Domain III – Social Studies

- Approximately 16% of the test
- Approximately 41 Items
- 35 minutes
- Averages 51 seconds per question

Social Studies Competencies

- Competency I: Social Science Instruction
- Competency II: History
- Competency III: Geography and Culture
- Competency IV: Economics
- Competency V: Government and Citizenship
Important Concepts in Social Studies

- Social Studies is a people centered field and should aim to produce good citizens as well as thoughtful learners.
- Students in SS engage in ideas over memorization and are taught that historical events impact current events.
- EC-6 SS builds a foundation to support the learning that occurs in later grades.
- Students in SS should learn how to examine events and ideas from multiple perspectives or points of view through primary and secondary sources and strategies such as: debate, role play, cooperative learning, simulations, guest speakers, etc.

Comprehensive Knowledge & Integration of Social Studies

- The SS teacher understands the TEKS and should be able to select and apply effective and developmentally appropriate instructional practices, activities, technologies and materials to promote students’ knowledge and skills in SS.
- Teachers create situations where students are practicing social skills and provide experiences for students to understand their own unique traits as well as commonalities with other students.

Comprehensive Knowledge & Integration of Social Studies

- In Texas, the scope and sequence of SS follows an expanding environments model.
  - Kinder – self, home, family, classroom
  - 1st – classroom, school, community
  - 2nd – community, state, nation
  - 3rd – how individuals impact communities and world
  - 4th – Texas history
  - 5th – history of the US
  - 6th – people and places in the contemporary world
History

- History should be taught as a way for students to understand both events in the past and the present, especially notions of cause and effect.
- In teaching history, teachers use primary sources (original records or first hand accounts such as diaries, eye witness accounts) and secondary sources (use primary sources to learn about an event or deliver information at a later time – i.e. autobiographies, textbooks)
- Teachers use timelines to help put events in perspective and almanacs for statistical information.

History

- Students can actively engage in learning about history through oral histories—interviews with an eyewitness to an historical event; surveys, timelines, etc.
- Visual depictions such as photographs and cartoons help present data and visual/symbolic understanding of events.
- Students should be involved in historical methods such as 1) problem identification; 2) gather information from the past; 3) observe data carefully; 4) analyze data and make inferences; and 5) draw conclusions (Seefeldt, 1997).

Geography

- The study of geography includes our planet and the people who live on it.
  - Cultural geography studies how human groups live and change in relation to the environment.
  - Physical geography studies the Earth and its physical environment.
Geography

• Some important concepts of geography include:
  – Maps: visual means of representing location, distance, boundaries, features, etc
  – Relief maps have raised features to show elevation
  – Topographic maps show detailed elevations and use contour lines but are flat
  – Physical maps are also flat but use different colors and other details to show land forms
  – Reference maps show location
  – Thematic maps show other things about a place such as population, vegetation, languages spoken, etc
  – Political maps show boundaries of nations and states with capitals

Geography

– Relative location: where something is located in relation to something else
– Absolute location: precise location on a map
– Latitude: parallels or horizontal lines of the Earth’s grid (equator is one and cuts through the center of the earth horizontally and has a location of 0 degrees)
– Longitude: meridians or vertical lines of the earth that stretch "long-ways" or vertically from the north pole to the south pole. Prime meridian in Greenwich, England has a location of 0 degrees longitude.

Economics

• Economics focuses on the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.
• There are 3 main types of economic systems:
  – Communism, socialism, and capitalism
• In a free enterprise system (capitalism), individuals control the production of goods based on supply and demand.
  – Supply: the amount of available goods and services
  – Demand: the number of people who want to buy the product/service
  – Interdependence: how people, industry, and government are dependent on one another.
Economics in Texas

- Historically, the Texas economy was land based.
  - Cotton was a major cash crop and helped shape TX history, but was almost completely destroyed by the boll weevil in the early 1900s.
  - Cattle drives were also a major business in TX development and the King ranch was one of the largest ranches in the world.
- Most of the 20th century was shaped by petroleum businesses and contributed to much of its growth.
- Now the TX economy has diversified and computers and electronics are now the 2nd largest goods export (2nd to chemical manufacturing).

Government, Citizenship & Culture

- The government operates by a system of checks and balances. The three branches of the federal government include:
  - Legislative Branch: Makes laws.
  - Executive Branch: Carries out the laws.
  - Judicial Branch: Interprets the laws.
- Texas gained independence from Mexico in 1836 (signed Declaration of Independence)
- Sam Houston was the first elected president of the Republic of Texas.
- Ma Ferguson was the first woman governor of Texas (in 1924)
- Symbols of TX: Capital: Austin; Motto: Friendship; State bird: mockingbird; flower: bluebonnet; tree: pecan.

Government, Citizenship & Culture

- Mission San Jose: known as the “Queen of the Missions” it is in San Antonio and all the outer walls, dwellings, workshops, and mill are still in place.
- San Jacinto Monument: the world’s tallest obelisk was built to commemorate the Battle of San Jacinto (brought Texas independence).
- Texas has 254 counties.