

Assessment Guide for Educators

Social Studies

June 2016



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Note on the June 2016 Edition

Assessment Guide for Educators — Social Studies:

Minor correction of typographical error. Percentages incorrectly listed as 40% and 30%, now corrected to 50% and 20%. Page 5.

Note on the March 2016 Edition

GED Testing Service has published the March 2016 Edition of the Assessment Guide for Educators to include the following:

1. Updated performance level information to reflect the new performance levels: Below Passing, Pass/High School Equivalency, GED® College Ready, and GED® College Ready+Credit
2. Updated information on the Social Studies test to reflect the elimination of the Social Studies Extended Response question
3. Streamlining and simplification of the guide, based on adult educator feedback, to make the guide more user-friendly and to eliminate redundancies

Assessment Targets

Assessment Targets for Social Studies

The GED® test has three main purposes—to provide candidates with

1. A path to a high school credential
2. Evidence of their readiness to enter workforce training programs or postsecondary education
3. Information about their strengths and weaknesses in key academic areas

The philosophy underlying the GED® test is that there is a core of academic skills and content knowledge that must be acquired in order for an adult to be prepared to enter a job, a training program, or an entry-level, credit-bearing postsecondary course. This core of knowledge and skills is reflected in the career- and college-readiness standards now adopted in some form by the majority of states.

Content Specifications for the GED® Social Studies Test

The GED® Social Studies test focuses on the fundamentals of social studies reasoning, striking a balance of (1) deeper conceptual understanding, (2) procedural skill and fluency, and (3) the ability to apply these fundamentals in realistic situations. As a result, each item on the Social Studies test will be aligned to one *Social Studies Practice* and one *Content Topic*.

The Social Studies Practices can be described as skills that are key to reasoning in both textual and quantitative social science contexts. The practices come from important skills specified in career- and college-readiness standards, as well as in National Standards for History.

The Social Studies test also focuses on four major content domains: civics and government, United States history, economics, and geography and the world. The social studies content topics are drawn from these four domains. The content topics provide context for measuring a test-taker's ability to apply the reasoning skills described in the practices. The content topics reflect both what is taught in many high-school-level social sciences courses and what is most relevant and useful for an adult population.

To measure this content at a range of levels of complexity, several different item types are used in the test, including multiple choice, drag-and-drop, hot spot, and fill-in-the-blank.

The following specifications guide the GED® Social Studies test:

1. Approximately 50 percent focuses on civics and government, 20 percent on United States history, 15 percent on economics, and 15 percent on geography and the world
2. The test includes items that assess textual analysis and understanding, data representation and inference skills, and problem solving using social studies content
3. Each item on the Social Studies test align to one Social Studies Practice and one Content Topic
4. Each item aligns to one DOK level, based on appropriate alignment to Social Studies Practice
5. The test items are written to DOK level 1, 2 or 3
6. Problem-solving skills will be measured in both academic and workplace contexts
7. Approximately 50 percent of the test items are in scenarios in which two or three items are based on a single stimulus (textual, graphic, or a combination of both); the remaining approximately 50 percent of the items are standalone items

The Social Studies Assessment Targets are divided into two sections: the **Practices** and the **Content Topics**. The Social Studies **Practices** describe skills necessary for reasoning in a social sciences context, while the **Content Topics** describe a body of knowledge typical of what is taught in US high schools.

Workplace Context: Stimuli in this category may include workplace letters, resume cover letters, letters to customer service departments, memos, flyers for company-sponsored events, explanations of initiatives, procedural documents, descriptions of activities, or changes in policies. They also include community-related documents like public postings or letters to the editor.

References to Common Core State Standards, NCSS and NSH ¹	Social Studies Practices	Range of Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels ²
R.1, R.8	<p>SSP1 Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Determine the details of what is explicitly stated in primary and secondary sources and make logical inferences or valid claims based on evidence. b. Cite or identify specific evidence to support inferences or analyses of primary and secondary sources, attending to the precise details of explanations or descriptions of a process, event, or concept. 	<p>2-3</p> <p>1-3</p>
R.2, NCSS Literacy Skills	<p>SSP2 Determining Central Ideas, Hypotheses and Conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source document, corroborating or challenging conclusions with evidence. b. Describe people, places, environments, processes, and events, and the connections between and among them. 	<p>1-3</p> <p>2-3</p>
R.3, R.8	<p>SSP3 Analyzing Events and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify the chronological structure of a historical narrative and sequence steps in a process. b. Analyze in detail how events, processes, and ideas develop and interact in a written document; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. c. Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation, including action by individuals, natural and societal processes, and the influence of ideas. d. Compare differing sets of ideas related to political, historical, economic, geographic, or societal contexts; evaluate the assumptions and implications inherent in differing positions. 	<p>1-2</p> <p>2-3</p> <p>2-3</p> <p>2-3</p>
R.4.2, L.4.2.	<p>SSP4 Interpreting Meaning of Symbols, Words and Phrases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in context, including vocabulary that describes historical, political, social, geographic, and economic aspects of social studies. 	<p>1-3</p>
R.6, NSH 3.F	<p>SSP5 Analyzing Purpose and Point of View</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify aspects of a historical document that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts). b. Identify instances of bias or propagandizing. c. Analyze how a historical context shapes an author's point of view. d. Evaluate the credibility of an author in historical and contemporary political discourse. 	<p>2</p> <p>2-3</p> <p>2-3</p> <p>2-3</p>

References to Common Core State Standards, NCSS and NSH ¹	Social Studies Practices	Range of Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels ²
R.9.1, R.7.1, R.7.2, O7: 7.RP, 3.MD.3, S-ID.1, 8.SP.1, S-ID.6, S-ID.7, NSH 2,	<p>SSP6 Integrating Content Presented in Different Ways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text. 2-3 b. Analyze information presented in a variety of maps, graphic organizers, tables, and charts; and in a variety of visual sources such as artifacts, photographs, political cartoons. 2-3 c. Translate quantitative information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., table or chart); translate information expressed visually or mathematically into words. 1-3 	
R.8, NSH 3.E	<p>SSP7 Evaluating Reasoning and Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a primary or secondary source document. 2-3 b. Distinguish between unsupported claims and informed hypotheses grounded in social studies evidence. 2-3 	
R.9, R.7	<p>SSP8 Analyzing Relationships between Texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Compare treatments of the same social studies topic in various primary and secondary sources, noting discrepancies between and among the sources. 2-3 	
R.1, W.1, W.2, W.4, W.5, L.1, L.2, L.4	<p>SSP9 Writing Analytic Response to Source Texts³</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Produce writing that develops the idea(s), claim(s) and/or argument(s) thoroughly and logically, with well-chosen examples, facts, or details from primary and secondary source documents. 2-3 b. Produce writing that introduces the idea(s) or claim(s) clearly; creates an organization that logically sequences information; and maintains a coherent focus. 2-3 c. Write clearly and demonstrate sufficient command of standard English conventions. 1-2 	
O7: 7.RP, 3.MD.3, S-ID.1, 8.SP.1, S-ID.6, S-ID.7	<p>SSP10 Reading and Interpreting Graphs, Charts and Other Data Representation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Interpret, use, and create graphs (e.g., scatterplot, line, bar, circle) including proper labeling. Predict reasonable trends based on the data (e.g., do not extend trend beyond a reasonable limit). 2-3 b. Represent data on two variables (dependent and independent) on a graph; analyze and communicate how the variables are related. 2-3 c. Distinguish between correlation and causation. 1-3 	
Q8: 6.SP.3, S-MD.2, 6.SP.2, 6.SP.5., S-ID.2, S-ID.3, S-ID.4, S-ID.9	<p>SSP11 Measuring the Center of a Statistical Dataset</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Calculate the mean, median, mode, and range of a dataset. 1 	

