



**United States  
History and the Constitution**

**Test Data  
Review Report  
2023**

## Introduction

On October 24, 2023, Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) and the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) Office of Assessment and Standards (OAS) convened a panel of educators to review item data from the South Carolina End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) assessment of the 2019 South Carolina Social Studies College- and Career-Ready Standards. The panel discussed and analyzed items from the 2023 assessment, including information about how students performed on each item. The panel recognizes the hard work of South Carolina educators and offers these relevant and useful suggestions for improving instruction as an addendum to those from previous years.

## General Instructional Strategies

- For using **Primary and Secondary Sources**,
  - be specific in teaching students how to interact with and use different primary sources, including text-based (e.g., diary, memoir, letter, monograph, speech, literature, newspaper article), data-based (e.g., graph, chart, diagram, timeline), map-based (e.g., political map, physical map, thematic map), and visual-based (e.g., political cartoon, photo, illustration).
  - consider having students read and use social studies sources similarly to how the disciplinary community would read and use them today. Where specific sources are mentioned in the Standards/Alignment Guide, educators can ask themselves these questions to help integrate the use of sources in authentic ways:
    - Who reads this sort of text outside a classroom setting?
    - What is their goal in reading it?
    - How do they read it?
    - What do they use the information from the source(s) to do?
  - ask questions about primary sources and analyze how a particular source could be used by a historian.
  - give students frequent opportunities to analyze primary sources and make connections between an unfamiliar (“cold read”) primary source and previous learning.
  - practice summarizing or close reading strategies with primary sources to identify information relevant to the question or task.
  - create short summaries of primary sources to encourage thinking about main ideas.
  - teach students to use *all* of the information provided by a source; encourage students to review the time period of quotes and cartoons to make connections with historical perspectives and promote “big picture” thinking.
  - provide consistent practice reading longer *excerpts* of primary sources; get students in the habit of contextualizing, reviewing the author and date of a primary source prior to reading to put the source into context and draw on prior knowledge.
  - use narratives and other primary sources to provide direct connections to content.

- use images and political cartoons frequently in class, and model for students how to use and interpret them; add accessibility captions and encourage students to create meaning from illustrations by reading descriptions or captions.
- teach students how to draw conclusions from data; familiarize students with maps, charts, and graphs, and ask them to draw conclusions using those data and their own historical knowledge.
- For incorporating **Historical Thinking Skills**,
  - allow students to create their own graphic organizers when making comparisons.
  - replace guided notes with visual organizers whenever possible to allow the development of historical thinking skills and the ability to categorize, classify, or sort important information.
  - include and compare/contrast diverse perspectives in instruction.
  - practice determining patterns or trends in data and differentiating between the causes and effects of the trends; ask students questions like:
    - “What can be known from this information?”
    - “What can be inferred from this information?”
    - “What cannot be known from this information?”
  - help students to recognize and discuss connections between historical events.
  - encourage students to make connections between the date of a source and the major issues or historical events occurring during that time period.
  - create frequent opportunities for students to use historical thinking skills to connect their knowledge of an event to broader trends.
  - practice highlighting specific evidence within a document that supports a claim; have students provide justification for why it supports the claim.
  - require students to support their answers with evidence.
  - use charts to summarize differences in political viewpoints.
  - create tasks that require students to identify trends from a set of data and draw conclusions about continuities or changes.
- For effective **Questioning**,
  - model and practice questions that require multi-step thinking processes.
  - ask questions that require students to make connections rather than simply recalling information.
  - ask questions that require students to provide evidence to support their response.
  - ask questions that require students to look for consistency or differences using more than one primary source.

- ensure students practice questions in which they recall information from a source and apply that information using higher-order thinking skills.
- increase literacy in graphs, charts, and maps; model for students how to use that information to answer questions.
- For standard-specific and disciplinary **Vocabulary**,
  - use the language of the standards during instruction and draw attention to the use of that language in assignments and instructional materials.
  - emphasize the meaning of words or phrases commonly used in social studies contexts that are not necessarily “vocabulary” terms (e.g., “dissent,” “minority,” “emerged,” “commercial growth”).
  - ensure students are familiar with different expressions when referring to time periods (e.g., “early/mid/late-twentieth century”).
  - provide students with opportunities to practice using standard-specific vocabulary and general disciplinary words or phrases in written or verbal forms.

