Part Four: Gateway Social Studies
Scoring Domains

- Domain 1: Development, Analysis, & Interpretation
- Domain 2: Expression of Social Studies Knowledge
- Domain 3: Organization of Social Studies Concepts
- Domain 4: Conventions
Domain 1. Development, Analysis, & Interpretation

- Response to Task
- Focus
- Depth
- Social Studies Facts, Concepts, Events
- Analysis of Relationships
Domain 1: Development, Analysis, and Interpretation

Overview Statement: The degree to which the writer demonstrates a depth of understanding of Social Studies through the description, analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of facts, concepts, and events related to the assigned task.

Components:
- Depth of Development
  - Analysis and Interpretation of relationships implicit in the writing task
  - Description of social studies facts, concepts and historical events
- Response to the Task
- Focus/Relevance
Component 1: Depth of Development

Elements of Depth of Development:

- Analysis and Interpretation of relationships implicit in the writing task
- Description of social studies facts, concepts, and historical events

Depth of Development involves the level of historical understanding demonstrated in a student response. Writers achieve depth by analyzing, interpreting, and synthesizing the facts, concepts and principles inherent in each Gateway assigned task and by describing historical events. Analysis, synthesis, and interpretation are tools that a writer uses to demonstrate how specific historical facts relate to larger, more general concepts and principles of world history (often referred to as the “big picture.”). The writer accomplishes this by explaining why historical events occurred in addition to describing what occurred. Gateway social studies writing tasks require the student to both recognize and explain the relationships in a sequence of historical events. Explaining causes and effects is one way writers can demonstrate an understanding of historical relationships. Drawing conclusions and defending them with evidence from prior knowledge is another way of demonstrating an understanding of concepts and principles in world history. In high level Gateway student responses, the writer’s analysis is explicit, not implied.

The amount of depth in a student response is based on the degree to which the writer elaborates the explanations of each part of the assigned task. Writers are expected to provide evidence to justify their interpretations of historical events. Effective elaboration consists of details that are specific, relevant, correct, and fully explained.
Examples of Depth of Development in a Paragraph

Depth of Development: High-Medium-Low Level Examples

**Artistic Contributions**

**HIGH**

“In the current world, artists have almost limitless freedom to create whatever they want. However, in the Dark Age of Europe, art was confined to the church and the items that could be portrayed had to have religious significance. The European Renaissance revived art in Europe and saw many great works produced. The most famous painting in the world, the Mona Lisa by Da Vinci, was produced during the Renaissance. Sculptures, including Michelangelo’s statues of David and the Pieta, came into prominence during this time. The artwork of the Renaissance, including such classics as Botticelli’s The Birth of Venus” and Hiram Bosch’s The Garden of Earthly Delights,” has been imitated by many artists or has been the inspiration for them. The Renaissance also saw non-religious art produced, such as Raphael’s “the School of Athens.” This non-religious art marked a turning point in Europe, as the church no longer had complete control over artists during this time. The artistic freedom and the artistic styles of the Renaissance would go on to shape the artistic culture of Europe for centuries.”

**MEDIUM**

“Artistic contributions during the European Renaissance made a large impact on the world. Artists, such as Leonardo da Vinci, developed a new style of art which made paintings and drawings look more realistic. An example of one of Leonardo da Vinci’s paintings, which is perhaps the most popular paintings in the world, is known as the Mona Lisa. This painting perfectly represents this time period just by the way it was painted; it has the Renaissance style to it. Also, the Pieta was another great piece of art which was developed during this time period. As the reader can see, artistic contributions during the European Renaissance time period had a major impact on the entire planet.”

