

## Kindergarten Teacher Notes for the Georgia Standards of Excellence in Social Studies

The Teacher Notes were developed to help teachers understand the depth and breadth of the standards. In some cases, information provided in this document goes beyond the scope of the standards and can be used for background and enrichment information. Please remember that the goal of social studies is not to have students memorize laundry lists of facts, but rather to help them understand the world around them so they can analyze issues, solve problems, think critically, and become informed citizens.

**Children's Literature:** A list of book titles aligned to the Kindergarten Social Studies GSE may be found at the Georgia Council for the Social Studies website: <http://gcss.net/uploads/files/kindersocstkidsbooks.pdf>

### **TEACHER NOTES**

## **KINDERGARTEN Historical Understandings**

### **SSKH1 Identify the national holidays and describe the people and/or events celebrated.**

The intent of this standard is to begin building student understanding of the ways in which Americans celebrate selected events and traditions throughout the year. Because our country is so diverse, this standard provides a way to recognize both our similarities and our differences related to holidays. This standard should be taught with SSKG1 - **Describe the diversity of American culture by explaining the customs and celebrations of various families and communities.**

**Resources:** The following articles are for teacher background about building understanding of cultural differences in young children.

[http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article\\_view.aspx?ArticleID=147](http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=147) Appreciating diversity in Early Childhood Settings.

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/teaching-diversity-place-begin-0/> Tips for teaching about diversity.

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/expert-tips-advice/2015/08/teach-children-cultural-awareness-diversity/> background article for teachers and parents about helping students learn about diversity.

### **SSKH1 Identify the national holidays and describe the people and/or events celebrated.**

#### **a. Christmas**

At the most basic level, kindergarten students should know that Christmas is a national holiday that is celebrated on December 25<sup>th</sup> each year. Most people have the day as a school or work holiday. Teachers should consider the following guidelines in teaching about this and other holidays in this standard.

Discuss how people around the world celebrate special occasions. Talk about the fact that not all celebrate the same holidays and if they do celebrate Christmas time, families may celebrate this holiday in different ways. Let your students share how they celebrate various special days. Explore what celebrate means by reading about and discussing ways that special days are celebrated (weddings, birthday parties, giving gifts, games, songs, decorations, symbols, and other aspects.)

Discuss the fact that different celebrations take place at different times of the year. Explore which celebrations happen in the winter and in December. This is a good opportunity to reinforce the calendar skills and names of the months. Remember that you will want to teach about holidays without requiring your students to celebrate or observe with particular practices that may not be how their families observe a particular holiday.

One creative extension of teaching about holidays is for the students to vote to create their own holiday around something important to them. One teacher wrote about her class holiday, “Teddy Bear Day,” because the students wanted to celebrate their stuffed animal. One enduring understanding to reinforce is how and what Americans celebrate has changed over time and continues to change today. Different cultures have different traditions that have been passed down through the years and generations.

**Vocabulary:** national, holiday, celebrate, celebrations, Christmas, traditions, same, different

**Resources:**

Celebrating Winter Holidays in the Classroom -

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/collections/teaching-content/celebrating-winter-holidays-classroom/>

The December Dilemma: Acknowledging Religious Holidays in the Classroom

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/december-dilemma-religious-holidays-anne-obrien> a thoughtful discussion of issues surrounding teaching religious holidays in classrooms.

How to Teach Students about Holidays & History - <http://www.teacher.org/resource/teaching-holidays/> provides teacher background information on many different holidays (both national and others) that are celebrated in the United States.

**SSKH1 Identify the national holidays and describe the people and/or events celebrated.**

**b. Columbus Day**

Columbus Day celebrates the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus in 1492. Officially recognized on October 12, the holiday is often observed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of October. It was first celebrated in 1792 but did not become a national holiday until 1937, when President Franklin Roosevelt declared it as such. The day has been celebrated to honor Columbus and also celebrate Italian-American heritage.

Discuss various ways that this day is celebrated and some information we think we know about Columbus guiding young historians to ask questions about how we could explore this topic more fully. The questions help to model inquiry and will help young learners realize that history is told differently depending on the perspective of the storyteller. Discuss with them that some historians have been exploring these questions their whole lives, so they should continue to ask them as they grow and learn.

Possible questions (adapted from the first web resource listed below) include:

- How do we know about Columbus’s voyages?
- Whose perspective (point of view) do we know the most about from history?
- How do you think the story of this event would be different if it were told by the Taino Indians, the natives whom Columbus first met in the “new” land?
- What lands and people did he encounter?
- What are some primary sources related to Columbus? (you will need to define these in kindergarten friendly ways...perhaps by sharing a box of primary sources related to you and having them use them to be history detectives and find out more about you. As you share each source, tell more about your past. Then shift to some primary sources related to Columbus.)
- What are some different ways people celebrate or don’t celebrate Columbus Day today?
- When was it first celebrated as a holiday? How have celebrations or customs changed?

- How do their families celebrate this holiday or do they choose not to celebrate it?

You might have your students ask their parents or other family members about Columbus Day and have them share what they found out. This would be a very simple oral history project and would help the class see a variety of customs and responses.

“Talking About Columbus Day with Kids” - This article is full of practical tips for teaching about Columbus and the holiday with young learners without distortion or the perpetuation of myths: <http://www.learningliftoff.com/talking-about-columbus-day-with-kids/#.WSXp08m1tp8>

Lesson plans for teaching this topic to K-5 students may be found at:

<http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/columbus-day-grades-k-5.htm#V>

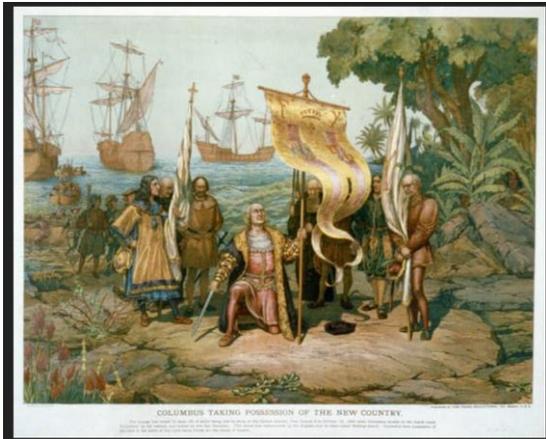
<http://www.history.com/topics/exploration/columbus-day> - The History Channel has good background on this holiday for teachers, although ads and content are NOT appropriate for students.

