

# GED Social Studies — Table of Contents

Dominex

## GED Social Studies — Table of Contents

### 1. Civics and Government

#### (a) Principles of Democracy

- Rule of law
- Separation of powers
- Checks and balances
- Individual rights

#### (b) Structure and Functions of Government

- Federal, state, and local governments
- Legislative, executive, judicial branches
- Powers and responsibilities of each branch

#### (c) Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens

- Voting and civic participation
- Civic duties (jury duty, obeying laws)
- Civic responsibilities (volunteering, community involvement)

#### (d) U.S. Constitution and Amendments

- Bill of Rights
- Key amendments (13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, etc.)
- Constitutional principles

#### (e) Political Parties, Elections, and Voting

- Major U.S. political parties
- Electoral process and voting rights
- Campaigns and political participation

### 2. U.S. History

#### (a) Colonial Period

- Early settlements
- Colonial economies and societies

- (b) American Revolution
  - Causes of revolution
  - Key battles and events
  - Declaration of Independence
- (c) Westward Expansion and Civil War
  - Manifest Destiny
  - Slavery and sectionalism
  - Civil War causes, events, and outcomes
- (d) Industrialization
  - Economic growth
  - Urbanization
  - Labor movements
- (e) Civil Rights Movement
  - Key figures (Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks)
  - Major events and legislation
- (f) Modern America
  - Contemporary political, social, and economic developments

### 3. **Economics**

- (a) Supply and Demand
  - Law of supply and demand
  - Market equilibrium
- (b) Market Economy Principles
  - Profit motive
  - Competition
  - Consumer choice
- (c) Government and the Economy
  - Fiscal and monetary policy
  - Taxes and government spending
  - Regulations and trade policy
- (d) Global Trade
  - Import and export
  - Trade agreements
  - Balance of payments

### 4. **Geography and the World**

- (a) Maps and Globes

- Map types and symbols
- Latitude and longitude
- (b) Human and Physical Geography
  - Population distribution
  - Urbanization
  - Landforms and climate
- (c) Population Trends
  - Migration and demographics
  - Population growth and density
- (d) Environmental Issues
  - Climate change and global warming
  - Resource management
  - Sustainability

## 5. **Social Studies Practices**

- (a) Analyzing Primary and Secondary Sources
- (b) Interpreting Graphs, Charts, and Maps
- (c) Evaluating Arguments and Evidence
- (d) Understanding Chronology and Historical Context
- (e) Comparing Perspectives Across Time and Cultures

# GED Social Studies — Civics and Government

Dominex

## Civics and Government

The **Civics and Government** section of the GED Social Studies test assesses a candidate's understanding of the principles, structures, and functions of government, as well as the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Mastery of this section ensures students can interpret and analyze political systems, understand civic duties, and participate responsibly in society.

### 1. Principles of Democracy

A foundational concept in American government is the **principle of democracy**, which ensures that power originates from the people. Key components include:

**Rule of Law:** In a democracy, no individual or group is above the law. All citizens, including government officials, must follow legal guidelines, ensuring fairness and accountability. This principle prevents abuses of power and upholds justice.

**Separation of Powers:** Democracy divides government authority among three branches: legislative, executive, and judicial. Each branch has distinct responsibilities, which prevents concentration of power and promotes a balanced government.

**Checks and Balances:** Each branch of government has specific powers to monitor and limit the others. For example, the president can veto legislation, Congress can override a veto, and courts can declare laws unconstitutional. These checks maintain equilibrium and protect citizen rights.

**Individual Rights:** Democracies safeguard fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, religion, assembly, and the press. These rights empower citizens to participate in governance, express opinions, and challenge government decisions when necessary.

### 2. Structure and Functions of Government

Understanding the organization of government helps citizens navigate and influence political systems effectively.

**Federal, State, and Local Governments:** The United States operates under a federal system. Power is divided among national, state, and local levels. Federal government handles national issues such as defense and foreign policy, while states manage education, transportation, and healthcare. Local governments address community needs like zoning, sanitation, and public safety.

**Legislative Branch:** This branch, represented by Congress, makes laws. The Senate and House of Representatives collaborate to draft, debate, and pass legislation that governs the nation.

**Executive Branch:** Headed by the President, the executive branch enforces laws, manages federal agencies, and directs foreign policy. The President also serves as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.

