skills is profitable at the end of an inquiry lesson but not profitable to do during the lesson.

ANSWER: FALSE

*Essay Questions*

29. No inquiry skill lesson is content free because the skill must be developed when using it with content. However, when teaching a skill the teacher focuses more on the development of the skill and does not assess the comprehension of the content. Describe a learning cycle lesson for second-graders that is working to develop in students their ability to order, or sequence, information. What content would be appropriate for second-graders to work with in order to develop their ability at ordering information? What activity might you use in the lesson development phase of the lesson with that content to teach the skill?

30. After developing fourth-graders' ability to make appropriate inferences, what kind of assessment would you use? Why?

## Social Studies Process and Inquiry Skills: A Class Exercise

### Lesson Applying the Process Skill of Observation to Social Studies Content

#### 1. Exploration Phase

What does observing mean? What are the characteristics of an effective observer? How does one make proper observations? Process skills relate to critical thinking and are used in several school subjects and so have some transferability among the subjects.

#### 2. Lesson Development Phase

Children take part in activities designed to develop and refine their abilities to make observations. Their observational errors should be pointed out. Suggestions for improving observational skills should be provided to students by the teacher. Use several short videos of daily family activities or several picture books about families.

#### 3. Expansion

Children learn social studies content when applying the process skill. For example, children should learn about how families are organized by consciously making observations of how family members interact with each other. They identify duties different family members undertake and how the work of the family is divided. Next they draw inferences about the similarities and differences between the roles various family members play. They can also compare families by providing examples from their own families' behaviors.

Do students observe the same basic roles and relationships in all families? Identify similarities and differences found among the families and how they organize their work. Review the similarities and differences students observed in daily habits such as eating meals, recreation, play, and going to bed.

In a closure discussion considered: Just what did you learn about ...? What other observations might have been made? Are we certain our observations are accurate? Did we guess about some of the things we observed? How could our observations have been improved to be more accurate? Were the differences we observed change the definition of a family? Do you think the differences might change the feelings and loyalties of the members to their families? Why or why not? (Recall that concepts and generalizations need a degree stability in their definitions and conclusions if they do not remain permanent to all times and locations.)

Analyze the skills used in the activity of making a family dinner featuring chicken Kiev. Provide students with the list of steps for making chicken Kiev listed below. Have them identify the process skills used in each of the steps. Observing is used in each and other skills are suggested for consideration.

1. Finding and locating a recipe for chicken Kiev—observing, reading
2. Locating a reputable meat market—observing, drawing conclusions, reading map
3. Finding the appropriate pots, pans, utensils—observing, classifying
4. Looking for other necessary ingredients—observing, classifying
5. Locating dishes, glassware, silverware—observing, finding patterns
6. Following the recipe—observing, reading skills, interpreting observations

7. Tasting food (during preparation)—observing, interpreting the taste, drawing conclusions
8. Setting a timer and listening for the “ding” to know when the chicken is done—observing, interpreting observations, extrapolating

Ask students: How might other skills added to this activity? Survey of preferences.