

ASTERO (Alberta Social Teachers' Education Resource Online)

<http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/astero/index.html>

Supported by a THEN/HiER Small Projects Grant, the ASTERO website offers both a conceptual framework and classroom planning resources served by several feeder projects enacted with practicing and pre-service teachers (see for example the 'Citizenship Project' link). These resources integrate theory with practice and reflect ASTERO's objective of ensuring that social studies is meaningful and purposeful to students and their communities. ASTERO is operated out of the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta where visitors will find work produced through curriculum development with Alberta Teachers' Association, Alberta Assessment Consortium, and teachers from the Canadian Rockies School District and other Alberta school jurisdictions. Funds from the Small Projects Grant were used to support two University of Alberta graduate students to construct the website, Laurence Abbott and David Scott.

Conceptually, the website is guided by a 3 's' understanding of social studies curriculum and pedagogy (-s-tudents using – s-subject matter to inquire into present and preferable – s-ocial relations in the context of pressing issues of social concern). This approach is guided through a backward design format organized to have students engage with “throughline questions” – powerful questions that explicitly invoke 3 's' understanding, invite ethical contemplation, and can be approached by any number of disciplines (See den Heyer, K. (2009). “Implicated and Called Upon: Challenging an Educated Position of Self, Others, Knowledge and Knowing as Things to Acquire” – available at ASTERO). Visitors to the ASTERO website will find templates for such planning, guides to help articulate throughline questions, and exemplars from classroom work. I am indebted to Penney Clark and THEN/HiER support for this project.



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