

CHAPTER ONE

Design Your Classroom *to Create Communities of Learners*

How exciting! You have been given your teaching assignment and handed the key to a classroom. Now it is time to use your knowledge, skills, and experience to create a community of learners. Your first task is to set the stage for effective teaching and learning every day in your own social studies classroom.

EXPLORE YOUR SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM

Take a tour and see your school in action. As you walk around the building, take note of the layout and activities. Consider these questions: Are classrooms grouped by department or grade level? Do students enter from the outside or from an inside hallway? What types of projects do you see students engaged in, especially in the social studies classes? How and where do teachers obtain books and supplies? Where is your room located in relation to the other school facilities?

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Here are some items you want to see and discuss with your colleagues to be prepared for the first day of school:

- Location of the main office, health office, restrooms, and lunchroom
- Location of the media center and technology labs
- Copy of the school district teacher handbook and curriculum guide
- Copy of the student handbook
- List of your tentatively assigned grade levels and courses
- List of your assigned students noted with special needs (including learning, social, family, and health needs)
- Copies of the course textbooks and syllabi
- Location of your classroom (or rooms if you will be a traveling teacher)
- Types of student desks or tables and chairs assigned to your classroom
- Availability of bulletin boards and display spaces in your classroom
- Availability of technology and storage areas within your classroom
- Location of your team/department office or planning room and storage areas
- Copies of the school calendar and schedule with the first day of work and the first day of school for students
- Directions to preferred places to park your car and whether or not a permit is required
- Directions to the faculty lounge and restrooms

As you become acquainted with each of these items, you will generate more questions and begin to plan for your students. This “preview of coming attractions” will help you get centered and enhance your peace of mind about your career as a social studies teacher. We will discuss these items in much more detail throughout the upcoming chapters.

MEET YOUR DEPARTMENT AND TEAM

You are going to spend most of your school time outside of your classroom with your department or team members. Although you might have been hired to teach specific social studies courses, you

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also were hired to fit into a particular group of people. Most teams want you to be an individual who successfully balances working on your own with working with others. You may be sharing students with other teachers; you may be team teaching with other teachers. You may work together to develop lesson plans and benchmark assessments. Every teacher will contribute to both your immediate effectiveness and long term success in some way. And every teacher will have more or different experiences than you bring to share with you. Our first secret for success is for you to learn from each person's strengths and expertise as you refine your skills and independence.

Many schools are organized into grade levels or academic departments with a group leader known as a department chair. Department chairs usually have been teaching at their schools a long time. They will likely be the ones to help you get your course textbooks, supplementary materials, and classroom supplies. Sometimes department chairs determine course assignments and periods taught. They can usually link you to professional organizations and professional development opportunities too.

INVESTIGATE YOUR SCHOOL HISTORY AND CUSTOMS

Schools are institutions frequently named for individuals who may be famous nationally or well known locally. Sometimes the namesake is still living, visits the school, and makes donations. It is exciting when you and your students meet the person for whom your school is named and learn what contributions this person made to the community to receive this special recognition.

Investigate your school's background. Frequently there are trophy cases, wall plaques, and group photographs displayed throughout the building. The annual yearbooks may be housed in the library. If you ask about your school in the faculty lounge or department planning room, it is likely someone will be happy to share stories of the school's history. It is both fun and informative to find out more about your school. Also, you can use these resources as ways of connecting your students to social studies with an immediate historical or sociological perspective. Discuss the significance of collecting and displaying local artifacts with your students. Take a field trip in your own school! Your school also functions around a set of customs and

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traditions (Cattani, 2002). By watching and listening carefully, you will realize how to promote and replicate the accepted ways of doing things at your new school. You will learn who is responsible for various aspects of the school's operations, how teachers and administrators expect you and your students to behave, and so forth. These are excellent topics to discuss with your department chair, team members, and/or a mentor.

Another secret is to use school customs and traditions as topics in your classroom. Have students discuss active citizenship, analyze roles and norms, or investigate group behaviors. Help students become aware of their school culture.

ACCESS TEXTBOOKS AND EQUIPMENT

When you obtain copies of your course textbooks and sample syllabi, you can begin reading them to prepare for the coming school year. Also ask for the teacher's manuals and supplementary teaching materials that either accompany the books or that have been purchased for your courses. Yet, be aware that teaching assignments may change during the summer or even in the beginning of the school year as the student population and faculty commitments stabilize.

