

The New York State Social Studies Test

Observations & Analyses

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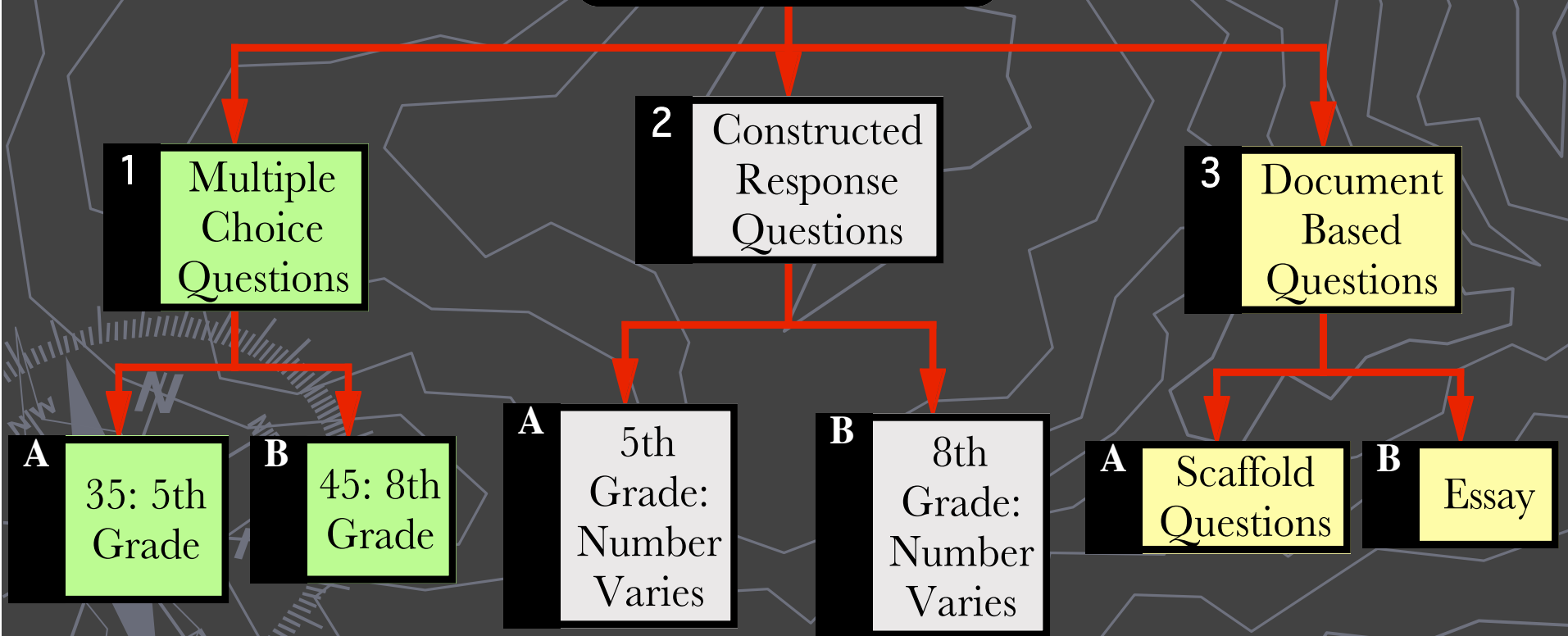


Part One

The Tests' Structure



The NYS Social Studies Test



Structure of the Tests

- 1. The test comprises two test booklets and is administered in two 1.5 hour sessions--given in the same day (8th Grade: two one hour sessions--can be different days).**
- 2. Booklet 1 contains 35 multiple-choice questions and several short-answer, constructed-response questions (8th Grade: 45 multiple choice and several CRQ's).**
- 3. Booklet 2 contains a document-based question.**
- 4. Each student's performance on the test will fall into one of four levels of performance.**
- 5. All students who score within levels 1 and 2 must receive academic intervention services.**

