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## **EOCEP U.S. History and the Constitution 2025 Test Data Review Report**

Office of Assessment and Standards

October 2025

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*South Carolina Department of Education*

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## Introduction

Data Recognition Corporation and the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) Office of Assessment and Standards (OAS) convened a committee of content experts to review item data from the 2024-25 administration of the End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) for United States History and the Constitution. The committee discussed and analyzed operational and field test items from the assessment, including information about how students performed on each item. Based on their analysis, the committee compiled a list of key insights and instructional strategies to support student learning and promote ongoing educational improvement throughout the state. The SCDE extends its sincere appreciation to the committee for its dedicated work and presents this document of recommendations as an addendum to those from previous years (2021-2024).

## General Instructional Strategies (2021-2025)

The following categories outline the general instructional strategies noted by the committees from 2021-2025. This list was created to help educators discern the recurring recommendations and trends across test administrations. Some recommendations have been consolidated where appropriate. **Recommendations made or repeated in 2025 are bold.**

### Assessment Practices

- **Help students practice interpreting the item stem/question prior to engaging with the provided stimulus to read it in a more focused and purposeful way. (2025)**
- **Create a pacing guide to ensure equal coverage of all standards prior to beginning instruction to allow for all standards and indicators to be covered adequately; realistic time constraints associated with teaching U.S. History were acknowledged, but recommendations were made for teachers to review their curriculum resources and remove any additional content not listed in the standards and [USHC Alignment Guide](#) if pressed for time. (2025, 2022)**
- **Regularly expose students to different item types listed in the [USHC Item Types and Descriptions](#) document on classroom assessments as well as provide opportunities to practice these types of items using tools within the testing environment on the [Online Tools Training \(OTT\)](#). (2025, 2022, 2021)**
- Student knowledge of the content and skills in Standard 5: Legacy of the Cold War, which makes up approximately 20 percent of the total test, was identified as an area for growth. (2022)
- The test is sequenced in roughly a chronological order beginning with Standard 1 and ending with Standard 5. (2022)
- Have students practice eliminating false statements and answering questions with more than one correct answer (e.g., explaining the relationship between multiple causes and effects, identifying multiple changes, characteristics of an era, or comparing similarities and differences. (2022, 2021)

## Cognitive Complexity/Depth of Knowledge (DOK)

- **Align instructional strategies and resources to match the expectations of the standards and more frequently incorporate rigorous instructional tasks and assessments (e.g., integrate opportunities for students to directly practice selecting evidence or reasoning that supports their response or draw a skills-based conclusion that continues from their response). (2025, 2022)**
- Use resources such as the [EOCEP USHC Test Blueprint](#), which contains a minimum/maximum percentage of items on the test in each DOK level, or the [EOCEP USHC Performance Level Descriptors User Guide](#) that convey information about the knowledge, skills, and abilities expected of students in each performance level, as a guide for planning classroom instruction. (2022)
- Use DOK level one questions to formatively assess and serve as a component of the learning progression when building toward higher-level cognitive skills. (2022)
- Students performed well on questions classified as a Depth of Knowledge (DOK) level one but demonstrated a need for practice with questions at DOK levels two and three that require the use of multiple skills or multi-step strategic thought processes to draw conclusions. (2022, 2021)

## Course Themes and Broad Connections

- American Culture and Identity
  - Emphasize similarities/changes in American culture and values between time periods throughout American history; ask students to draw conclusions about the impacts on national politics, foreign policies, and societal development. (2024)
- Capitalism and Technological Innovation
  - **Emphasize and trace the role of the federal government and its changing nature in the economy through different historical eras across Standards 1–5. (2025, 2023)**
  - Revisit the role of capitalism after it is introduced in Standard 1 and emphasize its relationship/connection to the Industrial Revolution, Cold War, modern-day political parties, etc. (2024)
- **Expansion, Regionalism, and Union**
  - **Use maps and primary sources to show how land agreements, policies, purchases, or conquests show American expansionism over time. (e.g., Northwest Ordinance, Louisiana Purchase, Mexican Cession, etc.) (2025)**
- Founding Principles and Political Institutions
  - Review the founding concepts and principles of the Constitution regularly with students throughout the course; while this content is introduced in Standard 1, Standards 2-5 also contain relevant content (e.g., constitution debates, constitutional amendments, Supreme Court decisions, etc.) that allow students to explore continuities and changes over time. (2024)

