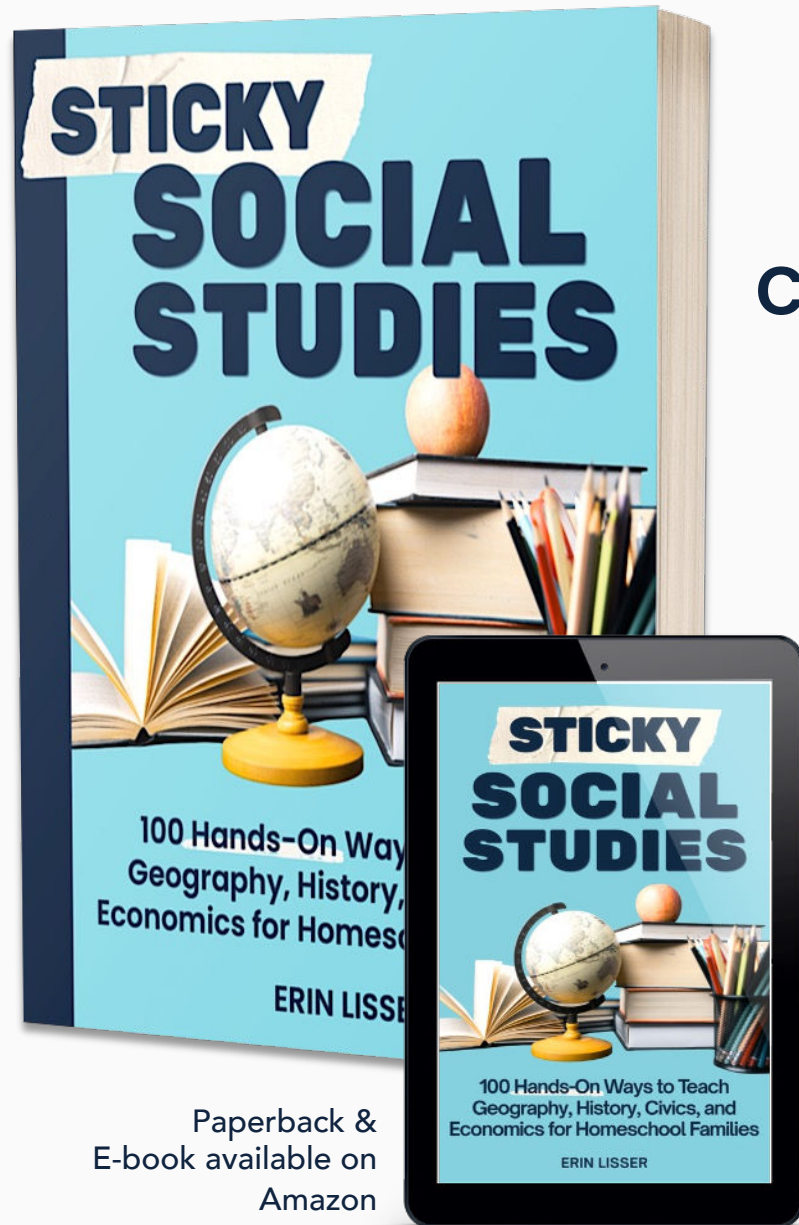


Do social studies, not bookwork



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Amazon

Sticky Social Studies gives you 100 simple, hands-on ideas to help your child explore geography, history, civics, and economics at home.

Inside, you'll find:

- **100 easy-to-use and flexible activities** that work for a wide range of ages and learning styles
- **Conversation-driven learning** that builds critical thinking and connections
- **Clear structure with each activity**, including time, materials, and extension suggestions

HANDS-ON, ACTIVE SOCIAL STUDIES

GEOGRAPHY & MAP SKILLS

Idea #1: Set Up Your Geography Station

Connects to: Map reading, spatial awareness, global literacy
Time: 20 to 30 minutes to set up; ongoing use through the year
Best for: All ages
Prep & Supplies: Large world map, large country map, globe with clearly marked latitude and longitude lines

What to Do

Acquire a large world map, a large country map, and a globe with clearly marked latitude and longitude lines. Ideally, your maps include both political features (countries, states, cities, borders) and physical features (mountains, rivers, oceans). These items can be easily found online or at a curriculum store.

