

Overview of the 2021 Social Studies Standards & IDM Model

K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies Revision Timeline



Organizational Shifts in the 2021 Standards

2011

2021

57 anchor standards → 25 anchor standards

Impacts

Less anchor standards allows for clearer visibility into vertical progression than before, impacting:

- How the standards are read
- District-level planning
- Assessment
- No one-to-one crosswalk



*MDE Social Studies
Implementation Page*

Content Shifts in the 2021 Standards



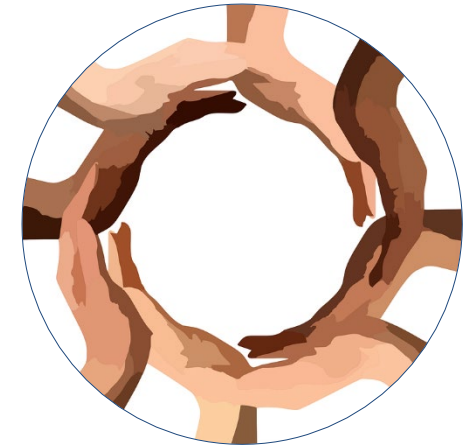
Centers Student Inquiry



Emphasizes Disciplinary Literacy



K-8 Fully Interdisciplinary
No identified “lead disciplines”



Adds Ethnic Studies Strand

Inquiry in the Anchor Standards

2011

“The student will know...”

Individuals in a republic
have rights, duties and
responsibilities.

2021

“The student will...”

Explain and evaluate rights,
duties and responsibilities
in democratic society.

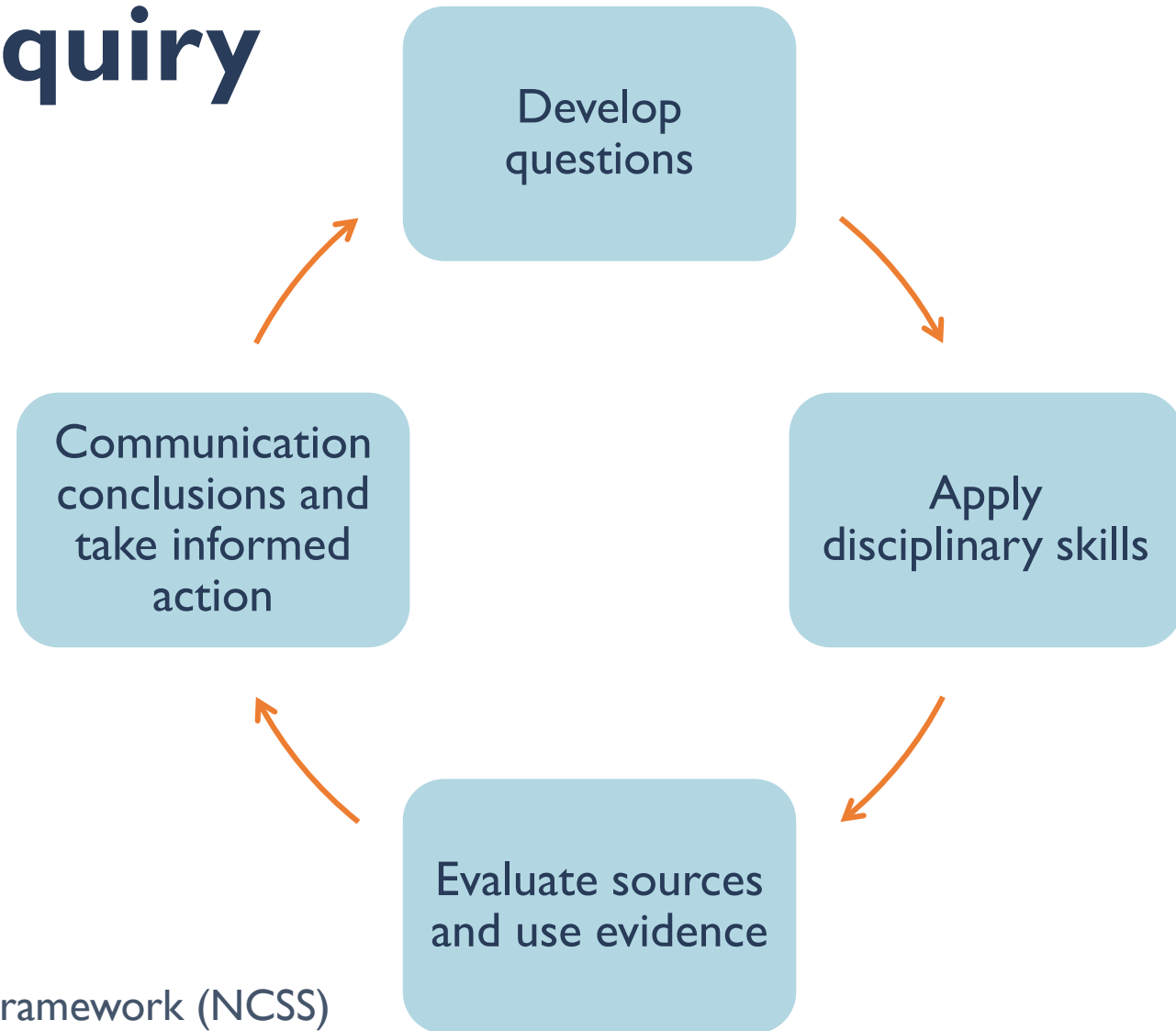
- How does this change the focus of the anchor standards?
- How might it change assessment?

