

Middle School Social Studies Emergency Sub Binder

Emergency sub plans for middle school social studies, grades 6 to 8. The sub needs no social studies background: every step is on the page.

PREVIEW

What is included

- 7 front pages: binder cover, important information, note to the sub, the filled-in lesson plan, schedule, class list, how it went
- 9 activities with sub scripts and student pages (31 pages): 3 individual, 6 with a partner, a team or the whole class
- A Say this to the class script for every activity, star challenges for fast finishers, every answer in a key
- 7 of the 9 activities list their C3 or Common Core standards on the sub script (not the puzzles or the optional quiz game)
- Color and ink-saver B&W, US Letter and A4

How it works

1. Leave the binder out. The lesson plan lists every activity with its page and minutes.
2. The sub reads the Say this to the class box word for word.
3. Students work from their own pages, with the steps on the page. The sub needs no social studies background: every answer is in the key.
4. No prep and no tech: print and go.

The 9 activities, 35 to 45 minutes each

1. **Quiet Reading**, 45 min SOLO: citing evidence from two articles: the trade city of Great Zimbabwe and the effects of the Erie Canal
2. **The Fact-Check Desk**, 40 min SOLO: fixing social studies mix-ups about places, government, money and history
3. **Writing Menu**, 45 min SOLO: writing with evidence: a letter to a town board, Census data, or two points of view
4. **Partner Check**, 40 min PAIRS: mixed review: government, time zones, fact and opinion, money, maps and democracy
5. **The Town Budget Review**, 40 min PAIRS OR THREES: costs and benefits of a town choice, reading a dot map and a majority vote
6. **Puzzle Tournament**, 41 min TEAMS: social studies word parts, vocabulary, analogies, anagrams and other word logic
7. **The Project Fair Mix-Up**, 40 min TEAMS: matching projects to the meaning of five social studies fields
8. **Which Claim Holds Up? Stand-Off**, 40 min WHOLE CLASS: judging claims: data, sources, sample size, fitting the evidence and causes
9. **Whiteboard Quiz Game**, 35 min WHOLE CLASS: a review of this binder: articles, fact checks, partner rows, the budget and evidence

What this preview shows: the note to the substitute, the lesson plan, the other front pages, one page of every activity, a sub script, four more student pages and one ink-saver page. Every product page is watermarked. Answer keys are not shown, only one warm-up answer. The full binder has 38 pages.



Note to the Substitute

Middle school social studies, grades 6 to 8 · 9 one-period activities · no prep, no social studies background needed

Thank you for covering my class

The front pages (important information, lesson plan, schedule, class list) are filled in for today. After them come 9 social studies activities: the first 3 are individual work, the other 6 are for partners, teams or the whole class. Each one fills most or all of a period of 40 to 55 minutes, runs from the printout alone, and carries its own facts and answer key, so you never teach anything new. Everything reviews middle school social studies (geography, world and US history, civics and economics, with source and map skills), all on paper. Print this binder one-sided, because the keys sit behind student pages when it is two-sided.

Social studies and talk: Everything is paper and pencil. History is told plainly, civics is about how government and decisions work (never parties or candidates), and made-up towns are labeled made-up. A student with a question writes it down for me; a student who is upset goes to the school counselor or another trusted adult.

Every activity except the puzzle tournament and the review game lists the standards it practices on a small line under its focus line (for you, not the students): grades 6 to 8 indicators of the C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards, and Common Core RH.6-8 for work with sources. It practices part of a standard; it is review, not a full assessment.

The first page of every activity is your script. The box marked **Say this to the class** is written to be read aloud word for word. Every answer is in a key on the script page or on the page right after it. Keep those pages with you and hand out only the student pages. Every student sheet except the quiz board has core work for everyone and one **Challenge** box, with its own answer space, for early finishers.

The 9 activities

- **Quiet Reading** quiet single · 45 min · p. 7
- **The Fact-Check Desk** quiet single · 40 min · p. 13
- **Writing Menu** quiet single, choose · 45 min · p. 16
- **Partner Check** pairs · 40 min · p. 20
- **The Town Budget Review** pairs or threes · 40 min · p. 23
- **Puzzle Tournament** teams, puzzles · 41 min · p. 26
- **The Project Fair Mix-Up** team logic · 40 min · p. 29
- **Which Claim Holds Up? Stand-Off** whole class · 40 min · p. 33
- **Whiteboard Quiz Game** whole class, teams · 35 min · p. 36

If the class is loud

- Switch to a quiet single activity: Quiet Reading, The Fact-Check Desk or Writing Menu. Nobody needs to move.
- In the scored games (Puzzle Tournament, Which Claim Holds Up? Stand-Off and Whiteboard Quiz Game), the scoring keeps the class honest.
- If an activity is not working, stop it and switch. Every activity can start at any point in the period.
- The games are optional: a fun way to end the class or to use extra time.