Choose a visible, easily accessible place in your home to display them—a living room wall, a hallway, or your main learning space—so they are easy to reference. Place them at a height your child can reach.

Spend time exploring the maps together. Identify continents, oceans, and major countries. Locate your home state or region. Find the Equator and Prime Meridian on the globe. Compare how landforms appear on the globe versus the flat maps.

Throughout their social studies learning, use these maps regularly. When you hear about a place in the news, locate it. When studying history, find where events occurred. When planning travel or discussing weather patterns, reference the maps again.

These tools should become a consistent part of your homeschool routine rather than being pulled out only for formal lessons.

Why This Matters

Geographic literacy develops through repeated exposure. Keeping maps visible and actively using them builds spatial awareness naturally over time, turning geography into a habit rather than a one-time lesson.

Try This Next

At the end of each week, ask: What new places did we learn about? Locate them on your maps and briefly review where they are in relation to places you already know.

My Notes & Ideas

HISTORY & CULTURE STUDIES

Idea #27: Organize The Story

Connects to: Cause and effect, comparison, sequencing, problem-solving
Time: 20 to 30 minutes

Best for: Upper elementary and up

Prep & Supplies: Blank paper; simple graphic organizer templates (cause-and-effect chain, Venn diagram, T-chart, timeline)

What to Do

Introduce a few basic graphic organizers that historians use to make sense of complex events. You can find these online or make your own.

Some useful structures include:

Cause-and-Effect Chart or Chain: To trace why an event happened and what resulted from it.

Venn Diagram or T-Chart: To compare two leaders, groups, or belief systems.

Problem-Solution Chart: To explore the choices leaders faced during a crisis.

Timeline: To place events in chronological order.

As you study a historical topic, pause to decide which organizer would help you think more clearly about it. For example, when studying a war, use a cause-and-effect chain to distinguish long-term causes from triggers. When comparing cultures or religions, use a Venn diagram for similarities and differences. When examining a political crisis, map out leaders' possible decisions.

Aim for practicing sorting information using one of these graphic organizer types once per unit, era, or topic. Involve your child in deciding which one makes the most sense for the content.

Why This Matters

History is full of layered causes, competing viewpoints, and interconnected events. Graphic organizers help us slow down and visualize relationships rather than flattening history into isolated facts.

Try This Next

After filling out one graphic organizer and considering the information through that lens, ask your child how it would look differently if you had chosen a different structure.

My Notes & Ideas

GOVERNMENT & CIVICS

Idea #52: The Preamble, Rewritten

Connects to: Constitutional foundations, civic ideas

Time: 30 to 60 minutes

Best for: Middle school and up

Prep & Supplies: Text of the Preamble; other examples of great mission statements

What to Do

The Preamble is the opening statement of the U.S. Constitution. While it does not create laws or list specific rights, it works like a mission statement, explaining what the government is meant to do and why it exists. Over time, its language has taken on strong patriotic and emotional meaning, even though it was originally written as a practical introduction.

Begin by reading the Preamble aloud together with your child. It's not too difficult to memorize, and by doing so, they'll become familiar with its rhythm and ideas. Next, have your child rewrite the Preamble in their own words, line by line, focusing on how each phrase would be worded in today's language. For each phrase, also think of a current, real example of how the government tries (or sometimes fails) to live up to that goal.

Why This Matters

The Constitution is more than a distant historical document—it outlines the goals and responsibilities of government that still shape American life today. When we are deeply familiar with the Preamble's words, we can appreciate the values, ideals, and goals that unite Americans and better understand how many disagreements arise over how well the government fulfills them.

Try This Next

Use the Preamble as a model to write a personal or family mission statement, choosing values and goals that matter most and explaining how you plan to uphold them.

My Notes & Ideas

ECONOMICS & MONEY SKILLS

Idea #100: Build A Life

Connects to: Budgeting, career, taxes, cost of living, financial planning

Time: 1 hour or more

Best for: High school

Supplies: Access to websites to research careers, salaries, and living expenses

What to Do

With your child, discuss how every adult must make many economic decisions as they build a life—where to live, what career to pursue, how much to spend, and how much to save.