**LOW**

“Art was literally everywhere during the Renaissance era. It didn’t matter what race you were. Art was all over Europe from the Greeks to the Romans to the French. From the rich to the poor – Art was something they dealt with daily in their lives. To some people, art was like a religion, it was like a whole new sense to our body. Art came in all shapes and sizes. Paintings and drawings is whom people usually refer to when spoken of Art, but it’s much more than that, its castles, churches, and statues. Expressed through emotion, it’s another spirit. Not all people did art for a hobby or to get distracted, some people used art for symbolic messages, or a way to get into a person’s soul.”
Examples of Depth of Development in a Paragraph

Depth of Development: High-Medium-Low Level Examples

**Literary Contributions**

**HIGH**

“One clear example of this movement away from over bearing religion formed in the world of literature. For many years, only the bible and other religious texts – written only in Latin – dominated the literary globe. However, beginning with Martin Luther’s texts in “common” Germanic, and continued by the invention of the printing press, literacy became far more common. In light of the Renaissance and humanist movement, the authorship of secular texts exploded. Men such as Shakespeare and Petrarch developed a new kind of poetry – the sonnet— that praised love. In fact, Petrarch’s sonnet “Laura” praised a single woman: evidence of the humanist movement. In turn, Shakespeare’s writings also showed a separation from religion and God; many of his plays were comedies that poked fun at human fallacy and were written solely for human enjoyment and pleasure. They served no higher purpose. The men had an appreciation for both the beauty of humanity and its faults that echoed the very core of what the Renaissance was.”

**MEDIUM**

“Literary contributions during the Renaissance were very popular and well known. These contributions came from great writers, such as Petrarch, Miguel de Cervantes, Giovanni Boccaccio, and William Shakespeare. For example, William Shakespeare was most likely the best playwright of all time. Some of his famous plays include Julius Caesar, Hamlet, and Romeo and Juliet. All three of these plays are extremely well known today. Some proof that they are still popular today.”

**LOW**

“The literacy contributions are things the renaissance would do to find out things. There was the great writers of the Renaissance Petarch, Miguel de Cervantes, Giovanni Boccaccio and William Shakespere. They would make laws and have sign them so that the law was passed. They needed a certain amount of people to sign it, The renaissance also made laws so that they could have more freedom.”
Examples of Depth of Development in a Paragraph

Depth of Development: High-Medium-Low Level Examples

**Scientific Contributions**

**HIGH**

“Although the Renaissance is largely associated with the various artistic and literary achievements, there were various scientific advancements that took place. Through the secular outlook, scientists explored the outside world as well as the human soul. Copernicus fashioned the idea that the sun was the center of the solar system, but his theories were readily dismissed. Kepler then proved Copernicus’ theories correct as did Galileo who designed a telescope to observe the stars which provided the evidence needed to support Copernicus and Kepler. Using his telescope, he was able to map constellations and planetary alignments. Isaac Newton also provided scientific advancements by establishing the laws of gravity setting the basis for modern physics and calculus. New tools such as the telescope allowed Renaissance scientists to better understand the world around them.”

**MEDIUM**

‘The technological and scientific breakthroughs of the Renaissance were the works of the scientists. Believe it or not, Leonardo da Vinci was not only an artist, but an inventor as well. Da Vinci had many ideas for inventions. He wrote his ideas in code so that nobody would steal them. One invention of his, though unsuccessful, was a flying machine. Another scientist was Galileo. He created a telescope so that he could observe the moon. This was an astronomical breakthrough for the world.”

**LOW**

“Last, the scientists developed scientific vehicles as new things. The made many scientific vehicles and some vehicles are used to create new things. Some scientists drew pictures, so I think they are interested in both of them.”
Component 2: Response to Task

The response to the task component involves the degree to which the writer addresses each part of the Gateway task. Most Gateway Social Studies test forms have three parts, and students are required to answer all of them. High level responses address all parts of the writing task thoroughly. Mid-level responses address most parts of the writing task with some detail. Low level responses may only address a small part of the task or do not address the assigned task with clarity and correctness.