Which activity when?

- A student says the class never learned this? Every activity reviews earlier work. Ask them to try the first problem with a partner, and leave me a note.
- The same activity in every period is fine: each class sees it once. The lesson plan (next page) lists all 9.
- A class that needs to settle: start with a quiet single activity. A restless class: a group activity uses the energy.
- Short period? These fit: Whiteboard Quiz Game (35 min) and one reading of Quiet Reading (about 20 min).

Before you leave

Please fill in the How It Went page at the back. It takes two minutes and I read every word. Thank you!

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Lesson Plan

Filled in for today: 9 activities, 35 to 45 minutes each. Write the time of each period you use.

ACTIVITY	PLAN	PAGE
Quiet Reading Quiet single · about 45 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• One article and its question sheet per student; fast finishers take the other • Silent reading and questions, about 20 minutes per article • Read the answers out from the key, or collect for me	p. 7
The Fact-Check Desk Quiet single · about 40 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Hand out both sheets; pencils only • Students find the one wrong sentence in each note, name the fact and fix it • Read the key out at the end, or collect for me	p. 13
Writing Menu Quiet single, choose · about 45 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Three stacks: A: A Letter to the Town Board, B: Where the Middle Moved, C: Two Views of One Day • Students choose one, write alone in silence, then use the checklist • Compare with the models on the script, or collect for me	p. 16
Partner Check Pairs · about 40 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Pairs: one Partner A sheet and one Partner B sheet • Both do row 1, then compare: the answers must match • Different answers? Talk it through together. The key is on the script	p. 20
The Town Budget Review Pairs or threes · about 40 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Pairs or threes, each student with both sheets • Part 1: review three proposals, the map and the limits (keyed) • Part 2: pick a plan that fits the budget and count the board's vote	p. 23
Puzzle Tournament Teams, puzzles · about 41 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Teams of 3 or 4, one puzzle sheet and one answer sheet per team • One round at a time, 1, 2 or 3 points per puzzle • Every answer is on the key. The key settles arguments	p. 26
The Project Fair Mix-Up Team logic · about 40 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Teams of 3 or 4, one case file and one grid sheet per team • Warm-up together on the board, then the case on their own • Teams hand in both sheets; check the slip against the key and reveal	p. 29
Which Claim Holds Up? Stand-Off Whole class · about 40 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Both sheets to every student; everyone stays seated • Read a round, 20-second guess, count hands, then 60 seconds to decide and give a reason • One speaker per side, then read the answer from the key	p. 33
Whiteboard Quiz Game Whole class, teams · about 35 min Time ____ : ____ to ____ : ____	• Draw the 5 by 5 board or use the board page; 3 to 5 teams • Teams take turns picking a category and value; you read the question • Right answer: points on the scoreboard. Optional, for the end of class	p. 36

Fast finishers

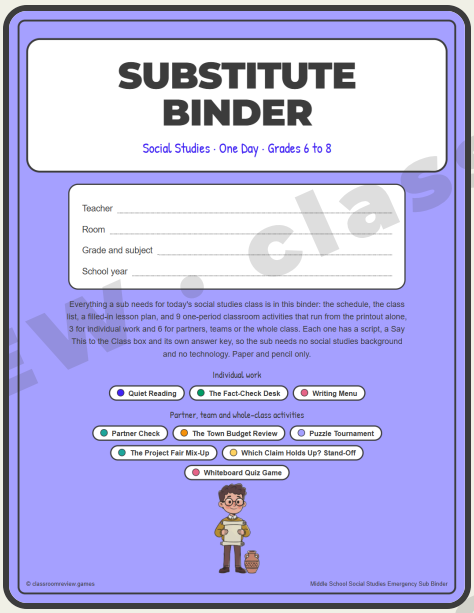
Any quiet single activity can follow any other activity: Quiet Reading (p. 7), The Fact-Check Desk (p. 13) and Writing Menu (p. 16).

Collect / leave for me

.....

