

Subject-Area Lesson Planning Tool: Social Studies



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INTRODUCTION

Social studies is a can drive students' social, emotional, and academic growth and development. High-quality social studies education is necessary to develop responsible citizens with personal agency to participate in a multicultural, democratic society. Students need to leave social studies classrooms with deep content knowledge and a set of social, emotional, and cognitive competencies (knowledge, skills, and mindsets) "to actively contribute to sustaining a democratic society, to good stewardship of the natural environment, and to the health and prosperity of their own communities" ([Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction \[OSPI\] Social Studies Standards](#), p. ii).

"Social emotional learning (SEL) is a process through which individuals build awareness and skills in managing emotions, setting goals, establishing relationships, and making responsible decisions that support success in schools and in life." -- [OSPI](#)



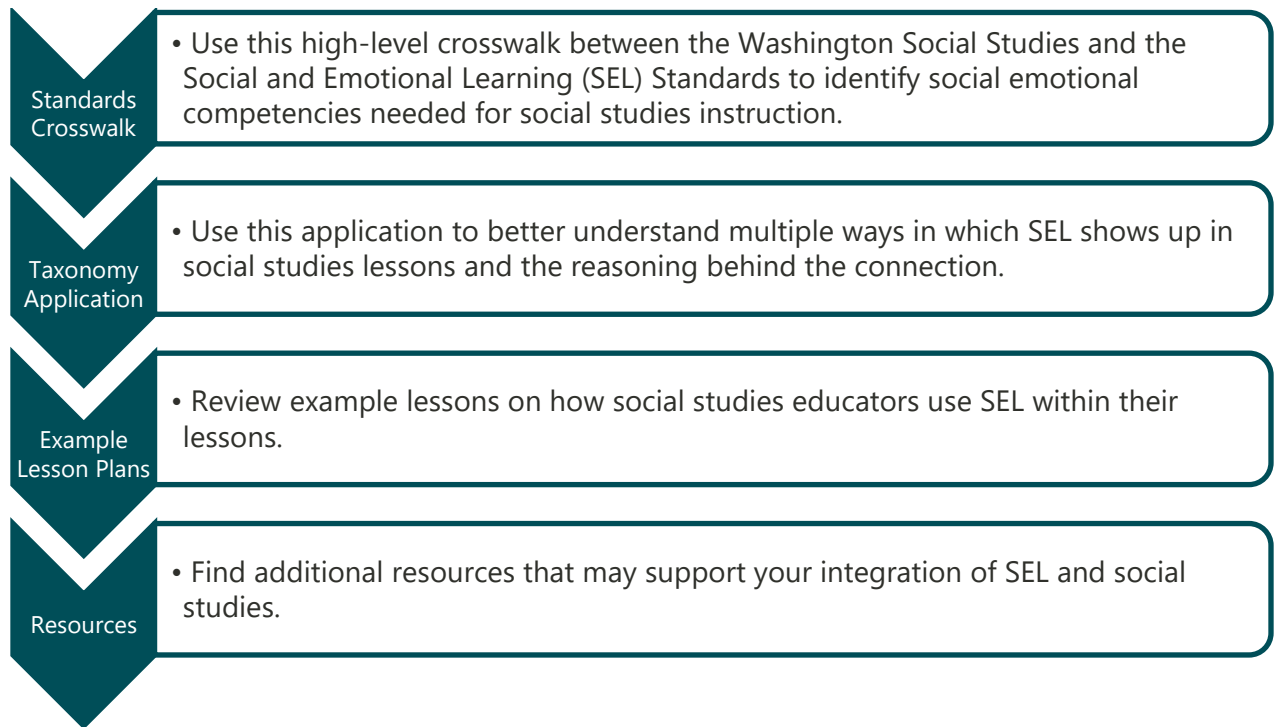
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How to Use This Tool

The [TPEP Student Growth Goal Rubrics](#) tell us that effective social studies instruction “relies heavily on the teacher’s knowledge of students’ cultural, academic, and social/emotional assets.” This lesson planning tool supports social studies educators in Washington as they intentionally plan ways to nurture social emotional competencies within their academic lessons. The tool is scaffolded for your use and includes a standards crosswalk, application of how the standards align, example lesson plans, and additional resources (see Figure 1 for an overview of how to use this tool). You can use the questions for reflection in each section to customize these strategies for your classroom.

