

Literacy in Social Studies

This paper offers examples of contexts across social studies where literacy skills can be progressed and provides links to the significant aspects of learning.

Introduction

Curriculum for Excellence emphasises the importance of ensuring that learners engage in joined up learning, where they use their skills across different areas of content and context. The teaching of literacy is the responsibility of all curricular areas. Social Studies offers a rich opportunity to contextualise literacy for children and young people. Across the range of social studies subjects there are many opportunities to enable learners to improve their literacy skills, whilst enjoying the exciting learning opportunities which these contexts provide.

There are three significant aspects of learning within literacy

- Listening and Talking
- Reading
- Writing

Although teaching and learning will often take place across more than one significant aspect of learning, a learner may achieve a level in listening and talking or reading or writing. Progress and achievement within these three significant aspects of learning in literacy and English will be evidenced as children and young people achieve across these key themes:

- engage with a broad range of increasingly complex texts, including Scottish and Scots texts
- develop and apply knowledge and understanding of language
- find, use and organise information, including developing critical literacy skills
- use reading and listening strategies to understand, analyse and evaluate texts
- create texts of increasing complexity using more sophisticated language

More information about the Literacy significant aspects of learning can be found at: http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/LitEngProgFramOct15_tcm4-830976.pdf

The significant aspects of learning for social studies are below:

SAL 1 – understanding the place, history, heritage, and culture of Scotland and appreciating local and national heritage within the world

SAL 2 - developing an understanding of the world by learning about how people live today and in the past

SAL 3 – understanding political, social and environmental issues

SAL 4 - becoming aware of change, cause and effect, sequence and chronology

SAL 5 - understanding the principles of representative democracy, participation and citizenship by practising democracy through electoral participation and active citizenship in the school and local community

SAL 6 - using and applying skills in creating models, maps and graphical representation of information

SAL 7 - locating, exploring and linking periods, people, events and features in time and place developing useful skills for learning, life and work.

SAL 8 - gaining business enterprise skills and knowledge and an understanding of the importance and methods of managing finance

SAL 9 - developing useful skills for learning, life and work.

Level/Organiser	<i>Possible Contexts for learning</i>	Social Studies Significant Aspects of Learning (SALs)
Early level Listening & Talking	<p>Visits to or pictures of landscapes could provide a context for discussion, describing what is seen. For example, physical landscapes like rivers and hills, pre-historic era such as Skara Brae or Celtic settlements/Medieval castles.</p> <p>Visits outdoors or pictures of towns, streets and houses would provide an opportunity to share experiences, information and stories with others.</p> <p>Artefacts can be used to stimulate discussion and storytelling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 1 • SAL 2
First level Listening & Talking	<p>Political literacy contexts provide an opportunity to consider the differences between facts and opinions and to give own opinions, for example, dog littering or parent parking outside schools.</p> <p>Use of BBC radio and TV programmes on Social Studies topics to identify purpose and main ideas of spoken text e.g. Tudors, Romans and Victorians. http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/schoolradio/subjects/history</p> <p>Use of artefacts to create and talk about stories of what might have happened</p> <p>Recording the weather each day would provide a good opportunity for discussion about factual data, and to explain other actual events.</p> <p>Early debating skills gives learners the opportunity to consider topics such as travel to school, recycling, food banks, nursing homes, parks and woodland and explain their opinions to others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 3 • SAL 5 • SAL 9
Second level Listening & Talking	<p>Use of BBC radio and TV programmes on Social Studies topics to identify purpose and main ideas of spoken text e.g. WW2, Britain since the 1930s, (http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/schoolradio/subjects/history), a village in India (http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/schoolradio/subjects/geography). This topic could give pupils the opportunity to explore problems faced by the village and how they might overcome them.</p> <p>Use of BBC TV clips to provoke discussion about history topics http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/highlights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 2 • SAL 4 • SAL 7

