



Social Studies

in Washington State

Constitutional Issues

Grades 6 - 8

OSPI-Developed

Assessment

A Component of the
Washington State Assessment System

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Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Old Capitol Building
P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200

For more information about the contents of this document, please contact:

Carol Coe, Social Studies Program Supervisor
Phone: 360-725-6351, TTY 360-664-3631

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Introduction

To Washington State Educators of Social Studies:

Welcome to one of our OSPI-Developed Assessments and this implementation and scoring guide. This document is part of the Washington assessment system at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

The assessments have been developed by Washington State teachers and are designed to measure learning for selected components of the Washington State Social Studies Learning Standards. They have been developed for students at the elementary and secondary levels. Teachers from across the state in small, medium, and large districts and in urban, suburban, and rural settings piloted these assessments in their classrooms. These assessments provide an opportunity for teachers to measure and evaluate student growth; they can both help teachers determine if learning goals have been met, and influence how teachers organize their curricula. They also provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have gained.

These assessments provide:

- Immediate information to teachers regarding how well students have acquired the expected knowledge and skills in their subject areas.
- Information that can lead to continued strengthening of teaching practices.
- Resources that enable students—as part of the learning experience—to participate in measuring their achievements.

This document includes the following parts:

- directions for administration
- the student's copy of the assessment
- scoring rubrics

Our hope is that this assessment will be used as an integral part of your instruction to advance our common goal of ensuring quality instruction for all students.

If you have questions about these assessments or suggestions for improvements, please contact:

Carol Coe, Program Supervisor, Social Studies
360-725-6351, carol.coe@k12.wa.us

CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

An OSPI-Developed Assessment

Social Studies
Grades 6 - 8

Overview

This document contains information that is essential to the administration of *Constitutional Issues*, an OSPI-Developed Assessment for civics. If this assessment is being used as a summative assessment to determine if specific social studies learning standards have been met, then prior to its administration, all students should have received instruction in the skills and concepts needed to achieve the standards.

This assessment may be used as an integral part of instruction; as such, it may be used as a formative assessment, summative assessment, culminating project, part of an alternative education packet, part of a lesson plan or unit of study, a pre- or post-assessment, or as an individual student portfolio item. In short, OSPI encourages the use of this and other OSPI-Developed Assessments to support deep social studies learning in line with our Washington State Learning Standards and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

Synopsis of *Constitutional Issues*

Citizens in a democracy have the right and responsibility to make informed decisions.

In this assessment, students will introduce various claims and develop an argument about a public issue, using evidence from primary sources, secondary sources, and discussions.

Test Administration: Expectations

- The skills assessed by this item should be authentically incorporated into classroom instruction.
- This assessment item is to be administered in a safe, appropriately supervised classroom environment following district policy and procedures.
- All industry and district safety policies and standards should be followed in the preparation and administration of any OSPI-Developed Assessment.
- Accommodations based upon a student's individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan may require additional modifications to this assessment.

- Additional modifications to the administration of this assessment may be required to accommodate cultural differences, diversity, and religious mores/rules.

Description of the Performance Assessment

Constitutional Issues requires students to demonstrate their abilities as effective citizens by writing essays or creating presentations in which they introduce a public issue and take a position on it.

- The task requires the student to choose and research an issue and to consider the issue from multiple points of view.
- The task requires the student to state a claim and support it with evidence from multiple informational sources, including the Constitution.
- The task requires the student to consider the strengths and weaknesses not only of the student's own position, but also of opposing positions.
- Prior to taking/receiving/administration of this assessment, students should be exposed to primary source documents, including the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.
- Prior to taking/receiving/administration of this assessment, students need to have experience with:
 - Analyzing sources (close reading).
 - Citing sources.
 - Using text-based evidence.
 - Avoiding plagiarism.

If the students have experience with the above skills, the assessment should take 5–10 days. If the assessment is used as a teaching tool, it will take 3–6 weeks.

Learning Standards

College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards

Dimension 1: Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries	Dimension 2: Applying Disciplinary Tools and Concepts	Dimension 3: Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence	Dimension 4: Communicating and Taking Informed Action
developing questions and planning inquiries	civics economics geography history	gathering and evaluating sources developing claims using evidence	communicating and critiquing conclusions taking informed action

Washington State Standards—Social Studies Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs): Grade Level Expectations (GLEs)*.