Figure 1. Road Map for Using the Lesson Planning Tool



Questions for Reflection

Before advancing to the next section, reflect on some of your own assumptions and beliefs:

- How do you see social emotional competencies align with specific social studies standards? Which social emotional competencies do social studies scholars tend to use? How do you encourage students’ development of those competencies?
- How do teachers explicitly connect social emotional competencies to effective teaching practices (the four Affirming Learning Environment practices in Module 2 and the Lesson Design Practices in Module 3) to promote students’ mastery of social studies content standards? How do you reinforce students’ use of those competencies?
- What social emotional competencies do you use to create the conditions for the kind of learning necessary for all students to develop social studies skills and engage with social studies content?

CROSSWALK OF THE WASHINGTON SOCIAL STUDIES LEARNING STANDARDS AND THE SEL STANDARDS

Social studies education in Washington comprises five sets of learning standards—including one overarching set—as well as civics, economics, geography, and history. Each set has a specific collection of knowledge and skills, as well as the social emotional competencies necessary to engage with them. To get started, review the high-level crosswalk between the [Social Studies Learning Standards](#) and the SEL Standards and Benchmarks.

Social Studies Learning Standards	Example of Alignment with Washington SEL Standards
<p>Social Studies Skills: The student understands and applies reasoning skills to conduct research, deliberate, and form and evaluate positions through the processes of reading, writing, and communicating.</p>	<p>To successfully acquire social studies skills, students will use the following social emotional competencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand their own values, identities, and aspirations as they develop their positions (Self-Awareness 1B). • Persevere when setting, monitoring, and accomplishing goals as they communicate their positions (Self-Efficacy 3A). • Engage in healthy and respectful dialogue (Social Management 5A) with those who have diverse thoughts and backgrounds (Social Management 5C) as well as differing perspectives. • Demonstrate a sense of school and community responsibility through the content and skills learned in social studies (Social Engagement 6A).
<p>Civics: The student understands and applies knowledge of government, law, politics, and the nation’s fundamental documents to make decisions about local, state, national, tribal, and international issues and to demonstrate thoughtful, participatory citizenship.</p>	<p>To be successful in civics, students will use the following social emotional competencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate responsible decision making and problem-solving skills as they relate to community issues (Self-Management 2B). • Demonstrate awareness and ability to speak on behalf of personal rights and advocacy as related to participatory citizenship (Self-Efficacy 3C).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an awareness of and respect for similarities and differences among community, cultural, and social groups (Social Awareness 4B) as they apply civic knowledge and make decisions. • Demonstrate the ability to resolve conflicts in constructive ways (Social Management 5B) while engaging in participatory citizenship. • Demonstrate a sense of school and community responsibility (Social Engagement 6A) while contributing productively to their schools, workplaces, and communities (Social Engagement 6C).
<p>Economics: The student applies understanding of economic concepts and systems to analyze decision making and the interactions between individuals, households, business, government, and societies.</p>	<p>To be successful in economics, students will use the following social emotional competencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an understanding of external influences (e.g., community supports; Self-Awareness 1C) while developing responsible decision-making skills (Self-Management 2B) in a variety of economic situations (Self-Efficacy 3B). • Demonstrate awareness of and engage respectfully (Social Management 4A and 5C) with individuals of diverse perspectives, cultures, language, history, identity, and ability when considering economic concepts and impacts.
<p>Geography: The student uses a spatial perspective to make reasoned decisions by applying the concept of location, region, and movement and demonstrating knowledge of how geographic features and human cultures impact the environment.</p>	<p>To be successful in geography, students will use the following social emotional competencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate awareness and understanding of the variation within and across of others' perspectives, cultures, histories, and identities as it relates to geographic features (Social Awareness 4A and 4C). • Analyze how human culture influences geographic features, including identifying strategies for problem-solving human impact on geography (Social Management 5B).

