
NEW YORK STATE TEACHER CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS™

FIELD 115: SOCIAL STUDIES TEST DESIGN AND FRAMEWORK

October 2015

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This test design and framework document is designed to provide information about the content and format of a test for the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations™ (NYSTCE®) program. Education faculty and administrators at teacher preparation institutions may also find the information in this framework useful as they discuss the test with candidates. All test components may differ from those presented here. Furthermore, review of this framework, in whole or in part, does not guarantee an increased likelihood of success on any of the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations. The NYSTCE program is subject to change at the sole discretion of the New York State Education Department, and any changes will fully supersede the information presented in this document. As a reminder, candidates are responsible for contacting their certification officer(s) regarding any changes to the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations.

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**FIELD 115: SOCIAL STUDIES
TEST DESIGN**

This test consists of selected-response items measuring content knowledge and one extended constructed-response item measuring pedagogical content knowledge. The constructed-response item is scenario-based and requires candidates to describe an instructional strategy to help students achieve a specific learning goal or an instructional intervention to address a specific learning difficulty, and to provide a rationale for employing that instructional strategy or intervention.

The selected-response items count for 80% of the total test score and the constructed-response item counts for 20% of the total test score, as indicated in the table that follows. Each selected-response item counts the same toward the total test score. The percentage of the total test score derived from the constructed-response item is also indicated in the table that follows.

The total testing time is 195 minutes. Candidates are free to set their own pace during the test administration. The following estimates were used to determine the total test time:

- The selected-response items are designed with the expectation of response time up to 135 minutes.
- The constructed-response item is designed with the expectation of a response up to 60 minutes.

Further information regarding the content of each competency can be found in the test framework.

Competency	Selected-Response		Constructed-Response	
	Approximate Number of Items	Approximate Percentage of Test Score	Number of Items	Approximate Percentage of Test Score
0001 United States History	16	14%	--	--
0002 Global History	16	14%	--	--
0003 Geography	13	12%	--	--
0004 Economics	13	12%	--	--
0005 Civics, Citizenship, and Government	15	13%	--	--
0006 Social Studies Literacy	17	15%	--	--
0007 Pedagogical Content Knowledge	--	--	1	20%
Total	90	80%	1	20%

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United States History
Global History
Geography
Economics
Civics, Citizenship, and Government
Social Studies Literacy
Pedagogical Content Knowledge

The New York State Social Studies teacher has the knowledge and skills necessary to teach effectively in New York State public schools. The social studies teacher demonstrates strong literacy skills; mastery of the content and concepts of United States and global history, geography, economics, civics, citizenship, and government; and an ability to apply the ten unifying social studies themes described in the New York State K–12 Social Studies Framework: individual development and cultural identity; development, movement, and interaction of cultures; time, continuity, and change; geography, humans, and the environment; development and transformation of social structures; power, authority, and governance; civic ideals and practices; creation, expansion, and interaction of economic systems; science, technology, and innovation; and global connections and exchange. In addition, the social studies teacher knows how to interpret social studies information; analyze relationships between social studies disciplines; evaluate alternative perspectives; compare and contrast differing sets of beliefs, ideologies, and institutions; and demonstrate mastery of social studies research skills and methods.

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COMPETENCY 0001—UNITED STATES HISTORY

Performance Expectations

The New York State Social Studies teacher applies the concepts of time; continuity; change; global connections; and science, technology, and society to analyze major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York State. The teacher uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to recognize, interpret, and illustrate how events are related chronologically to one another in time; identify causes and effects of historical events and developments using examples from different time periods; evaluate relationships among multiple causes and effects; examine the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time; relate patterns of continuity and change to larger historical processes and themes; contrast models of historical periodization that historians use to categorize events; analyze multiple perspectives on a given historical experience; analyze similarities and differences among historical developments over time and in different geographic and cultural contexts; analyze the relationship between geography, government, economics, and history as a context for events and movements; and assess significant intellectual, scientific, and technological innovations that have shaped the American people.

