



Standards Alignment

The National Center for History in the Schools National Standards for History (1996)

Standard 4 – Students understand how democratic values came to be, and how they have been exemplified by people, events, and symbols.

Standard 4A – Students understand how the United States government was formed and the nation's basic democratic principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Standard 4B and C – Students understand ordinary people and historic figures who have exemplified values and principles of American democracy.

Standard 7A – Students understand the cultures and historical developments of selected societies in such places as Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe.

National Council for the Social Studies Curriculum for Social Studies (1994)

Standard 2 – Time, Continuity and Change

Standard 5 -- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

Standard 6 -- Power, Authority, and Governance

REVIEW OF THIRD GRADE UNIT – HISTORY OF SEGREGATION by Dr. M. Gail Hickey, Professor of Education

The Third Grade History Unit "History of Segregation" represents a strategy for introducing young students to an era of United States history marked by a public focus on segregation. While traditionally United States history is not introduced prior to fifth grade, recent research on children's comprehension of social studies concepts and content reveals young children develop historical understandings earlier than expected. Therefore, the unit is based upon appropriate pedagogical foundations.



Levstik and Barton (1994) and Downey (1994), for example, found even early elementary grades children are capable of more historical understanding than educators originally thought. Young students' historical knowledge prior to fifth grade, however, is limited primarily to information about popular culture and everyday life.

The "History of Segregation" instructional unit also draws upon curriculum standards identified by national educational organizations. The National Council for the Social Studies, in its Curriculum Standards for Social Studies (1994), discusses what children kindergarten through third grade can know and do. Students in first through third grades should explore "concepts of communities, past and present [and] the impact of laws and individual behavior on communities". The National Center for History in the Schools' National Standards for History for Grades K-4 (1994), lists content standards for primary grades students, including "Students should understand how democratic values came to be and how they have been exemplified by people, events, and symbols." The same document lists history-related skills appropriate for teaching young students, such as "Historical issues: Analysis and decision making: identify issues in the past; compare interests and values of various people; suggest alternative choices for solving a historical problem; prepare a position on an issue; evaluate the consequences of a decision." Each of these content standards and historical skills is a focus of one or more lessons in the third grade unit "History of Segregation."