

## **SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM-GRADE TWO**

### **An Overview**

The Grade Two social studies curriculum is built around the communities we live in, what they were like historically, and what those types of communities are like today. Geographical descriptions and identifications of the types of local communities in southern Connecticut are learned.

Social responsibility, citizenship, basic democratic beliefs and ethical values continue to be woven into the fabric of the history of our community and the lessons we learn daily by living in our own school community.

Through group discussion, field trips, speakers and computer activities such as Google Earth and Discovery Activities Scholastic News magazines, the children will become more aware of the meaning of community, the services it provides, the need we have for it, and the people necessary to a community. The concept of commitment and participation in community life is also a topic of discussion and thought, particularly at St. Thomas's Day School where caring about those in our community who need help is of the utmost importance.

### **Early Communities in South Eastern Connecticut**

The American past is introduced to Grade 2, through understanding early life in New Haven. The first recorded groups of people living in the New Haven area were the Quinnipiac Native Americans and the English Puritans who settled here. Their efforts at living together and sharing the land is viewed as basic to the concept of what American beginnings were all about. How the two groups were alike and different are discussed and charted with a Venn Diagram. Ownership, language, cultural differences, basic human needs and understandings are thought about when learning about the first communities in this area.

### **How This Community Changed with the Influx of immigrants from Places All Over the World**

**Geography** is taught around the countries and bodies of water that the immigrants lived in and traveled from to arrive in what is now New Haven. The communities they formed and the kinds of communities that have evolved in and around New Haven are defined and considered in terms of the communities that our students live in today.

### **Rural Areas, Urban Areas, Suburban Areas, Towns and Villages**

We study maps of Connecticut, having to do with population, terrain, services, vegetation, and farming. We look at charts and graphs that help us define what different areas in and around New Haven are like.

### **Holidays, Historical Events, Cultural Happenings in New Haven**

All of the above are experienced through the eyes of each of the different communities in New Haven. How the different communities celebrate, are affected by and react to these celebrations.

**Columbus Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hannukah. Martin Luther King Day.**

### **How Is It That We Are Now the Community of New Haven.**

A culmination of the study of the experiences of the New Haven community, is an original play titled, "**Coming to New Haven**". Second Grade family histories are used as the backdrop of each scene. The children represent their own ancestors and explain how each of their families came to live in New Haven.

Mapping, graphing, research on the computer, the use of the globe, writing about our families and ancestors are activities used in the second grade program. Much of the interrelatedness and the procedures for investigating our themes are found in the research model, Super Three. Learning to use the real-world tools and technology for the 21st Century is a key element to Grade 2 Social Studies.

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## **Grade Two Social Studies Outline**

### **A. Neighborhoods and Communities**

1. What is a neighborhood?
2. What is a community?

### **B. Types of Communities (urban, suburban, rural)**

### **C. New Haven (An urban community)**

1. Neighborhoods in New Haven
2. Occupations
3. Ethnic Make-up of the city
4. Government (Mayor—elected)
5. History—Quinnipiac Indians, Puritans, Immigration of a variety of cultures, the Amistad Incident, ( a New Haven Story)
6. Celebrating holidays

**D. Living in rural and urban Connecticut**

1. Country and town centers
2. New Haven Green

E. **Tools**—Maps, graphs, learning how to find information on the computer and in newspapers and informational reading.

**F. Trips**

1. East Rock and the Quinnipiac Memorial
2. Lighthouse Point—Science teacher accompanies to look at the geography of the area.
3. New Haven History Museum—Docents visit our school, the class goes to the museum to learn about the Puritans, Quinnipiacs and the Amistad story.
4. Eli Whitney Museum— Model village of early New Haven
  - a. Special Exhibits
  - b. Model Train Sets—Holiday display, building our own trains and villages.
5. Trip to Village of Durham and Greenbacker's Dairy Farm
6. Bus trip to the New Haven Library for Women's History Month.
7. Trip to the New Haven Green and the Mayor's Office.
8. Trip Around Town to Wooster Square, and The 29<sup>th</sup> Colored C.V. Infantry Regiment Memorial Monument and the Knights of Columbus Museum.
- 9.. Mystic Seaport, Mystic, Connecticut
  - a. Groton Submarine Base museum

Resources: Allyn & Bacon Series on Communities  
Silver Burdett, Neighborhoods and Communities  
Connecticut Folk Tales by Glenn White  
Vision in the Sky, a story of colonial New Haven by Myrna Kagan  
Community Discovery- George Kram Co  
National Geographic Mapping skills  
My Guide to Our Community, Modern Learning Press  
Amistad Awakening  
Biographies of Eli Whitney, Constance Motley Baker, Matthew Henson  
Edward A. Bouchet...first African American to graduate from Hopkins  
Grammar School in 1870.