



**TEXAS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS PROJECT**  
Grades 9/10 English Language Arts/Social Studies  
*In the Community: A Study of Culture*

This guide links the *In the Community: A Study of Culture* unit to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for ninth and tenth graders. *In the Community* is an English language arts unit that allows students to study important figures and events in their local community through literature, the arts, culture, and other perspectives. *In the Community* also has interdisciplinary connections to social studies and the fine arts. For example, students consider how the development of ideas has influenced institutions and societies, as addressed in the Social Studies TEKS; and students relate the arts to history, society, and culture, as addressed in the Fine Arts TEKS. The following document includes the applicable TEKS and the details of the *In the Community* unit. The asterisks indicate the TEKS that are testable on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). The final section of this document presents the applicable Texas College Readiness Standards adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) on January 24, 2008.

**Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills**

The unit may address the following TEKS:

English Language Arts:

***English I***

- I.1 Understands new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing
- I.2 Analyzes, makes inferences, and draws conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provides evidence from the text to support their understanding
- I.8 Analyzes, makes inferences, and draws conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provides evidence from the text to support their understanding
- I.11 Understands how to glean and use information in procedural texts and documents
- I.12 Uses comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning
- I.13 Uses elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text
- I.14 Writes literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas.
- I.16 Writes persuasive texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues
- I.17 Understands the function of and uses the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing

- I.18 Writes legibly and uses appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions in their compositions
- I.20 Asks open-ended research questions and develops a plan for answering them
- I.21 Determines, locates, and explores the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather
- I.23 Organizes and presents their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience
- I.24 Uses comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings
- I.25 Speaks clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language

### ***English II***

- II.1 Understands new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing
- II.2 Analyzes, makes inferences, and draws conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding
- II.6 Understands, makes inferences, and draws conclusions about the varied structural patterns and features of literary nonfiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding
- II.8 Analyzes, makes inferences, and draws conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding
- II.9 Analyzes, makes inferences, and draws conclusions about expository text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding
- II.12 Uses comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning
- II.13 Uses elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text
- II.14 Writes literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas
- II.16 Writes persuasive texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues
- II.18 Writes legibly and uses appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions in their compositions
- II.23 Organizes and presents their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience
- II.24 Uses comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings
- II.25 Speaks clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language

This task can also cover TEKS in these courses: ***Independent Study in English, Humanities, Analysis of Visual Media,*** and ***Journalism.***

### Social Studies:

#### ***World History***

- 2. Understands how the present relates to the past
- 20. Understands the relationship between the arts and the times during which they were created
- 21. Understands the roles of women, children, and family in different historical cultures
- 22. Understands how the development of ideas has influenced institutions and societies
- 25. Applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources, including electronic technology\* (Testable on the Grade 10 Social Studies TAKS, Objective 5)
- 26. Communicates in written, oral, and visual forms\* (Testable on the Grade 10 Social Studies TAKS, Objective 5, and Exit Level Social Studies TAKS, Objective 5)

27. Uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings

### ***World Geography Studies***

2. Understands how people, places, and environments have changed over time and the effects of these changes on history
5. Understands how political, economic, and social processes shape cultural patterns and characteristics in various places and regions\* (Testable on the Grade 10 Social Studies TAKS, Objective 3, and Exit Level Social Studies TAKS, Objective 3)
8. Understands how people, places, and environments are connected and interdependent\* (Testable on the Grade 10 Social Studies TAKS, Objective 5, and Exit Level Social Studies TAKS, Objective 5)
15. Understands how different points of view influence the development of public policies and decision-making processes on local, state, national, and international levels
16. Understands how the components of culture affect the way people live and shape the characteristics of regions
17. Understands the distributions, patterns, and characteristics of different cultures
18. Understands the ways in which cultures change and maintain continuity\* (Testable on the Grade 10 Social Studies TAKS, Objective 3)
21. Applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources, including electronic technology\* (Testable on the Grade 10 Social Studies TAKS, Objective 5, and Exit Level Social Studies TAKS, Objective 5)
22. Communicates in written, oral, and visual forms
23. Uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings

Depending on the subject of study, this task may cover additional Social Studies TEKS.

