



Evidence-Based Instructional Practices

Questioning and the Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies

The [Questioning Overview](#) provides the research base associated with this evidence-based instructional practice.

What are connections between the Evidenced-Based Instructional Practice #5: Questioning and the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Social Studies?

In an ever-changing and increasingly interconnected world, Kentucky students must be life-long critical thinkers and questioners who can undertake multidimensional, complex reasoning. Thus, students should be engaged in educational experiences that are designed around teachers and students generating questions collaboratively and independently to support students in becoming civically engaged, socially responsible and culturally aware.

The *Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies* is organized around the inquiry practices of questioning, investigating, using evidence and communicating conclusions. Students will consider or pose questions and then investigate those questions through the disciplinary lenses of civics, economics, geography and history. Students complete the inquiry process by communicating evidence-based conclusions. The development of two types of questions – compelling and supporting – is essential to the study of each social studies discipline in the *KAS for Social Studies*. Compelling questions are open-ended, enduring and centered on significant unresolved issues. Supporting questions can be answered using the concepts and practices of each social studies discipline. Students begin engaging with questioning as early as kindergarten when they are required to ask compelling questions with teacher support. This skill progresses as students continue through their social studies education:

- Students begin developing their own supporting questions, with teacher support, by Grade 3.
- Students begin developing their own compelling questions, with teacher support, in Grade 6.
- Students independently generate their own supporting questions starting in Grade 5.
- Students independently generate their own compelling questions starting in high school.

Ensuring that student voice is valued in Kentucky social studies classrooms empowers students to unlock the unknown through questioning because it capitalizes on their curiosity as learners. Inquiry instruction requires teachers and students to ask questions that drive student investigation of the subject matter and eliminates the “skills vs. content” dilemma in social studies as both are needed to successfully engage in inquiry. Students engage in inquiry using the tools, conceptual understandings and the language of political scientists, economists, geographers and historians at a developmentally appropriate level to be informed and make sense of the interconnected world around them.

What are planning considerations for the successful implementation of the Evidenced-Based Instructional Practice #5: Questioning to ensure that all students have equitable access and opportunity to learn the standards contained in the *KAS for Social Studies*?

- Effective questioning practices are essential for the social studies classroom in Kentucky. Educators must understand that one of the instructional shifts of the *KAS for Social Studies* requires that teachers and students consistently craft questions that spark and sustain an inquiry.
- Establish a safe and collaborative learning environment where students feel comfortable and empowered to ask questions and take academic risks.
- Evaluate compelling questions that are developed and generated by teachers and students. Criteria for evaluation includes, but is not limited to:
 - Is this question open-ended?
 - Is it enduring?
 - Does it center on significant unresolved issues?
 - Does it generate interest?
 - For more information on evaluating compelling questions, visit Section 3B of the KDE's [Inquiry Practices of the *KAS for Social Studies* Module](#).
- Evaluate supporting questions that are developed and generated by teachers and students using the following criteria:
 - Does it align to and inspire investigation of the compelling question?
 - Does it provide students with knowledge that they can synthesize to answer the compelling question?
 - Can it be answered through use of the concepts and practices of each social studies discipline?
 - Does it use discipline specific terminology?
 - For more information on evaluating supporting questions, visit Section 3C of the KDE's [Inquiry Practices of the *KAS for Social Studies* Module](#).
- Provide opportunities and support for students to develop and generate their own supporting questions.
- Support students in using and analyzing sources to make evidence-based claims when answering compelling and supporting questions. In Kentucky, all valid claims in response to compelling and supporting questions must be based on logical evidence. This skill requires students to collect, evaluate and synthesize evidence from primary and secondary sources to develop and support a claim to answer compelling and supporting questions.
 - For more information on using evidence, visit Section 3E of the KDE's [Inquiry Practices of the *KAS for Social Studies* Module](#).

What strategies and resources can support the implementation of Evidence-Based Instructional Practice #5: Questioning within the *KAS for Social Studies*?

KDE's [Inquiry Practices of the *KAS for Social Studies* Module](#)

Module 3 provides support for understanding and implementing the inquiry practices of the *KAS for Social Studies*.

- Section 3B: What are Compelling Questions and how do students ask them?: This section provides an in-depth look at compelling questions, including their design and a discovery task for identifying them. Strategies for asking compelling questions and questioning caveats are also discussed.
- Section 3C: What are Supporting Questions and how do students ask them?: This section provides an in-depth look at supporting questions, including characteristics and design and a discovery task for identifying them. Strategies for asking supporting questions and questioning caveats are also discussed.

KDE's [Social Studies Student Assignment Library](#)

The Social Studies Student Assignment Library provides Teacher Notes which contain guidance on how to design instruction using compelling and supporting questions. Examples of utilizing questioning in the classroom are provided throughout the Teacher Notes. Some specific examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Within the [Grade 4](#), [Grade 8](#) and [High School Strongly Aligned 2](#) Teacher Notes, educators can examine strategies for questioning for surface, deep and transfer learning to support students when deepening their understanding of the content.
- Additionally, strategies to support students when developing and generating compelling and supporting questions are provided throughout the Teacher Notes. Some examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - [Parts, Perspectives, Me](#) is suggested in the [Grade 5 Teacher Notes](#) and [Think, Puzzle, Explore](#) is suggested in the [Grade 6 Teacher Notes](#) to inspire students to identify additional, more discipline specific, questions they have about the compelling question.
 - [Question Formulation Technique \(QFT\)](#) is suggested in the [High School Social Studies Two Teacher Notes](#) to support students in generating their own compelling questions.

KDE's [Healthy Integration of the KAS for Social Studies and the KAS for Reading and Writing Module](#)

- This module explains how to teach social studies as a compelling context for growing proficient readers and writers by connecting the two disciplines through the investigation of a compelling question.
 - Section 4D: How do I integrate social studies and reading and writing?: This section provides steps for understanding how to design healthy integration while maintaining discipline integrity between the social studies and reading and writing, which are integrated through the investigation of a compelling question.