**Subject Matter Knowledge Matrix**

**History and Social Science Curriculum Framework**

Students in Massachusetts must meet rigorous academic standards, which are outlined in the [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/). To do so, they must have access to educators with strong content knowledge and pedagogical skills, the building blocks of effective instructional practice.

In support of this, the [Subject Matter Knowledge Guidelines](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/domains/instruction/smk-guidelines.docx) set forth the content knowledge expectations for educator licensure in Massachusetts. Through these expectations, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) seeks to ensure that educators entering the workforce have sufficient content knowledge in their licensure area to support students in mastering the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

While the Curriculum Frameworks serve as an anchor, the intent is not that educators should simply know the content included in the Frameworks. Rather, educators must move beyond basic or functional knowledge to a level of fluency or expertise with the academic standards such that they can teach and support students in mastering the content.

The figure below shows a steady progression, not in the amount of information one knows, but in the depth and ability to use that information for a specific purpose. The boxes below the continuum outline some assessments used to determine varying levels of content knowledge. The depth at which the knowledge and application of content knowledge must be demonstrated is dependent on the stage of development for an individual educator (i.e. Basic, Functional, Fluent, or Expert) and/or license type (Provisional, Initial, or Professional).



This worksheet should be completed for licensure programs with Subject Matter Knowledge expectations in the [History and Social Science Curriculum Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html), including:

History/Social Science, 1-6

History/Social Science, 5-12

**History and Social Science Scope, Sequence, and Content Progression**

The History and Social Science Scope, Sequence, and Content Progression outlines the core history and social science knowledge that students should learn from PK through grade 12.

In support of a strong vertical progression of learning, educators should have the content knowledge to support PK-12 students in mastering prerequisite and advanced standards. Teachers need to be able to access knowledge from prior grades, and teachers who are aware of later content can make better choices about what to emphasize, what language to use, and what larger contexts to provide for their students. This expectation allows teachers to meet students where they are and prepare them for where they are going.

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| **Instructions*:***Please use the chart below to determine which rows of the matrix should be completed for each license. This content knowledge must either be covered directly through program coursework or screened during the admissions process.  For each relevant grade level, list the numbers/abbreviations/titles of the **sponsoring organization’s required courses where the content knowledge is explicitly targeted and coherently addressed**. Then, **briefly describe where in the syllabus the content is covered** (i.e., unit name, week number, objective number). Course identifiers should match those of submitted syllabi and content knowledge for each grade level should not be spread across too many courses.  The full [History and Social Science Curriculum Framework](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html), including the Guiding Principles which are also available in [Appendix A](#_Appendix_A:_History) of this document, should be consulted when designing programs to ensure appropriate content coverage and rigor for each licensure field’s grade span. Sponsoring Organizations should prioritize content fluency in the grade span for the license while ensuring functional content knowledge in the two grade levels below and above the grade span. |

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| **License Field and Grade Span** | **Rows to Complete** |
| History/Social Science 1-6 | Pre-kindergarten through grade 8 |
| History/Social Science, 5-12 | Grade 3 through high school |