A thoughtful re-examination of Columbus Day, which might be useful for teacher background, is found at: <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5902>

“Why is Columbus Day still a U.S. federal holiday?” - An interesting article from the Washington Post raises questions about what most of us have been taught about Columbus and the day on which he is honored, at: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2015/10/11/why-is-columbus-day-still-a-u-s-federal-holiday/?utm\\_term=.483a2c0888a1](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2015/10/11/why-is-columbus-day-still-a-u-s-federal-holiday/?utm_term=.483a2c0888a1)

“A Brief History of Columbus Day” - Another good article questioning past and present celebrations is from Time magazine at: <http://content.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1929666,00.html>

### Resources on Columbus:



*Columbus Taking Possession of the New Country*, from an 1893 print by L. Prang and Company, Library of Congress.

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b49587> color film copy slide

Christopher Columbus kneeling, holding flag and sword with two other men holding flags. There are other men on land and in boats behind Columbus and three ships in background. They are on the island named San Salvador by Columbus, later called Watling Island.

Instead of telling young learners this is a painting of

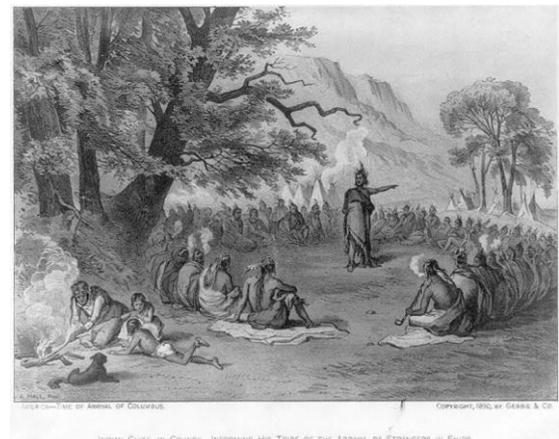
Columbus and his landing, explain that this is how one artist chose to tell a story about Columbus by painting a scene. Ask questions like: What do you see in the painting? Who is most important, according to the artist? Through whose “eyes” is he seeing this scene? Whose story is NOT told in this painting?

Compare and contrast the first painting with this one: *Indian chief in council informing his tribe of the arrival of strangers in ships [Columbus]*, Library of Congress.

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a46186> b&w film copy neg.

This image was created around 1890 by Gebble and Company.

Ask students why both of these might have been created in the 1890’s,



about 400 years after Columbus made his voyages.



Other images related to Columbus include his ships (although historians differ on the actual names of the main three ships of his earliest voyage) and how artists have depicted the man himself. Digital file from original, Library of Congress

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/det.4a15958> - Spanish caravel Santa Maria.

Columbus image - Engraving by John Sartain from the original portrait presented to William A. Bryan, Esq., of Virginia by H.M. the late Queen Sophia of Holland. Library of Congress,



b&w film copy neg.

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3a05534>

**Vocabulary:** explorer, sailor, ship, New World, painting, portrait, drawing, land, people, perspective (point of view),

**SSKH1 Identify the national holidays and describe the people and/or events celebrated.**

**c. Independence Day**

The intent of this standard is to explore the various ways that families celebrate or observe this holiday.

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July or Independence Day, was established as a national holiday in 1941, though it has been celebrated since 1776 when the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress (it was signed on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and adopted July 4<sup>th</sup>). It is celebrated as the birth of American independence from Great Britain.

Although we do not expect kindergartners to understand fully the meaning and significance of the Declaration of Independence, we can explore images of the document, and view artifacts and images of the various ways that people observe July 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Resources:**



The Declaration of Independence – show an image like the one at the left OR try to obtain a facsimile of this important founding document to share with your students. Philadelphia: Printed by John Dunlap, July 4, 1776. Library of Congress.

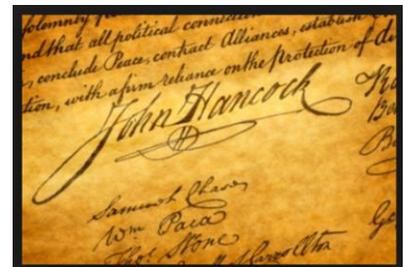
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.rbc/pe.76546>

They might enjoy exploring:

\* the John Hancock signature and those of the other signers.

\* What they notice about how it was written (computer, typewriter, printing, cursive, ink, pencil...draw out what they observe and what questions they have.)

\* if you have a facsimile, talk about the kind of paper it is written on and how big it is. Why do they think it is that size?



**Vocabulary:** July 4<sup>th</sup>, independence, declaration, signature, patriotic, parade, picnic, document, flag, fireworks

**SSKH1 Identify the national holidays and describe the people and/or events celebrated.**

**d. Labor Day**

Labor Day, a public holiday celebrated the first Monday in September, is dedicated to celebrating American workers and their contributions to our country. This “workingman’s holiday” was first observed in areas where there was a lot of industry. Those who created this holiday wanted to recognize that workers have helped this country be stronger, wealthier, and more successful. First celebrated in New York in 1882, the first observance charged to attend, and most workers had to lose a day’s pay in order to attend. Flags from many nations were flown to represent the variety of immigrants who became American workers. Thousands of workers picnicked and listened to labor leader speeches, and watched fireworks and danced as day turned to evening. After the huge success in New York, other cities and states began to host their own celebrations.

After widespread demand for the nation to observe the holiday, Labor Day became a national holiday in 1894. How was the holiday observed in its earliest days? A parade of workers and worker groups was an essential ingredient, and later people who were leaders or prominent people began giving speeches at the Labor Day celebrations. In more modern times, the holiday is marked as the end of summer and near the beginning of the school year, so it is a last opportunity for picnicking or outdoor activities. Some communities fly flags and host arts, foods, or musical events. Businesses hold sales events, and the media shares information about various celebrations. Most of the historical information about Labor Day comes from the Department of Labor website at: <http://www.dol.gov/laborday/history.htm>

**Vocabulary:** labor, worker, contributions, observance, celebrations, picnicking

**SSKH1 Identify the national holidays and describe the people and/or events celebrated.**

**e. Martin Luther King, Jr., Day**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. (Jan. 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968)** - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is celebrated on the third Monday of January each year to honor the life and contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His philosophy of non-violence and leadership in the modern American Civil Rights movement contributed to greater racial justice and equality throughout the nation. Events in his life that are appropriate for kindergartners are:

