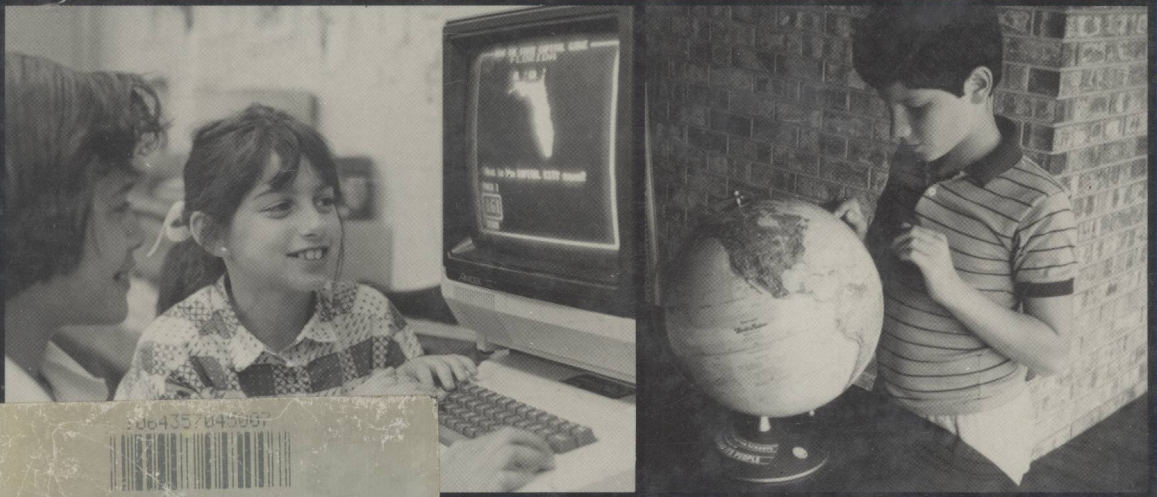


SECOND EDITION

Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary School

THE BASICS FOR CITIZENSHIP



THEODORE KALTSOUNIS

C4
R14
E-2

9760532

TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Basics for Citizenship

SECOND EDITION

Theodore Kaltsounis

University of Washington, Seattle



E9760532

PRENTICE-HALL, INC., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632

Kaltsounis, Theodore.

Teaching social studies in the elementary school.

Includes bibliographies and indexes.

1. Social sciences—Study and teaching (Elementary)—United States. I. Title.

LB1584.K295 1987 372.8'3044 86-25387
ISBN 0-13-895657-X

Editorial/production supervision and interior design: Edie de Coteau

Cover design: Diane Saxe

Manufacturing buyer: John Hall

*Photographs on pages 1, 70, 97, 127, 205, 231, 285, and 308
courtesy of Seattle School District, Seattle, Washington
photos by Bokmon Dong*

*Photographs on pages 20, 32, 37, 79, 139, 159, 169, 212, 295, and 311
courtesy of Northshore School District, Bothell, Washington*

*Photographs on pages 115, 191, 255, 263, and 281
courtesy of Bellevue School District, Bellevue, Washington*

*All other photographs
by author.*

© 1987 by Prentice-Hall, Inc.

A Division of Simon & Schuster

Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, in any form or by any means, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

ISBN 0-13-895657-X 01

Prentice-Hall International (UK) Limited, London

Prentice-Hall of Australia Pty. Limited, Sydney

Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., Toronto

Prentice-Hall Hispanoamericana, S.A., Mexico

Prentice-Hall of India Private Limited, New Delhi

Prentice-Hall of Japan, Inc., Tokyo

Prentice-Hall of Southeast Asia Pte. Ltd., Singapore

Editora Prentice-Hall do Brasil, Ltda., Rio de Janeiro

PREFACE

During the 1960s and most of the 1970s, the school subject of social studies was in ferment. Because of dissatisfaction with what was then practiced, attempts were made to improve it. As a result, the “new” social studies emerged, followed by the “new-new” social studies. The former was too content-oriented and much too academic, while the latter was too process-oriented. Generally speaking, both movements were eventually rejected in practice, but they were not a total loss. Numerous aspects of new as well as the new-new social studies were well founded and worth preserving.

In retrospect, one of the mistakes of the new movements was probably the total rejection of what came before. This rejection was mainly the product of the excitement generated by the new directions rather than the outcome of any compelling rationale. The whole thing was a good illustration of the all too familiar phenomenon in education where the pendulum swings from one extreme to the other. As evidenced in its preface, the first edition of this book tried to prevent this tendency by advocating an approach that did not reject the traditional social studies. Instead, it was suggested that the new trends be used to change what was already in practice.

