

PURPOSE: To establish common expectations for student writing in social studies

OUTCOMES:

- Learn to use the content and claims rubric
- Identify qualities of writing that meets specific points
- Identify patterns in student writing at the classroom/school level to inform instruction

PROCESS:

1. Have students respond in writing to a common prompt. Suggested prompts:
 - a. Social Studies Sample Scope and Sequence Unit Assessment - [K-12 Social Studies Resources](#)
 - b. [Grade-Level Practice tests](#), [Item set](#), and [Task set](#)
 - c. Tasks created at the school/district level
2. Collect students' written responses to the common prompt.
3. Work collaboratively to understand the rubric.
 - a. Review the scoring criteria on the chosen rubric. Read through each row. Highlight the keywords on the rubric that show the differences between each score.
 - b. Create anchor papers. These are papers that all participants agree represent a solid score (e.g., a 4 in Content and a 3 in Claims, etc.). Annotate the papers to identify which qualities match the rubric. They will serve as models of each score point on the rubric.
4. Score the compositions collaboratively.
 - a. Individually score the extended responses using the content and claims rubric and anchor set.
 - b. Then come together as a group. Read each extended response aloud and, as a group, discuss the individual scores using the rubric and the anchor papers.
 - c. Try to reach consensus on the scores for each extended response. Discuss any scores that are not consistent.
5. After the responses are scored, discuss the essays in general—strengths, weaknesses, different approaches to the task, etc. Determine any patterns that exist in the responses as a whole (e.g., difficulty with a particular construct, such as relevance of the evidence or the organization of the ideas). Individual teachers should also consider their own students' papers to determine any patterns.
6. Finally, discuss the instructional implications: "How will we address the general weaknesses? How will I address my own students' weaknesses, etc.?" Develop a plan.