

Social Studies I-Search **“Working for Learning”**

Background: A good social studies student is one who exceeds the expectations in both breadth and depth of knowledge. In this project, you will demonstrate your depth and breadth of knowledge through an Information Literacy Research project. Information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information." Information literacy also is increasingly important in the contemporary environment of rapid technological change and proliferating information resources.

State Standards:

- 5.A.4a** Demonstrate a knowledge of strategies needed to prepare a credible research report (e.g., notes, planning sheets).
- 5.A.4b** Design and present a project (e.g., research report, scientific study, career/higher education opportunities) using various formats from multiple sources.
- 5.B.4a** Choose and evaluate primary and secondary sources (print and nonprint) for a variety of purposes.
- 5.C.4a** Plan, compose, edit and revise information (e.g., brochures, formal reports, proposals, research summaries, analyses, editorials, articles, overheads, multimedia displays) for presentation to an audience.
- 5.C.5b** Support and defend a thesis statement using various references including media and electronic resources.
- 16.A.5a** Analyze historical and contemporary developments using methods of historical inquiry ().
- 18.B.5** Use methods of social science inquiry (pose questions, collect and analyze data, make and support conclusions with evidence, report findings) to study the development and functions of social systems and report conclusions to a larger audience.

Learning Targets: The goal of the information literacy project for AT students is to develop skills using the AT research process: **S.T.U.D.Y.** By the end of the project students will:

- Identify and write researchable question
- Know how to access and evaluate a variety of resources
- Choose and evaluate primary and secondary sources (print and nonprint) for a variety of purposes.
- Incorporate a variety of strategies needed to prepare a credible research report
- Collect and analyze data
- Make and support inferences with evidence
- Support and defend a research question using various references
- Demonstrate organization & transformation of selected information
- Provide Bibliographic Citations for selected sources.
- Compose a meaningful world history writing assignment using this process.

Assignment: Select a historical topic of interest, select one of the five frameworks to focus your research, develop a researchable question to guide your inquiry, connect it to one of the five Social Studies skills (politically, economically, historically, geographically, and culturally), and write a researched based paper support your research question.

Frameworks: The student will demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the above Social Studies skills by applying them to **ONE** of these analytical frames.

1. **Describe a global pattern over time and space:** Develop a greater understanding of the evolution of global processes and contacts, especially in interaction with different types of human societies. For example, describe patterns of trade, war, diplomacy, international organizations, social constructs, migration, or the spread of religion.
 - a. **Example:** What is the one child policy? How is that policy affecting the population problem in South Asia?

2. **Connect local issues to global situations:** Describe how the functions and structures of local states' political culture and organization can be connected to global states and political identities of other nation states or the world. For example, explain the impact of technology on people and the environment or analyzing systems of social and gender structure on international trade.
 - a. **Example:** How many cases of Mad Cow disease have been reported in Great Britain since 1984? What is being done worldwide to prevent the spread of it?

3. **Compare cultures within and among other communities:** Analyze different cultural and intellectual developments within and among societies and compare their cultural frameworks. For example, take a culture and compare and contrast it with another culture when looking at the seven elements of culture, i.e. Socioeconomic breakdown, government systems, or role of religion on community.
 - a. **Example:** What aspects of western cultures most upset the Islamic militants and what do you see as a solution to these perceptions?

4. **Develop ability to assess claims of universal standards while remaining aware of human commonalities and differences:** Identify universal norms and standards within cultures while understanding similarities and differences among communities. For example, describe the similarities and differences among cultures when it comes to gender equality, social mobility, and/or religious standards.
 - a. **Example:** Compare how different countries celebrate Christmas. Also, describe the major difference in tradition.

5. **Describe an account of historical context to gain understanding:** Interpret factual knowledge of historical content to gain a better understanding of the connected world. For example, analyze the civil rights movement, apartheid, the Cold War, or the Industrial Revolution and connect it to world history and today.
 - a. **Example:** What country joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1982 and later joined the Western European Union in 1988? What is the impact of NATO on world peace?

Social Science Skills: The following five Social Science skills are explained in more detail below.

Political Systems

1. **Rationale:** Understanding the role of political systems is a key piece to developing and learning about culture and world history. Through the study of various forms and levels of government and the documents and institutions of the world, students will develop the skills and knowledge that they need to be contributing citizens, now and in the future.
 - a. **Example:** Describe the process of building consensus and how it can impact the characteristics of a nation's government.

Economic Systems

2. **Rationale:** People's lives are directly affected by the economies of cities, states, nations and the world. All people engage in economic activity: buying, selling, trading, producing and consuming. By understanding economic systems—and how economics blends with other social sciences, students will be able to make more informed choices, prudently use resources and function as effective participants in the economies around them.
 - a. **Example:** In the USSR, how did the totalitarian state change the economy and what affect did it have on the rest of the world?

Historical Perspective

3. **Rationale:** Historian George Santayana said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." In a broader sense, students who can examine and analyze the events of the past have a powerful tool for understanding the events of today and the future. They develop an understanding of how people, nations, actions and interactions have led to today's realities. In the process, they can better define their own roles as participating citizens.
 - a. **Example:** How are the changes taking place in Mexico City compare to those that occurred in Europe during the Industrial Revolution?

Geographic Systems

4. **Rationale:** The need for geographic literacy has never been greater or more obvious than in today's tightly interrelated world. Students must understand the world's physical features, how they blend with social systems and how they affect economies, politics and human interaction. Isolated geographic facts are not enough. To grasp geography and its effect on individuals and societies, students must know the broad concepts of spatial patterns, mapping, population and physical systems (land, air, water). The combination of geographic facts and broad concepts provides a deeper understanding of geography and its effects on individuals and societies.
 - a. **Example:** What are the effects of Global Warming on the polar ice caps?

Social Systems

5. **Rationale:** A study of social systems has two important aspects that help people understand their roles as individuals and members of society. The first aspect is culture consisting of the language, literature, arts and traditions of various groups of people. Students should understand common characteristics of different cultures and explain how cultural contributions shape societies over time. The second aspect is the interaction among individuals, groups and institutions. Students should know how and why groups and institutions are formed, what roles they play in society, and how individuals and groups interact with and influence institutions.
 - a. **Example:** Compare and contrast the cultures and the roles of women in the novels: *The Good Earth* and *Nectar in a Sieve*