

NYS Core Curriculum Introduction to United States History and Government

United States history is the history of a great experiment in representative democracy. The basic principles and core values expressed in the Declaration of Independence became the guiding ideas for our nation's civic culture. United States history since the Declaration of Independence has witnessed continued efforts to apply these principles and values to all people. Adoption of the United States Constitution codified these principles, but, as the history of our nation shows, that document and its amendments represented only the first step in achieving "liberty and justice for all."

One major goal of the State social studies curriculum, K-11, calls for students to learn about the structure and function of governments and to learn how to take on their roles as citizens. Students should understand those basic principles and the cultural heritage that support our democracy so that they can become informed, committed participants in our democracy. This core curriculum lists examples that describe how individuals and groups throughout history have challenged and influenced public policy and constitutional change. These examples and this course of study should help students understand how ordinary citizens and groups of people interacted with lawmakers and policy makers and made a difference.

This core curriculum is organized into seven historical units. Each unit lists the content, concepts and themes, and connections teachers should use to organize classroom instruction and plan for assessment. The State Regents examination for United States History and Government will be based on the content column in this core curriculum. The following concepts and themes in United States history are also emphasized in this curriculum:

Change	Diversity	Government	Physical Systems
Citizenship	Economic Systems	Human Systems	Places and Regions
Civic Values	Environment	Immigration and Migration	Reform Movements
Constitutional Principles	Factors of Production	Individuals, Groups, Institutions	Presidential Decisions and Actions
Culture and Intellectual Life	Foreign Policy	Interdependence	Science and Technology

Since this curriculum emphasizes government and basic constitutional principles, students should understand the importance of key United States Supreme Court decisions. The following required Supreme Court decisions have had significant impact on our nation's history:

Marbury v. Madison (1803)

McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)

Gibbons v. Ogden (1824)

Worcester v. Georgia (1832)

Dred Scot v. Sanford (1857)

Civil Rights Cases (1883)

Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific R.R. v. Illinois (1886)

United States v. E.C. Knight Co. (1895)

In Re Debs (1895)

Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)

Cruzan v. Director, Missouri Dept. of Health (1990)

Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Penn., et. al. v. Casey (1992)

Vernonia School District v. Acton (1995)

Northern Securities Co. v. United States (1904)

Lochner v. New York (1905)

Muller v. Oregon (1908)

Schenck v. United States (1919)

Schechter Poultry Corp. v. United States (1935)

Korematsu v. United States (1944)

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954)

Watkins v. United States (1957)

Mapp v. Ohio (1961)

Baker v. Carr (1962)

Engle v. Vitale (1962)

Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)

Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States (1964)

Miranda v. Arizona (1966)

Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)

New York Times v. United States (1971)

Roe v. Wade (1973)

United States v. Nixon (1974)

New Jersey v. TLO (1974)

Briefs of these cases are available in *U.S. Supreme Court Decisions: A Case Study Review for U.S. History and Government*, developed by Project P.A.T.C.H. of the Northport U.F.S.D. and the Law, Youth and Citizenship Program. The book can be accessed on the Internet at www.tourolaw.edu/patch/where the briefs are linked to the full text of each case.

Suggested historical documents are also included to assist in planning instruction. Students should learn how to analyze historical documents and prepare essays and reports that describe different perspectives on various historical issues, events, and questions. Additional documents can be found on a number of websites including the following:

www.nationalgeographics.com

www.nara.gov/

www.wnet.org/tenement

www.sara.nysed.gov/

www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp/home.html

www.nysba.org/lyc/LYC.html

www.whistlestop.org/archive.htm

www.jefferson.village.virginia.edu/vshadow2

www.lcweb2.loc.gov/amhome.html

www.thehistorynet.com

www.umdl.umich.edu/moa/index.html

www.ipl.org/ref/POTUS

www.execpc.com

www.nisk.k12.ny.us/Fdr/FDRnewdeal.html

www.americanpresidents.org

www.gilderlehrman.com

www.cwc.lsu.edu/

Concepts and Themes for Social Studies

Concepts and themes serve as content organizers for the vast amounts of information people encounter every day. Concepts represent mental images, constructs, or word pictures that help people to arrange and classify fragmented and isolated facts and information.

A concept is

- usually abstract, as opposed to concrete.
- a product of the analysis and synthesis of facts and experiences rather than a definition to be learned.
- constantly subject to change and expansion of meaning and delineation of detail, as different experiences provided settings and different relationships in new contexts.

Students construct concepts and themes as they interact with their environments. This process of concept formation is ongoing, stimulated by active, meaningful involvement, and developmental in nature. To demonstrate the developmental nature of concept learning, the concepts and themes of the K-12 social studies program are listed on each page of the core curriculum.

The key concepts of the K-12 social studies program are:

History

Change involves the basic alterations in things, events, and ideas.

Choice means the right or power to select from a range of alternatives.

Culture means the patterns of human behavior that includes ideas, beliefs, values, artifacts, and ways of making a living, which any society transmits, to succeeding generations to meet its fundamental needs.