Component 1.1 8 th Grade	Understands key ideals and principles of the United States, including those in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and other fundamental documents.
GLE 1.4.1 7 th –8 th Grades	Analyzes how a position on an issue attempts to balance individual rights and the common good.
Component 4.3 7 th –8 th Grades	Understands that there are multiple perspectives and interpretations of historical events.
GLE 5.4.1 8 th Grade	Uses sources within the body of the work to support positions in a paper or presentation.
GLE 5.4.2 8 th Grade	Uses appropriate format to cite sources within an essay or presentation.

CCSS Literacy—Reading History/Social Studies (RH/SS); Speaking and Listening (SL)

CCSS RH/SS 1 6 th –8 th Grades	Cite specific textual evidence** to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
CCSS RH/SS 2 6 th –8 th Grades	Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
CCSS RH/SS 8 6 th –8 th Grades	Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
CCSS SL 1 6 th –8 th Grades	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade-8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

*In a cohesive paper***:* CCSS ELA Standards—Writing History/Social Studies (WHST)

CCSS WHST 1 6 th –8 th Grades	Write arguments focused on <i>discipline-specific</i> content.
CCSS WHST 4 6 th –8 th Grades	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
CCSS WHST 7 6 th –8 th Grades	Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
CCSS WHST 9 6 th –8 th Grades	Draw evidence** from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

***In a presentation: CCSS ELA Standards—Speaking and Listening
History/Social Studies (SL)***

CCSS SL 3 8 th Grade	Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
CCSS SL 4 8 th Grade	Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

***If implemented using technology: CCSS ELA Standards—Writing
History/Social Studies (WHST); Speaking and Listening (SL)***

CCSS WHST 6 6 th –8 th Grades	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently.
CCSS WHST 8 6 th –8 th Grades	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

*OSPI recommends that this classroom-based assessment be used at a particular grade level. If the assessment is used at another grade level within the grade band (3–5, 6–8, 9–12), the GLEs may need to be adjusted to match the content.

**Definition: *Evidence* in the CCSS refers to facts, figures, details, quotations, or other sources of data and information that provide support for claims or an analysis and that can be evaluated by others; should appear in a form and be derived from a source widely accepted as appropriate to a particular discipline.

***Students may do either a paper or a presentation in response to the assessment, provided that for either format, the response is documented in such a way that someone outside of the classroom can easily understand and review it using the rubric (e.g., a video recording of the presentation or an electronic written document).

Assessment Task

Teacher's Instructions to Students

1. Say: "Today you will take the Grades-6–8 Washington OSPI-developed social studies assessment for civics. This assessment is called *Constitutional Issues*."
2. Provide the class with copies of the student's section of the assessment (which may include the student's task, response sheets, rubrics, templates, and glossary), along with any other required materials.
3. Tell the students that they may highlight and write on these materials during the assessment.
4. Have the students read the directions to themselves as you read them aloud. We also encourage you to review the glossary and scoring rubric with the students.
5. Answer any clarifying questions the students may have before you instruct them to begin.

Accommodations

Refer to the student's IEP or 504 plan.

Student's Copy of the Task

The following section contains these materials for students:

- the student's task: *Constitutional Issues* (Grades 6–8)
- assessment rubric
- worksheets and handouts (optional)

Constitutional Issues

Citizens in a democracy have the right and responsibility to make informed decisions. You will introduce various claims and develop an argument about a public issue, using evidence from primary sources, secondary sources, and discussions.

Your Task

In a cohesive paper or presentation, you will:

- State a claim that considers both individual rights and the common good.
- Provide background on the issue by explaining:
 - What the issue is.
 - Who is involved in the issue.
 - Why this issue is important.
- Provide evidence for your claim that includes:
 - An explanation of how a constitutional principle or democratic ideal logically supports your claim on the issue.
 - How one additional piece of credible evidence logically supports your claim on the issue.
- Cite specific textual evidence from at least three different sources that provide relevant information.