- Migration and Mobility
  - **Help students make connections about American attitudes toward immigration (e.g., groups during colonization, Alien and Sedition Acts, Old/New immigrants, Chinese Exclusion Act, war refugees, etc.) and how U.S. policies have continued or changed across major historical eras. (2025)**
  - **Ensure that students have a basic understanding of the physical geography of the United States to help make connections with migration and settlement patterns; begin mapping migration patterns of different groups at the beginning of the course and continue adding to the map throughout instruction across all standards. (2025, 2024)**
  - Show students maps of population density during different periods of time as a visual to deepen their understanding of demographic changes. (2024)
- Natural Rights and Social Development
  - **Ask students to think critically about big concepts (e.g., individual rights); help students make connections about how American social values have been shaped over time (e.g., connections from movements during the antebellum era with the Civil Rights Movement, reform movements and resulting legislation, or government actions during times of crisis with Espionage and Sedition Acts, USA PATRIOT Act, etc.). (2025, 2024)**
- Broad Connections
  - **Help students to summarize and make broad connections between historical events; test items more often require students to apply a broader understanding of the historical content on the assessment rather than only recall memorized information. (2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021)**
  - Help students chunk content by main concepts, trends, and connections to understand key and transformative events in U.S. History (a general knowledge of date ranges that establish major historical time periods is helpful for chunking). (2022)
  - Have students 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. (2022)
  - Use summarizing strategies (e.g., HIPPO) to help students determine the purpose of and make broad connections with primary and secondary sources, in addition to their prior knowledge, to reach a conclusion. (2022, 2021)

### Historical Thinking Skills

- **Model connecting the content/skill/thinking during instruction; allow students the opportunity to practice connecting the content/skill/thinking in small groups and independently. (2025, 2024)**
- **Content listed in the [USHC Alignment Guide](#) cannot simply be taught as vocabulary terms in isolation, as the test items require more complex application of the skills with the content. (2025, 2022)**

- **Provide students with one or more skills-based tasks that use the standard-aligned historical thinking skill to formulate conclusions. (2025, 2024)**
  - **Highlight specific evidence within a document that supports a claim; have students provide justification for why it supports the claim. (2025, 2024, 2023)**
  - Identify or explain a similarity or difference in the identified historical developments, events, geographic settings, economic situations, groups or individual's actions/beliefs. (2024)
  - Identify or explain a cause/effect of, or causality between, historical developments or events. (2024)
  - Identify a source(s) that demonstrate(s) a correct cause/effect relationship. (2024)
  - Identify or explain how historical events are related chronologically. (2024)
  - Draw conclusions about historical developments or characteristics of a time period. (2024)
  - Establish connections between relative historical events/themes or make connections between sources. (2024, 2023)
  - Draw conclusions about the time and place in which a source(s) was created. (2024)
  - Analyze patterns of continuity or change. (2024)
  - Analyze the significance of an event, action, idea, or development as part of a change or part of a continuity in history. (2024)
  - Analyze point of view, purpose, bias, artistic technique, and/or the intended audience of a source(s). (2024)
  - Identify a plausible claim that logically flows from a source(s) presented. (2024)
  - Evaluate and classify best use of one or more sources. (2024)
- 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. (2023)
- Allow students to create their own graphic organizers when making comparisons of diverse perspectives or political viewpoints. (2023)
- Practice determining patterns or trends in data and differentiating between the causes and effects of the trends or continuities and changes; ask students questions like: (2023)
  - What can be known from this information?
  - What can be inferred from this information?
  - What cannot be known from this information?
- Use the historical thinking skills to go deeper into the content to help students draw conclusions; embed these practices in classroom assessment (e.g., compare historical events, perspectives, and eras and demonstrate an understanding of historical trends and concepts found throughout the standards or have students sequence events to understand connections between time periods well as change over time.) (2022, 2021)
- Teach historical thinking skills concurrently while teaching content through the lens of the historical thinking skill attached to that indicator; note that historical thinking skills should not be taught in isolation and should consistently be applied throughout instruction. (2022, 2021)