Take inventory of the various kinds of teaching equipment and resources that are available. See what types of realia, primary source documents, and teaching models your school possesses. Inquire if there is a catalogue of your school's video and software collections. The types of equipment you can easily access certainly will impact the ways that you plan and implement your teaching strategies and learning experiences. Then, begin a wish list of items you would like to obtain when there is money available in the school budget. Check to see if your district has equipment standards for social studies classrooms. (See Box 1.1)

PLAN FOR DESKS AND DISPLAYS

I like the teacher to be in the front with the students around the teacher in a semicircle. The teacher walks around class and talks to students.

Atul, age 15, Grade 10

Box 1.1 Social Studies Materials and Equipment

- Atlases
- Cultural artifacts
- Globes
- Flags
- Historic costumes
- Maps: current and historical
- Display cases
- Chalkboards or whiteboards
- Smart Board
- Overhead and/or ELMO or other electric imaging projector
- Television
- DVD, CD, and/or videotape player(s)
- Computer(s)—desktop or laptop
- Printer
- Scanner
- Internet connections for one or more computers
- Large screen for projections

The classroom environment sets the tone for your students (Kottler, Kottler, & Kottler, 2004). You want your room to be both attractive and functional. It should be a place where students feel welcome, safe, and comfortable. Post your name and room number near the door. If possible, place a social studies poster on or beside the door that indicates the subjects taught in your room.

When a teacher puts up posters that he or she likes, the students that come into the classroom can get a basic idea of what kind of person their new teacher might be.

Trent, age 14, Grade 9

First, imagine what your students as well as other visitors will see as they enter. Display social studies materials and objects in this space. You can use maps, globes, models, time lines, posters, books, artifacts, and so forth. Over time, change your exhibits to reflect the

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topics and issues that you are studying in your courses to stimulate new ideas. Display products created by your students. Your goal is to captivate your students' interests and to communicate that engaging, challenging, and rewarding social studies education will be happening in your classroom.

Second, arrange the desks and furniture to allow students to move around the room quickly and easily; they need to be able to see you and the boards without any obstructions. Position the desks or tables into groups, half circles or circles, or a horseshoe shape to offer the most effective learning environments for your activities. Seating arrangements reflect your teaching styles. You want students to interact with one another and to work in collaborative learning groups. Sitting at tables or desks grouped in fours can facilitate these activities readily.

From a new teacher: *"My classroom is set up in a way that works for me. I have the students divided into two groups. Debates are a frequent occurrence in my classroom so this set-up works the best for me. It saves some time, which can be added to the instructional time for the students. It is also a nice set-up when playing review games prior to tests."*

Third, determine where you will place three-dimensional items, such as artifacts and models. Some objects you will let students handle, while others may be fragile and personal and you will want students to only look at them. Strategically place bookshelves, side tables, and/or display cases within students' view. Then move other furniture, such as wardrobes and file cabinets, to the walls or corners where students can access them for books, materials, and supplies, so you can see all parts of the room. You may have to make accommodations if your classroom is small, the seating is fixed, or other furniture is immovable.

Fourth, consider where to place your desk. Some teachers want their desks placed near the door; some teachers want their desks placed near the front of the classroom, which is usually where the boards are located. Yet, some teachers want their desks placed near the back of the classroom. Each location has benefits and limitations, and each teacher is unique. We suggest that you walk through other teachers' classrooms to see how they have arranged their classrooms. You might want to match them since it will be the configuration that the students will expect. Or you might want to be different to capture your students' attention and signal what activities they will engage in while in social studies.