Component 3: Focus/Relevance

Relevant details focus directly on the assigned Gateway task. Student writers are not penalized for including additional details, but an abundance of irrelevant details is an indicator that the writer may not understand the major concepts and principles in the assigned task. Information about time periods other than the Renaissance may be irrelevant, but the writer could also include such examples to contrast the Renaissance with earlier and/or later times. For example, in an explanation of the artistic contributions of the Renaissance, it is directly relevant to discuss artistic themes in the Middle Ages and to contrast the more secular themes of the Renaissance artists. Likewise, it is also relevant to illustrate how scientific advancements of the Renaissance influenced later scientific discoveries.
Domain 2. Expression of Social Studies Knowledge
Domain 2: Expression of Social Studies Knowledge

Overview Statement: The degree to which the writer uses appropriate social studies vocabulary, relevant prior knowledge, and information from the provided documents.

Components:
- Prior Knowledge
- Use of Documents
- Social Studies Vocabulary
Component 1: Prior Social Studies Knowledge

Prior Knowledge is any relevant, correct knowledge which is not included in the historical background or in the provided documents of a Gateway Test Form. Student writers are expected to include some prior knowledge in each part of their responses. It is important to be familiar with the provided documents in order to correctly gauge the amount of prior knowledge demonstrated in a student response.

Examples of Relevant Prior Social Studies Knowledge for Form 416: Cultural Contributions of the Renaissance

- Renaissance art is most well-known for its realism which was achieved through the use of perspective.
- Michelangelo helped design St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome.
- The Gutenberg Bible was printed in the 1400s.
- Humanists emphasized the enjoyment of life.
Component 2: Social Studies Vocabulary

Student writers are expected to use correct social studies vocabulary in each part of their responses. Some social studies vocabulary is included in the Historical Background of the test form and in the documents provided to cue the students’ prior knowledge. It is appropriate for students to use the terms that are provided in the documents; however, it is expected that students will add additional vocabulary in constructing their responses.

Examples of Relevant Social Studies Vocabulary for Form 416: Cultural Contributions of the Renaissance

- Realism
- Perspective
- Frescoes
- Movable type
- Printing press
- Humanists
- Patrons
- Sonnet
- Geocentric Theory
- Telescope
- Heliocentric Theory
**Component 3: Use of Documents**

Documents are provided with each form of the Gateway Social Studies Assessment. These documents may include photographs, maps, diagrams, flow charts, political cartoons, charts, and time lines. The purpose of these documents is to provide historical information to interpret as well to cue students to their prior knowledge about each social studies topic. Appropriate use of the provided documents involves correctly interpreting and applying the information in the documents to answer each part of the assigned task. Inappropriate use involves copying statements verbatim from the documents or interpreting the information incorrectly.
Domain 3: Organization of Social Studies Concepts
Domain 3: Organization of Social Studies Concepts

Overview Statement: The degree to which the writer’s ideas are arranged in a clear order and the overall structure of the response is consistent with the parts of the assigned task.

Components:
- Linking Ideas
  - Sequence of Ideas
  - Transitioning
- Overall Plan/Organizational Strategy
- Introduction/Body/Conclusion
Component 1: Linking Ideas

Sequence of Ideas: In responding to the assigned task, students taking the Gateway Assessment for Social Studies may order their ideas in a variety of ways. Writers are not required to put their ideas and details in the order outlined in the Writing Task, but many choose to do so. Because the parts of the assigned task are related to a common theme, some writers choose to intertwine these related ideas in their responses and point out the connections to the common theme. When a writer’s ideas are logically sequenced, the reader can better understand the writer’s ideas. Each idea leads naturally into the next idea and links the ideas within each paragraph and between paragraphs.

Transitioning: Transitions may be a single word, a pronoun, a phrase, a complete sentence, or an implicit logic that connects two ideas. Transitions can be found within sentences, between sentences, and between paragraphs. Transitions may be explicit or implicit. Often the most effective transitions are the most subtle ones. There are many different techniques a writer can use to provide connections between ideas because transitions can serve several different purposes. Some transitions signal the relationship between the writer’s previous stated ideas and the ideas still to come. Other transitions suggest that relative importance of the ideas being presented.

