

Grade 5 Social Studies Curriculum

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Specific
Curricular
Outcomes
FINAL DRAFT

Grade Level: *Five*
Conceptual Organizer: *Societies*

Unit One – Introduction
What are societies?

5.1.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the concept of society

Elaboration

This outcome begins the investigation of societies. For the purpose of this curriculum, “society” is defined as “a group of people who share a common geographic location, culture and institutions.”

A society may refer to a particular people (such as the Nubians), to a nation (such as Canada), or to a broader cultural group (such as Western society). Students explore examples of different types of societies, both past and present. They begin to identify common features of societies (e.g. geographic location [place and environment], culture [social structure], and institutions [governance]) and gain an understanding of major historical eras.

To facilitate the study of societies over time, it is necessary to introduce students to major historical eras so that adjectives such as “ancient” and “middle ages” are meaningful. For the purpose of this curriculum, the major historical eras will be taken to be

- pre-history (up to approximately 3000 BCE)
- ancient (approximately 3000 BCE to 500 CE)
- middle ages (approximately 500 CE to 1500 CE)
- modern (approximately 1500 CE to the present)

It should be noted for students that we know about many of the societies they will study in the historical eras through archaeological evidence and that the start and end dates for these eras are approximate and interpreted differently by scholars. While students are to be introduced to the eras and their names, **it is not the intent that they be expected to recite the names and quote dates for each.**

By the conclusion of this introductory study, students should understand that:

- societies share common features.
- societies existed in the past as well as the present.

Unit Two – Place and Environment

What is the relationship between place, environment and change in societies over time?

5.2.1 Explain how place and geographic feature(s) influenced the development of an ancient society

Elaboration

This outcome examines the relationships between place and environment and the development of societies. An ancient society (i.e., one that existed during the ancient historical era) is to be used as the context, although no specific society is mandated.

Initial attention will need to be given to locating the society geographically. This will reinforce skills learned in grade four such as continent, hemisphere, absolute and relative location. Examples of questions that could be explored are: In what part of the world does the society lie? Where is it located in relation to “near neighbours”? Students will need to employ map reading skills (using such tools as maps, atlases and/or GIS).

A key to addressing this outcome is to identify a significant geographic feature(s) that was central to the society establishing and developing in a particular location. Possible features might be a river (e.g., Nile River [Nubian]), an ocean (e.g., Atlantic [Maritime Archaic]) or mountains (e.g., Andes [Incans]). The study will then go on to identify and describe significant characteristics of the geographic feature(s) and an explanation of how the physical feature(s) contributed to the beginning of the society and its development over time. Note: This builds on the concept of characteristics of physical features introduced in grade four. In the case of a river valley society, for example, significant characteristics might include extensiveness of the river system, annual flooding, and the presence of cataracts. These might have contributed to the society’s development in terms of transportation routes, food sources, provision of nutrients for agriculture, and protection from enemies. Over time the society may have developed more sophisticated adaptations to make better use of the feature(s) e.g. improvements in transportation, irrigation systems, etc.

It is important in the context of examining an ancient society that “ancient” not be deemed synonymous with “primitive.” “Ancient” simply indicates the historical time period during which the society thrived and is not a comment on its level of development. It is important to avoid suggesting that societies from the past were inherently inferior because they lacked the technological innovations we see today.

By the end of this study, students should understand that:

- societies often developed in locations that were advantageous.
- geographic features influenced the development of the society.

5.2.2 Describe how place and environment affected, and were affected by, the lifestyles of an ancient society

Elaboration

This outcome focuses on the effect of place and environment on the lifestyles within an ancient society, and the effect of the lifestyles on the environment. The society identified in outcome 5.2.1 should remain the focus of this study.

It is important in this outcome to maintain focus on the aspects of lifestyles that were particularly influenced by place and/or environment. For example, climate affects clothing styles, natural resources impact dwellings and jewellery, and physical geography affects modes of transportation.

The significant effects of the lifestyles on the environment will vary with context. This might include impacts of irrigation, deforestation, and resource extraction. This provides teachers with an opportunity to have students make inferences about the interactions between people, place and environment.

By the end of this study, students should understand that:

- lifestyle is a function of the place and environment in which one lives.
- over time, societies can significantly impact their natural environments.

Unit Three – Social Structure

How does examining social structures inform us about societies?