<p>History: The student understands and applies knowledge of historical thinking, chronology, eras, turning points, major ideas, individuals, and themes of local, Washington state, tribal, United States, and world history in order to evaluate how history shapes the present and future.</p>	<p>To be successful in history, students will use the follow social emotional competencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate awareness of their own personal and collective identity (Self-Awareness 1B). • Demonstrate awareness and understanding of the variation within and across of others’ perspectives, cultures, histories, and identities (Social Awareness 4A and 4C) and apply this awareness to engage respectfully with others about historical concepts and events (Social Management 5C). • Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal rights of self and others (Self-Efficacy 3C) when evaluating how history shapes the present and future.
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Questions for Reflection:

- How did the information in the crosswalk align with your existing knowledge of the relationships between social studies and SEL? Were there new ideas that broadened your thinking about the relationships between these areas? What questions emerged for you as you reviewed this crosswalk?¹
- What Affirming Learning Environment practices (e.g., Warmth and Support, Responsibility and Choice, Student-Centered Problem Solving) and Learning Design practices (e.g., Balanced Instruction, Cooperative Learning, Self-Assessment and Self-Reflection) might facilitate students’ development and application within these examples?
- How can you ensure that you incorporate students’ personal and cultural strengths and assets as you continue to nurture social emotional competencies in instruction related to social studies?

¹ These three question prompts are adapted from the Project Zero Thinking Routine *Connect, Extend, Challenge*, <https://pz.harvard.edu/resources/connect-extend-challenge>.

TAXONOMY APPLICATION

Now that you have had a chance to explore, at a high level, some alignment between the social studies disciplines and the SEL standards, review some concrete ways to ensure that you are meeting your students’ SEL needs within the social studies curriculum. Specifically, you will review concrete examples of how various [SEL Standards and Benchmarks](#) connect to the social studies disciplines. As you review these examples, ask yourself the following questions as you begin to plan your own social studies lessons that more intentionally integrate and nurture social emotional competencies. The following questions are based on the SEL-Academic Integration taxonomy that you have been learning about in the module series Academic Learning Is Social and Emotional: Equity-Centered Social emotional Learning in Washington.

1. **Explicit skill alignment:** Which SEL standards *are the same* skills, knowledge, and mindsets as those within the social studies standards?
2. **Explicit strategy alignment:** What social emotional competencies within the SEL standards do students use to accomplish specific social studies tasks?
3. **Ways of interacting:** How do students use their social emotional competencies within the SEL standards to participate in activities that help them learn social studies skills and content?
4. **Ways of being:** What social emotional mindsets and habits do social studies scholars (e.g., historians, economists, geographers) develop to be successful?

As you consider these examples, remember that the goal for you as an educator is to create the conditions that encourage students to develop, apply, and exhibit their social emotional competencies while mastering social studies content. The questions and examples in the table that follows can help you begin to intentionally integrate these efforts.

Social Studies Skills: Examples

Social Studies Skill Standard, Enduring Understanding	Taxonomy Approach & SEL Standard and Benchmark	Reasoning
SSS4: Knows that there are many ways to share ideas and can evaluate evidence and determine best tools to express one’s own knowledge and understanding.	Explicit Skill Alignment and Social Awareness4C (Demonstrates an understanding of variation within and across cultures.)	In SEL Standard 4C, students are asked to think about biases, assumptions, and strength of evidence. This social emotional skill is the same skill represented in SSS4, which asks students to evaluate evidence when they are sharing their own ideas.

Civics Skill Standard, Enduring Understanding	Taxonomy Approach & SEL Standard and Benchmark	Reasoning
C3. Knows that there are different communities nearby and that there may be different rules for different communities.	Ways of Being and Social Management 5C (Demonstrates the ability to engage in respectful and healthy relationships with individuals of diverse perspectives, cultures, language, history, identity, and ability.)	Students can use the interpersonal interaction skills listed in Social Management benchmark 5C to successfully understand how effective citizens interact with one another and understand how those interactions may differ by community.

Economics Skill Standard, Enduring Understanding	Taxonomy Approach & SEL Standard and Benchmark	Reasoning
E1. Can make decisions about how to use resources to benefit oneself and others.	Explicit Skill Alignment and Self-Management 2B (Demonstrates responsible decision-making and problem-solving skills.)	Both the economics standard and the SEL benchmark require students to think about responsible decision making for the benefit of themselves and others; it is the same skill.