### Fine Arts:

#### ***Art I and II***

3. Demonstrates an understanding of art history and culture as records of human achievement
4. Makes informed judgments about personal artworks and the artworks of others

#### ***Dance I and II***

4. Demonstrates an understanding of cultural, historical, and artistic diversity
5. Makes informed judgments about dance's form, meaning, and role in society

#### ***Music I and II***

5. Relates music to history, to society, and to culture
6. Responds to and evaluates music and musical performance

#### ***Theatre I and II***

4. Relates theatre to history, society, and culture
5. Responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances

### **Description of Unit**

In this project, students will begin by exploring a community somewhere in the world. As a class, students will become familiar with the culture, art, literature, leaders, and landmarks that are significant in that community. Then, independently or in groups, students will explore their local communities and the aspects of the local culture that are meaningful to them. As part of their study of the local community, they will host a classroom cultural event that showcases the culture of their community. Their final product will include developing a lasting contribution that will impact the community as a whole.

Please note that this task can be used in English Language Arts, Social Studies, or Fine Arts classes. It is up to the teacher to make necessary adjustments so that the students' research and products are aligned with the course curriculum. For instance, if the task is used in a Social Studies class, the teacher may wish to focus students on the historical aspects of world and local culture.

## Goals

Students will meet these goals in their explorations:

- Develop the essential skills of logical thinking, creative problem solving, intellectual risk taking, and communicating
- Have opportunities to generate new ideas
- Become familiar with a particular community
- Draw parallels and contrasts between the observed community and their local community
- Understand and describe the impact that one person can have on his/her community

## Phase I: Learning Experiences

1. Choose a country or city from around the world on which to focus. You can choose the location based on the required curriculum, the class could choose the community, or small groups could study various communities. Use the following discussion questions with students when considering what community to study:
  - What impact has the location had on you or people you know?
  - What influence does the country or city have on the global community?
  - What are the origins of the community? Why was it formed?
  - What is the current situation in the location? Is it at peace or war? How is the economy? What kind of government does it have?
  - Consider the life of somebody your age in that community. How does his/her life compare to your daily life?
  - Who are the significant artists and writers in the community? What does their work say about the community?
  - What is the culture of the community? How is the importance of culture communicated?

After the class brainstorms possible answers, provide the class with resources to explore these and other pertinent questions. You may wish to have students present their findings in a paper or in another format. Then explain that, in this project, each student will have an opportunity to find the answers to their own questions about the chosen country or city.

Depending on the course you teach, you may wish to have students focus on specific aspects of the community's history, literature, leaders, culture, or arts. The following resources may be helpful to students when choosing a cultural aspect:

- <http://rs6.loc.gov/intldl/intldlhome.html> Global Gateway: World Culture & Resources (Library of Congress)
- <http://icom.museum/vlmp/> Virtual Library Museums—lists museums by country
- [http://www.humanities-interactive.org/a\\_base.html](http://www.humanities-interactive.org/a_base.html) Texas Council for the Humanities Resource Center, a selection of humanities exhibits
- <http://www.worldhistorynetwork.org/dev/main.html> World History Network—search for research by region, topic, and time period

2. Have students choose an important aspect of the country or city of study. The aspect could be an era in history, a work of fiction or non-fiction, a literary movement, an artist, or an arts movement. For instance, if the class has chosen to study Russia, students may wish to study Russian folktales, the

tradition of icon painting, Byzantine architecture, the geography of the region, or the history of the tsars or peasantry.

After students have conducted research on some aspects of the topic, create a class collage. (If the whole class did not choose the same location to study, students can do collages in small groups. If each student studied a different location, you may wish to have students work on a world map.) Have students pictorially represent three important aspects of the culture they studied. You may wish to have students write a short paper or memo to explain the significance of the three items in the collage.

3. Debrief and discuss how the collage represents the location's culture. How do different parts of the community come together cohesively? As a bridge to Phase II, encourage students to think about how communities around the world have affected them and their local community.

## **Phase II: Independent Research**

### **A. Research process**

1. Selecting a topic. Each student chooses a subject from the local community to study. The focus of study could be a local author, artist, neighborhood, cultural component, political movement, or leader. The subject should be relevant to the student.
2. Asking guiding questions. Once the student has selected a subject from the community, he/she should think of three to five guiding questions to explore, such as:
  - What does your subject contribute to the community?
  - What is the history behind your subject? How has your subject changed and developed over time?
  - How has your subject impacted other communities?
  - What would your community be like without your subject?