Centers Student Inquiry

Inquiry means **all** students have opportunities to...

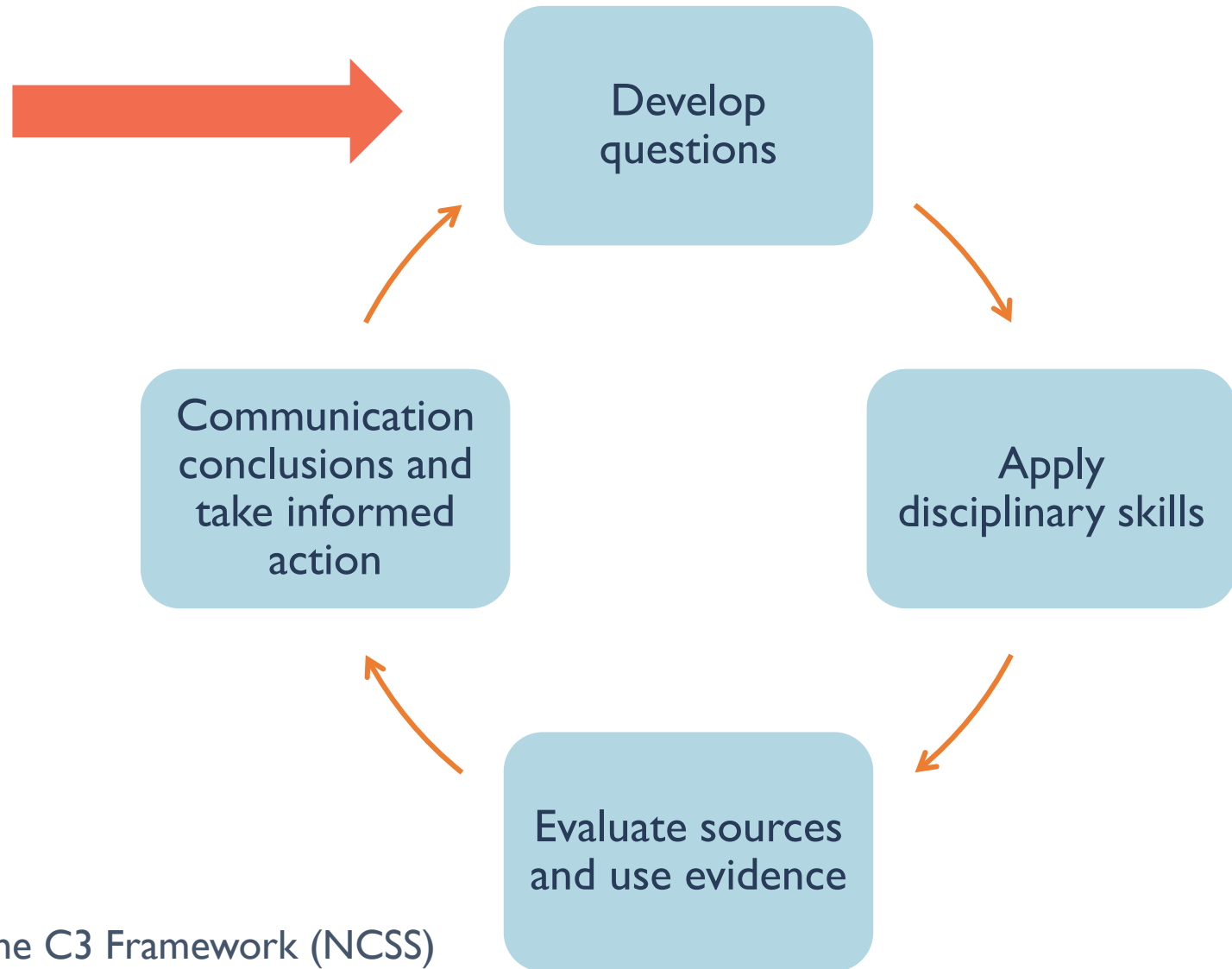


C3 Framework



From the C3 Framework (NCSS)