By having your child choose a career they find interesting, they could see themselves doing work for this exercise. Look up its typical starting salary for your region.

Estimate how much of that income would go to taxes and deductions, leaving a rough idea of monthly take-home pay. Now begin building a basic monthly budget together. List living expenses in your area, such as housing, utilities, groceries, transportation, insurance, phone or internet service, entertainment or hobbies, and savings.

Fill in the budget, compare the total expenses with the estimated take-home income. Guiding questions like: Would this income cover the expected expenses? Which expenses might need to be adjusted? What are some ways you could reduce your expenses? Which could realistically be saved each month?

Also talk about how choices about higher education, cost-of-living differences across regions, and lifestyle choices influence opportunities and trade-offs.

Why This Matters

By the time you finish this book, you have explored how people make decisions—about resources, communities and government, and throughout history. Planning for a life that will thrive in the world brings many of those ideas together, showing how economic choices shape everyday life and long-term goals.

Try This Next

Exercise with a different career or living location. Compare how changes in salary, taxes, or costs affect the overall budget and lifestyle. Be sure to consider the costs of opportunity, too, by asking questions like: Do you think you'd like that career or that place more or less than the first one? What would be more desirable, and less desirable, about this second option? Which place or job would be better for the short-term, and which would be better for the long-term?

My Notes & Ideas

INSIDE EACH *activity*



GEOGRAPHY & MAP SKILLS

Idea #7: Map Projections Compared

Connects to: Map projections and distortion

Time: 30 to 45 minutes

Best for: Middle school and up

Prep & Supplies: Images of several world map projections (Mercator, Robinson, Peters, Fuller)

What to Do

Gather up images of several different major world map projections. Print them, if possible. Lay them side by side for comparison.

First, ask your child to simply observe them. What looks different? Which maps make Greenland appear the largest? How does Africa compare to Greenland across the different maps? Which looks more “familiar”?

Next, explain why projections are necessary. Because Earth is spherical, flattening it involves compromises. Some projections maintain direction (like Mercator), others preserve area (like Peters and Fuller), and some try to balance distortions (like Robinson).

Try to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each, looking them up as well. Which projection would be best for navigation? Which better represents land area accurately? Which feels most visually balanced?

Encourage your child to notice how perspective can subtly influence the perception of size and importance.

Why This Matters

All maps involve choices. Understanding projection distortion helps us read maps critically rather than assuming every map is a perfectly accurate representation of the world.

Try This Next

Choose one projection and research why it was created. What problem was it trying to solve? Then decide which projection you would use in a classroom and explain your reasoning.



My Notes & Ideas



Planning Tips: At-a-glance info for best ages, time to allot, and any needed supplies

Detailed Instructions: Step-by-step directions with guiding and reflections questions to make learning meaningful

Larger Purpose & Extension Idea: Further maximize learning with these

Sketch Space: Room to jot down your ideas, notes, and anything else for each activity idea



GOVERNMENT & CIVICS



Idea #72: Visit Your State Capitol

Connects to: State government

Time: A few hours, plus travel time

Best for: All ages

Prep & Supplies: Information about your state capitol, Supreme Court building, governor's residence, and other important state government buildings; tour reservations; awareness of security rules and visitor policies

What to Do

Research whether your state capitol and other buildings offer tours, guided or self-guided, that explain government operations. Before visiting, discuss with your child about each government branch, what it does, and how it functions in your state.

During your visit, observe and ask about the building's layout, materials, and artwork, which are often intentionally chosen and symbolize more than you'd expect. What story do they tell about your state's history and values?

If possible, visit the legislative chamber or courtroom gallery. Even when no session is happening, imagine the debates and decisions there. Consider how state laws impact taxes, roads, safety, and daily life.

If an in-person visit isn't possible, see if your capitol building offers virtual tours to explore the spaces online.

Why This Matters

Government becomes more tangible when we see where it happens. Visiting a capitol building reinforces that civic decisions are made in real places by real people—not just in distant headlines.

Try This Next

Check whether your city hall or county government building offers similar tours. How do local government spaces compare to your state capitol in size, structure, and responsibilities?



My Notes & Ideas

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