1 The GED® Social Studies practices are derived from the Common Core State Standards for ELA and Literacy (R#) (L#) (2010), the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (N#) (O#) (P#) (Q#) (RP#) (S-ID#) (S-MD#) (S-SP#) (2010), NCSS National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (NCSS Literacy Skills) (2010), and National Standards for History Revised Edition (NSH#) (1996).

2 The Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels correspond with Norman Webb’s (University of Wisconsin) Depth of Knowledge model of cognitive complexity.

3 The Extended Response writing task will require test-takers to apply a range of Social Studies Practices; however, the practices under SSP9 will be of primary importance in the writing task, and these practices will only be assessed through the writing task.

Social Studies Content Topics

The Social Studies Content Topics describe key concepts that are widely taught in a variety of high-school social studies courses and are relevant to the lives of GED® test-takers. The content topics are designed to provide context for measuring the skills defined in the social studies practices section of this document.

To learn more about the reference column, see Appendix C.

The Social Studies Practices maintain a close relationship with the Social Studies Content Topics. More specifically, the primary focus of the GED® Social Studies test continues to be the measurement of essential reasoning skills, such as analysis, evaluation, inference, and so on, applied in a social studies context. However, test-takers should still be generally familiar with each of the basic concepts listed in the Social Studies Content Topics and subtopics, and they should be able to recognize and understand, in context, each of the terms listed there. Nevertheless, test-takers are not expected to have an in-depth and comprehensive knowledge of each subtopic. Rather, the stimuli used in the GED® Social Studies test provide necessary details about social studies-related figures, events, processes, and concepts. For example, a question may include answer options and stimuli that contain specific terms drawn from the content subtopics; however, test-takers will never be asked to formulate their own definition of a social studies term.

Focusing Themes

The content topics for the Social Studies test reflect two main themes. These themes have been designed to ensure both (1) that the test covers a wide range of important concepts and ideas in social studies, and (2) focus is placed on distinct subsets of ideas within each content topic. Content that falls outside these themes is not tested on the Social Studies test.

- **Development of Modern Liberties and Democracy** explores the development of current ideas about democracy as well as human and civil rights from ancient civilizations to the present. It examines contemporary thinking; policies and structures; major events that have shaped our democratic values; and major thinkers who contributed to American ideas of democratic government.
- **Dynamic Responses in Societal Systems** explores how the systems, structures, and policies in societies respond to

each other, conditions, and events. For example, societies and civilizations have developed and changed in response to particular geographic features and natural events. National economies respond to both governmental policies and natural laws of economics—such as supply and demand—around which policies are built. Similarly, countries respond to both internal and external changes and challenges in ways that are beyond the ability of any one person to control.

The Social Studies Content Topics Matrix on the next page identifies the major topics in social studies and shows the relationship between each content topic and each focusing theme. Each content topic in the matrix below contains a broad range of ideas. Additionally, each topic is aligned to a particular theme. The Development of Modern Liberties and Democracy theme easily lends itself to ideas relevant to civics and government as well as U.S. history, and the Dynamic Responses in Societal Systems is more closely tied to topics in economics and geography and the world.

The following Social Studies Content Topics table provides greater detail on each topic. Individual test items are drawn from the subtopics.

Focusing Themes	Social Studies Topic Matrix			
	CG: Civics and Government (50%)	USH: U.S. History (20%)	E: Economics (15%)	G: Geography and the World (15%)
I. Development of Modern Liberties and Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Types of modern and historical governments b. Principles that have contributed to development of American constitutional democracy c. Structure and design of United States government d. Individual rights and civic responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Key historical documents that have shaped American constitutional government b. Revolutionary and Early Republic Periods c. Civil War & Reconstruction d. Civil Rights Movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Key economic events that have shaped American government and policies b. Relationship between political and economic freedoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Development of classic civilizations
II. Dynamic Responses in Societal Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. Political parties, campaigns, and elections in American politics f. Contemporary public policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. European population of the Americas f. World War I & II g. The Cold War h. American foreign policy since 9/11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Fundamental economic concepts d. Microeconomics and macroeconomics e. Consumer economics f. Economic causes and impacts of wars g. Economic drivers of exploration and colonization h. Scientific and Industrial Revolutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Relationships between the environment and societal development c. Borders between peoples and nations d. Human migration

Social Studies Content Topics and Subtopics

Civics and Government	
CG.a	<p>Types of modern and historical governments</p> <p>CG.a.1 Direct democracy, representative democracy, parliamentary democracy, presidential democracy, monarchy and others types of government that contributed to the development of American constitutional democracy</p>
CG.b	<p>Principles that have contributed to development of American constitutional democracy</p> <p>CG.b.1 Natural rights philosophy</p> <p>CG.b.2 Popular sovereignty and consent of the governed</p> <p>CG.b.3 Constitutionalism</p> <p>CG.b.4 Majority rule and minority rights</p> <p>CG.b.5 Checks and balances</p> <p>CG.b.6 Separation of powers</p> <p>CG.b.7 Rule of law</p> <p>CG.b.8 Individual rights</p> <p>CG.b.9 Federalism</p>
CG.c	<p>Structure and design of United States government</p> <p>CG.c.1 Structure, powers, and authority of the federal executive, judicial, and legislative branches</p> <p>CG.c.2 Individual governmental positions (e.g. president, speaker of the house, cabinet secretary, etc.)</p> <p>CG.c.3 Major powers and responsibilities of the federal and state governments</p> <p>CG.c.4 Shared powers</p> <p>CG.c.5 The amendment process</p> <p>CG.c.6 Governmental departments and agencies</p>
CG.d	<p>Individual rights and civic responsibilities</p> <p>CG.d.1 The Bill of Rights</p> <p>CG.d.2 Personal and civil liberties of citizens</p>
CG.e	<p>Political parties, campaigns, and elections in American politics</p> <p>CG.e.1 Political parties</p> <p>CG.e.2 Interest groups</p> <p>CG.e.3 Political campaigns, elections and the electoral process</p>
CG.f	<p>Contemporary Public Policy</p>