Sample MC Question

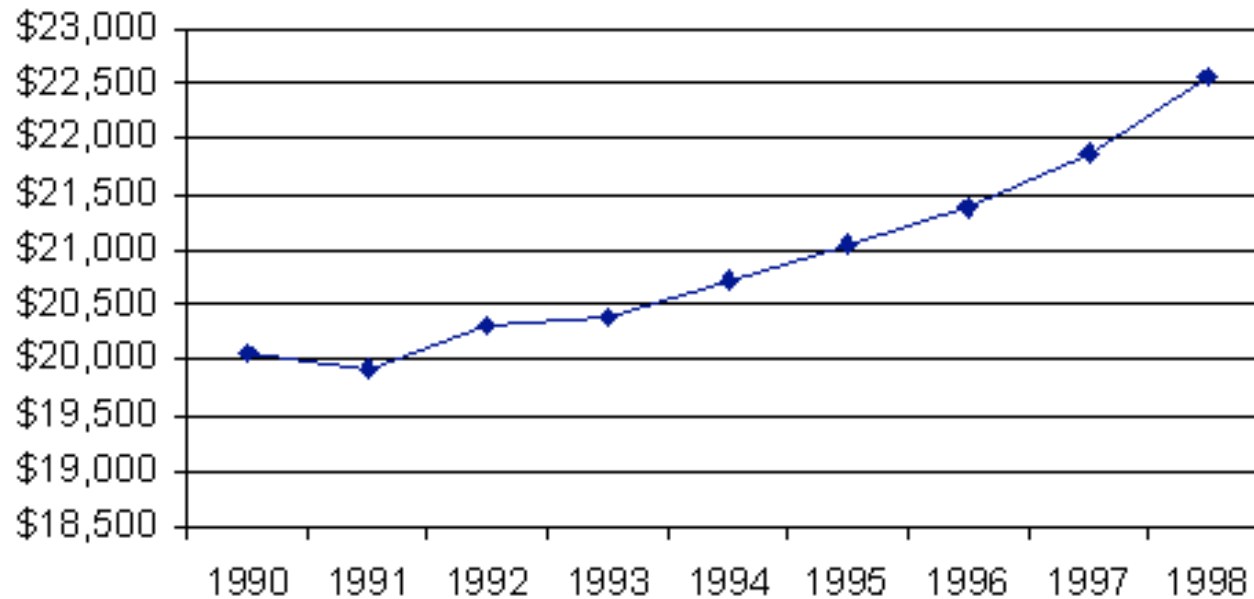
“The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be allowed in this state to all humankind...”

“*Without discrimination or preference*” means:

- a. Without prejudice or favoritism**
- b. Without freedom or slavery**
- c. Without signing a contract or legal agreement**
- d. None of these**

Sample MC Question

Chart 9: Per Capita Disposable Personal Income in Constant (1996) Dollars



Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

1. According to the chart, in which year did Americans have the least amount of extra money to spend?
 - a. 1995
 - b. 1990
 - c. 1998
 - d. 1991

CRQ Sample

COMMISSIONERS
TAMM BIXBY,
THOMAS B. NEEDLES,
C. R. BRECKINRIDGE,
W. E. STANLEY

ALLISON L. AYLESWORTH,
SECRETARY

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
COMMISSION TO THE FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES.

REFER IN REPLY TO THE FOLLOWING

Ex.L.H. No.5.

ADDRESS ONLY THE
COMMISSION TO THE FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES

Tahlequah, Indian Territory, July 16, 1903.

C. V. Rogers,

Claremore, Indian Territory.

Sir:

It is reported that you are holding in possession more land in the Cherokee Nation than you are entitled to hold or possess under the provisions of the Cherokee Agreement approved July 1, 1902, and as such practice retards the allotment of the lands of the Cherokee Nation, you are hereby notified and required to appear at the Cherokee Land office of this Commission, at Tahlequah, Indian Territory, during the official hours of the Commission, within thirty days

1. To whom is this letter written? (1)
2. Why is this person being asked to appear before the Cherokee Land Office? (2)
3. Which governmental agency sent this letter? (1)

Sample DBQ Scaffold Question

We come then to the question presented: Does segregation of [African American] children in public schools...deprive them...of equal educational opportunities? We believe that it does.

We conclude that in...public education..."separate but equal" has no place. Separate educational facilities are...unequal.

--United States Supreme Court Decision: The Case of Brown vs. Board of Education, May 17, 1954

1. Does the Supreme Court decision support segregation of African American children in public schools? (1)
2. What was the name of this famous case? (1)

Sample DBQ Essay

Historical Context: Racial segregation, the idea that a group of people should be treated differently from other people because of their race or religion, was a fact of life in the United States for almost 100 years after the Civil War ended. In the southern states, laws were created that segregated blacks. Finally in the 1960's things began to change.

Task: For Part A, read each document carefully and answer the question or questions after each document. Then read the directions for Part B and write your essay.

For Part B, use your answers from Part A, information from the documents, and your knowledge of social studies to write a well-organized essay. In the essay you should:

- **Discuss two forms of segregation that confronted African Americans**
- **Explain one method that African Americans used to try to end segregation**
- **Refer to specific documents in your essay**

Who Takes The Test?

- 1. All public school students in 5th/8th grade must take the Social Studies Test.**
- 2. The Committee on Special Education (CSE) must decide on a case-by-case basis whether the student will participate in the general State assessment.**
- 3. All LEP students are required to participate in the Social Studies Test. LEP students may take the test either in an alternative language or in English, whichever would be better for the student.**

Who Takes The Tests?

