



Essential Standards Extended Guide

American Government Grades 9-12

Guiding Information:

In response to requests from schools and districts for guidance on essential standards, committees of educators from around Idaho collaborated in the summer of 2024 to categorize social studies standards into three groups:

- **Essential standards** are explicitly taught, assessed multiple times, and receive targeted interventions for students who have not yet reached proficiency.
- **Supporting standards** are taught to reinforce essential standards and may or may not be formally assessed.
- **Additional standards** extend learning and are incorporated as time allows within course units, with assessment being optional.

This guidance helps LEAs prioritize the most critical standards, recognizing that not all standards are of equal importance. This document serves as a resource—not a mandate—to assist local efforts. Importantly, this work did not remove or revise any of the adopted Idaho Content Standards and is intended to refocus time and effort.

The committees developed instructional grouping models to demonstrate how standards can be combined into focused units. However, this is just one approach, and other combinations are possible. Educators can use this guide to begin developing scope and sequence for their instructional time and district-specific courses. It also provides a useful starting point for creating formative and summative assessments aligned with the standards.

Instructional Grouping 1: Foundations

Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

9-12.GOV.1 Examine the influences of leading European thinkers such as Locke and Montesquieu, as well as the influence of historical institutions such as Greek democracy, Roman republicanism, and the English legal tradition on the American Founding.

9-12.GOV.6 Describe the purposes and functions of government as outlined in the Preamble of the Constitution.

9-12.GOV.7 Describe limited government within the Constitution, including:

- Checks and balances
- Popular sovereignty
- Rule of law
- Federalism

- Separation of powers
 - Judicial review
 - Majority rule and protection of minority rights

9-12.GOV.8 Describe the structure of the Constitution and the process to amend it.

9-12.GOV.9 Analyze how the Bill of Rights limits the powers of the government and ensures individual rights.

9-12.GOV.10 Define the concepts of democracy and republic and examine the relationship between the two.

9-12.GOV.12 Evaluate the arguments within the Declaration of Independence and its definition of an ideal government.

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

9-12.GOV.2 Examine the Declaration of Independence and American grievances against British rule.

9-12.GOV.3 Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation.

9-12.GOV.4 Analyze the Constitutional Convention of 1787, including the Great Compromise and the ensuing debate over ratification between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists.

9-12.GOV.11 Understand the shared values and aspirations of Americans including liberty, egalitarianism, individualism, and laissez-faire government.

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

9-12.GOV.23 Evaluate the Supreme Court’s interpretations of the freedoms articulated in the First Amendment, including Schenck v. United States, New York Times v. United States, Engel v. Vitale, Miller v. California, Tinker v. Des Moines, Texas v. Johnson, and Kennedy v. Bremerton.

9-12.GOV.24 Evaluate the Supreme Court’s interpretations of freedoms in the Fourth through Eighth Amendments, including Mapp v. Ohio, Gideon v. Wainwright, and Miranda v. Arizona.

9-12.GOV.25 Evaluate the Supreme Court’s interpretations of the freedoms in the 14th Amendment, equal protection, and due process clauses including Plessy v. Ferguson, Roe v. Wade, Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization, Gitlow v. New York, Loving v. Virginia, Obergefell v. Hodges, and Brown v. Board of Education, 1954.

9-12.GOV.26 Explain the government’s limited role in free enterprise and how that affects individual economic freedoms.

Additional Standards

If time allows, these standards may be taught and/or assessed

9-12.GOV.5 Evaluate the arguments presented in the Federalist Papers, particularly Essay 10 and Essay 51, and evaluate the arguments in the Anti-Federalist Papers.

Instructional Grouping 2: Civil Rights

Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

9-12.GOV.15 Evaluate the roles of the federal and state governments in the Civil Rights Movement.

9-12.GOV.22 Distinguish between civil rights and civil liberties and how they are put into practice in our daily lives.

9-12.GOV.49 Describe the evolution of voting (methods and process) and enfranchisement including key amendments (15th , 19th, 23rd, 24th, 26th) and laws (1965 Voting Rights Act) that have extended the right to vote to previously disenfranchised Americans.

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

9-12.GOV.18 Describe the means that citizens use to responsibly participate in the political process, including campaigning, petitioning, demonstrating, running for office, lobbying, and voting.

Instructional Grouping 3: Election Politics

Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

9-12.GOV.16 Explain the role and evolution of political parties in governing and in the recruitment/election of political candidates and the importance of and difference between primaries, caucuses, and general elections.