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SUBSTITUTE BINDER

Social Studies · One Day · Grades 6 to 8

Teacher _____

Room _____

Grade and subject _____

School year _____

Everything a sub needs for today's social studies class is in this binder: the schedule, the class list, a filled-in lesson plan, and 9 one-period classroom activities that run from the printout alone, 3 for individual work and 6 for partners, teams or the whole class. Each one has a script, a Say This to the Class box and its own answer key, so the sub needs no social studies background and no technology. Paper and pencil only.

Individual work

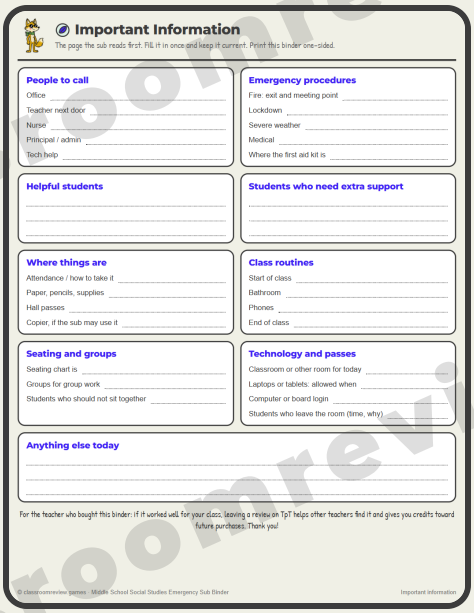
- Quiet Reading
- The Fact-Check Desk
- Writing Menu

Partner, team and whole-class activities

- Partner Check
- The Town Budget Review
- Puzzle Tournament
- The Project Fair Mix-Up
- Which Claim Holds Up? Stand-Off
- Whiteboard Quiz Game

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Middle School Social Studies Emergency Sub Binder



Important Information

The page the sub reads first. Fill it in once and keep it current. Print this binder one-sided.

People to call

Office _____

Teacher next door _____

Nurse _____

Principal / admin _____

Tech help _____

Emergency procedures

Fire: exit and meeting point _____

Lockdown _____

Severe weather _____

Medical _____

Where the first aid kit is _____

Helpful students

_____

_____

_____

Students who need extra support

_____

_____

_____

Where things are

Attendance / how to take it _____

Paper, pencils, supplies _____

Hall passes _____

Copier, if the sub may use it _____

Class routines

Start of class _____

Bathroom _____

Phones _____

End of class _____

Seating and groups

Seating chart is _____

Groups for group work _____

Students who should not sit together _____

Technology and passes

Classroom or other room for today _____

Laptops or tablets: allowed when _____

Computer or board login _____

Students who leave the room (time, why) _____

Anything else today

_____

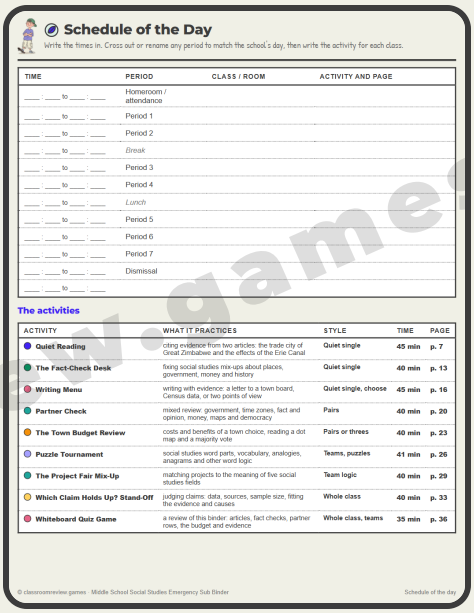
_____

_____

For the teacher who bought this binder: if it worked well for your class, leaving a review on TpT helps other teachers find it and gives you credits toward future purchases. Thank you!

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Important information



Schedule of the Day

Write the times in. Cross out or rename any period to match the school's day, then write the activity for each class.