Constitutional Issues Rubric

Score	4	3	2	1
Claim	I stated a claim concerning the issue; the claim accurately addresses an alternate or opposing claim and balances individual rights with the common good.	I stated a claim concerning the issue; the claim accurately addresses an alternate or opposing claim and considers individual rights and the common good.	I stated a claim concerning the issue; the claim accurately addresses an alternate or opposing claim and addresses either individual rights, or the common good.	I stated a claim concerning the issue; the claim accurately addresses an alternate or opposing claim.
Civics Concepts	I provided background on the issue by describing: What the issue is. Who is involved. Why this issue is significant (specifically, how it relates to a key democratic ideal or constitutional principle).	I provided background on the issue by describing: What the issue is. Who is involved. Why this issue is significant	I provided background on the issue by describing two of the following: What the issue is. Who is involved. Why this issue is significant	I provided background on the issue by describing one of the following: What the issue is. Who is involved. Why this issue is significant
Evidence/Reasoning	I provided reason(s) for the claim, supported by evidence, which includes: An accurate explanation of how a constitutional principle or democratic ideal logically supports the claim. AND An accurate explanation of how two or more additional pieces of credible evidence logically support the claim.	I provided reason(s) for the claim, supported by evidence, which includes: An accurate explanation of how a constitutional principle or democratic ideal logically supports the claim. AND An accurate explanation of how one additional piece of credible evidence logically supports the claim.	I provided reason(s) for the claim, supported by evidence, which includes: An accurate explanation of how a constitutional principle or democratic ideal logically supports the claim. OR An accurate explanation of how one piece of credible evidence logically supports the claim.	I provided reason(s) for the claim, but no supporting evidence.
Sources	I referred explicitly in the paper or presentation to four or more credible sources that provide relevant information	I referred explicitly in the paper or presentation to three credible sources that provide relevant information	I referred explicitly in the paper or presentation to two credible sources that provide relevant information	I referred explicitly in the paper or presentation to one credible source that provides relevant information
Citations	I cited sources properly within the paper, presentation, and bibliography, using a specific format.	I cited sources adequately within the paper, presentation, and bibliography.	I cited sources minimally within the paper, presentation, and bibliography.	I cited sources incorrectly within the paper, presentation, and bibliography.

No Score (NS) is given if the work is unintelligible, in a language other than English, off topic, off purpose, or copied.

In this section, you'll find:

- Handout #1: Constitutional Principles
- Handout #2: Democratic Ideals
- Graphic Organizer #1
- Graphic Organizer #2
- Guidelines for Structuring an Essay
- Outline for an Argumentative Essay
- Student's Checklist
- Works Cited (MLA)

Handout #1: Constitutional Principles

Below is a list of briefly defined constitutional principles and related terms.

Bill of Rights (individual rights): The original Constitution focused on the requirements for a federal government, and critics at the time complained that the document did not include sufficient protections of the rights and liberties of individuals. As a compromise, ten amendments were added to the Constitution to specify and guarantee the rights of individuals. These first ten amendments are known as the Bill of Rights. Additional amendments have been added so that there are now twenty-seven in all. The protections in the Bill of Rights apply to every person living in the United States, both citizens and non-citizens.

checks and balances: The Constitution divides the government into three separate branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. Each of the branches can check, or limit, the power of the other two so that no one branch can assume all power. This has not always worked as designed, especially when Congress and the president represent the same political party.

citizenship: This is defined by the Constitution as follows: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside." Those who are born in the United States are U.S. citizens, and those who are born to a parent who is a citizen are also citizens themselves. Those born outside the United States can become naturalized citizens by meeting a series of requirements, including living in the United States for a certain number of years, passing a written test, and meeting other requirements.

civil rights: Civil rights are rights guaranteed to people by law, by virtue of their being citizens and living in this country. The struggle for civil rights continues, despite amendments to the Constitution and other laws guaranteeing the legal status of all citizens. Victories in the civil rights movement have often been in the legal arena, where "human rights" have become formally recognized as civil rights through the

passage of laws and amendments, guaranteeing freedom from slavery, institutionalizing voting rights, and ending segregation of many different forms.

constitution: A constitution is a formal plan of government. The Constitution of the United States defines the plan, structure, and federal laws for our nation.

democracy: The ideal and central notion of democracy is that it is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. The people govern themselves, either directly or through elected representatives. The power to govern comes from them, and the government works for and is responsible to them. There are many ways in which a democracy can be organized, and as we have seen through our history a slight majority can entirely shut out the voices of a bare minority.

dissent: One of the fundamental rights guaranteed by our Constitution is the right of dissent. The law guarantees that individuals and groups have the right to publicly disagree with their government and their leaders. They have the right to express their opinions, to protest, and to challenge the policies and practices of their government, and they have the right to work legally to change the policies and laws of the nation. Dissent has often led to changes in the laws, policies, and practices of the United States.

