



Standards Alignment

The National Center for History in the Schools National Standards for History (1996)

Standard 2A – Students understand the history of his or her local community.

Standard 3A – Students understand the history of indigenous peoples who first lived in his or her state or region.

National Council for the Social Studies Curriculum for Social Studies (1994)

Standard 2 – Time, Continuity and Change

Standard 3 – People, Places and Environment

REVIEW OF FIRST GRADE UNIT – Communities Long Ago by Dr. M. Gail Hickey, Professor of Education

The First Grade History Unit "Community History" represents a strategy for involving young students in the study of history by drawing upon their own past experience.

The unit also is based upon appropriate pedagogical foundations. Barton (1994), for example, determined constructivist approaches for teaching history or social studies, such as those emphasized in "Community History", help young students build upon the knowledge they bring to the classroom setting and allow them to expand their perception of change over time by examining history through a personal lens.

The "Community History" instructional unit also draws upon curriculum standards identified by national educational organizations. The National Council for the Social Studies, in its Curriculum Standards for Social Studies (1994), emphasizes students in first through third grades should explore, among other things, "concepts of communities, past and present". The National Center for History in the Schools' National Standards for History for Grades K-4 (1994), lists eight curriculum standards for teaching young children, including one specifically related to the "Community History" unit: "Students should understand the history of their own local community



and how communities in North America varied long ago".

As the author of *Bringing History Home: Local and Family History Projects for Grades K-6* (1999), I strongly support school experiences which facilitate children's exploration of and learning about their local community. As a social studies teacher educator, and as one involved in the development of National Council for the Social Studies curriculum standards, I endorse the use of such instructional units as presented by "Children Long Ago". This instructional unit, intended for use at the first grade level, generally is well structured and thoughtfully articulated.