The social studies of the 1980s, as currently practiced throughout the nation, does reflect a balance between the old and the new. The content is important, as is the process. The process of value clarification is important, but so is the development of the basic values of our system as defined in the Constitution and the rest of our basic social contracts. Learning to resolve issues is basic, but so is learning about the history and structure of our society and nation and the ways they relate

with the rest of the world. Studying the Third World is imperative, but so is the study of other parts of the world.

So, social studies during the last 20 years moved from the descriptive approach, to the new social studies, to the new-new social studies, and now to a balanced approach. The balanced approach was advocated in the first edition. It is also stressed in this edition—no longer as a wish, but as description of what is actually practiced. Adequate illustrations are provided throughout the book to demonstrate the trend toward balance.

This book is practical in that it addresses a series of basic questions a teacher must answer before being able to teach social studies effectively. These questions, in the order in which the chapters deal with them, are:

1. What is social studies supposed to accomplish in the elementary school and how could accountability be achieved in the various levels?
2. What should be the general area of study for each grade; for my own grade?
3. What should be the five or six unit topics that can provide a comprehensive treatment of the area of study designated for my grade?
4. What are the basic elements that could provide the basic content for each topic?
5. What is the best way to teach or deal with each one of these elements?
6. How do I relate what the children learn with their personal lives?
7. How can I develop a comprehensive plan for effectively teaching a particular topic?
8. How do I evaluate both pupil progress and the effectiveness of my program?
9. What do I do with the textbooks and how do I use other commercially available materials?
10. Where do I go for additional resources to enrich learning experiences?
11. How is social studies taught in alternative schools and programs?
12. How can I improve myself as a social studies teacher?
13. How can my school help me do well in social studies?
14. What can I do to recruit the help of parents in teaching social studies?

Chapters 1 and 2 respond to the first question by explaining why each student must develop the qualities needed to cope with mounting social conflict. Chief among these qualities are decision-making abilities. These involve the individual's knowledge as well as values.

Responding to questions 2, 3, and 4, Chapter 3 advises teachers to adhere to the traditional areas of study—family, community, city, region, nation, world. No better framework has been found. But the topics in each area must allow for its comprehensive treatment and should accommodate basic issues, especially contemporary ones. Concepts, generalizations, and issues are recommended as the structural elements of topic content, giving substance to social studies and also contributing toward developing dynamic citizens. Such content helps children (1) acquire basic knowledge about human relationships, and (2) become involved in, and develop skills useful to, coping with these human relationships.

Chapters 4 and 5 respond to questions 5 and 6. Chapter 4 proffers the inquiry approach as the most effective method to teach concepts, generalizations, and thinking skills; Chapter 5 presents the valuing process as a model for dealing

with issues and values, including the development of the core of values of our society.

In response to question 7, Chapter 6 explains how the traditional unit plan is modified to allow the teaching of concepts, generalizations, and issues through inquiry and the valuing process.

Responding to question 8, on evaluation, Chapter 7 explains why evaluation is an integral part of instruction, Diagnostic, formative, and summative evaluation of pupil progress are examined. Criteria are also provided for evaluating social studies programs.

As implied in questions 9 and 10, a variety of resources are needed to make inquiry and the valuing process work. Chapters 8 through 11 are addressed to these resources and their most effective uses.

Question 11 does not concern all teachers equally. But more and more teachers are experimenting with alternative programs. Chapter 12 deals specifically with social studies in nongraded and open-school situations, in early childhood education, and in programs for gifted and for physically and mentally handicapped children. It also emphasizes such dimensions in the social studies program as multi-ethnic education, global education, economic education, law-related education, women's studies, and future studies.

Finally, Chapter 13 is addressed to teacher self-improvement and to the kind of support and cooperation the teacher needs from the school administrator and the parents if a social studies program is to be successful.

The 13 chapters are organized in four interrelated parts. Part I (Chapter 1 and 2) examines the goals of social studies. Part II (Chapters 3-7) deals with planning and teaching social studies. Part III (Chapter 8-11) describes instructional resources and their use. Part IV (Chapters 12 and 13) deals with such special considerations as social studies for alternative schools and guidelines for teachers, administrators, and parents.

