

SOCIAL STUDIES SYLLABUS

PRIMARY



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Year of Implementation From 2006 (Updated 2008)

ISBN 981-05-4023-X

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Primary Social Studies syllabus was reviewed in 2003 with the intent of updating content and ensuring sound developmental progression from pre-school to primary. This is to ensure that the syllabus remains relevant to the needs of pupils and nation. The syllabus has incorporated knowledge, skills as well as attitudes and values essential to the development of a holistic understanding of Social Studies.

1.2 This syllabus provides pupils with a basic understanding of historical, geographical, economic and sociological knowledge at the primary level. The MOE initiatives of National Education (NE), Thinking Skills, Information Technology (IT), Economic Literacy and Financial Literacy are incorporated into the syllabus. In addition, in line with Innovation and Enterprise (I&E) and Teach Less, Learn More (TLLM), the syllabus content has been reduced to free up time and space for teachers to adopt innovative and interactive teaching methods, and to better enable pupils to take ownership of their learning.

2 Aims and Objectives

2.1 Aims

The Primary Social Studies syllabus aims to

- equip pupils with the knowledge, skills as well as attitudes and values to make informed decisions; and

- enable pupils to communicate and work as a team in a multi-cultural and interdependent world.

2.2 Objectives

To achieve these aims, it is important that pupils acquire the three basic components of knowledge, skills as well as attitudes and values. The specific objectives to be developed in each component are as follows

2.2.1 Knowledge

- To understand people's interaction with places and the relationships between people, places and the environments;
- To acquire knowledge of how things were in the past and how things change and develop over time;
- To understand the importance of making informed choices about the use of resources; and
- To appreciate the multi-cultural world.

2.2.2 Skills

- To acquire, use and evaluate information and ideas from a variety of sources;
- To express and present information and ideas clearly in oral, visual and written forms;
- To work effectively in a variety of group settings; and
- To apply decision-making skills.

2.2.3 Attitudes and Values

- To develop respect for and positive attitudes towards their own, and other people's culture;

- To develop a sense of responsibility towards the environment;
- To develop a positive attitude towards life-long learning; and
- To foster a sense of belonging to the country.

3 Curriculum Time

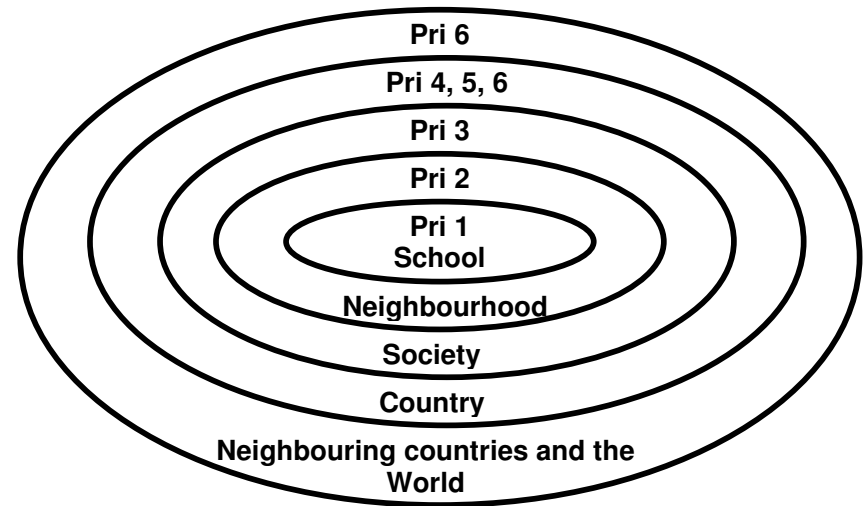
- 3.1 Social Studies is compulsory for all levels in primary schools.
- 3.2 The time allocation for the different levels is as follows

<u>Level</u>	<u>No. of periods per week</u>
Pri 1 to Pri 3	1
Pri 4	2
Pri 5 to Pri 6	3

