What have I learned today?

Formative Assessment in Social Studies

Easy Ways to Check for Understanding

D.C. Everest Social Studies  D.C. Everest Area Schools  Weston, WI 54476
http://www.dce.k12.wi.us/jrhigh/socialstudies/
5-Minute Strategies

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Using These Five-Minute Strategies

- These are quick (5-minutes or less) daily strategies which can be used any time during a lesson to help the teacher (and students) check for understanding.

- These strategies also send a message to students – be the best learner you can be because you may be asked to demonstrate your learning during class.

Assessment is derived from “assidere” which means “to sit with or beside.” It is something we do with and for a student, not something we do to them. - Green
Using These Five-Minute Strategies (con’ t)

• It is critical that the teacher assess students on a daily basis (e.g., move about the room and listen to what students are saying when they talk with partners, collect and read their summaries, etc.).

• Every day the teacher must ask – “Did the students learn the essential understandings from the lesson?”

Daily monitoring can include anything from written student responses such as journal writing or notes to reflective responses based on a teacher’s frequent questioning for understanding during each class session.
Using These Five-Minute Strategies (con’t)

• The teacher must use the information from these quick formative assessments to alter instruction and provide feedback to students to help them move forward in their learning.

• In addition to checking for understanding, these strategies are a great way to provide closure to lessons. Again, if students feel that the teacher is checking for understanding every day, they will be more concerned about their learning.

The simplest prescription for improving education must be “dollops of feedback.”
Using These Five-Minute Strategies (con’t)

• Most of these strategies are not original, they have simply been compiled for ease of use. They are meant to provide some creative ways to check for understanding.

• Some of these strategies also help the student assess his/her role as a learner and will provide valuable feedback as to how the learner views the teacher.

Learning is viewed as an activity that students do for themselves in a proactive way rather than as a covert event that happens to them in reaction to teaching.

- Barry Zimmerman
Using These Five-Minute Strategies (con’t)

- Tip #1 Have paper readily available so students don’t waste time getting it out.

- Tip #2 Keep a box which contains a dice, a deck of playing cards, Clio’s box, etc.

- Tip #3 When you start the slide show, you can right-click and it says “Go to slide...” and you can go to any slide in the program.

The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn. - Alvin Toffler
Good Questions

• On a piece of paper, write three good questions you could ask to learn more about the topic we studied today.

The one real object of education is to have a man [or woman] in the condition of continually asking questions. ~Bishop Mandell Creighton
Three Minute Writing

- You have three minutes to write everything you learned today. Don’t worry about the organization – just write for three minutes about what you have learned.

Who does not know that the first law of historical writing is the truth. - Cicero
Draw Two Names

• You have one minute to think about how you might summarize today’s lesson.

• Two names will then be drawn and those two people will stand and each give a thirty second summary of the key points of the lesson.

Summarizing is defined as synthesizing important ideas. – M. McLaughlin
Chapter Skim

• Skim over pgs. __________ in your textbook that you have already read. You will have two minutes to skim.

• You now have thirty seconds to tell your partner some key ideas from the book. Then your partner does the same.

Perhaps nobody has changed the course of history as much as the historians.  ~Franklin P. Jones
Pair Share

• Person A will discuss: ____________________________ for one minute.
• Person B will discuss: ____________________________ for one minute.
• Be prepared to share with the group.

The biggest enemy to learning is the talking teacher. - John Holt
Simon Says for Big Kids

- Simon say - tap your head if you understood __________ from today’s lesson.
- Simon says - hold your arms up if you didn’t understand __________.
- Simon says – turn around if you understood __________.
- Simon says – flap your arms if you know what _____ means.

To know nothing of what happened before you were born is to remain forever a child. - Cicero
Big Idea

• Write a “big idea” for the unit we’ve been studying.

• Big ideas are not specific to just any one unit and can also apply today.

Examples

Trade and land disputes sometimes arise between two countries.

New technology often makes people’s lives easier.

People rebel against their government when they are oppressed.

Citizens in a country might disagree about their country’s policies.

Big ideas are at the core of the subject. They are broad, abstract, and timeless.

- Wiggins
Cause/Effect

• Make a graphic organizer like one of those below to show the causes and effects for _____________________.

The causes of events are ever more interesting than the events themselves.

~Cicero
History Dice

• Decide which person is “even” and which person is “odd.”

• The teachers asks a questions and you and your partner discuss how to respond.

