Social Studies Sharing

Sec 3 & 4 PTM 2017
13 January 2017
Session Overview

1. Overview of the Social Studies (SS) curriculum in schools
2. Assessment in the SS Curriculum
3. Strategies used in the Teaching & Learning of SS
4. Strategies that parents can adopt to support learning their daughter in the learning of SS
Revised social studies syllabus tackles hot-button issues

The Ministry of Education team that worked on revising the upper secondary social studies syllabus includes (from left) assistant director Azlinda Samudin, curriculum planning officer Sandra Yam, deputy director for humanities Marilyn Lim, senior curriculum resource development officer Rashidah Kassim and curriculum planning officer Kenneth Sung. PHOTO: DIOS VINCOY JR FOR THE STRAITS TIMES.

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2,175

Nimby syndrome, poverty line among topics featured; aim is to promote...
A welcome lesson in critical thinking

Revised social studies syllabus opens up topical issues for debate, though some say that it could do better

What’s new in social studies textbook

ST looks at two examples.

FOREIGN WORKERS

HomeFron is a 24-page, under a section titled “Challenges in a multi-racial society.”

New textbooks:

- World history and citizen foreigner tensions – as well as attitudes among people of different cultures, religions, and social-economic statuses – are the focus of a 24-page section titled “Challenges in a multi-racial society.”

- "Students are asked questions such as "How far do Singaporeans view themselves as valuable in addition to the workforce?"

Socio-economic diversity in textbooks:

- "Homefront," a 24-page, under a section titled "Challenges in a multi-racial society," is an example of a new textbook that focuses on issues of inclusion and diversity.

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Combined Humanities (CH)

How is CH mark calculated?

Social Studies $\rightarrow 50\%$

$+$

Elective History/Geography/Literature $\rightarrow 50\%$
Background and Overview of Social Studies
Background to Social Studies

• A subject offered in many developed countries (citizenship education)

• Key aims of SS in S’pore:
  - instill a sense of national identity as well as global awareness/perspective
  - develop critical thinking and process skills
Background to Social Studies

• Combined Humanities was introduced in 2001; first year of examination in 2002
• 3 cycles of revisions in SS syllabus since 2001
• Start of new SS syllabus in 2016 (current Sec 3 cohort); content updated to make syllabus more relevant to present day context
• Change in paper codes for Sec 3 cohort in 2017
The NEW 2016 SS Syllabus

- Content is organised around three issues.
  - Issue 1: Exploring Citizenship and Governance
  - Issue 2: Living in a Diverse Society
  - Issue 3: Being Part of a Globalised World

- Each issue is organised around an Inquiry Focus.
## Issue 1: Exploring Citizenship and Governance [Chaps 1-3]

### Inquiry Focus
Working for the good of society: whose responsibility is it?

### Guiding Qns
- What does it mean for me to be a citizen of my country?
- How do we decide on what is good for society?
- How can we work for the good of society?
# The NEW 2016 SS Syllabus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue 2</th>
<th>Living in a Diverse Society [Chaps 4-7]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry Focus</td>
<td>Living in a diverse society: Is harmony achievable?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Guiding Qns | • What is diversity?  
  • Why is there greater diversity in S’pore now?  
  • What are the experiences and effects of living in a diverse society?  
  • How can we respond in a diverse society? |
### The NEW 2016 SS Syllabus

#### Issue 3

**Being Part of a Globalised World**

[Chaps 8-11]

#### Inquiry Focus

**Being part of a globalised world: Is it necessarily good?**

#### Guiding Qns

- What does it mean to live in a globalised world?
- How do we respond to tensions arising from some economic, cultural and security impact of globalisation?
## The SS Examination Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Section A:** One Source-based Case Study (SBCS)  
- 5 sub-parts [Qns 1a-e]    | 35m   | 70%       |
| **Section B:** One Structured-Response Question (SRQ)  
- 2 sub-parts [Qns 2a-b]    | 15m   | 30%       |
Section A: Source-based Case Study

• Section A (SBCS) requires students to interpret and evaluate a collection of sources based on a societal issue.

• Can be set on any one of the three issues in the SS syllabus

• Issue/ Focus of SBCS may or may not be covered in the syllabus
Section A: Skills tested in SBCS

Objective 2: Interpreting and Evaluating Sources/ Given Info

Candidates should be able to:

- comprehend and extract relevant information;
- draw inferences from given information;
- analyse and evaluate evidence;
- compare and contrast different views;
- distinguish between fact, opinion and judgement;
- recognise values and detect bias; and
- draw conclusions based on reasoned consideration of evidence and arguments.

Evaluating reliability of source(s)
Evaluating utility (or usefulness) of source(s)
## Section A: Source-based Case Study

The SBCS comprises of 5 sub-questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qn</th>
<th>Skills Tested</th>
<th>Marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)-(d)</td>
<td>Source-handling skills on <strong>specific</strong> sources</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e)</td>
<td><strong>Source-handling skills requiring use of multiple sources. Students will have to consider the issue of the case study from a broader perspective.</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SBCS- The ‘e’ Question

Issue: How does opening our doors to foreigners impact economic opportunities in Singapore?