Dissent is crucial in a democracy in that it protects the minority from being silenced by the majority, and guarantees that there be open debate and questioning of policies and practices.

due process: Due process is a constitutionally guaranteed safeguard that protects the rights of individuals. Due process guarantees the administration of justice according to established rules and principles, based on the principle that a person cannot be deprived of life or liberty or property without appropriate legal procedures and safeguards. At a trial or hearing, due process guarantees that a person has the opportunity to be present, to be heard, to present evidence, and to challenge the testimony of his or her accusers.

equal rights: All persons, both citizens and non-citizens, living in the United States are guaranteed equal treatment under the law. The Constitution prohibits discrimination by the government and grants all people "equal protection of the laws." The clause means that the government must apply the law equally and cannot give preference to one person or class of persons over another.

federalism: This is the concept of sharing power between the federal, or national, government and the states within the nation. The federal government has the power to tax, control trade, regulate and organize money, and raise an army and to deal with other nations (including declaring war). The states have power to pass their own laws and to establish schools, local governments, and other institutions. There is often an uneasy lack of clarity at points of intersection between federal and state jurisdictions, a tug-of-war over who has the authority to make laws or rules related to issues of both federal and local concern.

habeas corpus: This Latin term literally means “you have the body.” Habeas corpus is the basic protection against arbitrary arrest and imprisonment. A writ of habeas corpus requires that anyone who is detaining someone must bring that person to court and justify why that person should be detained. If they cannot justify continuing to detain the person he or she must be released. This basic protection is in place to keep the government from simply rounding people up and keeping them in prison indefinitely, without charging them or prosecuting them for any crime. This has been a very controversial topic, especially during times of war.

human rights: Human rights are those rights inherent to all people on the planet. The Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, “guaranteeing the rights of all people and encompassing a broad spectrum of economic, social, cultural, political and civil rights.” These rights are not ensured by law in individual nations, and they are not universally practiced or enforced around the world. The Declaration of Human Rights lays out general guidelines for how people should be treated and supported as members of the human community.

innocent until proven guilty: A basic tenet of the U.S. legal system is that a person is presumed innocent until he or she is proven guilty. When a person is brought to trial it is assumed that he or she is innocent. It is up to the prosecution to prove guilt. If they cannot prove guilt the defendant is judged not guilty and set free. This is true no matter how serious the crime, and no matter the publicity about the situation; defendants are still assumed innocent, and guilt still must be proven in court.

popular sovereignty: This term refers to the authority or rule of the people. The power or authority of the government and of governance rests with the people. The government serves the will of the people, and they are the final authority for what the government does in their name

representative government: a representative government is one in which the population chooses representatives to carry out the governmental duties of the nation. Rather than personally making decisions on every item confronting the nation, the citizens choose representatives to take on that task on their behalf. The ultimate power and responsibility for governance still rests with the people, who can remove their representatives if they feel they are not being well served by them.

republicanism: Based on the belief that the people exercise their political power by voting for their political representation (see also **representative government**).

rule of law (limited government): Our society is said to be governed by a rule of law. This means that there are laws that define what behavior is allowed and not allowed, for all individuals, groups, and governments. The laws, beginning with the Constitution and including state and local laws, determine what is allowed, and no one is considered above or outside of them. There are many concerns and questions about whether the laws are applied equitably to all individuals, rich or poor, in power or out of power, and whether the laws are truly designed to equally benefit all citizens.

separation of powers: The Constitution organizes the federal government into three separate but equal branches: the executive, the legislative, and the judicial. Each of the branches is responsible for certain areas of governmental authority. This design came about partly in response to the British monarchy that had kept the entire empire under its thumb, and was created as a guarantee that no one person or branch of government becomes too powerful. Each branch has certain legal responsibilities and the legal means to limit the power and authority of the other two branches. The legislature is responsible for passing laws, the federal budget, and declaring war. The executive branch, headed by the president, is responsible for carrying out the law and for commanding the armed forces during a war declared by Congress. The judicial branch is responsible for ruling on laws, determining whether they are constitutional, and whether laws have been followed or broken. This design has proven more or less resilient over the more than two hundred years that the United States has been a nation, though at times one branch or another has sought to overstep its constitutional limits. The separation of powers has been most vulnerable to abuse when one party or the other controls both the presidency and the houses of Congress.

