

EOCEP U.S. History and the Constitution 2022 Data Review Report

On November 16, 2022, 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 2022 assessment focusing on items with a low percentage and high percentage of students answering correctly. The panel recognizes the hard work of SC educators, particularly during the past three years, and offers these relevant and useful suggestions for improving instruction.

General Observations

- Students were consistently able to:
 - recall the “what” of an event
 - recall large-scale historical knowledge or terms
 - identify broad trends and concepts in U.S. History
 - recall information directly from the stimulus to answer the question
 - identify information from basic charts, graphs, political cartoons, and secondary sources
- Students were occasionally able to:
 - use two-step thought processes
 - place historical documents into context
 - identify turning points in historical eras
 - recall subject specific academic vocabulary
 - make connections between events and places
 - determine the significance of historical events
 - draw conclusions supported by basic evidence
 - explain or describe the “why” or “reason for” an event
 - draw conclusions about historical perspectives, beliefs, or arguments
 - use information in a stimulus and prior knowledge to reach a conclusion
 - make basic inferences about the meaning of political cartoons and other primary source documents
- Students were rarely/infrequently able to:
 - provide justifications for claims
 - use two or more cognitive thinking processes
 - make inferences based on more detailed prior historical knowledge
 - use multi-step thought processes in conjunction with complex item types such as multi-select, evidence-based selected response, and technology enhanced items
 - provide more than one example of a cause, effect, impact, comparison, change, characteristic, etc.

Suggested Instructional Strategies

New and Noteworthy:

- *Be deliberate in pacing the course to ensure equal coverage of all standards.*
 - The committee strongly recommended for teachers to establish pacing guides prior to beginning instruction to allow for all standards and indicators to be covered adequately. Based on a variety of assessment items, the committee identified students' knowledge of the content and skills in Standard 5: Legacy of the Cold War as a weakness, which makes up approximately 20 percent of the total test. More information regarding the number of items tested per reporting category can be accessed in the [USHC EOCEP Test Blueprint](#). While the committee acknowledged the realistic time constraints associated with teaching U.S. History, they recommended that teachers review their curriculum resources and remove any additional content not listed in the standards and [Alignment Guide](#) resources if pressed for time. The committee reminds teachers that the test is ordered chronologically beginning with Standard 1 and ending with Standard 5. A suggestion was made to increase USHC students' reading stamina by using primary and secondary sources materials of varying lengths and formats (text, cartoons, images, tables, etc.) throughout the course.
- *Increase students' understanding of economic terms and trends.*
 - The committee noticed several items that revealed content misconceptions as well as patterns in content deficits. Difficult economic concepts such as laissez-faire, command economy, Supply-Side Economics, and Stagflation were identified as a weakness as well as political party platforms and foreign/domestic policies that required an understanding of differing economic perspectives (e.g., Hamilton and Jefferson, boom and bust cycles, and the North American Free Trade Agreement).
- *Integrate the analysis of primary and secondary source excerpts into **every** class.*
 - The committee strongly recommended for teachers to intentionally select short standards-aligned excerpts, visuals, or quotes from sources, such as the Library of Congress or National Archives, and provide students with daily opportunities to investigate these primary and secondary sources. The committee recommended for teachers to model their thinking while analyzing sources and gradually release students to practice in small groups and then on their own. Based on a variety of assessment items, the committee identified a need for students to practice closely reading each stimulus and question, carefully utilizing context clues, including the time period and vocabulary, in the question stem and caption(s). The committee concluded students selected incorrect distractors as a result of skimming the question rather than using the evidence from the stimulus to support the answer. Students should be given practice analyzing all aspects of each stimuli including visuals, maps, graphs, comparative texts, political cartoons, et al., before making answer selections.

- *Chunk the material by main concepts, trends, and connections using graphic organizers.*
 - The committee recommended for students to have a working understanding of key and transformative events in U.S. History and a general knowledge of date ranges that establish major historical time periods. The committee suggested for students to take notes directly into graphic organizers aligned with the historical thinking skill of the indicator to better visualize and apply their learning and make thematic connections.
- *Align instructional strategies and resources to match the expectations of the standards.*
 - The committee recognized a noticeable difference in student performance on Depth of Knowledge (DOK) level 2 and 3 questions and suggested for teachers to more frequently incorporate rigorous instructional tasks and assessments. Teachers could use the [USHC EOCEP Test Blueprint](#), which contains a minimum/maximum percentage of items on the test in each DOK level, as a guide for planning classroom instruction. A recommendation was also made to reference the [USHC EOCEP Performance Level Descriptors User Guide](#) that convey information about the knowledge, skills, and abilities expected of students in each performance level. Lastly, the committee suggested that DOK level one questions could be used to formatively assess and serve as a component of the learning progressions when building toward higher-level cognitive skills.