While these examples are general, the student's questions should be specific to the chosen cultural aspect. The questions should lead him/her to form individual research-based opinions. The student should develop a hypothesis or some possible answers to the questions.

3. Designing and submitting a research proposal. The student should include numerous components in the research proposal:
  - The cultural aspect he/she will study
  - Three to five guiding questions he/she will investigate and hypotheses
  - Primary and secondary resources he/she will need to find answers to questions, such as an expert on the local community, pieces of literature or works of art created in the community, or museums and exhibitions

In the process of writing the research proposal, students may refine their guiding questions.

Here are some questions to guide student identification of resources in the community:

- What libraries, research centers, archival institutions, museums, or organizations will have information on the cultural aspect?
- What are some key words, events, or people related to the subject?
- What types of primary sources might exist? Who might you interview to gather information?
- What letters, diaries, or other first person narratives are available?
- What manuscripts, songs, hymns, photographs, governmental records, original newspaper articles or cartoons, or oral histories are available?

- Are there local art showings, poetry or book readings, or theatre or dance productions you can attend?
4. Conducting the research. After you have approved student proposals, students begin using the resources they have identified and others they may encounter. It may be helpful to plan a trip to a local museum, art exhibit, literary event, or landmark. Students should conduct an oral interview with an expert in the local community.
  5. Hosting a classroom cultural event to showcase the local community. Based on their topics of study, students should create a small exhibit, which may feature their product (see below for more details on the product). Invite members of the community and school as well as other students to the local culture fair. This fair could be a good cumulative event for students to display their learning and research.

### **B. The product**

The student shows what he/she has learned through **one** of the following products:

1. A contribution to the local community. As a class, in small groups, or individually, students may develop a service project that promotes the culture of the community. For example, students could coordinate an art showing for local artists in the community. If done as a group, each individual student should document his/her contributions and reflections on the project.
2. Website or newsletter for a neighborhood. In order to promote a positive feeling of community in the area, the student can create a website or newsletter. In the product, the student could highlight cultural events and other significant activities. The student could also showcase significant members of the community and their contributions.
3. Documentary or awareness video about an issue in the community. Based on the student's studies of the topic, he/she can create a documentary or awareness video to educate members of the community about a relevant issue.

Whatever product the student chooses, he/she must complete a Reference List/Works Cited Page that includes at least ten references. The references should include a mix of primary and secondary sources.

### **C. Communication**

In a period of no more than 15 minutes, students present their products, engaging other students in the content of their work. Audience members should ask unscripted questions for the student to answer.

### **D. A completed project consists of:**

1. The research proposal, including guiding questions
2. A research log, note cards, or resource process sheets
3. Evidence of participation in the classroom cultural event—this could include a sketch of an exhibit or presentation notes
4. The product
  - a. A contribution to the local community—submit documentation and reflections
  - b. Website or newsletter for a neighborhood—submit the URL or paper or electronic copy
  - c. Documentary or awareness video—submit the VHS or DVD
5. A Works Cited Page with at least ten references
6. A videotape or audiotape of the presentation, including the unscripted Q&A session

## **THECB College Readiness Standards**

This unit may address the following THECB College Readiness Standards:

### English Language Arts:

- I.A.1 Determines effective approaches, forms, and rhetorical techniques that demonstrate understanding of the writer's purpose and audience
- I.A.2 Generates ideas and gathers information relevant to the topic and purpose, keeping careful records of outside sources
- I.A.3 Evaluates relevance, quality, sufficiency, and depth of preliminary ideas and information, organize material generated, and formulate thesis
- I.A.4 Recognizes the importance of revision as the key to effective writing
- I.A.5 Edits writing for proper voice, tense, and syntax, assuring that it conforms to standard English, when appropriate
- II.A.1 Uses effective reading strategies to determine a written work's purpose and intended audience
- II.A.2 Uses text features and graphics to form an overview of informational texts and to determine where to locate information
- II.A.3 Identifies explicit and implicit textual information, including main ideas and author's purpose
- II.A.4 Draws and supports complex inferences from text to summarize, draw conclusions, and distinguish facts from simple assertions and opinions
- II.A.5 Analyzes the presentation of information and the strength and quality of evidence used by the author, and judge the coherence and logic of the presentation and the credibility of an argument
- II.A.7 Evaluates the use of both literal and figurative language to inform and shape the percepts of readers
- II.A.8 Compares and analyzes how generic features are used across texts
- II.A.10 Identifies and analyzes how an author's use of language appeals to the senses, creates imagery, and suggests mood
- II.A.11 Identifies, analyzes, and evaluates similarities and differences in how multiple texts present information, argue a position, or relate a theme
- II.B.1 Identifies new words and concepts acquired through study of their relationships to other words and concepts
- II.B.2 Applies knowledge of roots and affixes to infer the meanings of new words
- II.C.2 Analyzes themes, structures, and elements of myths, traditional narratives, and classical and contemporary literature
- II.C.3 Analyzes works of literature for what they suggest about the historical period and cultural contexts in which they were written
- II.C.4 Analyzes and compares the use of language in literary works from a variety of world cultures
- II.D.1 Describes insights gained about oneself, others, or the world from reading specific texts
- II.D.2 Analyzes the influence of myths, folktales, fables, and classical literature from a variety of world cultures on later literature and film
- III.A.1 Understands how style and content of spoken language varies in different contexts and influences the listener's understanding
- III.A.2 Adjusts presentation (delivery, vocabulary, length) to particular audiences and purposes
- III.B.1 Participates actively and effectively in one-on-one oral communication situations
- III.B.2 Participates actively and effectively in group discussions
- III.B.3 Plans and delivers focused and coherent presentations that convey clear and distinct perspectives and demonstrate solid reasoning
- IV.A.1 Analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of a public presentation

- IV.A.2 Interprets a speaker’s message; identifies the position taken and the evidence in support of that position
- IV.A.3 Uses a variety of strategies to enhance listening comprehension
- IV.B.1 Listens critically and responds appropriately to presentations
- IV.B.2 Listens actively and effectively in one-on-one communication situations
- IV.B.3 Listens actively and effectively in group discussions
- V.A.1 Formulates research questions
- V.A.2 Explores a research topic
- V.A.3 Refines research topic and devises a timeline for completing work
- V.B.1 Gathers relevant sources
- V.B.2 Evaluates the validity and reliability of sources
- V.B.3 Synthesizes and organize information effectively
- V.B.4 Uses source material ethically
- V.C.1 Designs and presents an effective product

Mathematics:

- VI.A.1 Plans a study
- VI.B.1 Determines types of data
- VI.B.2 Selects and applies appropriate visual representations of data
- VI.B.4 Describes patterns and departure from patterns in a set of data
- VIII.A.1 Analyzes given information
- VIII.B.2 Uses various types of reasoning

Science:

- I.A.1 Utilizes skepticism, logic, and professional ethics in science
- I.C.1 Collaborates on joint projects
- III.C.1 Prepares and represent scientific/technical information in appropriate formats for various audiences
- III.D.1 Uses search engines, databases, and other digital electronic tools effectively to locate information
- III.D.2 Evaluates quality, accuracy, completeness, reliability, and currency of information from any source
- V.C.1 Recognizes patterns of change
- V.E.1 Uses models to make predictions

Social Studies:

- I.A.2 Analyzes the interaction between human communities and the environment
- I.A.3 Analyzes how physical and cultural processes have shaped human communities over time
- I.A.4 Evaluates the causes and effects of human migration patterns over time
- I.A.5 Analyzes how various cultural regions have changed over time
- I.A.6 Analyzes the relationship between geography and the development of human communities
- I.B.2 Identifies and evaluates sources and patterns of change and continuity across time and place
- I.B.3 Analyzes causes and effects of major political, economic, and social changes in U.S. and world history
- I.C.1 Evaluates different governmental systems and functions
- I.C.2 Evaluates changes in the functions and structures of government across time
- I.E.1 Identifies different social groups and examine how they form and how and why they sustain themselves
- I.E.2 Defines the concept of socialization and analyzes the role socialization plays in human development and behavior
- I.E.3 Analyzes how social institutions function and meet the needs of society

