

ABC-CLIO's Online History Databases Support Social Studies Curriculum in Katy, Texas

CHALLENGE

When the state of Texas launched the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards for social studies, the Katy Independent School District's social studies textbooks were not aligned to the new standards. A new textbook adoption was at least two years away.

Students in Texas take the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) social studies tests at grade 8 and 10 and are required to pass an Exit Level social studies assessment for graduation.

SOLUTION

To answer their needs for standards' alignment and preparation for social studies tests, Katy ISD chose ABC-CLIO's social studies online databases and has been using them for eight years—almost from the time they were first introduced.

When educators access specific curriculum objectives and standards, they find links to supporting primary and secondary resources in ABC-CLIO's online database resources. According to Ginny Garvic, Social Studies Curriculum Specialist (K-7), "We don't just say 'go to ABC-CLIO World History,' we take them right to the articles,

which saves teachers a lot of time. The look of the new site with the Version 2.0 upgrade is very student- and teacher-friendly."

What Teachers and Librarians Are Reporting

In both junior high and high school, teachers use the databases for additional information and visuals to enhance their lessons. Teachers find it valuable to

be able to show a picture of a particular region or to display images from the eras they're covering to strengthen students' conceptual understanding. Sixth grade teachers appreciate the features and functionality of CLIOView in the World Geography database for meeting learning objectives for comparing countries and using demographics.

According to Cheryl Salois, Secondary Lead Librarian, "We saw the need to subscribe to the

American Government database because it offered access to data about Supreme Court cases. Our Government classes do a great deal of research around Supreme Court cases and this online database offered rich information for student inquiry."

Salois also notes that the district also uses the World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras databases for their high school Latin classes, an unexpected, added value.

Implementation Notes

Katy ISD subscribes to the databases districtwide so that

all secondary campuses have access and all the librarians can help students and faculty find the information they need for class assignments and projects. In addition, librarians find the MLA citations for every page and every image especially helpful.

According to Salois, Katy students can access ABC-CLIO's online databases directly from their libraries' web sites. ABC-CLIO online database icons also appear on the district's home page. Students access

"All of ABC-CLIO's online databases match our curriculum and that's the critical part. Plus, the customer service is excellent and meets our needs for support and response."

– Ginny Garvic, Social Studies Curriculum Specialist (K-7)

the databases from the library and many students access the databases from home, using a password. They can also send themselves articles and images from the library to their home computers.

Salois notes, “We like to bring our history teachers in and provide training about the databases. We typically conduct these sessions at the beginning of the year, so everyone starts out with information they can build on throughout the year.”

Teaching 21st Century Research Skills

Katy ISD recommends its students go to resources like the ABC-CLIO online databases for research projects rather than the open Internet because of the accuracy and reliability of the information in the databases.

Salois adds, “There is a wealth of information in ABC-CLIO’s online databases and it is very well presented. Just about anything we want is in there. We can access any one of the five databases we have or we can search across all five simultaneously. For deeper research, we also have ABC-CLIO’s eBooks and links within the databases to relevant, recommended websites.

This makes searching more productive for both our students and teachers.”

Salois further states: “We teach students year after year that they need to verify their sources from the Internet. They find an article and don’t know if it’s true. We try to steer the kids away from that and guide them to content that is verified, accurate, reliable and authoritative—like ABC-CLIO online databases.”

“We really value ABC-CLIO online databases. It’s just something good we can do for our teachers, and especially for our students by giving them access to this set of authoritative resources.”

– Cheryl Salois, Secondary Lead Librarian

QUICK FACTS

Katy Independent School District Katy, Texas

A Profile:

- **60,800 students**
- **53 schools—including 18 secondary schools:**
 - 6 high schools
 - 1 career center
 - 1 alternative education center
 - 12 junior high schools
- **ABC-CLIO’s Online Databases Used:**
 - American History
 - American Government
 - World Geography
 - World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras
 - World History: The Modern Era

KATY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