## Primary and Secondary Sources

- Use strategies such as a “Say, Mean, Matter” graphic organizer to help students decode denser text and excerpts. (2025)
- Use a collection of sources (stimulus set) organized around a topic, theme, or idea that are meaningfully connected to understand a larger historical concept rather than focus on events in isolation; have students organize sources chronologically and generate synthesis statements to help them think more broadly about the main concepts and trends across U.S. history or provide students with one or more skills-based tasks that use the standard-aligned historical thinking skills to formulate conclusions. (2025, 2024)
- 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). (2025, 2023)
  - Use the “four quadrants” strategy to divide a visual-based source and incorporate spiraling questions that begin at the surface level “What do you see?” and move into deeper analysis pulling the image together. (2025)
  - Model for students how to use visual-based sources and interpret them; add accessibility captions and encourage students to create meaning from illustrations by reading descriptions or captions. (2023)
  - Teach students how to draw conclusions from data and ask them to draw conclusions using those data and their own historical knowledge. (2023)
- Build student capacity and increase reading stamina by having students read and analyze excerpts of primary source documents outlined in the [USHC Alignment Guide](#) and standards-aligned historical texts (to include visuals, maps, graphs, comparative texts, political cartoons, quotes, et al.) every day, with varying degrees of length and complexity. (2025, 2023, 2022, 2021)
- Teach students to use *all* the information provided by a source; get students in the habit of contextualizing by reviewing the author, date, or time period of a primary source (prior to engaging with it) to make connections with prior knowledge or historical perspectives and promote “big picture” thinking. (2025, 2023, 2021)
- Help students practice making claims using multiple excerpts or sources; encourage students to annotate the text, image, data, etc. to record active student thinking. (2024)
- 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: (2023)
  - 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. (2023)
- Give students frequent opportunities to make connections between an unfamiliar (“cold read”) primary source and previous learning. (2023)
- Practice creating short summaries or using close reading strategies with primary sources to identify main ideas and information relevant to the question or task. (2023)
- Model and think out loud while analyzing sources and gradually release students to practice in small groups and then on their own. (2022)

## Questioning

- **Ensure students practice answering questions in which they recall information from a source and apply that information using higher-order thinking skills to make connections. (2025, 2023)**
- Increase literacy in graphs, charts, and maps; model for students how to use the information in the stimulus to answer questions. (2023)
- Ask questions that require students to look for consistency or differences using more than one primary source. (2023)
- Intentionally create, model, and implement high-level questions that require students to use multi-step thinking processes and evidence to justify their response. (2023, 2022, 2021)
- Scaffold questions that require students to understand the text and secondary questions to apply the learning to the historical thinking skill(s) with time to read, talk, think, and write. (2022, 2021)

## Vocabulary

- **Use a “Taboo-game style” vocabulary review; students give clues for their team to guess a vocabulary term while avoiding a list of “forbidden” or closely associated terms to promote active engagement and deeper understanding. (2025)**
- Use the language of the standards during instruction and draw attention to the use of that language in assignments and instructional materials. (2023)
- 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). (2023)
- Ensure students are familiar with different expressions when referring to time periods (e.g., early/mid/late-twentieth century). (2023)
- Several test items revealed content misconceptions and patterns in content deficits in economic terms and trends such as laissez-faire, command economy, supply-side economics, and Stagflation, or 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). (2022)
- Students performed well when the language/vocabulary in the question explicitly matched the language/vocabulary of the standard or indicator. (2021)