**Judicial Branch:** Courts interpret laws and review legal disputes. The Supreme Court has the power of judicial review, allowing it to declare laws or executive actions unconstitutional if they violate the U.S. Constitution.

**Powers and Responsibilities:** Each branch has defined powers that complement one another. The legislative branch controls the budget, the executive implements policies, and the judiciary interprets laws. Understanding these responsibilities ensures citizens recognize how government decisions are made and how to hold officials accountable.

### 3. Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens

Democracy relies on active citizen participation. Citizens are expected to engage in civic life and uphold societal norms.

**Voting and Civic Participation:** Voting is a fundamental way for citizens to influence government policies and leadership. Civic participation also includes joining political parties, attending town meetings, or engaging in peaceful protests.

**Civic Duties:** Citizens must obey laws, pay taxes, and, when called, serve on juries. These duties maintain social order and ensure fair administration of justice.

**Civic Responsibilities:** Beyond duties, citizens may volunteer, mentor youth, participate in community organizations, and contribute to social welfare. These actions strengthen society and promote the common good.

### 4. U.S. Constitution and Amendments

The U.S. Constitution is the supreme law of the land, forming the blueprint for government and protecting citizens' rights.

**Bill of Rights:** The first ten amendments guarantee fundamental freedoms, including speech, religion, and assembly, protecting individuals from government overreach.

**Key Amendments:** Significant amendments include the 13th (abolishing slavery), 14th (equal protection under the law), 15th (voting rights regardless of race), and 19th (women's suffrage). Each amendment has shaped the evolution of U.S. democracy and expanded civil liberties.

**Constitutional Principles:** The Constitution establishes federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, and the rule of law, ensuring that governance is fair, accountable, and representative of the people.

## 5. Political Parties, Elections, and Voting

Political engagement is central to democracy, and understanding political systems allows citizens to participate effectively.

**Major U.S. Political Parties:** The Democratic and Republican parties dominate American politics, each offering different perspectives on government, economy, and social issues. Awareness of party platforms helps voters make informed decisions.

**Electoral Process and Voting Rights:** Elections are held at local, state, and federal levels. Citizens must understand voter registration, election procedures, and their rights to ensure full participation.

**Campaigns and Political Participation:** Campaigns educate voters on issues and candidates. Active participation includes attending rallies, volunteering for campaigns, and engaging in public debates. Understanding these processes empowers citizens to influence government and policy outcomes.

# GED Social Studies — U.S. History

Dominex

## U.S. History

The **U.S. History** section of the GED Social Studies test covers the major events, people, and ideas that have shaped the United States from its colonial beginnings to modern times. Understanding this history allows students to analyze political, social, and economic developments and their impacts on contemporary society.

### 1. Colonial Period

The colonial period refers to the time from the early 1600s to the mid-1700s when European settlers established communities in North America. Key aspects include:

**Early Settlements:** Colonists from England, Spain, France, and the Netherlands founded settlements along the eastern coast and inland regions. Jamestown (1607) and Plymouth (1620) are notable examples. Settlers faced challenges such as harsh climates, conflicts with Indigenous peoples, and establishing governance.

**Colonial Economies and Societies:** Economic activity varied by region. The New England colonies focused on trade, shipbuilding, and small-scale farming. The Middle Colonies cultivated grains and maintained diverse industries. The Southern Colonies relied heavily on cash crops such as tobacco, rice, and indigo, often using enslaved labor. Social structures were influenced by religion, class, and cultural traditions.

### 2. American Revolution

The American Revolution (1775–1783) was a transformative period that led to independence from Britain.

**Causes of Revolution:** Tensions arose due to taxation without representation, British control over colonial trade, and restrictions on self-governance. Key legislation, such as the Stamp Act and Tea Act, spurred resistance and protests.

**Key Battles and Events:** Notable events include the Boston Tea Party, the battles of Lexington and Concord, the Siege of Yorktown, and international alliances with France and Spain that supported the colonies.

**Declaration of Independence:** Adopted on July 4, 1776, the Declaration formally announced the colonies' independence, asserting natural rights and the principle that government derives its power from the consent of the governed.

### 3. Westward Expansion and Civil War

**Manifest Destiny:** The 19th-century belief that the United States was destined to expand across the continent justified territorial acquisitions and settlement of western lands.

**Slavery and Sectionalism:** Differences between the industrial North and the agrarian South, particularly over slavery, created deep social, economic, and political divides.