The future of our society and our system depend on how much future generations know about them and the extent to which they have developed the commitment and the skills to actively participate in them. In other words, the future of our society and our system depend on the extent to which we meet the objectives of social studies. Obviously, social studies is a basic subject and it ought to be taken seriously as early as possible in the educative process of children.

Theodore Katsounis

CONTENTS

Preface vii

I Goals and Objectives of Social Studies

1

WHY TEACH SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL?

1

The general purpose of social studies 4

The viability of decision making 9

Summary 17

Activities 18

Notes 19

2

ACCOUNTABILITY AND INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES IN SOCIAL STUDIES

20

Need for clarity in instructional objectives 23

Behavioral objectives in social studies 24

Types of instructional objectives 26

Steps in determining instructional objectives 31

Summary 35

Activities 35

Notes 35

II Planning and Teaching Social Studies

3

A SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM FOR DECISION MAKING

37

Deficiencies of the descriptive curriculum 39

The shortcomings of the conceptual curriculum 40

The dynamic social studies curriculum 42

Developing a dynamic curriculum	44
A sample curriculum	59
The curriculum and the special emphases	66
The next step	67
Summary	67
Activities	68
Notes	68

4

DEVELOPING CONCEPTS AND GENERALIZATIONS THROUGH INQUIRY

70

Research findings on the ability of young children to conceptualize	72
Reduction of generalizations to instructional objects	73
Various models of the inquiry method	77
The role of questions in inquiry and conceptualization	85
Generalizations as means rather than ends	88
Learning activities for concepts and generalizations	90
Summary	94
Activities	94
Notes	95

5

DEALING WITH ISSUES, VALUES, AND THE VALUING PROCESS

97

The nature of values	99
Values in teaching	103
Steps in resolving issues	105
A sample plan dealing with an issue	113
Developing social values	117
More on value clarification and value assessment	120
Summary	124
Activities	125
Notes	125

6

THE UNIT PLAN AND THE LESSON PLAN: BRIDGING THE OLD AND THE NEW

127

The inadequacy of the textbook	129
Advantages of the unit plan	130
The structure of the unit plan	132
The contemporary unit plan compared with the traditional	143
Unit plan and the textbook: A compromise	145
An example of a unit plan	146
The lesson plan	155

An example of a lesson plan	156
Summary	157
Activities	158
Notes	158

7

PUPIL PROGRESS AND PROGRAM EVALUATION	159
--	------------

Types of evaluation and their place in the teaching-learning process	160
Techniques of collecting information	166
Program evaluation	183
Summary	188
Activities	189
Notes	189

III Instructional Resources for Social Studies**8**

PROJECTS, TEXTBOOKS, AND OTHER READING MATERIALS	191
---	------------

Projects and earlier textbooks	192
The current textbooks	195
Basic characteristics of current social studies	196
Other reading materials	201
The problem of readability	208
Summary	210
Activities	210
Notes	211

9

COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND CURRENT EVENTS	212
---	------------

Community resources	213
Current events	226
Summary	234
Activities	234
Notes	235

10

MAPS, GLOBES, AND OTHER AUDIOVISUAL AIDS	236
---	------------

Maps and globes	237
Other audiovisual aids	250
Summary	260

Activities	260
Notes	261

11

DRAMATIC PLAY, GAMES, SIMULATIONS, AND COMPUTER SOFTWARE 263

Forms of dramatic play	264
Games	268
Simulations	271
Computer software	279
Summary	283
Activities	283
Notes	284

IV Special Considerations in Social Studies

12

SOCIAL STUDIES FOR ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EMPHASES 285

Alternative schools and programs	287
Special emphases	296
Summary	304
Activities	305
Notes	306