4. **LEP students may also use both an English and an alternative language edition of the test simultaneously.**
5. **Alternative language editions of the test are provided in Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Spanish. The test may be translated orally into other languages for those LEP students whose first language is one for which a written translation is not available.**
6. **Schools are permitted to offer LEP students specific testing accommodations when taking this test** (*time extension; separate location; bilingual dictionaries & glossaries; oral translations for low-incidence languages; writing responses in native language*)

The background of the slide is a dark gray topographic map with white contour lines. In the bottom-left corner, there is a compass rose with a blue needle pointing towards the top-left. The compass rose is labeled with 'N' for North, 'NE' for Northeast, 'E' for East, 'SE' for Southeast, 'S' for South, 'SW' for Southwest, 'W' for West, and 'NW' for Northwest. The text 'Section Two' is centered in the upper half of the slide in a large, bold, yellow font with a black drop shadow.

Section Two

Scoring The Test

Who Scores The Tests?

1. It is the school's responsibility to make the necessary arrangements for scoring all test materials.
2. The answer sheets provided by the state for Part I may be either hand scored or machine scored.
3. The state provides a scoring key for hand scoring the answer sheets.
4. The answer sheets contain fields for recording scores for the Part II constructed-response questions and the Part III document-based question.
5. Public schools may use their own machine-scannable answer sheets for Part I of the test. All answer sheets *must* provide four choices labeled A, B, C, and D, *not* 1, 2, 3, and 4.

How Do You Score The Test?

- 1.** A chart for converting the student's total-test raw score to a scaled score will, on the date of the Booklet 2 administration, be posted on the state's website: www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa.
- 2.** The conversion chart may change from one test administration to another, so it is crucial that for each administration, teachers use *only* the conversion chart provided for that specific administration.
- 3.** Take extreme care in recording the student's scores on each part of the test, adding these scores to determine the total test raw score, and using the conversion chart to obtain the correct scaled score.
- 4.** Public schools are required to submit test data through the Local Education Agency Program (LEAP) reporting system.

Training Test Raters

- ▶ Rating CRQ responses
- ▶ Rating DBQ essays
- ▶ Training Program: Set implementation, intermediate, and outcome goals for your program, and create instruments for evaluating each section!

CRQ Scoring Instructions

The rating guide contains specific rubrics for the Part II constructed-response questions. Follow your school's procedures for training raters. This process should include:

1. The introduction to the constructed-response questions may take place once the administration of the test has begun. However, you may not remove the actual Booklet 1 rating guide from the package of scoring materials for use by raters until the school has finished administering Booklet 1.
2. The trainer may begin the introduction to the specific constructed-response rubric once the school has finished administering Booklet 1.
3. Trainer leads review of the specific rubric for each constructed-response question.
4. Rating the constructed-response questions:
 - ▶ Each student's answer to each of the constructed-response questions is scored by one rater.
 - ▶ The rater records the score for each constructed-response question in the student's test booklet.

Sample CRQ Scoring Guide: Grade 5

One Point Questions

- ▶ **One point is awarded for a question that has a clearly defined response.**
- ▶ **Partially correct or incorrect answers receive no credit.**

Two Point Questions

- ▶ **Two points are awarded when a question is answered correctly**
- ▶ **One point is awarded for a partially correct response**
- ▶ **No points are awarded for incorrect responses**
- ▶ **When the two credit option is used, rubrics and/or scoring guides for each question will indicate both the point value of a given question and examples of answers at each score point.**

DBQ Rater Training Guide

1. Trainer leads review of specific rubric with reference to the essay task.
2. Trainer leads discussion of procedures for assigning holistic scores (i.e., by matching evidence from the response to the content-specific rubric).
3. Trainer leads review of each anchor paper and commentary.

Practice Scoring Individually

4. Raters score the practice papers independently without looking at the scores and commentaries provided after the papers.
5. Trainer records scores and leads discussion of scoring criteria until raters feel comfortable enough to move on to actual scoring.
6. If additional practice is required to reach scoring consensus, trainer may use a sample of student answer papers from the current administration of the test.

Sample DBQ Rubric: Grade 5

Score of 4:

1. *Answers all aspects* of the task by using the documents and may bring in relevant outside information related to the documents
2. *Consistently uses* accurate data
3. *Develops ideas fully*, using such supporting evidence as examples, reasons, details, explanations, and generalizations that are relevant and appropriate

Score of 3:

1. *Answers most aspects* of the task by using the documents
2. *Generally uses* accurate data
3. *Develops ideas satisfactorily* with adequate supporting evidence

Score of 2:

1. *Answers some aspects* of the tasks by using some of the documents
2. *Uses some* accurate data
3. *Demonstrates weakness* in development of ideas with little supporting evidence

Score of 1:

1. *Shows limited understanding* of the task
2. *Does not use information* to support ideas or uses information that is not relevant

Score of 0:

1. *Fails to answer question* or response is totally unrelated to topic
2. *Uses no* accurate data

Section Three

Test Preparation Materials



Test Prep

- ▶ Curriculum Enrichment/Review Guides
- ▶ Primary Sources
- ▶ Simulations
- ▶ Practice Tests



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Section Four

Professional Development Connections

Professional Development

- ▶ Literacy-centered Instructional Strategies
- ▶ Cooperative Learning
- ▶ Questioning Techniques
- ▶ Technology Integration
- ▶ Test-taking Strategies