
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, VICTORIA

COURSE OF STUDY
FOR
PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Social Studies, Grades VII. and VIII., 1956

Subject Revision Committee :

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Social Studies, Grades VII and VIII

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INTRODUCTION.

The courses in social studies for Grades VII. and VIII. are designed to extend the study of topics included in the courses for the earlier grades. In the course for Grade VII., the topics "The Family and the Community" are revised and extended to give point to a study of Australian regions and the rule of law. The family is treated as the social unit, and consideration is given to reasons why communities are formed, the members of which have rights and duties and are all subject to the rule of law. This leads to the first big topic, "A Regional Study of Australia", the main topic of the course for this grade. It provides for detailed treatment of the regions of Australia, comparison with world regions, and study of geographical, historical, and economic aspects. This topic should form the greater part of the year's work. The second big topic, "The Rule of Law", introduces the study of Australian civics. The last topic "Working Together in Australia", gathers together

the features of Australian life. Most of the year will be spent on topics 3 and 4, and topic 1 will be treated briefly.

The main topics of the course for Grade VIII. are The British Commonwealth of Nations, and "Living and Working Together". In the former, the history of each nation is treated briefly. Great Britain, which has been studied in the course for Grade VI., is treated from a more advanced point of view, including such aspects as population, needs, and problems such as food, clothing, and defence. In the latter topic, the pupil is acquainted with the world in which he will soon live and work, and he is given some values with which to tackle problems that will confront him. The topic "The World To-day" completes the study of the rule of law in the family, the community, the State, and finally among nations. In topic 4, the course is rounded off by emphasizing that, if a better world is to be made, it is necessary for all to be well-informed in world affairs, and to be tolerant of the views of others.

COURSE FOR GRADE VII.

TOPIC.

1. *Families and Communities of Families.*

The home as the environment where the child lives until he attains adulthood.

His needs and how they are met by his parents at the beginning.

His growth toward independence.

Learning to live together.

Privileges, responsibilities.

Standards of behaviour necessary in a family.

Family life in the past.

The Royal Family.

The family within the community.

The community as a collection of families.

How communities grew.

Factors determining their growth.

Necessity for law to maintain order in a community.

2. *The Local Community.*

Geographical position—relation to world as a whole.

Fixing position of locality—latitude, longitude.

Elementary geological study of the area. Necessary links with earth's history. Relief, drainage systems, prominent physical features.

Mapping.

Factors that determine climate—seasonal and annual rainfall, temperature, winds, etc.

SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENT.

Treat briefly child life in a wide range of environments to bring about an awareness of the common needs of children; for example, nomad Arab family, Eskimo family, family of Pacific Islanders, Indian family.

Consider physical needs, social needs, education needs. How are these met in our own country and in other societies? For example, nomad Arab family, Eskimo family, family of Pacific Islanders, Indian family.

As the child grows older, his interests widen and he comes under influences other than the family, for instance, church, school, reading, sport, radio, cinema, and travel.

What are the privileges and responsibilities of members of families?

Necessity for living harmoniously.

Some comparisons with ancient Egypt, Rome, Norman England. Even the greatest family is essentially like every other family.

Study some communities.

The aboriginal tribe, the Scottish clan, ancient Greek city, Australian town or city or country district.

Consider factors such as protection, family ties, provision of necessities of life in a primitive community; trade, agriculture, industry, communications, amenities in a civilised community.

Discuss laws necessary in a primitive tribe and in a civilized country.

Compare with rules of behaviour in a family.

The whole topic should be undertaken as a class project, the various aspects being investigated by groups.

A series of maps, models, and charts should be produced, and the results of the work and research, when combined, should give a comprehensive picture of the locality and the local community.

The topic should provide many opportunities for excursions and field work. Research should, as far as possible, be based on actual experiences.

Maps should be drawn after actual inspection of areas. If a map of the district in sufficient detail is not available, pupils could fill in details.

TOPIC.

SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENT.

History of locality—

- (a) Settlement, with reasons.
- (b) Land occupation and use.
- (c) Pioneers, present-day personalities.

How the needs of the community are met, for example, food, water, housing, health, safety, education, recreation, transport, communication.

The work of the community.

How the people are employed.

What wealth does the community produce?

Use of land.

How the community is governed. Municipal government.

How laws are made and how they are enforced.

3. Australia.

A regional study of Australia. Factors determining regions as treated in local study.

How these factors operate in Australia and the world—rainfall, temperature, prevailing winds.

Detailed treatment of the regions of Australia with emphasis on the climatic and economic features of each region.

Treatment of selected primary industries characteristic of each of the climatic regions, with attention to the historical, geographical, economic, and social aspects.

Treatment of selected secondary industries.

4. The Rule of Law.

The story of government in Australia.

Need of laws in large communities.

Laws relating to health, transport, marketing, communication, employment, keeping the peace, education.

How laws are made.

Legislating bodies—Commonwealth, State, Municipal.

Law observance and enforcement. Government departments.

Executive officers of these departments.

Police.

5. Working Together in Australia.

Study each of these aspects in relation to the locality. Some are entirely local. Some are the responsibility of the larger community, State, or Commonwealth.

In considering government, for example, visits should be made to such places as municipal offices, and opportunities should be taken of seeing legislative bodies at work.