Geography Skill Standard, Enduring Understanding	Taxonomy Approach & SEL Standard and Benchmark	Reasoning
<p>G1. Knows that the use of tools (e.g., maps, globes, charts, graphs) is important to understanding the world around us. Different cultures may use different tools, and have different names and different perspectives, when looking at the world around us.</p>	<p>Ways of Being and Self-Efficacy Benchmark 3A (Demonstrates the skills to set, monitor, adapt, persevere, achieve, and evaluate goals.)</p>	<p>The content standard is connected to the SEL standard through a common way of being (using tools). Geography experts need to think about and use their tools in ways that help them monitor, adapt, and persevere in their goals.</p>

History Skill Standard, Enduring Understanding	Taxonomy Approach & SEL Standard and Benchmark	Reasoning
<p>H2. Knows that history is a series of connected events shaped by multiple cause-effect relationships, linking past to present.</p>	<p>Explicit Strategy Alignment and Social Management Benchmark 5A (Demonstrates a range of communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.)</p>	<p>As students begin to understand that history is a series of connected events, that understanding is enhanced when they interact with others to process the cause-effect relationships and learn about the multiple perspectives and interpretations of history.</p>

Questions for Reflection:

- What did you learn from these taxonomy examples? What does it mean to intentionally embed SEL and academics in social studies?
- What are some questions you may ask yourself to become more intentional in your approach to SEL–academic integration?
- How can you incorporate multiple, lived experiences and interpretations through a more intentional SEL–academic integration approach in social studies?

EXAMPLE LESSON PLANS

This section of the tool provides example lesson plans that intentionally embed Social Studies Standards and the SEL Standards and Benchmarks. You can use this tool, and what you learned from the module, to help guide you as you make instructional decisions together with your students. As you review the examples, note how the educator uses multiple taxonomy approaches within a single lesson.

The lesson plan examples follow the first two steps below.² These steps and guiding questions provide an approach to critically self-reflect and more intentionally support students in developing and applying social emotional competencies within the context of academic learning. For more in-depth guidance on lesson planning for SEL–academic integration, check out the [Academic Integration Planning tool](#), as well as a set of videos featuring Washington educators implementing and reflecting on their lessons.

- Step 1: Prepare** In step 1, identify the assets and strengths that your students can leverage in this lesson, the academic and social emotional outcomes you want to see for your students, and what social emotional competencies you will bring to the lesson as an educator. In step 1 of social studies lesson planning, it may be helpful to consider a compelling question and enduring understanding.
- Step 2: Plan** In step 2, determine what equity-centered practice you will use (e.g., 10 instructional practices) and which taxonomy approach you will focus on. During this step, you will develop or modify your lesson to intentionally embed SEL.
- Step 3: Reflect** In step 3, reflect on what you found to be successful and challenging in implementing the lesson, and reflect on your own social emotional competencies.

² Adapted from Yoder, N., Ward, A. M., & Wolforth, S. (2021). *Teaching the whole child: Instructional practices that integrate equity-centered social, emotional, and academic learning*. American Institutes for Research. [https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/Social emotional-Learning-Equity-Centered-Instructional-Practices-December-2021.pdf](https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/Social%20emotional-Learning-Equity-Centered-Instructional-Practices-December-2021.pdf)