4 Framework of the Syllabus

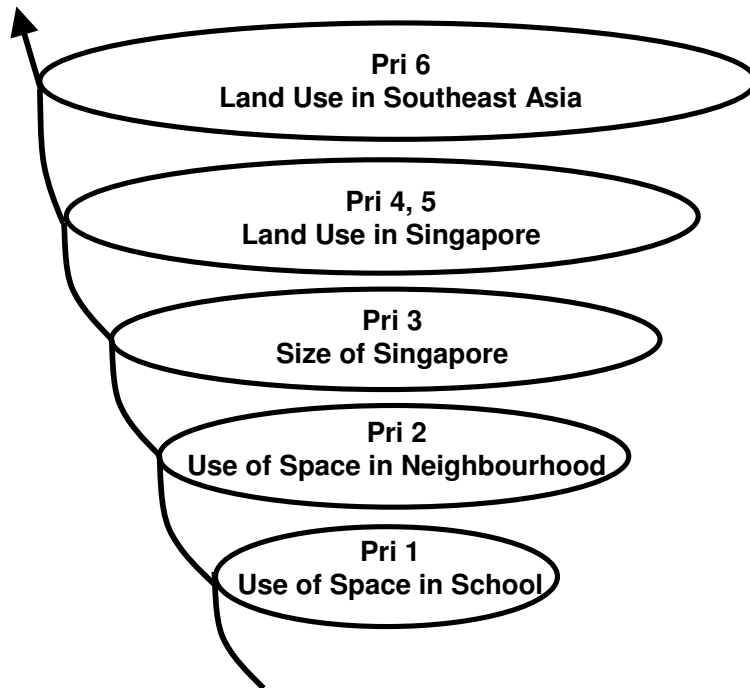
- 4.1 The sequence of the topics in the Primary Social Studies syllabus is based on the expanding environment approach. Such an approach allows pupils to first look at topics that are familiar and gradually proceed to topics that are less familiar. The syllabus begins in Primary 1 by examining the pupils' immediate environment, the school, and moves on to the neighbourhood, the society, the country and finally ends in Primary 6 with the study of Singapore's Southeast Asian neighbours and other countries.

Figure 1 – The Expanding Environment Approach



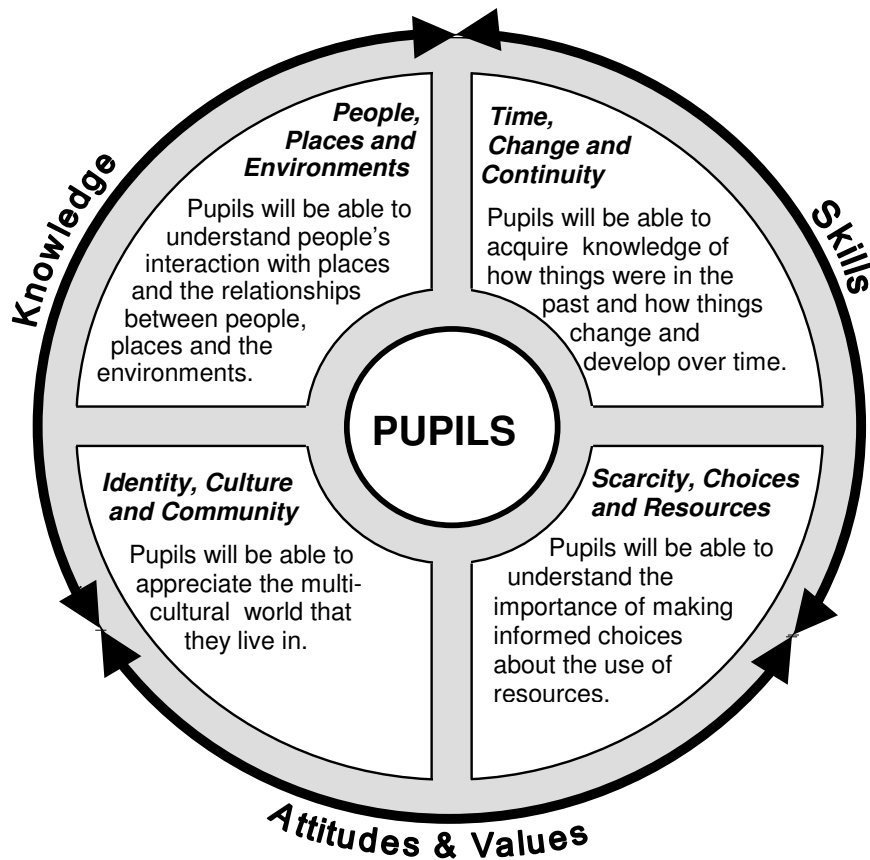
- 4.2 The Primary Social Studies Syllabus advocates the teaching of concepts using the spiral approach. It presents concepts and skills to pupils at a higher level each year. This approach helps pupils understand how a new application or an idea is connected to one learnt previously. It also introduces and reinforces knowledge and feelings about Singapore in increasing depth and breadth. *Figure 2* shows the spiral approach in the teaching of concepts, for example, *Land Use*.