## Standard-Specific Instructional Strategies (2023-2025)

The following categories outline the standard-specific instructional strategies noted by the committees from 2023-2025. This list was created to help educators discern the recurring recommendations and trends across test administrations. Some recommendations have been consolidated where appropriate. **Recommendations made or repeated in 2025 are bold.**

### Standard 1: Foundations of American Republicanism 1607–1815

#### *Colonial Regions*

- **Practice analyzing the reasons for similarities and differences between colonial regions with a graphic organizer (or have students create their own) to help students visualize how these differences contributed to sectionalism (e.g., use the “ESPN” geography strategy to organize information). (2025, 2024, 2023)**
- Help students understand similarities between the northern and southern colonies (e.g., relations with Native Americans) in addition to differences in social, political and economic characteristics. (2024, 2023)
- Emphasize how policies, such as mercantilism or salutary neglect, impacted the colonial economies or governments in similar or different ways. (2024)
- Differentiate between vocabulary such as subsistence farming and commercial agriculture. (2023)

#### *Founding Documents*

- **Encourage students to make connections between historical documents from this time period (e.g., highlight specific grievances listed in the Declaration of Independence and show how they are addressed in the U.S. Constitution or compare Article 3 of the Articles of Confederation to the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution). (2025, 2023)**
- Use graphic organizers, or let students create their own, to analyze the causes and effects of the transition from the Articles of Confederation to the U.S. Constitution and how it impacted the development of the U.S. government. (2024, 2023)
- Have students explore the articles within the U.S. Constitution; students should understand its logical progression and how the debates over representation impacted the formation of the legislative branch. (2024)
- Help students understand arguments for or against certain proposals, ideas, or plans (e.g., Albany Plan of Union, Parliamentary Acts, etc.). (2023)

#### *Development of Republicanism and Federalism*

- **Select excerpts from the U.S. Constitution (e.g., Article 1 Section 1, Article 2 Section 4, 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment, etc.) for students to practice connecting and applying founding principles such as federalism, republicanism, checks and balances, and separation of powers; extension activity to use primary source excerpts to connect founding principles to different perspectives. (2025, 2023)**

- **Help students understand that capitalism developed concurrently with ideals of Republicanism during the Enlightenment (e.g., use excerpts from Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations* to show how concepts of commerce and free trade influenced the Founding Fathers and shaped the U.S. economy). (2025, 2024)**
- Help students with contextualization; ask students to look for connections to the Atlantic world (e.g., “How did Great Britain’s government positively or negatively influence the development of American democracy?” and “How and why did capitalism develop in the U.S.?” etc.). (2024)
- Ensure that students are familiar with features of the U.S. government that were inspired by the Enlightenment (e.g., separation of powers, natural rights, etc.). (2024)
- Make sure students can discern the difference between separation of powers and federalism; help students understand that federalism developed from the lessons learned from the Articles of Confederation. (2024)
- Help students understand the context around the First Great Awakening and the connection to the Enlightenment. (2023)
- Practice connecting and applying founding principles such as federalism, republicanism, checks and balances, and separation of powers to different perspectives. (2023)

### **Role of the Federal Government**

- **Use a jigsaw case study activity to help students understand how the decisions of the Marshall Court expanded federal power and influenced debates about the role of the federal government. (2025)**
- **Have students create a comparison chart of Hamilton and Jefferson’s views on the creation of a national bank and trace how their opposing views led to ongoing debates about the interpretation of the U.S. Constitution. (2025)**
- **Ensure that students are familiar with the development of early political parties and the differing perspectives on federalism (e.g., trace debates over the role of government and federalism from before the American Revolution through the ratification of the U.S. Constitution). (2025, 2024)**
- **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. (2025, 2023)**
- Help students understand the continuities and changes in relationships with Native Americans and Europeans surrounding the War of 1812; it may be helpful to make comparisons to the American Revolution. (2024)

