

LEAP Civics Achievement Level Descriptors

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Vision for Social Studies Standards and Assessment

To be ready for success, students must build knowledge of the world; thoughtfully examine the information they read, hear, and observe; and develop and express their ideas through speaking and writing. Through regular analysis and evaluation of information from an array of high quality primary and secondary sources and engaging learning experiences, students will develop the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to demonstrate understanding of important content and concepts. A leading goal in social studies is to prepare students for civic life by helping them to become knowledgeable about the world, reason through complex questions, and effectively express their ideas. To accomplish this goal, students must consistently do the following in their social studies class:

- build content knowledge and skills through meaningful learning opportunities and the exploration of high-quality, complex sources;
- engage in the majority of the thinking, speaking, and writing; and
- practice using accurate and relevant information from their social studies knowledge and well-chosen evidence from sources to support claims about social studies concepts. Simply stated, students must develop a broad and deep knowledge of the content so that they are able to express and support claims about social studies concepts.

The LEAP Social Studies assessments will reflect the vision and instructional priorities for social studies by providing students with opportunities to answer questions that allow them to demonstrate knowledge of social studies content and concepts, apply social studies skills and practices, and express and develop claims supported by information and evidence with explanation and reasoning.

Reporting Categories

All LEAP Social Studies tests for grades 3-8 and Civics will be reported using two types of reporting categories.

- Content Reporting Categories - The Louisiana Student Standards for Social Studies (LS4) were written with the goal of producing individuals who have (1) a broad and deep knowledge of U.S. and world history, (2) a firm grasp and appreciation of the civic principles that underlie our system of government, (3) a solid understanding of fundamental economic principles and the ability to make wise financial decisions, and (4) a proficiency in both physical and human geography. All assessment items have a primary content reporting alignment.
- Skills and Practices Reporting Categories - To achieve the goals outlined in the LS4, students should build content knowledge through engagement with authentic primary and secondary sources and express arguments about civics topics. The skills and practices for each grade and course are specified in the LS4. A subset of assessment items have a primary skills and practices reporting alignment.

The following table includes the descriptions for each reporting category.

Reporting Category	Description
Foundations and Civil Rights	Content in this reporting category focuses on the foundations of the United States government and how civil rights and civil liberties in the United States have developed and been protected by the U.S. government over time.
Structure, Functions, and Policies	Content in this reporting category focuses on the structure and functions of the United States government and the role of the U.S. government in developing and implementing domestic, foreign, and economic policies.
Political Processes and Public Participation	Content in this reporting category focuses on national, state, and local political processes and how the citizenry participates in those political processes.
Establishing Context	Skills and practices in this reporting category focus on applying chronological reasoning; examining continuity and change; making comparisons and connections; and applying spatial understanding.
Examining Sources and Claims	Skills and practices in this reporting category focus on examining and using primary, secondary, and tertiary sources; evaluating claims and counterclaims; using evidence to support claims; distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant information; and constructing and expressing claims.

Achievement-Level Definitions

Achievement-Level definitions briefly describe the expectations for student performance at each of Louisiana's five achievement levels:

- **Advanced:** Students performing at this level have **exceeded** college and career readiness expectations and are well prepared for the next level of study in this content area.
- **Mastery:** Students performing at this level have **met** college and career readiness expectations and are prepared for the next level of study in this content area.
- **Basic:** Students performing at this level have **nearly met** college and career readiness expectations and may need additional support to be fully prepared for the next level of study in this content area.
- **Approaching Basic:** Students performing at this level have **partially met** college and career readiness expectations and will need much support to be prepared for the next level of study in this content area.
- **Unsatisfactory:** Students performing at this level have **not yet met** the college and career readiness expectations and will need extensive support to be prepared for the next level of study in this content area. Achievement-Level Descriptors Achievement-Level descriptors indicate what typical students should know and be able to do at each of Louisiana's five achievement levels: Advanced, Mastery, Basic, Approaching Basic, and Unsatisfactory

Achievement Level Descriptors

Achievement-level descriptors (ALDs) describe the knowledge, skills, and processes that students typically demonstrate at each achievement level.

The ALDs in the tables that follow should be read as a building of ability; if a student achieves ‘Advanced,’ then they can demonstrate the knowledge and skills at the Advanced level and all the knowledge and skills described at the other levels, as well.