13

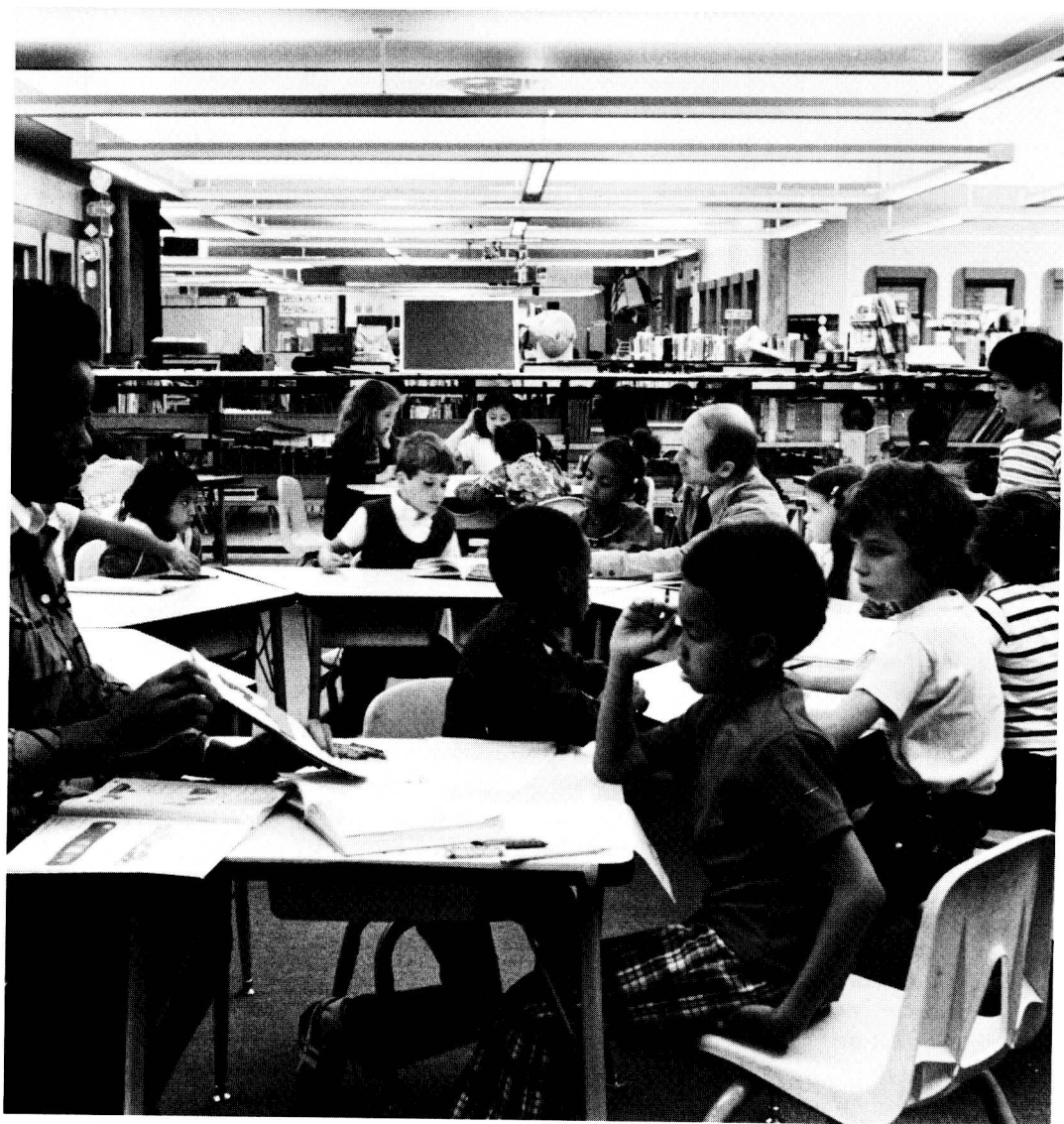
GUIDELINES TO TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND PARENTS 308

Guidelines for teachers	310
Guidelines for administrators	312
Guidelines for parents	315
Summary	317
Activities	318
Notes	318

Index of Authors	319
------------------	-----

Index of Subjects	322
-------------------	-----

Why Teach Social Studies in the Elementary School?



OBJECTIVES

Studying this chapter will enable the reader to :

1. recognize that because social studies contributes to the individual's survival and well-being, it is considered to be one of the basic subjects.
2. identify the purpose of social studies as the ability to understand and cope with human relationships.
3. justify the ability to make decisions as the ultimate objective of social studies.
4. distinguish between two types of decision making, and identify their various components and logical steps.
5. realize that the shift toward decision making necessitates dealing with values as well as with knowledge, and providing opportunities for active participation in the social arena.
6. identify both the differences and the similarities between decision making and problem solving.
7. recognize the importance of teaching the basic American values found in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.
8. be convinced that a social studies program based on decision making promotes a dynamic, participatory citizenship that reflects the finest of the American cultural imperatives.

