

Making the social sciences an important part of the educational process

(Some reflections by Ed Dorgan – Social studies Coordinator RSD10, Burlington, CT)

1. Add 'reading like an historian' and writing like an historian skills into the curriculum - so adding students to analyze different sources (realizing the impact of perspectives) on understanding history.
2. Adding in historical thinking skills [e.g., cause and effect, change and continuity, turning points in history, through their eyes -differing perspectives, and using the past to better understand the present]
3. Developing lessons that use historical fiction and non-fiction sources/materials. Also share (historical) literacy skills with elementary teachers.
4. Base learning goals on students developing historical / social studies thinking skills. Thereby, determining benchmarks by course for the skills needed to demonstrate proficiency through the school year.
5. Remember to scaffold geographic, economic, and social/cultural skills from elementary through high school.
6. Incorporate note-taking and summarizing skills (practice) into the curriculum.
7. Promote multiple perspectives to provide a realistic view of historical events (thereby helping students realize that history isn't one-sided).