

# INQUIRY JOURNEYS

Elementary Social Studies Curriculum

## Scope and Sequence

inquirED's  
**INQUIRY JOURNEYS**  
 K-5 SOCIAL STUDIES



LEARN MORE:

Download Scope and Sequence



## Ask More of Your Curriculum

Teachers and students deserve **high-quality instructional materials** that support **rigorous and engaging inquiry-based social studies**.

## More Knowledge Building and Hands-On Learning for Students

**WATER**  
 LAUNCH RITE | Published June 6, 2022

Water is necessary for all life. We need water to stay alive and healthy. We use water for growing food, washing, cooking. We also use it to and cooling, manufacture transportation, and more. Fish and wildlife need rivers, lakes, and wetlands.

**WE NEED TO CONSERVE WATER**

Diagram of water cycle in the world

99.8% unusable water

### Growing as Readers and Writers

Reading, writing, speaking, and listening tasks are scaffolded across units.

**Vocabulary**

**push factor:** a reason that causes people to leave a place where they have been living

**pull factor:** a reason for or

**Guiding Questions**

- What push or pull factor led to the move?
- What challenging experiences did they have?
- What positive experiences did they have?



### Mastering Social Studies Standards

Content, instruction, and assessment align with standards to support student learning.

The New Colonists  
 By Emma Lazarus (1843-1897)  
 Directed by  
 Narration by  
 Animation & Design by  
 Sound Design by

**1773 BOSTON GAZETTE REPORTS TEA PARTY**  
 Adaptation of original text in the Boston Gazette, Oct. 23, 1773  
 LAUNCH RITE | Adapted by InquirED in August of 2021

### Exploring Diverse Sources

Units utilize diverse, complex texts that support culturally-responsive learning.

Today we will explore maps and images to investigate how landscapes change over time.

**Discuss**

- What story do these maps and images tell us about the changing landscape?
- What inferences can we make about why the landscape changes?
- What connections can we make to our own landscape?

### Discussing, Collaborating, and Taking Action

Lessons prompt collaboration and discussion, culminating in impactful real-world projects.

# More Everyday Support for Teachers

**OPENING**

**Spark Thinking** Estimated Time: 15 min

- Spark thinking about the waves of immigration to the US with a brief gallery walk.
  - Point out the **Waves of Immigration Gallery Walk posters**, and set clear expectations about how students should move around the room (either in groups or individually) and the appropriate volume level.
  - Invite students to briefly walk around the room to silently see-think-wonder in response to images and captions on the posters.
    - Remind students to think about concrete observations in response to the "what" prompt, interpretations in response to the "think" prompt, and the bigger questions that the images raise for them in response to the "wonder" prompt.
- Introduce the Essential Question guiding this module's investigation.
  - Explain that students will be investigating 3<sup>rd</sup> lessons while learning about historical waves we are experiencing today.
  - Explain that "waves" refer to times in his large numbers.
- Connect to the Essential Questions by detail.
  - Invite students to share out observations.

**ACTIVE INQUIRY**

**Text Examination**

- Introduce the **"Coming in Waves"** article with a brief source analysis.
  - Ask: What can be identified about this source (ex. author, text features, etc.)?
  - Invite students to identify familiar concepts and predict what the text will be about.
  - Encourage them to support their predictions with evidence from the title, images, and headings.

**CLOSING**

**Reflect and Connect** Estimated Time: 10 min

- Present the **Waves of Immigration Anchor Chart** and invite students to share findings from the text examination and annotation.
  - Record key takeaways on the anchor chart as students share evidence in response to the guiding questions.
    - When students share evidence about push and pull factors, challenge them to classify each factor as a "push" or "pull."
    - Discuss evidence about the impacts of these waves.
- Introduce the **Waves of Immigration exit ticket** and prompt students to complete it independently.
  - Circulate to monitor independent work and support students as needed.

**Waves of Immigration Anchor Chart**

**Waves of Immigration exit ticket**

**Detailed lesson plans** come with step-by-step instructional guidance to support discussion, collaboration, and projects.

**Coming in Waves**

By Andrew Matthews May 01, 2013 | 760L

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**ASSESSMENT GUIDE**  
**Waves of Immigration exit ticket**

**Look for:**

- Reliable identification of push or pull factors driving the major waves of immigration
- Evidence of causes or conditions that many people have emigrated from
- Identification of an outcome of the major waves of US immigration

Respond to the questions below by details and evidence from the "Waves of Immigration" article.