Education is finally becoming an important national issue. From the President of the United States to the mayor of the smallest municipality, leaders across the nation are concerned with the education of children and youth. The governors of the fifty states appear to be in fierce competition with each other in an effort to achieve quality education. It is probably the first time in the history of this country that so many education bills have been enacted or are under consideration by so many state legislatures. Obviously the nation is taking seriously Jefferson's profound statement that "if a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."¹

The early 1980s will probably be remembered as the years of the education reports. Dozens were produced by various educational committees, foundations, and institutions, the most celebrated of all being *A Nation at Risk*.² Most reports deal with the high school and reflect a widespread belief that the major problems in education stem from a relaxation of standards and a lowering of expectations. The responses to these reports have thus far been somewhat simplistic: more tests, more academic curricula and courses, more time in school, and more homework.

It is difficult to tell what the impact of the educational movement of the early eighties will be, but those of us interested in social studies can take comfort in the fact that social studies overwhelmingly emerges as one of the most important subjects in schooling. Knowledge about society, skills for social participation, and commitment to the basic beliefs of the democratic way of life are considered to be fundamental educational objectives. As already pointed out, however, the various national reports on education focus mainly on the high school; they say very little about the elementary school. They seem to assume that conditions and instruction at the elementary level are not as poor as they are at the high school level.

Does the somewhat more positive view of the elementary school mean that the status of social studies for young children is satisfactory? Unfortunately not. Social studies in the lower grades is not considered important, and too often the elementary school is viewed as an institution that should concentrate only on the so-called basics like “the three Rs”: reading, writing, and arithmetic. This tendency continues to manifest itself in the implementation of limited programs: Many elementary schools pay little attention to social studies and science, and for some time music, art, and physical education have been thought superfluous and their systematic development is constantly diminishing.

But are the three Rs the only basics? By way of answer we must first define “basic”. A reasonable definition is at hand, and, humans being social animals, we apply it to the biological and cultural realms alike: A basic is, in the biological realm, anything that is a prerequisite to survival and, in the cultural realm, anything that is a prerequisite to the skills or activities useful or necessary to a society or its members. In the cultural realm, reading skills are obviously essential to persons engaged in nearly any activity characteristic of a society like ours—whether it be filling a purchase order, interpreting a statute, or using an electric coffeemaker. The utility of writing skills is the logical converse (anything to be read must first have been written), and the need to manipulate numbers is nearly as prevalent. Moreover, reading and writing, activities inseparable from the literature of a culture, can be a source of personal enrichment. (Of course, cultural basics can affect our physical survival, both directly and indirectly: A person unable to read or count might suffer serious harm by failing to understand a road sign or by taking more than the prescribed quantity of a drug; many if not most jobs and careers are closed to persons not proficient in the three Rs).

Granted, then, that the three Rs are basics. But are they by our definition the only basics? It can be argued that some abilities are even more basic than reading, writing, and arithmetic. In our complex society survival quite often means being able to cope with one’s self or to get along with others. About 50,000 persons in the United States die in automobile accidents each year, not because they cannot read road signs but because, lacking self-control, they behave in ways that cause accidents. Loneliness often directs people toward suicide. Our mental institutions and prisons are filled to capacity. The fact is that people need a strong self-concept and the skills necessary to get along with themselves and others long before they need to know how to read and write. Indeed, children might be better able to learn how to read, write, and manipulate numbers if they have developed the personal powers that help them accept themselves and successfully deal with others.

It can be forcibly argued, as it is in this book, that education must serve certain needs more basic than those served by the three Rs. The process of socialization must include two elements that, although analytically separable, are virtually inseparable in their effect on the person: learning the skills of interaction, and developing a proper self-concept. In the context of formal education, social studies is the domain most pertinent to these needs. Thus, although the value of the three Rs is not to be discounted, teaching them exclusively and

neglecting social studies would appear to be an educational error. Children need opportunities to experience success. They need to understand themselves, their potential as human beings, and their relationships with others. They need enriching experiences that demonstrate the value of such skills as reading, writing, and arithmetic. It is interesting that although most schools concentrate on the traditional basic skills (the three Rs), they do not always appear to be effective in developing these skills. Could it be that the more basic processes of developing a proper self-concept and learning to socialize are not sufficiently emphasized to maximize effective learning of the three Rs?