Diversity means understanding and respecting others and oneself including similarities and differences in language, gender, socioeconomic class, religion, and other human characteristics and traits.

Empathy means the ability to understand others through being able to identify in one's self-responses similar to the experiences, behaviors, and responses of others.

Identity means awareness of one's own values, attitudes, and capabilities as an individual and as a member of different groups.

Interdependence means reliance upon others in mutually beneficial interactions and exchanges.

Imperialism means the domination by one country of the political and/or economic life of another country or region.

Movement of People and Goods refers to the constant exchange of people, ideas, products, technologies, and institutions from one region or civilization to another that has existed throughout history.

Nationalism means the feeling of pride in and devotion to one's country or the desire of a people to control their own government, free from foreign interference or rule.

Urbanization means movement of people from rural to urban areas.

Geography

The six essential elements of geography:

The World in Spatial Terms-Geography studies the relationships between people, places, and environments by mapping information about them into a spatial context.

Places and Regions-The identities and lives of individuals and peoples are rooted in particular places and in those human constructs called regions.

Physical Systems-Physical processes shape the Earth's surface and interact with plant and animal life to create, sustain, and modify ecosystems.

Human Systems-People are central to geography in that human activities help shape the Earth's surface, human settlements and structures are part of Earth's surface, and humans compete for control of Earth's surface.

Environment and Society-The physical environment is modified by human activities, largely as a consequence of the ways in which human societies value and use Earth's natural resources, and human activities are also influenced by Earth's natural resources, and human activities are also influenced by Earth's physical features and processes.

The Uses of Geography- Knowledge of geography enables people to develop an understanding of the relationships between people, places, and environments over time-that is, of Earth as it was, is, and might be. ("Taken from: *Geography for Life: National Geography Standards*, 1994, pp. 34-35. Permission applied for.)

Environment means the surroundings, including natural elements and elements created by humans.

Economics

Needs and Wants refer to those goods and services that are essential such as food, clothing, and shelter (needs), and those good and services that people would like to have to improve the quality of their lives, (i.e., wants-education, security, health care, entertainment).

Economics Systems include traditional, command, market, and mixed systems. Each must answer the three basic economic questions: What goods and services shall be produced and in what quantities? How shall these goods and services be produced? For whom shall goods and services be produced?

Factors of Production are human, natural, and capital resources which when combined become various goods and services (e.g., How land, labor, and capital inputs are used to produce food.).

Scarcity means the conflict between unlimited needs and wants and limited natural and human resources.

Science and technology means the tools and methods used by people to get what they need and want.

Belief Systems means an established orderly way that groups or individuals look at religious faith or philosophical tenets.

Civics, Citizenship, and Government

Justice means the fair, equal, proportional, or appropriate treatment rendered to individuals in interpersonal, societal, or government interactions.

Nation-state means a geographic/political organization uniting people by a common government.

Citizenship means membership in a community (neighborhood, school, region, state, nation, world) with its accompanying rights, responsibilities, and dispositions.

Political Systems such as monarchies, dictatorships, and democracies address certain basic questions of government such as: What should a government have the power to do? What should a government not have the power to do? A political system also provides for ways that parts of that system interrelate and combine to perform specific functions of government.

Power refers to the ability of people to compel or influence the actions of others. "Legitimate power is called authority."

Government means the "formal institutions and processes of a politically organized society with authority to make, enforce, and interpret laws and other binding rules about matters of common interest and concern. Government also refers to the group of people, acting in formal political institutions at national, state, and local levels, who exercise decision making power or enforce laws and regulations." (Taken from: *Civics Framework for the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress*, NAEP Civics Consensus Project, The National Assessment Governing Board, United States Department of Education, p.19).

Decision Making means the processes used to "monitor and influence public and civic life by working with others, clearly articulating ideals and interests, building coalitions, seeking consensus, negotiating compromise, and managing conflict." (Taken from: *Civics Framework*, p.18).

Civic Values refer to those important principles that serve as the foundation for our democratic form of government. These values include justice, honesty, self-discipline, due process, equality, majority rule with respect for minority rights, and respect for self, others, and property.

Human Rights are those basic political, economic, and social rights that all human beings are entitled to, such as *the right to life, liberty, and the security of person, and a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family*. Human rights are inalienable and expressed by various United Nations Documents including the *United Nations Charter* and *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

Characteristics of Thematic Essays

- Focus on concepts and themes included in the Social Studies Learning Standards
- Go beyond recall and reiteration of facts
- Emphasize critical thinking skills
- Ask students to make connections and linkages
- Ask students to write an essay that has an introduction, supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion
- Are criterion referenced and employ a scoring rubric