**Waves of Immigration Exit Ticket**

What are 3 reasons that immigrants have come to the US since the 1900s?

Responses will vary, but may include:

- Seeking poverty and famine
- Looking for new jobs
- Looking for new land to live on


Today we will learn about major waves of immigration in order to identify causes and impacts of immigration to the US across history.

**Share Out**


- What do you see?
- What do the posters make you think?
- What do the posters make you wonder?

**Our Changing Landscape**


**Landscape Modification Photo Cards** Modification: Bridges and Tunnels



A bridge is built over land or water to connect two places. This is the Golden Gate Bridge in California. It crosses the San Francisco Bay. Many people drive, bike, or walk across the bridge each day.



A bridge is built over land or water to connect two places. This is the Brooklyn Bridge in New York City. It crosses the East River. Many people drive, bike, or walk across the bridge each day.



A bridge is built to pass over water. This is the Tower Bridge in London, England. It crosses the River Thames. The bridge opens up so that ships can pass and

**inquirED THE ROLE OF TREES**

Level: 5-8 | Published April 1, 2022

**Benefits of Trees**

Trees are very important to the environment. They give us clean air. Trees pull in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and release oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>). This is a natural way of cleaning the air.

Trees absorb water from the rain.

**mine reclamation land (after)**

**ALL ABOUT MINING**

www.allaboutmining.org

Colorado Mining Association Education Foundation, Inc.

**Slide presentations, student handouts, and assessment** are a click away and customizable to support instruction.

Ready-to-go multimodal content and sources include **1000s** of videos, texts, maps, and photographs.

## Standards-Aligned K-5 Inquiry Units

K	Navigating School	My Team & Self	Past, Present, & Future	
1	Families Near & Far	Our Special Location	Civic Engagement	
2	Meeting Needs & Wants	Our Changing Landscape	Innovation	
3	Global Connections	Migration & Movement	The 20th Century Civil Rights Movement	
4	Natural Resources of the US	Our State's History	Economic Choices	
5	Native America	The Colonial Era	The American Revolution	Rights & Responsibilities

inquirED works closely with leaders to design the best scope and sequence for you.

VIEW SAMPLE:





## Navigating School

### How can we make school a great place for everyone?

Students need to understand the places and people around them to thrive at school. In this Inquiry, students explore their roles at school, investigating how they can make choices that will make school a great place for themselves and those around them.

#### Investigation Modules



School norms, behaviors, interactions

Creating maps of the school and classroom



Interviewing staff members about roles and duties

Leaders, helpers, and friends



Student roles and responsibilities

Being a helper



Encountering problems

Tactics to help resolve conflicts

#### Action Module



Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Written Project, students might collaborate on an original storybook to help future students navigate school.



## My Team and Self

### How can we unite to build a powerful class community?

Successful teams can do just about anything! But to understand what you can accomplish as a team, you need to understand who makes up the team and how those individuals can work together. This Inquiry explores essential elements of personal identity to help students recognize how they can contribute to their class community and their own learning in amazing ways.

#### Investigation Modules



Self-portraits: historical and student-generated

Family, culture, identity



Brainpower and brain growth

Strengths, challenges, growth mindset



Case Study: Apollo 11 & the power of different skills

Classmate interviews, celebrating unique strengths



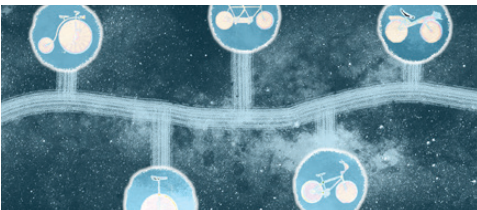
Cooperation and teamwork

Setting shared goals

#### Action Module



Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a 3D Project, students might create works of art to teach visitors about how knowing themselves and their classmates helps them form a strong team.



## Past, Present, and Future

### How can we use wisdom from the past to build a better future?

Understanding our past experiences and how our memories shape us is integral to planning for our future. Students explore concepts of time and memory, discovering and sharing stories and memories that have helped them learn and grow.

