Reflective teaching of social studies requires recognition that the social issues addressed needs to be multidimensional, complex and almost by definition controversial. To investigate social issues, students need to consider a combination of logical approaches and multiple, often conflicting perspectives. More specifically, students need to engage in disciplined inquiry about a problem or issue, including genuine openness to considering viewpoints different from their own, to reach a reasoned decision. Then they can take an informed stand on an issue and provide a convincing defense of their evidence-based position (Hartman, 2010; Oakes, J., Lipton, M., Anderson, L., & Stillman, J., 2013).

http://www.ncss.org/

The National Council for the Social Studies is an umbrella organization for elementary, secondary, and college teachers of history, geography, economics, political science, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and law-related education. Over the years, it has played a role in articulating performance expectations for social studies in the early grades, middle grades, and high school years.

http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/nchs/

Home page for the National Center for History in the Schools

http://www.facing.org/

“Facing History and Ourselves” connects history to the day-to-day experiences of students by revealing how violence and hate can destroy a society and how the decisions of ordinary people shape an age and ultimately history.

http://www.ncge.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1

Home page for the National Council for Geographic Education.

http://www.nationalgeographic.com/education/

Provides teachers with countless resources, including standards-based lesson plans and activities.

http://primarysource.org/

Resource center/network for K-12 teachers teaching more inclusive social studies. Five main content areas: China Studies; African-American Intellectual History; Mayan Studies: Caribbean Studies; the American West. Useful for its links.

http://www.ced.csulb.edu/people/linda-symcox

Linda Symcox, an historian and teacher educator at California State University at Long Beach, has written a compelling history of the controversy surrounding the National History Standards. The book, *Under Fire: The National History Standards in the Culture Wars* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), provides both an insider’s view and a cultural and political analysis of the school curriculum.
Professors Sam Wineburg, Daisy Martin, and Chauncey Monte-Santo focus their work on teaching students to think historically. In their book, *Reading Like a Historian: Teaching Literacy in Middle and High School History Classrooms* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2011), the authors lead teachers through eight units (e.g., American Revolution, Civil Rights Movement), which include core questions, key historical thinking concepts, and teaching strategies.

Teaching History offers many resources for history teachers in elementary, middle, and high schools. The website includes many teaching resources, such as teaching guides and strategies for working with English Learners, as well as information about historical content. It is also possible to download primary sources and to search for history-focused field trips in your area on the site.

The Zinn Education Project provides a plethora of resources for educators who are striving to teach history in an honest, critical, and engaging manner. The Zinn Education Project began with Howard Zinn's *A Peoples History of the United States* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003) but now includes additional books, as well as lesson plans, posters, and numerous other resources.

Facing History and Ourselves is a nonprofit organization that offers an innovative, interdisciplinary approach to teaching citizenship. It connects history to the day-to-day experiences of students by revealing the corrupting forces of violence and hate, and the power of ordinary people in shaping history. Facing History's resource center has a lending library of relevant books, periodicals, and videos.

EdTech Teacher presents The Center for Teaching History with Technology, a resource created to help K-12 history and social studies teachers incorporate technology effectively into their courses. Find resources for history and social studies lesson plans, activities, projects, games, and quizzes that use technology. Explore inquiry-based lessons, activities, and projects. Learn about web technologies such as blogs, podcasts, wikis, social networks, Google Docs, ebooks, online maps, virtual field trips, screencasts, online posters, and more. Explore innovative ways of integrating these tools into the curriculum, watch instructional video tutorials, and learn how others are using technology in the classroom.

One resource for history teachers which can help students learn to think like historians is computer-based archives. Some are available on CD-ROM for purchase, such as *The Valley of the Shadow* (http://valley.lib.virginia.edu/) on the Civil War, which includes detailed timelines and copies of newspaper articles from the 1860s for students to analyze. Some are available online, such as those on American History from The Library of Congress.

A good example is The Veterans History Project (http://www.loc.gov/vets/) where students can see and hear veterans’ own stories to develop perspectives on war. In addition to document archives, it has photographs, exhibitions, multicultural resources, and sponsors Webcasts. It even has a special area for teachers, which includes lesson plans for classroom activities based on
primary sources. As Hartman (2010) advises, visit the site and ask yourself reflective teaching questions about its potential use, such as: “How might my students engage in guided inquiry with some of these primary sources to answer questions that will give them insight into current events?” (p. 295).

An archive that focuses on World History (http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/) has a search engine built into it so prospective and beginning teachers can look for specific topics or documents. It is designed to provide a working-class, non-Euro-centric view of history. It is organized into these categories: The World, Asia and Oceana, The Americas, Africa, and Europe.

