

Descriptors of DOK Levels for Social Studies

Social Studies DEPTH OF KNOWLEDGE (DOK)

Recall and Reproduction – Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Level 1

Recall and Reproduction asks students to recall facts, terms, concepts, trends, generalizations and theories or to recognize or identify specific information contained in graphics. This level generally requires students to identify, list, or define. The items at this level usually ask the student to recall who, what, when and where. Items that require students to “describe” and “explain” could be classified at Level 1 or 2 depending on the complexity of what is to be described and explained. A Level 1 “describe or explain” would recall, re-cite or reproduce information. Items that require students to recognize or identify specific information contained in maps, charts, tables, graphs or drawings are generally Level 1.

A student answering a Level 1 item either knows the answer or does not: that is, the answer does not need to be “figured out” or “solved.”

Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 1 performance are:

- Define Compromise.
- Identify two examples of political conflict among individuals and/or groups in the United States during the colonial time period.
- Identify how scarcity forces people and societies to make choices.
- List three physical characteristics of a region of the United States.
- Describe physical features of regions.

Skills and Concepts/Basic Reasoning – Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Level 2

Skills and Concepts/Basic Reasoning includes the engagement of some mental processing beyond recalling or reproducing a response. This level generally requires students to contrast or compare people, places, events and concepts; convert information from one form to another; give an example; classify or sort items into meaningful categories; describe, interpret or explain issues and problems, patterns, reasons, cause and effect, significance or impact, relationships, points of view or processes. A Level 2 “describe or explain” would require students to go beyond a description or explanation of recalled information to describe or explain a result or “how” or “why.”

Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 2 performance are:

- Explain the causes and effects of the Revolutionary War.
- Describe how groups and individuals in Kentucky make economic decisions based on their limited productive resources.
- Explain the reasons why discrimination developed in the United States prior to the Civil Rights Movement.
- Compare and give examples of how scarcity required the Ancient Egyptians and the Ancient Romans to make decisions about how their productive resources should be used.
- Explain how interaction between the supporters of slavery and those opposed to slavery led to political conflict and competition during the 1850s.

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Strategic Thinking/Complex Reasoning – Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Level 3

Strategic Thinking/Complex Reasoning requires reasoning, using evidence, and a higher level of thinking than the previous two levels. Students would go beyond explaining or describing “how and why” to justifying the “how and why” through application and evidence. The cognitive demands at Level 3 are more complex and more abstract than Levels 1 or 2. Items at Level 3 include drawing conclusions; citing evidence; applying concepts to new situations; using concepts to solve problems; analyzing similarities and differences in issues and problems; proposing and evaluating solutions to problems; recognizing and explaining misconceptions or making connections across time and place to explain a concept or big idea.

Some examples that represent, but do not constitute all of Level 3 performance are:

- Propose and evaluate solutions for an economic problem.
- Citing evidence, evaluate monarchies, democracies, republics, and dictatorships in terms of their effectiveness in establishing order, providing security, and accomplishing common goals.
- Analyze the causes of the rapid population growth of the “Sun Belt” states, and explain the economic impact of this growth on those regions where population patterns have shifted.
- Recognize and explain misconceptions related to the discovery of America.

Extended Thinking/Reasoning – Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Level 4

Extended Thinking/Reasoning requires the complex reasoning of Level 3 with the addition of planning, investigating, or developing that will most likely require an extended period of time. The extended time period is not a distinguishing factor if the required work is only repetitive and does not require applying significant conceptual understanding and higher-order thinking. At this level the cognitive demands should be high and the work should be very complex. Students should be required to connect and relate ideas and concepts *within* the content area or *among* content areas in order to be at this highest level. The distinguishing factor for Level 4 would be evidence through a task or product that the cognitive demands have been met. A Level 4 performance will require students to analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources examine and explain alternative perspectives across a variety of sources and/or describe and illustrate how common themes and concepts are found across time and place. In some Level 4 performance students will make predictions with evidence as support, develop a logical argument, or plan and develop solutions to problems.

Many on-demand assessment instruments will not include assessment activities that could be classified as Level 4. However, standards, goals, and objectives can be stated so as to expect students to perform thinking at this level. On-demand assessments that do include tasks, products, or extended responses would be classified as Level 4 when the task or response requires evidence that the cognitive requirements have been met.

- Some examples that represent, but do not constitute all of Level 4 performance are:
- Research, apply and adapt information to solve a geographic problem.
- Create and participate in a simulation of a mock trial.
- Plan and develop a solution to a problem/issue in your community.
- Examine and explain alternative perspectives across a variety of primary/secondary sources.
- Analyze and synthesize information for multiple sources.

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DOK as a “Ceiling”

*DOK levels identified on Core Content statements represent the **highest** level that items will be designated for the Kentucky Core Content Test. It is important to note, however, that items will also be developed below this “ceiling” level.*

Examples for each of the Depth of Knowledge Levels in Social Studies

Recall & Reproduction (DOK 1)	Skills & Concepts/ Basic Reasoning (DOK 2)	Strategic Thinking/ Complex Reasoning (DOK 3)	Extended Thinking/ Reasoning (DOK 4)
Identify who, when, what where, and why Recall facts, terms, concepts, trends, generalizations and theories Use a variety of tools Recognize or identify specific information contained in graphics. Identify specific information in maps, charts, tables, graphs or drawings Define Identify cause and effect Describe (recall, recite or reproduce information) Identify purposes	Describe or explain how or why Give an example Describe and explain issues and problems, purposes, patterns, sources, reasons, cause and effect, multiple causation, significance or impact, relationships, points of view or processes Compare/contrast people, places, events, purposes, and concepts Classify, sort items into meaningful categories Convert information from one form to another	Use concepts to solve problems Use evidence to justify Propose and evaluate solutions to problems Recognize and explain misconceptions Cite evidence and develop a logical argument for concepts Reason and draw conclusions Disseminate among plausible answers Analyze similarities and differences in issues and problems Apply concepts to new situations Make connections across time and place to explain a concept or big idea Recognize and explain patterns Make and support decisions Evaluate effectiveness and impact	Connect and relate ideas and concepts within the content area or among content areas Examine and explain alternative perspectives across a variety of sources Describe and illustrate how common themes and concepts are found across time and place Make predictions with evidence as support Develop a logical argument Plan and develop solutions to problems Analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources Complex reasoning with planning, investigating or developing that will most likely require an extended period of time-must require applying significant conceptual understanding and higher-order thinking Apply and adapt information to real-world situations Participation in simulations and activities requiring higher-level thinking (e.g., Mock Trial, Mock Congress, Project Citizen)