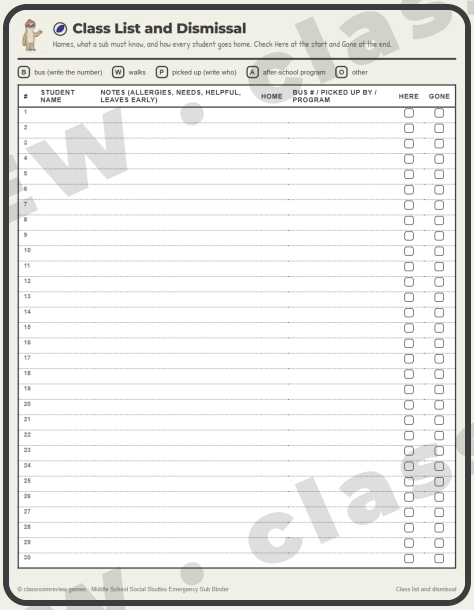
TIME	PERIOD	CLASS / ROOM	ACTIVITY AND PAGE
___ : ___ to ___ : ___	Homeroom / attendance		
___ : ___ to ___ : ___	Period 1		
___ : ___ to ___ : ___	Period 2		
___ : ___ to ___ : ___	*Break*		
___ : ___ to ___ : ___	Period 3		
___ : ___ to ___ : ___	Period 4		
___ : ___ to ___ : ___	*Lunch*		
___ : ___ to ___ : ___	Period 5		
___ : ___ to ___ : ___	Period 6		
___ : ___ to ___ : ___	Period 7		
___ : ___ to ___ : ___	Dismissal		
___ : ___ to ___ : ___			

The activities

ACTIVITY	WHAT IT PRACTICES	STYLE	TIME	PAGE
Quiet Reading	citing evidence from two articles: the trade city of Great Zimbabwe and the effects of the Erie Canal	Quiet single	45 min	p. 7
The Fact-Check Desk	fixing social studies mix-ups about places, government, money and history	Quiet single	40 min	p. 13
Writing Menu	writing with evidence: a letter to a town board, Census data, or two points of view	Quiet single, choose	45 min	p. 16
Partner Check	mixed review: government, time zones, fact and opinion, money, maps and democracy	Pairs	40 min	p. 20
The Town Budget Review	costs and benefits of a town choice, reading a dot map and a majority vote	Pairs or threes	40 min	p. 23
Puzzle Tournament	social studies word parts, vocabulary, analogies, anagrams and other word logic	Teams, puzzles	41 min	p. 26
The Project Fair Mix-Up	matching projects to the meaning of five social studies fields	Team logic	40 min	p. 29
Which Claim Holds Up? Stand-Off	judging claims: data, sources, sample size, fitting the evidence and causes	Whole class	40 min	p. 33
Whiteboard Quiz Game	a review of this binder: articles, fact checks, partner rows, the budget and evidence	Whole class, teams	35 min	p. 36

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Schedule of the day



Class List and Dismissal

Names, what a sub must know, and how every student goes home. Check Here at the start and Gone at the end.

(B) bus (write the number) (W) walks (P) picked up (write who) (A) after-school program (O) other

#	STUDENT NAME	NOTES (ALLERGIES, NEEDS, HELPFUL, LEAVES EARLY)	HOME	BUS # / PICKED UP BY / PROGRAM	HERE	GONE
1					☐	☐
2					☐	☐
3					☐	☐
4					☐	☐
5					☐	☐
6					☐	☐
7					☐	☐
8					☐	☐
9					☐	☐
10					☐	☐
11					☐	☐
12					☐	☐
13					☐	☐
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26					☐	☐
27					☐	☐
28					☐	☐
29					☐	☐
30					☐	☐

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Class list and dismissal



How It Went

For you to leave for me. Two minutes: check the boxes and go.

Today

Date _____ Period(s) _____

Activities used _____

Sub name _____

The class

- ☐ Great, no problems
- ☐ Fine, a little loud
- ☐ A difficult day, see notes
- ☐ Finished the activity
- ☐ Stopped early (time)
- ☐ Used a second activity

Stars of the day

Students who helped, led a group well, or were a good sport:

_____

_____

_____

Work collected

_____

_____

Notes

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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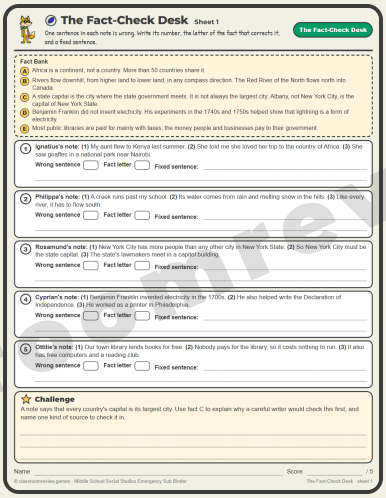
How it went

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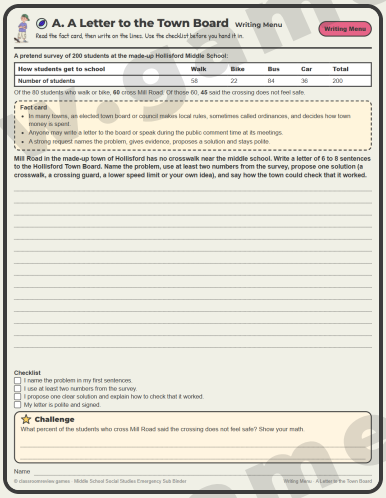
ONE PAGE OF EVERY ACTIVITY