**Civil War Causes, Events, and Outcomes:** The Civil War (1861–1865) was fought primarily over slavery and states' rights. Key events include the Emancipation Proclamation, major battles such as Gettysburg, and the surrender at Appomattox. The Union victory preserved the nation and led to the abolition of slavery.

### 4. Industrialization

**Economic Growth:** Post-Civil War industrialization transformed the U.S. economy, with rapid growth in manufacturing, railroads, and technological innovation.

**Urbanization:** Cities expanded as people migrated for work, leading to diverse, densely populated urban centers.

**Labor Movements:** Workers organized to demand fair wages, reasonable hours, and safe working conditions, resulting in strikes and the formation of labor unions.

### 5. Civil Rights Movement

The mid-20th century Civil Rights Movement sought to end racial discrimination and ensure equal rights.

**Key Figures:** Leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, and Thurgood Marshall played pivotal roles in advocating for social justice.

**Major Events and Legislation:** Landmark events include the Montgomery Bus Boycott, March on Washington, and the Freedom Rides. Legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 legally protected civil rights.

### 6. Modern America

Modern America encompasses contemporary political, social, and economic developments.



**Political Developments:** The evolution of political parties, government policies, and landmark Supreme Court decisions shape national governance and citizen engagement.

**Social Developments:** Civil liberties, gender equality, immigration, and cultural diversity are ongoing social concerns that influence society.

**Economic Developments:** Advances in technology, globalization, and shifts in labor markets continue to redefine the U.S. economy, affecting both domestic and international relations.

# GED Social Studies — Economics

Dominex

## Economics

The **Economics** section of the GED Social Studies test examines fundamental principles of how individuals, businesses, and governments make economic decisions. Understanding these concepts allows students to analyze economic issues, market behavior, and the global economy.

### 1. Supply and Demand

The law of supply and demand is a cornerstone of economics. It explains how prices are determined in a market economy.

**Law of Supply and Demand:** Demand refers to the quantity of a good or service that consumers are willing and able to purchase at different prices. Supply refers to the quantity that producers are willing to sell. Prices adjust based on the interaction between supply and demand:

- If demand exceeds supply, prices tend to rise.
- If supply exceeds demand, prices tend to fall.

**Market Equilibrium:** The point at which quantity demanded equals quantity supplied is the market equilibrium. At this price, there is no surplus or shortage, and resources are allocated efficiently. Shifts in supply or demand cause changes in equilibrium price and quantity.

### 2. Market Economy Principles

A market economy operates based on the decisions of individuals and businesses, guided by certain principles:

**Profit Motive:** Businesses operate to earn profit, which incentivizes efficiency, innovation, and resource allocation. Profits signal successful products and services, while losses indicate inefficiency.

**Competition:** Competition among firms fosters better quality, lower prices, and innovation. It prevents monopolies from dominating the market and encourages consumer choice.

**Consumer Choice:** Consumers influence production by selecting goods and services they value. Their preferences guide what is produced, how much, and at what price.

### 3. Government and the Economy

Governments intervene in the economy to stabilize growth, protect citizens, and ensure fair practices.

**Fiscal and Monetary Policy:** Fiscal policy involves government spending and taxation to influence economic activity. Monetary policy, controlled by central banks, affects money supply and interest rates to maintain price stability and employment.

**Taxes and Government Spending:** Taxes fund public goods and services such as infrastructure, education, and defense. Government spending stimulates economic growth, especially during recessions.

**Regulations and Trade Policy:** Regulations ensure fair competition, protect consumers and workers, and maintain environmental standards. Trade policy, including tariffs and quotas, shapes international commerce and domestic industries.

### 4. Global Trade

Global trade allows countries to specialize in producing goods and services efficiently, exchanging them with others.

**Import and Export:** Imports are goods and services bought from other countries, while exports are goods and services sold abroad. Trade enables access to resources, technology, and markets not available domestically.

**Trade Agreements:** Agreements between countries, such as NAFTA or WTO treaties, reduce trade barriers, standardize regulations, and promote cooperation. These agreements impact prices, competitiveness, and economic growth.

**Balance of Payments:** The balance of payments records all economic transactions between a country and the rest of the world, including trade, investment, and financial flows. A positive balance indicates net exports, while a negative balance reflects net imports.

**Summary:** Understanding supply and demand, market principles, government intervention, and global trade helps individuals analyze economic decisions and evaluate policies in both national and international contexts.