- His birth and childhood in Atlanta
- His college experiences at Morehouse College and his ministry at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta
- His divinity degree from Crozier Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania
- His graduate studies at Boston University; he received his doctorate in 1955
- His marriage to Coretta Scott in 1953
- He becomes pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama in 1954
- 1955 – 1959 He leads the Montgomery Improvement Association and their bus boycott, his home is bombed, wins the right to desegregate the buses; becomes leader of the SCLC, appears on the cover of Time magazine, and continues his civil rights work.
- 1960 – moves back to Atlanta
- 1963 – Letter from Birmingham Jail; March on Washington and the Dream speech

- 1964 – receives the Nobel Peace Prize
- 1965 – March from Selma to Montgomery
- 1968 – “I’ve been to the Mountaintop” speech, marches, assassination on April 4

Timeline information obtained from <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-resources/major-king-events-chronology-1929-1968>

His widow, Coretta Scott King, wrote about her husband’s life and legacy, including how best to observe the holiday named for him: He was not just a thoughtful and inspiring thinker and writer, Dr. King was also a man of action. He marched and sang and spoke eloquently to people throughout the country and the world. While he faced threats and violence and was jailed for his beliefs and actions, he also refused to stop. In the end he was assassinated and became a civil rights martyr, and although he died that day in Memphis, his words and legacy have lived on in this holiday and in all sorts of civil rights victories.

Each MLK holiday serves as a “teach in” in which Dr. King’s principles of non-violence and conflict resolution are taught to a new generation of activists. The emphasis is on reconciliation and forgiveness and encouragement to continue to fight injustice peacefully. It is a day of education, remembrance, tribute, and also a day of service. Some people use this day to do volunteer service in hospitals, prisons, and homeless shelters or to feed the hungry, tutor others, or to be of service in other ways. In other words, Coretta Scott King, writes, we use this day “to serve humanity.”

Read more from Coretta Scott King’s explanation of the MLK holiday at:  
<http://www.thekingcenter.org/meaning-king-holiday#sthash.FpyWmTO2.dpuf>

**Activity idea:** find a copy of Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech to play for your students. <http://www.npr.org/2010/01/18/122701268/i-have-a-dream-speech-in-its-entirety> for a 17 minute audio of the speech. You will want to share only small excerpts to your young learners. Study an excerpt transcribed and ask students what they think it means. Then play the video clip so that students can see and hear him say the words...what do they think it means now? What do we get from hearing and seeing the speaker himself?

**Activity idea:** Create a collage of symbols or objects representing Dr. King’s legacy or life. (idea from previous GPS frameworks document)

**Activity idea:** Provide opportunities for kindergartners to partner with 2<sup>nd</sup> graders and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, who also learn about Dr. King. How can we learn from other students?

Information about the creation of the Martin Luther King, Jr., memorial may be found at:  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/lifestyle/martin-luther-king-jr-memorial-timeline/>

There are a number of good children’s books about Dr. King; see the link at the start of this document for some suggestions.

**Vocabulary:** non-violence, racial justice, equality, civil rights, memorial, march, boycott, segregation, integration

**SSKH1 Identify the national holidays and describe the people and/or events celebrated.**

**f. Memorial Day**

Memorial Day was originally known as Decoration Day and began in 1868, shortly after the Civil War ended. It was called Decoration Day because of the tradition of decorating graves with flowers, wreaths, and flags. It became an officially recognized federal holiday in 1971 under President Lyndon Johnson. Today there is a Memorial Day ceremony on the last Monday in May each year at Arlington National Cemetery, in which a small American flag is placed on each grave. It is also a tradition for the President or Vice President to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in a solemn ceremony attended by about 5,000 people.

See PBS The National Memorial Day concert for more information; teachers may find some of these facts helpful to share with students: <http://www.pbs.org/national-memorial-day-concert/memorial-day/history/>

More teacher background information may be found at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at: <https://www.va.gov/opa/speceven/memday/history.asp>

In December of 2000, The National Moment of Remembrance was passed into law, to encourage all Americans to pause wherever they are at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day for a minute of silence to remember and honor those who have died in service to the nation. As Moment of Remembrance founder Carmella LaSpada states: “It’s a way we can all help put the memorial back in Memorial Day.”

<http://www.va.gov/opa/speceven/memday/history.asp>

Since Memorial Day typically occurs after the school year has ended, teachers may choose to teach this holiday in the last few weeks of school, when they can also teach about Independence Day. Discuss with students the way that their families may choose to observe these holidays.

**Vocabulary:** memorial, memory, remember, remembrance, decorate, ceremony, wreath, tradition, cemetery

**SSKH1 Identify the national holidays and describe the people and/or events celebrated.**

**g. New Year’s Day**

New Year’s Day is a national holiday in the United States, and marks the time when the old year “dies” and the new year is “born.” Students may observe that often the old year is portrayed as an old man, and the new year as a baby. The main features of this holiday, like most of those we observe, is that it is a holiday from work and school, and that some people celebrate with parties on New Year’s Eve. They stay up until midnight to “ring in the new year” with bells, fireworks, or other noisemakers. Another feature of New Year’s appropriate for kindergartners is a discussion of new year’s resolutions, or goals, that some people like to make at the start of the new year. Discuss the various ways that students might celebrate the new year with their families.

In addition to staying up until midnight and making noise at the start of the new year, some people eat certain foods on New Year’s Day that they believe will bring them good luck. Often the menu in the South consists of ham or pork, black-eyed peas, and collard or turnip greens. In some families, lentils, pomegranates, or fish are eaten to bring good fortune in the new year. Some Spanish and Portuguese families eat twelve grapes at midnight to have twelve months of good luck in the new year. Some start the

new year with a breakfast of bagels or doughnuts, whose ring shapes are said to bring a lucky year. Japanese families may eat soba noodles, which must be eaten without chewing or breaking them, since they symbolize long life.



If your students are able, you may wish to share with them that some scholars believe that the month of January gets its name from an ancient Roman god named Janus. Janus had two faces, one looking to the past, and one looking to the future. Why might that god be a good one to symbolize the new year and the month of January? You might have students tell or draw something that they did in the past year and something they hope to do in the new year to mark this holiday and its meaning. *The image is of a coin featuring the Roman god Janus. Public domain*

**Vocabulary:** eve, resolutions, goals, resolve, luck, good fortune, year, fireworks, past, future

**SSKH1 Identify the national holidays and describe the people and/or events celebrated.**

**h. Presidents Day (George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and the current president)**

This standard is taught with SSKH2f (Lincoln Memorial), SSKH2g (Washington Monument), and SSKh2h (White House).



Presidents' Day in our country is celebrated on the third Monday in February, and the holiday name first began to be popularly used in 1971. The federal government officially calls this holiday "Washington's Birthday." It is viewed today as a celebration of the birthdays and lives of all U.S. presidents. Our standard states that we will recognize this day as a celebration of Washington, Lincoln, and the current president.

