

# National Essential Skills Study (NESS)

Your final survey choices must be submitted electronically at [www.LeaderEd.com/ness.html](http://www.LeaderEd.com/ness.html). Use this printout to examine the topics and make your preliminary selections.

## Social Studies

Choose a minimum of **20** topic statements and a maximum of **30** topic statements as the ones you think are most important for high school graduates to know and be able to do.

### Geography

- Employ geographic tools (maps, globes, photographs, models, satellite images, charts, databases, GPS, etc.) and other visual images (physical, mental, and electronic representations) to acquire, process, and report information about people, places, and environments from a spatial perspective.
- Compare and contrast the physical, human, and cultural characteristics of places and regions on Earth.
- Analyze how people's culture and experience in one place or region influence perceptions of peoples from other places and regions.
- Relate the physical processes that shape the Earth's surface to the spatial distribution of ecosystems.
- Analyze the causes and effects of population change on the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's diverse populations and cultures, including the impact of demographics and the fact that they are constantly shifting.
- Analyze the patterns and networks of economic interdependence between places and regions on Earth.
- Analyze how the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of the Earth's surface.
- Analyze the interaction between humans and the physical environment.
- Use geographic studies (e.g., demographics) to interpret the past and present and to plan or predict future events.

### Global Studies (World History)

- Examine and explain the processes that led to the emergence of the earliest agricultural communities around the world.
- Examine and explain the characteristics of early civilizations (4000–1000 BCE) in Eurasia and Africa and the emergence and spread of agrarian and militaristic societies.
- Analyze major global occurrences from 1000 BCE – 1914 CE (onset of World War I) and describe the causes, consequences, or results.
- Describe the impacts of revolution and reform on the world economy from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century through today and explain the causes and global consequences of local, regional, and global wars.
- Analyze long-term changes and recurring patterns in world history and explain any relationship to situations in the world today.
- Compare and contrast U.S. foreign and domestic governmental policies to those of other nations and describe how this affects how nations interact with each other.
- Classify the political organization of other nations and evaluate how U.S. politics and society have influenced, or been influenced by, other nations.

### Civics and Government

- Examine the concepts of civic life, politics, and government and explain why government is necessary.
- Examine the purpose of rules and laws, explain how governments enact and enforce them, and assess ways to evaluate rules and laws.

- Explain limited government and the importance of limiting the power of government.
- Analyze the values, principles, and beliefs of our constitutional democracy and evaluate why it is important for U.S. citizens to promote and share these values, principles, and beliefs.
- Describe the benefits and challenges of diversity in the United States.
- Describe the U.S. Constitution and why it, or any constitution, is important.
- Compare and contrast the organization, roles, and major responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments.
- Explain the roles, rights, and responsibilities of the U.S. citizen in our democracy.
- Compare the purposes, sources of power, and effectiveness of various governments around the world to each other and to those outlined in the U.S. Constitution.
- Understand and evaluate the role of political parties and interest groups in the United States and other nations.

## **United States/North American History**

- Compare and contrast family life as well as local and North American community life now and in the past.
- Describe significant people, events, problems, and ideas that were instrumental in creating the history of your state.
- Explain how American principles and values came to be and are represented today by people from many cultures, which contribute to and help form a national cultural, economic, and political heritage.
- Investigate major scientific and technological discoveries, the inventors responsible for them, and their social and economic impact on societies within North America and around the world.
- Describe how exploration and colonization resulted in cultural, economic, and ecological interactions among societies in North America, Western Europe, and Western Africa around the 15<sup>th</sup> century.
- Explain the attraction of the Americas to Europeans and examine why enslaved Africans were brought to the colonies and how the Europeans struggled for control of their settlements in North America and the Caribbean.
- Investigate how political, religious, and social values and institutions emerged in the English colonies and assess how they impacted life in the Americas during the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- Describe the impacts of revolution and reform on the U.S. economy and society from the period of colonization through contemporary times and explain the causes and consequences of local, regional, and global wars on the United States.
- Analyze and describe the struggle for racial and gender equality and the extension of civil liberties.
- Investigate current U.S. economic, social, and cultural developments and trends and describe the impact they have on modern foreign and domestic politics and policies.

## **Economics**

- Give examples of and explain how scarcity of productive resources (natural and human resources and capital goods) necessitates choices at both the personal and societal levels in the modern world and explain the impact of those choices.
- Investigate how a cost/benefit analysis can influence decisions based on profits and losses.
- Describe the advantages and disadvantages of different methods for allocating goods and services (e.g., by price, command, majority rule, contests, force, first-come/first-served, sharing equally, lottery), then choose the method that is most appropriate for a specific problem or situation.
- Describe how buyers and sellers interact to create market forces whereby market prices are determined and scarce goods and services are allocated.
- Explain how changes in supply or demand cause relative prices to change and, in turn, affect the purchasing and sales incentives of buyers and sellers.
- Analyze how economic institutions (banks, labor unions, corporations, legal systems, not-for-profit organizations, etc.) evolve in market economies to help individuals and groups accomplish their goals.

- Explain how money (currency, coins, checks) makes it easier to trade, borrow, save, invest, and compare the value of goods and services than bartering does.
- Explain how workers' incomes depend primarily on the market value of what they produce, the skill with which they produce it, and how productive they are.
- Describe how investment in factories, machinery, and new technology and in the health, education, and training of people can raise future standards of living.
- Analyze the extent to which government policies or programs play a role in a market economy or society and evaluate the effectiveness of those policies or programs.
- Analyze how a nation's overall levels of income, employment, and price for goods are determined by the interaction of spending and production decisions made by all households, firms, government agencies, and others in the economy.
- Evaluate the trends and impacts of unemployment and inflation on individuals, nations, and economies.

## Social Studies/Historical Thinking Skills

- Compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned.
- Analyze how change happens at different rates at different times; understand that some aspects can change while others remain the same; and understand that change is complicated and affects not only technology and politics, but also values and beliefs.
- Distinguish valid arguments from fallacious arguments in historical interpretations.
- Identify bias and prejudice in historical or modern interpretations of people, places, or events.
- Evaluate major debates among historians concerning alternative interpretations of the past, including an analysis of authors' use of evidence and the distinctions between sound generalization and misleading oversimplification.
- Construct and test hypotheses; collect, evaluate, and report information from multiple primary and secondary sources.
- Identify connections between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.
- Recognize the complexity of historical causes and effects, including the limitations on determining cause and effect.
- Interpret past events and issues within the context in which an event unfolded rather than solely in terms of present-day norms and values.
- Understand the meaning, implications, and impacts of historical events and recognize that events could have taken other directions.
- Solve problems effectively by characterizing a problem through identification of variables and relationships and moving to a solution.
- Make and communicate decisions by identifying alternatives and consequences and satisfying constraints.

When you enter your survey responses online, you will be asked to check one of the boxes below. If you will be giving your completed survey to someone else to enter your choices, please indicate your position below.

<p><b>Your Position:</b> <i>(Select only one)</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> English Language Arts Educator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics Educator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Science Educator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies Educator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Elementary (K-5) Educator</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Language Educator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Art/Music Educator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Physical/Health Education Educator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Educator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Career/Technical Education Educator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School Administrator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Guidance Counselor</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Other Educator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Community Member</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Business/Industry</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Student</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other Non Educator</p>
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