

Appendix B: Finland National Curriculum

This document is retrieved from the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004, published by the Finnish National Board of Education, Helsinki.
http://www.oph.fi/download/47675_POPS_net_new_2.pdf

Researcher's comments and descriptions are in *italics*.

CROSS-CURRICULAR THEMES

– *pages 36–41 in the original document*

Instruction may be separated into subjects or integrated. The objective of integrating instruction is to guide pupils in examining phenomena from the perspectives of different fields of knowledge, thereby elaborating themes and emphasizing general educational goals.

Cross-curricular themes represent central emphases of the educational and teaching work. Their objectives and contents are incorporated into numerous subjects; they integrate the education and instruction. Through them, the educational challenges of the time are also met.

This section depicts the cross-curricular themes, but they are implemented in the various subjects, from the perspectives characteristic of those subjects, and in a manner required by the pupil's developmental phase. In formulating the curriculum, cross-curricular themes are to be included in the core and optional subjects and in joint events such as assemblies, and are to be manifest in the school's operational culture.

Growth as a Person

The 'Growth as a Person' cross-curricular theme encompasses all instruction. The goal of the theme is to support the pupil's comprehensive growth and the development of his or her life management skills. The objective is to create a growth environment that supports individuality and healthy self-esteem on the one hand, and, on the other, development of a sense of community based on equality and tolerance.

Objectives

The pupils will

- come to understand their physical, psychological and social growth, and their uniqueness as individuals
- learn to evaluate the ethics of their actions and to recognize right and wrong
- learn to recognize the importance of aesthetic experiences to the quality of life
- learn to recognize their individual learning styles and develop themselves as learners
- learn to function as members of a group and community.

Core Contents

- factors influencing physical, psychological, and social growth; recognition and handling of feelings; factors influencing mental vigour and creativity
- justice and equality
- ethical observation and interpretation of ethical phenomena
- study skills and long-term, purposeful self-development

- consideration for other people; rights, obligations and responsibilities within a group; various ways of cooperation

Cultural identity and internationalism

The goal of the cross-curricular theme ‘Cultural Identity and Internationalism’ is to help the pupil to understand the essence of the Finnish and European cultural identities, discover his or her own cultural identity, and develop capabilities for cross-cultural interaction and internationalism.

Objectives

The pupils will

- come to know and appreciate their respective cultural inheritances, spiritual and material, and to see the Finnish cultural identity as an element of indigenous, Nordic, and European cultures
- come to understand the roots and diversity of their own cultures and to see their own generation as a continuer and developer of previous generations’ ways of life
- get an introduction to other cultures and philosophies of life, and acquire capabilities for functioning in a multicultural community, and in international cooperation
- come to understand the component factors of cultural identity and their meaning for the individual and community.

Core Contents

- one’s own culture, the culture of one’s home region, and the nature of being Finnish, Nordic and European
- other cultures and multiculturalism
- human rights and prerequisites for trust, mutual respect, and successful cooperation among human groups
- internationalism in different spheres of life, and skills for functioning in international interaction
- the importance of the culture of manners

Media Skills and Communication

The goals of the cross-curricular theme ‘Media Skills and Communication’ are to improve skills in expression and interaction, to advance understanding of the media’s position and importance, and to improve skills in using the media. With respect to communication skills, emphasis is given to participatory, interactive, and community communication. The pupils are to practise media skills as both producers and recipients of messages.

Objectives

The pupils will learn to

- express themselves in a versatile, responsible way, and to interpret communication by others
- develop their information management skills, and to compare, choose, and utilize acquired information
- take a critical stance towards contents conveyed by the media, and to ponder the related

- values of ethics and aesthetics in communication
- produce and transmit messages, and use the media appropriately
- use media and communication tools in information acquisition and transmission, and in various interactive situations.

Core Contents

- expression of one's own thoughts and feelings, various languages of expression, and their use in different situations
- analysis and interpretation of the content and purpose of messages, change in the communication environment, and multimedia communication
- the media's role and influence in society, and the relationship between reality and the world depicted by the media
- working with the media
- data security, freedom of speech, and critiquing sources
- tools of communications technology, their diversified use, and internet ethics

Participatory Citizenship and Entrepreneurship

The goals of the 'Participatory citizenship and Entrepreneurship' cross-curricular theme are to help the pupil perceive society from the viewpoints of different players, to develop the capabilities needed for civic involvement, and to create a foundation for entrepreneurial methods. The school's methods and culture of learning must support the pupils' development as independent, initiative-taking, goal-conscious, cooperative, engaged citizens, and help the pupils form a realistic picture of their own possibilities for influence.