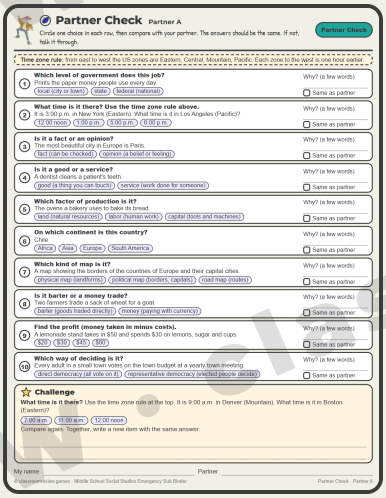
1. Quiet Reading, 45 min (solo)



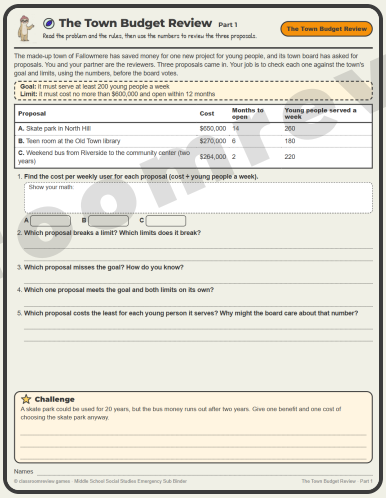
2. The Fact-Check Desk, 40 min (solo)



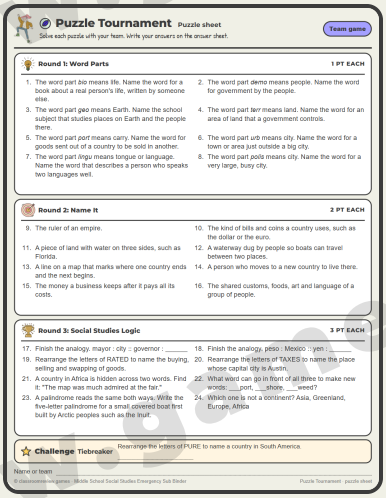
3. Writing Menu, 45 min (solo)



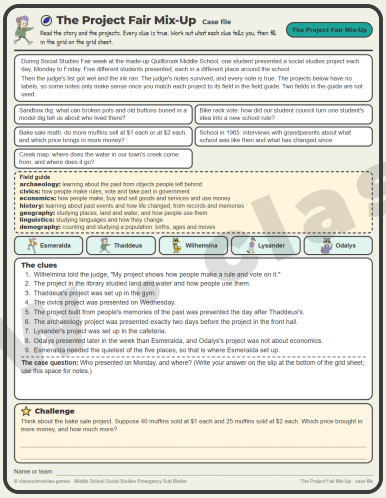
4. Partner Check, 40 min (pairs)



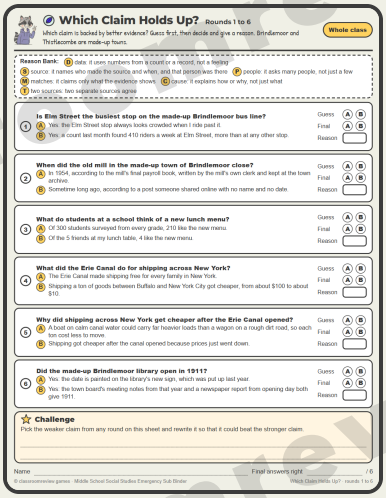
5. The Town Budget Review, 40 min (pairs or threes)



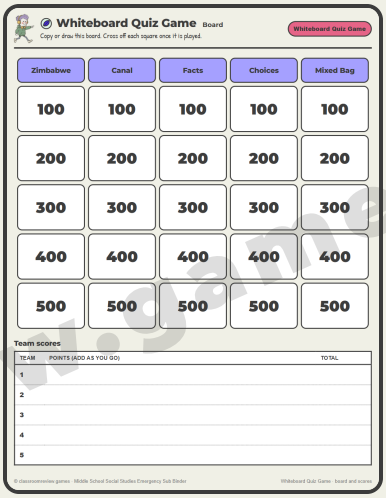
6. Puzzle Tournament, 41 min (teams)