Inquiry starts with a question



From the C3 Framework (NCSS)

Components of a Compelling Question



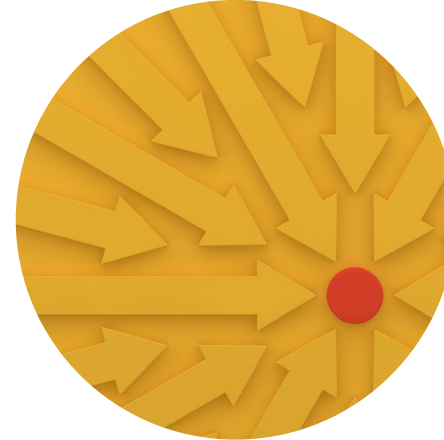
Conceptual

An abstract idea
specific to a discipline



Engages Multiple Disciplines

Assessed
benchmarks come
from more than one
discipline area



Argument Driven

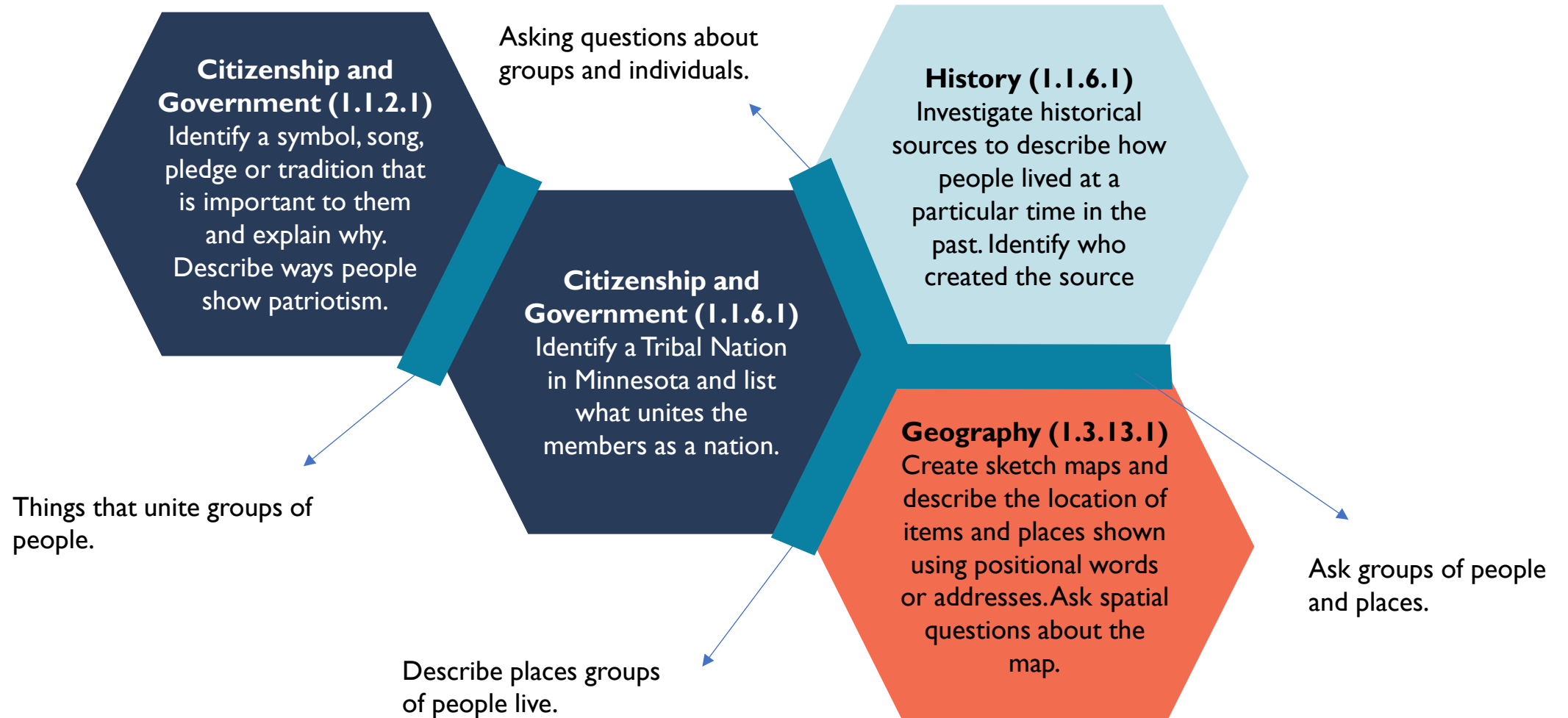
Doesn't have a single,
widely agreed upon
answer within the
disciplines, is answered
across disciplines



