

SF  
Z-19  
(1,94)



Syllabus of

**HISTORY AND SOCIAL  
STUDIES  
FOR SCHOOLS  
IN FINLAND**

Georg-Eckert-Institut BS78



1 235 371 X

NATIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION  
1994



## COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

### HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Georg-Eckert-Institut  
für internationale  
Schulbuchforschung  
Braunschweig  
-Schulbuchbibliothek -

94/1523

The aim of History and Social Studies teaching is to guide the student to understand and to outline the present, to strengthen the student's own identity, to guide him to respect human beings and human work done in the fields of material and spiritual culture and also to help him to grow as a active, critical and responsible member of society. Central areas to be examined in teaching History and Social Studies are time, man and the environment.

#### Aims and Central Contents

The aims of studying History and Social Studies are that the student

- \* gets such information and experiences with which he can become acquainted with his roots, clarify his picture of himself, and by so doing, strengthen his self-esteem in a healthy manner and build his picture of the world;
- \* becomes familiar with his homeland and its history and cultural tradition so that his national identity is strengthened;
- \* becomes familiar with meaningful events and periods in history of the world, especially with the neighboring areas and the rest of Europe;
- \* masters information and skills that he needs in society and
- \* can get and use historical and social information, and handle historical and current problems.

In the studying, general history, Finnish history and modern Finnish society are examined.

In general history, the focus is on European history, in which the neighboring countries of Finland occupy a special place. In Finnish history, along with national historic phenomena and events, the focus is on regional and local history, home district history, and everyday life at different periods, which means a micro-historical point of view. In Social Studies modern Finnish society is examined in functional relations so that enough attention is paid to regional and local conditions and special features.

In History, the historical development of different areas is examined in a balanced way, such as political, economic and social history, and cultural history.

SF

2-19 (1,94)

There is an attempt to outline the historical development along continuums from ancient history to the modern day. The continuums, however, are not gapless; certain specific and interesting phenomena are focused on that describe the nature and meaning of the period. In order to crystallize the picture of the present day as a result of a historical development and as a starting point for the future, some current domestic and international issues are also covered in the teaching.

The earliest stages of the time continuum are studied at the lower level, where topics from ancient history to the French revolution and, in Finnish history, up to the end of the Swedish rule are covered. Material that gives experiences plays an important role in choosing contents.

At the upper level, general history and the central events and phenomena up to today are treated and current international and domestic issues are examined. Special attention is paid to historical phenomena and turning points that help understand the world and Finland today. In Social Studies, teaching focuses on the Finnish political and social systems, the status of citizens in society, the main features of Finland's political economy and economic life, and the central issues of social policy.

### **Nature of Study and Starting Points of Teaching**

The aims for the arrangements of History and Social Studies study is that the student

- \* adopts social ethical values such as social responsibility, respecting his own people and home district, respecting work and human rights, international mutual understanding and desire for peace;
- \* develops and matures his sense of time and knowledge of history, and learns to proportion his period and himself to continual change;
- \* has real interest in historic and social issues and understands general social phenomena;
- \* realizes the relation of man and nature as a basic issue in history, the present day and the future;
- \* understands cultural differences and respects the cultural traditions of all mankind;
- \* understands that he, as a citizen and consumer, can wield influence when social decisions are made;
- \* is prepared to investigate, learn, continuously analyze information and apply it creatively; and
- \* is prepared to think critically on grounds of his ability to estimate and exercise his sense of proportion.

In thematic topics, the student is guided to pay attention to the historical background of the subject and social views under study. The contents of the teaching and work habits of History and Social Studies give plenty of opportunities for cooperation with other subjects.

## UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

### HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES

The purpose of the instruction of history and social studies in the senior secondary school is – taking into account the study of these subjects in the comprehensive school – to add to students' conceptions about the surrounding society and world. The instruction conveys subject matter that students can utilize when they build up their own personality, outlook of life, and world view, and it creates preconditions for critical analysis and processing of knowledge.

Instruction is based on positive socio-ethical values, such as social responsibility, work, spirit of enterprise and appreciation of one's home region, understanding of cultural differences, and an attempt to increase international understanding and willingness to promote peace.