<http://www.britannica.com/topic/Presidents-Day>

**George Washington: (Feb. 22, 1732 – Dec. 14, 1799)** - Our first president is fascinating and there are many kid-friendly facts to share with kindergartners. The Mount Vernon website is FULL of great information and resources to use in teaching about this president. Start with *Key Facts* and select those appropriate to share with young learners - <http://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/key-facts/> At the Mount Vernon site, take a virtual tour of the estate, and see maps, documents, photos, and artifacts

that will fascinate students. There are special sections for teachers and for students under the "Education" tab.

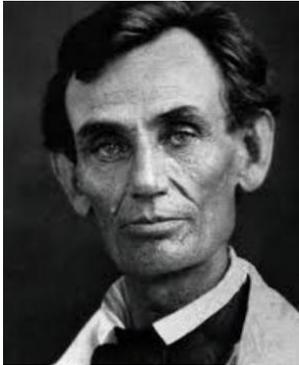
Students may be interested in knowing about Washington's tooth problems, which can be found at: [http://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/biography/washington-stories/dentures/#at\\_pco=smlre-1.0&at\\_si=59299db75e5a28c2&at\\_ab=per-2&at\\_pos=2&at\\_tot=5](http://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/biography/washington-stories/dentures/#at_pco=smlre-1.0&at_si=59299db75e5a28c2&at_ab=per-2&at_pos=2&at_tot=5)

**Activity idea:** Gilbert Stuart portrait of Washington (Landsdowne, 1796) from the National Portrait Gallery, photo by notes author; <http://www.georgewashington.si.edu/portrait/> - an interactive version of that allows you to analyze and talk about this portrait with kindergarten students. You will need to "translate" the narration into information young learners can absorb. Start by asking students what they see, what they think, and what questions come to mind. Record these as they explore. Ask why the artist made this portrait this way and what we think Stuart thought of Washington from his portrait. There are a

number of good children's books about Washington; see the link at the start of this document for some suggestions.

**Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12, 1809 – April 15, 1865):** Our 16<sup>th</sup> president, Lincoln was born in Kentucky, moved to Indiana, then Illinois. He worked as a shopkeeper, surveyor, and postmaster before training as lawyer and legislator. He became a noted speaker before he became president. Other kid-friendly essentials about Lincoln include the fact that he was born in a log cabin and was very poor growing up. He became president in 1860 and ruled the country during its most difficult time, throughout the Civil War. His most famous speech is called the Gettysburg Address, which he gave in 1863 at a cemetery in the little town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

**Fun facts about Lincoln:** He was the tallest president (6 ft 4 in); he loved to tell stories and jokes; he was the first president with a full beard; and he liked to store things like letters and other documents in his tall, stove-piped hat. See the hat from the Smithsonian's collection at: [http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah\\_1199660](http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_1199660)



**Activity Idea:** Use Google Arts and Culture, search Abraham Lincoln, for a wealth of pictures and artifacts you can share with your students. You will want to select carefully which items to share with students of this age. The site includes virtual tours of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, the Lincoln Memorial, Ford's Theater, Mount Rushmore.



**Activity Idea:** Show a photo of Lincoln without a beard, and one of him with one and tell them the story of Grace Bedell, the eleven year old who wrote to Lincoln in 1860, advising him to grow a beard. Show students the actual letters to Lincoln and the letter he sent back in response. See the letters and their transcripts at the Library of Congress at: <https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/0903/letter.html>

A statue of Grace Bedell and Lincoln is located in Westfield, New York. Further information may be found at: <https://www.nps.gov/liho/westfield-inaugural-journey.htm>

There are a number of good children's books about Lincoln; see the link at the start of this document for some suggestions.

Add to the discussion of Presidents Day age/grade appropriate information about the current president.

**Vocabulary:** president, portrait, photograph



**SSKH1 Identify the national holidays and describe the people and/or events celebrated.**

**i. Thanksgiving Day**

Abraham Lincoln issued a 'Thanksgiving Proclamation' on October 3, 1863, and officially set aside the last Thursday of November as the national day for Thanksgiving. Congress made Thanksgiving Day an official national holiday in 1941.

Thanksgiving is often taught poorly to young children, so we want to be careful that when we teach about the “first” Thanksgiving—the Pilgrims, the Mayflower, the feast with the Wampanoag people—we are as accurate as we can be about these people and the feast. American Indians had been giving thanks for their bounty for years before Europeans came to this continent, so the claim that this was the “First” Thanksgiving is dubious. The facts of the feast at Plimoth may be gleaned from the following sites and from children’s books about this topic:

Plimoth Plantation website – a variety of Thanksgiving activities that are based in historical fact at:

<https://www.plimoth.org/learn/just-kids>

You are the Historian - <https://www.plimoth.org/learn/MRL/interact/thanksgiving-interactive-you-are-historian>

How to Talk to Kids About Thanksgiving, Nov. 25, 2015, NPR Ed:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2015/11/25/457105485/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-thanksgiving>

**Vocabulary:** Thanksgiving, proclamation, Pilgrims, Wampanoag, Mayflower, feast

**SSKH1 Identify the national holidays and describe the people and/or events celebrated.**

**j. Veterans Day**

Veterans Day was originally known as Armistice Day, and marked the anniversary of the end of fighting in World War I on November 11<sup>th</sup>. Armistice Day was officially designated a national holiday by President Woodrow Wilson, in order to reflect on the heroism of those who died in the country’s service and to show sympathy for the losses experienced by other nations. In 1954, after the Korean War, the word “Armistice” was changed to “Veterans,” and Veterans Day became a day to honor all those who have served in the military, whether in wartime or in peacetime.

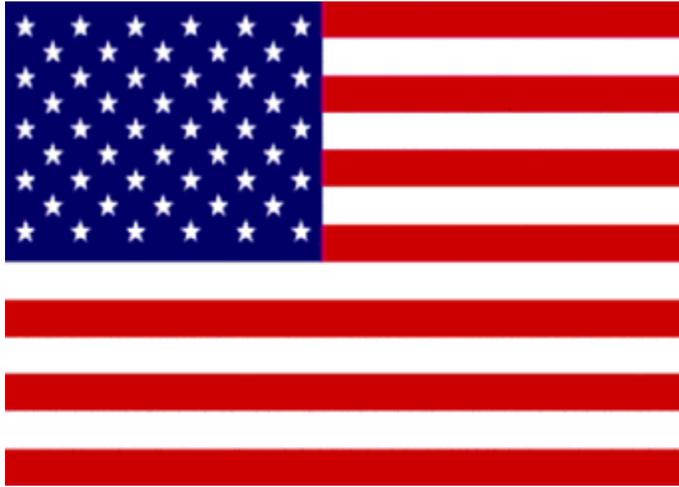
Note that *Memorial Day* is intended to honor those who have died in the service of their country, particularly those who died in battle or as the result of wounds of battle, while *Veterans Day* is a day to honor all those who have served, not only those who have died. You may wish to explore the custom of wearing poppies to honor veterans, which is also mentioned at the sites below.

