

Student Expectations

The primary difference between the Texas and Louisiana expectations for students is that Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are focused on more specific knowledge while Louisiana Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) focus at a global, conceptual level. This difference is reflected in the number of strands that run across the grade levels in Social Studies. The eight strands of the TEKS, History; Geography; Economics; Government; Citizenship; Culture; Science, Technology, and Society; and Social Studies Skills, break down the knowledge students are to learn into discrete categories and specific statements of knowledge and skills that students are expected to master. In the introduction to the TEKS statements it is recommended that the skills listed in the geography and social studies skills strands be incorporated into the teaching of all the other essential knowledge and skills for social studies.

In contrast, the GLEs include four strands: History, Geography, Civics, and Economics. In addition to these four strands, the GLEs are also organized according to specific categories under each strand. Social studies skills are included at the higher level of Benchmarks suggesting that they should also be integrated where appropriate across the content strands.

In addition to the differences in the number of strands, the content focus is different under some strands. Some variations are a matter of a focus on state issues. For example, in the history strand in Louisiana, the focus is on Louisiana history and migrations to Louisiana, while the TEKS address

why communities are formed and the individuals who have helped build communities in Texas.

Other variations are based on the level of depth at which certain topics are discussed. In the economics strand in Texas the focus is on the identify of people who have started businesses and the impact of scarcity on interdependence. A similar concept in Louisiana for third grade is described as trade in the local community, the definition of abundance, and how economic choices are made. Other commonalities, with differences in descriptions exist in the culture strand. In the TEKS students are to retell folktales, legends, and myths, while the GLEs require students to identify how cultures record histories.

The government strand in Louisiana focuses on the differences between laws and rules. In the TEKS, the focus at grade three is on local government and how government services are funded. The concept of "consent of the governed" is also introduced at this grade level in Texas, along with historical and modern-day examples of good citizens. The GLEs are similarly focused on how good citizens solve problems.

Assessment

Social Studies assessments in Texas and Louisiana differ in several ways. Louisiana students are tested using the Integrated Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (iLEAP) at Grade 3, 5, 6, and 7 beginning in Spring 2006, and the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) for Social Studies is first administered at Grade 8. The Louisiana test, like the TAKS, is a criterion referenced test (CRT) and specifically targets the

corresponding GLEs. The Social Studies TAKS, however, includes items based on the Grade 8 curriculum and builds on student skills from Grades K through 8. Louisiana students are also assessed with the LEAP 21 at Grades 4 and 8. The Mathematics and Language Arts sections of the LEAP 21 are used for promotion or remediation decisions, however, the Social Studies sections are not.

Coding in the Side-by-Side Analysis

Due to the differences in the degree of specificity of the student expectations and standards, some of the TEKS are matched to more than one Louisiana GLE or vice versa. In addition, although specific skills are not indicated in GLE statements, the Louisiana Content Standards Task Force identified “Communication,” “Problem-Solving,” “Resource Access and Utilization” and “Linking and Generating Knowledge” as foundational skills at all grade levels.

Numbering of GLE statements is sequential across the grade level. The number in parentheses following each GLE statement is a reference to the Louisiana Benchmark statement. For example, G-1A-E1 refers to the Geography Strand, Standard 1, Category A, Elementary Benchmark 1. Benchmark statements are similar to the Texas Knowledge and Skill statements. More information about the Louisiana Benchmarks is available from the Louisiana State Department of Education: <http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/2911.pdf>.

Regarding the codes and content in the middle column of the document:

- Notations regarding TAKS objectives are included in the analysis column.
- Notations are made when concepts are addressed in another grade level in Louisiana.
- *Implied* refers to components of concepts that implicit within the context of the statement, but may not be explicitly stated in the expectations
- *Similar* or *approximates* means the concept is worded differently, but the intent appears to be the same. For example, in second grade, TEKS statement 2.1a reads, “explain the significance of various community, state, and national celebrations such as Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Thanksgiving”. The GLE statement 52 for second grade reads “explain the customs related to important holidays and ceremonies in various countries around the world in the past.” The notation on the side by side indicates that the TEKS statement “approximates LA GLE 52 but TEKS does not focus on world holidays.
- *Not specifically addressed* refers to concepts and skills that may be covered, but not necessarily addressed in all classrooms by all teachers.
- *Extend to/focus on* indicates the TEKS and GLE statements are similar, but some GLEs go beyond what appears in the TEKS.