

The Iowa Council for the Social Studies Journal

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FORWARD

This fifth issue of The Iowa Council for the Social Studies Journal focuses on INTEGRATION OF THE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM into the school's larger curricular framework. Over the years, curricular integration has been represented by a variety of titles including interdisciplinary teaching, multidisciplinary learning, curricular infusion, cross-curricular teaching and the like. While creating meaning out of educational jargon may be a difficult task, the most significant job confronting professional educators is making learning meaningful for every student.

Current constructivist learning theory informs us that students cannot learn without constructing a meaningful cognitive framework. To put it more simply, students learn new information or develop new skills when new information and skills are taught in a meaningful context. Teaching for meaning in the social studies is particularly imperative. Of all the disciplines, social studies is vested with the prime responsibility for citizenship education – the over-arching goal of American education. In addition, it is in the social studies that culture and values of today's society are examined, refined and transmitted to the next generation.

The six articles in this edition are written by educators from diverse settings including self-contained teaching, team teaching, early childhood, elementary, middle school and high school classrooms as well as the central office. Through the texture and variety in their everyday experiences emerges a constant theme: students learn best in classrooms where integration replaces isolation, where thinking replaces memorization, and where problem-solving replaces rote recall.

Lynn E. Nielsen
Editor

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