<http://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/vetdayhistory.asp> and [https://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/vetday\\_faq.asp](https://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/vetday_faq.asp)

**Vocabulary:** veteran, heroism, sympathy, honor, military, military service

**SSKH2 Identify the following American symbols.**

**a. The national and state flags (United States and Georgia flags)**



The American Flag has thirteen stripes representing the original thirteen colonies, alternating red and white. It has a blue field representing the union in the top left, with white stars, one representing each state for a total of fifty.

With kindergarten students, explore the reasons why red, white, and blue were chosen as the colors. Although there have been several meanings given through the years for those three colors, the founding Fathers did NOT express them in 1777 when the Stars and Stripes (the first flag) was adopted. Some have said they chose these three colors

because they were the same ones that Great Britain (the mother country) had. Counting the stars and the stripes in the flag would be a good way to reinforce their number skills, and exploring the rectangles and stars reinforces their shape recognition.

**Activity:** Show flags from throughout the history of the United States to compare how the flag looked at different points. Have students notice the arrangement, the number of stars, and the number of stripes and have them ask questions or generate ideas of why they think it has changed over time.

Teacher background article:

“Why the U.S. Flag is Red, White, and Blue,” by Nicole Greenstein, Time Magazine, July 4, 2013, at: <http://swampland.time.com/2013/07/04/why-the-u-s-flag-is-red-white-and-blue/>

“Five Myths About the American Flag,” may be helpful for teachers to avoid repeating myths about the flag - <http://www.aarp.org/politics-society/history/info-06-2011/5-myths-about-the-american-flag.html>

More background information on the History of the American Flag may be found at: <http://www.pbs.org/a-capitol-fourth/history/old-glory/>

Star Spangled Banter: 13 Fun Facts About the U.S. Flag (some of which your young learners may enjoy learning) may be found at Mental Floss at: <http://mentalfloss.com/article/50913/star-spangled-banter-13-fun-facts-about-us-flag>



The Georgia State Flag has three stripes, two red separated by one white. It has the state coat of arms on a blue field in the top left. The seal has three pillars—labeled wisdom, justice, and moderation—representing the three branches of government legislative, judicial, and executive. The pillars are supporting an arch representing the state constitution and there is a man with a sword drawn defending the constitution. Surrounding the arch and pillars are thirteen stars, representing Georgia and the other twelve original colonies that

formed the United States of America. Within the circle of stars, just below the pillars are the words “In God We Trust.”

**Activity:** Do a compare/contrast of the Georgia flag with the U.S. flag having students note the similarities and differences.

**Activity:** Research Flag etiquette and discuss them with students.

Information about how the flag’s appearance has changed throughout our history may be found at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_the_United_States)

**Vocabulary:** flag, stripes, stars, colonies, coat of arms, pillars, etiquette

**SSKH2 Identify the following American symbols.**

**b. Pledge of Allegiance**

Students should know what the Pledge of Allegiance is. As written in 1954, it reads:

“I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

Note that students may not be forced to recite the pledge of allegiance, since some of your students’ beliefs may forbid their doing so. Our focus is on making sure they know what the pledge is, what it means, and that many Americans regard it as a strong symbol of their loyalty.

*For teacher background:* the original version of the pledge was first published in a children’s magazine in September of 1892. Later, some wording changes were made to the phrase “my flag” and that version of the pledge was formally recognized by the U.S. government in 1942. In 1954, then president Dwight D. Eisenhower urged and the Congress legislated that the words “under God” be added. In a 1943 Supreme Court decision, a ruling was made that no person can be required to recite the pledge. Information from Encyclopedia Britannica - <https://www.britannica.com/event/Pledge-of-Allegiance-to-the-Flag-of-the-United-States-of-America>

**Vocabulary:** pledge, allegiance, loyalty, republic, indivisible, liberty, justice, nation

**SSKH2 Identify the following American symbols.**

**c. Star Spangled Banner (identify as the national anthem).**

Inspired by the sight of the American flag flying over Fort McHenry the morning after battle during the War of 1812, Francis Scott Key wrote *The Star Spangled Banner*, which became the American National Anthem in 1931. For the lyrics and more information, visit

<http://amhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/the-lyrics.aspx>

A number of good children’s books may be used to extend student’s understanding of this historical event and the particular flag called The Star Spangled Banner. Although some people refer to any flag as the star spangled banner, the flag from Fort McHenry is the actual flag honored with that name.

The Smithsonian Institute has a fascinating online exhibit about how the Star Spangled Banner has been preserved through the years. The vivid photographs could serve to inspire students’ questioning and story telling related to this flag and how it is being saved. See more information at:

<https://amhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/preservation-project.aspx> with several interactive features at <http://amhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/default.aspx>

**Vocabulary:** spangled, banner, national, anthem, lyrics, battle, fort

**SSKH2 Identify the following American symbols.**

**d. The bald eagle**

In 1782, the American bald eagle was adopted as the national bird of the United States. It was chosen for its majestic beauty, great strength, long life, and because it is native to North America. For more information, visit

<http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/celebrate/eagle.pdf>



**Activity idea:** One thing that some kindergarten teachers do is to have their students check in regularly to Berry College’s Eagle Cam to watch the eaglets nesting and hatching on a live camera. This is a great way to connect the bald eagle in social studies to science. <http://www.berry.edu/eaglecam/>

**Activity idea:** There is a story told that Benjamin Franklin wanted the turkey named the national bird, rather than the bald eagle. This story is a myth, but one you can discuss with your young learners. It is true that he did not like the bald eagle being used to symbolize the U.S., because he said it “had bad moral character...and was lazy.” Franklin considered the turkey a much more respectable bird, a true native of North America, and a courageous bird who would not hesitate to attack a British soldier who crossed his path. Teachers may find out more about this myth and the facts behind it at:

Smithsonian Magazine - <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/american-myths-benjamin-franklins-turkey-and-the-presidential-seal-6623414/>

**Vocabulary:** adopted, majestic, native, eaglets

**SSKH2 Identify the following American symbols.**

**e. The Statue of Liberty**

The Statue of Liberty is located in New York Harbor at the southern tip of Manhattan in New York City. It was a gift of friendship for the people of France to the United States as a universal symbol of freedom and democracy. It was designated as a National Monument in 1924. For more information visit <http://www.nps.gov/stli/index.htm>

A number of children's books explain the making of the Statue of Liberty, the poem inscribed on her base, and the meaning of the statue to Americans then and now. It is fascinating to show students photos of the statue as it was created and assembled. Be sure to explain that school children of the U.S. collected pennies to help build the base on which the statue rests.