SOURCE: "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good." Densho Civil Liberties Curriculum v. 1.0. CD-ROM. Densho, the Japanese American Legacy Project, Seattle, WA. 2007.

Handout #2: Democratic Ideals

Below is a list of briefly defined democratic ideals.

common good: The democratic ideal recognizes that there must be a balance between the welfare of each individual and the good of the overall population—the population as a whole. There are many questions about who decides what is good for the population as a whole; there is seldom universal agreement about what is best for all, and it usually means some individuals must give up what would be personally good for them so that the population as a whole can benefit. There are questions about who should decide what is best for the common good, and upon what basis they should make those decisions. There are also questions about whether those who get to decide what is best for the common good are always fair and equitable in their decisions, and many have felt that their rights have been consistently sacrificed for the benefit of others.

diversity: This concept recognizes that we as a human population are not identical, that there are differences in our races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientation, nationality, and experiences. The democratic ideal recognizes these differences and makes no judgment about them; they are different—not less than or more than—and in the true ideal we benefit from those differences. This is clearly a democratic ideal that we have not yet attained, as there is still discrimination and unequal treatment of members of various facets of our diverse human community.

equality: When people are demanding equality they are demanding the same treatment, the same opportunity, the same status, and the same rights under the law as anyone else. This becomes complicated, because there has been unequal opportunity, treatment, and rights for members of certain groups of people throughout our history, which means that some groups have had more resources and a more privileged position for centuries. They are in a better position in terms of wealth, power, position, and connections to decision makers. If we then treat them in an equal manner with those who have not enjoyed the same advantages, the situation remains unequal.

justice: Based on fairness, people are treated in an honorable and fair manner according to the mores of a society. There is not necessarily a clear, absolute definition of what this means, or of what measure or code should be used to determine what justice looks like. Different societies and communities may have different value systems, which might lead each to a unique approach to defining and administering justice. What happens when different systems intersect, and whose definition of justice rules? How are those who are “in the minority” guaranteed justice, as promised by the pledge of allegiance, which ends, “with liberty and justice for all”?

liberty: The Declaration of Independence includes the right of liberty within those unalienable rights (rights that cannot be taken away) granted by the Creator to all. Liberty means freedom to live your life as an independent person, having the ability

to make choices without interference or restrictions from others. The most obvious restrictions that the colonists were responding to at the time of the writing of the Declaration were those imposed by the king of England. It must be noted that while the Declaration states that all men were entitled to the right of liberty, it does not address the practice of slavery; enslaved Africans, taken by force from their homes and sold to buyers in the United States and other countries, continued to be kept in bondage long after the British were forced out of North America, and others within the new nation experienced severe restrictions on the lives they could lead. There were also severe limitations placed on the choices that women could make, and on those other people of color living in the colonies/new nation.

life: The Declaration of Independence mentions life as an unalienable right guaranteed to all men (now understood to include men, women, and children), that all have the right to live their lives without fear or threat. This does become complicated in some instances, such as when one kills in self-defense, and in situations involving the death penalty.

patriotism: Patriots are people committed to working on their nation's behalf, for the good of the community. The original term referred to the colonists who fought for independence from the British. It is a very difficult term to define, and it has become politicized in recent times. There are some who would say anyone opposing a president's plan or agenda is not a patriot; others insist it is their patriotic duty to speak the truth, to question and challenge policies they oppose so that a thoughtful and thorough debate can be held.

pursuit of happiness: This phrase appears in the Declaration of Independence. It is not defined within that document, but is generally understood to mean that citizens in the United States should be free to engage in that which brings them pleasure, joy, or satisfaction, without interference or intrusion. The Declaration was written in response to the limits and intrusions that the British government placed on the lives and business interests of the American colonists. This gets complicated, because the same things don't necessarily make each of us happy, and what makes one person happy may in turn interfere with someone else's happiness. It also must be noted that the Declaration of Independence is not law and was written at a time when women had few rights and enslaved Africans none at all.

truth: an honest, open, complete, and unvarnished account of how things are. Someone telling the truth does so without any intention of deceiving or dissembling, and with the intention of conveying information in an accurate and complete way.

SOURCE: "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good." Densho Civil Liberties Curriculum v. 1.0. CD-ROM. Densho, the Japanese American Legacy Project, Seattle, WA. 2007.