Instruction emphasizes the significance of the relationship between man and his environment as the basic issue of history, the present, and the future.

The purpose of the instruction is also to awaken in students willingness and skill to participate actively in social activities, and ability to see their own activity as part of a wider social context.

#### Objectives

The objective of the study of history and social studies is that students

- \* see the present as the result of historical development and as the starting point for the future so that they have the possibility to relate their own time and themselves to continuous change and add to their sense of time,
- \* develop abilities to acquire many-sided historical and topical knowledge by various means in the different fields of history and social studies, and process it,
- \* learn to critically assess the reliability and significance of information sources and information and opinions,

- \* are able to assess fairly the birth and significance of various historical and social phenomena in relation to their own time, and to compare them with each other and also with the present time, and
- \* obtain an ability to use and apply acquired knowledge in various situations related to studying, work, and other social life, and leisure.

### **Obligatory courses**

The first four obligatory courses mainly deal with history, the last is related to social studies. The boundary between history and social studies is not, however, very definite in the various courses.

#### **Man, environment, and culture**

The course studies population and social history longitudinally; the emphasis, however, is on some selected living environments presented as examples. The nature of historical change and process is illustrated in the course. The emphasis lies on general history, which is supplemented, when appropriate, with phenomena in Finnish history. Central approaches of the course include nature and economy, survival and change of a community, economic upheavals, migrations, and division of labour between the genders.

#### **European man**

The course studies European cultural history and the development of Finnish culture as one part of it. The world of people from different periods of time are approached through sources dating from their own time. Themes are constructed also with the help of prominent persons in history and ordinary people. Central achievements of various art types are studied simultaneously. Central approaches of the course include concept of man and established customs, natural scientific world view, concept of knowledge, and arts.

#### **International relationships**

The course analyzes international politics, and events are studied by means of an economic and ideological framework. Central approaches of the course include nationalism, polarity of democracy and totalitarianism, international agreement systems, liberation of colonies, and national minorities in international politics. The emphasis of the course is on this century.

#### **Turning points in Finnish history**

The purpose of the course is to analyze central major transition-periods in Finnish history during the 19th and 20th centuries

against the background of long shared politicosocial development with Sweden. Central approaches include the issue of democracy, conflict between social groups, conflict in foreign policy, and major transitions in culture.

#### **Power structures, state and individual**

This course orientates students towards political and social studies, and it includes, in addition to the analysis of the present Finnish system, international comparisons and historical background. Central approaches include human rights, political and social rights, division of power and control of power.

### **Specialization studies**

Specialization courses expand the studies to cover history and social studies as well as legal systems outside Europe.

The development and present nature of a high culture outside Europe can be studied both from the point of view of cultural clash or adjustment and integration, and from the point of view of the present influence of culture.

In social studies the emphasis lies on economics from the point of view of both microeconomics and macroeconomics. In jurisdiction, students learn about central principles in the Finnish legal system and about the most common areas of jurisdiction from the citizen's point of view.

Other specialization topics include Finnish history before autonomy, antiquity, present world situation, futurology, corporate economics, and social politics.

### **The nature of studies and some suggestions for teaching**

Typical approaches of the study of history include development, change, transitions and breakdowns. The studies include both long historical development trends and a more indepth examination of historical phenomena in the past and present. They are studied by means of themes that guide in understanding historical processes. Chronological progress is not the only possible approach, but it is also possible to take a problem, cultural phenomenon, or event and study it either in the context of its own time or by unrolling the chain of events that led to it.

A central feature in the study of history is criticism which must be focused on knowledge as such and on the phenomenon that is studied. Therefore, students should be given an opportunity to learn about different information and research results available on the object of study. It is possible, on the basis of these,

to develop the students' ability to assess the reliability of information and to realize the relativity of information.

It is important in social studies that instruction focuses, in addition to regulations that guide the activities of the Finnish social system, also on their practical applications. Students must get an idea of the possibilities to influence the development of events.

Instruction uses many-sided materials, like general and specialization work on history, archives, texts and programmes from mass media as well as data bases.