United States History	
USH.a	<p>Key historical documents that have shaped American constitutional government</p> <p>USH.a.1 Key documents and the context and ideas that they signify (e.g. Magna Carta, Mayflower Compact, Declaration of Independence, United States Constitution, Martin Luther King’s Letter from the Birmingham Jail, landmark decisions of the United States Supreme Court, and other key documents)</p>
USH.b	<p>Revolutionary and Early Republic Periods</p> <p>USH.b.1 Revolutionary War</p> <p>USH.b.2 War of 1812</p> <p>USH.b.3 George Washington</p> <p>USH.b.4 Thomas Jefferson</p> <p>USH.b.5 Articles of Confederation</p> <p>USH.b.6 Manifest Destiny</p> <p>USH.b.7 U.S. Indian Policy</p>
USH.c	<p>Civil War and Reconstruction</p> <p>USH.c.1 Slavery</p> <p>USH.c.2 Sectionalism</p> <p>USH.c.3 Civil War Amendments</p> <p>USH.c.4 Reconstruction policies</p>
USH.d	<p>Civil Rights</p> <p>USH.d.1 Jim Crow laws USH.d.2 Women’s suffrage USH.d.3 Civil Rights Movement</p> <p>USH.d.4 Plessy vs. Ferguson and Brown vs. Board of Education</p> <p>USH.d.5 Warren court decisions</p>
USH.e	<p>European settlement and population of the Americas</p>
USH.f	<p>World Wars I & II</p> <p>USH.f.1 Alliance system</p> <p>USH.f.2. Imperialism, nationalism, and militarism</p> <p>USH.f.3 Russian Revolution</p> <p>USH.f.4 Woodrow Wilson</p> <p>USH.f.5 Treaty of Versailles and League of Nations</p> <p>USH.f.6 Neutrality Acts</p> <p>USH.f.7 Isolationism</p> <p>USH.f.8 Allied and Axis Powers</p> <p>USH.f.9 Fascism, Nazism, and totalitarianism</p> <p>USH.f.10 The Holocaust</p> <p>USH.f.11 Japanese-American internment</p> <p>USH.f.12 Decolonization</p> <p>USH.f.13 GI Bill</p>

United States History	
USH.g	<p>The Cold War</p> <p>USH.g.1 Communism and capitalism</p> <p>USH.g.2 NATO and the Warsaw Pact</p> <p>USH.g.3 U.S. maturation as an international power</p> <p>USH.g.4 Division of Germany, Berlin Blockade and Airlift</p> <p>USH.g.5 Truman Doctrine</p> <p>USH.g.6 Marshall Plan</p> <p>USH.g.7 Lyndon B. Johnson and The Great Society</p> <p>USH.g.8 Richard Nixon and the Watergate scandal</p> <p>USH.g.9 Collapse of U.S.S.R. and democratization of Eastern Europe</p>
USH.h	American foreign policy since 9/11

Economics	
E.a	Key economic events that have shaped American government and policies
E.b	Relationship between political and economic freedoms
E.c	Fundamental Economic Concepts E.c.1 Markets E.c.2 Incentives E.c.3 Monopoly and competition E.c.4 Labor and capital E.c.5 Opportunity cost E.c.6 Profit E.c.7 Entrepreneurship E.c.8 Comparative advantage E.c.9 Specialization E.c.10 Productivity E.c.11 Interdependence
E.d	Microeconomics and Macroeconomics E.d.1 Supply, demand and price E.d.2 Individual choice E.d.3 Institutions E.d.4 Fiscal and monetary policy E.d.5 Regulation and costs of government policies E.d.6 Investment E.d.7 Government and market failures E.d.8 Inflation and deflation E.d.9 GDP E.d.10 Unemployment E.d.11 Tariffs
E.e	Consumer economics E.e.1 Types of credit E.e.2 Savings and banking E.e.3 Consumer credit laws
E.f	Economic causes and impacts of wars
E.g	Economic drivers of exploration and colonization
E.h	Scientific and Industrial Revolutions

Geography	
G.a	Development of classical civilizations
G.b	Relationships between the environment and societal development G.b.1 Nationhood and statehood G.b.2 Sustainability G.b.3 Technology G.b.4 Natural resources G.b.5 Human changes to the environment
G.c	Borders between peoples and nations G.c.1 Concepts of region and place G.c.2 Natural and cultural diversity G.c.3 Geographic tools and skills
G.d	Human migration G.d.1 Immigration, emigration and diaspora G.d.2 Culture, cultural diffusion and assimilation G.d.3 Population trends and issues G.d.4 Rural and urban settlement

Item Types & Item Layout

Item Types in Social Studies

The GED® test uses a variety of item types, made possible through computer-based testing. The computer-based testing platform allows the opportunity to use interactive item types that are not possible on a pencil-and-paper test.

The Social Studies test includes:

- Multiple Choice items
- Fill-in-the-blank
- Drag-and-drop items (Technology-enhanced)
- Drop-down items embedded in passages (Technology-enhanced)
- Hot Spot items (Technology-enhanced)

These items assess the full depth and breadth of skills outlined in the GED® Social Studies Assessment Targets. Employing this variety of item types also allows us to assess the targeted content at a number of Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels, as they each provide opportunities for test-takers to apply different cognitive strategies and demonstrate proficiency with social studies content (See *Depth of Knowledge Summary* in the Assessment Guide for Educators Introduction for more information). Each item type on the Social Studies test may be presented either as a stand-alone item or as part of an item scenario in which two or three items pertain to a single stimulus.

Stimulus materials may include brief text, maps, graphs, tables, or other graphic representations of data or social science

Technology-Enhanced Items

In Technology-enhanced (TE) items, test-takers interact with the content in a more authentic way. Test-takers may be asked to select blocks of text, select multiple answers from a list, drag an answer to a location, or manipulate symbols or other graphics.

concepts. Many of the brief texts featured in both stand-alone items and item scenarios are drawn from texts reflecting “the Great American Conversation.” These texts may be directly excerpted from founding documents, such as The Bill of Rights, or they may contain analyses of these documents. They may also be drawn from other more contemporary primary and secondary source documents (e.g. political speeches and commentary) that convey important concepts about American civics.

“The Great American Conversation” refers to texts like the founding documents (e.g. The Bill of Rights) or other sources, including more contemporary ones that reflect important ideas about American citizenship and modern liberties.

Multiple choice (MC)

Multiple choice (MC) items consist of a question accompanied by several possible answer choices. This item type is used to assess aspects every Social Studies Practice and Content Topic listed in the GED® Social Studies Assessment Targets. Multiple choice items continue to be a reliable method for measuring skills and knowledge at a range of cognitive levels in a standardized manner. MC items on the GED® test have four answer options.