Relevant

Engages with issues
and concerns students
are interested in and
curious about

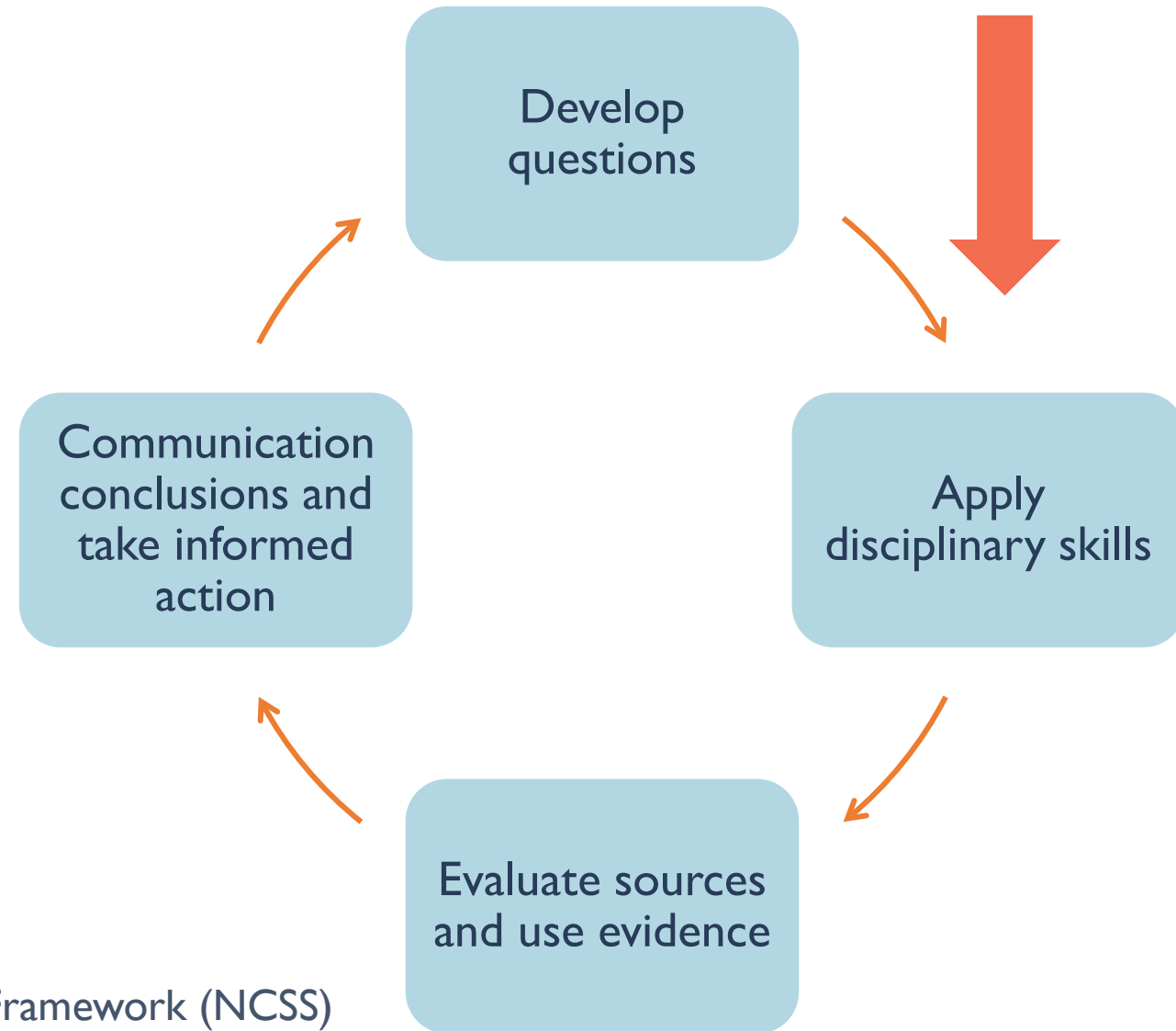
Finding the Concept



What unites a community?

Compelling Question

Questions require disciplinary skills and literacies



From the C3 Framework (NCSS)

Defining Disciplinary Literacy

The confluence of content knowledge, experiences, and skills merged with the ability to read, write, listen, speak, think critically and perform in a way that is **meaningful within the context of a given field.** ([Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#))

- Disciplinary reading and writing
- Authentic opportunities for reading and writing in the content areas
- Opportunities for speaking, listening (oral communication)
- Building vocabulary and knowledge

Content-Area vs. Disciplinary Literacy

Content-Area Literacy

Strategies that cross over
different content areas

- Broad comprehension strategies
- Cornell notes
- Summarizing
- Generic close reading
- Graphic organizers

Disciplinary Literacy

Ways of thinking and working that are
specific to the discipline

- How historians, geographers, economists, political scientists, and ethnic studies scholars read, write, and think
- Uses discipline-specific sources
- Asks discipline-specific questions
- Analyzes evidence, context, power, and perspective

Identify What Students Need



Skills—What do students need to be able to do?