#### Investigation Modules



Past, present, future

Learning from stories



Chronological order

Timelines



Increments and measures (months, weeks, days)

Natural cycles and patterns (night & day, seasons)



Learning from experiences

Relationship between actions and outcome

#### Action Module



Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a 2D Project, students might create a visual display of illustrations and advice that shares the wisdom they've gained from past experience.







## Families Near and Far


**How can we bring families together to form stronger communities?**

Families take many forms; there's no single definition. In this Inquiry, students identify the roles and responsibilities that contribute to a family. They explore what makes their family unique and the differences they may encounter among different families and cultures.

### Investigation Modules

-  Exploration of different family structures  
Families around the world
-  Customs and traditions  
Exploring holidays and food traditions
-  Responsibilities, needs, and wants of a family  
Compare and contrast different family roles
-  Diverse family types  
How families help each other

### Action Module

-  Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Written Project, students might collect recipes to create an original cookbook that celebrates the diversity of traditions in the classroom community.







## Our Special Location


**How can we help others appreciate our special location?**

Our geographic location shapes who we are and how we live. During this Inquiry, students investigate how location and climate shape daily life, and how goods and services meet community needs.

### Investigation Modules

-  Maps and globes: symbols, directions, location  
Mapping important community locations
-  Landforms, bodies of water, local and regional climates  
Effects of climate and landscape on way of life
-  Community goods and services  
Characteristics of rural, urban, and suburban communities
-  Community workers and helpers  
Symbols that represent our community

### Action Module

-  Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Multimedia Project, students might use cardboard boxes to create a 3D map of their community with symbols and signage, inviting other students to their class for a miniature guided tour.



## Civic Engagement


**How can we work together for the good of the community?**

You are never too young to engage in civic life. In this Inquiry, students explore different forms of participation and investigate key civics topics such as rights, fairness, responsibilities, rules, and laws.

### Investigation Modules

-  Responsibilities as community citizens  
Purpose and function of rules and laws
-  Difference between fact and opinion  
Making informed choices
-  Historical changes in rules and laws  
Case Study: Women and girls in sports
-  Working together to overcome challenges  
Case study: Americans with Disabilities Act

### Action Module

-  Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Presentation Project, students might collaborate to plan a video PSA that investigates an issue in their school community they would like to address.



## Meeting Needs and Wants

### How can we work together to meet community needs and wants?

Communities are created to meet our common needs. In this Inquiry, students are introduced to the concepts of needs and wants, scarcity and abundance, the ways that producers and consumers interact, and how individuals and communities make choices about how to use their resources.

#### Investigation Modules

- 🔍 Understanding needs and wants  
Money Wise: prices, saving, spending, and giving
- 🔍 Producers and consumers  
Market Economy: supply and demand
- 🔍 Planned vs. unexpected expenses  
Financial literacy and evaluating financial decision-making
- 🔍 Community needs and wants  
Generating ideas to meet community needs

#### Action Module

- 🔍 Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Multimedia Project, students might demonstrate their understanding of community needs and wants by designing original products for “sale” at a model marketplace or makers fair.



## Our Changing Landscape

### How can we respond to our changing landscape?

Our relationship to the physical world around us begins with our own geographical location and the physical features of that location. In this Inquiry, students explore access to and dependency on natural resources, how and why we modify the landscape, and the impacts that modifications can have on land, water, and living things.

#### Investigation Modules

- 🔍 Identifying geographic features  
Natural resources of community and state
- 🔍 Basic human needs  
Freshwater, issues of scarcity
- 🔍 Types of modifications to the environment  
Population growth and landscape changes
- 🔍 Responses to environmental problems  
Innovation in fresh food production

#### Action Module

- 🔍 Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a 3D Project, students might design and share with other students an interactive game in which everything is traced back to its source as a natural resource.



## Innovation

### How can we innovate to improve the world around us?

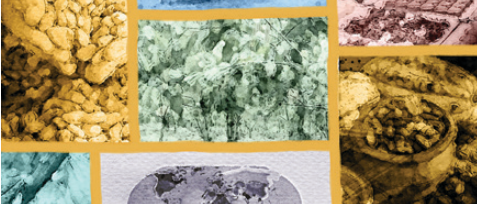
Innovation touches every facet of life – past, present, and future. In this Inquiry, students consider how innovation changes society as a whole as they make their own blueprints for inventing a better world.

