

Standards and Scoring Criteria for Student Work in Social Science

General Rules

The task is to estimate the extent to which the student's performance illustrates the kind of cognitive work indicated by each of the three standards: Analysis, Disciplinary Concepts, and Elaborated Written Communication. Each standard will be scored according to different rules, but the following apply to all three standards:

- Scores should be based only on evidence in the student's performance relevant to the criteria. Do not consider things such as following directions, correct spelling, neatness, etc. unless they are relevant to the criteria.
- Scores may be limited by tasks which fail to call for social studies analysis, disciplinary conceptual understanding, or elaborated written communication, but the scores must be based only upon the work shown.
- Take into account what students can reasonably be expected to do at the grade level. However, scores should still be assigned according to criteria in the standards, not relative to other papers that have been scored.
- When it is difficult to decide between two scores, give the higher score only when a persuasive case can be made that the paper meets minimal criteria for the higher score.
- If the specific wording of the criteria is not helpful in making judgments, base the score on the general intent or spirit of the standard described in the scoring criteria of the standard.
- Completion of the task is not necessary to score high.

	Analysis	Disciplinary Concepts	Elaborated Written Communication
4 Honors Work	Substantial evidence of analysis. Almost all of the student's work includes analysis	The student uses social studies concepts to organize, explain, interpret, summarize, and extend the meaning and significance of otherwise discrete pieces of information. The use of ideas illustrates exemplary understanding.	The student provides substantial and accurate elaboration for two or more important statements. The details, qualifications, and nuances are expressed within an overall coherent framework intended for the reader, and relevant to the topic. The response is so rich as to be worthy of display as an outstanding example of writing in social science.
3 Meets Expectations	Moderate evidence of analysis. A moderate portion of the student's work contains analysis.	The student has included social studies concepts to organize, explain, interpret, summarize, and extend the meaning and significance of otherwise discrete pieces of information. The use of ideas is somewhat limited and/or shows some flaws in understanding.	The student provides some elaboration for two or three important statements OR provides substantial elaboration for one statement. In either case, the details, qualifications, and nuances are expressed within an overall coherent framework intended for the reader, and relevant to the topic, and without major inaccuracies.
2 Approaches	Some evidence of analysis. A small, but not central portion of the student's work includes analysis.	The student has included social studies concepts, but their use is significantly limited and/or shows significant flaws in understanding	The student provides reasonably accurate elaboration for at least one important topic.
1 Unacceptable	No evidence of analysis. No portion of the work shows analysis; OR virtually all analysis offered is unsuccessful or in error	The student includes virtually no social studies concepts, or the use of any that are included shows almost no understanding.	The student provides virtually no information or provides only disjointed details. OR, he/she provides discrete claims, broad generalizations, slogans, or conclusions, but none are elaborated.

Criteria for Scoring Analysis

Student performance demonstrates thinking with social studies content by organizing, synthesizing, interpreting, evaluating, and hypothesizing to produce comparisons/contrasts, arguments, application of new information to new contexts, and consideration of alternative viewpoints.

- ❑ This essential question is whether students demonstrate construction of knowledge through thinking and the organization of information, versus reproduction of knowledge by restating what has been previously given to them.
- ❑ In scoring analysis, the proportion of work that illustrates analysis is more important than the number of statements indicating analysis.

Criteria for Scoring Disciplinary Concepts

Student performance demonstrates an understanding of ideas, concepts, theories, and principles from the social studies disciplines and civic life by using them to interpret and explain specific, concrete information or events.

- ❑ Consider the extent to which the student demonstrates use and understanding of social studies concepts. Low scores may be due to a task that fails to call for understanding of social studies concepts.
- ❑ Possible indicators of understanding important social studies concepts central to the task are expanding upon definitions, representing concepts in alternate ways or contexts, or making connections to other social studies concepts, to other disciplines, or to real-world situations.
- ❑ A guiding question for using this standard is, “Does the student show understanding of the fundamental ideas relevant to the social studies used in the task?”
- ❑ Correct answers can be taken as an indication of the level of conceptual understanding if it is clear to the scorer that the task or question requires conceptual understanding in order to be completed successfully. In this case, the scorer must determine the level of understanding and score it appropriately.
- ❑ The score should not be based on the proportion of student work central to the task that shows conceptual understanding but on the quality of the understanding wherever it occurs in the work.

Criteria for Scoring Elaborated Written Communication

Student performance demonstrates an elaborated account that is clear, coherent, and provides richness in details, qualifications and argument. The standard could be met by elaborated consideration of alternative points of view.

- ❑ Elaboration consists of two major parts: a conclusion, generalization, or argument AND support for it, in the form of example, summary, illustration, detail, or reason. Elaboration is coherent when the examples, summaries, illustrations, details, or reasons do indeed provide appropriate, consistent support for the conclusions, generalizations, or arguments.
- ❑ Consider the extent to which the student presents a clear and convincing explanation or argument. Possible indicators of elaborated written communication are richness in details, qualifications, and argument, as well as elaborated consideration of alternative points of view. To score high on this standard the student must communicate in writing an accurate and convincing explanation or argument.
- ❑ The score should not be based on the proportion of student work central to the task that contains explanation/argument/representation but on the quality of the elaborated communication, wherever it may be in the work.