Analyze specific types of sources
Compare perspectives
Use evidence
Explain a concept or idea



Content—What do students need to know?

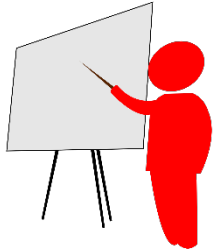
Events
Systems
Context

Unpack the Benchmark

History (1.1.6.1)
Investigate historical sources to describe how people lived at a particular time in the past. Identify who created the source

Skills	Content
What do students need to be able to do? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze specific types of sources• Compare perspectives• Use evidence• Explain a concept or idea	What do students need to know? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Events• Systems• Context
Supporting Question:	

Components of a Supporting Question



Explanatory

Offers explanation or description rather than argumentation



Agreement

There is a generally agreed upon answer within a field



Informative

Helps a student organize information needed to engage with the compelling question



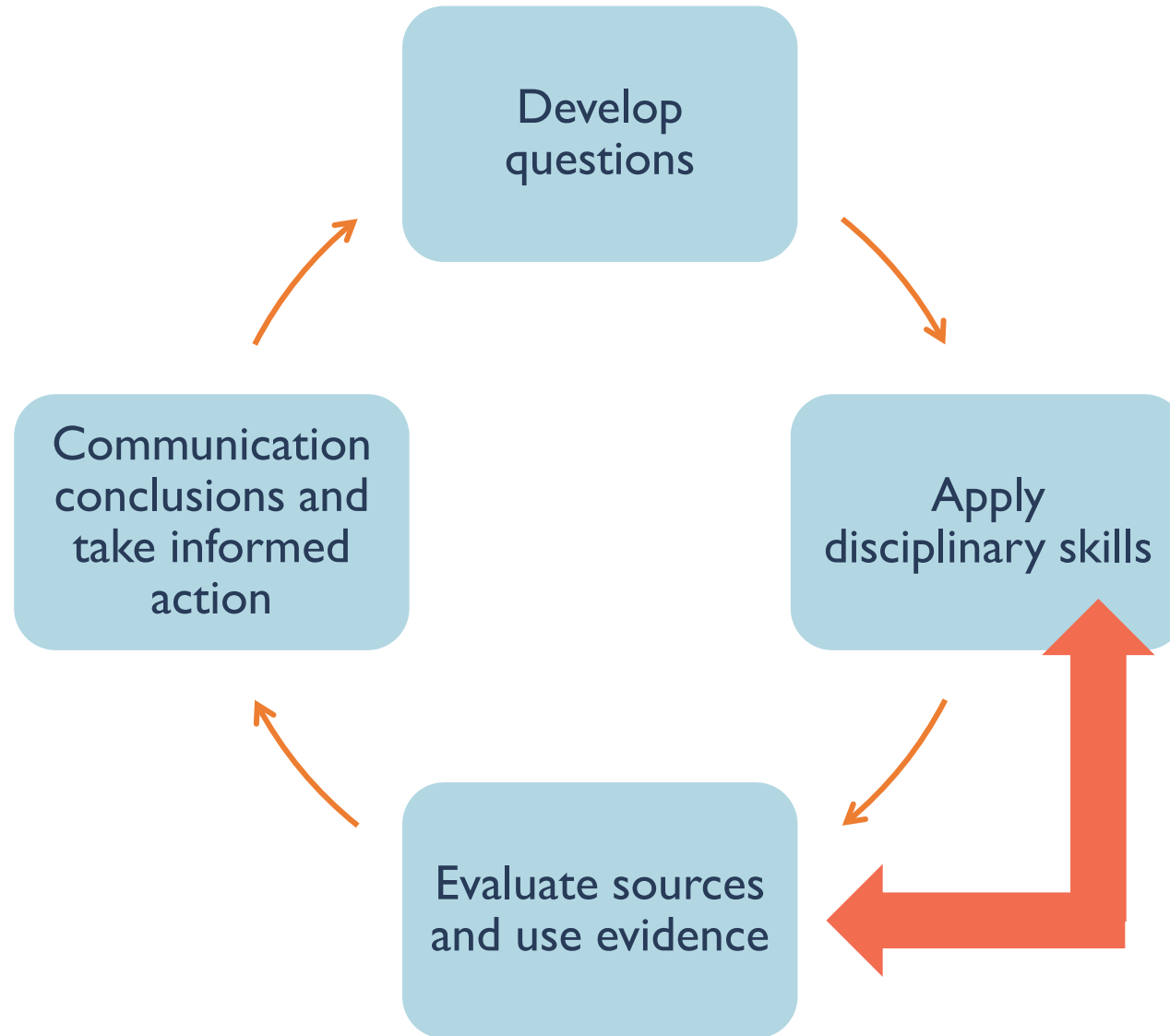
Open-Ended

Generally not answered with a simple yes-or-no.