Performance Indicators

- a. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the global heritage of the American people and the people of New York prior to 1500
- b. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points related to European exploration and colonization of the Americas and of New York (1500–1763)
- c. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in United States and New York State history during the era of the Revolution and establishment of the new nation (1754–1820s)
- d. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in United States and New York State history during the era of expansion and reform (1801–1861)
- e. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in United States and New York State history during the Civil War and Reconstruction period (1850–1877)
- f. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in United States and New York State history during the development of industrial society in the United States (1870–1900)

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- g. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in United States and New York State history during the emergence of modern American society (1890–1930)
- h. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in United States and New York State history during the Great Depression and World War II (1929–1945)
- i. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in United States and New York State history during the postwar period (1945 to early 1970s)
- j. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in United States and New York State history during the contemporary era (1968 to the present)
- k. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of patterns of continuity and change and how they relate to larger historical processes and themes

COMPETENCY 0002—GLOBAL HISTORY

Performance Expectations

The New York State Social Studies teacher applies the concepts of time; continuity; change; global connections; and science, technology, and society to analyze major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in global history from the beginnings of human society to the present. The teacher uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to recognize, interpret, and illustrate how events are related chronologically to one another in time; identify causes and effects of historical events and developments using examples from different time periods; evaluate relationships among multiple causes and effects; examine the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time; relate patterns of continuity and change to larger historical processes and themes; contrast models of historical periodization that historians use to categorize events; analyze multiple perspectives on a given historical experience; analyze similarities and differences among historical developments over time and in different geographic and cultural contexts; analyze the relationship between geography, government, economics, and history as a context for events and movements; and assess significant intellectual, scientific, and technological innovations that have shaped global history.

Performance Indicators

- a. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in global history from the beginnings of human society through the development of classical civilizations (to 500 CE)

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- b. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in global history during the era of expanding zones of exchange and encounter (300–1000 CE)
- c. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in global history during the era of global interactions (1000–1650 CE)
- d. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in global history during the emergence of the first global age (1450–1770)
- e. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in global history during the Age of Revolutions (1750–1914)
- f. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in global history during a half century of crisis and achievement (1900–1945)
- g. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of major political, social, economic, cultural, and scientific developments and turning points in global history during an era of conflict and globalization (1945–present)
- h. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of patterns of continuity and change and how they relate to larger historical processes and themes

COMPETENCY 0003—GEOGRAPHY

Performance Expectations

The New York State Social Studies teacher applies the concepts of people, places, environments, culture, and global connections to analyze the world in terms of space, places and regions, physical settings, human systems, and environment and society. The teacher is skilled at asking and answering geographic questions; applying theories of geography; acquiring and organizing geographic information; and using maps, globes, graphic representations, and geospatial technologies to analyze relationships between people, places, regions, and environments. The teacher also uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to understand the uses of geography to interpret the past and make inferences about the future; evaluate relationships between the environment and human activities; recognize how place and region influence the social, cultural, political, and economic characteristics of societies and civilizations; and analyze changing interconnections among people, places, and regions.

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Performance Indicators

- a. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of how to develop and use maps and other geographic tools to examine issues, problems, and questions concerning spatial patterns of cultural and environmental characteristics and how to organize information about people, places, and environments in a spatial context
- b. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the physical and human characteristics of places; the spatial organization of people, places, and environments; and the relationships and interactions within and between human and physical systems
- c. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the nature of regions, how human beings create and use regions to organize geographic knowledge and ask geographic questions, and how culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions
- d. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the physical processes that shape the patterns of the earth's surface and the spatial distribution of the earth's ecosystems
- e. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the distribution and characteristics (e.g., belief systems, political ideals, social institutions, literature, art) of human populations; the historical events and cultural and economic factors influencing human migrations; the processes, patterns, functions, and environmental consequences of human settlement; and the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of the earth's cultural mosaics
- f. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of past, current, and likely future connections and interactions among regions and nations; the diffusion of ideas, beliefs, technology, and goods; patterns and networks of economic interdependence; the effect of economic globalization and the expanding use of scarce resources on relations between nations; and ways in which the forces of cooperation and conflict and the tension between national interests and global priorities influence the division and control of the earth's surface
- g. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of how physical systems and climatic factors affect human systems; how actions stemming from political decisions and economic activities modify the physical environment and spatial patterns within and among urban, suburban, and rural regions; how changes occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of natural resources; and how human-made and natural catastrophes affect global trade, politics, and human migration

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COMPETENCY 0004—ECONOMICS

Performance Expectations

The New York State Social Studies teacher uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of economic concepts, data, structures, and activities. The teacher applies the concepts of production, distribution, consumption, and global connections to analyze economic behavior and institutions in a context of scarcity and interdependence. The teacher employs marginal analysis and other economic principles and theoretical perspectives to examine the influence of incentives and competition on production and distribution in specific markets; analyze the operation of the United States and global economies; and describe the impact of government policies on the national and global economy. The teacher also uses economic indicators to assess the current and future state of the economy and demonstrates command of the skills needed to make informed and well-reasoned economic decisions related to the management of personal finances in daily life.