Objectives

The pupils will

- come to understand the importance, workings, and needs of the school community, the public sector, the business world and organizations, from the perspective of the functionality of society
- learn to form their own critical opinions, making use of various types of expertise
- learn to participate appropriately and to take responsibility for the care of shared concerns in their local and school communities
- learn to confront and deal with changes, uncertainty, and conflicts, and to act with a sense of enterprise and initiative
- learn to act innovatively and perseveringly in achieving a goal, and to assess their own personal actions and their impacts
- come to know working life and entrepreneurial activity, and come to understand their importance to the individual and society.

Core Contents

- basic information about the activity of, and division of labour between, the school community, the public sector, the business world, and organizations
- the importance of democracy in the community and society
- various means of participation and influence in civic society
- networking to promote one's own and general welfare
- participating and exerting an influence in one's school and living environment, and

- evaluating the impact of one's actions
- entrepreneurship and its importance to society, basic information on entrepreneurship as a vocation, and getting an introduction to working life

Responsibility for the Environment, Well-Being, and a Sustainable Future

The goal of the cross-curricular theme 'Responsibility for the Environment, Well-Being, and a Sustainable Future' is to augment the pupil's abilities and motivation to act for the environment and human well-being. It is the objective of basic education to raise environmentally conscious citizens who are committed to a sustainable way of life. The school must teach future-oriented thinking and the building of the future upon ecologically, economically, socially, and culturally sustainable premises.

Objectives

The pupils will

- come to understand the prerequisites for human well-being, the necessity of environmental protection, and the relationship between the two
- learn to observe changes taking place in the environment and human well-being, to clarify these changes' causes and consequences, and to act for the good of the living environment and the enhancement of well-being
- learn to evaluate the impacts of their consumption and daily practices, and will adopt the courses of action required for sustainable development
- learn to promote well-being in their own communities and to understand the threats to, and potential for, well-being at a global level
- come to understand that, through their choices, individuals construct both their own futures and our common future; the pupils will learn to act constructively for a sustainable future.

Core Contents

- ecologically, economically, culturally and socially sustainable development in one's own school and living environment
- individual and community responsibility for the well-being of people and the condition of the living environment
- environmental values and a sustainable way of life
- eco-efficiency in production, society, and everyday ways of acting; product life-cycles
- consumer behaviour, management of one's own household, and the consumer's means of influence
- the hoped-for future and the choices and actions it calls for

Safety and Traffic

The goals of the 'Safety and Traffic' cross-curricular theme are to help the pupils understand the physical, psychological and social dimensions of safety, and to guide the pupils towards responsible behaviour. Basic education must give the pupil age-appropriate abilities to act so as to promote safety in a variety of activity environments and situations.

Objectives

The pupil will

- learn to recognize safety and health risks, to anticipate and avoid dangerous situations, and to act so as to promote health and safety
- learn to foster non-violence and to act constructively when bullying occurs
- learn to act appropriately in accident and crisis situations
- learn to act safely and responsibly in traffic
- learn to have an impact on the safety of the school environment, including the traffic environment
- get to know the welfare services in society.

Core Contents

- protecting oneself from accidents, intoxicants, and crime in one's own living environment
- environmental and occupational safety
- action models that promote health, safety, non-violence, and peace
- dimensions of violence in the immediate community and wider society
- key traffic regulations and various traffic environments
- considerate traffic behaviour, safety of the traffic environment, and safety equipment
- mapping out dangerous places in the immediate environment and improving safety
- services that promote safety
- home-school cooperation in promoting safety

Technology and the Individual

The goal of the 'Technology and the Individual' cross-curricular theme is to help the pupil both to understand the individual's relationship to technology; and to see the importance of technology in our daily lives. Basic education has to offer a fundamental knowledge of technology; its development and its impacts, guide the pupils towards sensible choices, and lead them to consider the ethical, moral and equality issues associated with technology. The instruction must advance understanding of the operating principles of tools, equipment and machines, and teach the pupils how to use them.