5.3.1 Explain the social structure of a society from the middle ages

Elaboration

Unit 3 focuses on social structure, a common feature of societies past and present. A single society from the middle ages should be the focus of the inquiry for both outcomes 5.3.1 & 5.3.2, but the choice of the particular society is left with the teacher. Options include (but are not limited to) England and France in Europe, Japan in Asia, and Central America's Maya-society. Please note that it may be necessary to make a conscious effort not to stereotypically characterize societies from the middle ages as strictly European.

Outcome 5.3.1 involves an examination of the social structure of the chosen society and some explanation of relationships within the social structure and how they influenced the nature of the society. Discussion will include:

- Geographic location of the society from the middle ages
 - In what region of the world was the society located?
 - What were the neighbouring societies?
 - Did the society contain or was it bordered by a significant geographic feature(s)?
- Illustration of the social structure (diagrammatically or otherwise)
- Identification of relationships within the social structure
- Influence of social structure on the society.

Discussions around societal structure could include the impact of the status of one's birth family on one's life role, differences between urban and rural life roles, differences between men's and women's roles, and the degree of power and autonomy associated with various roles in the social structure. Teachers may wish to use a cooperative learning structure where any given student may focus on one of these topics in depth.

By the end of this study, students should come to understand that:

- societies have a social structure.
- people have particular roles within the social structure.

5.3.2 Examine the diverse lifestyles within a society from the middle ages

Elaboration

This outcome continues the study of the society identified in outcome 5.3.1. The study focuses on the lifestyles of various groups within the chosen society. The discussion of lifestyle needs to remain related to social structure. The key is to identify lifestyles associated with various roles within the social structure and to compare and contrast these lifestyles. Limiting study to three or four roles that illustrate the lifestyle variations is a practical constraint.

The connection between environment and societies should be revisited here, both in terms of the effect of the environment on peoples' lifestyles (e.g. clothing and transportation) and the effect of their lifestyles on the environment (e.g. deforestation).

By the end of this study, students should understand that:

- a person's lifestyle was influenced by his/her role within the social structure.

Unit Four – Governance

How does examining governance inform us about societies?

5.4.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the diverse societies of First Nations and Inuit, in what later became Canada.

Elaboration

At the close of the 15th century, it is estimated that there were 40-60 million people living in what is now called North and South America. Archaeological evidence, including oral tradition, confirms that these societies were in existence for thousands of years.

Outcome 5.4.1 introduces students to the diversity of First Nations and Inuit societies, in what later became Canada. This involves identifying the geographic locations of selected societies. While First Nations and Inuit of the Atlantic region will be the primary focus, students will briefly examine peoples from other geographic regions of the country (e.g., Arctic [Inuit], Interior Plains [Blackfoot], Canadian Shield [Cree] etc.) to establish the degree of diversity. The number of distinct groups considered at any point, for comparison purposes, will need to be limited to one per geographic region.

As stated previously, the primary sources of information for this study should be based upon archaeological data and oral tradition. Oral tradition has been a central means of teaching lessons and conveying information about societies worldwide and is not unique to First Nations and Inuit.

Attention should be given to an examination of the relationship of First Nations, and Inuit societies with place and environment. In particular, teachers will focus on the influence of place and environment in what was later known as Atlantic Canada, on clothing, food, dwellings and tools. It is important for students to gain an appreciation for the uniqueness and sustainable nature of adaptations to their environment. It may be useful for teachers to focus on one adaptation for each group (e.g. Inuit [waterproof clothing], Mi'kmaq [birch bark canoe] etc.).

A number of clarifications for teachers are important regarding outcome 5.4.1:

- First Nations and Inuit are distinct peoples.
- Inuit are not included within the collective term, First Nations.
- Innu, Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) and Passamaquoddy are spoken of collectively as First Nations in the context of what later became Atlantic Canada.
- The attribution to all First Nations people, in general, of characteristics or practices that were, in fact, associated with only one or a few First Nations is inappropriate and must be avoided.
- It is proper when speaking of a particular First Nation to use the specific name of that First Nation, giving/using the First Nation's own name rather than one used by others at or after the time of contact.

- The term “Indian” is inappropriate and is restricted to certain governmental and legal contexts e.g., the Department of “Indian and Northern Affairs” at the Federal level, or the “Indian Act.”

By the end of this study, students should understand that:

- First Nations and Inuit societies existed in what later became known as Canada.
- First Nations and Inuit societies were influenced by their environment.

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5.4.2. Examine systems of governance in societies of First Nations and Inuit in what later became Atlantic Canada

Elaboration

“Worldview” is “the framework of ideas and beliefs through which an individual, or group of people, interpret the world and interact in it.” Students in Grade 5, should understand how fundamental beliefs of First Nations and Inuit, informed their world view. First Nations and Inuit viewed nature as a gift and believed natural resources were to be used in a sustainable way with everyone sharing the land and its resources to meet their needs. Their world view also influenced their governance systems.