Performance Indicators

- a. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the problem of scarcity and the challenges of meeting needs and wants, the costs of economic choices, the uses of marginal analysis, and the consequences of different methods of allocating limited resources
- b. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of how incentives, voluntary exchanges, and specialization influence economic behavior
- c. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of how markets, prices, competition, and supply and demand help determine personal income and the production and allocation of goods and services
- d. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the role of entrepreneurship in organizing economic activity and the ways in which businesses promote technological innovation, invest in plants and equipment, develop human capital, allocate resources, and increase productivity to spur economic growth and raise standards of living
- e. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the role of economic institutions and the law in market economies; the influence of government activity, including fiscal and monetary policies, on economic behavior; the ways in which government policies seek to correct market inefficiencies; and the intended and unintended consequences of such policies
- f. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of economic indicators and related tools and methods for measuring economic activity, factors that influence economic fluctuations, and the consequences of unemployment and inflation for individuals and the overall economy
- g. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the role of comparative advantage in international trade; arguments for and against free trade; and ways in which current globalization trends and policies affect economic growth, labor markets, rights of citizens, the environment, and resource and income distribution in different nations and economic systems

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- h. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the basic principles of personal finance and how individuals set personal financial goals; recognize their income needs and debt obligations; and utilize informed and well-reasoned budgeting, borrowing, and investment strategies to maximize well-being

COMPETENCY 0005—CIVICS, CITIZENSHIP, AND GOVERNMENT

Performance Expectations

The New York State Social Studies teacher uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of political science concepts, governmental structures, policy-making processes, and individual and collective civic engagement. The teacher analyzes the purposes of government and civic life, the structure and operation of political systems, and the differing assumptions held by people across time and place regarding power, authority, governance, and law. The teacher uses political science concepts and theoretical perspectives to investigate historical and contemporary political issues; interprets fundamental ideas contained in the foundational texts of United States government; analyzes the structure and operation of different levels of government in the United States; understands the operation of the United States electoral and political system; and evaluates factors that have expanded or limited the role of the individual in political life in the United States. The teacher also recognizes the ideals and principles of citizenship and sovereignty. The teacher demonstrates knowledge necessary for effective civic and political participation.

Performance Indicators

- a. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the meaning of civic life and the purposes that governments serve
- b. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the characteristics of limited and unlimited government; the origins, uses, and abuses of power; the nature, purposes, and impact of constitutions; and alternative ways of organizing governments
- c. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to compare past and present political systems with the contemporary United States political system in terms of ideology, structure, function, institutions, decision-making processes, citizenship roles, political participation, political culture, civic ideals and practices, and means of promoting the common good
- d. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the foundations of the United States political system, including the idea of constitutional government, political culture in the United States, and the values and principles basic to American constitutional democracy as embodied in the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of New York
- e. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the distribution of authority and responsibility within government in the United States, including the concepts of federalism, separation of powers, and checks and balances

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- f. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the structures, powers, and responsibilities of local, state, tribal, national, and international civic and political institutions
- g. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of how public policy is made; the operation of various deliberative processes and procedures for making governmental decisions at the local, state, national, and international levels; the role of the citizen in making public policy; and the intended and unintended outcomes of the policy making process
- h. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the role of the judiciary as reflected in the rule of law, landmark decisions of the United States Supreme Court, and judicial review
- i. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of international relations, the purposes and functions of international organizations, the formation and execution of United States foreign policy, the domestic factors that influence the United States' relations with the world, the ways in which the United States has influenced other nations, and the ways in which other nations have influenced politics and society in the United States
- j. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of the United States election process and the roles of political parties, pressure groups, and special interests in the United States political system
- k. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of how the United States political system provides for choice and opportunities for participation, factors that have expanded or limited the role of the individual in political life in the United States, and events and developments related to the struggle for access to citizenship rights and universal human rights
- l. uses a variety of analytical and evaluative skills to demonstrate understanding of civic ideals, such as respect for diversity, open-mindedness, willingness to compromise, and persistence; the rights and responsibilities of United States citizens; the civic dispositions or traits important to the preservation and improvement of United States constitutional democracy; and the ways in which citizens take part in civic life and seek to address social and political problems in a representative democracy