N(A) Level
(e) How far so the sources in the case study show that opening our doors to foreigners impact economic opportunities in Singapore? EYA. [10m]

‘O’ Level
(e) ‘Singapore should welcome foreign manpower.’ Using sources in this case study, explain how far you would agree with this statement. [10m]
Section B: Structured-Response Qn

• Students will be required to show their understanding of societal issues when they apply their knowledge as they analyse societal issues and construct explanations.

• Emphasis on knowledge beyond factual recall and ability to construct reasoned arguments, and making informed judgement and recommendations.
Section B: Structured-Response Qn

• Provided with three **Extracts** which serve as **stimulus/scaffold** for students to think about an issue and hence, reflect in their responses.

• Two sub-parts
  - Sub-part (a): requires consideration of issue in the context of Singapore [7m]
  - Sub-part (b): application of content found in the TB [8m]
Extract 1

Individuals are granted the legal status of citizenship by countries. In Singapore citizenship is legally granted when a person is born in Singapore and one of the person’s parents is a citizen. Citizenship can also be legally granted if a person makes an application and fulfils criteria such as having good character, an intention to reside in Singapore permanently and has elementary knowledge of one of the following languages, namely Malay, English, Mandarin and Tamil.

In 2013, the number of Singapore citizenship granted is about 20,000. Slightly more than 40% of those granted citizenship is aged 30 years and below.
SRQ- Sub-part (a)

Extract 1 states that more than 40% of the 20,000 citizens who were granted S’pore citizenship in 2013 were 30 years and below.

(a) In your opinion, why do you think more than 40% of the 20,000 citizens granted S’pore citizenship were below 30 years old? Explain your answer using one (NA)/ two (Express) reason(s). [5m]
SRQ- Sub-part (b)

Extract 2
One way to shape citizenship is through participation in meaningful causes. Singaporeans can participate towards building a better Singapore through individual or group involvement in working for the good of society.

Extract 3
In Singapore, citizenship can be shaped through national identity. Common practices is one way which national identity is strengthened as it enables the citizens to identify with the aspects of what makes us Singaporeans.
SRQ- Sub-part (b)

Extracts 2 and 3 reflect the role of national identity and participation in shaping citizenship in Singapore.

‘N(A)’ Level
(b) Explain how participation and national identity shape citizenship in S’pore. [10m]

‘O’ Level
(b) Is participation more important national identity in shaping citizenship in S’pore? EYA. [10m]
How are students assessed?

- **No point-by-point** marking in SS
- **Levels of Response Marking Scheme (LORMS)**
  - rewards the *level* of skill or understanding displayed (i.e. quality of response)
  - covers possible responses (but needs to be justified/ supported with evidence)
Issues in Past Years’ SBCS

GCE ‘O’ Level

• 2008: Can S’pore attract and retain the talent it needs to ensure its economic devt?
• 2009: Why did Saddam Hussein invade Kuwait?
• 2010: What was the impact of the Mumbai terror attacks of November 2008?
• 2011: Is it likely that any increase in population will occur in Singapore?
• 2012: Healthcare in Britain (NHS)
Issues in Past Years’ SBCS

GCE ‘O’ Level

• 2013: Cod Wars
• 2014: Role of the British Army in Northern Ireland
• 2015: What is the impact of the killing of Osama bin Laden?
• 2016: How significant was the role of the UN in responding to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait?
Issues in Past Years’ SBCS

GCE ‘N’ Level

• 2008: Impact of the Sri Lankan conflict on relief efforts after the tsunami
• 2009: Ethnic tensions in Kenyan (December 2007)
• 2010: Effectiveness of ERP in S’pore
• 2011: Will IRs benefit S’pore?
• 2012: Who was to blame for the Korean War?
Issues in Past Years’ SBCS

GCE N Level

• 2013: The challenges of globalization- Why was the takeover of Cadbury by Kraft unpopular?

• 2014: Why is the conflict over Paracel and Spratly Islands so difficult to resolve?

• 2015: What caused the Sinhalese-Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka?
Strategies used in the Social Studies Classroom
Strategies used in the SS Class

1. Cascading of some skills to lower secondary History

2. Differentiated approach for NA and Express students

3. Explicit teaching of question analysis
   • Looking for clues in qns to identify the skills tested and demands of qns
Strategies used in the SS Class

4. Use of discussions + newspaper article reflection

5. Use of scaffolds to guide student responses
How can Parents help?

Strategies you can try with your daughter
Some common issues seen in our girls

• Lack of awareness of the world around them → inferences drawn are sometimes inaccurate or superficial

• Need to be able to see issues from different perspectives

• Poor time management (especially during examination) → inability to complete paper within duration given
Strategies for parents

• Encourage your child to read widely
  - to read the papers and watch the news

• Discuss news articles with your child
  - engage her in discussion of topics/issue related to the themes in the syllabus or in news featured on a weekly basis
  - encourage her to form opinions about various issues and justify her stand with facts and concrete evidence
Strategies for parents

• Help her to learn effective **time management**
  - e.g. setting alarm for suggested amount of time needed to complete assignments
  - e.g. 10-12mins for each sub-part in SBCS + 10mins reading of sources
  - e.g. 15-20mins for each sub-part in SRQ
The evidence is now beyond dispute:

‘When schools work together with families to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in school, but throughout life.’

HARVARD EDUCATIONAL REVIEW
The Social Studies Team @SJC

Ms Kathleen Ang  Ms Melissa Paul  Ms Samantha Tan

Mrs Joyce Goh  Mrs Veronica Tjan
Q & A

Thank you!