

CHILDREN AND THEIR WORLD

Third Edition

STRATEGIES
FOR
TEACHING
SOCIAL
STUDIES

Welton/Mallan



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Strategies for Teaching
Social Studies

THIRD EDITION

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To . . .

David Jr., Stephen, Christopher,
Lynda, and Shawn

. . . as they encounter their world.

PREFACE

We have written this book out of the conviction that elementary social studies can be approached as something students do and use, not simply something they are expected to know. By no means are we suggesting that social studies content is unimportant, however. Events over the last decade—particularly the emergence of state-mandated curriculum requirements—have made us increasingly aware of the need for a balanced approach to social studies. In such an approach, legitimate “know about” dimensions coexist well with an emphasis on the development of skills. Helping prospective teachers develop and manage this approach is at the heart of this book.

AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

Children and Their World: Strategies for Teaching Social Studies, Third Edition, is intended for undergraduate students taking a first course in teaching elementary and middle school social studies. Inservice teachers and graduate students should continue to find this edition as useful as previous editions.

This book has been designed to help students understand the complex nature of elementary and middle school social studies. We take serious exception to the contention that “anyone can teach social studies,” because it ignores the significant differences between demands that a subject like social studies imposes on a teacher as compared to those imposed by a subject such as mathematics. Any unwillingness to consider the nature of those differences risks misunderstanding the nature of both “beasts.” We have tried to address those differences, along with elements that are unique to social studies, in a manner that is clear and direct and that appeals to undergraduate students.

This book is also based on the premise that learning is an *active* process. That premise, though hardly new or earthshaking, applies equally to students in elementary or middle school classrooms and to the students who read this book. A major purpose of this book is to present instructional models that provoke learner involvement. For prospective teachers especially, our purpose is to suggest that successful social studies teaching depends on one’s ability to relate the three elements that form the triumvirate of teaching: (1) social studies content; (2) teaching methods; and (3) the ability to *apply* content and method in the classroom. The key to effective instruction lies, we believe, in *application*; content and teaching methods are certainly essential but they are not sufficient in and of themselves. Because we view teaching as an applied skill, we make every effort to relate subject-matter content to teaching methods, and teaching theory to actual practice.

REVISIONS IN THIS EDITION

This text has been extensively revised and updated throughout to incorporate the most recent research in social studies education and to reflect emerging changes

and emphases in the field. A new chapter on instructional themes, which includes global education, multicultural education, law-related education, and sex-equity education, has been added. Several other chapters—including those on the nature of social studies, the nature of social ideas, social studies programs, access skills, and evaluation strategies—have been substantially reorganized and rewritten. In addition, the chapter on concept-based instruction—while retaining its emphasis on concepts as the building blocks of social studies instruction—has been greatly simplified, retitled “The Nature of Social Ideas,” and moved to a more pivotal, upfront position in the text.

The treatment of several topics from earlier editions has been significantly expanded and updated in this revision. These topics include a reconceptualization of the field of social studies; developmental considerations that have an impact on social studies programs; the role and use of textbooks; social studies for young children; and the nature of skills-based teaching. New topics have also been added throughout the book. For example, state-mandated curricula; skills as “skill rules”; schema theory in relation to concept-oriented teaching; findings from the effective teaching research; and using computer-based instruction each now receives full discussion.

A significant aspect of this revision is the inclusion of new model student activities dealing with global education; examples and nonexamples of concepts; presenting information in table form; conducting surveys; role playing for young children; and gathering and interpreting data. Model student activities retained from previous editions have been updated throughout.

Finally, the book has been tightened throughout. Its overall part and chapter organization, its internal heading structure, and its writing style have been extensively overhauled to give it a very clear, direct quality.

COVERAGE AND FEATURES

This edition of *Children and Their World* is organized into three sections. Part One, “Foundations,” contains three chapters that examine the nature of social studies as a teaching field, the social science disciplines, and the nature of social ideas. Part Two, “An Instructional Framework,” examines the diverse elements that are essential to social studies teaching. Chapter 4 illustrates the planning process and the nature of content utilization; Chapter 5 focuses on social studies programs; Chapter 6 identifies instructional themes; Chapter 7 considers the issues and techniques associated with values education; and Chapter 8 treats teaching and questioning strategies. Chapters 9 through 11 deal with skills-based teaching. Chapter 9 identifies strategies related to reading, listening, and observing skills that enable students to gain access to information. Chapter 10 focuses on information-processing skills, while Chapter 11 explores strategies related to maps and globes, tables and graphs, and other media forms.

Part Three, “Management and Organization,” contains five chapters that consider the various management dimensions associated with teaching social studies.

Chapters 12 and 13 focus on managing group dynamics and group-based instruction. Chapter 14 treats strategies related to individualized instruction including special considerations for exceptional students. Chapter 15 examines the variety of instructional resources available to social studies teachers. Chapter 16 explains the different evaluation strategies that teachers might employ. The book ends with an Epilogue in which we identify our perceived priorities for social studies in the 1990s and beyond.

In order to make this text easy to study and more appealing to use, we have included the following features:

Key Questions and *Key Ideas* at the beginning of each chapter that serve as advance organizers for the content to be covered.

Introductions that treat one or more issues within the chapter and that provide an overview of what is to come.

Model Student Activities that are appropriate for use with elementary students in the form in which they are presented, and that also illustrate lesson formats that can be adapted to other social studies topics or content.

Commentaries that are set off from the text and in which we extend ideas introduced previously or offer our point of view on various problems and issues.

Summaries that highlight the major concepts presented within each chapter.

Suggested Activities that are designed to stimulate further thought or provide opportunities for students to apply the concepts treated within the chapter.

Suggested Readings that list, with annotations, additional sources for students to locate detailed information on topics considered within the chapter.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are keenly aware of our indebtedness to many people who helped to make this book possible. Countless elementary and middle school students—including even Keith whom we describe on page 431—helped us to learn what it means to teach a subject like social studies, and who, collectively, played a significant though immeasurable role in shaping this book. Equally important are the college students and inservice teachers with whom we have been privileged to work, and whose questions (and responses to our answers) have indicated directions in which we needed to go and areas where we needed to be clearer than we were. We are also grateful to our colleagues, at both Texas Tech and Syracuse University, who have influenced and inspired us in so many ways.

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Finally, we owe special acknowledgment to our families who know only too well the trials and joys associated with producing a book such as this, and with whom we intend to become reacquainted.

David A. Welton

John T. Mallan

CHILDREN AND THEIR WORLD

PART ONE

Social Studies: Foundations

CHAPTER 1

The Dynamics of Social Studies

CHAPTER 2

Social Studies and the Human Experience:
The Disciplinary Foundations

CHAPTER 3

The Nature of Social Ideas



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