# Activity Directions: Progressions across Grades in Social Studies

## ****Learning Objective****

Build understanding of the learning progressions and grade-level expectations in Minnesota’s social studies standards.

### ****Time****

90 minutes or more

### ****Preparation****

1. Decide if the participants will use online versions of the standards or with paper copies. The standards documents are available at the Minnesota Department of Education’s [Social Studies webpage.](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/stds/soc/) The spreadsheet versions are probably easiest to use.
2. Provide highlighters (fi using paper standards), markers, and sticky notes for each individual or group.
3. Provide chart paper, large paper sheets (e.g. 11 X 17) or white boards for each group.
4. Decide whether groups will be asked to focus on a particular social studies disciplinary strand (Citizenship and Government; Economics; Geography; History) or focus on social studies in general.
5. Set up [PowerPoint](https://standards.education.mn.gov/sds/get/sbe/prod000495): Understanding Progressions Across Grades - Social Studies
6. Preview the Inquiry Infographics.

### ****Directions****

* Warm-up: Finish this sentence …

A learning progression is like \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

* Review what learning progressions are (refer to Action Overview: Learning Progressions and/ or quotes on PowerPoint slides 5-6).
* Instruct participants to work individually to identify the core concepts that are most important to learn
* Next, participants should gather in small groups to share out.
* With their groups, have participants organize the core concepts into big buckets/big ideas.
* Ask each group to share out the big buckets/big ideas they have – have a volunteer write them down on a large piece of poster paper. This list is a way to build learning progressions for students. This list represents the big ideas of social studies and are the building blocks that students should revisit year after year, at deeper levels.
* The structure of the standards guides learning progressions. Have participants view the “Standards at a Glance” graphic (see PowerPoint or page 2 of the [Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies 2011)](https://education.mn.gov/mdeprod/idcplg?IdcService=GET_FILE&dDocName=042018&RevisionSelectionMethod=latestReleased&Rendition=primary) and discuss how these, as the foundation, set the stage for learning progressions. (note: pages 10-17 detail the strands and substrands visually depicted in the graphic.)
* Review definitions and organization of Minnesota’s social studies standards and benchmarks (see the graphics on the PowerPoint or refer to pages 4-7 of the [Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies 2011](https://education.mn.gov/mdeprod/idcplg?IdcService=GET_FILE&dDocName=042018&RevisionSelectionMethod=latestReleased&Rendition=primary))
* Share the Inquiry Infographics developed by the Minnesota Center for Social Studies Education and have small groups look through materials and discuss how the focus on inquiry builds learning progressions K-12. (organized K-3; Elementary and Secondary by strand)
* K–12 Progressions Reflection:
  + How do the strands support learning progressions?
  + How do the substrands, standards, and benchmarks support learning progressions?
  + How do the inquiry practices support learning progressions?
  + How might the progressions be useful for vertical alignment?
  + Where might you need additional support
* Discovery Task
  + If you are a **K–8 educator**…

Individually, with a partner or in a small group, analyze how the strand, substrands, standards and benchmarks can help an educator begin to see the progressions from one grade to the next.

* + If you are a **high school educator**…

Individually or with a small team, analyze how the strand, substrands, standards and benchmarks frame learning progressions and how can the learning progressions impact and support learning in your grade or course.

**Credit**

Developed with Beth Ratway, Midwest Comprehensive Center at American Institutes for Research.