

CORE QUESTIONS RUBRIC

Learn how TCI Covers [Content](#), [Presentation](#), [Learning](#), and [Special Topics](#).

Content	TCI Notes
1. A Alignment with curriculum: The content aligns with the state's standards, benchmarks and clarifications for subject, grade level and learning outcomes.	Correlations to each K-5 Social Studies standard, benchmark, and clarification are provided. In the teacher and student online accounts, a detailed Florida Benchmarks page provides correlations with links to reading, activities, and assessment questions that cover each benchmark. Benchmarks are also labeled at the point of use in each section of the online text. Benchmark maps are included in the print Teacher's Guide. View standards correlations here: • Social Studies Grade K • Social Studies Grade 1 • Social Studies Grade 2 • Social Studies Grade 3 • Social Studies Grade 4 • Social Studies Grade 5
2. A Alignment with curriculum: The content is written to the correct skill level of the standards, benchmarks and clarifications in the course.	The content (both reading and activities) is written explicitly to the level of the benchmarks and their clarification statements. Supports are provided—see other criteria—for readings and activities to help bring all students up to the course standards.
3. A Alignment with curriculum: The materials are adaptable and useful for classroom instruction.	TCI materials can be used as-is or adapted for individual classrooms. There are multiple options for teaching every lesson, including Reading, Hands-On Activity, and Dive Deeper. All handouts and notebook PDFs can be saved to Drive for editing. Summative assessment questions can be fully modified, deleted, or added.
4. B Level of Treatment: The materials provide sufficient details for students to understand the significance of topics and events.	Readings and activities provide sufficient context and detail for students to understand the content. Reading Notes questions allow students to process the content in-depth. Unit Inquiry Challenges help students connect the various events they're learning about to a bigger idea. Online readings, such as Explores, Biographies, and Primary Sources, provide further opportunities for students to dive deeper.
5. B Level of Treatment: The content matches the standards.	TCI's programs match state standards. See our grade-level correlation documents to see how. • Social Studies Grade K • Social Studies Grade 1 • Social Studies Grade 2 • Social Studies Grade 3 • Social Studies Grade 4 • Social Studies Grade 5

6. B Level of Treatment: The content matches the student abilities and grade level.	All reading and activities are written at grade level, with optional support tools to make the content accessible to all students.
7. B Level of Treatment: The content matches the time period allowed for teaching.	TCI provides pacing guides and timing suggestions to allow for appropriate teaching time allotment.
8. C Expertise for Content Development: The primary and secondary sources cited in the materials reflect expert information for the subject.	Primary and secondary sources are sourced by trained editorial staff, fact-checked by outside vendors, and scholar reviewed by professors. All primary sources that are mentioned in the Florida benchmarks are included in TCI programs.
9. C Expertise for Content Development: The primary and secondary sources contribute to the quality of the content in the materials.	Primary and secondary sources are chosen so that they deepen student understanding of the material. In the unit Inquiry Challenge, students use these sources to answer a compelling historical/social sciences question. Throughout the reading, primary source quotes are integrated to support the text. In the Primary Sources Library, full-length sources are provided for students to draw their own conclusions from.
10.D Accuracy of Content: The content is presented accurately. (Material should be devoid of typographical or visual errors.)	All content has been laid out to ensure ease of use and has been copyedited for any typographical or grammatical errors.
11. D Accuracy of Content: The content of the material is presented objectively. (Material should be free of bias and contradictions and is noninflammatory in nature.)	All content is presented objectively. In addition to standards followed by the editorial team developing the programs, content is regularly fact-checked and reviewed by a variety of content area scholars. All representation of groups is reviewed to ensure it is unbiased and not inflammatory. Primary sources are integrated to bring in artifacts, images, and voices from the historical period. TCI is committed to working with the Florida Department of Education to make changes requested by the state reviewers.
12. D Accuracy of Content: The content of the material is representative of the discipline. (Material should include prevailing theories, concepts, standards and models used with the subject area.)	TCI's editorial and curriculum teams include a variety of staff, teachers, consultants, and scholars. Our scholars have a range of disciplines, geographic locations, races, languages, and genders. Since most grade levels in Florida contain a mix of disciplines, we assign scholars who are experts in their area to review individual lessons to ensure that lessons are representative of the discipline(s) they include.
13. D Accuracy of Content: The content of the material is factually accurate. (Materials	TCI materials are fact-checked to ensure content is accurate and properly sourced. Content is also reviewed by outside scholars in the relevant social sciences.