### **Vocabulary**

- **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, regions, alliances, neutrality) and recognize synonyms for these terms. (2025, 2023)**

- Practice using academic vocabulary in multiple sources and contexts (e.g., sovereignty); have students consider the meaning when it is used in terms such as “popular sovereignty” in reference to principles of the U.S. Constitution or the Kansas- Nebraska Act and “tribal sovereignty,” “American sovereignty,” or “sovereign nations” during later periods of expansionism or imperialism. (2024)
- Ensure students are familiar with other terms for the United States, (e.g., Republic) during this time period; expose students to terms such as federal, national, or central when referencing the government. (2023)
- Use primary sources that help students become familiar with phrases and dialect of this time period. (2023)

## Standard 2: Expansion and Union 1803–1877

### *Sectionalism*

- **Have students use secondary sources, such as maps of railroads or charts of regional characteristics during the antebellum era, to (2025, 2024)**
  - **make comparisons and draw conclusions about major trends,**
  - **understand economic differences between regions,**
  - **show how regions were interdependent, or**
  - **determine where most immigrants settled during the mid-1800s and explain why.**
- **Use a map as a graphic organizer to highlight sectionalism; have students match the components of the American System with areas that will benefit or create charts to highlight sectional differences; students could continue to add additional events that increase sectional differences, leading to the Civil War or use it to demonstrate each region’s advantages during the Civil War. (2025, 2023)**
- 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. (2023)

### *American Expansion*

- **Emphasize the importance of railroads for westward expansion and industrialization of the North (e.g., highlight the influence on settlement patterns or significant differences, strengths, or challenges between travel over land and travel over water; emphasize flexible routes vs. efficiency). (2025, 2023)**
- Help students make the connection between rural to urban demographic changes and the women’s rights movement (e.g., Lowell factories and the changing roles of women in society). (2024)
- Build continuity across indicators by analyzing the U.S.’s relationship with Native Americans. (2023)

### **Role of Government from Antebellum Era to Reconstruction**

- **Help students identify trends and the overall significance of U.S. Supreme Court cases from this period (e.g., *Worcester v. Georgia*, *Dred Scott v. Sandford*) by creating an annotated timeline of events from sectionalism to secession. (2025)**
- **Emphasize the context for the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation as a war measure by integrating a timeline of events (e.g., Lincoln’s election, southern secession, Emancipation Proclamation, 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, etc.) to help show the connection. (2025)**
- **Help students analyze the continuities between the Reconstruction era and antebellum era (e.g., evaluating the exception clause of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment and comparing slavery-era laws to Black Codes, understanding the cost of labor and why Black Codes were imposed, evaluating ongoing tensions between the legislative and executive branches, etc.). (2025, 2024)**
- **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, Reconstruction Act of 1867, and Ku Klux Klan Act in 1871) and the shift in stance or involvement over time; annotated timelines, graphic organizers, or gradient lines may help develop understanding. (2025, 2023)**
- Practice having students ask questions to contextualize historical sources, such as the Emancipation Proclamation or the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution. (2024)
  - When and where was the source written?
  - Who was the intended audience?
  - What significant events occurred when the source was created?
  - What social, political, or economic factors might have influenced the creation of the source?
- Emphasize government concepts such as the supremacy clause, necessary and proper clause, federalism, etc. when discussing the Reconstruction Amendments (e.g., 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment reinforcing federal supremacy over Black Codes in states). (2024)
- Help students better understand the impeachment process in the context of Reconstruction (e.g., President Andrew Johnson); students demonstrated the misconception that the process is carried out by the judicial branch rather than an example of checks and balances between the executive and legislative branches. (2024)
- Help students understand the debates over the role of the federal government in securing natural rights for all citizens during Reconstruction. (2023)

### **Vocabulary**

- Help students understand the difference between the meaning of territorial “acquisition” and “expansion”. (2023)
- 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). (2023)
- Provide concrete examples for students to understand the difference between the terms “Black Codes” and “Jim Crow laws”. (2023)

