

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 different number of strands, the content focus is often different. For example, the history strand in Texas is a survey of U.S. history from pre-Columbian times through modern times. The GLEs, however, focus on Native Americans, Explorers and Colonial US. This difference is played out across all the other strands. In the economics

strand, the GLEs require study of the economics of Native Americans and early explorers, while the TEKS introduce the free enterprise system. The culture strand of the TEKS is focused on cultures from the Pre-Columbian era through the immigrations of 20th century. Consistent with the overall focus at this grade level, the cultures of Native Americans, African Americans, and residents of Louisiana are included in the GLEs. The science, technology, and society strand of the TEKS include a study of how technology affects economics and society as a whole. Again, the GLEs examine science and technology in terms of how they are related to exploration and conflict with native peoples.

Other differences appear in the geography and government strands. In the GLEs at this grade level, students learn about colonial governments, while the focus in Texas is on the study of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Finally, Texas students at Grade Five are expected to locate all 50 states, while students in Louisiana learn to locate major landforms and geographic features.

Assessment

Social Studies assessments in Texas and Louisiana differ in several ways. Louisiana students will be 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, while 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 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 are 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.