Examples of Explicit Transition Words

- also, another
- but, however
- for example
- this, therefore, so
- first, second, third, in conclusion
Component 2: Overall Plan/Organizational Strategy

All effective writing requires planning and structure to communicate meaning to the reader. Social Studies writing is no exception. Students taking the Gateway Assessment for Social Studies are expected to write a coherent essay that uses and explains social studies vocabulary, facts, concepts, and events. Student responses should have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion that are appropriate to formal social studies writing. Within that format, students can group and sequence their ideas in almost any manner that is clear to the reader. An overall narrative plan would not be appropriate for the purpose of this assessment, but there may be tasks which would support explaining events and examples in chronological order. It is not necessary or recommended for the writer to adopt the persona of someone living during the events in the assigned era.

Grouping: In order to effectively group social studies ideas, the writer must first understand the logical relationships between specific social studies facts and the larger social studies concepts. Grouping ideas is not the same element of writing as formatting paragraphs. Even if a writer fails to correctly format paragraphs, social studies ideas may still be grouped logically. Grouping ideas effectively does not require an explicitly stated topic sentence stating the purpose of each paragraph. Logical grouping and sequencing of social studies ideas enhances the flow of ideas and leads the reader through the response more effectively than explicit announcements and structures.

Component 3: Introduction, Body, Conclusion

Introduction: An effective introduction should set the stage for the development of the writer’s ideas and should be consistent with the purpose of the assigned social studies task. The purpose of an introduction is to establish the topic of the response and its overall context in the field of world history. It is not necessary for the writer to announce each subject that will be explained in the paragraphs that follow. Addressing some of the major themes related to the task is an effective starting point. An effective introduction to the Renaissance could begin by explaining why and how European culture and attitudes toward life began to change. An ineffective introduction often repeats the information provided in the historical background of the writing task.

Body: The body of a Gateway response should be organized into clear paragraphs. Each part of the response should be explained using specific vocabulary, details, and historical examples. Effective social studies writing involves defining terms for the reader and providing clear examples to clarify complex events and philosophies.
**Conclusion:** The purpose of the conclusion is to signal the reader that the response is coming to a close. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, some of which are more effective than others. Using the final paragraph as an opportunity to make big picture connections related to the assigned topic and task is more effective than restating information from the introduction or the body of the response. Explaining how the topic is tied to contemporary events can also help the reader understand and remember complex concepts in world history.
Domain 4. Conventions

- Sentence Formation
- Diction
- Usage
- Mechanics
Domain 4: Conventions

Overview Statement: The degree to which the writer demonstrates control of sentence formation, usage, diction, and mechanics.

Components:

- Sentence Formation
  - correctness
  - effectiveness
  - complexity
  - end punctuation
  - variety

- Usage/Diction
  - subject-verb agreement
  - standard word forms
  - pronoun-antecedent agreement
  - tense

- Mechanics
  - citation of original sources
  - internal punctuation
  - spelling
  - capitalization
  - paragraph breaks
Component 1: Sentence Formation

A sentence is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb. Four elements of sentence formation are evaluated in the Gateway Assessment for Social Studies: correctness, effectiveness, complexity, variety.

**Sentence Correctness:** A correct sentence is one that contains a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought. Because a timed writing assessment has a limited amount of time allotted for proofreading and editing, student responses often contain incorrect sentences. Sentence errors can take the form of incomplete sentences (fragments), run-on sentences or missing end punctuation. A single, incorrect sentence will not determine the entire Conventions score for a student response. Even a “5” level response in Conventions may have an occasional sentence error. Evaluating this component of sentence formation involves looking at the proportion of correct sentences to incorrect sentences in a student response and asking: are the majority of the sentences correct or incorrect? For example, two incorrect sentences in a response with a total of only five sentences represents a significantly higher percentage of error than two incorrect sentences in a response with 35-50 correct sentences.