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| **History and Social Science Scope, Sequence, and Content Progression** | **Course(s) or Screening** |
| *Example Row* | *EDU 101 – Weeks 5-7* |
| **Pre-Kindergarten: Building a Foundation for Living, Learning, and Working Together.** Students are introduced to four major fields of social studies: civics (respecting one another, cooperating, and obeying appropriate rules); geography (understanding connections between places and people); history (recalling experiences); and economics (understanding working, buying, selling and trading things). |  |
| **Kindergarten: Many Roles in Living, Learning, and Working Together.** Students learn about classroom democracy, respect for one another, local geography, roles of people, national, state, and community traditions, and economics in the context of work and money. |  |
| **Grade 1: Leadership, Cooperation, Unity, and Diversity.** Students learn about leadership on many levels, the meaning of citizenship, and map types. They explore how the concepts of unity and diversity, respect for differences, and respect of self, shape life in the United States, and how people make choices about purchasing goods and services and saving resources. |  |
| **Grade 2: Global Geography - Places and Peoples, Cultures and Resources.** Students learn about global geography, looking at reasons why people settle in particular places, why they migrate, how they bring culture with them, and how they earn a living, exchange goods and services, and save for the future. |  |
| **Grade 3: Massachusetts, Home to Many Different People.** Students study Massachusetts and New England, beginning with their own city or town. They explore interactions among Native Peoples, European settlers and Africans, and learn about the Massachusetts people who led the American Revolution. The standards introduce students to the founding documents of Massachusetts and United States so that they may begin to discuss and apply ideas about self-government as they help develop codes of classroom rules, rights, and responsibilities. |  |
| **Grade 4: North American Geography and Peoples.** Students learn about North America (Canada, Mexico, and the United States) and its peoples from a geographic perspective. They learn about ancient civilizations on the continent and early European exploration as they expand map reading, mapmaking, and geographic reasoning skills introduced in grades 2 and 3. They apply concepts of how geography affects human settlement and resource use, and how the westward expansion of the United States created a modern nation of 50 states and 16 territories. |  |
| **Grade 5: United States History to the Civil War and the Modern Civil Rights Movement.** Building on their knowledge of North American geography and peoples, students learn more about the history of the colonies, the American Revolution, the development of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, the early Republic, and the westward expansion of the United States. They study the sectional conflicts over slavery that led to the Civil War and the long struggle in the 19th and 20th centuries for civil rights for all |  |
| **Grades 6 and 7: World Geography and Ancient Civilizations I and II.** Sixth grade students examine how the perspectives of political science, economics, geography, history, and archaeology apply to the study of regions and countries. They study the development of prehistoric societies and then focus on area studies of Western Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Central America, the Caribbean Islands, and South America. Grade 7 examines the physical and political geography and ancient societies of South and East Asia, Oceania, and Europe and concludes with a study of government in Greece and Rome, which serves as a prelude to the study of civics in grade 8. |  |
| **Grade 8: United States and Massachusetts Government and Civic Life**. Students study the roots and foundations of democratic government through primary documents, such as the United States and Massachusetts Constitutions; how and why government institutions developed; how government evolves through legislation and court decisions; and how individuals exercise their rights and civic responsibilities to maintain a healthy democracy in the nation and the Commonwealth. |  |
| **High School: United States History I and II, the Colonial Period to the Present.** Students begin their high school study of the United States with a review of the causes of the American Revolution, Constitutional principles, and events of the early Republic. They examine the causes and consequences of the Civil War, industrialization, immigration, the role of the United States in World War I, and the early 20th century quest for social justice for all citizens. In United States History II, they learn about the fundamentals of economics, the Great Depression and the New Deal, World War II, the Cold War, social, cultural, and technological change, and globalization concluding with a study of social and political movements and international events in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. |  |
| **High School: World History I and II, 6th Century to the Present.** Building on their understanding of world geography and civilizations from middle school, students in World History I study cultural, religious, political, and economic developments in Africa, Asia, and Europe from approximately 500 CE to c. 1800. World History II examines how modern world history, beginning with the late 18th century, has been shaped by the past, how nations and empires are born, rise, interact, and sometimes fall. The standards introduce students to concepts such as colonialism, imperialism, genocide, human rights, and globalization, and the importance of ethical, political, economic, and scientific ideas in shaping nations. |  |
| **High School Electives: United States Government and Politics, Economics, Personal Financial Literacy, and News/Media Literacy**. United States Government and Politics, a full-year course, builds on the grade 8 Civics and United States History I and II courses to deepen understanding of political science. The Economics elective, also a full- Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for History and Social Science 19-year course, examines the concepts of scarcity, supply and demand, market structures, and the role of government, the role of financial institutions, economic stabilization, and trade. Standards for personal financial literacy and news/media literacy are included and may be used as stand-alone electives or integrated into a variety of other subjects, such as family and consumer science, business, college and career readiness, journalism, history and social science, English, or mathematics. High schools may also offer electives such as Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses, or locally developed courses, such as area studies of regions of the world, anthropology, Constitutional law, criminology, sociology, state or local history and politics, world religions, human rights, and might include capstone research projects |  |