## Standard 3: Capitalism and Reform 1862–1924

### *Industrial and Labor Leaders*

- **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; provide scenarios to have students classify which statement would have been supported by which group. (2025, 2023)**
- Ensure students can apply their understanding of terms (e.g., Captains of Industry, Robber Barons, or philanthropists) to different perspectives using evidence to support their conclusions; have students analyze primary source excerpts to show that businessmen of the time (e.g., Carnegie, Rockefeller, Vanderbilt) could be understood from multiple perspectives, depending on the context. (2024)
- Expose students to political cartoons demonstrating the relationship between labor, business, and the U.S. government and have students evaluate the cartoonist’s perspective. (2024)
- Use a graphic organizer to compare how the government responded to the needs of businesses and workers and have students summarize effects of the response (e.g., Sherman Anti-Trust Act). (2024)
- Provide instruction on the impact of the assembly line as it relates to labor and production methods; use a graphic organizer to make comparisons. (2023)
- Help students understand how Social Darwinism was used to justify business activities and compare differing perspectives. (2023)

### *Reform Movements*

- **Help students understand why Populist and Progressive groups or reformers would have advocated for specific reforms; highlight the groups responsible for the change, the reason(s) for the change, and the proposed solution(s) (e.g., 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment, 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Pure Food and Drug Act, Interstate Commerce Act); use sources from muckrakers during the Progressive Era to deepen students’ understanding of how the movement led to reforms. (2025, 2023)**
- **Help students understand short- and long-term causes and effects of Constitutional reforms during the Progressive era using jigsaw strategies (e.g., connection between political machines and 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment, 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and the immediate impact versus the impact over time, etc.). (2025, 2024)**
- Use cause/effect diagrams or have students create their own visuals to represent causal relationships between historical events and developments (e.g., Farmers Alliance, the development of labor unions, famous strikes, etc.). (2024)
- Emphasize the economic transformation during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the role of Progressive era legislation (e.g., Federal Reserve Act of 1913). (2024)

### *Expansion, Government Policies, and Demographic Change*

- **Have students create an annotated timeline of U.S. government policies toward Native American tribes and nations during westward expansion 1800s (e.g., forced relocation, reservations, allotment and assimilation) and summarize how these policies impacted the relationship between the U.S. and Native Americans during the late. (2025, 2024, 2023)**
- **Place greater emphasis on legislation passed in the years during and following the Civil War (homesteading, environmental conservation efforts, assimilation policies, immigration laws) and examine factors that influenced the creation of the legislation or how that legislation represented a continuity or change in American policy (e.g., use maps to demonstrate impacts of legislation). (2025, 2023)**
- **Ensure that students can explain how economic development influenced demographic changes and subsequent legislative changes (e.g., Chinese Exclusion Act, assimilation, Great Migration, etc.). (2025, 2024)**
- **Provide multiple primary sources for students to analyze that demonstrate changes in federal government policies in this time period; (e.g., maps of Indian Territory prior to the passage of the Dawes Act, excerpts from the Dawes Act, documents of applications for land allotments after the passage of the Dawes Act); have students explain the intentions of the policies and if the outcome matched intended purpose. (2025, 2023)**
- Use maps to label motivations/incentives for western movement as well as impacts on regions or groups. (2023)
- 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). (2023)

### *Review Strategies and Vocabulary*

- **Ask students to summarize the roles of Robber Barons/Captains of Industry, labor leaders, workers, muckrakers, etc. by creating an “I Am Poem” (I see..., I hear..., I feel..., I worry about..., I hope that..., etc.) that incorporates a specified number of vocabulary terms in their response. (2025)**
- 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, etc.). (2023)

