

Grade 7 Social Studies Achievement Level Descriptors

The Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) describe the knowledge, skills, and cognitive processes that students should exhibit with relative consistency and accuracy in a variety of contexts. Some deviations or exceptions may be observed.

	Approaching Basic	Basic	Mastery	Advanced
General Social Studies Descriptors	Students at the Approaching Basic level demonstrate a limited understanding of history, civics, geography, and economics content and concepts in United States history from 1763 through 1877.	Students at the Basic level demonstrate a general understanding of history, civics, geography, and economics content and concepts in United States history from 1763 through 1877.	Students at the Mastery level demonstrate a strong understanding of history, civics, geography, and economics content and concepts in United States history from 1763 through 1877.	Students at the Advanced level demonstrate a thorough understanding of history, civics, geography, and economics content and concepts in United States history from 1763 through 1877.
Category	Approaching Basic	Basic	Mastery	Advanced
Claims and Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and express flawed claims that provide vague explanations of connections and relationships among ideas, people, and events within or across time and place. Use little or no evidence from the sources and limited knowledge from the course to respond to questions about social studies content and concepts. Rely on either knowledge from the course or information provided in the sources to make vague or incomplete connections among social studies themes and disciplines (history, geography, civics, economics). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and express reasonable claims, but provide inconsistent or incomplete explanations of connections and relationships among ideas, people, and events within or across time and place. Use disconnected evidence from the sources and general knowledge from the course to respond to questions about social studies content and concepts. Use knowledge from the course and information provided in the sources to make obvious connections among social studies themes and disciplines (history, geography, civics, economics). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and clearly express logical claims that provide consistent and complete explanations of the connections and relationships among ideas, people, and events within or across time and place. Use appropriate evidence from the sources and strong knowledge from the course to respond to questions about social studies content and concepts. Integrate knowledge from the course with information provided in the sources to make reasoned and informed connections that show the relationships among social studies themes and disciplines (history, geography, civics, economics). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and effectively express valid claims that provide cohesive and in-depth explanations of the connections and relationships among ideas, people, and events within or across time and place. Use well-chosen evidence from the sources and thorough knowledge from the course to respond to questions about social studies content and concepts. Synthesize knowledge from the course and information provided in the sources to make sophisticated connections that show the interrelationships among social studies themes and disciplines (history, geography, civics, economics).

Sample Content Connections	Category	Approaching Basic	Basic	Mastery	Advanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key historical events and people shaped U.S. foreign and domestic policies. Reform movements influenced US policies, legislation, and court cases. Political, social, and economic factors influenced migration and settlement patterns. Resources and land use contributed to the development of diverse regional economies in the United States. 	History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key events, ideas, people, or policies from the American Revolution through the ratification of the Constitution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the impact of key events, ideas, people, and policies from the American Revolution through the ratification of the Constitution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the causes and impact of key events, ideas, people, and policies from the American Revolution through the ratification of the Constitution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the causes and impact of key events, ideas, people, and policies from the American Revolution through the ratification of the Constitution.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify major events and policies during the Washington and Adams presidencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe major events and policies during the Washington and Adams presidencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how major events and policies during the Washington and Adams presidencies influenced the development of the United States. 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe social or economic factors that led to westward expansion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the role of social and economic factors that led to westward expansion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze social and economic factors that led to westward expansion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze political, social, and economic factors that led to westward expansion.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe major American reform movements during the nineteenth century. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the motivations and influence of major American reform movements during the nineteenth century. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the motivations and influence of major American reform movements during the nineteenth century. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the motivations and influence of major American reform movements during the nineteenth century.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe political, social, or economic characteristics of different regions of the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how political, social, and economic factors influenced the development of different regions of the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare and contrast the political, social, and economic development of different regions of the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the political, social, and economic development of different regions of the United States.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key events, ideas, and people that led to the Civil War. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the reasons for the expansion of slavery in the South after 1800 and the key events, ideas, and people that led to the Civil War. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the reasons for the expansion of slavery in the South after 1800 and the role of the key events, ideas, and people that led to the Civil War. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the reasons for the expansion of slavery in the South after 1800 and the role of the key events, ideas, and people that led to the Civil War.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important turning points and major developments during the Civil War. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe important turning points and major developments during the Civil War and the short-term outcomes of Reconstruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the importance of turning points and major developments during the Civil War and the short-term outcomes of Reconstruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze important turning points and major developments during the Civil War and the short- and long-term outcomes of Reconstruction.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political, social and geographic factors shaped the economic development of regions in the United States. 	Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe information shown in historical charts, graphs, and maps of the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain information in historical charts, graphs, and maps of the United States, including the importance of physical features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze information in historical charts, graphs, and maps of the United States, including the importance of physical and political features. 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify motivations and settlement patterns of groups migrating within and into the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain motivations and settlement patterns of groups migrating within and into the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze motivations, settlement patterns, and obstacles faced by groups migrating within and into the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze motivations, settlement patterns, and obstacles faced by groups migrating within and into the United States and the impact of these migrations.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe ways Americans adapted to and transformed physical environments in the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how Americans adapted to and transformed various physical environments to expand the growth and influence of the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze how Americans adapted to and transformed various physical environments to expand the growth and influence of the United States

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate between a few forms of government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate between various forms of government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the differences between various forms of government.
Civics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe some structures and powers of the branches of the federal government and some principles and purposes of government according to the United States Constitution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the structures and powers of the branches of the federal government and explain the principles and purposes of government according to the United States Constitution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the structures and powers of the branches of the federal government and the principles and purposes of government according to United States Constitution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the structures and powers of the branches of the federal government and the principles and purposes of government according to the United States Constitution.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key ideas that influenced the formation of the United States government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe key ideas that influenced the formation of the United States government and legislation or court decisions that influenced events in US history. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how key ideas in historical documents influenced the formation of the United States government and how legislation and court decisions influenced events in US history. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze how key ideas in historical documents influenced the formation of the United States government and how legislation and court decisions influenced the course of US history.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illustrate the role of the legislative branch in the process of a bill becoming a law at the federal level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illustrate how a bill becomes a law at the federal level, including the roles of the legislative and executive branches. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify United States foreign policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe United States foreign policies and the impact of interactions between nations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how United States foreign policies were developed and carried out, ways nations interact, and the impact of interactions between nations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the development and implementation of United States foreign policies, interactions between nations, and the impact of international relations.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the individual rights and freedoms of United States citizens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe influences on the development of individual rights and freedoms in the United States and ways citizens influence change in a democratic society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how different factors influenced the development of individual rights and freedoms in the United States and ways citizens influence change in a democratic society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze influences on the development of individual rights and freedoms in the United States and ways citizens influence change in a democratic society.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the duties and responsibilities of United States citizens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the duties, responsibilities, and qualifications of United States citizens and the development of political parties in the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the duties, responsibilities, and qualifications of United States citizens and the development and roles of political parties and special interest groups in the United States. 	
Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the influence of resources and technology on the United States economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how resources and technology influenced the economy of the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how demand for resources and technology influenced economic diversity in the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the demand for resources and technology that influenced economic diversity in the United States.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe factors that influenced economic interdependence between regions of the United States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe factors that influenced economic interdependence between regions of the United States and government policies that influenced the United States economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how economic interdependence developed between regions of the United States and with foreign countries and the ways government policies influenced the United States economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the development of economic interdependence between regions of the United States and with foreign countries and the ways government policies influenced the United States economy.