Fill-in-the-blank (FIB)

Fill-in-the-blank (FIB) items consist of a sentence or scenario with one or multiple blanks for the test-taker to complete. These items give test-takers the opportunity to construct a very brief response, like a single word or a short phrase, when potential answers have little variability. For example, this item type might be used when an item requires a test-taker to identify a particular data point on a chart reflecting economic trends. It could also be used to excerpt a word or phrase from a text to demonstrate understanding of an idea or vocabulary term that could be inferred from a brief textual stimulus.

Drag-and-drop

Drag-and-drop items are another type of interactive task that require test-takers to move images or words to designated drop targets on a computer screen. They may be used to assess how well a test-taker can make comparisons between concepts or representations of data or how well they classify or order information. For example, an individual drag-and-drop item may require a test-taker to place labels on a map to indicate important commodities produced in various regions. Other items might provide the test-taker an

opportunity to place data points or labels drawn from a brief text onto a graph or chart.

Drop-down

Drop-down items have drop-down menu functionality embedded within a brief text. They will be used to give test-takers opportunities to choose the correct response to complete statements. Test-takers are given the advantage of seeing the complete statements they create in an interactive manner on screen. These items can measure many of the same skills that fill-in-the-blank items can, though they provide a selection of possible responses from which test-takers can choose. This item type is especially effective for the purposes of assessing how well a test-taker can identify a logical conclusion drawn from text-based evidence or even make a generalization based on an author's argument.

Hot spot

Hot spot items consist of a graphic image or block of text with virtual "sensors" placed strategically within it. The test-taker selects a portion of the text or part of the graphic by clicking on the designated sensor. This interactive item type allows test-takers to respond to questions that ask for supporting evidence or other key information. Hot spot items can also be used to measure a test-taker's understanding of relationships between data points cited from a textual or graphic stimulus and are also particularly effective for measuring a test-taker's ability to understand geographic concepts with regard to mapping. Other applications of hot-spot functionality might include asking test-takers to select data or points in a graph, chart, or table that support or refute a given conclusion stated in a brief textual stimulus.

Item Layouts in Social Studies

Item layouts are shown to highlight the structure of each item type described in the previous section. The content in the item layouts shown in this guide is not representative of the GED® test and is merely included to illustrate test item functionality rather than content.

Multiple Choice Item and a Passage

This layout allows the test-takers to see the stimulus text and item simultaneously. For Social Studies, two or three items will pertain to a single, brief text or graphic.

Social Studies - Candidate Name
Question 1 of 10

Answer Explanation
Flag for Review

page 1 page 2 page 3

The chart below describes the four methods used to amend the U.S. Constitution.

Four Methods of Amending the U.S. Constitution

	Step 1	Step 2
1.	A two-thirds vote in both houses of the U.S. Congress	Ratified by three-fourths of the state legislatures
2.	A two-thirds vote in both houses of the U.S. Congress	Ratified by ratification conventions in three-fourths of the states
3.	A national constitutional convention called by two-thirds of the state legislatures	Ratified by three-fourths of the state legislatures
4.	A national constitutional convention called by two-thirds of the state legislatures	Ratified by ratification conventions in three-fourths of the states

Which statement correctly describes an important way that the process of amending the U.S. Constitution is different from the process of creating federal laws?

- A. Only one government branch is involved in the amendment process.
- B. Only one legislative body can conclude the amendment process.
- C. Only state legislatures are involved in the amendment process.
- D. Only state governments can start the amendment process.

← Previous
Next →

Fill-in-the-blank Item

This item type requires test-takers to type their response into the blank (empty box).

Social Studies - Candidate Name Question 5 of 10

Answer Explanation Flag for Review

Women's Voting Rights

Since the 19th century, many people have worked for equal rights for women. Much of this effort focused on suffrage, which is the right to vote. One of the greatest victories for advocates of women's rights was ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920. The 19th Amendment stated that "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." However, the struggle for equality in other areas of society continued even after the 19th Amendment granted woman suffrage.

Number of Women in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1917-2011

Session of Congress	Number of Women Representatives
65	0
70	5
75	10
80	12
85	15
90	18
95	20
100	25
105	45
110	65
111	70

This data is taken from the public domain.

Type the appropriate session of Congress in the box.

The number of women representatives who served in the Congress was twice the number of women representatives who served in the 101st Congress.

[← Previous](#) [Next →](#)

Drag-and-drop Item

This example using math content shows six elements of an equation (boxed numbers and boxed letter x), three of which would be selected and dragged to one of the drop targets in the equation boxes next to “y =.” In items that use this layout, the appearance and number of the drag tokens and the drop targets may vary, but all drag-and-drop items allow test-takers to interact with the material as they move objects around on the screen.

Mathematical Reasoning - Candidate Name Question 6 of 10

Answer Explanation Calculator Flag for Review

A scientist is studying red maple tree growth in a state park. She measured the trunk diameters of a sample of trees in the same month every other year. The tables show the data for two of the trees.

Tree 1	
Year	Trunk Diameter (inches)
1	18.6
3	19.2
5	19.8
7	20.4
9	21.0
11	21.6
13	22.2

Tree 2	
Year	Trunk Diameter (inches)
1	11.4
3	12.0
5	12.6
7	13.2
9	13.8
11	14.4
13	15.0

This is the final year in which she will collect data. When her data collection is complete, she will predict future red maple tree growth.

Formula Sheet Calculator Reference

The scientist creates an equation that models her data for each tree so that she can predict the diameter in the future. Complete a linear equation that fits the data for tree 1, where x is the year and y is the trunk diameter, in inches.

Click on the variables and numbers you want to select and drag them into the boxes.

Equation for Tree 1

$y =$ $+$

-0.6

-0.3

18.0

18.3

18.6

x

← Previous Next →

Drop-down Item

In this item type, illustrated here with science content, test-takers will choose their answers from a drop-down menu that will appear embedded within text.

Mathematical Reasoning - Candidate Name Question 8 of 10

Answer Explanation Calculator Flag for Review

Formula Sheet Calculator Reference

The graph shows the level of ibuprofen, y units, in a patient's bloodstream x hours after the ibuprofen was taken.

Ibuprofen Level in Patient's Bloodstream

Time Since Ibuprofen Was Taken (hours)	Ibuprofen Level (units)
0	0
1	6
2	4
3	3
4	2
5	1
8	1

The level of ibuprofen in the patient's bloodstream increased from hours to hours.

Select...

0

2/3

2 1/2

5

8

Hot Spot Item

Each graph in this item is a “sensor” region or hot spot on which test-takers click to provide their responses.

Mathematical Reasoning - Candidate Name Question 5 of 10

Answer Explanation Calculator Flag for Review

Formula Sheet Calculator Reference

A scientist is studying red maple tree growth in a state park. She measured the trunk diameters of a sample of trees in the same month every other year. The tables show the data for two of the trees.

