

## EOCEP U.S. History and the Constitution 2021 Data Review Report

On October 18, 2021, the South Carolina Department of Education Office of Assessment and Standards convened a panel of experts to review item data from the South Carolina End-of-Course Examination Program for United States History and the Constitution. The panel of educators discussed and analyzed items from the 2021 assessment focusing on items with a low percentage and high percentage of students answering correctly. There were no state assessments in 2020 due to the global pandemic; thus, there is no Data Review Report for spring 2020. However, there are still reports from previous years that contain relevant and useful suggestions for improving instruction. The panel recognizes the hard work of SC educators over the past two years and offers the following recommendations as an addendum to those from previous years.

### General Recommendations

- Students performed well when the language of the question explicitly matched the language of the standard or when they were provided with information in the stimulus to answer an evidence-based question using a single skill. Students also performed well on questions classified as a Depth of Knowledge (DOK) level one.
- Student performance demonstrated a need for practice with questions at a DOK level two and three that require the use of multiple skills or multi-step strategic thought processes to draw conclusions.
- Student performance demonstrated a need to practice close reading of each question in its entirety, carefully utilizing context clues including the time period and vocabulary in the stem and caption(s). It appeared many selections were made by skimming the question rather than using the evidence from the stimulus to support the answer. Students should analyze all aspects of each stimuli including visuals, maps, graphs, comparative texts, political cartoons, et al., before making answer selections.
- Student performance indicates a need for regular exposure to the different types of complex items such as multi-select, evidence-based selected response (EBSR), and technology enhanced (TE) items. Students performed well on TE items where all answer choices were used but performed poorly when not all answer choices were required to be used. Students also could benefit with practice seeing these types of items and using tools within the testing environment. Both can be accessed through the Online Tools Training in [Quick Links for Teachers](#).
- Student performance highlighted the need for consistent application of the historical thinking skills to the content standards in classroom assessments. Students demonstrated weakness in their ability to *compare* historical events, perspectives, and eras and demonstrate an understanding of historical trends and concepts found throughout the standards. Special emphasis should be placed on the sequencing of events and the skill of *cause and effect* between *time periods* and events as well as *change over time*.

## Suggested Instructional Strategies

- *Build student capacity and increase reading stamina.*
  - The committee suggested having students practice reading and analyzing historical texts (to include visuals, maps, graphs, comparative texts, political cartoons, et al.) every day, with varying degrees of length and complexity. Special emphasis should be placed on reading excerpts of the primary source documents outlined in the [Alignment Guide](#). A recommendation was also made to collaborate with ELA teachers for additional textual resources.
- *Teach historical thinking skills concurrently while teaching content.*
  - A recommendation from the committee is to teach the content through the lens of the historical thinking skill attached to that indicator. This could be accomplished through learning tasks tied to specific learning targets or a larger unit essential question. It is important to note that historical thinking skills should not be taught in isolation. However, the committee recognized that it may be helpful to broadly teach and assess the content through the skill aligned to the indicator.
- *Intentionally create and plan for the implementation of high-level questions that require students to explain and justify their thinking using evidence.*
  - The committee recommended using questions that are intentionally sequenced and require multi-step thought processes to meet the requirements of the standards. Questions can be scaffolded to help students analyze and understand a text, but students need more practice with multi-step questions that require them to draw conclusions relating to the historical thinking skill(s). For example, questions could be crafted that first require students to understand the text and secondary questions created to apply the learning to the skill.
- *Help students to summarize and make broad connections.*
  - The committee recommended using summarizing strategies to help students draw conclusions and make broad connections with primary and secondary sources. An example of a strategy suggested was HIPPO (historical context, intended audience, point of view, purpose, outside information). The recommendation included an emphasis on allowing students to come to these conclusions of their own volition rather than exclusively through direct instruction. Committee members also commented that students were more often required to apply a broader understanding of the historical content to the questions rather than answer based on memorized information.
- *Regularly expose students to different formative and summative assessment item types.*
  - The committee recommended for classroom assessments to provide practice in determining the main idea, eliminating false statements, and answering multi-select questions. Specifically, to address the deficits of multi-select responses, questions on formative or summative assessment should include more than one correct answer, such as the relationship between multiple causes and effects.