## Standard-Specific Strategies and Information

- For **Standard 1: Foundations of American Republicanism 1607-1815**,
  - help students understand similarities between the northern and southern colonies, such as relations with Native Americans, in addition to differences.
  - practice analyzing the reasons for similarities and differences between colonial regions with a graphic organizer, or by having students create their own.
  - differentiate between vocabulary such as subsistence farming and commercial agriculture.
  - help students understand arguments for or against certain proposals, ideas, or plans (e.g., “Albany Plan of Union,” “Parliamentary Acts”).
  - ensure students are familiar with other terms for the United States, (e.g., “Republic”) during this time period; expose students to terms such a “federal,” “national,” or “central” when referencing the government.
  - help students to understand commonly used disciplinary words or phrases in relation to this time period (e.g., “sovereignty,” “delegated,” “turning point,” “dissent,” “minority,” “emerged”) and recognize synonyms for these terms.
  - use graphic organizers, or let students create their own graphic organizers, to analyze the causes and effects of the transition from the Articles of Confederation to the Constitution.
  - help students understand the context around the First Great Awakening and the connection to the Enlightenment.

- help students understand the difference between domestic and foreign policy and how these policies were maintained or changed from Washington's to Madison's presidency.
- practice connecting and applying founding principles such as federalism, republicanism, checks and balances, and separation of powers to different perspectives.
- use primary sources that help students become familiar with phrases and dialect of this time period.
- encourage students to make connections between historical documents from this time period (e.g., "Declaration of Independence," "Federalist Papers") and other documents or points of view.
- For **Standard 2: Expansion and Union 1803-1877**,
  - use a graphic organizer to highlight sectionalism; have students match the American System with areas that will benefit or create charts to highlight sectional differences.
  - provide descriptive overviews of political parties ("e.g., "Federalist," "Democratic," "Whig," "Republican"), and consistently refer back to them to discuss how they may have changed over time.
  - help students understand the difference between the meaning of territorial "acquisition" and "expansion".
  - emphasize the importance of railroads for westward expansion and industrialization of the North; emphasize the significant differences, strengths, or and challenges between travel over land and travel over water (e.g., flexible routes vs. efficiency).
  - ensure students are familiar with different expressions when referring to time periods in this standard (e.g., "the women's rights movement began in the mid-nineteenth century").
  - build continuity across indicators by analyzing the U.S.'s relationship with Native Americans.
  - provide concrete examples for students to understand the difference between the terms "Black Codes" and "Jim Crow laws".
  - help students understand the debates over the role of the federal government in securing natural rights for all citizens during Reconstruction.
  - help students understand and differentiate between government actions (e.g., "Missouri Compromise," "Compromise of 1850," "Kansas-Nebraska Act," "Freedmen's Bureau Act of 1865/66," and "Reconstruction Act of 1867") and the shift in stance or involvement over time; annotated timelines, graphic organizers, or gradient lines may help develop understanding.
- For **Standard 3: Capitalism and Reform 1862-1924**,
  - provide instruction on the impact of the assembly line as it relates to labor and production methods; use a graphic organizer to make comparisons.

- create comparison charts to identify strategies (e.g., “strikebreaking,” “vertical or horizontal integration,” “collective bargaining,” “creation of trusts,” “control of labor costs”) that would have been supported by either labor leaders, Captains of Industry, or both.
- help students understand how Social Darwinism was used to justify business activities and compare differing perspectives.
- help students understand why Progressive reformers would have advocated for specific reforms; highlight the reason(s) for the change and the proposed solution(s); (e.g., “17<sup>th</sup> Amendment,” “18<sup>th</sup> Amendment”); use photography from the Progressive Era to deepen students’ understanding of how the movement led to reforms.
- emphasize the meaning of commonly used disciplinary economic words or phrases frequently throughout instruction in this standard (e.g., “free market,” “trusts,” “capitalism,” “competition,” “rates and rebates,” “laissez-faire,” “regulations,” “quota,” “cost,” “goods and services,” “capital,” “subsidies,” “taxes and tariffs”).
- guide students in recognizing and connecting overarching themes that repeat across different historical eras.
- use maps to explain westward movement; label maps with motivations/incentives for movement as well as impacts on regions or groups.
- use primary sources, such as political cartoons, to help students understand the context of historical events and developments (e.g., “reasons for changes in immigration laws”).
- use a timeline to continuously examine the federal government’s actions and impact on Native Americans.
- provide multiple primary sources for students to analyze that demonstrate changes in federal government policies in this time period; examples could include maps of Indian Territory prior to the passage of the Dawes Act or documents of applications for land allotments after the passage of the Dawes Act.
- place greater emphasis on legislation passed in the years following the Civil War (environmental conservation efforts, assimilation policies, immigration laws) and examine how that legislation represented a continuity or change in American policy.
- use maps to examine conservation efforts in the late 1800s to early 1900s.
- For **Standard 4: Modernism and Interventionism 1893-1945**,
  - provide students with a timeline for U.S. involvement in war; class discussion may help develop a comparison of the isolationist and interventionist perspective across World Wars.
  - demonstrate the differences in reasons for U.S. intervention in World War I compared to World War II.
  - ask students to compare the League of Nations and United Nations; consider the U.S.

perspective in the context of the economy and world events at the time of the establishment of both organizations.