In the ALDs, **the verbs are in boldface type to call out the progression in complexity of what the student can do; some text is italicized to call out a different complexity in the content knowledge that students can be expected to know.**

Reporting Category	Advanced	Mastery	Basic	Approaching Basic
Foundations and Civil Rights	Analyze <i>how</i> factors influenced the Founding Fathers and the formation and development of the government of the United States.	Explain <i>the significance of</i> the factors that influenced the Founding Fathers and the formation and development of the government of the United States.	Describe the factors that influenced the Founding Fathers and the formation and development of the government of the United States.	Identify the factors that influenced the Founding Fathers and the formation and development of the government of the United States.
	Evaluate how civil rights and civil liberties in the United States have developed and been protected by the U.S. government over time.	Explain <i>how</i> civil rights and civil liberties in the United States have developed and been protected by the U.S. government over time.	Describe the civil rights and civil liberties in the United States that have developed and been protected by the U.S. government over time.	Identify the civil rights and civil liberties in the United States that have developed and been protected by the U.S. government over time.
Structure, Functions, and Policies	Analyze the structure, roles, responsibilities, powers, and functions of governments in the United States.	Explain the structure, roles, responsibilities, powers, and functions of governments in the United States.	Describe the general structure, roles, responsibilities, powers, and functions of governments in the United States.	Identify the general structure, roles, responsibilities, powers, and functions of governments in the United States.
	Analyze the issues of foreign and domestic policy of the United States.	Explain <i>the issues of</i> foreign and domestic policy of the United States.	Describe the foreign and domestic policies of the United States.	Identify the foreign and domestic policies of the United States.

Reporting Category	Advanced	Mastery	Basic	Approaching Basic
	Analyze the role of government institutions in developing and implementing economic policies.	Explain the elements of the United States economy within a global context and economic principles required to make sound financial decisions.	Describe elements of the United States economy and economic principles.	Identify elements of the United States economy and economic principles.
Political Processes and Public Participation	Analyze political processes and the role of public participation in the United States.	Explain <i>the importance of</i> political processes and the role of public participation in the United States.	Describe political processes and the role of public participation in the United States.	Identify political processes and the role of public participation in the United States.
	Evaluate how the media and technologies affect politics and public opinion.	Explain <i>how</i> the media and technologies affect politics and public opinion.	Describe ways that media and technology affect politics and public opinion.	Identify ways that media and technology affect politics and public opinion.
Establishing Context	Evaluate continuity and change in U.S. government, politics, and civic issues throughout U.S. history.	Explain continuity <i>and</i> change in U.S. government, politics, and civic issues throughout U.S. history.	Describe continuity and/or change in U.S. government, politics, and civic issues throughout U.S. history.	Identify continuity and/or change in U.S. government, politics, and civic issues throughout U.S. history.
	Analyze causes and effects of events and developments in U.S. history.	Explain causes <i>and</i> effects of events and developments in U.S. history.	Describe causes and/or effects of events and developments in U.S. history.	Identify causes and/or effects of events and developments in U.S. history.

Reporting Category	Advanced	Mastery	Basic	Approaching Basic
	Compare and contrast events and developments in U.S. history and government.	Explain events and developments in U.S. history and government.	Describe <i>major</i> events and developments in U.S. history and government.	Identify <i>major</i> events and developments in U.S. history and government.
	Analyze recurring patterns, trends, and themes related U.S. history and government.	Explain connections between ideas, events, and developments related to U.S. history and government, and explain recurring patterns, trends, and themes.	Describe connections between ideas, events, and developments related to U.S. history and government.	Identify connections between ideas, events, and developments related to U.S. history and government.
	Use geographic representations, demographic data, <i>and</i> geospatial representations to analyze civic issues and government processes.	Use geographic representations, demographic data, <i>and</i> geospatial representations to explain civic issues and government processes.	Use geographic representations, demographic data, <i>or</i> geospatial representations to describe civic issues and government processes.	Use geographic representations, demographic data, <i>or</i> geospatial representations to identify civic issues and government processes.
Examining Sources and Expressing Claims	Use <i>a variety of</i> primary and secondary sources to analyze social studies content; evaluate claims, counterclaims, and evidence; compare and contrast multiple sources and accounts; and explain <i>how the availability of sources affects historical interpretations</i> .	Use <i>a variety of</i> primary and secondary sources to explain social studies content, <i>claims, counterclaims, evidence,</i> and similarities and differences of multiple sources and accounts.	Use <i>a</i> primary <i>or</i> secondary source to describe social studies content and a claim or evidence.	Use <i>a</i> primary <i>or</i> secondary source to identify social studies content and a claim or evidence.

Reporting Category	Advanced	Mastery	Basic	Approaching Basic
	<p>Construct and express <i>claims</i> that are supported with relevant evidence from primary and/or secondary sources, social studies content knowledge, <i>and clear reasoning and explanations</i> to demonstrate an understanding of social studies content; compare and contrast content and viewpoints; analyze causes and effects; and evaluate counterclaims.</p>	<p>Construct and express a claim that is supported with relevant evidence from a primary and/or secondary source, social studies content knowledge, and/or an explanation to demonstrate an understanding of social studies content; compare and contrast content and viewpoints; explain causes and effects; and explain <i>counterclaims</i>.</p>	<p>Identify a claim that is supported with relevant evidence from a primary <i>and/or</i> secondary source, social studies content knowledge, <i>and/or an explanation</i> to demonstrate an understanding of social studies content; identify <i>viewpoints</i>; <i>and identify causes and effects</i>.</p>	<p>Identify a claim or an explanation that is supported with relevant evidence from a primary or secondary source or social studies content knowledge to demonstrate an understanding of social studies content.</p>