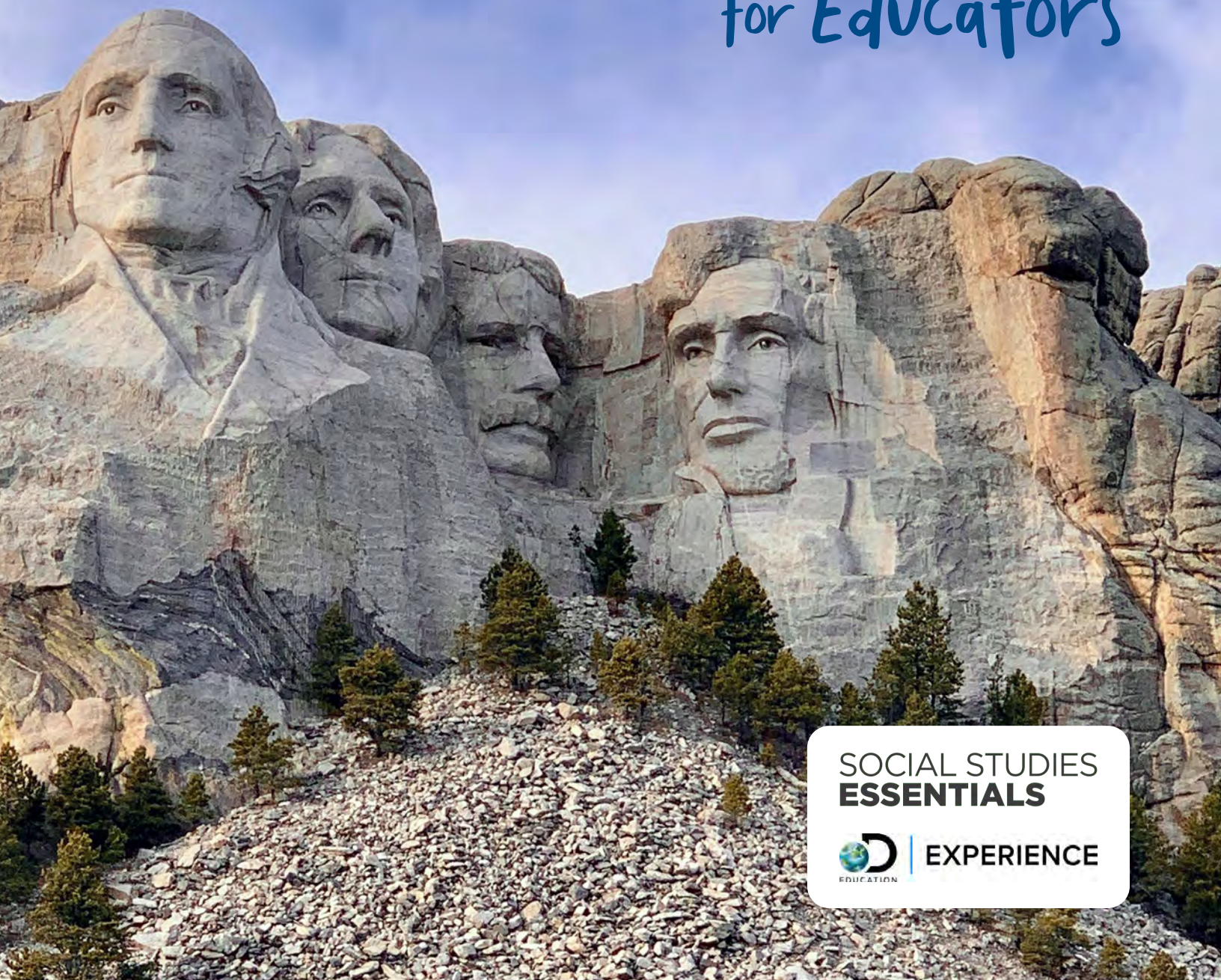


Commemorate the U.S.'s **250th ANNIVERSARY!**

Free Hand-Picked Resources
for Educators



**SOCIAL STUDIES
ESSENTIALS**



EXPERIENCE

ENGAGING WAYS TO CONNECT THE PAST WITH THE PRESENT



July 4, 2026, marks 250 years since the United States was founded, and throughout the year, people are taking time to reflect on the figures, ideas, and events that have shaped our country. This is a fantastic opportunity for educators and students to connect with history in timely, relevant ways that bring it to life.

With that in mind, Discovery Education has assembled a curated collection of engaging, thoughtful, and meaningful content to energize teaching and learning about this exciting moment in your classroom.

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ACCESS YOUR FREE RESOURCES

Help students see how history, civics, and social studies connect to the world around them through relevant, engaging learning with our hand-picked resources:

- 1. Start with a grade band (K–2, 3–5, or 6–12):** This makes it easy to select resources that align to students’ age, background knowledge, and learning needs.
- 2. Explore topics that fit classroom goals:** Within each grade band, resources are grouped using themes such as America’s history, national symbols, government, civics, and related social studies topics.
- 3. Use the provided links as entry points:** Each link offers a sample of content included with Discovery Education programs—a quick way to preview the kinds of lessons, activities, an learning experiences available.