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Fifth, dedicate distinct portions of your walls to highlight each course that you will be teaching. Save one space for general information. Use bulletin boards or cork strips to post reference information and related articles from newspapers, magazines, and journals. Set aside a special area to recognize student work. Here are two extremely important secrets: Find ways to display samples of every student's work from all your courses, and rotate the student work regularly throughout the school year. We also encourage you, from the first day of school, to display emergency procedures near the door and prepare everyone for all types of emergencies and evacuation. (See Box 1.2)

Box 1.2 Materials and Purposes for Social Studies Bulletin Board Displays

- Visual aids to build background knowledge
- Political spectrum to illustrate varying perspectives on an issue
- Prompts to stimulate discussions
- Quotes by historical and contemporary figures to inspire student actions and interactions
- Current event articles from journals, newspapers, and magazines to connect to students' daily lives
- Examples of professionals in social studies-related pursuits to identify social studies careers
- Maps to show political, historical, economic, physical, topographic, road, and climate information
- Time lines to relate the perspectives of time and events in the past or present
- Rubrics to show criteria for student work
- Displays to recognize students' accomplishments

COLLECT MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

It is time to brainstorm the kinds of materials and resources you would like to use to make your curriculum and instruction come alive. Consider what you want to use to illustrate concepts emphasized in

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your units and lessons such as maps, charts, photographs, artifacts (Obenchain & Morris, 2003), and realia (Maxim, 2006). What primary source documents will you want your students to examine? What online resources will you access, such as the Library of Congress or National Archives? Look through the textbooks to identify the topics and issues to start your thoughts. Can you find these materials in a local teacher supply store? Does the school have resources? Are these items available online? Is there an educational catalog you can borrow from your school's department chair or librarian? Additionally, do you want specific items, such as magnifying glasses to look at documents, or supplies, such as graph paper or construction paper, for the students to use in class?

It is also wise to begin collecting materials to help you get organized, such as plastic crates, stackable baskets, or colored file folders. You will keep some of these items in your classroom, some in the department or grade level office, and some at home. You will be amazed how quickly supplemental materials will accumulate, and in social studies, they take up a great amount of room.

ESTABLISH YOUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

There are three sources to consult as you establish your classroom policies and procedures. You will need to comply with regulations adopted by the school district (i.e., dress code and weapons), school building (i.e., hall passes and tardies), and your team or department (i.e., interactions and assignments). You want to be firm, fair, consistent, and, most of all, patient as you reflect all three layers of regulations and express your own style. Keep in mind that, for most of you, your students spend only one class session a day with you. They move through many different spaces and try to comply with everyone's expectations. You want to create an environment that communicates your plans and makes teaching and learning the focus of the school day.

The teacher takes a paper and asks students to tell a rule, and writes [it] down if that is [a] good [one] then passes the paper around and has students write their names.

Anusha, age 9, Grade 4

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You have several choices in establishing classroom policies and procedures. Although you could simply tell your students how you expect them to act in your classroom, we encourage you to model effective social studies by brainstorming possibilities, examining rationale, and reaching consensus. Try accomplishing this during the first few days of class. Divide the class into small cooperative learning groups, and ask each group to construct a list of classroom expectations along with associated consequences (rewards and punishments). Prompt your students to write the list as positive rather than negative statements. You will have to decide if you want to call them rules or if that term conveys negativity.

You might be amazed at the detailed lists your students will generate. Through consensus, you and your students can determine which expectations to adopt and how they will be managed. You will discover that some items can be grouped together into one overarching expectation, some items have multiple implications, and some items you need to maintain control. These discoveries are all part of the negotiation and consensus building—excellent models of social studies processes used in the real world. If you have multiple classes, you will have to decide if you want one set of expectations for all your classes or if you want to customize the expectations for each of your classes. Keep in mind the need to revisit and revise both the expectations and the processes from time to time, just as citizens revisit and revise governmental and business regulations.

Teachers need to collaborate with students, but know basically what they want.

Ann, age 14, Grade 9

When you talk with your colleagues, you may find that most of them follow similar procedures. This approach makes it much easier for your students and for you. If you like the procedures, we suggest that you try something similar. Then you can discuss the outcome with your team to make changes as a group or individually.

CREATE A SHARED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Your goal is to make your classroom a shared learning environment. Therefore, you need to refer to it as “our classroom” rather than “my

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classroom.” The same advice applies to your classroom management. By setting expectations together, you and your students share a sense of ownership and responsibility relative to how everyone will participate in the shared learning community.

From one experienced teacher: *“Since this is a social studies class, I use charts similar to the United States’ branches of government and how a bill becomes a law to communicate my system of classroom management. The first chart shows three boxes: expectations of the school, expectations of the teacher, and expectations of the students. Each box has a few items listed; together we list a few more items. The second chart shows a flowchart of rewards and consequences. I complete most of the charts in advance, but together we finish the charts. I repeat this exercise with each class during the first day. Then I consolidate all of the charts into one final version. In this way, I start the first day by doing social studies.”*

Some student expectations from the school and/or district include:

1. Wear clothing in compliance with the dress code.
2. Respect all people and the school campus.
3. Avoid gum, tobacco products, cell phones, and music players on campus.