**Vocabulary:** statue, liberty, harbor, symbol, freedom, democracy, monument

**SSKH2 Identify the following American symbols.**

**f. Lincoln Memorial (identify image and associate with Abraham Lincoln and Presidents Day)**

Dedicated in 1922, the Lincoln Memorial is a national monument located at the National Mall in Washington D.C. It was built to honor President Abraham Lincoln, the President of the United States of American during the Civil War, who is credited with preserving the Union. The memorial has 36 columns, representing the number of states in the Union at the time of Lincoln's death, with a nineteen foot tall statue of Lincoln seated in the center chamber.



The National Park Service site on the Lincoln Memorial, including information on its history, may be found at <https://www.nps.gov/linc/index.htm> Have your students learn more about the sculptor, Daniel Chester French, and why and how he designed the sculpture and the hall in which it sits.

**Vocabulary:** memorial, monument, statue, sculptor, sculpture

**SSKH2 Identify the following American symbols.**

**g. Washington Monument (identify image and associate with George Washington and Presidents Day)**



The Washington Monument is a stone obelisk and a national monument located at the National Mall in Washington D.C. It was dedicated in 1885 and is the world's tallest stone structure. It was built to commemorate George Washington, the Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolution, and the first President of the United States under the Constitution.

Washington Monument, National Park Service - <https://www.nps.gov/wamo/index.htm>

FAQ's about the Monument are found at <https://www.nps.gov/wamo/faqs.htm>

Your students might want to know a few things about the Washington Monument, including the fact that it is closed until spring 2019 for repairs to modernize it so the elevators will work better and it will be safer. Another question your learners might ask is why there are two different colors to the monument — the answer

is that when they first started building the monument they ran out of money and stopped construction. Twenty-five years later, the U.S. Government completed the rest of the monument using marble from a different quarry. At first the two marbles looked similar, but through the years, the weather has made the two sections look more and more different in color.

Consider talking about the shape of the monument and linking that knowledge to solid figures in math/geometry. Students can “build” their own monument using construction materials in the classroom.

**Vocabulary:** monument, obelisk, dedicated, commemorate

**SSKH2 Identify the following American symbols.**

**h. White House (identify image and associate with Presidents Day and the current president)**

The White House is located in Washington D.C. at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. The first President of the United States, George Washington, selected the site in 1791 but he never got to live in it since it was under construction throughout his presidency. Every president since John Adams has lived in the White House while they were in office.

Find facts about the White House to share with your young learners at:



<http://easyscienceforkids.com/the-white-house/> (you should control use of this site since it does contain ads.)

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/white-house-facts/> (also has ads but includes other kid-friendly facts about the White House)

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/the-white-house/> (the White House official site has some kid-friendly facts that you will need to facilitate.)

<https://www.kidsdiscover.com/teacherresources/building-white-house/> This Kids Discover article for older learners can easily be adapted for use at kindergarten level. The focus is on the history of the building of the White House.

Children’s literature related to this standard may provide a good source of information as well.

**SSKH3 Correctly use words and phrases related to chronology and time. (Note: These elements should be integrated into discussions about historical events and figures.)**

The intent of this standard is to build the first layer of historical understandings in young learners by teaching them how to describe events, people, and things in terms of time and order of events. All of the time/chronology words of this standard will need to be posted on anchor charts and referred to repeatedly (while working with the calendar each day, with each of the holidays and symbols we learn about, with the historical figures linked to some of these holidays, etc.)

**Activity idea:** Help students to make a personal timeline showing different points in their lives and using time words to describe them. (e.g., use a sentence strip and put down three drawings or photographs – as a baby, as a toddler, as a kindergartner, and how they think they will be as an adult). Compare/contrast their timeline with that of one of the historic figures they learn about: George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, the current president, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The discussion/debrief time related to the timelines provides many opportunities to reinforce the chronology terminology.

**Vocabulary:** use, words, phrases, chronology, time

**SSKH3 Correctly use words and phrases related to chronology and time. (Note: These elements should be integrated into discussions about historical events and figures.)**

**a. Now, long ago**

For this element, students should understand what things are happening at this present time or moment—**now**, and that some things happened in the past—**long ago**.

**Vocabulary:** now, long ago

**SSKH3 Correctly use words and phrases related to chronology and time. (Note: These elements should be integrated into discussions about historical events and figures.)**

**b. Before, after**

For this element, students should understand that some events occur, and some people exist at an earlier time than others—**before**, and that some events occur, and some people exist at a later time than others—**after**.

**Vocabulary:** before, after

**SSKH3 Correctly use words and phrases related to chronology and time. (Note: These elements should be integrated into discussions about historical events and figures.)**

**c. Today, tomorrow, yesterday**

For this element, students should understand the concept of things that occur on this day—**today**, on the day after today—**tomorrow**, and the day before today—**yesterday**.

**Vocabulary:** today, tomorrow, yesterday

**SSKH3 Correctly use words and phrases related to chronology and time. (Note: These elements should be integrated into discussions about historical events and figures.)**

**d. First, last, next**

For this element, students should understand that **first** means that something is the earliest, that it came before all others in time or order. **Last** means that something is the latest; that it came after all others in time or order. **Next** means that something comes immediately after something else.

**Vocabulary:** first, last, next

**SSKH3 Correctly use words and phrases related to chronology and time. (Note: These elements should be integrated into discussions about historical events and figures.)**

**e. Day, week, month, year**

For this element, students should understand that a **day** is a unit of time that goes from one midnight to the next. (24hrs) A **week** is a period of seven days in a row (from Sunday – Saturday), and a **year** is a period of 365 days beginning with the January 1<sup>st</sup> and ending on December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Vocabulary:** day, week, month, year

**SSKH3 Correctly use words and phrases related to chronology and time. (Note: These elements should be integrated into discussions about historical events and figures.)**

**f. Past, present, future**

For this element, students should understand that the **past** refers to a time that has gone by, and no longer exists. **Present** is the period of time occurring now, and the **future** is a time that has not occurred yet.

