

The TCI Approach

The TCI Approach consists of a series of instructional practices that allows students of all abilities to experience key social studies concepts.



Theory- and Research-Based Active Instruction

Lessons and activities are based on five well-established theories.

- 1 Understanding by Design**—Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe believe that teaching for deep understanding requires planning backward—first determining the big ideas students are to learn and then working backward to identify methods to reach those goals and ways to assess the effectiveness of teaching.
- 2 Nonlinguistic Representation**—Many psychologists believe that we think and remember better when we store information in both linguistic and nonlinguistic forms. Research by Robert Marzano and colleagues demonstrates that teaching with nonlinguistic activities such as graphic organizers, mental images, and movement helps to improve students' understanding of content.
- 3 Multiple Intelligences**—According to Howard Gardner's revolutionary theory, every student is intelligent—just not in the same way. Because everyone learns in a different way, the best activities tap more than one kind of intelligence. Gardner has described these seven intelligences: verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, body-kinesthetic, musical-rhythmic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.
- 4 Cooperative Interaction**—Elizabeth Cohen's research has led her to conclude that cooperative groupwork leads to learning gains and to higher student achievement. Cohen has found that if students are trained in cooperative behaviors, placed in mixed-ability groups, and assigned roles to complete during a multiple-ability task, they tend to interact more equally. This increased student interaction leads to more learning and greater content retention.
- 5 Spiral Curriculum**—Educational theorist Jerome Bruner championed the idea of the spiral curriculum, in which students learn progressively more difficult concepts through a process of step-by-step discovery. With this approach, all students can learn once a teacher has shown them how to think and discover knowledge for themselves.

STANDARDS-BASED CONTENT

Dynamic lessons that integrate hands-on learning and content reading build mastery of state and national social studies standards while consistently achieving high-quality social studies instruction.

PREVIEW ACTIVITY

A short, engaging activity at the start of each lesson helps you preview key concepts and tap students' prior knowledge and personal experience.



Multiple Intelligences Teaching Strategies

Multiple Intelligences Teaching Strategies incorporate six types of activities.

- 1 Visual Discovery**—Students view, touch, interpret, and bring to life compelling images, turning what is usually a passive, teacher-centered activity—lecturing—into a dynamic, participative experience.
- 2 Social Studies Skill Builder**—This strategy turns the traditional, rote tasks usually associated with skill-based worksheets into more dynamic, interactive activities.
- 3 Experiential Exercise**—These short, memorable activities make abstract ideas or remote events accessible and meaningful by tapping into intrapersonal and body-kinesthetic intelligences.
- 4 Writing for Understanding**—These activities give all learners, even those with lesser linguistic skills, something memorable to write about.
- 5 Response Group**—This strategy helps students grapple with the ambiguities of issues in social studies, recognize the complexity of historical events, and discuss the consequences of public policies.
- 6 Problem Solving Groupwork**—This strategy teaches students the skills necessary to work together successfully in small groups, both in the classroom and later in life.

CONSIDERATE TEXT

Carefully structured reading materials enable students at all levels to understand what they read. Uncluttered pages present content in digestible “chunks.” Engaging images reinforce content while consistent vocabulary development improves student comprehension.

GRAPHICALLY ORGANIZED READING NOTES

Comprehensive graphic organizers help students record key ideas and make meaning out of what they read. By using graphic organizers that display the underlying logic of and interconnections among concepts, students improve their comprehension and retention of content.

PROCESSING ACTIVITY

An end-of-lesson processing activity, involving multiple intelligences and higher-order thinking skills, challenges students to apply what they have learned in a variety of creative ways.

ASSESSMENTS TO INFORM INSTRUCTION

Carefully designed tests move students through a progression of thinking skills, from comprehension to skills application to critical thinking. Test results in these three areas show you where students are succeeding and where they need more instruction.