Graphic Organizer #1

Fill out one sheet for the “yes” position and one sheet for the “no” position.

Topic/Research Question

Reason #1

Reason #2

Evidence

Evidence

Evidence

Evidence

Evidence

Evidence

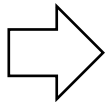
Graphic Organizer #2

The Issue (RESEARCH QUESTION)

BACKGROUND

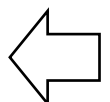
Who is involved with this issue?

Why is it important?



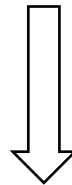
Include evidence for both sides of the issue.

(Get this information from Graphic Organizer #1 with yes/no positions and evidence.)



What is your position? What claims are you making?

Position



What **constitutional principle** or **democratic ideal** are you using as evidence to support your claims? Explain how you are using it.

Connect your position to **individual rights**.

Connect your position to **common good**.

Guidelines for Structuring an Essay

INTRODUCTION

Contains the thesis statement (claim)

BACKGROUND

1–2 paragraphs

Provide background on the issue by explaining what the issue is, who is involved in the issue, and why the issue is important.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE #1

1–2 paragraphs

My evidence includes an accurate explanation of how a constitutional principle or democratic ideal logically supports the claim on the issue.

OR

My evidence includes an accurate explanation of how one piece of credible evidence logically supports the claim on the issue.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE #2

1–2 paragraphs

My evidence includes an accurate explanation of how a constitutional principle or democratic ideal logically supports the claim on the issue.

OR

My evidence includes an accurate explanation of how one additional piece of credible evidence logically supports the claim on the issue.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE #3

1–2 paragraphs

My evidence includes an accurate explanation of how a constitutional principle or democratic ideal logically supports the claim on the issue.

OR

My evidence includes an accurate explanation of how one additional piece of credible evidence logically supports the claim on the issue.

COUNTERCLAIM

1 paragraph

State opposing claim(s) regarding individual rights and the common good. (Balancing a counterclaim is required to earn a score of 4.)

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

1 paragraph

Sum up claims + supporting-evidence statements. Explain “so what” about the summary statements.

Outline for an Argumentative Essay

TOPIC:

THESIS (includes your claim and supporting evidence, without explaining it yet):

BACKGROUND:

REASON / evidence #1:

REASON / evidence #2:

REASON / evidence #3:

COUNTERCLAIM / addressing individual rights vs. common good:

CONCLUSION:

Student's Checklist

- I stated a claim on an issue, and my claim accurately considers both individual rights and the common good.
- I provided background on the issue by explaining what the issue is.
- I provided background on who is involved in the issue.
- I provided reason(s) for my claim and supported the reason(s) with evidence.
- My evidence includes an accurate explanation of how a constitutional principle or democratic ideal logically supports the claim on the issue.
- My evidence includes an accurate explanation of how one additional piece of credible evidence logically supports the claim on the issue.
- I made explicit references within the paper or presentation to three credible sources that provide relevant information.
- I cited sources within the paper/presentation and/or bibliography.
- I did not plagiarize.

Works Cited (MLA)

Source #1

_____, _____ " _____ "

Author (Last name, First name) Title of Article (web sources, magazines, reference books)

_____ . _____

Title of Source (Italicized – Underline only if written by hand) Date

_____ . _____ . _____

Page Number(s) Type of Source Date Accessed (website only)

Source #2

_____, _____ " _____ "

Author (Last name, First name) Title of Article (web sources, magazines, reference books)

_____ . _____

Title of Source (Italicized – Underline only if written by hand) Date

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Page Number(s) Type of Source Date Accessed (website only)

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Author (Last name, First name) Title of Article (web sources, magazines, reference books)

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Supporting Materials and Resources for Teachers

Preparation for Administering the Assessment

Tools & Materials

Teachers will need the following materials and resources to administer this assessment:

- copies of the task (one for each student)
- copies of the rubric, handouts, worksheets, and glossary (one set for each student)

Guidelines

You can approach this assessment in any number of ways; however, the assessment is well suited to be a culminating activity of classroom instruction in civics.

While the essay format is often used for this assessment, it is not required. Students may make projects or PowerPoint presentations. Please note, however, that the final product must demonstrate that the student is able to complete the project individually; therefore, a group project is not an appropriate use of this assessment.