should be free of mistakes and inconsistencies.)	
14. E Currency of Content: The content is up-to-date according to current research and standards of practice.	TCI's editorial review process ensures that content and educational strategies are consistently revised and updated. All K-12 programs have been updated and reviewed within the last few years. TCI employees and contractors attend professional development to stay current on important practices in education and in social science disciplines.
15. E Currency of Content: The content is presented to the curriculum, standards and benchmarks in an appropriate and relevant context.	The content focuses on the Florida benchmarks for each grade. The Florida Benchmarks page in the teacher account explicitly lists the readings, activities, and assessment questions for each benchmark. TCI takes care to present the benchmarks in a way that is appropriate and relevant to students at that grade level, while still following the exact language of the benchmarks. Context is provided through unit Inquiry Challenges, Writing in Social Studies, and other big picture projects that help students make sense of the various topics in the benchmarks.
16. E Currency of Content: The content is presented in an appropriate and relevant context for the intended learners.	Readings and activities are currently in-use at—or have been field tested at—the appropriate grade level to ensure that content is relevant for the intended learners. Differentiation tips allow teachers to then adjust the level of content for their particular students. Preview assignments, discussion prompts, and other activities help learners see how the content is relevant to their lives.
17. F Authenticity of Content: The content includes connections to life in a context that is meaningful to students.	Connections to everyday life and local communities are embedded throughout the content. Every lesson begins with a Preview assignment that elicits students' prior experiences and knowledge. Inquiry Challenges connect to students' lives and local communities. Biographies—many of which have videos—inspire students with the heroes of yesterday and today. TCI provides a Citizenship Toolkit and a Taking Action Toolkit to help students address real-world issues and take action as appropriate for their community.
18. F Authenticity of Content: The material includes interdisciplinary connections which are intended to make the content meaningful to students.	Correlations to B.E.S.T. Math and ELA benchmarks are provided. Students read, analyze text, and write in every lesson's graphically-organized Activity Notes. Formal writing assignments are included in the following features: Writing for Understanding activities, Show What You Know assignments, and unit Writing in Social Studies. Speaking and listening skills are taught and practiced throughout the hands-on activities, such as Response Groups where students debate with evidence. Research skills and inquiry are embedded into every unit's Inquiry Challenge and also taught in our Social Studies Skills and ELA Toolkits.
19. G. Multicultural Representation The portrayal of gender, ethnicity, age, work situations, cultural, religious, physical, and various social groups are fair and unbiased.	Care is taken to ensure all types of students are represented without bias. The text, illustrations, and activities show people of various groups in historically accurate and fair ways. Multiple perspectives are offered on topics such as examining how experiences of events differed for groups throughout history. The Biographies Library gives students access to content about a wide-range of people.
20. H. Humanity and Compassion The materials portray people and animals with compassion, sympathy, and consideration of their needs and values, and exclude	The text and illustrations vary and care is taken to ensure all people and animals are represented compassionately and without bias. Activities help students understand reasons why people have taken certain actions throughout history.

pornography and inhumane treatment. (An exception may be necessary for units covering animal welfare.)

Presentation

1. A Comprehensiveness of Student and Teacher Resources: The comprehensiveness of the student resources address the targeted learning outcomes without requiring the teacher to prepare additional teaching materials for the course.	Materials contain a wide variety of resources for instruction and inquiry. Each unit includes an Inquiry Challenge that allows students to explore unit content and make connections to their community. Each lesson includes a Preview Activity, Vocabulary Activity, Hands-On Activity, and Reading Activity. The Hands-On Activities are multi-modal lessons and interactive projects. Dive Deeper activities provide enrichment reading and resources for each lesson. Social Studies Stories provide high-interest reading activities and videos that complement each unit. TCI Video Library and interactive Lesson Games provide a variety of media supplements.
2. B Alignment of Instructional Components: All components of the major tool align with the curriculum and each other.	All components of the core curriculum—the Student Journal, Activity Cards, and online components—align with each other. The Teacher's Guide (and online teacher account) provides directions about how to use each of these components to teach each lesson. Ready-to-use slideshows in the teacher account let teachers know precisely when to use each of the core components.
3. C Organization of Instructional Materials: The materials are consistent and logical organization of the content for the subject area.	Programs are organized in a clear and understandable sequence. Teachers can easily move from program content, into units (Unit Overview page), and then to lessons (Lesson Overview page). Each stop has quick access to all the resources a teacher and student need at the unit and lesson level.
4. D Readability of Instructional Materials: Narrative and visuals engage students in reading or listening as well as in understanding of the content at a level appropriate to the students' abilities.	In addition to all reading being at grade level, the narrative and visuals are designed to be considerate for the reader and allow all students to understand the content. TCI's considerate design includes single column text, vocabulary definitions called out at point of use, chunked content, large and compelling images, clean and visually appealing page layout free of distracting call outs.
5. E Pacing of Content: The amount of content presented at one time or the pace at which it is presented must be of a size or rate that allows students to perceive and understand it.	All content is divided into clearly defined units that cover big ideas and then broken into more detailed lessons and sections that enforce big ideas, concepts, or themes. Hands-On activities are thoughtfully timed to engage students both physically and mentally during the learning process appropriate to the learners. Content is "chunked" in the Student Journal and within activities to make it accessible for students.