**Vocabulary:** past, present, future

## **KINDERGARTEN Geographic Understandings**

**SSKG1 Describe the diversity of American culture by explaining the customs and celebrations of various families and communities.**

For this standard students should understand that people have a variety of customs and celebrations within families and communities, and that these differences make our country very interesting. This standard should be taught as SSKH1 is taught, throughout the school year to correspond to the holidays included in the standard.

**Vocabulary:** describe, diversity (differences within), culture, explaining, customs, celebrations, various (many different kinds), families, communities

**SSKG2 Explain that a map is a drawing of a place and a globe is a model of Earth.**

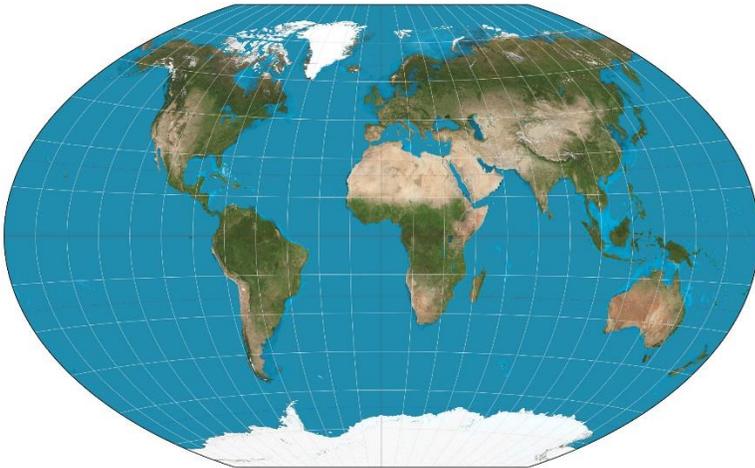
For this standard, students should understand that a map is a two-dimensional representation of an area that shows its physical features on paper, and a globe is a round three-dimensional object that represents the planet earth.

**Vocabulary:** explain, map, drawing, place, globe, model, Earth

**SSKG2 Explain that a map is a drawing of a place and a globe is a model of Earth.**

**a. Differentiate land and water features on simple maps and globes.**

For this element, students need to be able to tell the difference between land and water features on a map like the one below.



**Activity Idea:** Use an inflatable globe ball and toss the ball to students. As each child catches the globe in their two hands, ask them to tell you whether their thumb on the hand they write with is on water or land. On most globes the water is the area in blue. After each toss, record the tally for land or water where the thumb landed. After a time (say, 10 minutes) count up tally marks and determine which came up most: land or water. Generally the water tallies should be

greater than the land ones, allowing you to tell students that there is more water on our planet Earth than there is land, so a random tossing should land on water more often.

**Vocabulary:** differentiate (tell the difference), land feature, water feature

**SSKG2 Explain that a map is a drawing of a place and a globe is a model of Earth.**

**b. Explain that maps and globes show a view from above.**

This element asks students to clearly describe in detail how maps and globes show a view looking down from above. If we were in an airplane looking down, we would see the view from above. That is the view from which most maps are made.

**Activity idea:** Use chart paper to make a map of the classroom, with each item in the room viewed as if from above. A good prop to show a view from above for a room map would be a dollhouse with furniture and the map could be almost life sized.

**Activity idea:** Use Google maps to show a view of the school and surrounding area from above. Create a map with the view from above the school and surrounding area.

**Vocabulary:** maps, globes, view, above

**SSKG2 Explain that a map is a drawing of a place and a globe is a model of Earth.**

**c. Explain that maps and globes show features in a smaller size.**

For this element, students need to be able to describe in detail how maps and globes show features smaller than they actually are.

**Activity idea:** Use the classroom map made to work with element b above to discuss the fact that items on the map do not appear their actual size but are smaller. Ask students why that is true. (The map would have to be too big, you could only have maps of very tiny things unless you show feature smaller.) Show students a map of the school zone, your town, the state, the United States, and the Earth. As maps are used to show larger and larger areas, the items will need to shrink smaller and smaller and only some items will appear.

**Activity idea:** Another way to help students grasp the abstract notion that features are shown in a smaller size on maps and globes is to tell students that a model is a smaller, miniature size of something that usually comes in a much larger size. Show them a model car or toy train or dollhouse (or any number of other models) and ask them if this is the actual size of a real car, or train, or home? Why do we have models? (to be able to explore or play with items that would normally be too large to fit in our



classroom.) In the same way, the globe represents a model of the earth. Show them a photo like the one shown here of the earth from space. In order to see this in actual size, we would have to go in a rocket far from the earth. (Thanks to teachers Lyssa Sahadevan, Trish Morrison, and Amy Cardwell for sharing this idea in a workshop!)

Image is in the Public Domain from NASA, 17 October 2000.

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=885>

\* Note that this is a good time to introduce and provide multiple experiences with understanding what a compass rose is and the cardinal directions, North, South, East and West. Although these are not part of the content standards they are located on the Map and Globe Skills matrix.

**Vocabulary:** explain, maps, globes, features, smaller, size

**SSKG3 State the street address, city, state, and country in which the student lives.**

This skill will need to be built over time with young students, since these layers of their address are very abstract for them at this point.



**Activity idea:** Use a flipbook or anchor chart to display the layers of address very visually so that students understand how the address gets “larger” as we move from street address to country. See a sample to the left of how some teachers in Houston County build the layers of the address.

**Vocabulary:** state, street address, city, state, country, lives

## **KINDERGARTEN Government/Civics Understandings**

### **SSKCG1 Demonstrate an understanding of good citizenship.**

This intent of this standard is for students to “demonstrate an understanding” of what it means to be a good citizen. The big ideas we want kindergartners to understand is that we are a society ruled by rules and laws (what we later know as the Rule of Law), and we recognize certain character traits as ones we would want good citizens to possess.

**Vocabulary:** demonstrate, understanding, citizenship

### **SSKCG1 Demonstrate an understanding of good citizenship.**

#### **a. Explain how rules are made and why.**

For this element, students should be able to explain how the beliefs of a group help shape their rules and laws. For instance, the rules at school might be different from the rules at home because they have different purposes and are made up of different people.

**Activity idea:** The beginning of the school year is a good time to introduce this element, since that is the time when teachers are teaching and instilling in students the class and school rules and procedures. Reading aloud children’s books related to what happens when there are no rules, followed by good class discussion, can provide opportunities to reinforce the need for rules.