• The teacher rolls the dice. If it’s an even number the “even” people stand and the teacher calls on someone to respond. If an odd number is rolled, the “odd” people stand.

It must be remembered that the purpose of education is not to fill the minds of students with facts... it is to teach them to think, if that is possible, and always to think for themselves. - Robert Hutchins
My Learning

- Respond to the following statements about your learning by ranking each statement a 1 through 5 with “5” being totally true and “1” not true at all.

A. I totally understand everything in this class.
B. Reading the textbook really helps me understand.
C. Listening in class is easy for me and helps me.
D. I put a lot of effort into this class.
E. Being able to talk about the ideas with others helps me.
F. Acting things out helps me learn things.

Self-regulated learners set task-specific learning goals and employ appropriate strategies to attain those goals. – Myron Dembo
It Never Happened

• Pretend that ________________ had never happened or ________________ had never been born. How would things be different?

• Discuss this with your partner.

What if the bullet of John Wilkes Booth had been deflected on the night of April 14, 1865?
Fogginess

• What part of the lesson today was the most unclear (or foggy) to you?
• Write it on a piece of paper.

Nothing capable of being memorized is history. R. G. Collingwood
Retelling

• You have just finished reading/hearing about _______________.
• You have one minute to think about what you read/heard.
• Partner A – retell it to Partner B in two minutes.
• Partner B – ask questions to check for understanding.

If you’ve heard this story before, don’t stop me, because I’d like to hear it again. - Groucho Marx
Different Perspectives

• Show at least two-three different perspectives people had about our topic today.
• Use talk bubbles or a chart. Be sure to identify the person or group for each perspective you describe.

We should develop our own society and not integrate.

People of all colors are children of Allah.

The best way to bring about change is to use the legal system.

We need to use non-violent means to bring about an end to segregation.

Why study history? The answer is because we virtually must, to gain access to the laboratory of human experience. – Why Study History?
Key Concepts

• Explain the key concept “__________.”
• Give a definition (in your own words), draw a symbol/picture to represent it, give an example of the concept, and a big idea to go with it.

**Definition**
Overthrow of one government for another government or sudden change (e.g., in ideas, technology)

**Big Idea**
Revolutions sometimes occur when peoples’ rights are taken away or they have bad times economically.

**picture/symbol**
We are going to overthrow the government because you people are really mean!

**Examples**
American Revolution, French Revolution, Russian Revolution
Industrial Revolution

You will have the most instructional success if you teach a cluster of concepts which relate to a big idea. – Michigan Curriculum Framework
Newspaper Headline

• Create a newspaper headline that may have been written for the topic we are studying. Capture the main idea of the event.

"The newspaper is a greater treasure to the people than uncounted millions of gold."
-Henry Ward Beecher
Thought Bubble

• Draw a thought bubble and write in the thoughts of __________. Be sure to include key historical thoughts.

EXAMPLE
Thomas Paine

I just know I can write something the average person will understand. I need to convince them that a tiny island should not rule us.

“A man who does not think for himself does not think at all.” – Oscar Wilde
Chalkboard Champs

• The class is divided into 3-4 teams.
• The chalkboard/whiteboard is divided into a large space for each team.
• Each person needs a writing utensil.
• When the teacher says “Go,” all team members rush to their area and write or draw (symbols/pictures) to represent key ideas in the current topic of study. (It will be crowded!)
• At the end of 3 minutes, each team must present 2-3 ideas from their chalkboard creation.

I will not sleep through my education.
I will not sell school property.
I will not drive the principal’s car.
I will not conduct my own fire drills.

Bart Simpson Blackboard Quotes
Test Questions

- Write two test questions that you think the teacher might put on the test.
- Make your two questions be about the most important ideas of the unit.

The desire to know is far more important than achievement and/or performance measures.

-Caine & Caine
Historical Cartoons

• Create a cartoon or a comic strip about one of the key events, ideas or people that we have been studying.
• You will have five minutes.
• Your drawing is not as important as the ideas you include in it.
• Use talk bubbles and captions.

The pictures made it interesting and it just stuck in my mind.

- Quote from student using Adventure Tales Cartoon Book
Biography

• Choose one of the key people we have been studying recently.

• In three minutes write as much as you know about that person.

The best biographies leave their readers with a sense of having all but entered into a second life and of having come to know another human being in some ways better than he knew himself. - Mary Cable
Am I a “10”? 

• Rate yourself from “1” to “10” (ten being the best) on how well you understand everything we study in class.

