

The Social Studies Observation Protocol¹ articulates the vision for skillful social studies teaching and learning, grounded in research about how students best learn to make sense of what they read as well as the C3 framework for Social Studies State Standards.² Purposes include: 1) preparing lessons; 2) reflecting on instructional practices; 3) developing professional learning on standards-aligned practice; and 4) providing feedback on classroom practice.

Culture of Learning: Are all students engaged in the work of the lesson from start to finish?

- Students complete instructional tasks, volunteer responses, and/or ask appropriate questions.
- Students follow behavioral expectations and directions.
- Students execute transitions, routines, and procedures in an orderly and efficient manner.
- Students are engaged in the work of the lesson from start to finish; there is a sense of urgency about how time is used.
- Students and their teacher demonstrate a joy for learning through positive relationships and strong classroom culture.

Not Yet	Somewhat	Mostly	Yes
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High-Quality Texts: Is the lesson focused on a high-quality text(s)?

- Students spend the majority of the lesson listening to, reading, writing, and/or speaking about text(s).
- The text(s) are at or above the complexity level expected³ for the grade and time in the school year and/or support students with meeting grade-level social studies standards.
- The text(s) are worthy of student time and attention. They exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or build students' knowledge or understanding of the world. Where appropriate, the texts are richly illustrated and represent high-quality primary or secondary sources.

Not Yet	Yes
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High-Quality Questions and Tasks: Does this lesson employ questions and tasks, both oral and written, which integrate the literacy and social studies standards and build students' comprehension of the text(s) and its historical or current significance?

Questions and tasks:

- Integrate grade-level reading, writing, speaking and listening, and/or language standards and grade-level social studies standards in service of deep understanding of the text(s) and/or content under consideration.
- Address the specific text(s) at hand by attending to its particular qualitative features: its purpose and/or language, structure(s), or knowledge demands to build understanding of the text and/or content.
- Require students to use evidence from the text to demonstrate understanding in a grade-appropriate way and to support their ideas about the text and/or content.
- Attend to the most critical words, phrases, and sentences within the text in order to build students' vocabulary and deepen understanding of the text and/or content.
- Are sequenced to deepen students' understanding of the text, the author's craft, and/or the content under consideration.

Not Yet	Somewhat	Mostly	Yes
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Student Ownership: Are all students responsible for doing the thinking in this classroom?

- Students do the majority of the work of the lesson: speaking/listening, reading, and/or writing.
- Students reason and make meaning of texts to persevere through difficulty. When teachers provide support, students still own the complex thinking.
- Students talk and ask questions about each other's thinking in order to improve their understanding about the text or topic.
- Students provide text evidence to support their ideas and use topic or text-specific language in their oral and/or written responses.
- Students make connections, as appropriate, to the real world, referencing ideas from text(s) or reference materials.

Not Yet	Somewhat	Mostly	Yes
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¹ This tool draws heavily from Student Achievement Partners' [Instructional Practice Guide Coaching Tools \(IPGs\)](#) and the Culture of Learning competency of the [TNTP Core Teaching Rubric](#).

² We used the [C3 Framework](#) published by the National Council for the Social Studies as our primary standards for CCR social studies instruction. We also consulted the [Common Core Standards for History/Social Studies](#) to assess opportunities for grade-level practice and grade-level state standards for social studies to assess whether tasks focused on building appropriate content knowledge.

³ See [The Supplemental Information for Appendix A of the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy: New Research on Text Complexity](#) (page 4, figure 1) for grade-level complexity expectations. Note that Read-Aloud texts should be 2-3 grade levels above the target audience.