**How did people live together in
the past?**

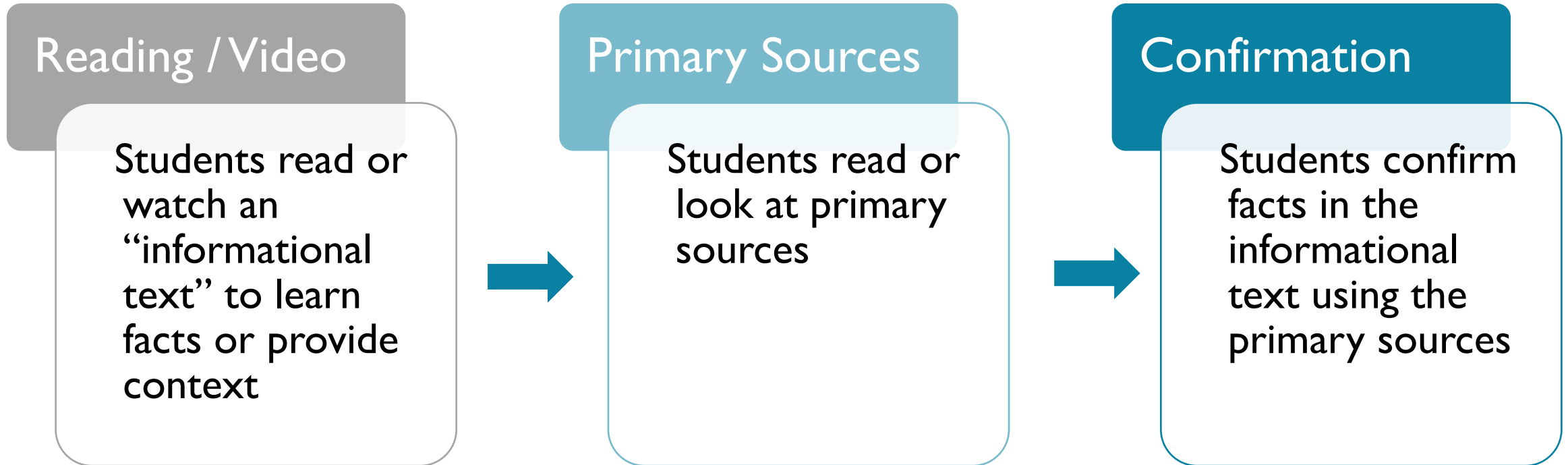
Supporting Question

Sources








From the C3 Framework (NCSS)

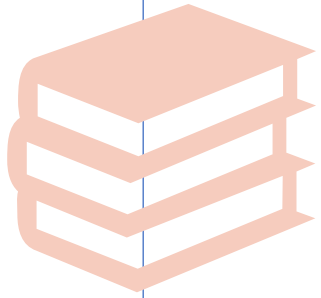
Before: Informational Text



The Problem with Informational Texts

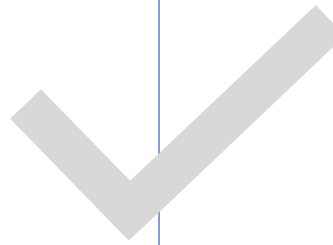
-  Flattens disciplinary source work into generic reading tasks.
-  Trains students to gather *facts first* and only think afterward.
-  Reverses how social scientists actually work — inquiry drives the evidence, not the other way around.
-  Encourages students to treat sources as proof for what the “informational text” already claims.
-  Centers comprehension instead of investigation, analysis, and reasoning—the core literacies of social studies.

Now: Authentic Disciplinary Text



Source type

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary



Source type depends on how it is used, not the author's intent

Choosing Social Studies Sources

Before (2011)

Reliance on textbooks and other tertiary sources



Now (2021)

Focus on discipline-specific primary and secondary sources

Examples of Discipline-Specific Primary and Secondary Sources

Citizenship and Government

Speeches, laws, white papers, journal articles, court decisions, and political cartoons

Economics

Economic indicators and other economic data, speeches, government reports, and journal articles

Geography

Interpretative maps, demographic data sources, and journal articles

History

Speeches, letters, visual material, historical monographs, historical surveys, and journal articles

But students don't know anything...yet!

- Historians, geographers, political scientists, and economists don't start with complete knowledge – they start with questions.
- A social studies expert outside their specialty can still analyze sources because they know how to think, not what to think.
- Disciplinary thinking builds knowledge – it doesn't wait for it.
- Inquiry is how knowledge is built.