**Vocabulary:** explain, rules, made, how, why

### **SSKCG1 Demonstrate an understanding of good citizenship.**

#### **b. Explain why rules should be followed.**

For this element, students should be able to explain the consequences of not following rules. The student should understand that punishment is not the only consequence of not following rules. For instance not following safety rules could result in injury, or not following rules about hallway behavior could make young children be afraid to go from one area of the school to another. Breaking rules about using supplies responsibly can help insure that we have enough supplies to do more activities in the future.

**Vocabulary:** explain, rules, followed

**SSKCG2 Describe examples of positive character traits exhibited by good citizens such as honesty, patriotism, courtesy, respect, pride, and self-control.**

For this standard, students should be able to describe examples of:

**Honesty:** someone being truthful

**Patriotism:** loving, honoring and/or sacrificing for our country

**Courtesy:** being polite toward others

**Respect:** someone admiring another person or thing (e.g. respecting a teacher or the flag). Respect can have other attributes such as listening without interrupting, speaking to peers and adults with courtesy, and treating the earth with care by not littering or harming nature.

**Pride:** someone feeling happy or satisfied about one's own achievements, or the achievements of someone close to them

**Self-control:** the ability to control one's own feelings, emotions, or reactions, etc., or to express them at the appropriate time and place

All of these qualities of good citizens are the ingredients of a good citizen. At the beginning of the school year, you might ask kindergartners what a good citizen is and record responses. Check this list as you move through the year and see if the ingredients change and grow.

**Vocabulary:** describe, examples, positive, character traits, citizens, honesty, patriotism, courtesy, respect, pride, self-control

## KINDERGARTEN Economics Understandings

### **SSKE1 Describe the work that people do such as: police officer, fire fighter, soldier, mail carrier, farmer, doctor, teacher, etc.**

This standard is the first step toward students understanding the need for **specialization** – a term that will show up in later standards and economics courses. In describing this work, teachers may ask students to describe why these jobs are needed or why people choose to do these jobs.

#### **Resources:**

A Lesson plan on community helpers: <https://sites.google.com/a/fiu.edu/ms-natalie-martinez-website/home/lesson-plan>

A lesson plan, Grades K-1 Community Helpers that is adaptable to SSKE1 is found at [http://digitalcommons.pace.edu/elem\\_soc/2/](http://digitalcommons.pace.edu/elem_soc/2/)

**Vocabulary:** work, job(s), police officer, fire fighter, soldier, mail carrier, farmer, doctor, teacher (and other community helpers/occupations)

### **SSKE2 Explain that people earn income by working.**

Building on the first standard, this standard should lead students toward an understanding that people can be paid for their work. Sometimes this work takes physical forms (the mail carrier, fire fighter, soldier, farmer) and sometimes this work takes mental forms (doctor, teacher) etc. Wages are typically seen as short-term payments (hourly, daily, or weekly) whereas salaries are typically set for longer periods (monthly, yearly, multi-yearly).

Kindergarten ideas for most of these basic economic concepts are shared at “Adventures of a K/1 Teacher” at <http://teacherkimbo.blogspot.com/2012/01/needs-wants-goods-and-services.html>

**Vocabulary:** earn, income, working, wages/salaries, pay, paid, paycheck, payment

### **SSKE3 Explain how money is used to purchase goods and services.**

#### **a. Distinguish goods from services.**

For this element, students should be able to tell the difference between **goods**—materials that people can purchase and **services**—work that is performed for others in return for wages. Students should be concerned with goods and services purchased by consumers and the forms of money that are used to purchase those.

#### **Resources:**

A lesson on goods and services may be found at: <https://www.education.com/lesson-plan/kindergarten-economics-goods-and-services/>

EconEdLink, whose resources are free to teachers after you register and set up a login/password, features an interactive drag-and-drop game on goods and services for young learners at:

<http://www.econedlink.org/tool/101/Goods-Services>

Check out the Kindergarten appropriate video, “Herschel’s World of Economics: Goods and Services” from the Indiana Council for Economic Education at YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wy0TrDCiqLw>

Edutopia, parts of which are kindergarten friendly, may be found at:

<https://www.edutopia.org/pdfs/stw/edutopia-stw-financial-lit-ariel-lessonplan-goods-services.pdf>

**Vocabulary:** purchase, goods, services

**SSKE3 Explain how money is used to purchase goods and services.**

**b. Identify that U.S. coins and dollar bills (paper money) are used as currency.**

Closely related to SSKE3, the focus here is on the United States' system of currency and reinforces what students already know: we pay for things with coins and paper bills or money. Reinforcing this understanding can also help to build number sense and counting skills. Integrate U.S. history by examining some bills and coins to see who or what is depicted on each.

**Resources:**

Kid-friendly activities and information about U.S. currency may be found at:

<https://www.usmint.gov/kids/coinsMedals/index.html>

Watch a fascinating video of how paper money is made at <https://kids.usa.gov/watch-videos/money/money-factory/index.shtml> Show this clip in short increments and stop to talk about what students are seeing and hearing. Students might design their own piece of paper money as a way to extend their thinking.

Another activity explains how coins are minted. For kindergarten students, this would have to be a teacher directed activity. <https://www.usmint.gov/kids/coinNews/mintingProcess/index.html>

A lesson plan called “The Alphabet of Coins” may be found at

<https://www.usmint.gov/kids/teachers/lessonPlans/viewLP-21t.html>

Coin Curricula Center – links to a variety of activities related to coins

<https://www.usmint.gov/kids/teachers/coinCurricula/index.html> ; Clicking on the penny reveals links to multiple activities, plans, and resources.

**Vocabulary:** money, coin(s), dollar bills (paper money), currency, identify

**SSKE4 Explain that people must make choices because they cannot have everything they want.**

This is the crux of all future economics the student will learn. Ask students to do two things at the same time (say the alphabet and count to 10). When they say they cannot, ask them why. Eventually, you will arrive at the point that given a certain period, you cannot do everything you want to do so you have to choose which to do. This is also true when we are deciding on what to buy. This standard will be expanded on in later grades.

**Resources:**

For Teacher background – “Four Money Lessons Your Kids Can Learn Before Kindergarten,” this site has ads and is written for parents, but there is good information for teachers : <http://moneyning.com/kids-and-money/4-money-lessons-your-kids-can-learn-before-kindergarten/>

Financial Literacy for Kids has fully developed lesson plans for very young learners at:

<https://www.incharge.org/financial-literacy/resources-for-teachers/financial-literacy-for-kids/>

**Vocabulary:** choices, everything, want(s)