Some student expectations from the teachers include:

1. Arrive to class on time ready to participate.
2. Bring supplies and assignments to class everyday.
3. Do your best on every assignment.

Some student expectations from the students include:

1. Talk only at appropriate times and in consideration of other speakers.
2. Use polite language and speaking tones.
3. Take responsibility for your actions.

HOLD CLASS MEETINGS REGULARLY

One way to build community is to hold class meetings (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). After all, an effective class meeting is social studies in action right there in your classroom. Let your students know when class meetings will be held, such as every other Monday, and how long they will last, such as fifteen minutes. You will not need to dedicate an entire class session to a class meeting unless you have a large agenda, such as an upcoming school event or a growing classroom dilemma. You can lead the meeting or, after time and modeling, your students can lead the meeting. The goal is to create a shared learning environment.

Construct an agenda and post the agenda, just as you expect your school administrators and public officials to do for and with you. Invite your students to submit agenda items by a stipulated deadline, such as one day before the meeting. Your students will be quite impressed that they have a genuine voice. As you guide your students through the first few meetings, explain each step to them and remind them that, although this is a shared experience, you are the teacher and will make the final decisions on which items you will discuss, the order, and the amount of time spent on each. You must maintain this responsibility. Some of your students may take advantage of a class meeting and suggest agenda items that are uncomfortable or inappropriate. They also may want to extend the length of the classroom meeting to avoid doing other work.

During the class meeting, follow the agenda and ask a student to serve as scribe to record the notes. You can select a scribe using name cards or sticks. Again, you will have to model your expectations explicitly. Using large chart paper, the overhead projector, or an ELMO (electric light machine operation) is effective and you have a copy of the notes to keep.

Preview the entire agenda and state the approximate length of time you plan to dedicate to each item. Doing this helps students manage their energies too. They know that you expect to discuss an issue and determine an outcome rather quickly, or that you plan to introduce an item that will take several class meetings to decide the most appropriate action. Give each student the opportunity to speak during the meeting, and hold the meetings when all students are present.

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Once you have conducted the first few class meetings, your students will start contributing more agenda items and begin realizing that they have both voice and choice. For these outcomes to happen, you must conduct an authentic class meeting and follow through on the class decisions.

ENSURE EQUITY AND FAIRNESS

You want to be fair (Danielson, 1996), you want your students to understand fairness and act fairly, you want to ensure fairness among your students, and you want your students to appreciate fairness in the classroom and in the world. Fairness entails a significant concept of social studies that assures everyone is provided equity and justice. Think of this as providing everyone equal information, access, and opportunity (Gallavan, in press) for effective learning and living.

Equity and fairness do not mean you treat all students the very same. Some students will require more time and attention; some students will need less energy. You need to be aware of each of your student's individual needs and interests so you can provide for them appropriately. And not all students will need the same amount of time and attention at the same time. Equity and fairness should be considered in terms of what you think or believe is a student's past performance, a student's immediate progress, and what you predict is a student's long-term potential. These conditions are all important aspects of equity and fairness. The triad of performance, progress, and potential can guide you in working with your students throughout the school year. (See Box 1.3)

USE APPROPRIATE AND NEUTRAL LANGUAGE

Your students and their families look to you as a positive role model. For some of your students, you are one of the few educated individuals who can help prepare them for their future studies and career success. And for some of your students, English is a new language. They need to hear and see proper English in both formal and informal conversations and written communications.

