

Building Literacy in Social Studies
Module 2: Instructional Shifts
Handouts



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Explore

Six Shifts in Iowa Core Literacy Standards for History/Social Studies

Shift 1: Disciplinary Literacy	Content area teachers emphasize reading and writing in their planning and instruction for teaching the content. Students learn through reading domain-specific texts in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects and by writing informative/explanatory and argumentative pieces.
Shift 2: Informational Text	Classrooms are places where students access the world- science, social studies, the arts and literature- through informational text and literary text. In elementary, at least 50% of what students read should be informational; in middle school, it should be 55%; and by the end of high school, it should be 70%.
Shift 3: Academic Vocabulary	Students constantly build the vocabulary they need to be able to access grade level complex texts. By focusing strategically on comprehension of pivotal and commonly found words teachers constantly build students' ability to access more complex texts across the content areas.
Shift 4: Text Complexity	In order to prepare students for the complexity of college and career-ready texts, each grade level requires growth in text complexity. Teachers create more time in the curriculum for close and careful reading and provide appropriate and necessary supports to make text accessible to students reading below grade level.
Shift 5: Text Based Evidence and Argument	Students have rich and rigorous conversations which are dependent on students reading rich and complex texts. Teachers ensure classroom experiences stay deeply connected to the text(s) and that students develop habits for making evidentiary arguments based on the text, both in conversation as well as in writing, to assess their comprehension of a text(s).
Shift 6: Writing from Sources	Writing instruction emphasizes use of evidence to inform or to make an argument; it includes short, focused research projects K-12. Students K-12 develop college and career ready skills through written arguments that respond to the ideas, events, facts, and arguments presented in the texts they listen to and read.

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Activity: In Your Own Words

Instructional Shift	Description in Your Own Words	How does this connect to social studies?	What This Looks Like in Your Classroom
Shift 1: Disciplinary Literacy			
Shift 2: Informational Text			
Shift 3: Academic Vocabulary			
Shift 4: Text Complexity			
Shift 5: Text Based Evidence and Argument			
Shift 6: Writing from Sources			