**Sentence Effectiveness:** This element concerns the clarity of a writer’s sentences. A sentence should make sense as an independent unit. It should convey a clear message. When the words of a sentence are arranged in the wrong order, sentence effectiveness and clarity are affected. When a writer overloads a sentence with too many clauses or strings together unrelated ideas, clarity is reduced and the reader must reread to make sense of the passage.

**Sentence Complexity:** A sentence may express a single, complete thought or it may express more complex relationships between multiple ideas. For the Gateway Assessment, students are expected to control the construction of simple, complex, compound, and compound-complex sentences as they respond to the assigned task.

**Sentence Variety:** There are many ways sentence construction can be varied: by length, structure, type and beginning.

- **Length:** the length of a sentence can be varied by the number of words or by the length of individual words with the sentence.
- **Structure:** the structure of a sentence can be simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex.
- **Type:** Sentences can be declarative, interrogative, and imperative.
- **Beginnings:** Varying the beginnings of sentences makes the response more engaging to read. Students can vary the subject of the sentence, vary introductory clauses, and vary the types of verbs used to begin each sentence.
Component 2: Usage/Diction

There are four elements of the Usage component of Conventions: subject-verb agreement, standard word forms, pronoun-antecedent agreement, and tense.

Subject-verb agreement: A verb must agree in number with its subject. Singular nouns (he) only agree with singular verb forms (goes), and plural nouns (they) only agree with plural word forms (go).

Standard word forms: Word forms include nouns, adjectives, adverbs, homonyms, plurals, and possessives. Students taking the Gateway assessment are expected to use standard word forms, not slang or texting abbreviations.

Pronoun-antecedent agreement: Pronouns are words that can take the place of nouns. An antecedent is the noun that the pronoun is replacing. Singular antecedents must be replaced by singular pronouns, and plural antecedents must be replaced by plural pronouns in order to “agree.”

Verb Tenses: Verb tenses tell whether an action took place in the past, present, or future. There are about a dozen different verb tenses, but for the purpose of the Gateway Assessment, this rubric focuses on simple past, present, and future tenses.
Component 3: Mechanics

Five elements of Mechanics are evaluated in the Gateway Assessment for Social Studies: internal punctuation, spelling, capitalization, citation of original sources, and paragraph breaks.

Internal Punctuation: Internal punctuation is punctuation which falls within the body of a sentence rather than at the end. There are many different types of internal punctuation: commas, apostrophes, quotation marks, semi-colons, and colons. “5” level writers will demonstrate control of most of these, but not every student response lends itself to quotation marks and colons.

Spelling: Although spelling may be the most recognizable element of Conventions, it is only one of sixteen elements that contribute to the Conventions score. Because a timed writing assessment has a limited amount of time allotted for proofreading and editing, student responses often contain multiple spelling errors. To evaluate the writer’s control of spelling, consider the proportion of correctly spelled words to incorrectly spelled words. Ten spelling errors may seem like a serious error, but if there are 300 words spelled correctly in the response, then consistent control of spelling has been demonstrated. It is also important to consider the severity of the writer’s spelling errors. Do they obscure meaning? Also, some scientific terms are difficult to spell even for the average adult. Some writers misspell simple words, while others attempt to spell more challenging scientific vocabulary words. All of these factors should be considered in evaluating control of spelling.

Capitalization: There are many categories of words which should be capitalized: the first word of every sentence, proper names, titles, days of the week and month names, some abbreviations, and the first word of directly quoted speech. There are additional categories for capitalization in science vocabulary such as capitalizing the name of the genus but not the species. Each student response provides many opportunities to demonstrate control of this element of Conventions. Single errors in capitalization rarely interfere with meaning and are not considered severe.

Citation of Original Sources: As part of the Gateway test materials, students are given the correct format for citation of sources (see page 10). Because documents that include quotations and text are also provided to cue students’ prior knowledge, students are expected to cite the source of information used in responding to the assigned task.

Paragraph Breaks: This element deals with the physical formatting of information on the page, and not the organization of information within paragraphs. Each new paragraph should be indented.