Figure 2 – The Spiral Approach in the Teaching of Concepts



- 4.3 Themes are introduced to align the content to ensure continuity and progression across levels. The four themes are “*People, Places and Environments*”, “*Time, Change and Continuity*”, “*Scarcity, Choices and Resources*” and “*Identity, Culture and Community*”. These themes allow for a seamless integration of the components of Geography, History, Economics and Sociology in the curriculum framework.
- 4.4 The themes also provide for a smooth transition in the teaching of content and skills from one level to the next.
- 4.5 The conceptual model, as shown in *Figure 3*, illustrates how pupils acquire knowledge, skills as well as attitudes and values objectives through the four different themes.

Figure 3 – The Conceptual Model



5 Suggested Teaching Strategies

5.1 A variety of appropriate teaching strategies, activities and teaching aids can be employed to engage pupils in reflective and interactive learning.

5.1.1 Interactive and pupil-centred learning approaches are recommended to arouse the pupils' interest and to engage them as self-directed and independent learners. Such approaches include cooperative learning strategies, storyline method, oral history, providing real life examples and SAIL (Strategies for Active and Independent Learning).

5.1.2 Activities to encourage pupils' participation could include group discussions, simulation exercises, role plays, debates and the use of models. Fieldtrips should be conducted wherever possible. National Heritage Tours and Learning Journeys could be incorporated as part of the fieldtrips.

5.1.3 Teaching aids could include photographs, newspaper clippings, CD-ROMs, RDMC (Rich Digital Media Content), image masters, games, the Internet and video programmes.

6 Assessment

- 6.1 Social Studies will continue to be a non-examination subject for all levels. Assessment is however important to help teachers monitor pupils' progress in the mastery of concepts, skills as well as attitudes and values. It also serves to evaluate the effectiveness of the Social Studies instructional programme and to communicate to stake holders what we value in education. As an integral part of instruction, there should be continuous assessment of pupils' learning throughout the programme.
- 6.2 Pupils will be assessed through both formal and non-formal modes of assessment.
- 6.2.1 Formal assessment modes could include pen-and-paper assessments such as worksheets and/or exercises from the Activity Books.
- 6.2.2 Non-formal assessment modes provide for more variety and enjoyment in teaching and learning. They could include activities such as role play, debate, interview, journal writing and Show-and-Tell.
- 6.3 Assessment tasks may be individual or group-based. A variety of tasks should be used to gather information about the pupils' performances. This is to enable teachers to draw valid and reliable conclusions about pupils' demonstration of the learning outcomes. All assessment given should be placed in a meaningful context.
- 6.4 Self-assessment and peer-assessment could be incorporated in some of the assessment tasks for pupils from Primary 3 to Primary 6. Pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on their own and others' performances. These types of assessment encourage pupils to be accountable for their own learning.

7 Overview of the Syllabus

Primary 1	Unit 1	Our School
Primary 2	Unit 2	Our Neighbourhood
Primary 3	Unit 3	Our Needs
Primary 4	Unit 4	Our Beginnings
	Unit 5	Our Heritage
Primary 5	Unit 6	Singapore Under Foreign Rule
	Unit 7	Building the Nation
Primary 6	Unit 7	Our Progress
	Unit 8	Our Links with Southeast Asia and the World

Syllabus Content



	Topic	Content	Concepts
P 1 – Our School	People in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends in my class/ school • People who work in my school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution • Cooperation • Community
	Places in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classrooms, Canteen, School hall, School field, Teachers’ room and other special rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Use of space • Needs and wants
	Special days in the school calendar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NE Commemorative days, Sports Day, Teachers’ Day, Children’s Day, Speech and Prize-giving Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebration • Pride in school

Knowledge Objectives:

People, Places and Environments

Pupils will be able to understand the features and functions of a school and describe the roles and responsibilities of people in the school

Time, Change and Continuity

Pupils will be able to understand how schools are like in the past and how schools are like today