Previously Suggested & Still Relevant

- *Use the historical thinking skills to go deeper into the content and draw conclusions.*
 - The committee again recommended the need for consistent application of the historical thinking skills in classroom assessments. The committee noted that the terms listed in the Alignment Guide cannot simply be taught as vocabulary terms in isolation. The test items require more complex application of the skills with the content. A suggestion was made to frame instruction through the lens of the historical thinking skill attached to each indicator. This could be accomplished through tasks tied to specific learning targets or a larger unit essential question. However, the committee also noted historical thinking skills should not be taught in isolation and should consistently be applied throughout instruction.
- *Help students to summarize and make broad connections.*
 - The committee again noted that students were more often required to apply a broader understanding of the historical content on the assessment rather than recall memorized information. The committee recommended using summarizing strategies to help students determine the purpose of, and make broad connections with, primary and secondary sources. Students need practice with using information in a stimulus in addition to their prior knowledge to reach a conclusion. The recommendation also included balancing direct instruction with student-centered opportunities to predict outcomes, make claims, and draw conclusions.

- *Regularly expose students to different formative and summative assessment item types.*
 - The committee again recommended 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. A suggestion was made to allow time during class for students to practice determining the main idea of a stimulus, eliminating false statements, and answering multi-select questions that require students to choose two correct answers. Specifically, to address the deficits of multi-select responses, questions on formative or summative assessments should include more than one correct answer, such as the relationship between multiple causes and effects, identifying multiple changes, or multiple characteristics of an era. Students should also explore comparing multiple similarities in addition to differences. 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](#).

- *Intentionally create and implement high-level questions into classroom instruction and assessment that require students to explain and justify their thinking using evidence.*
 - The committee once more recommended giving students' opportunities to practice questions at a DOK level two and three that require the use of multiple skills or multi-step strategic thought processes to draw conclusions. A suggestion was made to design or use questions that are intentionally sequenced and require students to use multi-step thought processes to meet the expectations 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) with time to read, talk, think, and write. Questions could be crafted that first require students to understand the text and secondary questions created to apply the learning to the skill.

USHC EOCEP Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. How can teachers become more involved in the USHC EOCEP test development process?

The Office of Assessment and Standards convenes several meetings each year to review items, stimuli sets, and item data. In addition, there are committees assembled to review stimuli sets and items for potential bias and sensitivity concerns. South Carolina educators are involved in each step of the development process. Educators who are interested in serving on a committee can apply by completing the [Application for Assessment Committees](#).

2. What resources are available from the SCDE to support teachers with the USHC EOCEP test?

The Office of Assessment and Standards provide the following resources:

- [USHC EOCEP Test Blueprint](#) provides teachers with information about the test construction, the Reporting Categories, the number of indicators assessed within each Reporting Category, the range of items within each category, the total number of operational items, and the range of items by DOK level.
- [USHC EOCEP Data Review Reports](#) from previous years may provide additional instructional insights for teachers.
- [Sample Release Items](#) provide teachers with examples of the types of items that are used on the USHC EOCEP assessment as well as a range of DOK complexity.
- [Online Tools Training \(OTT\)](#) includes samples of the item types and system functionality tools students will see in the testing platform. This is not a scored assessment, and the correct answers will not be identified once submitted.
- [USHC Alignment Guide](#) is a resource to assist educators in aligning inquiry and skills-based instruction with the *2019 South Carolina Social Studies College- and Career-Ready Standards*.
- [USHC EOCEP Performance Level Descriptors \(PLD\) User Guide](#) contains descriptions that provide the knowledge, skills, and abilities expected of students in each performance level as defined by the standards.

3. How can I use my class(es) EOCEP scores to determine trends if the test is different every year?

Each test is built to the Test Blueprint specifications and statistically equivalent for each administration. Teachers can view overall class performance on state summative assessments to determine changes in trends over time. Teachers can also track trends in student-level performance, using the total test score, to monitor if the percentage of students in the “meets expectations” performance level changes over time.

4. Why does the state offer assessment resources in multiple languages, but only offer the USHC EOCEP test in English?

Section 59-18-310 of [The Education Accountability Act](#) requires that statewide assessments must be “developed... and administered in English...”

5. Why don't teachers receive more specific information about student scores on the USHC EOCEP assessment to enhance our instruction?

Teachers receive the scale score to use as their students' final exam grade. This score ranges from 0-100, in correspondence with the South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale. *The scale score is not the percentage of test questions answered correctly.* Scale scores are built using the PLDs and the Rasch model. Once districts receive the final data file for that semester of testing, teachers also have access to their students' "Performance by Reporting Category." The five Reporting Categories for USHC are:

- Standard 1: Foundations of American Republicanism
- Standard 2: Expansion and Union
- Standard 3: Capitalism and Reform
- Standard 4: Modernism and Interventionism
- Standard 5: Legacy of the Cold War

Students also receive an Individual Student Report (ISR) that provides the scores and performance by Reporting Category for each EOCEP assessment taken during that school year. A [Sample ISR](#) is located on the SCDE website. Once the districts receive the final data file for that semester of testing, the data is uploaded (by the district) into [Enrich](#). The level of access that teachers have in Enrich is determined by the individual school district. Contact your School Testing Coordinator (STC) for more information about when the data file will be available in your district and how to access scores in Enrich.