Objectives

The pupil will

- come to understand technology, its evolution, and its impacts on different spheres of life, different sectors of society, and the environment
- learn to use technology responsibly
- learn to use information technology equipment and programs, and data networks, for various purposes
- learn to take a position on technological choices and to evaluate the impacts of today's technology related decisions on the future.

Core Contents

- technology in everyday life, society, and local industrial life
- the development of technology and the factors affecting that development in different cultures, in various spheres of life, in different eras
- the development, modelling, and assessment of technological ideas; the life cycle of

products

- information technology and the use of data networks
- technology related issues of ethics, morality, wellbeing, and equality
- the technology and society of the future

This document is retrieved from the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004, published by the Finnish National Board of Education, Helsinki.
http://www.oph.fi/download/47672_core_curricula_basic_education_3.pdf

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ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL STUDIES

Grades 1–4

- *pages 170–174 in the original document*
- *aims and contents which can be linked to geography have been selected to this document*

‘Environmental and natural studies’ is an integrated subject group comprising the fields of biology, geography, physics, chemistry, and health education. Instruction in the subject group includes the perspective of sustainable development. The objective of instruction is that the pupils get to know and understand nature and the built environment, themselves and other people, human diversity, and health and disease.

Instruction in environmental and natural studies relies on an investigative, problem-centred approach in which the starting points are the pupils’ existing knowledge, skills, and experiences; and things, phenomena, and events connected to the pupils’ environment and the pupils themselves. With the aid of experiential instruction, the pupil develops a positive relationship with nature and the environment.

The contents of, and approaches used in, environmental and natural studies are selected on the basis of the pupils’ prerequisites and developmental level, in such a way that studies can also be done as field work. Concepts associated with environmental and natural studies may be organized as modules in which the surrounding world, the pupils, and their actions as members of a community are examined. Studying these modules helps the pupils understand their own environment and the interaction between the individual and the environment.

Objectives

The pupils will

- get to know the natural and built environments in their neighbourhood, to observe the changes happening therein, and to perceive their home region as a part of Finland and the Nordic countries
- learn to obtain information about nature and the environment by observing, investigating, and using a variety of source materials
- learn to make observations using the different senses and simple research tools, and to describe, compare, and classify their observations
- learn to read and draft simple maps, and to use an atlas
- learn to represent information about the environment and its phenomena by different means
- learn to use the concepts by which the environment and the phenomena and subjects embraced by those concepts are described and explained
- learn to protect the nature and to save the natural resources
- learn to develop their psychological and physical self-knowledge, respect for themselves as individuals, respect for others, and social skills

Core Contents

Titles of the all core contents are listed here, but those having a link to geography are copied in their original length.

Organisms and living environments

One's immediate environment and home region, and the world as a human living environment

- the immediate environment
- times of the day, seasons
- map and main features of the terrain
- home region and province: their natural conditions, landscapes, built environment, and human activity
- Finland, the Nordic countries, other nearby regions, and the world as a place where people live

Natural phenomena

Substances around us

The individual and health

Safety

Description of Good Performance at the End of the Fourth Grade

Descriptions which have links to geography are copied here. Others can be read from the original document (link in the beginning of this document).

Science activities

The pupils will

- know how to make observations with the different senses and how to direct their attention towards the essential features of the object of those observations
- know how to describe, compare, and classify objects, organisms and phenomena on the basis of their various properties
- know how, with guidance, to carry out simple investigations of nature, natural phenomena, and the built environment
- know how to use a variety of information sources and how to compare, by different means, the information they have acquired
- know how to express — orally, in writing, and by drawing — the information they have acquired about nature and the built environment.

Organisms and environments

The pupils will

- know how to describe the differences between the natural and built environments; they will demonstrate an interest in, and a responsibility for, those environments, will know how to evaluate the beauty, diversity, and pleasantness of an environment

- understand a map’s means of expression; know how to use the legend, compass directions, and scale in reading a map; and know how to draw a simple map of the schoolyard and their own immediate environment
- know how to describe natural conditions and human activity in their home region and province
- know how to identify Finland, the Nordic countries, and other nearby regions; they will recognize the scenic wealth of those areas
- discern their home region as a part of Finland and Finland as one of the Nordic countries, and understand the world as a place where people live.