You should expose the students to primary source documents prior to administering this assessment.

You should also introduce students to a number of analytical methods before engaging them in the assessment; these include, but are not limited to:

- How to evaluate reliable and unreliable sources.
- How to formulate a claim.
- How to cite sources properly within a paper or presentation and in a bibliography, including instruction in APA, MLA, or Chicago citation methods.

Recommendations for Time Management

Time requirements for this assessment will vary widely based on your students' prior knowledge, chosen topics, and access to technology. If your students are completing the assessment as a culminating activity, expect to spend several days on research, collection of evidence, and outlining prior to the writing process. Writing and completion of projects can take from one day to a week depending on the prescribed format and pacing of your students.

Glossary

amendments: changes or additions to a document, such as the U.S. Constitution.

argue: to present reasons and evidence about a stance or opinion.

balance: harmonious arrangement or relation of parts within a whole.

bureaucracy: the administration of a government through departments managed by officials.

checks and balances: a process that allows each branch of government to limit the power of the other branches.

cite: note, quote, refer to, point out.

civic responsibility: the actions a citizen is required to do for the good of society.

claim: state to be true or existing.

common good: for the advantage or benefit of all people in society or in a group.

compromise: a settlement of differences in which all sides give up part of what they want in order to reach an agreement.

consent of the governed: a theory of government that states a government's legitimacy comes from the agreement of its citizens.

constituent: a person who is represented by an elected official.

constitutional issue: something that relates to the rights and government powers outlined in the U.S. Constitution. It often involves public disagreement.

controversial: something that produces public disagreement between individuals or groups holding opposing viewpoints.

core values: the basic principles or beliefs of a person or group.

credible: capable of being believed.

currency: money or other items used to purchase goods or services.

democracy: a form of government in which people choose leaders by voting.

demographic: identifying characteristics of human populations, such as age, gender, and nationality.

dictator: a person who rules with absolute power and authority.

doctrine: principles or beliefs of a group.

domestic: relating to matters within a country.

empower: to provide someone with the authority to take action.

evidence: knowledge on which to base a belief; facts or information helpful in forming a conclusion or judgment; details that support an assumption.

explain: tell about something so people understand it.

explicit: fully and clearly expressed.

federal: a form of government in which power is divided between a central government and other, more localized governments.

foreign policy: the way a government interacts with other nations.

forms of government: the different methods of ruling a country or group.

framers/founding fathers: delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and others who helped to establish the government of the United States.

impact: an influence or strong effect.

incentives: promises of rewards or punishments that encourage people to act.

initiative: the practice of allowing voters to propose and pass laws directly.

inquiry: a question; an investigation that allows a close examination of an issue.

interest groups: individuals who try to influence laws in favor of a cause they strongly support.

international: involving two or more nations.

lobbyist: a person who tries to influence legislation on behalf of a special interest group.

local: relating to a city or county level.

multicultural: relating to or made up of people having different ways of life.

national interest: the collective needs of people when developing economic, social, or political policies.

negotiate: to discuss a matter in order to reach an agreement.

opposing: be against.

per capita: by or for each person.

perspective: a way of regarding situations or topics.

political parties: organized groups who seek to influence the structure and administration of government policies.

popular culture: parts of a culture, such as arts, entertainment, music, sports, fashions, and fads.

precedent: an act or decision that provides an example for later actions or decisions.

pros and cons: arguments in favor of and against a position or course of action.

public goods: goods intended for the benefit of all members of a society (e.g., roads and bridges).

public services: services intended for the benefit of all members of a society (e.g., fire protection).

recall: a policy that allows voters to remove an elected official from office.

referendum: a proposed law, which people enact by voting.

reform: improvement made to existing structures or processes.

relevant: appropriate and makes sense at that particular time.

reliable: worthy of trust.

responsibilities: duties.

rights: something to which a person has a lawful claim: civil rights are freedoms guaranteed to citizens; human rights are basic rights to which all people are entitled; individual rights are those belonging to each person; property rights are legal claims to land or other possessions; states' rights are the powers the U.S. Constitution grants to the states.

sources: information taken from documents.

stakeholders: people who hold an interest in a business or project.

support: agreeing with or approving of a cause, person.

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- Washington State Social Studies Learning Standards: the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs).
- OSPI-developed classroom-based assessments.
- Intentional connections with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies.

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