Tree 1	
Year	Trunk Diameter (inches)
1	18.6
3	19.2
5	19.8
7	20.4
9	21.0
11	21.6
13	22.2

Tree 2	
Year	Trunk Diameter (inches)
1	11.4
3	12.0
5	12.6
7	13.2
9	13.8
11	14.4
13	15.0

This is the final year in which she will collect data. When her data collection is complete, she will predict future red maple tree growth.

The scientist plots the data for tree 2 on a coordinate grid. She begins by plotting data for year 3 and year 11. What are the locations of the two points on the coordinate grid?

Click on the grid to plot the points.

(Note: To remove a point, place the arrow over the point and click the left mouse button.)

Diameter of Tree 2

← Previous Next →

Performance Level Descriptors

Performance Level Descriptors

Performance Level Descriptors explain the skills a test-taker generally demonstrates in order to score into one of three performance levels on the GED® test and the skills they need to develop to advance their score.

The four performance levels for the GED® Social Studies test are Below Passing, Pass/High School Equivalency, GED® College Ready, and GED® College Ready + Credit.

Below Passing Level

Test-takers who score at this level typically have a limited but developing proficiency in demonstrating skills in the following categories: analyzing and creating text features in a social studies context, applying social studies concepts to the analysis and construction of arguments, and reasoning quantitatively and interpreting data in social studies contexts.

Test-takers at the Below Passing level typically demonstrate the following skills:

Analyzing and Creating Text Features in a Social Studies Context

- Determine the details of what is explicitly stated in primary and secondary sources and make logical inferences or valid claims based on evidence at a limited and/or inconsistent level
- Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source document, corroborating or challenging conclusions with evidence at a limited and/or inconsistent level
- At a limited or inconsistent level, determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in context, including vocabulary that describes historical, political, social, geographic, and economic aspects of social studies
- Distinguish between fact and opinion in a primary or secondary source document at a limited and/or inconsistent level

Primary sources are artifacts, documents, or other sources of information that were created by someone with direct knowledge of an issue, or in the time period being studied. Primary sources serve as original sources of information about the topic.

Secondary sources are documents or other sources of information that cite, comment on, or build upon primary sources.

Applying Social Studies Concepts to the Analysis and Construction of Arguments

- At a limited and/or inconsistent level, cite or identify specific evidence to support inferences or analyses of primary and secondary sources, attending to the precise details of explanations or descriptions of a process, event, or concept
- Describe people, places, environments, processes, and events, and the connections between and among them at a limited and/or inconsistent level

- At a limited and/or inconsistent level, analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation, including the importance of natural and societal processes, the individual, and the influence of ideas

Reasoning Quantitatively and Interpreting Data in Social Studies Contexts

- Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text at a limited and/or inconsistent level
- At a limited and/or inconsistent level, analyze information presented in a variety of maps, graphic organizers, tables, and charts; and in a variety of visual sources such as artifacts, photographs, political cartoons
- Translate quantitative information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g. table or chart); translate information expressed visually or mathematically into words at a limited and/or inconsistent level
- Interpret, use, and create graphs including proper labeling. Predict trends within a reasonable limit, based on the data, at a limited and/or inconsistent level
- Represent data on two variables (dependent and independent) on a graph; analyze and communicate how the variables are related at a limited and/or inconsistent level
- Distinguish between causation and correlation at a limited and/or inconsistent level
- Calculate the mean, median, mode, and range of a data set, at a limited and/or inconsistent level

In order to progress to the **Pass/High School Equivalency** level, test-takers need to:

- continue to strengthen the skills listed in the Below Passing level, including:
- Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source document, corroborating or challenging conclusions with evidence
- Cite or identify specific evidence to support inferences or analyses of primary and secondary sources, attending to the precise details of explanations or descriptions of a process, event, or concept
- Describe people, places, environments, processes, and events, and the connections between and among them
- Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation, including the importance of natural and societal processes, the individual, and the influence of ideas
- Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text
- Analyze information presented in a variety of maps, graphic organizers, tables, and charts; and in a variety of visual sources such as artifacts, photographs, political cartoons
- Interpret, use, and create graphs including proper labeling. Predict trends within a reasonable limit, based on the data.
- Translate quantitative information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., table or chart); translate information expressed visually or mathematically into words

and

develop the following additional skills:

- Identify aspects of a historical document that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose
- Compare treatments of the same social studies topic in various primary and secondary sources, noting discrepancies between and among the sources
- Identify the chronological structure of a historical narrative and sequence steps in a process
- Compare differing sets of ideas related to political, historical, economic, geographic, or societal contexts; evaluate the assumptions and implications inherent in differing position
- Identify instances of bias and propagandizing
- Analyze how a historical context shapes an author’s point of view

Pass/High School Equivalency Level

Test-takers who score at this level typically have a satisfactory proficiency in demonstrating skills in the following categories: analyzing and creating text features in a social studies context, applying social studies concepts to the analysis and construction of arguments, and reasoning quantitatively and interpreting data in social studies contexts.

Test-takers are generally able to demonstrate knowledge of and ability with the skills identified in the Below Passing level at a satisfactory level, as well as the following skills:

Analyzing and Creating Text Features in a Social Studies Context

- Identify aspects of a historical document that reveal an author's point of view or purpose at a satisfactory level
- Compare treatments of the same social studies topic in various primary and secondary sources, noting discrepancies between and among the sources at a satisfactory level

Applying Social Studies Concepts to the Analysis and Construction of Arguments

- Identify the chronological structure of a historical narrative and sequence steps in a process at a satisfactory level
- At a satisfactory level, compare differing sets of ideas related to political, historical, economic, geographic, or societal contexts; evaluate the assumptions and implications inherent in differing positions
- Identify instances of bias or propagandizing at a satisfactory level
- Analyze how a historical context shapes an author's point of view at a satisfactory level

In order to progress to the **GED® College Ready** level, test-takers need to continue to **strengthen** the skills listed in the Below Passing and the Pass/High School Equivalency levels, including:

- Identify aspects of a historical document that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose
- Describe people, places, environments, processes, and events, and the connections between and among them
- Identify the chronological structure of a historical narrative and sequence steps in a process
- Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation, including the importance of natural and societal processes, the individual, and the influence of ideas
- Compare differing sets of ideas related to political, historical, economic, geographic, or societal contexts; evaluate the assumptions and implications inherent in differing positions
- Analyze how a historical context shapes an author’s point of view
- Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text
- Translate quantitative information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., table or chart); translate information expressed visually or mathematically into words
- Represent data on two variables (dependent and independent) on a graph; analyze and communicate how the variables are related
- Distinguish between correlation and causation

GED® College Ready Level

Test-takers who score at this level typically have a strong proficiency in demonstrating skills in the following categories: analyzing and creating text features in a social studies context, applying social studies concepts to the analysis and construction of arguments, and reasoning quantitatively and interpreting data in social studies contexts.