## Standard 4: Modernism and Interventionism 1893–1945

### *U.S. International Involvement*

- **Use annotated timelines or charts to help students summarize the outcomes of major American wars and visually make comparisons about how the foreign policy following each conflict was similar or different. (2025)**
- Emphasize similarities and differences in the motives for involvement in the Spanish-American War, World War I, and World War II. (2024)
  - **Use primary source documents to determine commonalities/differences in perspectives for or against U.S. intervention in different foreign conflicts (e.g., isolationist/interventionist speeches or political cartoons from different eras); have students match motivations to perspectives, such as social Darwinism). (2025, 2024, 2023)**
  - Emphasize economic trends by using timelines of U.S. involvement in war or graphic organizers to help students “chunk” time periods and make connections. (2024, 2023)
  - Demonstrate the differences in reasons for U.S. intervention in World War I compared to World War II. (2023)
- 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. (2023)

### *Boom and Bust Cycles*

- **Use graphic organizers to**
  - **emphasize terms commonly used to teach the causes and impacts of the boom-and-bust cycles of the 1920s and 1930s (e.g., consumerism, consumer debt, credit, laissez-faire polices, deficit spending, etc.); help students visually differentiate if the term contributed to or was the result of the boom/bust cycle. (2025, 2024)**
  - **help students brainstorm solutions to Great Depression problems; then have them review different New Deal policies and compare them with their brainstorm list; ask students what the legislation attempted to address and if it was successful. (2025, 2023)**
- **Provide students with a list of New Deal programs and charts of federal spending to explain how the role of the federal government in the economy changed during that time. (2025, 2024)**

### *Changes During the 1920s*

- **Explore the reasons for and outcomes of the Great Migration and its connection to the Harlem Renaissance using maps and timelines; address misconceptions that African Americans were free from discrimination in the North. (2025, 2024)**
- Examine how the First Red Scare provides context for understanding nativism and immigration policies in the 1920s; differentiate between the First and Second Red Scare. (2024)

- Use examples of advertisements for consumer goods during the 1920s to understand consumerism. (2023)
- 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. (2023)

### *Federal Government Actions and the Homefront*

- **Help students understand why the federal government used rationing during the war; students demonstrated misconceptions that it was a strategy to raise money to finance the war effort. (2025)**
- **Help students visualize the changes in the wartime economy (e.g., before and after images of cars vs. tanks coming off assembly lines) and explore the impacts of different executive orders (e.g., Executive Order 8802). (2025)**
- **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 motivate and appeal to Americans. (2025, 2023)**
- Provide students with a “cold read” of primary source images or cartoons of the home front during World War I and World War II to examine the role of the government in the economy. (2024)
- Use sorting or classification activities to help demonstrate commonalities between federal government actions across different eras (e.g., Espionage and Sedition Acts, Executive Order 9066, etc.). (2024)
- Ask students to explain the shift in government intervention from the Gilded Age to the Great Depression, citing evidence. (2023)
- 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. (2023)

### *Review Strategies and Vocabulary*

- **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, defense industries etc.). (2025, 2023)**
- Use hexagonal review strategies to help students make multiple connections between different historical events that span across different time periods (e.g., American home front during war, American intervention in foreign affairs, characteristics of different decades, government policies, etc.). (2024)
- Have students create an annotated timeline to explain chronological turning points during each decade (e.g., 1920s, 1930s, 1940s). (2024)
- Encourage students to analyze quotes and cartoons from the time period to make connections with historical perspectives and promote “big picture” thinking. (2023)