	<p>Plan and make presentations based on Social Studies topics such as local area history or geography, weather, local war memorial, closure of a local facility such as a post office. Scottish culture through the ages, Jacobites, Industrial Revolution, important Scots who have made an impact on society (Great Scots website http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/studyingScotland/resourcesforlearning/learning/Contextsforstudy/greatscots/index.asp)</p> <p>International figures who have made a contribution such as Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Andrew Carnegie etc.</p>	
<p>Third level Listening & Talking</p>	<p>Learners can select an area of a Social Studies topic which interests them. For example within the Natural Hazards topic, they could choose a volcano, earthquake or hurricane. They can then select more complex texts and resources to enable their research and make a presentation with their research.</p> <p>Learners could consider an environmental problem in their local area and explore ways that problem could be solved. They could do this through working as a team or teams to explore different solutions. They could use current issue such as hosting of refugees.</p> <p>Debating skills can be improved at this level, considering topics such as international debt and aid, global warming, impact of WW1, impact and reaction to terrorism and terrorist threats, human trafficking, asylum seekers, refugees, pressure groups, child poverty, democratic and non-democratic states.</p> <p>The materials which learners use to research can be used to practise the skills of detecting bias and exaggeration. This could be used in looking at Political parties and elections. It could also be in the context of shifts in attitude, in the coverage of Syria or terrorist attacks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 3 • SAL 2 • SAL 5
<p>Fourth level Listening & Talking</p>	<p>Learners can use research methods to investigate topics such as questionnaires and interviews which will help them create questions and confidently and respectfully engage with others. This would be useful in a variety of Social Studies areas such as changes in land use, environmental issues, news video clips of refugees and migration, enterprise activities, business skills, managing finances, local community project.</p> <p>Learners can develop their skills in detecting bias and exaggeration in more complex texts and discuss the usefulness of this source.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 3 • SAL 8 • SAL 9

<p>Early level Reading</p>	<p>Learners can engage with texts to look at pictures with simple text to consider place and the past.</p> <p>Learners can look at weather symbols when recording and talking about the weather to consider what they mean and how they are used.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 3 • SAL 4
<p>First level Reading</p>	<p>Learners can engage with simple texts to think about past events and to understand simple timelines.</p> <p>Learners can get information from simple maps of their local area showing the main features.</p> <p>Learners can source information from labelled pictures and diagrams showing specific parts of the local landscape or townscape e.g. hills, rivers, church, roads etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 4 • SAL 6
<p>Second level Reading</p>	<p>Learners can engage with more complex historical texts and understand that there are differing points of view in them. War poetry can be used to provide a context.</p> <p>Learners can seek out and use increasingly complex texts and other resources to research a specific topic such as extreme weather events or natural disasters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL1 • SAL 2 • SAL 4
<p>Third level Reading</p>	<p>Learners can research and draw conclusions using increasingly complex texts on Social Studies topics such as world development, poverty, pollution and recycling.</p> <p>Learners can engage with increasingly complex historical texts and compare and contrast the opinions found within them. Texts could include posters such as those used for recruitment in WW1, these could be used to consider audience, message etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 2 • SAL 3
<p>Fourth level Reading</p>	<p>Learners can engage with increasingly complex historical texts and other sources and analyse the differing points of view of the authors on a subject.</p> <p>Learners can develop informed opinions using a variety of texts and sources and justify these opinions using references to the research undertaken. Sources could such as Census information or National Archives Scotland materials on Conscientious Objectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 4

<p>Early level Writing</p>	<p>Learners can begin to write simple labels on a picture to describe what they see.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 6
<p>First level Writing</p>	<p>Learners can write simple sentences about things they find out when collecting weather data. They can engage with texts to find out about historical time periods. They can find out about people in society who help them and begin to write about the work they do.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 3
<p>Second level Writing</p>	<p>Learners can research and produce increasingly detailed diagrams about the formation of landscape features local to them and further afield in Scotland.</p> <p>Learners can research and produce a written presentation on a historical figure such as an explorer or great leader from Scotland or Britain. Or they could look at topics such as Rights, Democracy and Elections, local community needs and wants, children’s rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 7 • SAL 2 • SAL 4 • SAL 5
<p>Third level Writing</p>	<p>Learners can research increasingly complex texts and sources and consider the value of such sources when producing presentations on their topics such as WW1, Food banks, Economic and Social inequality.</p> <p>Learners can use these sources to draw valid conclusions and make reasoned arguments and could present these as short video clips or films.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL 1
<p>Fourth level Writing</p>	<p>Learners can analyse a range a complex texts and sources to enable them to draw detailed conclusions and make increasingly complex arguments. Contexts could include developed and less economically developed countries, wartime enslavement, use of media, controversial issues, impact of a historical event or natural disaster.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAL1 • SAL 2 • SAL 3

Useful weblinks

Social Studies experiences and outcomes:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/curriculumareas/socialstudies/experiencesandoutcomes/index.asp>

Social Studies Assessing Progress and Achievement

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/assessment/progressandachievement/professionallearningresource/curriculum/socialstudies/progress.asp>

Literacy across Learning: Principles and Practice

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/learningacrossthecurriculum/possibilityforall/literacy/principlesandpractice/index.asp>