**Standards for History and Social Science Practice**

The Standards for History and Social Science Practice describe the processes and skills that history and social science educators at all levels should seek to develop in their PK-12 students. The practices encompass civic knowledge, dispositions, and skills and reflect the range of disciplinary skills often used by historians, political scientists, economists, geographers, and ordinary citizens. Designed for integration with the content standards, the seven practices encompass the processes of inquiry and research that are integral to a rich and robust social science curriculum and the foundation for active and responsible citizenship. All seven practices can be applied from PK–12 and across all social science disciplines.

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| **Instructions*:***Initial licensure program candidates must reach a level of fluent content knowledge in order to be endorsed. They must be able to apply content in a range of contexts and vertically connect content to build students’ knowledge. As such, sponsoring organizations must have at least one course covering the practices at the fluent level.  Please list the numbers/abbreviations/titles of the **required courses where practices are explicitly targeted and coherently addressed**. Then, **briefly describe where in the syllabus each practice is covered** (i.e., unit name, week number, objective number). Course identifiers should match those of submitted syllabi and practices should not be spread across too many courses. |

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| **Standards for History and Social Science Practice** | **Fluent**  *Initial*  *Licensure* |
| *Example Row* | *EDU 101 – Weeks 5-7* |
| **1. Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.**   * Civic knowledge includes the core knowledge in the Content Standards relating to civics and government, economics, geography, and history. * Civic intellectual skills encompass knowing how to identify, assess, interpret, describe, analyze and explain matters of concern in civic life. * Civic participatory skills encompass knowing how to make and support arguments, use the political process to communicate with elected officials and representatives of government, and plan strategically for civic change. * Civic dispositions encompass values, virtues, and behaviors, such as respect for others, commitment to equality, capacity for listening, and capacity for communicating in ways accessible to others. |  |
| **2. Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries**. The ability to develop focused research questions in history and social science or define the dimensions of a particular policy problem is central to learning in these disciplines. Students learn that each field in the social sciences (political scientist, economist, geographer, historian) has its own ways of defining questions. |  |
| **3. Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources.** Student researchers gather and organize information from a variety of online, print, and other sources. In the history and social science fields, they pay close attention to whether the source is primary or secondary. Primary sources are documents written or created during the period under study (e.g., census data, a map, an interview, a speech, or an artifact such as a building, painting, or tool) and considered first-hand accounts. Secondary sources are later interpretations or commentaries based on primary sources. Often students will use primary and secondary sources together to compose an argument, because each source provides a different type of information. |  |
| **4. Analyze the purpose and point of view of each source; distinguish opinion from fact.** Students need exposure to readings that represent a variety of points of view in order to become discerning and critical readers. They need to be able to identify the purpose of a document and the point of view of its author. As students search primary sources for answers to questions, they begin to understand that eyewitness accounts of the same event can differ. |  |
| **5. Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and relevance of each source.** Students investigating a question using online sources often find all too much material, some of it conflicting. The ability to be discerning and skeptical consumers of information is a crucial college, career, and civic skill. Students should learn how and why to assess, verify, and cite sources. |  |
| **6. Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence.** The strength of an argument or explanation lies in its logical development of ideas, acknowledgement of counterclaims, and use of reliable supporting evidence. Effective arguments and explanations often go beyond text alone to include well-chosen and relevant visual elements such as photographs, maps, and displays of quantitative data. Students’ ability to adapt a presentation to the task, purpose, and audience and their ability to respond to questions are important skills for civic participation. |  |
| **7. Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate.** One of the main goals of teaching history and the social science is to provide opportunities for students to practice using the knowledge and skills that enable them to participate in civic life. For example, engaging in discourse about public policy beyond the classroom through social media, letters to the editor, oral presentations in public settings, or community service-learning projects. |  |

# **Appendix A: History and Social Science Guiding Principles**

The following principles are philosophical statements that underlie the pre-kindergarten through grade 12 History and Social Science Framework standards and resources. These principles should guide the design and evaluation of History and Social Science programs in both PK-12 and higher education settings.