Social studies in the elementary school is important for a variety of other, more specific reasons. Research tells us that, in a general way, adult human beings are essentially formed by age twelve: i.e., the dominant characteristics of the personality are developed by the time children leave the elementary school. This includes attitudes, which constitute a basic focus of attention in citizenship education. Addressing herself to the development of attitudes, Judith Torney-Purta pointed out recently, "A review of research on perspective taking and other social cognitive processes suggests that the age period which begins at about eight is particularly critical in attitude formation."³ Consequently, we need to take advantage of the elementary school age to develop in children the kinds of attitudes and other personality characteristics that will serve as the foundation for the formation of value systems and behavior patterns critical for effective participation in a democratic society.

The family and other social institutions used to be partners with the schools in the development of values, dispositions, and skills basic to the democratic way of life, but the family is no longer as strong as it used to be. For many children the family is not there at all. Children no longer spend adequate time with adults. Parents work while the grandparents live somewhere else. Babysitters are too often just a couple of years older, if that, than the children for whom they babysit. Bluntly stated, there are not enough occasions for the proper socialization of children, and the school cannot remain indifferent.

The thesis of this chapter is that social studies is as important as, if not more important than, any other subject in the elementary school, and should be taught throughout the elementary school years as well as before and after. The notion of the general purpose of social studies provided in the preceding paragraphs will now be further elaborated.

THE GENERAL PURPOSE OF SOCIAL STUDIES

Overall Purpose of Education and Social Studies

In view of the uncertain status of social studies, it is not unusual to hear teachers and especially laypersons ask, "What is social studies all about?" To answer this question effectively, one must first examine the purpose of education in general.

There are many definitions of education, each reflecting a philosophical orientation, but most can be categorized as either “traditional” or “progressive.” Representing the traditional point of view, Mortimer Smith of the Council for Basic Education advocates that “education as carried on in schools must deal primarily with the intellectual training, with making young people literate in the essential fields of knowledge, with transmitting the heritage and culture of the race.”⁴ Although Mr. Smith acknowledges other purposes of education, such as “the social adjustment of the individual child, . . . his physical welfare, the development of his personality, and his vocational competence,” these are not priority items for the school. He would rather have the family and other educational agencies deal with these aspects of education.

Theodore Brameld, a progressivist, asserts that the educative process “centers in the necessity for all kinds of human groups to learn how to transmit and how to modify the patterns, the habits and practices, the traditions and skills, that have accumulated as these organized groups have formed themselves in cultures.”⁵ Progressive education does not deny the importance of knowledge and intellectual training, but it also strives to make children more effective participants in their society and, to the extent possible, more effective influences on the constant, pervasive changes in society. To knowledge, progressive education adds relevance. Harold Shane equates relevance with survival. “A relevant education, an education for survival,” he says, “is one which introduces children and youth to participation in the tasks that they and adults confront together in the real world. . . .”⁶

The most influential proponent of progressive education was John Dewey. His theory and overall purpose of education, here explained briefly, will serve as the framework within which to place the purpose of social studies. Dewey defined education as the process of bringing newborn children into the life of the society in which they are born.⁷ According to this definition newborns are outside their society because they lack the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in it. When societies were simple, the newborn were not very far from participation. The people around them were able to teach the needed knowledge and skills by what is now called informal education.

For millennia all education was informal, but as change in societies accelerated, social structures, resources, and relationships became more complex. Newborns were pushed farther and farther away from the life of their society, until informal education was no longer enough to confer full membership in the society. There was too much knowledge to be acquired and too many skills to be developed. Formal education became necessary. “Without such formal education,” wrote Dewey, “it is not possible to transmit all the resources and achievement of a complex society.”⁸

Education, therefore, derives its direction from the nature of society and the environment in which it exists and, as Shane points out, it becomes relevant. It provides young people with whatever knowledge is valued by society and assists them to develop those skills necessary for life, or survival, in that society.

This does not necessarily mean conformity; if a society values change, education should prepare young people to initiate change.

The purpose of education having been described, its content should be easy to prescribe: simply identify the knowledge that ought to be transmitted and define the skills that must be developed. That is exactly what happened when societies were stable and change was rare and took minor forms. Children had to learn certain things about the physical environment; they had to learn the symbols used by society to store knowledge and to communicate ideas and feelings; they had to learn the nature of the society's institutions, customs, and proprieties. During recent times, however, changes have been so rapid and so significant that a prescriptive curriculum can become outdated before children finish school. Education must take this fact into consideration. The value of this fundamental premise of today's education will become more evident as the purpose of social studies is defined.