- \[ \text{Continuum Scale} \]
  \[ \text{Low} \quad \text{High} \]

• Then complete the statements below:

  One thing that the teacher could do to help me understand things better is…

  One thing that I do that helps me learn the best is…

  The great...teachers are the ones who spark you to explore and make your own discoveries, who can guide your learning journey with a touch so subtle you think you're steering the plane yourself. - Tamim Ansary
Clio’s History Box

• Write a question you think is important about this unit on a piece of paper. Sign your name.

• Put your question into Clio’s History Box. After all questions are in the box, pick a question and answer it. Sign your name.

• The teacher will call on a few people and then collect the questions/answers.

Clio is the Muse of historical and heroic poetry. She is often represented in a sitting or standing attitude, with an open roll of paper, or chest of books.
G-SPRITE

• Use the following themes and relate them to the topic we’ve been studying.
• Usually you can find something to fit with most of the themes.

G  Geographical
S  Social
P  Political
R  Religious
I  Intellectual
T  Technological
E  Economical

Example – Puritan Life

G  Geographical - they lived in the New England Colonies
S  Social
P  Political - they held town meetings
R  Religious – they left England because of persecution; they wanted to purify the Church of England
I  Intellectual - they had a high literacy rate because they wanted people to read the Bible
T  Technological
E  Economical

Using themes will help your students reinforce and make connections with their prior knowledge of history. – Bringing History Home

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I can't understand why I flunked American history. When I was a kid there was so little of it. – George Burns

Be Funny

• Use humor (appropriate of course) to get across a main idea about the learning outcome (e.g., make a cartoon, tell a joke)

Paul Revere's Mother: "I don't care where you think you have to go, young man, midnight is past your curfew."
George Washington's Mother: "The next time I catch you throwing money across the Potomac, you can kiss your allowance good-bye!"
Abraham Lincoln's Mother: "Again with the stovepipe hat? Can't you just wear a baseball cap like the other kids?"
Connect to Today

• Think about how what we’ve been studying might be connected to things that are going on today.

Example

Migrations have occurred at various times in history. Today, immigrants from Mexico is a controversial topic.

History is a guide to navigation in perilous times. History is who we are and why we are the way we are. David C. McCullough
Mini-Drama

• The main idea of the lesson today was ____________________.
• You and your partner have two minutes to come up with a short one minute play that tells the main idea of the lesson today.
• Present your play to another pair.

It is somewhat difficult to remember all the happenings of certain events from throughout history, but it can be made much easier if you act out what you have learned about some of them. – Matt Sparks
Timeliner

• Dates help us understand history better. Pick five major events in history and tell the years that the events occurred.

• Talk with your partner to see which events he/she chose. Check each other’s dates for accuracy.

Chronological thinking is at the heart of historical reasoning. Without a clear sense of historical time—time past, present, and future—students are bound to see events as one great tangled mess. —National Center for History in Schools
Mental Geo Maps

• It is helpful to be able to see “maps” in your mind’s eye.

• Try to picture the following (e.g., continent, country, state) ____________in your mind.

• Now draw a picture of it. The picture won’t be perfect, but should give a general idea of the geographical region.

Mental maps are maps that represent the mental image that a person has of an area.
- Utah Education Network
Letter to Principal

• Write a short letter to the principal telling him all of the ideas you have learned about this week.

"History is the version of past events that people have decided to agree upon.

– Napoleon Bonaparte"
• Make a simple mind map about the topic we have been studying.
• Be sure to answer the 5W’s and the How. You have four minutes.

"Is a picture worth a thousand words? A graphic organizer forms a powerful visual picture of information and allows the mind 'to see' undiscovered patterns and relationships."
Meet the Teacher

• You and your partner decide on the most important idea from the lesson.
• Together, state that idea in one sentence.
• When you are ready, you and your partner should line up to “meet the teacher” and tell what you think the most important idea was.

History teaches us tolerance for human shortcomings and imperfections. - Lewis F. Powel
Mini-Debate

- Person A – You take the position of _____.
- Person B – You take the position of _____.
- You have one minute to think about what you will say.
- You will each have one minute to present your position to your partner.

*It is better to debate a question without settling it than to solve a question without debating it.* – Joseph Joubert
Rock, Paper, Scissors

• Listen to the question the teacher asks and discuss it with your partner.
• Do “Rock, Paper, Scissors” with your partner.
• The winner stands and the teacher will choose one or more of the winners to answer the question. Repeat several times.