**Guiding Principle 1.** An effective history and social science education teaches students about the legacy of democratic government. Study of history and social science prepares students to understand their rights and responsibilities as informed residents and citizens of a democratic society and to appreciate the shared values of this country. To become informed citizens, students need to acquire knowledge and experience of:

* the principles and philosophy of government in the founding documents of the United States;
* the structure and purposes of democratic government in the United States at the national, state, and local level;
* the structure and purposes of types of government other than democracy;
* how the concepts of liberty, equality, justice, and human and civil rights shape the United States;
* the achievements of democratic government and the challenges to maintaining it;
* ways to act as a citizen to influence government within the democratic system; and
* the importance of respectful public discourse and dissent in a democracy.

**Guiding Principle 2.** An effective history and social science education incorporates diverse perspectives and acknowledges that perceptions of events are affected by race, ethnicity, culture, religion, education, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and personal experience. The traditional motto of the United States is “E pluribus unum” – out of many, one. A history and social science education that does justice to the remarkable diversity of our country must tell the histories of individuals and groups and honor a plurality of life stories while acknowledging our ongoing struggle to achieve a more perfect union. Teaching how the concepts of freedom, equality, the rule of law, and human rights have influenced United States and world history necessarily involves discussions of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other characteristics. Effective instruction challenges students to value their own heritage while embracing our common ideals and shared experiences as they develop their own rigorous thinking about accounts of events. Effective instruction celebrates the progress the United States has made in embracing diversity, while at the same time encouraging honest and informed academic discussions about prejudice, racism, and bigotry in the past and present.

**Guiding Principle 3.** Every student deserves to study history and social science every year, from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Like learning to read, write, or perform well in any other subject, learning history and social science takes time. An effective history and social science education is given adequate time in the school day to build knowledge and skills of increasing complexity. In pre-kindergarten students learn about how cooperation builds community in the classroom, and how all kinds of families and individuals contribute to society. The elementary grade Content Standards are designed to introduce students to the drama of the past, its geographical settings, the habits of good citizenship, and everyday economics, a great deal of which can be integrated with English language arts and literacy, the arts, mathematics, and science. Middle school standards deepen students’ capacity to think logically and conduct research. At the high school level, where students should have the opportunity to take at least four courses in United States history, world history, and the social sciences, the standards require interpretation and synthesis of complex ideas about individuals, groups, events, and institutions.

**Guiding Principle 4.** An effective history and social science education teaches students to think historically. Taken together, the standards in this Framework present a broad scope of time and place, from human beginnings to the present, with the intent of helping students understand that their lives are connected to the long sweep of history. Beginning with the third-grade study of Massachusetts history, students become acquainted with the concepts of chronology, cause-and-effect relationships, and the role chance plays in historical events. In middle and high school, students learn that complex events have both intended and unintended consequences. By examining primary and secondary sources, students develop an appreciation for the importance of historical context and point of view. They learn that participants in historical events can often hold vastly different ideas about how those events unfolded. For example, what the Spanish considered a “conquest” of a new world in the Americas was seen rather differently by those whose lands were being invaded by foreigners. Students also learn that the work of historical investigation is never static because new evidence – a fresh archaeological find, a lost manuscript or photograph found in an archive – can inspire new connections and interpretations. Because historians of different generations can have different perceptions, it is important that readings include a variety of opinions and historical interpretations.