#### Investigation Modules

- 🔍 Sparks and impacts of innovation  
Using evidence to evaluate impact of innovation
- 🔍 Spotlight on George Washington Carver  
Characteristics of effective innovators
- 🔍 Impact of Industrial Revolution’s innovations  
Transcontinental Railroad
- 🔍 Modern innovations  
Improving communities through innovation

#### Action Module

- 🔍 Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Presentation Project, students might inform the community through a living history museum of the innovations and innovators who have brought about significant changes to daily life.



## Global Connections

### How can we act as global citizens?

Is it possible to touch a country and its people without ever setting foot there? In this Inquiry, students explore the geographic ways they are connected to distant places and the people who live there through the movement of people, goods, and ideas.

### Investigation Modules



Relative location and geographic features

Latitude, longitude, and grid systems



Physical and human geographic characteristics

Geography's effect on culture, goods, and services



Domestic and global trade

Using natural resources and raw materials



Cultural Diffusion

Globalization and interdependence

### Action Module



Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a 2D Project, students might inform their peers of the origins stories of various products by creating a wordless storybook that traces the journeys of these products.



## Migration and Movement

### How can we honor and respect our many cultures?

Throughout the history of the United States, immigration has played a large part in shaping our culture, politics, and economy. In this Inquiry, students explore the timeless themes of immigration as they uncover the meaning and value of cultural identity.

### Investigation Modules



Identifying push and pull factors

The impact of conflict on movement



Waves of immigration to the US

Identifying themes of immigration experiences



Cultural identity and immigration

Evolving identities



Diverse communities

Community connections

### Action Module



Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Multimedia Project, students might educate their community by hosting an exhibition night focusing on the stories of local landmarks named after immigrants.



## The 20th Century Civil Rights Movement

### How can we take steps toward equality and justice?

All people in the United States have the right to equal protection under the law. In this Inquiry, students investigate how citizens exercise their rights and responsibilities in our democracy through the lens of the Civil Rights Movement.

### Investigation Modules



Rights and responsibilities

Segregation



Civil rights movement

Changemakers in the civil rights movement



The March on Washington

Civil Rights Act of 1964



Learning from examples

Positive footsteps for change

### Action Module



Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Written Project, students might celebrate the contributions Civil Rights supporters by creating a graphic novel highlighting their efforts and impact.



## Natural Resources of the US

### How should we use the natural resources of the United States?

Each region of the United States is unique; together, they provide people with the different resources they need to survive. In this Inquiry, students explore the rich natural resources across the US, how people use them, and the ways everyone can help sustain them.

#### Investigation Modules



Regions of the US  
Climate, geography, and resources



Renewable vs. non-renewable energy  
Energy from the earth, air, water, and sun



Case study of the Dust Bowl  
Economic, social, and environmental stress



Promoting a working landscape  
Sustainability

#### Action Module



Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Written Project, students might create brochures to support an initiative to protect a natural resource in their community.



## Our State's History

### How can we help tell the story of our state?

The historical roots of early state and local history are not buried, but alive in the artifacts and monuments around us, as well as the stories that we tell. In this Inquiry, students learn about the first peoples to live in their state and the major events of their state's history.

#### Investigation Modules



First evidence of humans in our state  
Historic Native American cultures



State-specific history and developments timeline  
Researching and telling our state's story



Rights and freedom in state history  
US Policy and Native Americans' Freedom

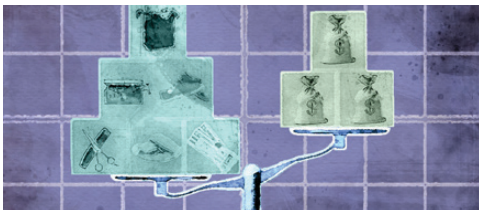


Historical Sources and Perspectives  
Memorializing state history

#### Action Module



Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a 3D Project, students might honor a person or event from state history by creating and presenting a scale prototype of a monument for their community.



## Economic Choices

### How can we make economic decisions that positively impact our own lives and communities?

Throughout our lives, the economic decisions we make affect us and others in our community in profound ways. In this Inquiry, students explore their role as a consumer, producer, and economic decision-maker.

#### Investigation Modules



Goods, services, producers, consumers  
Supply and demand



Opportunity costs  
Costs and benefits



Exploring our region's economic story  
Market demand and resources



Making economic choices that work toward goals  
The role of banks

#### Action Module



Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Multimedia Project, students might design a business plan to address a community need, conducting research and developing a way to produce and sell a valuable good or service.