7. The Project Fair Mix-Up, 40 min (teams)



8. Which Claim Holds Up? Stand-Off, 40 min (whole class)



9. Whiteboard Quiz Game, 35 min (whole class)

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Every activity also has a sub script with a Say this to the class box



The Project Fair Mix-Up

Sub script: a team logic mystery with social studies clues

One period · teams of 3 or 4

This activity practices: matching projects to the meaning of five social studies fields
Standards: Common Core: RH.6-8.4 (social studies vocabulary)
You need: the printed sheets and pencils; optional: the classroom board (for the warm-up; no board, hold up a grid sheet and talk it through)

SAY THIS TO THE CLASS

"The judge's list from Social Studies Fair week got wet, and your team rebuilds it from the judge's notes. Read the five projects carefully first, because some clues only make sense once you know each project's field. First I show you a short warm-up."

Materials

- **Copy the case file and the grid sheet one-sided. If they came out two-sided, give each team two copies.** Teams of 3 or 4. Each team gets one case file and one grid sheet (the grid sheet has the answer slip).
- Pencils and the board for the warm-up. No board? Hold up a grid sheet and talk it through.
- Jobs: **reader** (reads the clues out), **field expert** (matches each project to its field with the field guide), **marker** (the only one who writes in the grid) and **recorder** (fills in the slip).
- Keep this page and the next one: together they are your key.

Run it (40 minutes)

1. **Set up.** Make the teams, hand out the sheets. 3 min
2. **Read the story and the five projects.** A volunteer reads them out loud. 4 min
3. **Warm-up together** on the board, as shown below. 6 min
4. **Teams solve the case.** Walk around. After about 10 minutes, give a hint from the next page to any team that is stuck. Fast teams do the Challenges. 22 min
5. **Reveal.** Collect both sheets from each team, then read the answer and the full solution from the key. 5 min

The warm-up: teach the grid (6 minutes)

Draw this grid on the board. Students have the same one on their grid sheet. Alaric, Beatrix and Cormac each brought one old object: a map, a diary or a coin. Read the two clues:

1. **Beatrix's object was written day by day by one person.**
2. **Alaric's object could not be spent at a market.**

Then show it step by step:

1. Clue 1 first: a record written day by day by one person is a diary. Circle Beatrix under diary. A circle means the rest of that row and that column get an X.
2. Clue 2: a coin can be spent at a market, so Alaric did not bring the coin. Only the map and the coin are left, so Alaric has the map and Cormac the coin. Circle both.
3. Check it against both clues out loud.

	map	diary	coin
Alaric			
Beatrix			
Cormac			

Answer: Alaric, map; Beatrix, diary; Cormac, coin.

The two rules to say out loud: one circle in every row and every column of each small grid; and in this case, decide what a clue really tells you (which project, which place) before you mark the grid. An X means no, a circle means yes.

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The Fact-Check Desk Sheet 1

One sentence in each note is wrong. Write its number, the letter of the fact that corrects it, and a fixed sentence.

The Fact-Check Desk

Fact Bank

- **A** Africa is a continent, not a country. More than 50 countries share it.
- **B** Rivers flow downhill, from higher land to lower land, in any compass direction. The Red River of the North flows north into Canada.
- **C** A state capital is the city where the state government meets. It is not always the largest city: Albany, not New York City, is the capital of New York State.
- **D** Benjamin Franklin did not invent electricity. His experiments in the 1740s and 1750s helped show that lightning is a form of electricity.
- **E** Most public libraries are paid for mainly with taxes, the money people and businesses pay to their government.

1 **Ignatius's note:** **(1)** My aunt flew to Kenya last summer. **(2)** She told me she loved her trip to the country of Africa. **(3)** She saw giraffes in a national park near Nairobi.

Wrong sentence ☐ **Fact letter** ☐ **Fixed sentence:** .....

.....

2 **Philippa's note:** **(1)** A creek runs past my school. **(2)** Its water comes from rain and melting snow in the hills. **(3)** Like every river, it has to flow south.

Wrong sentence ☐ **Fact letter** ☐ **Fixed sentence:** .....

.....

3 **Rosamund's note:** **(1)** New York City has more people than any other city in New York State. **(2)** So New York City must be the state capital. **(3)** The state's lawmakers meet in a capitol building.

Wrong sentence ☐ **Fact letter** ☐ **Fixed sentence:** .....

.....

4 **Cyprian's note:** **(1)** Benjamin Franklin invented electricity in the 1700s. **(2)** He also helped write the Declaration of Independence. **(3)** He worked as a printer in Philadelphia.