6. Accessibility: The material contains presentation, navigation, study tool and assistive supports that aid students, including those with disabilities, to access and interact with the material. (For assistance refer to the answers on the UDL questionnaire.)	Navigating materials is made easy with the Student Dashboard, which provides direct links to all assigned readings, activities, Lesson Games, and Assessments. To support accessibility, TCI provides text-to-speech for all texts and prompts. There are also Reading Tools that allow students to adjust their reading level, view main ideas, take notes, and highlight text in various colors. All videos are captioned, and images have alt tags that describe them. TCI materials are also WCAG 2.2 AA-compliant, and TCI engages a third party for regular accessibility audits to ensure the website is compatible with assistive technologies.
7. In general, how well does the submission satisfy PRESENTATION requirements? (The comments should support your responses to the questions in the Presentation section.)	All content is presented in a way that is accessible to students.

Learning

1. A Motivational Strategies: Instructional materials include features to maintain learner motivation.	Hands-on Activities engage students both physically and mentally during the learning process. These activities are based on instructional strategies that embed immediate feedback and coaching for students. View the Lesson Overview planning box for a short description of each activity and how it engages students. Lesson Games and Vocabulary Activities provide immediate feedback and give students opportunities to try again if they don't get the correct answer on their first attempt.
2. B Teaching a Few "Big Ideas": Instructional materials thoroughly teach a few important ideas, concepts or themes.	Each lesson is focused around an Essential Question. The assessment for the lesson ends with an open-ended question tied to the Essential Question. In the Reading, TCI's Main Idea button helps focus students on only the most important ideas and concepts for that section.
3. C Explicit Instruction: The materials contain clear statements of information and outcomes.	The Teacher's Guide contains a Benchmark Map that helps teachers plan and prepare to teach the benchmarks. In addition, each lesson has clearly stated social studies and language arts objectives. Benchmarks are also labeled at point-of-use in each section of online text.
4. D. Guidance and Support: The materials provide guidance and support to help students safely and successfully become more independent learners and thinkers.	Lessons are developed with activities that encourage students to participate in the inquiry process. In TCI materials, students pursue research and make evidence-supported claims during class discussions and in their activity notes. Students also have the opportunity to build their claims both independently and collaboratively, receive critiques, and present them in public settings. In the Critical Thinking Skills Toolkit found in Program Support, students can use our Selecting Credible Sources and Identifying Frame of Reference tools. Other toolkits, like Current Events and Citizenship, teach thinking skills and then give students opportunities to practice them independently.
5. D Guidance and Support: Guidance and support must be adaptable to developmental differences and various learning styles.	The content focuses on teaching students to be critical thinkers. The lesson-specific Differentiating Instruction support found in the Teacher License (and the print Teacher's Guide) provides step-by-step suggestions for meeting the needs of learners reading and writing below grade level, English Language Learners (ELL), Students with Special Needs (ESE), and advanced learners. In addition to embedded learning opportunities, a variety of toolkits for explicitly teaching reading, writing, and vocabulary skills are available under Program Support.