“Rock, Paper, Scissors,” (also known as roshambo) appears to have originated around 200 BC in Japan. It later came to be associated with Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau, the French general who assisted Washington in the American Revolution.

Strait Dope
Trio Trading Cards

• Each student writes a “how” or “why” question about the topic on a card.
• Pass your card to another trio member and each person answers the question on the new card.
• Pass the card to the third member who has not had it yet. That person reads the question and answer aloud.

It is not the kings and generals that make history – but the masses, the people. - Nelson Mandela
My Tips to the Teacher

• Respond to the following statements about the teacher by ranking each statement a 1 through 5 with “5” being totally true and “1” not true at all.

A. The teacher lets me know each day what I need to learn.
B. The teacher is always checking to see if I understand.
C. The teacher clearly explains assignments.
D. The teacher lets me know how I will be evaluated.
E. The teacher gives me feedback which helps me learn.

We think too much about effective methods of teaching and not enough about effective methods of learning. - John Carolus
Back to Back Boards

• You and your partner each get a mini-whiteboard and stand back-to-back.

• The teacher asks a question and you each answer on your board.

• When the teacher says “turn around” you show each other your answers and discuss.

Man is a history-making creature who can neither repeat his past nor leave it behind. - W.H. Auden
5, 4, 3, 2, 1

• The teacher will make several statements regarding the unit we are studying.
• Each statement will start with “I thoroughly understand... (e.g., the differences between Hamilton and Jefferson).
• If you totally agree (and understand), put up five fingers, mostly agree-4 fingers, sort of agree-3 fingers, somewhat disagree-2 fingers and totally disagree-one finger.

History never looks like history when you are living through it.

- John Gardner
Learning Outcome

• Write today’s learning outcome (or target).
• Below make a face (see below) that shows how you are doing so far with the learning outcome.

History is herstory, too. ~Author Unknown
Art History

• Sketch something important about this time period in history. You have 5 minutes.
• Write a caption under the picture to explain why the picture is important.

Geronimo was an Apache Indian who stood against the U.S. government for a long time.

I’m sketching Geronimo!

The direct viewing of images, brings us “face-to-face with history.” – Stephen Bann
Note-Taking Specialist

• Switch notes with your partner.
• Look at your partner’s notes and enhance his/her notes by underlining key terms/ideas, drawing symbols for key ideas, adding in any important notes that are missing, asking questions about key ideas.

[When note taking] develop a system of "highlighting," using underlining, check marks or indentation's to signify important areas. - Emedia
Trio Rap

• Your trio should create a rap or a song that includes three main ideas from the lesson.
• If you’d like, use the melody of a common song.
• Perform your rap/song for another trio.

It's easier, and a lot more fun to rehearse song than text! Music and song stimulate creativity and foster a positive attitude towards school. – S. Ruth Harris
PSI

• In your trio, one person is P, S, and I.
• P presents his work for the day.
• S looks over P’s work and writes two strengths about it.
• I looks over P’s work and writes one way to improve it.

CANT stands for Constant And Never-ending Improvement. Anthony Robbins
Card Trick

• Each student picks a playing card.
• When the teacher asks a question, discuss it with your partner.
• The teacher will say something like, “all red cards stand” or “all Queens stand.”
• The teacher will pick someone who is standing to respond.

Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions. ~Oliver Wendell Holmes
Exit Pass

• Prior to leaving today, please do the following:

_________________________________

• That’s your exit pass out of class today. I’m going to check it at the door.

One of the reasons I love history is that it forces you to travel backward in time and actually live the events that the historian is writing about. - Rick Moran
Sources Used

The following sources provided ideas for some of these strategies:

Active Participation Strategies
(compiled by Juli Kendall for the MiddleWeb Reading/Writing Workshop discussion group: www.middleweb.com)

Active Learning with PowerPoint
http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tutorials/powerpoint/assessment.html

Picsearch (All pictures were found at various locations using www.picsearch.com)
http://www.picsearch.com/

Social Studies Concepts

Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards Through Classroom Assessment
http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/kbla9810.htm

Checking for Understanding Techniques
http://assist.edu mems.edu/ASSIST/classroom/assesses_learning/Sec1_plan teach/Str2_ongoing_assessment/tool_check_understanding.htm

Checking for Understanding: Strategies to use in the Field

Lesson Starters
http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/teachers/starters.html