Social studies deals with that portion of education that has to do with human relationships. Science deals with the physical environment; music and art deal with individual esthetic expression; reading and language arts deal with the skills of communication through language; mathematics deals with number relationships. Most human relationships take one or more of the following forms: person to person, person to group, group to group, person to institution, group to institution, or institution to institution. (With the recent emphasis on self-concept and global awareness, one might add the relationships of person to self and person to the world.)

Children have much to learn about human relationships. They must learn, for example, that person-to-person contacts are the universal fiber of every society. They must learn that people differ in many ways and that, in our society at least, every individual has the right to be different. Children must learn about the variety of formal and informal groups in society and the various functions these groups serve. They need to know the nature of our society's basic institutions, beginning with the family and ending with large organizations such as the federal government and the United Nations. Figures 1-1 and 1-2 show the overall purposes of education and the role of social studies, respectively.

Societal Conditions and Social Studies

If education is the process that assists individuals to become fully participating members of a changing society, knowledge alone about the various forms of human relationships is not enough. Individuals must also develop the necessary skills and some basic values and dispositions that will govern their relationships with other people. These skills and affective elements must be developed as early as possible. Children need to develop the skill, for example, to participate in orderly group discussion. They should learn how to cast a ballot, how to read a map, or how to approach various institutions in ways most effective for their purposes. They should know, for instance, how to apply for a job or how to open a bank account. They should value their rights as well as their

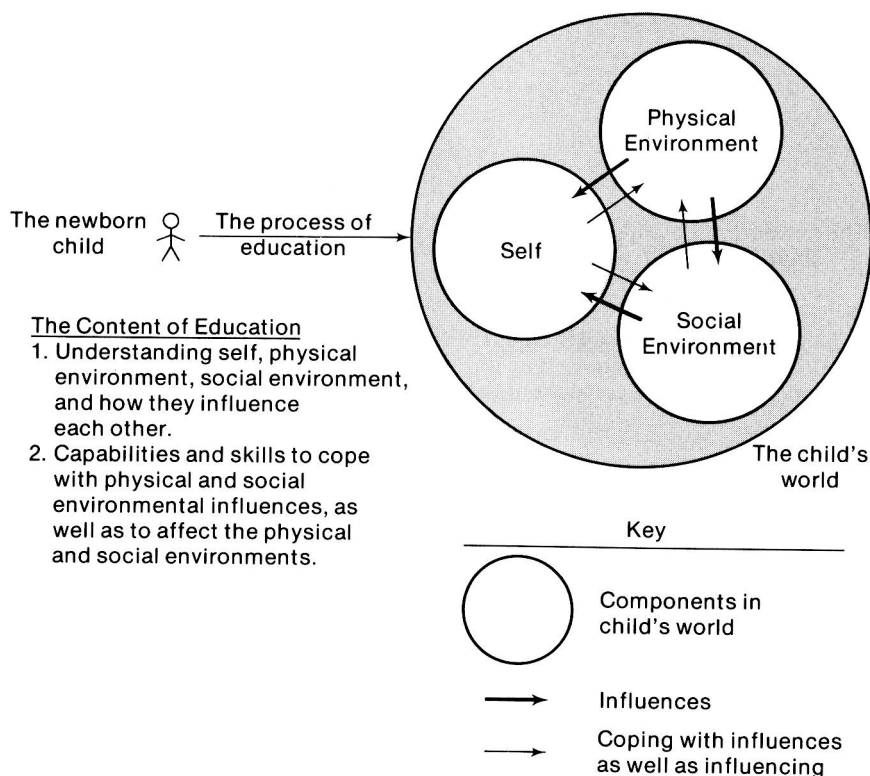


Figure 1-1 The Overall Purpose of Education

responsibilities as members of a family. Children should learn to value human dignity and to respect all individuals regardless of race, color, sex, occupation, religion, ethnic origin, or place of residence.

It was implied earlier that the purpose of education changes as the society changes—with respect to its resources, its achievements, and its store of knowledge. How does social change affect the purpose of social studies? Social studies is probably more affected than any other subject taught in school. This is especially true due to the tremendous changes that have taken place in human relationships during the last few years. Since World War II, throughout the world as well as throughout American society, change has assumed unprecedented proportions. The two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, have for some time controlled the destiny of practically every nation in the world. The emergence of the Third World and the rise of the People's Republic of China to world prominence have shifted the balance of power. While worldwide production of food has increased, world population has increased in still greater proportion, and not everyone has enough food to eat. Global interdependence has increased drastically.