6. E Active Participation of Students: The materials engage the physical and mental activity of students during the learning process.	Every TCI lesson includes a Hands-On Activity, Reading Activity, and an interactive Lesson Game. The Hands-On Activities utilize a variety of student-centered instructional strategies that engage students in learning new content. Finally, the Lesson Games provide a fun and interactive way to review the reading. Questions are automatically graded, providing students with immediate feedback and giving them an opportunity to try again when they miss a question.
7. E Active Participation of Students: Rate how well the materials include organized activities that are logical extensions of content, goals and objectives.	TCI materials are logically and clearly organized by unit and by lesson. Within each lesson, the provided activities support the lesson objectives. Students are given multiple opportunities to learn and practice the objectives through notebook prompts, discussions, hands-on activities, and Show What You Know assignments.
8. F Targeted Instructional Strategies: Instructional materials include the strategies known to be successful for teaching the learning outcomes targeted in the curriculum requirements.	TCI's six teaching strategies are grounded in research-based theories, including Robert Marzano's ideas on nonlinguistic representation and Elizabeth Cohen's research on cooperative interaction. Because of this research-based approach, each TCI lesson goes beyond traditional verbal-linguistic modes of instruction and provides teachers with strategies for using visuals, movement, art, music, and discussion to make learning more authentic and meaningful. Individual, small group, and whole class instruction strategies are provided. Ready-to-use slideshows walk teachers (and students) explicitly through each step of the lesson to ensure success.
9. F Targeted Instructional Strategies: The instructional strategies incorporated in the materials are effective in teaching the targeted outcomes.	All instructional strategies are effective in teaching the target outcomes. Details of TCI's Approach to Learning can be found online in Program Support.
10. G Targeted Assessment Strategies: The materials correlate assessment strategies to the desired learning outcomes.	Reading Checks are found throughout the digital text for students to self-assess their mastery before completing a formative task. Lesson Games are quantitative formative assessments that show content knowledge and reading comprehension. Show What You Know assignments at the end of each lesson are product-based and require students to aggregate information in order to show mastery of content and skills. Summative lesson assessments generate Benchmark Reports to assess students' performance on individual benchmarks and reteach as needed.

11. G Targeted Assessment Strategies: The assessment strategies incorporated in the materials are effective in assessing the learners' performance with regard to the targeted outcomes.	Every lesson includes multiple formative assessment opportunities and a ready-to-use summative assessment. Throughout activities, students show their learning via multi-modal Journal prompts, discussions, and presentations. At the end of each lesson, they complete a Show What You Know assignment, which is an open-ended assessment that allows for student choice. Formative and summative assessments are based on the objectives and benchmarks for each lesson. Lesson Games (formative) and Lesson Tests (summative) are automatically graded so teachers can easily evaluate achievement.
12. Universal Design for Learning: This submission incorporates strategies, materials, activities, etc. that consider the needs of all students.	Multi-modal lessons support a variety of learners and allow students to access content in multiple ways. In addition, the lesson-specific Differentiating Instruction support in the Teacher Account (and the Print Teacher's Guide) provides step-by-step suggestions for meeting the needs of English Language Learners and Learners with Special Education Needs. Reading, Writing, and Vocabulary Toolkits provide additional support. A few specific examples of strategies: In Visual Discovery activities, TCI provides images and primary-source photographs that students analyze to build background knowledge and understanding of the content. Spiral questions help students extract basic information and evidence, then progress to critical-thinking questions. In Response Group activities, students discuss key historical questions in small groups. Groups have data sheets and information that help them build arguments and cite evidence in their discussions, even if they are new to the content. These structures and supports provide opportunities for all students to participate and engage in interactive dialogue and discussion.
13. B.E.S.T. Standards Application: Do you observe the appropriate application of ELA Expectations and/or Mathematical Thinking and Reasoning Standards as applicable?	Correlations to B.E.S.T. Math and ELA benchmarks are provided. ELA is embedded throughout the program as students read, analyze texts, and write in every lesson's graphically organized Reading Notes. Formal writing assignments are included in Writing for Understanding activities and Show What You Know assignments.
14. In general, does the submission satisfy LEARNING requirements? (The comments should support your responses to the questions in the Learning section.)	The programs are designed to support all learners in the classroom and provide a variety of support resources for teachers to adapt lessons and for students to receive extra support.

Special Topics

1. Critical Race Theory: Do materials align to Rule 6A-1.094124, F.A.C., which prohibits Critical Race Theory (CRT), in instructional materials?	The materials do not include Critical Race Theory (CRT).
2. Culturally Responsive Teaching: Do instructional materials omit Culturally Responsive Teaching as it relates to CRT?	The instructional materials omit Culturally Responsive Teaching as it relates to CRT.
3. Social Justice: Do instructional materials omit Social Justice as it relates to CRT?	The instructional materials omit Social Justice as it relates to CRT.
4. Social Emotional Learning: Do instructional materials NOT solicit Social Emotional Learning (SEL), as these are considered extraneous and unsolicited strategies outside the scope of subject-area standards?	The instructional materials do not solicit Social Emotional Learning (SEL) outside the scope of the subject-area standards.