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COMPETENCY 0006—SOCIAL STUDIES LITERACY

Performance Expectations

The New York State Social Studies teacher reads and interprets social studies texts and graphic representations of social studies information; evaluates evidence from diverse sources in terms of content, bias, format, and audience; identifies central ideas or themes of texts and analyzes their relationship and development; and recognizes key supporting details and ideas. The teacher also interprets social studies and academic vocabulary; recognizes the structure of texts; evaluates and deconstructs arguments, giving attention to the role of purpose and point of view in their development; assesses the specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of evidence; makes inferences and draws conclusions from evidence; and compares two or more texts addressing similar themes or topics. In addition, the teacher defines and frames factual, interpretive, and evaluative questions; generates testable hypotheses; applies procedures for gathering and using information from traditional sources and new technologies; and recognizes the characteristics and uses of various social studies reference materials and resources.

Performance Indicators

- a. cites textual evidence to support analysis of primary sources (documents or physical objects written or created during the time under study) and secondary sources (works of synthesis or interpretation based on primary sources and the work of other authors), connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole
- b. determines the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source
- c. selects a summary of a social studies text that identifies clearly the relationships among key details and ideas
- d. evaluates various explanations for actions or events, determines which explanation best accords with textual evidence and contextual understanding, and recognizes where there is insufficient information to draw supportable conclusions
- e. determines the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a social studies text and analyzes how an author uses and refines the meaning of key terms
- f. analyzes in detail how a complex social studies text is structured, including how key elements contribute to the text as a whole
- g. evaluates authors' differing perspectives and points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence
- h. integrates and evaluates multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media, including a variety of graphic representations of social studies information, in order to address a question or solve a problem
- i. evaluates authors' premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information

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- j. distinguishes expressions of opinion from statements of fact, recognizes the assumptions on which an argument is based, assesses credibility, and identifies potential biases
- k. demonstrates knowledge of major interpretations of United States and global history, analyzes the relationship between historical sources and the secondary interpretations made from them, and integrates information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources
- l. recognizes and tests hypotheses, inferences, and generalizations and applies basic social studies research methodologies
- m. identifies the uses and limitations of basic reference sources and other social studies resources
- n. evaluates the appropriateness of various resources and research methodologies for meeting specific information needs
- o. presents social studies information and conclusions in a variety of text formats, including written text, maps, graphic representations, and oral presentations

COMPETENCY 0007—PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Performance Expectations

The New York State Social Studies teacher effectively applies pedagogical content knowledge to design instruction to help students achieve a specific learning goal. The teacher assesses and analyzes student artifacts and identifies potential and apparent student difficulties. The teacher also applies knowledge of how students learn to develop effective performance tasks that will help students achieve a specific learning goal.

Performance Indicators

- a. demonstrates knowledge of how to assess student readiness for a specific new learning goal related to analyzing a social studies text
- b. applies knowledge of how to design appropriate and effective instructional strategies that connect students' prior understanding and experiences to new knowledge
- c. applies knowledge of how to design appropriate and effective instructional strategies to help students develop factual, interpretive, and evaluative questions for further exploration of a topic in a social studies text
- d. applies knowledge of how to design appropriate and effective instructional strategies to help students analyze multiple perspectives and points of view, as well as how these perspectives influence interpretations of events, issues, or individuals

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- e. applies knowledge of appropriate and effective instructional strategies to help students create written analyses to demonstrate knowledge of social studies practices, including the gathering, use, and interpretation of evidence; chronological reasoning and understanding of causation; comparison and contextualization; geographic reasoning; economic reasoning; and civic participation
- f. applies knowledge of appropriate and effective assessment to measure student achievement and adjust instruction to promote student learning and growth