Wrong sentence ☐ **Fact letter** ☐ **Fixed sentence:** .....

.....

5 **Ottilie's note:** **(1)** Our town library lends books for free. **(2)** Nobody pays for the library, so it costs nothing to run. **(3)** It also has free computers and a reading club.

Wrong sentence ☐ **Fact letter** ☐ **Fixed sentence:** .....

.....

☆ Challenge

A note says that every country's capital is its largest city. Use fact C to explain why a careful writer would check this first, and name one kind of source to check it in.

.....

.....

.....

Name ..... Score ..... / 5

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A. A Letter to the Town Board Writing Menu

Read the fact card, then write on the lines. Use the checklist before you hand it in.

Writing Menu

A pretend survey of 200 students at the made-up Hollisford Middle School:

How students get to school	Walk	Bike	Bus	Car	Total
Number of students	58	22	84	36	200

Of the 80 students who walk or bike, **60** cross Mill Road. Of those 60, **45** said the crossing does not feel safe.

Fact card

- In many towns, an elected town board or council makes local rules, sometimes called ordinances, and decides how town money is spent.
- Anyone may write a letter to the board or speak during the public comment time at its meetings.
- A strong request names the problem, gives evidence, proposes a solution and stays polite.

Mill Road in the made-up town of Hollisford has no crosswalk near the middle school. Write a letter of 6 to 8 sentences to the Hollisford Town Board. Name the problem, use at least two numbers from the survey, propose one solution (a crosswalk, a crossing guard, a lower speed limit or your own idea), and say how the town could check that it worked.

Checklist

- [ ] I name the problem in my first sentences.
- [ ] I use at least two numbers from the survey.
- [ ] I propose one clear solution and explain how to check that it worked.
- [ ] My letter is polite and signed.

Challenge

What percent of the students who cross Mill Road said the crossing does not feel safe? Show your math.

Name

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Partner Check Partner A

Circle one choice in each row, then compare with your partner. The answers should be the same. If not, talk it through.

Partner Check

Time zone rule: from east to west the US zones are Eastern, Central, Mountain, Pacific. Each zone to the west is one hour earlier.

1 **Which level of government does this job?**
Prints the paper money people use every day.
local (city or town) · state · federal (national)
Why? (a few words) ..... ☐ Same as partner

2 **What time is it there? Use the time zone rule above.**
It is 3:00 p.m. in New York (Eastern). What time is it in Los Angeles (Pacific)?
12:00 noon · 1:00 p.m. · 5:00 p.m. · 6:00 p.m.
Why? (a few words) ..... ☐ Same as partner

3 **Is it a fact or an opinion?**
The most beautiful city in Europe is Paris.
fact (can be checked) · opinion (a belief or feeling)
Why? (a few words) ..... ☐ Same as partner

4 **Is it a good or a service?**
A dentist cleans a patient's teeth.
good (a thing you can touch) · service (work done for someone)
Why? (a few words) ..... ☐ Same as partner

5 **Which factor of production is it?**
The ovens a bakery uses to bake its bread.
land (natural resources) · labor (human work) · capital (tools and machines)
Why? (a few words) ..... ☐ Same as partner

6 **On which continent is this country?**
Chile
Africa · Asia · Europe · South America
Why? (a few words) ..... ☐ Same as partner

7 **Which kind of map is it?**
A map showing the borders of the countries of Europe and their capital cities.
physical map (landforms) · political map (borders, capitals) · road map (routes)
Why? (a few words) ..... ☐ Same as partner

8 **Is it barter or a money trade?**
Two farmers trade a sack of wheat for a goat.
barter (goods traded directly) · money (paying with currency)
Why? (a few words) ..... ☐ Same as partner

9 **Find the profit (money taken in minus costs).**
A lemonade stand takes in $50 and spends $30 on lemons, sugar and cups.
$20 · $30 · $45 · $80
Why? (a few words) ..... ☐ Same as partner

10 **Which way of deciding is it?**
Every adult in a small town votes on the town budget at a yearly town meeting.
direct democracy (all vote on it) · representative democracy (elected people decide)
Why? (a few words) ..... ☐ Same as partner

☆ Challenge

What time is it there? Use the time zone rule at the top. It is 9:00 a.m. in Denver (Mountain). What time is it in Boston (Eastern)?
7:00 a.m. · 11:00 a.m. · 12:00 noon
Compare again. Together, write a new item with the same answer:

.....

.....

My name ..... Partner .....

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Puzzle Tournament Puzzle sheet

Solve each puzzle with your team. Write your answers on the answer sheet.