Choosing Sources



Student Facing

Sources should help students answer the formative questions directly

Students should use them in the summative task as well



Use Picture Books

In early grades, consider using picture books- both fictional and historical



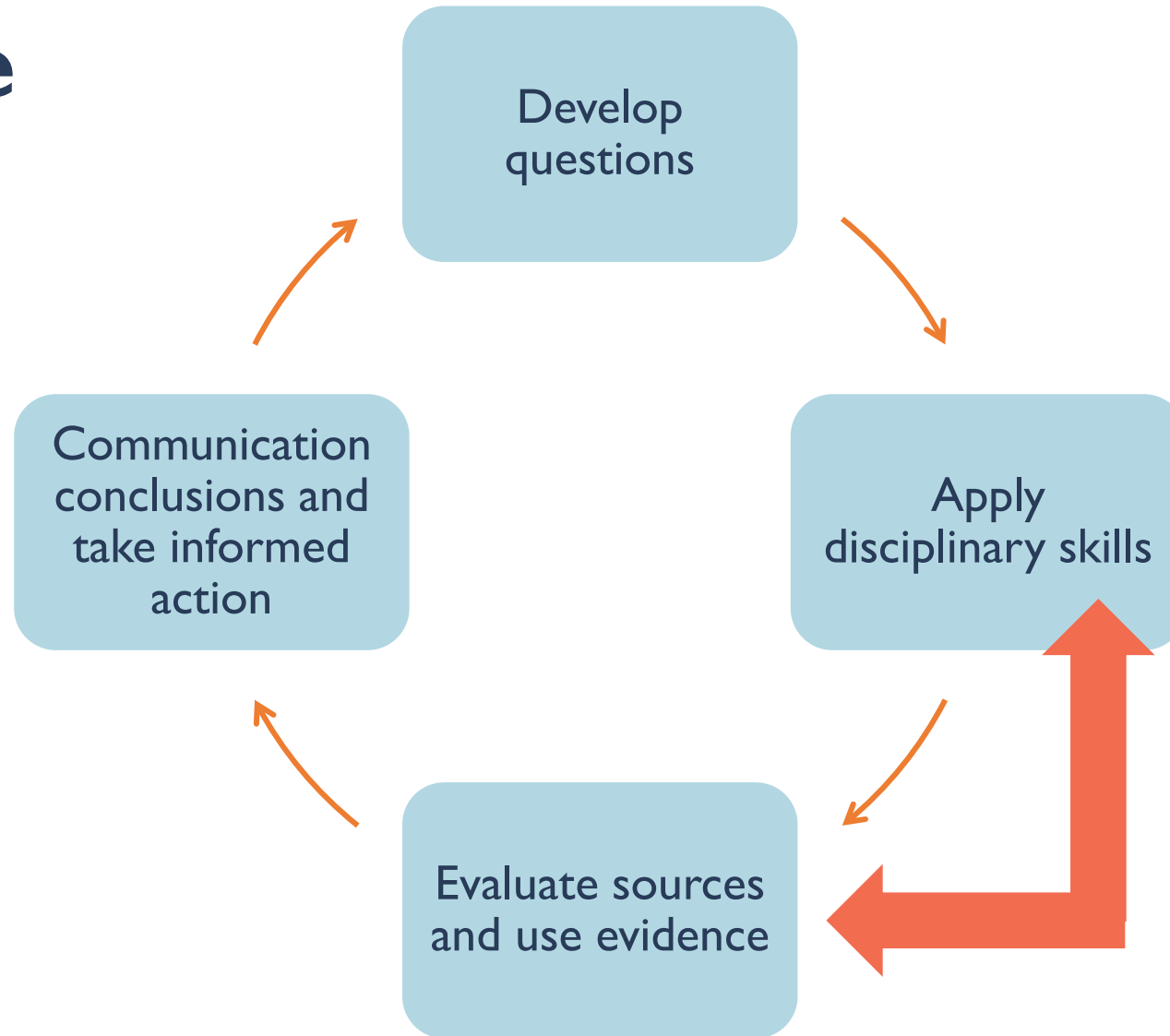
Should be Authentic to the Disciplines

Primary: Sources used to understand the perspective of the time (not just “eyewitness accounts”)

Secondary: Sources that interpret the meaning of the past using primary sources to support their argument