Scarcity, Choices and Resources

Pupils will be able to understand that scarcity of resources requires individuals to make choices

Identity, Culture and Community

Pupils will be able to understand the significance of celebrating special days in the school

Skills Objectives:**Process**

Pupils will be able to interpret visuals including pictures, diagrams and maps

Communication

Pupils will be able to express ideas orally based on knowledge, observation and experience

Participation

Pupils will be able to work effectively in groups and complete simple group tasks collaboratively

Critical and Creative Thinking

Pupils will be able to use the skill of comparing to discuss similarities and differences

Attitudes and Values Objectives:

- Pupils will be able to exercise personal responsibility and care for school property
- Pupils will be able to develop a sense of belonging and show pride and loyalty to the school

	Topic	Content	Concepts
P 2 – Our Neighbourhood	People in the neighbourhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living in the neighbourhood • People working in the neighbourhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goods and services • Contribution
	Places and land use in the neighbourhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land use for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Administration, Business, Housing, Recreation and Transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Neighbourhood • Community • Land scarcity
	Festivals of the people in the neighbourhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese New Year • Hari Raya Puasa • Deepavali • Christmas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customs and practices • Festival • Racial Harmony

Knowledge Objectives:

People, Places and Environments

Pupils will be able to develop an awareness of the role of people in the neighbourhood and the use of space in the neighbourhood

Time, Change and Continuity

Pupils will be able to understand that people, places and things change over time

Scarcity, Choices and Resources

Pupils will be able to understand that people depend on each other for goods and services

Identity, Culture and Community

Pupils will be able to understand the culture and practices of the various ethnic groups in the community

Skills Objectives:**Process**

Pupils will be able to sequence and categorise information according to given criteria

Communication

Pupils will be able to listen actively to others to understand their points of view

Participation

Pupils will be able to share information and ideas to contribute to a group task

Critical and Creative Thinking

Pupils will be able to brainstorm creative solutions to problems

Attitudes and Values Objectives:

- Pupils will be able to appreciate the multicultural nature of the community
- Pupils will be able to appreciate the importance of living in harmony in the neighbourhood
- Pupils will be able to appreciate the need for cooperation among the communities
- Pupils will be able to practise socially responsible behaviour

	Topic	Content	Concepts
Primary 3 – Our Needs	Meeting Our Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our country, Singapore <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Size, population and position of Singapore • Providing for our needs in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food - Water - Housing - Fuel - Defence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Size • Conservation • Scarcity • Needs and wants • Land use • Defence

Knowledge Objectives:

People, Places and Environments

Pupils will be able to understand how people adapt to and utilise the environment

Time, Change and Continuity

Pupils will be able to understand how people meet their basic needs in the past and present

Scarcity, Choices and Resources

Pupils will be able to understand the constraints faced in the allocation of resources

Identity, Culture and Community

Pupils will be able to understand their roles as members of the community

Skills Objectives:**Process**

Pupils will be able to gather and record information from print and non-print sources

Communication

Pupils will be able to present ideas and information through a variety of means

Participation

Pupils will be able to organise themselves in group work and keep simple records

Critical and Creative Thinking

Pupils will be able to consider advantages and disadvantages of solution to a problem

Attitudes and Values Objectives:

- Pupils will be able to show care for the environment
- Pupils will be able to appreciate the need for creative solutions in overcoming constraints

Primary 4A – Our Beginnings	Topic	Content	Concepts
	Singapore before 1819	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A brief history of Singapore before 1819 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Origin Settlement
	Founding of Modern Singapore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrival of Raffles Arrival of early settlers Raffles' Town Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location Free Trade Migration Planning Vision
	Our early settlers and their contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The contributions of the early settlers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution Entrepreneurship Hardship

Primary 4B – Our Heritage	Topic	Content	Concepts
	Our heritage areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kampong Glam Chinatown Little India 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage Conservation
Our multi-racial society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customs and practices, dress, food and games of the different ethnic groups in Singapore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identity Culture 	

Knowledge Objectives:**People, Places and Environments**

Pupils will be able to understand how human activities affect the development of a community

Time, Change and Continuity

Pupils will be able to understand the impact and the consequences of the decisions on the environment over time

Scarcity, Choices and Resources

Pupils will be able to understand that unequal distribution of resources results in the exchange of goods and services