All societies have systems of governance. This outcome asks students to examine systems of governance of First Nations and Inuit societies, in what later became Atlantic Canada. Students will examine how decisions were made (e.g. consensus) and the various structures of governance (e.g. structures that were hierarchical versus communal). In this way, students should gain an appreciation of the ways in which First Nations and Inuit organized themselves to grow and prosper throughout what would later be called Atlantic Canada.

By the end of this study students should understand that:

- a society’s worldview influences its system of governance.
- there were variations in systems of governance among First Nations and Inuit societies, in what later became Atlantic Canada.

Unit Five – Interactions

How are societies affected by interactions with other societies?

5.5.1 Examine the reasons for and effects of early English and French presence in what later became Atlantic Canada

Elaboration

The intent of the outcome is to identify motives for English and French early presence in what later became Atlantic Canada. The outcome also examines the interactions of these early Europeans with First Nations and Inuit.

In preparation for this study teachers may wish to briefly review motives for exploration (knowledge, wealth and power) from the grade four curriculum and how this led to European presence in what later became known as North America. It is important for teachers to note that the era of early European exploration has often been considered a positive (even glorious) one from a European perspective and reflected a particular world-view. During this time, England, France and other European nations competed, at times ruthlessly, for global power and the opportunity to exploit the resources of many regions and peoples world-wide. As Europeans realized the value of resources in what later became Atlantic Canada, they exploited them in various ways. Students should recognize that resources, such as fish, resulted in English and French presence in what later became Atlantic Canada. Motives beyond exploitation of resources included the English and French governments' desire to establish a military presence in various locations in what later became Atlantic Canada. As a result there were variations in how the region was settled.

This European presence would have a devastating effect on First Nations and Inuit people in what later became Atlantic Canada. Europeans brought with them diseases to which First Nations and Inuit were not immune. Further, European ideas regarding use of resources and ownership of land were contrary to First Nations and Inuit worldview.

Note: For the purposes of this outcome the British are referred to as “English” as “Britain” was not formed until 1707. The next outcome (5.5.2) will use the term “British.”

By the end of this study students should understand that:

- European early presence, in what later became Atlantic Canada, was motivated by a competition for resources.
- European early presence had an impact on First Nations and Inuit societies in what later became Atlantic Canada

5.5.2 Demonstrate an understanding that conflict had an impact on British and French settlers and on First Nations and Inuit people in what later became Atlantic Canada.

Elaboration

While outcome 5.5.1 examines the interactions among First Nations and Inuit and French and British settlers, this outcome focuses on conflict specifically. Students will consider how European conflicts affected the lives of British and French settlers and First Nations and Inuit people living in what later became Atlantic Canada.

This study will need to include British, French, and First Nations and Inuit perspectives. Issues and events for study will include:

- British and French struggle for power and wealth:
A series of European wars between the British and the French saw a constant trade-off of power and territorial ownership. It is suggested that one example be used to briefly illustrate the societal impact of this conflict, such as the Acadians.
- British involvement in the American War of Independence:
Once the British were successful in attaining territory in what later became known as Atlantic Canada, they welcomed British Loyalists – people who remained loyal to Britain during the American War of Independence. Conflict in this case resulted in the arrival of many United Empire Loyalists, including Black Loyalists.
- European displacement of First Nations and Inuit people:
British and French colonies took root and expanded in much of north eastern North America in the land of First Nations and Inuit people. It is suggested that the example of the Beothuk be used to illustrate this point.
- The major population decline among First Nations and Inuit.

It is important for teachers to note that students are not expected to memorize dates and sequences of events but to gain an understanding of the impact of conflict.

By the end of this outcome, students should understand that:

- conflict between societies can have significant impact.

Unit Six - My Society Today

What are some features of my society?

5.6.1 Illustrate an understanding that societies share common features

Elaboration

Here, the investigation of societies concludes. Students have explored examples of different societies, from various time periods. They have identified common features shared by societies and will now reflect upon what they have learned and identify these features in their own society (e.g. geographic location [place and environment], culture [social structure], and institutions [governance]).

Questions to consider are:

- How is your society influenced by place and environment?
- What are the roles that exist within your society's social structure? (E.g. Parents, Elders, police officer, religious leader.)
- How does governance influence your society?

By the end of this study, students will understand that:

- there are common features shared by all societies.