Topography should be treated broadly.

Communication, government, food, and other problems of the pioneers.

Treat the development of State government systems, and movement for, and accomplishment of, Federation.

What have we gained from Federation?

Find out about some prominent statesmen who helped to bring it about.

This topic offers opportunities to introduce pupils to local representatives of departments.

Observe legislative bodies at work, if possible. Introduce pupils to councillors, M.L.A.'s and M.H.R.'s to discuss functions.

Obtain a copy of a piece of legislation.

This is a summing up of features of Australian life.

COURSE FOR GRADE VIII.

TOPIC.

SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENT.

1. The British Commonwealth of Nations.

Great Britain.

Some of Britain's problems to-day, for example, population, food, defence.

Trade to obtain raw materials for her industries and food and clothing requirements.

The treatment should be brief, the purpose being to give some facets of life in other parts of the Commonwealth and the history behind their existence as Commonwealth nations.

Britain's food problem might be treated thus:—

What part of her food supplies does Britain grow?

What food does she produce in sufficient quantity to meet her needs?

What foods does she import?

Where from?

What does she export in exchange? Consider the peanut experiment in Kenya and the sorghum experiment in Queensland.

Why were these bold experiments undertaken?

The other nations—Canada, South Africa, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Ceylon.

TOPIC.

Outline the history of each nation and of the Commonwealth.

Regional studies of these nations.

Industries, exports, imports.

For each country, treat an industry characteristic of the region, for example, lumber in Canada, mutton in New Zealand, tea in Ceylon.

Links that bind the Commonwealth.

Provision of basic necessities in India and Pakistan.

Language question—Canada, South Africa, India, Pakistan, Ceylon.

Racial question in South Africa.

Population—India, Australia. Australia has her problems. To what extent do they exist in the other Commonwealth nations?

2. *The World To-day.*

- (a) For every nation to receive its requirements of all goods, exchange is necessary.
- (b) What hinders free exchange of goods to-day?
- (c) Peace between nations. Purpose of United Nations Organization.
- (d) Rule of law between nations.
- (e) Some international problems.

3. *Living and Working Together.*

The world the child will enter when he leaves school.

The child's future in the community.

Employment—skills and abilities necessary for earning a living.

Apprenticeship.

Continued education.

Leisure.

Citizenship.

The part the citizen plays in the community:—

- (a) Abides by law.
- (b) Fulfills civic duties.

Responsibilities of a citizen:—

- (a) Care and protection of the family.
- (b) Protection of others and their property and treating them as he would wish to be treated.
- (c) Protection of public interests and property; guarding against vandalism.
- (d) Respect for law and order.
- (e) Performance of civic duties.
- (f) Paying for community benefits such as social services and recreation.

SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENT.

Only a brief period should be given to the history.

- (a) With reference, say, to Australia, what raw materials and manufactured goods do we require and do not produce? What do we sell in exchange?

- (b) Discuss customs barriers and exchange payment.

- (c) The attempt by the League of Nations.

What United Nations Organization is trying to do.

- (d) Is this necessary? Why is it difficult to enforce?

- (e) Name some problems. What are United Nations Organization and its subsidiaries doing in regard to—

- (i) illiteracy;
- (ii) food;
- (iii) health;
- (iv) extension of democracy?

This section is designed to be the final social studies work done before the child leaves school. At this stage he should be given some specific values with which to tackle the problems of life.

Review occupations open to children.

Disadvantages of dead-end jobs.

Occupation must—

- (a) be agreeable;
- (b) pay a reasonable wage;
- (c) offer advancement;
- (d) offer fair wages and conditions.

How to get a job. Answering advertisements. Interviews. Appearance and personality.

How to keep a job. Fair day's work for a fair wage. Rights of employer and employee. Pride in a job done well.

Abilities and attitudes designed to help a child to use his leisure moments to the best advantage.

Recreations—reading, sport, music, art.

A democracy can work well only when responsibilities as well as privileges are shared.

Many of these items can receive timely treatment in discussions of current affairs.

Part the citizen can play in protecting public property and checking vandalism.

What civic duties can a person be called upon to perform?

TOPIC.

SUGGESTED DEVELOPMENT.

The rights of a citizen:—

- (a) Protection for self and family.
- (b) Opportunity to earn a living.
- (c) Care and assistance in misfortune.
- (d) Freedom from want and fear, and of worship and speech.

- (a) How does the community protect a citizen and his family?
- (b) Find out about unemployment and its causes.
- (c) Find out about workers' compensation, accident insurance, pensions, and medical assistance in hospitals.
- (d) Link with (c). What is meant by freedom of speech?

4. Making a Better World.

Need for knowledge in order to understand national and world problems.
 Keeping abreast of world affairs.

How can you find out about current events and world affairs?

Newspapers, books, periodicals, lectures, broadcasts.
 Why should Australians try to find out as much as possible about South-east Asia?
 What other parts of the world are concerned in great movements to-day?

Understanding and showing tolerance of the views of others.

Why should we try to understand the views and opinions of others?

National standards and ideals. Attitudes of individuals build up into attitudes of nations.

What are some of the influences that are helping to make a better world?

Things you could do to help.

