

# Introduction to Social Studies: My Big, Important World

**Overall Goal:** To introduce Mirabelle to the concept of Social Studies in a fun, tangible way, helping her understand it's the study of people and the world around her.

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## Day 1: Social Studies Treasure Hunt

**Lesson Time:** 15-20 minutes direct instruction, 10+ minutes independent work.

### Materials Needed:

- A small box or bag to be the "Treasure Chest"
- Four "treasures" to hide or gather before the lesson:
  1. **History Treasure:** An old family photograph or an old toy.
  2. **Geography Treasure:** A map, a globe, or a postcard from another place.
  3. **Civics Treasure:** A picture of a traffic light or a library card (which has rules).
  4. **Economics Treasure:** A few different coins (penny, dime, quarter).
- Device to watch a short YouTube video.
- Drawing paper and crayons/markers.
- **Optional:** *Children's Dictionary*, *My Encyclopedia of Very Important Things*
- **Worksheet:** A simple, printable "My Social Studies Treasures" worksheet. I have described how to make one below, or you can easily draw one yourself.
  - **How to make the worksheet:** Take a piece of paper and divide it into four boxes with a marker. In the corner of each box, write one of the following words or draw a simple symbol: "History (Past)", "Geography (Places)", "Civics (Rules)", "Economics (Money)".

### Lesson Instructions:

#### Part 1: The Spark (5 minutes)

**What to Say:** "Hi Mirabelle! Today we are starting a brand new, exciting subject called Social Studies. That's a big, fancy word, isn't it? Let's see if we can figure out what it means. Social Studies is all about learning about PEOPLE and the WORLD. It helps us understand ourselves, people who lived a long time ago, the places we live, the rules that help us, and how we use money."

#### What to Do:

1. Watch a short, engaging video to introduce the topic. Search on YouTube for "Social Studies for Kids" or "What is Social Studies? for Kindergarten." A good option is the video "Social Studies for Kids" by Homeschool Pop (watch the first 2-3 minutes).
2. **What to Say After the Video:** "See? Social studies is about stories of the past, maps of our world, rules that keep us safe, and the jobs people do. To make this really fun, we're going to be Social Studies Detectives today and go on a treasure hunt!"

#### Part 2: The Treasure Hunt (10 minutes)

#### What to Do:

1. Give Mirabelle the "Treasure Chest" (bag or box).
2. **What to Say:** "Okay, Detective Mirabelle! Your mission is to find four special treasures in our house. Each treasure will teach us about a piece of Social Studies."

3. Guide her to find the items you pre-selected. As she finds each one, have a quick chat about it.
4. **When she finds the old photo (History):** "Great find! This is our History treasure. History is the story of things that happened in the PAST. This photo helps us remember people and moments from long ago."
5. **When she finds the map (Geography):** "Excellent! This is our Geography treasure. Geography is the study of PLACES and the Earth. A map shows us where things are in the world."
6. **When she finds the traffic light picture (Civics):** "Awesome! This is our Civics treasure. Civics is about being a good citizen and understanding the RULES that help us all stay safe and be fair to each other. We all agree to stop at a red light to keep everyone safe."
7. **When she finds the coins (Economics):** "Perfect! This is our Economics treasure. Economics is about how people make, use, and share MONEY and other things they need or want."

### Part 3: Independent Work (10+ minutes)

*This is where you can step away as she works independently.*

#### What to Do:

1. Give Mirabelle the "My Social Studies Treasures" worksheet and crayons/markers.
2. **What to Say:** "Now you get to be an artist and a detective! In each box, I want you to draw one of the treasures we found today. Draw the photo in the 'History' box, the map in the 'Geography' box, and so on. This will be a special page to help us remember what social studies is all about."
3. This worksheet will serve as excellent proof of learning for her portfolio.

## Day 2: My Place in the World

**Lesson Time:** 10-15 minutes direct instruction, 15+ minutes independent work.

#### Materials Needed:

- The book *Me on the Map* by Joan Sweeney (or watch a read-aloud version on YouTube).
- 5-7 sheets of paper, each a little bigger than the last. (You can also use same-sized paper and just cut them down).
- Crayons, markers, and a pencil.
- A stapler, or a hole punch and yarn/string.
- A reference for your full address, city, state, country, and continent.

#### Lesson Instructions:

##### Part 1: The Spark (5-7 minutes)

**What to Say:** "Good morning! Yesterday, we were detectives and learned that Social Studies is about people, places, rules, and money. One of our treasures was a map, which is part of Geography. Today, we're going to be geographers and create a special map that shows YOUR amazing place in the world!"

#### What to Do:

1. Read the book *Me on the Map* by Joan Sweeney. If you can't get it from the library, you can find many wonderful read-aloud versions on YouTube.
2. As you read, point to the different "layers" and emphasize how each one gets bigger and

bigger, but she is still in the center of her own map.

## Part 2: Let's Make Our Map! (5-10 minutes)

### What to Do:

1. Lay out the sheets of paper. If they aren't pre-cut, arrange them in a stack so that about one inch of the paper below is showing, creating a waterfall effect. Staple them together at the top to create a flipbook.
2. **What to Say:** "We are going to make your very own 'Me on the Map' book! Each page will be a different part of your world, from the smallest place to the biggest."
3. Work together on the first two pages. Help her with the writing, but let her do the drawing.
4. **Page 1 (smallest paper):** Write "Me" at the bottom.  
**Say:** "This first page is the most important part of the map. It's you! Draw a picture of yourself here."
5. **Page 2:** Write "My Home" at the bottom.  
**Say:** "Where do you live? In our house! On this page, draw a picture of our home." Help her write your street address.

## Part 3: Independent Work (15+ minutes)

*You can now set her up for independent work. You may need to help her with the spelling of the places.*

### What to Do:

1. **What to Say:** "You're doing an amazing job! Now you can finish your map book. I'll help you with the words for the bottom of each page, and you can draw the pictures."
2. Have her complete the remaining pages. This is the main project for her end-of-year review.
  - **Page 3: My City/Town** (Draw a local landmark like a library or park).
  - **Page 4: My State** (Draw the shape of your state and a star where your city is).
  - **Page 5: My Country** (Draw the flag).
  - **Page 6: My Continent** (Draw the shape of North America).
  - **Page 7 (Optional, largest paper): My World** (Draw the Earth).
3. Encourage her to take her time and be creative with her drawings. This project beautifully combines geography, civics (understanding your address), and art in a very personal way.