Adapt Resources to Your Classroom

- **Mix and match based on needs:** Use this guide to find a single resource for a lesson, build a thematic learning sequence, or spark deeper discussion around important ideas and events.
- **Extend exploration across topics:** Classroom conversations can connect the past to the present, helping students learn how American history, government, and civics continue to shape everyday life.
- **Make learning meaningful:** Activities invite students to draw upon their own experiences and prior knowledge as they consider new civics and social studies concepts and possibilities for participation in their community.

GRADES K–2 RESOURCES

Teachers can try out these resources from Discovery Education:

FROM

RESOURCES

SOCIAL STUDIES ESSENTIALS

Brand new for 2026, Social Studies Essentials provides inquiry-based lessons aligned to the C3 Framework to spark curiosity, strengthen civic awareness, and build core literacy skills.

VOTING AND ELECTIONS

Explore what voting means and why people would need or want to vote.



EXPERIENCE

Experience is an essential companion for engaged classrooms, pairing captivating cross-curricular lessons with impactful educator-tested strategies. In its original series **Need to Know Jr.**, students learn the fundamentals of civics and see how rules, laws, and leaders help shape society.

Need to Know Jr.

SYMBOLS OF THE UNITED STATES

Why do many people think of the United States when they see the American Flag or a Bald Eagle? Explore symbols of the United States in this episode.



LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

Are students aware that each town, state, and country have their own rules? Explore who makes the rules for each level of government in this episode.



WHAT IS A GOVERNMENT?

Explore what a government is and the role that government plays in making rules for the country in this episode.



GRADES 3–5 RESOURCES

Teachers can try out these resources from Discovery Education:

FROM RESOURCES

SOCIAL STUDIES ESSENTIALS

Brand new for 2026, Social Studies Essentials provides inquiry-based lessons aligned to the C3 Framework to spark curiosity, strengthen civic awareness, and build core literacy skills.

CHANGES IN COMMUNICATION

Explore what communication is, why it's important, and how it has changed in communities over time.

Let's explore.

How does communication help communities stay connected?



EXPERIENCE

Experience is an essential companion for engaged classrooms, pairing captivating cross-curricular lessons with impactful educator-tested strategies. In its original series **Need to Know**, students dive into civics and how government works.

Need to Know

CIVIC DUTIES IN THE UNITED STATES

For citizens of the United States, there are certain expectations to be followed. Explore civic rights, duties, and responsibilities in this episode.



STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The American government has different levels to make sure that every community has a say in the issues that matter most to them. Explore state and local governments in this episode.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES

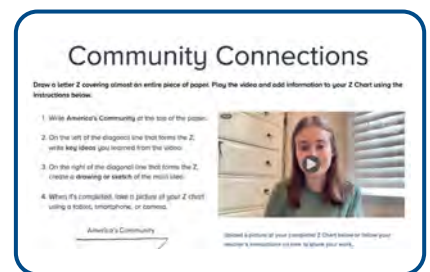
When the United States gained independence in 1776, American leaders had to establish a government for the whole country. Explore the federal government in this episode.

AMERICA 250

“America’s Field Trip” invites students to share their voice by submitting artwork, poems, videos, or essays about what America means to them. Students in grades 3–5 explore their role in shaping their community and America’s future.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS: Z CHART STUDENT ACTIVITY

Students will express their ideas on the spirit of connection woven into the fabric of our country using a Z Chart.



GRADES 6–12 RESOURCES

Teachers can try out these resources from Discovery Education:

FROM

RESOURCES



Experience is an essential companion for engaged classrooms, pairing captivating cross-curricular lessons with impactful educator-tested strategies.

[ORIGINS OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION: ROAD TO RATIFICATION](#)

What events influenced the origins of the U.S. Constitution? Students will explore the events, ideas, and debates that led to the writing and eventual ratification of the Constitution.

[DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE](#)

What did it mean to the colonists to become an independent nation? Students will analyze sections of the Declaration of Independence and explain how they represent the colonists' ideas about the role of government.

[EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW](#)

How has the meaning of equality changed since the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1868? Students will use the interactive Timeline Inquiry tool to investigate several landmark cases and laws.



“America’s Field Trip” invites students to share their voice by submitting artwork, poems, videos, or essays about what America means to them. Grades 6–8 examine civic engagement and its link to American identity, while grades 9–12 reflect on how the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution informs civic action.

[AMERICA FOR ALL: REMINDS ME OF STUDENT ACTIVITY](#)

Students in grades 6–8 will consider what it means to be an active citizen and how they can contribute to an inclusive America.

[THE SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL: READ ALL ABOUT IT STUDENT ACTIVITY](#)

Students will connect the foundational values of the Declaration of Independence to modern American life and culture.



SPARK CURIOSITY. BUILD CIVIC AWARENESS. STRENGTHEN LITERACY.

Discovery Education Social Studies Essentials (K–5) is the only solution that combines C3-aligned, inquiry-based learning with immersive multimedia and hands-on activities—making social studies exciting and relevant for young learners. Designed for busy classrooms, ready-

to-teach lessons save planning time for educators while helping students develop critical thinking, civic awareness, and essential literacy skills.

Explore what [Social Studies Essentials](#) can do for you!