- I.E.4 Identifies and evaluates the sources and consequences of social conflict
- I.F.1 Uses a variety of research and analytical tools to explore questions or issues thoroughly and fairly
- I.F.2 Analyzes ethical issues in historical, cultural, and social contexts
- II.A.1 Defines a “multicultural society” and consider both the positive and negative qualities of multiculturalism
- II.A.2 Evaluates the experiences and contributions of diverse groups to multicultural societies
- II.B.1 Explains and evaluates the concepts of race, ethnicity, and nationalism
- II.B.2 Explains and evaluates the concept of gender
- II.B.3 Analyzes diverse religious concepts, structures, and institutions around the world
- II.B.4 Evaluates how major philosophical and intellectual concepts influence human behavior or identity
- II.B.5 Explains the concepts of socioeconomic status and stratification
- II.B.6 Analyzes how individual and group identities are established and change over time
- III.A.1 Distinguishes spatial patterns of human communities that exist between or within contemporary political boundaries
- III.A.2 Connects regional or local developments to global ones
- III.A.3 Analyzes how and why diverse communities interact and become dependent on each other
- III.B.1 Applies social science methodologies to compare societies and cultures
- IV.A.1 Identifies and analyzes the main idea(s) and point(s) of view in sources
- IV.A.2 Situates an informational source in its appropriate contexts
- IV.A.3 Evaluates sources from multiple perspectives
- IV.A.4 Understands the differences between a primary and secondary source and use each appropriately to conduct research and construct arguments
- IV.A.5 Reads narrative texts critically
- IV.A.6 Reads research data critically
- IV.B.1 Uses established research methodologies
- IV.B.2 Explains how historians and other social scientists develop new and competing views of past phenomena
- IV.B.3 Gathers, organizes, and displays the results of data and research
- IV.B.4 Identifies and collects sources
- IV.C.1 Understands/interprets presentations critically
- IV.D.1 Constructs a thesis that is supported by evidence
- IV.D.2 Recognizes and evaluates counter-arguments
- V.A.1 Uses appropriate oral communication techniques, depending on the context or nature of the interaction
- V.A.2 Uses conventions of standard written English
- V.B.1 Attributes ideas and information to source materials and authors

Cross-Disciplinary Standards:

- I.A.1 Engages in scholarly inquiry and dialogue
- I.A.2 Accepts constructive criticism and revises personal views when valid evidence warrants
- I.B.1 Considers arguments and conclusions of self and others
- I.B.2 Construct well-reasoned arguments to explain phenomena, validate conjectures, or support positions
- I.B.3 Gathers evidence to support arguments, findings, or lines of reasoning
- I.B.4 Supports or modifies claims based on the results of an inquiry
- I.D.1 Self-monitors learning needs and seeks assistance when needed
- I.D.2 Uses study habits necessary to manage academic pursuits and requirements
- I.D.3 Strives for accuracy and precision
- I.D.4 Perseveres to complete and master tasks

- I.E.1 Works independently
- I.E.2 Works collaboratively
- I.F.1 Attributes ideas and information to source materials and people
- I.F.2 Evaluates sources for quality of content, validity, credibility, and relevance
- I.F.3 Includes the ideas of others and the complexities of the debate, issue, or problem
- I.F.4 Understands and adheres to ethical codes of conduct
- II.A.1 Uses effective prereading strategies
- II.A.2 Uses a variety of strategies to understand the meanings of new words
- II.A.3 Identifies the intended purpose and audience of the text
- II.A.4 Identifies the key information and supporting details
- II.A.5 Analyzes textual information critically
- II.A.6 Annotates, summarizes, paraphrases, and outlines texts when appropriate
- II.A.7 Adapts reading strategies according to structure of texts
- II.A.8 Connects reading to historical and current events and personal interest
- II.B.1 Writes clearly and coherently, using standard writing conventions
- II.B.2 Writes in a variety of forms for various audiences and purposes
- II.B.3 Composes and revise drafts
- II.C.1 Understands which topics or questions are to be investigated
- II.C.2 Explores a research topic
- II.C.3 Refines research topic based on preliminary research and devises a timeline for completing work
- II.C.4 Evaluates the validity and reliability of sources
- II.C.5 Synthesizes and organizes information effectively
- II.C.6 Designs and presents an effective product
- II.C.7 Integrates source material
- II.C.8 Presents a final product
- II.D.1 Identifies patterns or departures from patterns among data
- II.D.2 Uses statistical and probabilistic skills necessary for planning an investigation and collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data
- II.D.3 Presents analyzed data and communicates findings in a variety of formats
- II.E.1 Uses technology to gather information
- II.E.2 Uses technology to organize, manage, and analyze information
- II.E.3 Uses technology to communicate and display findings in a clear and coherent manner
- II.E.4 Uses technology appropriately