

## Montana Social Studies Content Standards



The Montana Social Studies Content Standards “fosters citizenship in an interdependent world.” One component of the integrated curriculum focuses on government, while developing the knowledge and skills necessary to make the connections between the past and the present. A strong emphasis on cultural heritage and contemporary perspectives is incorporated into the curriculum.

In SIRS’ study of the Montana Social Studies Content Standards, we see a direct correlation between the goals and objectives that are emphasized and the framework upon which SIRS Interactive Citizenship has been developed. SIRS Interactive Citizenship content emphasizes the generalizations and concepts that act as the framework for understanding democratic political institutions and their emergence throughout history, while the Discovery and Inquiry activities and related chapter lessons exemplify our commitment to critical thinking skills.

*What Citizens Need to Know About Government*, addresses the expectations for Standard 2 of the Social Studies High School curriculum and presents a framework for understanding America’s ongoing struggle to realize the ideals of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution and each citizen’s role in this democracy. Through this framework, students are able to connect the past to the present as well as appreciate universal historical themes and dilemmas by accessing primary sources such as, biographies, documents, diaries, letters, legends and speeches and links to related articles and web sites while focusing on the basic concepts of government. Thus, students develop the higher order thinking skills deemed necessary by the Montana Social Studies Content Standards.

<<http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/accreditation/HTM/Mtstandards.shtml>> [2002, January 16]



**Montana Social Studies Content Standard 2**  
correlation with  
**What Citizens Need to Know About Government**



**Students analyze how people create and change structures of power, authority, and governance to understand the operation of government and to demonstrate civic responsibility.**

**Rationale**

The vitality and continuation of a democratic republic depends upon the education and participation of informed citizens.

**Benchmarks**

Students will:

Upon Graduation – End of Grade 12

1. analyze the historical and contemporary purpose of government and how the powers of government are acquired, modified, justified and used (e.g., checks and balances, Bill of Rights, court decisions).

- *Chapter 1 provides a definition of government and explores the purpose of government.*
- *Chapter 2 explains how government is structured through a system of checks and balances.*
- *Chapter 9 presents the Bill of Rights and discusses how each constitutional amendment modifies the Constitution and addresses individual rights.*

2. compare and contrast various world political systems (e.g., ideologies, structure, institutions) with that of the United States.

- *Chapter 1 examines various political systems: command, custom, and consent. Historical and contemporary examples of governments found around the world can be analyzed. Links to websites, such as the British Parliament, allow students to continue in depth research into these examples.*

3. identify representative political leaders and philosophies from selected historical and contemporary settings.

- *Chapter 1 allows students to research the ideas of diverse political leaders, such as Abraham Lincoln and Chairman Mao. Students may also read the writings of 18<sup>th</sup> century philosophers who influenced early American leaders.*
- *Chapter 28 looks at the foreign policy issues of various 20<sup>th</sup> century presidents.*

4. related the concept of tribal sovereignty to the unique powers of tribal governments as they interact with local, state, and federal governments.

- *Chapter 1 discusses government by custom, as found in tribal governments. A link to the National Congress of American Indians allows students to research the structure of government tribes around the country including the Blackfeet, Chippewa Cree, and Gros Ventre.*

5a. analyze the effectiveness of various systems of government to protect the rights and needs of citizens and balance competing conceptions of a just society.

5b. analyze the impact of the Constitution, laws and court decisions on the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

- *Chapter 3 discusses the Constitution focusing on its structure, interpretation, and amendments.*
- *Chapter 9 looks at the Bill of Rights and minority rights.*
- *Chapter 7 focuses on the judiciary and the Supreme Court.*
- *From Chapter 9, students can read landmark Supreme Court decisions.*

6. analyze and evaluate conditions, actions, and motivations that contribute to conflict and cooperation within and among groups and nations (e.g., current events from newspapers, magazines, television).

- *Chapters 27 and 28 address national defense and foreign policy issues.*

7. analyze laws and policies governing technology and evaluate the ethical issues and the impacts of technology on society.

- *From Chapter 7, students can access a link to the Supreme Court to review pending and past court decisions on technology issues.*
- *From Chapter 10, students may link to the Montana State Government website to learn about current issues that affect Montana citizens.*