## Standard 5: Legacy of the Cold War 1945–present

### *Impacts of the Cold War and America’s Role in Global Affairs*

- **Use a cause-and-effect graphic organizer to help students analyze how the end of the U.S. policy of détente impacted relations with the Soviet Union, supporting their ability to move beyond vocabulary recognition to deeper historical thinking. (2025)**
- **Help students differentiate between U.S. economic policies such “Reaganomics” and “NAFTA” by using comparison charts. (2025)**
- **Create a “Then and Now” simulation using sources (e.g., job descriptions of a steel mill worker in Pittsburgh in 1965 or a customer support analyst in Austin in 2015 and bar graphs of job sectors in the U.S. economy in 1960 and 2015) to help students compare how the economy shifted from manufacturing during the Cold War era to a service-based economy in the post-Cold War era. (2025)**
- **Use excerpts from primary sources to help demonstrate the short- and long-term causes and effects of involvement in the Vietnam War (e.g., containment, Domino Theory, Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, War Powers Act, etc.). (2025, 2024, 2023)**
- Use timelines to help students connect the evolution of technology (e.g., Arms Race, Space Race, medical advancements, etc.) to events occurring during the Cold War and compare the impacts on American society. (2024, 2023)
- Help students compare the impacts of governmental policies developed because of the competition with the Soviet Union (e.g., investment in education, increased defense spending, G.I. Bill and Interstate Highways Act contributions to suburban growth, etc.). (2024, 2023)
- Help students make connections between the significance of the Iran Hostage Crisis in the greater context of the Cold War. (2023)
- 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. (2023)

### *Domestic Policies and Political Shifts*

- **Tie in specific excerpts from political party platforms when teaching about the political party spectrum. (2025)**
  - **Use official campaign slogans across time to help students make connections with similarities or shifts in party platforms. (2025)**
  - Use excerpts from prominent political speeches from different decades and/or eras to show how party platforms have changed over time (e.g., New Left/New Right); have students evaluate any changes in fiscal and political governance or economic and social policies. (2024, 2023)
- Emphasize economic conditions during the 1970s (e.g., regulation, inflation, stagflation, employment/unemployment, etc.) in connection with global events and trends (e.g., dependence on foreign oil). (2024)
- 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). (2023)

- 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. (2023)

### ***Movements for Civil Rights***

- **Have students choose a movement for equal rights and create a poster to advertise its goals, methods, leadership, and outcomes; in a “job fair-style” rotation, students visit other movements and complete a graphic organizer to make comparisons and determine continuities or changes between movements. (2025, 2024, 2023)**
- Help students understand the changes to de jure segregation as a result of federal government actions (e.g., *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, etc.) and why de facto segregation continued in many areas of society; help students analyze the outcomes and impacts of these government actions (e.g., cultural and historic housing patterns, government use of busing to achieve integration, etc.). (2024)
- Compare strategies of civil rights leaders using primary sources to illustrate continuities or changes in perspectives or strategies over time. (2023)
- Compare the approaches of civil rights movements over the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; match those movements with relevant legislation. (2023)
- Help students identify trends from U.S. Supreme Court decisions during this time period rather than memorize the facts of each case. (2023)

### ***Review Strategies and Vocabulary***

- **Use current events to bring relevancy and context to historical events from this standard. (2025)**
- 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). (2023)

## EOCEP USHC Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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

The Office of Assessment and Standards convene several committees of content experts each year to review stimulus set materials, test items, and test item data. In addition, there are separate committees assembled to review stimuli set materials and test items for potential bias, fairness, and sensitivity concerns. South Carolina educators are involved in each step of the [test 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 EOCEP USHC test?

The Office of Assessment and Standards provide the following resources:

- [EOCEP USHC Test Blueprint](#) outlines information about the test design, Reporting Categories, indicators within Reporting Categories, the range of items assessed within each Reporting Category, and the range of items by DOK level.
- [EOCEP USHC Data Review Reports](#) from previous years provide additional instructional insights for teachers.
- [Sample Release Items](#) show examples of the types of test items that are used on the EOCEP USHC assessment as well as a range of DOK complexity.
- [Online Tools Training \(OTT\)](#) provides students and teachers with the opportunity to
  - become familiar with the online testing platform,
  - practice using the available online tools,
  - preview different item types, and
  - review sample questions aligned to the South Carolina content standards.

Although the OTT items are not scored, the answer keys will be displayed after the last question.

- [USHC Alignment Guide](#) assists 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.

### 3. 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...”

**4. How can I determine trends using the EOCEP scores of my class(es) 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.

**5. Why are teachers not provided with more specific information about student scores on the EOCEP USHC test 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 their 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 how to access students’ performance by reporting category.