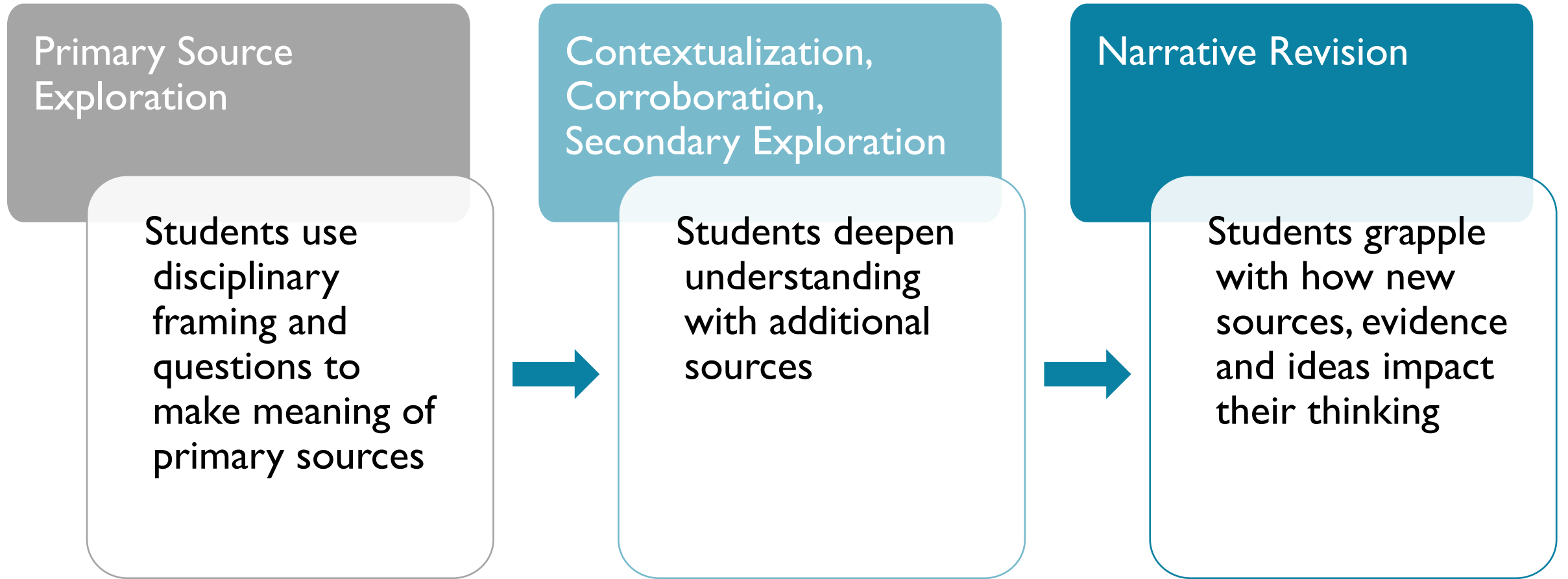
Tertiary: Sources that primarily contain summary or overview- use sparingly

Formative Tasks



From the C3 Framework (NCSS)

Now: Authentic Disciplinary Tasks



Formative Tasks



Pay attention to the skills ask in benchmarks



The formative task should respond to the sources.



Formative tasks should give students an opportunity to answer the supporting question directly.



Consider repeatable disciplinary literacy strategies:

See, think, wonder

Task cards w/disciplinary thinking questions

Mind maps (bubble maps, t-charts, cause and effect maps, etc)

Why Repeatable Routines?

Implementation that starts with matching benchmarks to current practice based primarily on content misses the major shifts of the standards

Two lessons can be on the suffrage movement without both meeting the benchmark if attention isn't paid to skills and sources in the benchmark

A significant revision means significant change to what is currently taught in classrooms

Teacher burnout from writing endless scaffolded questions and designing new activities

Inconsistency makes vertical progression difficult

Isn't It Boring?



Students don't get bored with routines when the sources are engaging and the questions matter. The routine is the structure; the source is the fuel.



Interest should come from the content, not from constantly changing activities. A powerful image, story, map or data set does more for engagement than a flashy new activity ever will.



Routines build skill and confidence. When students know the process, they can focus on thinking deeply instead of figuring out what they're supposed to do. That's motivating, not dull.



The best routines fade into the background. They become invisible. What students notice are the sources, the evidence, the discussions, and their own ideas.



If students are bored, the problem usually isn't the routine. It's that the source is weak, the question is shallow, or the thinking demand is too low.

What Makes a Good Routine in Social Studies?

- Works with many types of sources (text, image, map, data, video)
- Can be used across topics and units
- Surfaces student thinking quickly
- Supports disciplinary practices (sourcing, contextualization, argumentation, etc.) in ways that mirror the practices of social scientists
- Low prep, high instructional payoff

Examples

See, Think,
Wonder

Change,
Challenge,
Confirm

Inquiry
Cards

Mind
Maps

Summative Task



Addresses the compelling question directly



Gives students an opportunity to demonstrate understanding of each benchmark



Should use more than one source from the formative tasks