



## IXL Releases Adaptive Middle School Science and Social Studies Curriculum for 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

**SAN MATEO, Calif. – January 18, 2017** – Today, [IXL Learning](#), the K–12 learning program used by 1 in 9 U.S. students, announced the introduction of adaptive [science](#) and [social studies](#) content for grades 6–8. Each skill in the curriculum leads students through a series of concepts using multi-stage challenges, which they complete by answering interactive questions. This progression helps students build mastery of complex topics, while the challenges make the learning process engaging. With this release, IXL now offers science and social studies for grades 2–8 and math and English language arts for grades pre-K–12.

IXL’s science and social studies content is structured so that each stage in a skill teaches one piece of a larger concept. As they move through the stages, students gain factual knowledge about scientific and social phenomena, then apply their knowledge by analyzing visual and written primary sources and real-life examples. One of IXL’s science skills, for example, helps students understand the engineering-design process through a narrative about the Apollo space missions. Students learn the steps of the process, match the decisions made by NASA scientists to the parts of the engineering method and draw conclusions about why those choices were made. By pausing at every step to think critically and actively engage with what they’ve learned, students gain a deeper understanding of these subjects.

Each Apollo mission presented engineers with new problems. For example, the Apollo 13 mission had to be aborted, or ended early, after an oxygen tank on the service module exploded two days into the mission.

This image shows the service module of the Apollo 13 spacecraft. The explosion of the oxygen tank blew a protective panel off the service module. In the picture, you can see the exposed equipment that would have been covered by the missing panel.

A fatal shower when a protective panel blew off the Apollo 13 service module.

The oxygen tank was critical because it supplied astronauts with oxygen to breathe. The oxygen tank also supplied the fuel cells, which used oxygen to generate electricity for the spacecraft.

The explosion of the oxygen tank during the Apollo 13 mission caused many problems. Select the **two** problems that needed to be solved immediately.

- The astronauts might not have enough oxygen to breathe during the trip back to Earth.
- The service module might need to be redesigned before the next mission, and NASA did not know how long the redesign would take.
- The spacecraft might run out of power before it could return to Earth.
- The service modules in future missions might have the same problem with the oxygen tanks.


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“Science and social studies are much more than facts and dates to be memorized—they help us make sense of the rich, vibrant world we live in,” said Kate Mattison, senior director of curriculum at IXL Learning. “IXL gets students excited about this connection and empowers them to inquire about, explore and make educated judgments about their world.”

IXL creates a captivating learning experience by presenting a different challenge at every stage, such as answering a streak of questions correctly or collecting a certain number of tokens. A fun graphic shows students how close they are to reaching their goal, motivating them to keep working. IXL’s content also features intriguing—and sometimes humorous—information, to cultivate curiosity. For example, in a social studies skill about the Civil War, students learn that outnumbered Confederate armies used logs painted to look like cannons, called “Quaker guns,” to fool Union commanders. In a skill about the Constitutional Convention, students see a photo of quirky doodles drawn by delegates during long debates.

✓ **Correct!**

**Why did the delegates debate for so long?**  
The delegates cared so much about the issue of representation that they debated it for **over a month!** They knew it would have a huge impact on the lawmaking process. States with more representatives would have **more votes**, so each state wanted as many representatives as possible.



**Doodles from the convention**  
The debate about representation was one of the longest at the convention. Some delegates were not able to resist the temptation to **doodle** to pass the time away.

This picture shows a page from South Carolina delegate Pierce Butler's convention notebook. On most pages, Butler **took notes** on the debates and prepared his own remarks. On this page, he **practiced penmanship** exercises and even **drew cartoons** of some of the delegates.

IXL Science for middle school covers topics such as molecules and atomic composition, cells and genetics, ecosystems, plate tectonics, engineering design and the scientific method. Skills are aligned to NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards) and state standards.

IXL Social Studies for middle school includes standards-aligned history, civics, geography and economics content. Topics include ancient Egypt, countries of Africa, the American Revolution, the Bill of Rights, supply and demand curves and more.

In addition to science and social studies, IXL covers K–12 math and language arts, and is aligned to the Common Core and all state standards. Teachers and parents can use IXL Analytics' real-time data to analyze student performance and diagnose trouble spots. IXL features 10 free practice questions each day for students not subscribed to IXL; subscribers may practice unlimited questions across all grade levels. IXL is available online and as an app for iPad and Android tablets. For more information and to subscribe to IXL, please visit [www.ixl.com](http://www.ixl.com).

*Media, please note: Screenshots of IXL's science and social studies content may be downloaded at [www.ixl.com/press](http://www.ixl.com/press). Demos and access to IXL are available upon request by contacting [press@ixl.com](mailto:press@ixl.com).*

### About IXL Learning

IXL Learning is an educational technology company that delivers an immersive learning experience—for all students, in all grades, across all subjects, including math, language arts, science and social studies. Used by 1 in 9 U.S. students and with 30 billion questions asked and answered around the world, IXL is helping schools successfully use technology to improve teaching and learning. Our team of teachers, researchers and technologists crafts unique, high-quality content and uses strategically mapped progressions to provide unprecedented depth, breadth and challenge for each specific skill. From pre-K to 12th grade, IXL's content and technology enable fresh, engaging and personalized experiences that spark curiosity and build confidence. To learn more about IXL, visit [www.ixl.com](http://www.ixl.com), [facebook.com/IXL](https://facebook.com/IXL) and [twitter.com/IXLlearning](https://twitter.com/IXLlearning).

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