Team game

Round 1: Word Parts — 1 PT EACH

1. The word part *bio* means life. Name the word for a book about a real person's life, written by someone else.
2. The word part *demo* means people. Name the word for government by the people.
3. The word part *geo* means Earth. Name the school subject that studies places on Earth and the people there.
4. The word part *terr* means land. Name the word for an area of land that a government controls.
5. The word part *port* means carry. Name the word for goods sent out of a country to be sold in another.
6. The word part *urb* means city. Name the word for a town or area just outside a big city.
7. The word part *lingu* means tongue or language. Name the word that describes a person who speaks two languages well.
8. The word part *polis* means city. Name the word for a very large, busy city.

Round 2: Name It — 2 PT EACH

9. The ruler of an empire.
10. The kind of bills and coins a country uses, such as the dollar or the euro.
11. A piece of land with water on three sides, such as Florida.
12. A waterway dug by people so boats can travel between two places.
13. A line on a map that marks where one country ends and the next begins.
14. A person who moves to a new country to live there.
15. The money a business keeps after it pays all its costs.
16. The shared customs, foods, art and language of a group of people.

Round 3: Social Studies Logic — 3 PT EACH

17. Finish the analogy. mayor : city :: governor : _____
18. Finish the analogy. peso : Mexico :: yen : _____
19. Rearrange the letters of RATED to name the buying, selling and swapping of goods.
20. Rearrange the letters of TAXES to name the place whose capital city is Austin.
21. A country in Africa is hidden across two words. Find it: "The map was much admired at the fair."
22. What word can go in front of all three to make new words: ___port, ___shore, ___weed?
23. A palindrome reads the same both ways. Write the five-letter palindrome for a small covered boat first built by Arctic peoples such as the Inuit.
24. Which one is not a continent? Asia, Greenland, Europe, Africa

Challenge Tiebreaker Rearrange the letters of PURE to name a country in South America. _____

Name or team .....

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Houses of Stone

Article: Great Zimbabwe

Read the whole article before you look at the questions.

Quiet Reading

On a hilltop and in the valley below it, in the south of the country now called Zimbabwe, stand the ruins of a great stone city. Historians call it Great Zimbabwe. It was built and lived in from about the 1100s to the 1400s by the ancestors of the Shona people, who still live in the region today. The name Zimbabwe is often said to come from Shona words meaning "houses of stone."

The builders shaped blocks of granite, a hard local rock, and stacked them into long, curving walls without any mortar to hold them together. The largest structure, now called the Great Enclosure, has an outer wall that rises as high as about 11 meters. Leaders are thought to have lived inside the stone walls, and thousands of other people lived in round houses of hardened mud in the valley around them.

Great Zimbabwe grew rich from cattle and from trade. Gold and ivory from the region traveled to towns on the coast of the Indian Ocean, and from there traders carried them across the sea. Archaeologists digging at the site have found pieces of pottery made in China and glass beads from Persia (now Iran) and nearby lands, far from Africa. Those small objects are evidence that the city was linked to a trade network thousands of kilometers long.

Some of the most famous objects found there are birds carved from soapstone, a soft stone. Today a carved bird of this kind appears on the flag of Zimbabwe, and the country took its name from the old city when it became independent in 1980.

By the 1500s, most people had left the city. Historians are not certain why. Many think the land nearby could no longer feed so many people and their cattle, and that trade moved to other routes.

In the late 1800s, some European visitors claimed that people from far away must have built the city, because they would not believe that Africans had. That claim was wrong. In 1929, the archaeologist Gertrude Caton-Thompson dug carefully at the site, and her finds pointed to the people of the region as the builders. Today Great Zimbabwe is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

☆ Challenge

The city was built and lived in from about the 1100s to the 1400s. About how many years is that? Show your math.

Name .....

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In the full binder

A whole social studies sub day, planned and ready to print.

38 pages in color and ink-saver B&W, US Letter and A4

9 activities of 35 to 45 minutes, one per class period

7 front pages: note to the sub, lesson plan, schedule, class list

3 + 6 individual activities + partner, team and whole-class activities

Use it your way

- A sudden sick day: emergency sub plans that are ready before you need them.
- Any middle school social studies class, grades 6 to 8: every activity fits a 40 to 55 minute period. Geography, civics, economics and history, all paper and pencil.
- Your sub tub: print it once and keep it all year.
- Your own no prep day: teach it yourself when you need a break from planning.

Thank you! If this works for your class, a quick review helps other teachers find it, and gives you TpT credits.



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