Lesson Plan Example 1: Elementary School – Animating Civic Action

Step 1: Prepare	
Student Considerations <i>What are some of the interests, assets, and gifts that contribute to your students' social, emotional, and academic success and to their success in your classroom community?</i>	
These considerations will be unique to the educator and their students. For example, an educator might note here that their students have become particularly strong in their ability to actively listen to their peers, that they have formed a cohesive and supportive community, or that they tend to be highly inquisitive. The educator could then state some preliminary thoughts on how a lesson might draw upon the students' strengths.	
Academic Standards <i>What academic standards will you focus on?</i>	SEL Standards <i>What Washington SEL standards/social emotional competencies will you focus on?</i>
SSS3.4.1: Draw on disciplinary concepts to explain the challenges people have faced and opportunities they have created in addressing local, regional, and global problems at various times and places. C4.4.1: Recognize that civic participation involves being informed about public issues, taking action, and voting in elections. C4.5.4: Describe ways in which people benefit from and are challenged by working together, including through government, workplaces, voluntary organizations, and families.	Social Awareness: Demonstrates awareness of other people's emotions, perspectives, cultures, languages, histories, identities, and abilities. (<i>I can identify verbal, physical, and situational cues that affect how others may feel.</i>) Self-Awareness: Demonstrates awareness of personal and collective identity encompassing strengths, areas for growth, aspirations, and cultural and linguistic assets. (<i>I can identify how I feel or what I think about the values, assets, and beliefs of my culture[s].</i>)
Learning Goals <i>What learning goals will you focus on with your students?</i>	Educator SEL <i>What social emotional competencies will you leverage to implement your lesson?</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students identify how I have experienced stereotyping. 2. Students identify how others have experienced stereotyping. <p>Compelling Question: Is stereotyping harmful?</p> <p>Enduring Understanding: Stereotyping causes unfair beliefs and actions. To stop its harmful effects and be agents of change, students need to understand what stereotypes are, recognize stereotypical views, empathize with peers who experience(d) stereotyping, and take action to stop stereotyping in their own community.</p>	These competencies will be unique to the educator and could include relevant competencies that the educator feels confident about or ones the educator is trying to work on. For example, the educator might note that they will be using social awareness to observe students' body language, tone of voice, or engagement level to gauge how students are experiencing the potentially stressful parts of an activity.

Step 2: Plan

SEL-Academic Integration Strategy

What instructional practice(es) will you use to integrate SEL and academics? What SEL-academic integration taxonomy approach(es) will you use?

In the space provided, list the practices and approach that comprise your integrative strategy:

- **Instructional Practice:** Warmth and Support, Responsibility and Choice, Youth-Centered Problem Solving, Power of Language, Cooperative Learning, Group Discussions, Self-Assessment and Self-Reflection, Balanced Instruction, Expectations and Rigor, and/or SEL Competence Building

Exemplar Answer: *Warmth and Support, Group Discussions*

- **SEL-Academic Integration Taxonomy Approach:** Explicit Skills Alignment, Explicit Strategy Alignment, Ways of Being, and/or Ways of Interacting

Exemplar Answer: *Ways of Interacting*

Description of Lesson Activities

What activities will you consider for differentiating instruction and incorporating SEL before or within instruction?

- Display the following statements on the board:
 - People from X group are less intelligent than people from Y group.
 - People of gender X are better at math than people of gender Y.
 - X types of people are weird.
- In small groups, have students discuss what makes the statements unfair (way of interacting).
- As a class, have students share and discuss what makes the statements unfair (way of interacting).
- Have students reflect on stereotyping they have experienced (way of being).
- Model how to complete the “Tip of the Iceberg” task in which students document stereotyping they have experienced. Model how to complete the “Tip of the Iceberg” task in which students document what makes them feel great (explicit strategy alignment).
 - On the tip of the iceberg, put what you think others see when they look at or hear you.
 - Beneath the water, write and/or draw stereotypes you have faced.
 - Beneath the water, write and/or draw what makes you feel great. What makes you special? What do you wish others knew about you?

- For students willing to share their “Tip of the Iceberg” task with a peer. If students would like to share their task with the whole group, they may share (way of interacting).
- Play the audio from [Esther \(0.00–3:26\)](#).
- As a class, discuss the stereotyping that Esther faced.
- Have students complete the “Tip of the Iceberg” task about Esther.
 - On the tip of iceberg, put what you think others see when they look at or hear Esther.
 - Beneath the water, write and/or draw what stereotypes Esther faces.
 - Beneath the water, write and/or draw what makes Esther great. What makes Esther special? What does Esther wish others knew about her?

Formative Performance Task

In what ways will you ensure that students mastered the academic and social emotional competencies of the lesson?

Students create a “[Tip of the Iceberg](#)” diagram about themselves and about Esther.