The American Memory Project (http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html) is another history resource available at the Library of Congress. It includes sections on African-American History, Native American History, Women’s History, presidents, government and law, war and military, immigration, and other topics. For a comprehensive view of the resources in the American Memory Project, click on “List All Collections.” How might you use these resources in your teaching? (Hartman, 2010, p. 295).

History Matters (http://historymatters.gmu.edu/) is an outstanding and unique online multimedia resource for high school and college teachers teaching U.S. and World history. One unusual component is “Making Sense of Documentary Photography,” which can help students think reflectively and critically about visual history sources. Another is “video oral histories.” The website also includes an annotated guide to the most useful Web sites for teaching social studies and U.S. and World History.

River City (http://rivercity.activeworlds.com/) is a student-oriented, graphic interface, multi-user virtual environment modeled after Active Worlds and its subcomponent, Virtual High School, and gaming environments where many students spend their spare time. It’s a simulated city environment, digitized from the Smithsonian Museum’s collection of visual objects that were historically found in cities at the times targeted in the curriculum. The middle school standards-based curriculum enables different types and levels of inquiry about authentic problems in the context of a realistic historical, immersive, virtual environment. As one example, River City teaches students about the history of the Industrial Revolution and its impact on the culture and environment in the 1800s. In an animated, online, game-like environment, students collect water samples, identify incidences of disease, analyze the relationships between pollution and illness, and write letters to the mayor of River City with recommendations based on their conclusions. This lesson is multidisciplinary, including history, science, and English composition and certainly consistent with the goals and features of reflective teaching and learning.

WebQuests (http://webquest.org/) are another excellent way of using technology to promote reflective learning in history. Through structured inquiry experiences, students conduct their own historical research online, accessing a variety of resources such as documents, databases, and archives. The emphasis is not just on looking for information, but also on using it to support analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. These higher-level thinking strategies are important components of reflective thinking. As of this writing, there are hundreds of WebQuests with the word “history” in the title or description, ranging from grades 3 to 12. There are WebQuests on immigration, one focusing on Chinese immigration to California during the Gold Rush. Another involves research on Mexican immigration. A third is a problem-solving exercise about immigration to Idaho (Hartman, 2010).

One of the most innovative and motivating ways for students to learn history is through computer-simulated gaming types of environments, such as the well-known Oregon Trail. The Oregon Trail simulation software involves students in a role-playing environment where they travel 2000 miles and encounter obstacles comparable to the actual pioneers in the 1840s such as diseases, drowning, and snakebites. The goal is to reach Willamette Valley by making sensible decisions that require reflective thinking. Students learn history by experiencing it in an enjoyable computer
environment where they have to think like the pioneers. At one school in fifth grade, everyone took part in a dramatization of the Oregon Trail. In groups, some built their own covered wagons, dressed like pioneers, and took their "families" on the Oregon Trail, where they encountered other students who were native Americans, with beautiful headdresses and exciting dances that helped everyone learn about their culture and about conflicts over the land (Hartman, 2010).

WebQuests are another way students can use technology to learn about the Oregon Trail. A multidisciplinary project for middle school students (grades 6-8) is described on the WebQuest website as follows:

*Westward Expansion 1801–1861* Focuses on the period of Expansion and Reform from 1801-1861. This is done by exploring the following. The history of Louisiana Purchase, the state and federal policies that influenced the Cherokee tribe, social and political impact of the idea of Manifest Destiny pertaining to the Oregon Trail, the significance of Lewis and Clark expedition and its contributions to friendly relations with Native Americans, and the importance of the Monroe Doctrine and the War of 1812 during the 19th Century.

The InTime Web site ([http://www.intime.uni.edu/](http://www.intime.uni.edu/)) a database of technology-rich, student-centered lessons across subjects and grade levels, has online videotapes of lessons, along with lesson plans, probing questions, and links to Internet resources, including national content and technology standards. There are many social studies lessons ranging from lower elementary school through high school. One of these lessons designed for students in 8th grade is "A Walk Through History." Another is "Introduction to Black Studies" for students in grades 9–12. Both lessons have sets of probing questions to help teachers think reflectively about the lessons: a set of multicultural pre-video viewing and post-video viewing questions, and 10 other categories of pre- and post-video viewing questions: teacher interview, lesson overview, principles of learning, information processing, content standards, tenets of democracy, technology, teacher knowledge, and teacher behavior (Hartman, 2010, p. 297).

Other relevant links relevant to teaching history reflectively follow:

National Council for the Social Studies

U.S. History.org

World History Archives

Structured Controversy

Virtual Classroom. Thinking about History

**Representative Studies on Reflective Teaching of the Social Studies**


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Resources in Technology and Social Studies


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