

Minnesota Academic Standards in History and Social Studies

If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be . . . I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves. And if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education. - Thomas Jefferson

Public education in Minnesota must help students gain the knowledge and skills that are necessary to, in Jefferson's view, protect and maintain freedom. The Social Studies Standards on the following pages attempt to do just this by specifying the particular knowledge and skills that Minnesota students will be required to learn in the disciplines of U.S. History, World History, Geography, Economics and Civics as required by Minnesota statutes.

These standards are written with the recognition that additional academic disciplines, Psychology, Sociology, and Anthropology, have strong traditions of instruction in Minnesota schools. Schools may choose to continue teaching in these academic disciplines as local traditions, interest, and school priorities dictate.

GEOGRAPHY

What is Geography?

Geography is the science of space and place on Earth's surface. It is an integrative discipline that brings together the physical and human dimensions of our world. Geography's subject matter is the spatial arrangement of the physical and human phenomena that make up the world's environments and gives character to places, large and small. Geography describes the changing patterns of places in words, maps, numbers and graphics, explains how these patterns come to be, and unravels their meaning.

Geography captures the imagination. It stimulates curiosity about the world and the world's diverse inhabitants and places as well as about local regions and global issues. It enables us to understand our home by opening windows on the rest of the world.

Why study Geography?

To be successful contributors to a democratic society, all individuals need to have an understanding of geography, which means that they need to have an understanding of the spatial context of people, places and environments on Earth.

The geographically literate person knows where important things are, why they are located in those places and the significance of the locational patterns of the world. Furthermore, she comprehends the nature and significance of multiple connections between people and places around the world.

This statement on the nature of geographic education is based on Geography for Life: National Geography Standards developed by the Geography Education Standards Project on behalf of the American Geographical Society, Association of American Geographers, National Council for Geographic Education and the National Geographic Society.

GEOGRAPHY – GRADES K-3

Strand (Grades K-3)	Sub-Strand	Standards	Benchmarks	Examples
V. GEOGRAPHY	A. Concepts of Location	The student will use directional and positional words to locate and describe people, places and things.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will describe the location of people, places and things by using positional words. 2. Students will use maps and globes to locate places referenced in stories and real life situations. 3. Students will explain that an address locates a specific place. 4. Students will name and use directional words to describe locations of places in the school and community. Students will locate places by using simple maps, and understand that maps are drawings of locations and places as viewed from above. 5. Students will use the equator and poles as reference points to describe locations. 6. Students will compare distances between two or more places shown on a map with simple terms, such as farther and closer. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Near/far, above/below, left/right, behind/in front 3. Street address, apartment number, classroom number 4. Near/far, above/below, left/right, behind/in front, high/low, north/south, east/west 5. Point to or mark United States, Minnesota, Europe, and Africa features on map of the world and globe, in relation to the poles and the equator 6. Determine which is farther from Minnesota: Texas or Alaska
V. GEOGRAPHY	A. Concepts of Location	The student will demonstrate working knowledge of the cardinal directions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will use cardinal and intermediate directions to locate places. 	Students will describe the directional relationships between home and places studied (N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W, NW)
V. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will use and create maps and globes to locate people, places and things.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will locate places by using simple maps, and understand that maps are drawings of locations and places as viewed from above. 2. Students will recognize and locate the outline shape of the state of Minnesota on a map/globe. 3. Students will create and interpret simple maps using the map elements of title, direction, symbols, and a map key or legend. 4. Students will locate the continents and oceans on a map of the world and a globe. 5. Students will recognize the outline shape of the contiguous United States. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find their desk in a map of their classroom 2. Point to or mark Minnesota on a political map 3. Make a map to illustrate a topic in history or a story from the reading curriculum 4. Point out borders that touch other countries or water and know the location of Alaska and Hawaii 5. Mark or point to Canada, Mexico, Egypt, China, India and Japan on a world

Strand (Grades K-3)	Sub-Strand	Standards	Benchmarks	Examples
			<p>6. Students will recognize the outline shapes of countries and locate cultures and civilizations studied in history.</p>	map and a globe
V. GEOGRAPHY	B. Maps and Globes	The student will use maps and globes to demonstrate specific geographical knowledge.	<p>1. Students will locate on a map the major world countries, states and major cities of the United States.</p> <p>2. Students will use an atlas to locate geographic information.</p>	<p>1. Ancient civilizations, capitals of major countries, largest cities in the United States</p> <p>2. Use index to find latitude and longitude of places and find those places on a map in the atlas</p>
V. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Features and Processes	The student will distinguish between physical and human made features of places on the Earth's surface.	<p>1. Students will name and locate physical features of the United States, including places about which they have read.</p> <p>2. Students will name and locate major human-made features of the United States, including features about which they have read.</p>	<p>1. Deserts, mountain ranges, major rivers</p> <p>2. Major cities, capital of Minnesota and their hometown</p>
V. GEOGRAPHY	C. Physical Features and Processes	The student will identify specific landforms and waterways on a map using geographical terms.	<p>1. Students will locate major river systems and mountain ranges on continents studied.</p> <p>2. Students will explain and use introductory geographical terms.</p>	<p>1. Nile River, Mekong River, Himalayan Mountains, Alps</p> <p>2. Tributary, boundary, island</p>