Lesson Plan Example 2: Fifth-Grade Civics

Step 1: Prepare	
Student Considerations	
<i>What are some of the interests, assets, and gifts that contribute to your students' social, emotional, and academic success and to their success in your classroom community?</i>	
These considerations will be unique to the educator and their students. For example, an educator might note here that their students have become particularly strong in their ability to actively listen to their peers, that they have formed a cohesive and supportive community, or that they tend to be highly inquisitive. The educator could then state some preliminary thoughts on how a lesson might draw upon the students' strengths.	
Academic Standards	SEL Standards
<i>What academic standards will you focus on?</i>	<i>What Washington SEL standards/social emotional competencies will you focus on?</i>
C1.5.4: Identify the beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and values that underlie their own and others' points of view about civic issues.	Self-Awareness Benchmark 4C: Demonstrates an understanding of the variation within and across cultures. <i>(I can be aware of personal biases when considering the perspectives of others.)</i>
Learning Goals	Educator SEL
<i>What learning goals will you focus on with your students?</i>	<i>What social emotional competencies will you leverage to implement your lesson?</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students can understand and describe multiple perspectives about civic issues. 2. Students can generate questions to help better understand varying perspectives. <p>Compelling Question: How do experiences influence biases, and what impact do these biases have on different communities?</p> <p>Enduring Understanding: Knows that different communities create rules to promote the common good and individual liberties.</p>	These competencies will be unique to the educator and could include relevant competencies that the educator feels confident about or ones the educator is trying to work on. For example, the educator might note that they will be using social awareness to observe students' body language, tone of voice, or engagement level to gauge how students are experiencing the potentially stressful parts of an activity.
Step 2: Plan	
SEL-Academic Integration Strategy	
<i>What instructional practice(es) will you use to integrate SEL and academics? What SEL-academic integration taxonomy approach(es) will you use?</i>	
In the space provided, list the practices and approach that comprise your integrative strategy:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Practice: Warmth and Support, Responsibility and Choice, Youth-Centered Problem Solving, Power of Language, Cooperative Learning, Group Discussions, Self-Assessment and Self-Reflection, Balanced Instruction, Expectations and Rigor, and/or SEL 	

Competence Building

Exemplar Answer: *Responsibility and Choice, Power of Language, Cooperative Learning, Group Discussions*

- **SEL-Academic Integration Taxonomy Approach:** Explicit Skills Alignment, Explicit Strategy Alignment, Ways of Being, and/or Ways of Interacting

Exemplar Answer: Explicit Strategy Alignment, Ways of Being

Description of Lesson Activities

What activities will you consider for differentiating instruction and incorporating SEL before or within instruction?

- Have students review two primary sources that provide differing perspectives on a current event related to civic issues.
- Have students work in small groups to generate a list of questions about the different perspectives using the [Question Formulation Technique](#) (QFT). Using the QFT, students openly brainstorm as many questions as possible, write down the questions exactly as stated, and don't answer or judge this initial list of questions.
- Review, as a class, the lists of questions generated by the small groups. Use a set of prompts to help students prioritize which questions the class should work to address together to understand the differing perspectives.
- Encourage student discussion on the importance of asking questions about the ways in which they (the authors of the sources) and others perceive current events. Ask students to think about the authors' life experiences, motivations, and audience.
- Discuss with students how being inquisitive like a historian can help them understand the experiences, biases, and perspectives of other.

Formative Performance Task

In what ways will you ensure that students mastered the academic and social emotional competencies of the lesson?

Students write a brief essay in which they describe a topic they want to learn more about as it relates to the various perspectives on the civic issue (explicit strategy alignment).

Resources

[African American Studies Framework](#) (OSPI)

[Civic Empowerment Videos](#) (OSPI)

[Ethnic Studies Framework](#) (OSPI)

[Holocaust Center for Humanity](#) (OSPI)

[Teaching Resources](#) (Facing History and Ourselves)

[SEL and Social Studies Example Lesson](#) (Edutopia)

[SEL and Social Studies Integration Examples](#) (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL])

[SEL and Social Studies Integration Webinar](#) (InquirED)

[A Toolkit for Social Emotional Learning in the Social Studies Classroom](#) (Delaware Department of Education)

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This resource was developed by American Institutes for Research (AIR) with funding from the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.



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