# GED Social Studies — Geography & the World

Dominex

## Geography and the World

The **Geography and the World** section of the GED Social Studies test explores how humans interact with the environment, the spatial distribution of populations, and global environmental challenges. Understanding these concepts helps students analyze regional differences, human impact, and sustainable development.

### 1. Maps and Globes

Maps and globes are essential tools for representing spatial information and understanding the Earth's surface.

**Map Types and Symbols:** Different types of maps serve various purposes:

- **Political maps:** Show countries, borders, and major cities.
- **Physical maps:** Depict landforms such as mountains, rivers, and deserts.
- **Thematic maps:** Represent data such as population density, climate zones, or economic activity.

Symbols, colors, and legends provide meaning to the map features.

**Latitude and Longitude:** The geographic coordinate system allows precise location identification. Latitude measures north-south position, while longitude measures east-west position. These coordinates are critical for navigation, mapping, and understanding global spatial relationships.

### 2. Human and Physical Geography

**Population Distribution:** Human populations are unevenly distributed due to resources, climate, economic opportunities, and political stability. Densely populated regions often coincide with fertile land, access to water, and urban centers.

**Urbanization:** The growth of cities reflects economic development, industrialization, and migration from rural areas. Urbanization affects housing, transportation, and infrastructure demands.

**Landforms and Climate:** Physical geography influences human activity. Mountains, rivers, deserts, and plains shape settlement patterns, transportation, and agriculture. Climate zones, from tropical to polar, affect lifestyles, crops, and energy needs.

### 3. Population Trends

**Migration and Demographics:** Migration, both internal and international, reshapes population distribution. Demographic studies analyze age, gender, and ethnic composition to understand societal changes and challenges.

**Population Growth and Density:** Population growth rates and density influence resource allocation, economic development, and social services. High-density areas require careful urban planning, while low-density areas may face service delivery challenges.

### 4. Environmental Issues

**Climate Change and Global Warming:** Human activities, such as fossil fuel consumption and deforestation, have accelerated global warming, leading to rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and ecosystem disruptions.

**Resource Management:** Sustainable management of natural resources—water, forests, minerals, and energy—is critical to prevent depletion and ensure long-term economic and environmental stability.

**Sustainability:** Practices such as renewable energy use, conservation, and environmental regulations support sustainability. Understanding environmental issues allows individuals to make informed decisions and support policies that balance development and conservation.

**Summary:** Knowledge of maps, human and physical geography, population trends, and environmental issues enables students to analyze global challenges and human-environment interactions effectively.

# GED Social Studies — Practices

Dominex

## Social Studies Practices

The **Social Studies Practices** section of the GED test emphasizes the skills needed to analyze, interpret, and evaluate historical, political, and social information. Mastery of these practices allows students to make informed decisions and understand complex societal issues.

### 1. Analyzing Primary and Secondary Sources

Primary sources are original materials from the time being studied, such as letters, speeches, photographs, and official documents. Secondary sources interpret, analyze, or summarize primary sources, including textbooks, articles, and documentaries. Evaluating both types involves assessing credibility, bias, perspective, and relevance to a research question.

### 2. Interpreting Graphs, Charts, and Maps

Graphical representations convey complex information efficiently. Students must learn to:

- Identify trends and patterns in line graphs, bar charts, and pie charts.
- Interpret population pyramids, economic data, and social statistics.
- Read maps, including political, physical, and thematic maps, to understand spatial relationships.

### 3. Evaluating Arguments and Evidence

Critical thinking in Social Studies requires evaluating arguments for logic, evidence, and reliability. Key steps include:

- Identifying claims and supporting evidence.
- Detecting bias, assumptions, and incomplete information.
- Comparing differing interpretations of events or policies.

## 4. Understanding Chronology and Historical Context

Historical events must be analyzed in their temporal and cultural context. Students should:

- Sequence events accurately.
- Recognize cause-and-effect relationships.
- Understand the influence of historical, cultural, and social factors on events and decisions.

## 5. Comparing Perspectives Across Time and Cultures

Understanding multiple viewpoints is essential for comprehensive analysis. Students should:

- Compare perspectives from different social, political, and cultural groups.
- Identify changes in ideas, beliefs, and institutions over time.
- Examine how historical events are interpreted differently across cultures.

**Summary:** Mastery of these social studies practices helps students critically evaluate information, understand complex societal issues, and make informed decisions based on evidence and context.