



# High School Social Studies

How to find success  
transitioning from  
Junior High



Calgary Board  
of Education



# How are the grades different?



- Most Junior Highs assess students on a 1-4 scale for how well they are meeting specific outcomes for the class.
- High School Social Studies uses a percentage grade based off the learning outcomes of the course to determine how the students are doing overall in the class.
- That means that there will be ONE final mark that determines their degree of success in the class



# How is that grade calculated?



- At Centennial we divide the assignments and assessments that students complete over the year into FOUR different categories:
  1. Assignments
  2. Formal Written Work
  3. Tests and Quizzes
  4. Final Exam



# Assignments



- This category includes any work that your teacher assigns that is NOT a formal piece of writing like an essay or a test.
- This category could include:
  - Personal responses
  - Textbook questions and worksheets
  - Projects and presentations
  - Film and video responses
  - Article reviews



# Written work



- This category includes in-class formal writing
- In Social Studies there are specific types of written assignments that you will complete. These written assignments model the ones that are written for the diploma exam in grade 12.
- These often serve as a written “test” of your understanding of a unit or related issue and are written under “test conditions”.

# Unit tests and quizzes



- At the end of each unit your teacher will give you a multiple choice unit test in order to assess your overall understanding of the concepts, content and issues covered within the unit.
- These tests have a majority of “source-based” questions combined with some stand-alone questions.
- Students are expected to write these tests without any supporting resources such as their textbook, class notes or internet.

# Final Exam



- In grade 10 and 11 students will write ONE multiple choice test that will count as their final exam.
- This will test their understanding of the key outcomes (content, concepts, issues and skills) of the course.
- Approx. 80% of the questions will be source-based and approximately 20% of the questions will be stand alone

# How is the Social Studies curriculum “structured” in High School?



- All three levels of Social Studies are centered around issues and a concept.
  - Grade 10 is centered around the concept of globalization and the issue of “to what extent should we embrace globalization?”
  - Grade 11 is centered around the concept of nationalism and the issue of “to what extent should we embrace nationalism?”
  - Grade 12 is centered around the concept of ideologies and the issue of “to what extent should we embrace an ideology?”



# Related Issues/Units



- Each grade will try to explore that central issue by dividing the course into FOUR different “related issues”
- For example, Social Studies 10 explores the issue of globalization through the following related issues:
  - Relationships among globalization, identity and culture
  - Impacts of historical globalization
  - Economic and environmental impacts of globalization
  - Roles and responsibilities in a globalized world

# Exploring an issue



- When we are exploring a central issue or a related issue we are asking students look for why the issue does not have one single impact or correct solution.
- This can mean exploring the different possible perspectives or responses to a particular issue.
- When we explore different perspectives or responses we want to seek to understand the following:
  - Rationale – why do people support that response or hold that perspective
  - What kinds of people or groups would likely hold that perspective
  - What are the pros and cons of holding that perspective or following that response



# What do we need to learn or understand about the content?



- In order to be most successful in Social Studies we need to learn more than just the basics of content. That means more than just the definition or the dates or knowing who a person was.
- We need to understand HOW that content connects to the broader issue or unit we are learning about.
- We also need to explore if there are differing perspectives about the content and the reasons for why people have those different perspectives.
- As well, sometimes we need to understand that not everyone “sees” a concept the same way.



to understand  
“sees” a concept

# A successful student in social studies



- The most successful students in social studies demonstrate an ability to show BOTH of the following:
  - Clear and accurate understanding of content
  - AND
  - Being able to USE the content to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the complexity of an issue as well as the multiple perspectives around an issue



# How to be most successful with assignments and projects



- Most Social Studies assignments and projects are graded using a form of this rubric for whichever categories are being assessed:

• Excellent	-	90-100%
• Proficient	-	70-80%
• Satisfactory	-	50-60%
• Limited	-	30
• Poor	-	20%



# What skills do I need to work on for success in Social Studies?



- **Critical thinking.** Being able to engage with material in a reflective and independent manner through logic and analysis.
- **Literacy.** Being able to draw main ideas, related content and perspective/bias from written and visual texts.
- **Identifying perspectives and explaining their rationale.** Being able to view sources or statements and identify the reasons why certain groups would agree or disagree with those ideas and why they would feel that way.
- **Source Analysis.** Being able to connect content, concepts, perspectives and issues to a variety of sources.
- **Defending a position.** Being able to choose a personal position on an issue and defend it with logical arguments and appropriate evidence
- **Appropriate use of case studies.** Being able to choose case studies that are relevant to a specific issue and using the parts of that case study that support a particular perspective or position.