## Native America

How can we better honor the cultural heritage of this land?

Ever since their first encounter with Europeans, Native Americans have been misrepresented in both the popular imagination and the historical record. This Inquiry challenges students to explore diverse historical sources to form a deeper understanding of Native America's rich and varied cultures and histories.

### Investigation Modules

- Diversity across native america
- Storytelling as a historical source
- Cultural areas investigation
- Folktales investigation
- Artifacts as historical sources
- Identifying perceptions of the "First Thanksgiving"
- Analyzing, documenting artifacts
- Comparing narratives

### Action Module

- Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a 2D Project, students might share the true stories of inspiring Native Americans through a series of honorary portraits to be displayed in the school building.



## The Colonial Era

How can facing the complexities of America's past help us to meet the challenges of the present?

The European settlement of North America created a collision of worlds that led to profound global impacts. In this Inquiry, students go beyond a single narrative to explore the complex web of events and cross-cultural interactions that helped shape both the past and present of our nation.

### Investigation Modules

- The Columbian Exchange
- Jamestown Colony source analysis
- Migration to the Americas
- Plymouth Colony source analysis
- Colonial geography, economics, and culture
- Social roles in Colonial America
- Slavery in the colonies
- Colonial resistance

### Action Module

- Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Presentation Project, students might address the representation of cultural groups in colonial era artworks through a presentation to the school community.



## The American Revolution

How can we promote life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all?

The American Revolution reshaped society, culture, and government in the American colonies and territories. In this Inquiry, students explore the events, causes, and consequences of the Revolution, uncovering how diverse groups and individuals shaped the course of US History.

### Investigation Modules

- Pre-war timeline of important events
- British and American strengths and weaknesses
- The development of colonial identity
- Major battles and the homefront
- Source analysis of Capitol paintings
- Declaration of Independence
- Founding fathers case studies
- The Constitution, conflict, and compromise

### Action Module

- Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a Written Project, students might create a magazine to inform their community about contemporary events that align to (or don't live up to) the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.



## Rights and Responsibilities

How can we contribute to a healthy democracy?

The concept of freedom can be applied to the relationships between individuals, governments, religious groups, tribes, or other organizations. This Inquiry explores the concept of freedom in parallel with a study of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and branches of government.

### Investigation Modules

- Absolute monarchy
- Checks and balances, branches of government
- Preamble to the Constitution
- The Constitution in crisis
- Constitution, Bill of Rights applied to our lives
- Protections and limitations on freedom
- Amending the Constitution
- Creating arguments through images

### Action Module

- Using the lessons and resources in the Action Module for a 2D Project, students might design and create a mural that illustrates their rights and responsibilities as Americans to encourage young people to be more active in their community.



## Frequently Asked Questions

- **Which Inquiry Units should be used at a specific grade level? Can the scope and sequence be customized?**

Contact inquirED ([info@inquired.org](mailto:info@inquired.org)) for a standard scope and sequence that suggests specific Inquiries for each grade level K-5. inquirED can also help schools and districts customize their scope and sequence, moving units of study up or down a grade level to best match state social studies standards within each grade band.

- **Why is there no textbook for Inquiry Journeys?**

As a fully-digital curriculum, Inquiry Journeys can engage students and support teachers beyond the limits of traditional textbooks. Students can experience a wide-variety of sources from diverse authors and creators across a varied range of media types, including maps, documents, photographs, websites, videos, paintings, personal narratives, and more. Teachers can easily access and adapt resources, and make use of PD videos and professional learning sessions. All lessons can be kept up-to-date with the most current and relevant information and resources.

- **How does Inquiry Journeys align to standards?**

Each lesson of Inquiry Journeys aligns to state-specific social studies and ELA standards, which teachers can easily access directly from their online lesson plans. Each lesson also aligns to indicators from the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework, as well as inquirED's Inquiry Skill Standards.

- **What kind of support system is included with a subscription to Inquiry Journeys?**

inquirED's Partner Experience team provides implementation coaching through a mixture of targeted workshops, live professional learning sessions, and direct consultations. Additionally, teachers have access to inquirED's Inquiry Hub, a dynamic online learning space where they can find PD sessions, resources, quick tips, and on-demand technical support.