BIOLOGY AND GEOGRAPHY

Grades 5–6

- *pages 176–179 in the original document*
- *aims and contents which can be linked to geography have been selected to this document*

In geography instruction, the world and its various regions come under examination. The instruction must help the pupil understand phenomena associated with the activity of human beings and the natural world, and the interaction of those phenomena in different regions. The objective of geography instruction is to expand the pupil’s conception of the world from Finland to the whole of Europe and the rest of the world. The instruction is provided so that the pupil gets a sense of the richness of natural and cultural environments around the world and learns to appreciate them. Instruction in geography must create a foundation for intercultural tolerance and internationalism.

Instruction in biology and geography is to emphasize responsibility, the protection of nature, and the preservation of living environments. It must also support the pupil’s growth as an active citizen committed to a sustainable lifestyle.

Objectives

The pupils will

- learn to move about in the natural environment and observe and investigate nature outdoors
- come to understand that people depend on the rest of nature in their food production
- develop their environmental literacy, act in an environmentally friendly way, care for their local environment, and protect nature
- take responsibility for their own actions and take other people into consideration
- draw and interpret maps, and use statistics, diagrams, pictures, and electronic messages as sources of geographic information
- perceive a map of the world and know its main nomenclature
- understand the dependence of human activity on the possibilities that the environment offers on earth
- familiarize themselves with Europe’s geography and the world’s other regions and learn to appreciate and take a positive attitude towards other countries and their peoples and cultures.

Core Contents

Titles of the all core contents are listed here, but those having a link to geography are copied in their original length.

Organisms and living environments

Anatomy, vital functions, growth, development, and health of the human being

Biodiversity

- importance of biodiversity, public rights of access, citizen's responsibilities

Europe as part of the world

- Europe on the world map, map view of Europe
- Europe's climatic zones, vegetation zones, and human activity

Diversity of human life and living environments in the world

- world map's main nomenclature; map skills
- rain forests, savannas, steppes, deserts, areas of winter precipitation (Mediterranean), and temperate and cold zones, as human living environments; diversity of human life in various environments
- interaction of nature and human activity in the world; environmental changes engendered by humans

Description of Good Performance at the End of the Sixth Grade

Descriptions which have links to geography are copied here. Others can be read from the original document (link in the beginning of this document).

Nature study skills

The pupils will

- know how to move about in the natural environment and how to observe and investigate nature
- know how to describe simple investigations that they have performed concerning nature and the rest of the environment, and how to explain the investigative results

Organisms and living environments

The pupils will

- understand, and be able to provide examples of, why and how human beings depend on nature; they will be able to explain the source of basic foods
- be able to give examples of how the immediate natural environment and the residential environment can be preserved and protected.

Map skills

The pupils will

- know how to look in an atlas for places they are studying; they will make good use of map symbols and scales when reading a map and know how to interpret various maps
- know how to interpret statistics, diagrams, and pictures, as well as information transmitted by electronic messages, and how to evaluate different data sources

critically

- know how to draw simple maps and diagrams by themselves.

Europe as part of the world

The pupils will

- know, generally, Europe's states and their capitals, and be able to describe the variation of natural conditions and human activity in Europe.

Diversity of human life and living environments in the world

The pupils will

- know the key designations on the world map – continents, oceans, largest mountain ranges, rain forest and desert areas, and so forth
- know that the world has different climatic and vegetation zones; know how to give examples of how different climatic conditions, such as temperature and amount of precipitation, affect human activity, especially agriculture and residential living, in different zones; they will know how to describe human life in different types of environments
- know how to give examples, from different regions, of how human activity, such as the construction of cities, industrial construction, overgrazing, and the gathering of firewood have caused changes in the environment
- know how to identify features of their own and foreign cultures.

GEOGRAPHY **Grades 7–9**

- *pages 182–184 in the original document*

In geography instruction the world and its various regions and regional phenomena come under investigation. The instruction is to develop the pupil's geographical conception of the world, and the regional foundation of that conception. The objective of instruction in geography is to develop the pupil's ability to examine the natural, built, and social environments, and the interaction between people and the environment, from the local to the global level. The instruction is to guide the pupil in following current events in the world, and in evaluating their impact on nature and human activity.