Test-takers are generally able to demonstrate strong knowledge of and ability with the skills identified in the Below Passing and the Pass/High School Equivalency levels, including:

Analyzing and Creating Text Features in a Social Studies Context

- Determine how authors reveal their points of view or purposes in historical documents at a strong level
- Compare treatments of the same social studies topic in various primary and secondary sources, noting discrepancies between and among the sources at a strong level

Applying Social Studies Concepts to the Analysis and Construction of Arguments

- Identify the chronological structure of a historical narrative and sequence steps in a process at a strong level
- At a strong level, analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation, including the importance of natural and societal processes, the individual, and the influence of ideas
- At a strong level, compare differing sets of ideas related to political, historical, economic, geographic, or societal contexts; evaluate the assumptions and implications inherent in differing positions at a strong level
- Analyze how a historical context shapes an author's point of view at a strong level

Reasoning Quantitatively and Interpreting Data in Social Studies Contexts

- Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text at a strong level

- Represent data on two variables (dependent and independent) on a graph; analyze and communicate how the variables are related at a strong level
- Distinguish between correlation and causation at a strong level

In order to progress to the **GED® College Ready + Credit level**, test-takers need to continue to **strengthen** the skills listed in the Below Passing and the Pass/High School Equivalency levels, including:

- Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source document, corroborating or challenging conclusions with evidence
- Compare treatments of the same social studies topic in various primary and secondary sources, noting discrepancies between and among the sources
- Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation, including the importance of natural and societal processes, the individual, and the influence of ideas
- Compare differing sets of ideas related to political, historical, economic, geographic, or societal contexts; evaluate the assumptions and implications inherent in differing positions
- Analyze how a historical context shapes an author’s point of view
- Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text
- Translate quantitative information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., table or chart); translate information expressed visually or mathematically into words

GED® College Ready + Credit Level

Test-takers who score at this level typically have an outstanding proficiency in demonstrating skills in the following categories: analyzing and creating text features in a social studies context, applying social studies concepts to the analysis and construction of arguments, and reasoning quantitatively and interpreting data in social studies contexts. Test-takers are generally able to demonstrate outstanding knowledge of and ability with the skills identified in the previous levels including:

Analyzing and Creating Text Features in a Social Studies Context

- Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source document, corroborating or challenging conclusions with evidence at an outstanding level
- Compare treatments of the same social studies topic in various primary and secondary sources, noting discrepancies between and among the sources at an outstanding level

Applying Social Studies Concepts to the Analysis and Construction of Arguments

- At an outstanding level, analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation, including the importance of natural and societal processes, the individual, and the influence of ideas
- At an outstanding level, compare differing sets of ideas related to political, historical, economic, geographic, or societal contexts; evaluate the assumptions and implications inherent in differing positions
- Analyze how a historical context shapes an author's point of view at an outstanding level

Reasoning Quantitatively and Interpreting Data in Social Studies Contexts

- Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text at an outstanding level
- Translate quantitative information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., table or chart); translate information expressed visually or mathematically into words at an outstanding level

Appendix

A

The GED® Test - Social Studies: A Content Comparison Between 2002 and the Current Test

Note: Codes in the current column refer to the Current GED® Assessment Targets and Indicators as outlined in Chapter 1. The codes may not appear in numerical order, as the goal of the table below is to show areas of correspondence between the 2002 content and the current test content.

Social Studies Practices	
2002	Current Test
Understand the meaning and intent of text and/ or visual material, restate information and summarize ideas.	SSP1.a Determine the details of what is explicitly stated in primary and secondary sources and make logical inferences or valid claims based on evidence. SSP4.a Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in context, including vocabulary that describes historical, political, social, geographic, and economic aspects of social studies.
Identify implications and make inferences.	SSP1.b Cite or identify specific evidence to support inferences or analyses of primary and secondary sources, attending to the precise details of explanations or descriptions of a process, event, or concept.
Use information and ideas in a situation different from that provided by the item stimulus.	SSP1.b Cite or identify specific evidence to support inferences or analyses of primary and secondary sources, attending to the precise details of explanations or descriptions of a process, event, or concept.
Apply the appropriate abstraction to a new problem without prompting or instruction.	[Not assessed on the current test.]
Break down information and understand the relationship between component ideas.	SSP2.a Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source document, corroborating or challenging conclusions with evidence. SSP2.b Describe people, places, environments, processes, and events, and the connections between and among them.

Social Studies Practices	
2002	Current Test
Distinguish facts from opinions and hypotheses.	SSP.7.a Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a primary or secondary source document. SSP.7.b Distinguish between unsupported claims and informed hypotheses grounded in social studies evidence.
Distinguish conclusions from supporting statements.	SSP.11.b Identify specific pieces of evidence an author uses in support of claims or conclusions.
Recognize information that is designed to persuade an audience, recognize unstated assumptions, recognize fallacies in logic in arguments or conclusions.	SSP.5.b Identify instances of bias or propagandizing.
Identify cause and effect relationships and distinguish them from other sequential relationships.	SSP.3.a Identify the chronological structure of a historical narrative and sequence steps in a process.
Recognize the point of view of a writer in a historical account.	SSP.5.a Identify aspects of a historical document that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).
Recognize the historical context of the text, avoiding “present-mindedness.”	SSP.5.c Analyze how a historical context shapes an author's point of view.
Identify comparisons and contrasts among points of view and interpretations of issues.	SSP.8.a Compare treatments of the same social studies topic in various primary and secondary sources, noting discrepancies between and among the sources.
Determine implications, effects, and the value of presenting visual data in different ways.	SSP.6.a Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text. SSP.6.b Analyze information presented in a variety of maps, graphic organizers, tables, and charts; and in a variety of visual sources such as artifacts, photographs, political cartoons. SSP.6.c Translate quantitative information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., table or chart); translate information expressed visually or mathematically into words.
Use criteria provided to make judgments about the validity or accuracy of information.	SSP.5.d Evaluate the credibility of an author in historical and contemporary political discourse.
Identify generalizations, principles, or strategies and assess the appropriateness of information to substantiate conclusions, hypotheses, and generalizations (using such criteria as source, objectivity, technical correctness, and currency.	SSP.2.a Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source document, corroborating or challenging conclusions with evidence. SSP.5.d Evaluate the credibility of an author in historical and contemporary political discourse.
Assess the accuracy of facts.	SSP.3.a Identify the chronological structure of a historical narrative and sequence steps in a process. SSP.5.d Evaluate the credibility of an author in historical and contemporary political discourse.
Compare and contrast differing accounts of the same event.	SSP.5.d Evaluate the credibility of an author in historical and contemporary political discourse. SSP.8.a Compare treatments of the same social studies topic in various primary and secondary sources, noting discrepancies between and among the sources.
Recognize the role that values, beliefs, and convictions play in decision making.	SSP.5.a Identify aspects of a historical document that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts). SSP.5.b Identify instances of bias or propagandizing.