**Guiding Principle 5.** An effective history and social science education integrates knowledge from many fields of study. The fields of history, geography, civics, and economics form the core of a history and social science education. Under this broad umbrella are the history of the arts, philosophy and ethics, and religions, and developments in science, technology, and mathematics. Electives at the high school level might include study of regions of the world, anthropology, Constitutional law, criminology, sociology, state or local history and politics, world religions, human rights, or other topics and might include capstone research projects. The Content Standards of this framework are designed to include this breadth of knowledge, not as isolated facts to be simply memorized, but as useable knowledge to be integrated into an understanding of the world.

**Guiding Principle 6.** An effective history and social science education builds students’ capacities for research, reasoning, making logical arguments, and thinking for themselves. In an effective history and social science education, students engage in inquiry, reading, research, discussion, writing, and making presentations – these activities are the heart of this Framework’s Standards for History and Social Science Practice and link the history and social science disciplines to English language arts and literacy. In the course of applying these practices, students learn how to evaluate texts for bias intended to influence their opinions, and about the patterns of thought and reasoning of historians, geographers, political scientists, and economists. They learn to raise and refine questions and organize arguments and explanations by using structures such as comparison and contrast, cause and effect, or problem and solution. They learn to apply different forms of analysis, including contextually rich reading, visual analysis, spatial/geographical analysis, or quantitative reasoning.

**Guiding Principle 7.** An effective history and social science education improves reading comprehension by increasing students’ content knowledge. A rich education in history and social science involves extensive reading of challenging grade-level texts, which not only contributes to the development of basic reading skills but also introduces students to concepts and academic language that ultimately improve reading comprehension. Researcher Daniel Willingham contends, “Teaching content is teaching reading.” Content knowledge improves reading comprehension because it enables a student to make connections about events and ideas across texts. The Content Standards in this framework are organized to provide a coherent progression of knowledge about history, geography, civics, and economics to support students’ capacity to read with understanding in the elementary and middle grades. This foundational knowledge, in turn, prepares students to read texts that address topics of increasing complexity at the high school and college level.

**Guiding Principle 8.** An effective history and social science education incorporates the study of current events and news/media literacy. When teaching history and social science, teachers have a unique responsibility to help students consider events – including current events – in a broad historical, geographical, social, or economic context. The Framework’s News/Media Literacy standards for grade 8 and high school are designed to help students take a critical stance toward what they read, hear, and view in newspapers and on websites, television, and social media. Applying these standards, students learn to evaluate information, question and verify its source, distinguish fact from inference, and reasoned judgment supported by evidence from varying degrees of bias.

**Guiding Principle 9.** An effective history and social science education teaches students about using data analysis and digital tools as research and presentation techniques in the social sciences. History and social science teachers have a long history of teaching students to read, interpret, and create graphs, charts, maps, timelines, and illustrations. New opportunities for answering questions with data are available in the ever-expanding supply of online databases. Particularly at the high school level, teachers can provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge of quantitative reasoning and statistics, using “big data” to answer historical questions and solve problems. They can also provide opportunities for students to create digital exhibits that combine visual primary sources, video, and computer graphics to convey complex stories and interpretations of the past.

**Guiding Principle 10.** An effective history and social science education develops social and emotional skills. Social and emotional learning has demonstrated an increase in academic achievement and communication skills, improve attitudes and behaviors, and develop empathy. These skills are also practical civic skills that students need to engage effectively with others in the public problem solving of civic and democratic life. Teachers support the development of these skills by:

* helping students understand how their own unique experiences and ideas influence their perceptions of and feelings about history and current situations (self-awareness);
* encouraging students’ own power to take thoughtful action (self-management);
* increasing students’ understanding of others’ fundamental needs and human and civil rights (social awareness);
* increasing students’ capacity to participate in dialogue across differences and to take on the perspectives of others whose experience and position in the world differs from their own (dialogue and perspective-taking);
* encouraging students to collaborate respectfully with diverse peers (relationship skills);
* providing opportunities for students to define and make informed choices when participating in democratic practices (responsible decision making); and
* creating opportunities for students to work together on projects that aim to promote a public good beyond the classroom, in the school, or in the larger community (civic action).