

Parent Information About the New Alberta Social Studies Curriculum

How Can Literature Support Social Studies?

Learning through story is a powerful way of learning. From earliest times, cultures all over the world have used stories to teach their young. Our new Social Studies curriculum presents a lovely opportunity to use children's picture books as well as novels, poetry, and non-fiction as a springboard to discussing family, community, people and places, democracy, and rights and responsibilities.

Children are able to understand more complex stories through a "read aloud" than they would be able to read on their own. It is very important that you continue to read aloud to your children throughout their school years.

How can I support my child's understanding by reading with them?

- Find a few places to pause and invite your child to comment, respond, or interpret the text.
- Encourage your child to connect the text with their own lives and experiences and to make predictions. *Remember the time... Does this remind you of...? How might this ...?*
- Be sure to talk with your child about the details in the illustrations, pictures or photos of the story.
- Place books you have read aloud in a special basket or bookcase where your child can re-read their favourites again and again

These books are listed from easiest to most difficult. Often, a simple story can be used with older children to illustrate an important concept and children will enjoy revisiting these titles at different ages. Enjoy the story and the time you spend together.

Check your school or public library for some of these suggested titles:

- *The Moccasins* by Earl Einarsen
- *Two Pairs of Shoes* by Esther Sanderson
- *We All Sing With the Same Voice* by P. Miller and S. Greene
- *The Family Book* by Todd Parr
- *Our Tree Named Steve* by Alan Zweibel
- *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman
- *Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney
- *If the World Were a Village* by David Smith
- *No Two Snowflakes* by Sheree Fitch
- *One Well* by Rochelle Strauss
- *A Cool Drink of Water* by Barbara Kerley
- *A River Ran Wild* by Lynne Cherry
- *The Elders are Watching* by David Bouchard
- *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan
- *Hana's Suitcase* by Karen Levine

The Alberta Social Studies curriculum is built around core principles of citizenship and identity in the 21st Century. In classrooms throughout Alberta, students will critically examine and analyze important issues and concepts while they consider aboriginal, francophone and multiple perspectives from both the present and the past. This newsletter article is produced by the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium in cooperation with the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia as a result of a grant from Alberta Education to support implementation of Social Studies.

