

# English Language Arts & Literacy and *Social Studies Alive!*

*Social Studies Alive!* is aligned with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy<sup>1</sup> (CELA) to ensure that students develop literacy skills through learning social studies. The K–5 CELA are organized around four college and career readiness strands: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language.



## Key Points from the ELA Common Core

## *Social Studies Alive!*

### Reading

Informational and literary texts should be balanced, with at least 50 percent of reading time devoted to expository texts.

*Social Studies Alive!* reflects this balance in the Student Text. Each lesson has several sections of purely informational text that explain the content of that lesson, followed by a Reading Further article that blends literary and informational style text to engage students.

There is a “staircase” of increasing complexity in what students must be able to read as they move throughout the grades.

*Social Studies Alive!* is written with close attention paid to the text complexity, with increasingly sophisticated text as students progress through the grades. However, within each grade’s text, there is variation in the complexity to ensure that there is challenging text for all students.

Close reading of text is used to identify main ideas, supporting details, and evidence.

*Social Studies Alive!* Reading Notes in the Interactive Student Notebook require students to answer questions using evidence from the text and require a clear understanding of the main ideas and other details provided in the section.

### Writing

Routine production of writing appropriate for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences is emphasized.

From the earliest grades, *Social Studies Alive!* students practice three types of writing—writing to persuade, writing to inform or explain, and writing to convey experience. For example, when they record Reading Notes, students enjoy the challenges of writing about a personal experience related to the lesson, creating timelines, and writing song lyrics.

Effective use of evidence is central throughout the writing standards.

*Social Studies Alive!* students are expected to use evidence appropriately to support their analysis, reflections, and research. They are given support in identifying key details, which will serve most effectively as evidence. They also reflect on the role evidence plays in the social sciences and argument in general.

<sup>1</sup>National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers. *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects*. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington D.C. Date: 2010.

**Key Points from the  
ELA Common Core**

***Social Studies Alive!***

**Speaking and Listening**

Participation in rich, structured academic conversations in one-on-one, small-group, and whole class situations is emphasized.

The teaching strategies in *Social Studies Alive!* provide varied grouping techniques, resulting in a balance of paired, small group, and whole class discussions in which students reflect on their experiences and understanding of the activities. These discussions are designed to build clear communication skills that are critical to success in social studies and for college and career readiness.

Contributing accurate, relevant information; responding to and building on what others have said; and making comparisons and contrasts are important skills for productive conversations.

The cooperative tolerant classroom conventions emphasized throughout all of TCI's curricula encourage students to respond to and build on ideas and arguments presented by other students. During discussions, *Social Studies Alive!* guides students to compare and contrast relevant experiences across the four disciplines of social studies.

**Language**

Students should acquire and use general academic and domain-specific words.

*Social Studies Alive!* has a progression of increasingly sophisticated vocabulary built into it. Key terms are used throughout a lesson or the year without overwhelming students with too many unfamiliar words. Every component of *Social Studies Alive!* makes use of the vocabulary and includes activities to help solidify comprehension.

Skills to determine or clarify the meaning of unknown words or phrases are essential.

*Social Studies Alive!* vocabulary terms are previewed at the beginning of the lesson and students complete vocabulary development assignments, such as a Word Parts Log, that trains students to parse words to infer meaning.

Students should demonstrate command of standard English, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Throughout all components of *Social Studies Alive!*, students are expected to demonstrate command of the conventions of written and spoken English. An Editing and Proofreading Checklist is included to help students write with minimal errors.