- use graphic organizers to introduce students to New Deal policies; sort and compare different pieces of New Deal legislation to promote understanding of the purpose or need for such policies; ask students what the legislation attempted to address.
- ask students to explain the shift in government intervention from the Gilded Age to the Great Depression, citing evidence.
- place more emphasis on the role of government and its changing nature through different historical eras.
- emphasize the meaning of disciplinary words or phrases commonly used to teach historical events during the period of this standard and frequently incorporate related vocabulary into instruction (e.g., “consumerism,” “traditionalism,” “urbanization,” “disparities in wealth,” “provisions”).
- use examples of advertisements for consumer goods during the 1920s to understand consumerism.
- use graphic organizers to compare the characteristics of traditional and modern lifestyles; include vocabulary such as “fundamentalism” and “nativism” and provide examples of events (e.g. “Scopes Trial”) that demonstrate the tension between groups.
- incorporate propaganda examples for students to analyze as a group; encourage students to think about the ways propaganda from both world wars was meant to appeal to Americans.
- use poll data to compare how American attitudes towards war refugees in World War I and World War II were similar or different; students also can compare how attitudes stayed the same or changed prior to the war and during the war.
- encourage students to review the time period of quotes and cartoons to make connections with historical perspectives and promote “big picture” thinking.

- For **Standard 5: Legacy of the Cold War 1945—present**,

- use timelines to teach technological innovations; help students to connect the evolution of technology to events occurring in the time period.
- help students draw conclusions and make comparisons about impacts of government actions (e.g., how the G.I. Bill and Interstate Highways Act contributed to suburban growth).
- demonstrate the importance of the War Powers Act as it relates to the powers of the government.
- help students identify trends from U.S. Supreme Court decisions during this time period rather than memorize the facts of each case.
- help students make connections between the significance of the Iran Hostage Crisis in

the greater context of the Cold War.

- provide students opportunity to trace the shift in U.S. foreign policies and involvement in foreign affairs from Truman's presidency to Reagan's presidency.
- emphasize the shift in protection of civil liberties during the era; help students to understand what civil liberties are, as well as brief discussions of certain "Warren Court" cases.
- ask students to compare and contrast political platforms; have them draft responses to scenarios from a particular party's perspective.
- emphasize the meaning of commonly used disciplinary words or phrases frequently throughout instruction in this standard (e.g., "supply-side economics," "proxy wars," "integration," "civil liberties," "military installations," "revenue").
- help students understand the context or conditions that led groups or individuals to support certain ideas or concepts (e.g., President Reagan's support of supply-side economics).
- compare strategies of leaders, using primary sources to illustrate continuities or changes in perspectives or strategies over time.
- compare the approaches of civil rights movements over the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; match those movements with relevant legislation.
- emphasize how different movements (e.g., "Women's Rights," "Civil Rights") show continuity in strategies to further their cause (e.g., "protests," "legislation").

## EOCEP USHC Frequently Asked Questions

- **How can teachers become more involved in the EOCEP USHC test development process?**

The Office of Assessment and Standards convenes several meetings each year to review items, stimulus 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](#).

- **What resources are available from the SCDE to support teachers with the EOCEP USHC test?**

The Office of Assessment and Standards provide the following resources:

- [EOCEP USHC 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 Depth of Knowledge (DOK) level.



- [EOCEP USHC Test Data Review Reports](#) from previous years may provide additional instructional insights for teachers.
  - [Sample Items](#) provide teachers with examples of the types of items that are used on the EOCEP USHC assessment as well as a range of DOK levels.
  - [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*.
  - [EOCEP USHC 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.
- **Why are teachers not provided with more specific information about student scores on the EOCEP USHC assessment to enhance 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, dependent on district permissions, 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. Contact your School Testing Coordinator (STC) for more information about when the data file will be available in your district and how to access students' performance by reporting category.

- **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.

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

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