

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 all strands at this grade level. This is the grade level at which Louisiana students study Louisiana state history and government, just as Texas students study Texas history and government at grade seven. Texas students at this grade level focus

on United States history from Exploration and Colonization through Reconstruction, just as Louisiana students did at grade seven. This reversal of content across these two grade levels has two important implications for Louisiana students.

- Louisiana students who are in Texas during grade eight will miss their Louisiana state history
- Students who were in Louisiana during grade seven and are in Texas during grade eight will study United States history from the Revolution through Reconstruction twice!

This is particularly important as both Texas and Louisiana assess Social Studies at the eighth grade level on the student expectations for that grade level. In addition, both states include content from this grade level on their high school examinations.

Assessment

Social Studies assessments in Texas and Louisiana differ in several ways. The Social Studies TAKS at Grade 8 includes items based on the Grade 8 curriculum and builds on student skills from Grades K through 8. The LEAP 21 for Social Studies which is administered in Louisiana in Grade 8 is, like the TAKS, a criterion referenced test (CRT) and specifically targets the GLEs for Grade 8. LEAP 21 covers United States history up to 1877 and World History up to 1450. 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 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.