Social Studies Content Topics

United States History	
2002	Current Test
Beginnings to 1820 (Native Peoples, Colonization, Settlement, Revolution, the New Nation)	USH.a Key historical documents that have shaped American constitutional government
1801–1900 (Expansion, Reform, Civil War, Reconstruction, Industrial Development)	USH.b Revolutionary and Early Republic Periods USH.c Civil War and Reconstruction
1890–present (Emergence of Modern America, Great Depression, World War II, Postwar United States, Contemporary United States)	USH.d Civil Rights USH.e European settlement and population of the Americas USH.f World Wars I & II USH.g The Cold War USH.h American foreign policy since 9/11

Geography and the World	
2002	Current Test
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World in Spatial Terms • Places and Regions • Physical Systems • Human Systems • Environment and the Society • Uses of Geography • Beginnings–1000 B.C. (Beginnings and Early Civilizations) • 1000 B.C.–300 B.C. (Classical Traditions, Empires, Religions) • 300 B.C.–A.D. 1770 (Growing Trade, Hemispheric Interactions, First Global Age) • 1750–1914 (Age of Revolutions) • 1900–present (Urbanization; World Wars; Global Depression; Advances in Science and Technology) • New Democracies of Africa, Asia, South America; The Cold War; “Global Culture”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> G.a Development of classical civilizations G.b Relationships between the environment and societal development G.c Borders between peoples and nations G.d Human Migration

Civics and Government	
2002	Current Test
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic Life • Politics and Government • Foundations of the American Political System • American Government • Relationship of United States to Other Nations • The Roles of Citizens in American Democracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CG.a Types of modern and historical governments CG.b Principles that have contributed to development of American constitutional democracy CG.c Structure and design of United States government CG.d Individual rights and civic responsibilities CG.e Political parties, campaigns, and elections in American politics CG.f Contemporary Public Policy

Economics	
2002	Current Test
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Reasoning and Choice • Comparison of Economic Systems • Business in a Free Enterprise System • Production and Consumers • Financial Institutions • Government’s Role in the Economy, Labor and the Economy • Global Markets and Foreign Trade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.a Key economic events that have shaped American government and policies E.b Relationship between political and economic freedoms E.c Fundamental Economic Concepts E.d Microeconomics and Macroeconomics E.e Consumer economics E.f Economic causes and impacts of wars E.g Economic drivers of exploration & colonization E.h Scientific and Industrial Revolutions

Appendix

B

Social Studies Reporting Categories

Reporting Category 1: Analyzing and creating text features in a social studies context

Examples of skills measured in Social Studies Reporting

Category 1:

- Analyzing primary and secondary sources for various purposes
- Identifying aspects of a historical document that reveal the author's point of view or purpose Distinguishing between unsupported claims and those that are grounded in evidence necessary for understanding concepts in the social sciences
- Determining the meaning of domain-specific words used in context

Reporting Category 2: Applying social studies concepts to analysis and construction of arguments

Examples of skills measured in Social Studies Reporting

Category 2:

- Applying social-studies-specific reasoning skills to a variety of tasks
- Examining the relationships among people, environments, events, processes, and ideas and accurately describing the chronological and/or causal nature of the relationships
- Comparing different ideas within social studies disciplines such as civics and economics, and examining the implications of these ideas

- Producing writing that thoroughly and logically develops an idea, claim, or argument based on primary and/or secondary source texts
- Supporting contentions with specific textual evidence from the source texts and demonstrating an understanding of the contexts in which these documents were written

Reporting Category 3: Reasoning quantitatively and interpreting data in social studies contexts

Examples of skills measured in Social Studies Reporting

Category 3:

- Analyzing data presented in a wide variety of formats, including maps, graphic organizers, photographs, and political cartoons
- Integrating analyses of quantitative data with analyses of written information to inform their understanding of the topic at hand
- Accurately using and interpreting graphs in order to analyze the differing ways in which variables are related to one another

Important note regarding the Social Studies reporting categories:

The Social Studies reporting categories are organized according to the Social Studies Practices, rather than the Social Studies content indicators. This organization has been chosen because the Social Studies Practices are integrated into every item on the Social Studies test. While the content indicators are also reflected in all items, the Social Studies content Topics and Subtopics are too numerous for the test to be able to provide reliable and meaningful reporting data. Test-takers, however, will be receiving much more detailed information both on the skills they possess and on those they need to develop than ever before. With this additional information, adult educators will be in a position to focus their work with test-takers on critical skill development needs. Refer to Appendix D of this chapter to view the detailed information that is captured in each of the Social Studies reporting categories.

The reporting information provided by the Current GED® test is one of the most important elements of the new assessment system.

Gaining a firm understanding of the reporting categories on the GED® test will help adult educators in planning how they can best help adult learners to gain the skills they will need to be successful both on the test and in the future pathway they ultimately pursue.

Appendix

C

Reference Codes for Social Studies Practices

The table below provides the reference for each code identified in the “References” column in the Social Studies Practices section of the Social Studies Assessment Targets.

Numerical/Letter Symbol	Social Studies Standards Document Reference
R1, R2, R3, R4, R6, R7, R8, R9	CCSS for English Language Arts & Literacy Reading Master Standards
L1, L2, L4	CCSS for English Language Arts & Literacy Language Master Standards
W1, W2, W4	CCSS for English Language Arts & Literacy Writing Master Standards
NCSS Literacy Skills	National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment
NSH 2, NSH 3.E, NSH 3.F	National Standards for History Revised Edition
N-Q	Common Core State Standards for Mathematics Number and Quantity Quantities
RP	Common Core State Standards for Mathematics Ratios and Proportional Relationships
S-ID	CCSS for Mathematics Standards for Mathematical Content Statistics and Probability Using Probability to Make Decisions
S-MD	CCSS for Mathematics Standards for Mathematical Content Statistics and Probability Using Probability to Make Decisions
S-SP	CCSS for Mathematics Standards for Mathematical Content Statistics and Probability

Appendix

D

Glossary of Key Terms for the Social Studies Test

Analysis/analyze (do not substitute *infer, summarize*): to examine critically in order to determine meaning and to understand the essential elements of [a text or other stimulus]

Application/apply (do not substitute *interpret, infer, summarize, conclude, calculate, solve, predict*): to use or employ an already established skill or piece of information in a new situation

Argument (do not substitute *claim, stance, argumentation*): a process or line of reasoning. For our purposes, arguments can be made either persuasively (i.e., to convince an audience of something) or rhetorically (i.e., to lay out a logical progression of ideas in support of a central stance)

Argumentation (do not substitute *argument, claim, stance, point of view*): the presentation of a line (or lines) of reasoning (i.e., the way in which something is argued, not the line of reasoning itself)

Assumption (do not substitute *premise, conclusion*): something taken for granted; a supposition