Using gender-neutral language is important for both modeling and inclusion. Be aware of your word choices so your female

Box 1.3 Suggestions for Establishing Equity and Fairness

1. Establish and maintain high academic and social expectations for all of your students at all times.
2. Share expectations with students and parents in writing.
3. Model and reinforce respect and politeness with everyone at all times.
4. Apologize sincerely when you make a mistake.
5. Provide specific feedback and show genuine appreciation. If you applaud for one presentation, the goal is to applaud for all.
6. Allow students to finish speaking and redirect interruptions, although you may have to ask students to keep their comments to a limited amount of time.
7. Select students equitably using name cards, sticks, or tokens (for questions, comments, activities, errands, and so forth). All students need to know that they should be prepared at all times and that you have both the right and responsibility to call on them at any time.
8. Delve fairly; this means that you probe and follow up with all students using higher-order and critical thinking.
9. Use a stopwatch or clock to monitor ample wait time when asking students questions to answer or giving them instructions to demonstrate an action. Your students will appreciate the consistency.
10. Establish clear consequences for students who cannot show respect and fairness for others.

students feel valued and all your students experience the power of language. When addressing your students collectively, call them ladies and gentlemen rather than girls and boys or guys for everyone. When referencing professions use words such as firefighter and police officer rather than fireman and policeman. Use the term *humankind*, rather than *mankind*, when talking about all people. You might want to ask a colleague to listen to your word choices to be sure you are using appropriate and gender-neutral language.

The same guidelines apply to using culturally sensitive language. You want to be aware if you use any inappropriate cultural

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references or imply bias. Sometimes teachers make comments that communicate prejudice such as referring to all houses of worship as churches that are attended on or only on Sundays, people without jobs as irresponsible or poor, and so forth. All educators must be cognizant of their word choices. And, particularly as social studies teachers, we should lead others in this effort.

KNOW YOUR LEARNERS

With the diversity of today's society, you will likely have students representing different heritages, different customs, different countries, and different languages. They bring a variety of past school experiences with them along with different learning abilities, some more successful than others. You will need to get to know your students on an individual basis.

Social studies teachers show they care about you by taking an interest in you. They will acknowledge you if you are doing well, and help you if you aren't doing well. They might also ask about things going on in your life.

Amy, age 13, Grade 8

The relationships you establish with your students will motivate them to achieve and to continue to achieve (Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006). When students perceive that teachers care about them and their levels of achievement, they will be more likely to engage in the classroom. Take time to get to know your students. Use surveys and interest inventories, talk to them individually and in small groups, use dialogue journals, solicit their opinions, have them share their perspectives. For example, many teachers have students mark a place on a laminated map indicating where they were born or where they have lived or traveled. They ask students to write autobiographies and share special talents or hobbies. Social studies classes provide great opportunities for social interactions.

Teachers can show they care for you by remembering the little things. Such as when your birthday is, or that you like dogs. Another way is by asking how your weekend was, and then actually listening to the answer.

Linda, age 15, Grade 10

Feedback from students is the most compelling evidence and provides clear guidelines for teachers. In prioritizing their comments about teachers, social studies students say they want teachers who like their students and care about them as individuals; control the class so that students have a chance to learn what they need and want to learn; demonstrate fairness in their classroom interactions, assignments and assessments; know how to teach and help students succeed; and know their content and make it interesting (Gallavan, in press).

Help students with everything you can. You should also never give up on them no matter how their grades are.

Trevor, age 15, Grade 10

REALIZE CHANGES IN TODAY'S STUDENTS

One of the most important points when reflecting on your teaching entails the changes in today's students. Keep in mind that you are no longer the student, you are no longer the age of your students, and that today's students are different from you (Wallis & Steptoe, 2006).

Today's students can think broadly and holistically, yet they prefer to concentrate on minutiae. They can operate in an interdisciplinary manner in both form and function while focused on a single event, but they are more concrete than abstract thinkers. They approach problem solving and decision making eagerly as a personal challenge utilizing resources and creating solutions. They like the responsibility and productivity of their own advancement; however, some of today's students exhibit limited attention span and perseverance.

Many of today's students are smarter and more comfortable with current technology than you are now. They embrace technology as a way of thinking, acting, and communicating. Some say today's students are technology natives since they grew up with much of the technology we take for granted today. Today's students can be a bit impatient if and when technology is unavailable or fails to operate as expected.

Today's students like to work cooperatively and in teams. They like the group spirit and a feeling of helping others succeed . . . as long they also succeed individually. They think of themselves as

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rather special; they have been overly organized and extremely sheltered (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Many of them have been involved in all kinds of team sports and been given all kinds of awards. However, today's students tend to be extremely competitive, feel pressured to produce and achieve, and see winning as a way to be financially comfortable. Schools have gravitated away from cooperative learning and teamwork thereby placing today's students at a disadvantage. Social studies can help develop these skills.