The geography instruction is provided so that the pupils' cultural knowledge increases and their ability to understand the diversity of human life and living environments around the world improves. Instruction in geography has to serve as a bridge between natural- science and social-science thinking. The objective of the instruction is to guide the pupils in considering the cause-and-effect relationships of the natural-science, cultural, social, and economic phenomena that occur in the world. Geography instruction must support the pupils' growth as active citizens committed to a sustainable way of life.

Objectives

The pupils will

- learn to use and interpret physical and thematic maps and to use other sources of geographic information, such as diagrams, statistics, literature, news sources,

- electronic messages, and photographs, including aerial and satellite photographs
- learn to determine the location of regions and the distances between places
- come to understand the effects of planetary events on the earth
- come to understand the effect on the landscape of factors that reshape the earth's surface
- come to understand the interaction between natural and human activity in Finland, elsewhere in Europe, and elsewhere in the world; they will come to know the reasons that guide the location of human functions
- learn to recognize the features of different cultures and to take a positive stance towards foreign countries, their peoples, and representatives of various cultures
- come to know and value Finland's natural and built environments; they will learn to perceive their own regional identity
- know how every citizen in Finland can have an impact on the planning and development of his or her own living environment
- understand and evaluate critically news information on such issues as global environmental and development questions, and learn to act in accordance with sustainable development themselves.

Core Contents

Earth —the human being's home planet

- identifying the world's physical-geographic and human-geographic map views; analysing the world regionally
- the planet's internal and external events
- Asia, Africa, North and South America, Australia and Europe: comparison of two or more continents' natural conditions, human activity, and cultural features

Europe

- basic features of Europe's map view, natural conditions, landscape, and human activity; interaction of those features in Europe's different regions
- geographic study of Europe as part of the world; Europe's future

Finland in the world

- Finland's map view and landscape
- interaction of nature and human activity in Finland's different regions; the built environment and traditional landscapes
- Finland's population and its minority cultures
- opportunities for influence in the planning and development of one's environment
- Finland as part of the world
- small-scale research into one's immediate environment or home municipality: the natural, built, and social environments

The common environment

- environmental and developmental questions, locally and globally; deliberation of possible solutions to problems
- environmental questions in the Baltic region
- the human being as a consumer of natural resources

Final –Assessment Criteria for a Grade of 8

Geographical skills

The pupils will know how to

- look on maps and in atlases for the places they are studying, and how to make good use of a map's symbols and scale
- interpret physical maps, thematic maps, photographs, and statistics, and how to utilize news sources and information from data networks
- visualize geographic information with the aid of maps and drawings
- compare climate diagrams and population pyramids for different regions, and how to draw a climate diagram themselves on the basis of statistical information.

Analysing the world

The pupils will know how to

- perceive and analyse the world and recognize the basic physical-geographic and human-geographic features of the different continents
- apply the geographical knowledge they have learned to the analysis of current news information they have received from different sources, and how to locate the scenes of current events on the world map.

Analysing Europe

The pupils will know how to

- depict natural conditions and human activity in Europe's different regions, and will recognize Europe's scenic and cultural wealth
- compare Europe to other continents, and will understand that Europe interacts with other regions of the world.

Analysing Finland

The pupils will know how to

- explain how Finland's natural landscapes have taken shape, and how natural conditions have influenced human activity in Finland's different regions
- depict and analyse the location and regional features of settlement and business activity in Finland
- analyse the features of Finland's constructed environment; they will have a sense of what valued cultural and traditional landscapes are
- explain how every citizen in Finland can influence the planning and development of his or her own living environment
- plan and carry out small-scale studies of the natural and built environment in their own home region
- recognize the features of their own cultures; they will know about the minority cultures in Finland and nearby regions
- depict how Finland interacts with its neighbouring regions, the rest of Europe, and the rest of the world.

The common environment

The pupils will be able to

- explain briefly what the main global environmental and development problems are; these including the greenhouse effect's growing strength, ozone depletion, desertification, pollution of living environments, population growth, poverty, and hunger
- depict the Baltic region's environmental problems and their causes and put forward ways of improving the region's environmental status
- describe their own opportunities for contributing to the improvement of the environment's status; they will know ways by which the main global environmental and development problems can be resolved.