



Effective Teaching in

Elementary Social Studies

Tom V. Savage
David G. Armstrong

Third Edition

EFFECTIVE TEACHING IN ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES

Third Edition

Tom V. Savage

California State University, Fullerton

David G. Armstrong

Texas A & M University



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PREFACE

Citizens' roles become more difficult with each advancing year. Complex social problems grow more rapidly than our capacity to respond to them. Who has answers to such intractable difficulties as war, world hunger, and the hatreds that pit neighbor against neighbor in many parts of the world? Closer to home, where are the solutions to social strains caused by youth gangs, lingering racial prejudice, hostility toward immigrants, and growing crime rates? Today, we often feel overwhelmed by conflicting claims of individuals and groups who assert they have the answers. Choosing among competing recipes for change is not easy, but we *must* choose and act.

Young people in school must prepare to be sophisticated, tough-minded adults who can cope with a changing and challenging world. They must understand that there are no easy answers to difficult problems. Good social studies instruction provides this perspective. We believe that the social studies program, even in the early primary grades, needs to help young people develop sophisticated thinking skills. Simplistic instruction that demands little of children other than a repetition of arid "facts" will not do. We need to help young people develop confidence in their abilities to view problems from multiple perspectives, apply rational thinking powers, and above all, make hard decisions.

Social studies is, by nature, controversial. Because of this nature and because social studies is viewed as such a vital subject by knowledgeable individuals, social studies teachers face enormous pressures. Special interest groups ranging across the political spectrum want to "reform" education by gaining control of the content of the curriculum and the methods of instruction. It is important that social studies teachers from kindergarten through grade 12 have a solid knowledge of the purposes of social studies and of the methods most likely to promote growth toward informed and responsible citizenship. This task cannot be delayed until students reach secondary school. It must begin with the first days of the school experience.

It is for these purposes that we have written *Effective Teaching in Elementary Social Studies, Third Edition*. It is our desire that elementary teachers confront and clarify their views of the meaning and purpose of social studies. We hope that this text will contribute to their understanding and assist them in developing a set of beliefs and instructional skills that will help them face difficult choices and implement meaningful instruction.

Because of the interrelated nature of knowledge needed to make decisions, the content of the social studies can no longer be identified as simply history and geography. Definitions of the curriculum need to be expanded to include important multicultural and gender equity issues, environmental issues, and issues relating to global understanding.

New demands are being placed on the instructional role of teachers. Instruction must help pupils learn how to develop thinking skills and must challenge pupils to go beyond merely acquiring knowledge to formulating values and beliefs. Teachers must be aware of new technologies and the exciting possibilities of infusing them into the

social studies program. The needs of an increasingly diverse student population must be accommodated, including a large number of pupils who have a primary language other than English. These students must not miss important social studies lessons simply because of language barriers. This text prepares teachers for these challenges.

Effective Teaching in Elementary Social Studies has been used successfully in undergraduate and graduate social studies courses. It is designed for use in elementary social studies methods classes, as a source for discussion in advanced curriculum classes, and as a personal reference for elementary social studies teachers. Users of earlier editions have labeled it as “practical,” “readable,” and “user friendly.” We hope you find the third edition consistent with this tradition.

New to This Edition

The third edition features much new content:

- Up-to-date information about elementary social studies curricula
- A new chapter on integrating the social studies with other subjects
- A new chapter on teaching social studies to limited English proficient pupils
- Updated information on authentic assessment
- Graphic organizers for every chapter to provide the reader with a scaffold or organizing framework for the chapter content
- A wide selection of current children’s literature that can be used to teach important ideas and concepts
- A case study to prompt thinking before reading each chapter and for reflection at completion
- More than 60 practical teaching lessons that are ready for classroom use (Some of these lessons are contributions from teachers who used earlier editions.)

Text Features

Each chapter of the third edition of *Effective Teaching in Elementary Social Studies* includes the following:

- **Chapter Goals** to help focus attention on key content in the chapter
- **Graphic Organizers** that show the relationship among items in the chapter
- An **Introduction** to provide a meaningful context for the information to follow
- A **Case Study** that prompts readers to think about a significant issue discussed in the chapter
- **Special Features** including (1) boxed items that pose questions and challenge readers to think about issues and (2) other figures and activities to enrich understanding
- **Key Ideas in Summary** to pull together and reinforce the chapter’s important content

- **Chapter Reflections** that prompt readers to return to the case study and review changes that might have occurred in their thinking as a result of reading the chapter
- **Activities** that help readers extend and enrich their understanding
- **References** that direct readers to sources of information used in the preparation of the manuscript

Organization

Content has been organized for flexible use. Some individuals may wish to reorder the material. To accommodate this possibility, the information in each chapter can be used independently of that in other chapters.

The text's four major divisions suggest the general flavor of information in related chapters. The first four chapters, under the heading "Contexts for the Social Studies," set the stage. The focus is on the purposes of the social studies, the social studies curriculum, an overview of history and the social science that form the core of social studies content, and general approaches to planning for instruction.

Part II, "Fundamental Approaches to Instruction," features chapters that respond to the need to implement different types of plans. These chapters present strategies for teaching concepts and generalizations, using learning groups, developing thinking skills, and recognizing the important role of values in arriving at conclusions and taking action.

The third part, "A Selection of Themes," highlights four critical areas that cross subject matter boundaries: (1) law-related lessons, (2) global education lessons, (3) multicultural and gender-equity lessons, and (4) environmental and energy lessons.

Part IV, "Supporting and Assessing Social Studies Learning," provides practical information on using new technologies to further social studies learning and on teaching important map and globe skills. A new chapter focuses on the important trend toward thematic instruction and integration across the curriculum. Another chapter new to this edition deals with ways teachers can support social studies learning for limited English proficient (LEP) pupils. The final chapter explores alternative ways to assess what pupils have learned and includes a section on "authentic assessment."

Effective Teaching in Elementary Social Studies, Third Edition, is a practical book. It goes beyond telling what should be done. The emphasis is on "how to do it." Content builds on years of experience of successful elementary teachers. A number of experienced elementary and middle school teachers teaching kindergarten through grade eight have contributed ideas and have implemented some of the lesson plans. Try the ideas. They work.

Acknowledgments

No work is an independent project. A number of individuals have been patient and have contributed to the development of *Effective Teaching in Elementary Social*

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T.V.S.
D.G.A.

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