Today's students may know more about the world than you knew when you were their age, or maybe more than you know now. (Some of them know that information is power and like having that power.) Many more of them seem to know isolated pieces of information and need help connecting the dots. They may not always see the world on a global scale and the interplay among nations, governments, and economies.

You must stay ahead of your students, and you must view the world from multiple perspectives. In general, today's students value diversity and avoid prejudice, bias, and stereotyping. Many of today's students are or have multiracial and multilingual family members, divide their lives with many different family members, and practice many different faiths and beliefs.

INVOLVE PARENTS AND FAMILIES

I liked that by doing our family tree we were learning about our ancestors and where they came from along with their names.

Vanessa, age 9, Grade 4

You have many different avenues for inviting your students' parents into your classroom. They are a wonderful resource and the more you include them, the more effective you will be as a teacher. Parents and family members will understand your purposes and situation more clearly when they visit; they are more likely to listen and support you if you encounter difficulties with their children; and they will contribute their expertise to your classroom.

From a new teacher: *"Once a week I make a plan to contact at least three parents for what I like to call 'Community Connection.' These are always positive calls. I find out students' interests and family ties and give updates on student progress."*

You can ask for parent volunteers to either work with you in the classroom and with individual students and/or to assist you with

clerical work and special events. Talk with your department chair and colleagues to investigate how other teachers involve parents. If you want parents in your classroom, think carefully about their roles and their interactions with students. This would be a great topic to discuss at a classroom meeting with your students too.

Another way to involve parents and family members in your classroom is to invite them to discuss their professions, travels, hobbies, special interests, personal life experiences, and so forth. Send home a survey at the beginning of the school year with specific topics and issues to solicit potential speakers. You may discover that your students' parents have much to share on topics relevant to your curriculum. We give you more guidelines about doing this in Chapter 9.

A veteran teacher tells us, "*My most successful assignments were those that involved parents and students' own likes. I had parents come in and share their '60s' experiences by just telling the students what life was like growing up during that decade.*"

Your school will sponsor all kinds of special events related to social studies such as holiday festivals, unit culminations, geography bees, history day competitions, career days, and so forth. You will want to invite parents and family members to participate in many different capacities. You might need help with food, decorations, sales, judging, score keeping, prizes, and so forth. These are ideal opportunities to connect with parents, strengthen relationships with students, and extend your classroom. We provide you with more ideas in Chapter 11.

Also, we recommend that you look at *Secrets to Success for Beginning Elementary Teachers* (2007) or *Secrets for Secondary School Teachers: How to Succeed in Your First Year* (2004) by Corwin Press for specific suggestions on organizing your room and creating communities of learners.

BEGIN EACH DAY ANEW

Be ready for each class and greet students every day. This means having all of your teaching materials arranged in advance. Find a spot where you will stand and welcome students as they enter the classroom. This may be the same spot where you stand after you close the learning as you dismiss the students. Following these routines will let your students know you are approachable and help you stay organized.

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Include a moment at the beginning of each class for everyone to get settled. This is the perfect time for you to share some current events and help your students take a breath to focus on social studies before you launch into your agenda. The more you can model and reinforce a positive and productive manner, the more your students will participate and achieve.

Establish a Sense of Place . . .

You've dreamed of this day, and now it is here. You want this classroom to be an inviting, exciting, and rewarding space where everyone engages in and contributes to the learning experience. The secret is creating a safe and welcoming sense of place. Help the students feel comfortable around you and with social studies. When students walk in the door, they will immediately experience that this is a social studies classroom. Now you are ready to think about your curriculum.

Suggested Activities

1. Design your ideal classroom. Consider the following:
 - Placement and movement
 - Information and displays
 - Resources and references
 - Materials and supplies
 - Presentations and demonstrations
 - Equipment and storage
2. Develop one display, preferably interactive, that will attract your students' attention and motivate their interests in a captivating social studies topic or issue.
3. Brainstorm and share ways to connect social studies concepts to the contemporary world of your students throughout the week. These may include pictures of students' activities and articles of interest to them.
4. On a bulletin board, feature a small group of students in each class each week. Construct a list of items that students can display including photographs, accomplishments, travels, interests, and so forth.