Identity, Culture and Community

Pupils will be able to understand how traditions, beliefs and symbols of heritage contribute to their sense of identity

Skills Objectives:**Process and Inquiry**

Pupils will be able to organise information in various ways

Communication

Pupils will be able to convey information for a particular purpose and audience

Participation

Pupils will be able to make sound decisions in cooperation with others

Critical and Creative Thinking

Pupils will be able to identify a problem and provide innovative solutions to problems

Attitudes and Values Objectives:

- Pupils will be able to appreciate the cultural diversity of the different ethnic communities living in Singapore
- Pupils will be able to appreciate the importance of groups and individuals in the community

	Topic	Content	Concepts
P 5A – Singapore Under Foreign Rule	Singapore during World War II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fall of Singapore • Singapore under Japanese rule • Japanese surrender and return of the British • War heroes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defence • Hardship • Freedom
	Life after the War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment • Shortage of food and water • Inadequate housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survival • Scarcity • Poverty

	Topic	Content	Concepts
P 5B – Building The Nation	Singapore's struggle for self-government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons for wanting self-government • Singapore leaders in the 1950s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Marshall - Lim Yew Hock - Lee Kuan Yew 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Election • Self-government • Vision
	Becoming an independent nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merger and separation • Independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merger • Separation • Independence
	Working towards a Singaporean identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significance of national symbols <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National flag, Pledge, State Crest, National Anthem, National flower • Creation of a national identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National identity • Nation building • National symbols

**Knowledge Objectives:****People, Places and Environments**

Pupils will be able to understand how events affect people and places

Time, Change and Continuity

Pupils will be able to understand how past events shape the present

Scarcity, Choices and Resources

Pupils will be able to understand that resources are scarce and have to be allocated through various mechanisms

Identity, Culture and Community

Pupils will be able to develop an awareness of the different aspects of the Singaporean identity

Skills Objectives:**Process and Inquiry**

Pupils will be able to draw conclusions using historical data

Communication

Pupils will be able to present a viewpoint with supporting evidence

Participation

Pupils will be able to assign roles and set expectations for group tasks

Critical and Creative Thinking

Pupils will be able to take different perspectives, generate new ways of viewing a situation and develop arguments

Attitudes and Values Objectives:

- Pupils will be able to appreciate the contributions made by Singapore leaders in the 1950s
- Pupils will be able to appreciate the significance of independence
- Pupils will be able to develop a sense of rootedness to Singapore

P 6A – Our Progress	Topic	Content	Concepts
	Geographical overview of Singapore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position and size of Singapore in relation to the world Characteristics of its physical environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location Size Climate
Singapore's progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport/communications Industries Leisure and Recreation Education Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Globalisation Industry Entrepreneurship Innovation 	

P 6B – Our Links with Southeast Asia and the World	Topic	Content	Concepts
	Southeast Asian countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A geographical overview People and their way of life Main economic activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic activities Resources Culture
Our links with the rest of the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singapore's links with other countries through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade, Defence, Health, Education Singapore's involvement in ASEAN Singapore's involvement in international organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN, WTO, WHO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interdependence Globalisation Cooperation Collaboration Regionalism 	

**Knowledge Objectives:****People, Places and Environments**

Pupils will be able to understand how people adapt to and change their environment

Time, Change and Continuity

Pupils will be able to develop an awareness of the progress made in Singapore and other countries

Scarcity, Choices and Resources

Pupils will be able to recognise the element of interdependence between Singapore and other countries

Identity, Culture and Community

Pupils will be able to develop an awareness of the cultures of the peoples of Southeast Asia

Skills Objectives:**Process and Inquiry**

Pupils will be able to propose and evaluate solutions and issues

Communication

Pupils will be able to make sound arguments to persuade others to accept their points of view, decisions or solutions

Participation

Pupils will be able to show respect for the opinion of others

Critical and Creative Thinking

Pupils will be able to explore ideas beyond what is given and consider their relevance

Attitudes and Values Objectives:

- Pupils will be able to show confidence in Singapore's future
- Pupils will be able to appreciate the similarities and differences among peoples and communities in the region and the rest of the world
- Pupils will be able to appreciate the importance of maintaining good relationships in the region and the rest of the world
- Pupils will be able to develop a sense of responsibility to local and global environment and communities