SAMPLE THEMATIC ESSAY SCORING RUBRIC

5	4	3	2	1	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a thorough understanding of the theme • Addresses all aspects of the task • Shows an ability to analyze, evaluate, compare, and/or contrast issues and events • Richly supports essay with relevant facts, examples, and details • Writes a well-developed essay, consistently demonstrating a logical and clear plan of organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a good understanding of the theme • Addresses all aspects of the task • Shows an ability to analyze, evaluate, compare, and/or contrast issues and events • Includes relevant facts, examples, and details, but may not support all aspects of the task evenly • Writes a well-developed essay, demonstrating a logical and clear plan of organization • Include a good introduction and conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents a satisfactory understanding of the theme • Addresses most aspects of the task or addresses all the aspects in a limited way • Shows an ability to analyze or evaluate issues and events, but not in any depth • Writes a satisfactorily developed essay, demonstrating a general plan of organization • Uses some facts, examples, and details • Restates the theme in the introduction and concludes with a simple restatement of the theme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to address the theme, but uses vague and/or inaccurate information • Develops a faulty analysis or evaluation of theme • Writes a poorly organized essay lacking focus; uses few facts, examples, and details; and includes information that contains inaccuracies • Has vague or missing introduction and/or conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows limited understanding of the theme; omits concrete examples; uses weak details or none at all • Lacks an analysis or evaluation of the issues and events beyond stating vague and/or inaccurate facts • Attempts to complete the task, but demonstrates a major weakness in organization • Uses little or no accurate or relevant facts, details, or examples • Has vague or missing introduction and/or conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to address the theme • Is illegible • Blank paper

Characteristics of Constructed-Response Questions

- Are keyed to the Social Studies Learning Standards
- Are open-ended short answer questions
- Measure application level skills
- Allow for partial credit
- Use a range of stimuli: time lines, maps, graphs, cartoons, charts, and short readings
- All multiple questions that build from the simple to the complex
- Have a limited number of right answers
- Are criterion referenced and employ a scoring rubric

CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE FORMAT

Each set of questions (usually 3) should be based on a given stimulus (e.g., chart, table, photograph, quotations, paintings, reading passages, maps)

Question 1. General or specific question with answer found in stimulus. Information taken directly from stimulus. A simple translation question (e.g., In which year..., What was the population in the year...?)

Question 2. Make connections between and among the different parts of the stimulus (e.g., comparisons-similarities and differences, identify patterns, application, state generalization or conclusion, summarize in own words)

Question 3. Bring in additional outside information related to topic found in stimulus and go beyond the data (e.g., extrapolation, explanation, prediction; "What might happen if this trend continues?")

Characteristics of Document-Based Questions

- Are based on the Social Studies Learning Standards, themes, and concepts
- Provide students with a common base from which they demonstrate what they know and are able to do
- Focus on critical thinking skills
- Ask students to make comparisons and draw analogies
- Ask students to apply knowledge to the given data
- Ask students to take positions on issues or problems and support their conclusions
- Require students to look at issues from multiple perspectives
- Require students to apply the skills of historical analysis
- Require students to apply skills they will use as adults
- Are criterion referenced and employ a scoring rubric

SAMPLE DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION RUBRIC

5	4	3	2	1	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoroughly addresses all aspects of the task by accurately analyzing and interpreting most of the document • Incorporates relevant outside information • Richly supports essay with relevant facts, examples and details • Writes a well-developed essay, consistently demonstrating a logical and clear plan of organization • Uses information from the documents in the body of the essay • Includes a strong introduction and conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses all aspects of the task by accurately analyzing and interpreting most of the documents • Incorporates relevant outside information • Includes relevant facts, examples and details, but discussion may be more descriptive than analytical • Writes a well-developed essay, demonstrating a logical and clear plan of organization • Includes a good introduction and conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses most aspects of the task or addresses all aspects in a limited way; uses some of the documents • Incorporates limited or no relevant outside information • Uses some facts, examples and details, but discussion is more descriptive rather than analytical • Writes a satisfactorily developed essay, demonstrating a general plan of organization • Restates the theme in the introduction and concludes with a simple restatement of the theme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to address some aspects of the task making limited use of the documents • No relevant outside information is presented • Uses few facts, examples and details and discussion simply restates contents of the documents • Writes a poorly organized essay, lacking focus • Has vague or missing introduction and/or conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows limited understanding of the task with vague, unclear references to the documents • No relevant outside information is presented • Attempts to complete the task but essay demonstrates a major weakness in organization • Uses little or no accurate or relevant facts, details, examples • Has no introduction or conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to address the task • Is illegible • Blank paper

Teaching Students to Respond to Document-Based Questions

Process:

1. Read the question and underline key words, eras, names, issues, etc. Determine the required task.
2. Brainstorm the facts you know about the topic and time period. Write them down.
3. Analyze the documents.
 - Identify type of document.
 - Indicate author and time period written - what do you know about them?
 - Identify a point of view.
 - Write notes in margin.
 - Look for relationships (similarities/differences) among the documents and group accordingly.
4. Structure your response based on task required in essay - outline answer.
 - political/social/economic
 - positive/negative
 - support/disagree
5. Write an organized essay.
 - Introductory paragraph - Develop a thesis in response to the question: What will you prove in essay?
 - Body paragraphs - Develop information citing supporting evidence from the documents and outside historical information
 - Concluding paragraph
 - Cite the documents (i.e. Doc. 1) in margin.