Author (do not substitute *narrator, speaker*): the person who wrote a text or other document

Author's credibility (do not substitute *author's point of view, meaning, bias, propaganda*): the degree to which an author can be believed or trusted

Author's point of view (do not substitute *author's purpose, meaning, author's credibility*): the author's attitude or outlook with which information, events, etc. are presented

Author's purpose/intent (do not substitute *meaning, summary, author's point of view, perspective*): the reason an author composes a text or other document (e.g., to convince an audience to use reusable bags rather than paper, to explain Lincoln's stance on abolition of slavery)

Bias (do not substitute *propaganda, author's credibility*): a particular tendency (of an author or a group), especially one that prevents unprejudiced consideration

Causation: a connection between two events or sets of circumstances whereby one produces or brings about the other; that is, one is the cause and the other its effect

Character (do not substitute *people, figure*): a person represented in a story or other literary work (for our purposes, characters are often fictional)

Claim (do not substitute *stance, argument author's purpose, author's point of view, hypothesis, position, perspective*): an assertion of something as fact

Conclusion/conclude (do not substitute *generalization, hypothesis, inference, application, summarize, predict*): a statement that follows logically from another or others in an argument (note: arguments may be text-based, mathematical, scientific, etc.)

Connotative meaning (do not substitute *literal (denotative) meaning, figurative meaning, symbolic meaning*): an association or idea suggested by a word; implicated meaning

Correlation: a relationship or connection between two or more events or sets of circumstances

Create (do not substitute *apply, analyze, synthesize*): to originate or invent (e.g., an original line of reasoning)

Data (do not substitute *information*): individual facts, statistics, or pieces of information (can be qualitative or quantitative). See **information** for disambiguation.

Detail (do not substitute *idea*): a small part that can be considered individually

Evaluate: (do not substitute *interpret, infer, summarize, analyze*): to make a judgment about the significance, worth, validity or quality of something

Evidence (do not substitute *detail, reasoning*): that which tends to prove or disprove something; grounds for belief

Figurative meaning/language (do not substitute *connotative meaning*): that which involves figures of speech and/or is not meant literally (e.g., that which is described through metaphor)

Finding (do not substitute *conclusion, evidence, assumption*): that which is discovered through research or study (See **conclusion** for disambiguation— these concepts are closely related)

Format (do not substitute *genre*): general appearance, style, arrangement (e.g., of a text)

Generalization (do not substitute *summary, conclusion, hypothesis*): a principle, theory or idea that can be applied in many instances

Genre (do not substitute *format*): a class or category, usually used to describe literary or artistic work (e.g., fiction, poetry, etc.)

Historical context: events, figures, ideas prevalent in the popular or political discourse at the time at which something (e.g., a document) was originated

Hypothesis (do not substitute *generalization, conclusion, claim, stance, position, assumption, inference*): a proposition or set of propositions set forth as an explanation for a group of facts or phenomena; conjecture that is a guide for investigation

Idea (do not substitute *theme, detail*): any conception resulting from mental understanding, awareness or activity

Inference/infer (do not substitute *interpret, summarize, analyze, hypothesize*): to conclude by reasoning from evidence that which is *not* explicitly stated

Information (do not substitute *data*): knowledge gained through experience or study. More abstract and general than “data.”

Interpret (do not substitute *infer, summarize, analyze*): to provide the meaning of, or explain, that which is explicitly stated or displayed graphically or symbolically

Justify (do not substitute *support*): to show a claim or statement to be writing, especially using evidence

Literal meaning (do not substitute *inference, interpretation, generalization*): meaning that is in exact accordance with the most explicit, primary meaning of a word or text

Main idea (do not substitute *theme, summary, topic, idea*): the most important central thought in a paragraph or longer *informational* text

Meaning (do not substitute *tone, voice*): what is or is intended to be expressed

Premise (do not substitute *conclusion, assumption, hypothesis*): a basis, stated or assumed, on which reasoning proceeds

Prediction (do not substitute *conclusion, assumption, reasoning, premise, hypothesis*): A statement of something in advance of occurrence, especially on a reasoned or evidentiary basis

Primary source: an original document describing events or ideas of which the author has personal knowledge or experience

Propaganda (do not substitute *bias*): systematic, purposefully persuasive messages that attempt to influence the emotions, attitudes, opinions, and actions of an audience

Reasoning (do not substitute *evidence, meaning, conclusion*): the process of forming conclusions, judgments, or inferences from evidence

Rhetorical technique (do not substitute *author's purpose, figurative language, literary device*): any device an author may use to evoke particular tone or feeling or to provide a frame that may help an audience think about a topic (e.g., appeal to reason); an element of style (i.e., literary devices are a type of rhetorical technique, but not all rhetorical techniques are literary devices)

Scientific model (do not substitute *scientific presentation, theory*): An interpretative description of a phenomenon or system that facilitates access to that phenomenon. May be expressed in a diagram, a set of equations and/or a textual description, though none of those expressions are the model itself. Rather, the expressions represent or communicate the model

Scientific presentation (do not substitute *scientific model, theory*): any medium through which scientific data or information is conveyed, including text, graphs, tables, diagrams, etc.

Secondary source: a document that relates, discusses and comments upon a primary source

Sequence of events (do not substitute *plot, structure*): the order in which events (often historical) occur. Most often conveyed chronologically, but may also be conveyed procedurally, non-literally, etc. Typically, we use “sequence of events” to describe historical events and we use “plot” to describe the events that occur in fictional works.

Speaker (do not substitute *author, narrator*): a person who speaks (used specifically to describe one who delivers a speech or the voice expressed in a poem. Should *not* be used to describe a narrator in a work of fiction or an author in a work of non-fiction.)

Stance (do not substitute *claim, argument, argumentation*): the position on which an author bases an argument (e.g., pro or con)

Structure (do not substitute *sequence of events*): the relationships among and/or organization of component parts of a text or other medium (e.g., Q&A or cause-effect)

Summarize (do not substitute *interpret, analyze*): a brief account that gives the main points of something

Support (do not substitute *justify*): to establish by providing appropriate facts and evidence (either quantitative or textual).

Synthesis/synthesize (do not substitute *apply, summarize, analyze*): to combine elements or ideas from multiple materials into a unified, if complex, whole

Theme (do not substitute *idea, topic, main idea, summary*): the unifying, dominant idea in a *literary* text

Tone (do not substitute *meaning, voice*): the author’s attitude toward the subject and/or audience (e.g., informal, playful, serious, condescending, etc.)

Topic (do not substitute *idea, theme, main idea, summary*): the subject of a discussion or work (typically more concrete than a theme (e.g., sedimentary rocks (topic) vs. rebirth (theme))) in an *informational* text

Voice (do not substitute *meaning, tone*): a combination of an author’s syntax, diction, style, and perspective that is unique to that particular author