9-12.GOV.17 Evaluate the role of the media/social media as a means of communicating information/misinformation and how it influences the importance of issues and public opinion.

9-12.GOV.19 Explain the requirements to be considered a natural-born U.S. citizen, and describe the process of naturalization, including the knowledge required by the Naturalization Test.

9-12.GOV.37 Explain the Electoral College system, and how it has evolved over time, and compare arguments for and against it.

9-12.GOV.51 Describe the nomination and election process in American national and state elections, including the Electoral College.

9-12.GOV.53 Explain the impact of reapportionment and redistricting on elections and governance.

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

9-12.GOV.14 Compare and contrast major American political ideologies.

9-12.GOV.50 Examine campaign finance laws and campaign funding and spending, including the impact of Supreme Court decisions, the nationalization of campaign financing, and the role of interest groups.

9-12.GOV.52 Analyze the influence of political parties, media coverage, campaign advertising, interest groups, public opinion polls, social media, and digital communications on elections.

9-12.GOV.54 Explain the role of state governments in administering elections and compare different state's voting rules and elections laws.

9-12.GOV.55 Evaluate the challenges of the election process.

Additional Standards

If time allows, these standards may be taught and/or assessed

9-12.GOV.31 Describe the census and its role in redistricting and reapportionment, including the role of Baker v. Carr.

9-12.GOV.48 Compare partisan and non-partisan offices and elections.

Instructional Grouping 4: Article I

Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

9-12.GOV.30 Analyze Article I and the 17th Amendment of the Constitution as they relate to the legislative branch, including eligibility for office, roles, duties, casework, length of terms, and election to office for representatives and senators.

9-12.GOV.33 Describe the process of how a bill becomes law.

9-12.GOV.34 Describe the powers of United States' Congress, including appropriations, declaration of war, commerce, implied powers, confirmations, necessary and proper clauses, and powers of impeachment and oversight.

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

9-12.GOV.46 Compare the lawmaking process at the national, state, and local level.

Instructional Grouping 5: Article II

Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

9-12.GOV.35 Analyze Article II of the Constitution as it relates to the executive branch, including appointments, oath of office, Commander-in-chief of the military, powers of the president, eligibility for office, succession (25th Amendment), executive orders, treaties, length of term (20th and 22nd Amendments).

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

9-12.GOV.36 Identify major departments of the executive branch, including cabinet and non-cabinet level departments and agencies.

9-12.GOV.40 Explain the processes of selection and confirmation of Supreme Court justices

Instructional Grouping 6: Article III

Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

9-12.GOV.38 Analyze Article III of the Constitution as it relates to judicial power, including the length of terms and the jurisdiction of the U.S. Supreme Court.

9-12.GOV.41 Describe the Supreme Court's role, established by *Marbury vs. Madison*, in determining the constitutionality of laws and acts of the legislative and executive branches.

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

9-12.GOV.39 Analyze the origin and evolution of the modern federal court structure including the Judiciary Act of 1789.

9-12.GOV.42 Compare and contrast different judicial philosophies including activism vs. conservatism, originalism vs. living constitution, and textualism.

Instructional Grouping 7: Federalism

Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

9-12.GOV.13 Describe, at the national, state, and local level, what should be reasonably expected from any citizen or resident of the U.S. and explain why it is important for the well-being of the nation, including being informed on civic issues, serving in the military or alternative service, obeying the law, paying taxes, volunteering, and performing public service, respecting the rights of others, serving as a juror, and voting.

9-12.GOV.21 Identify and be able to engage with key officials, both elected and appointed, in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches at the federal, state, and local levels.

9-12.GOV.43 Explain the functions, powers, interactions, and dynamic relationships among federal, state, local, and tribal governments including the roles of the 10th Amendment, McCulloch vs Maryland, Gibbons vs. Ogden, and evolution from dual federalism to cooperative federalism.

9-12.GOV.44 Analyze and discuss sovereignty and the federal responsibility the United States has with federally recognized American Indian tribes with emphasis on Idaho, such as hunting and fishing rights, and land leasing.

9-12.GOV.45 Explain the organization and powers of state and local government as described in the Constitution of the State of Idaho by analyzing legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

9-12.GOV.58 Identify and evaluate the role of the United States in international organizations, agreements, treaties, and humanitarian relief efforts.

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

9-12.GOV.28 Compare the types and purposes of taxation that are used by local, state, and federal governments to pay for services provided by the government.

9-12.GOV.32 Identify leadership positions of the legislative branch, including majority and minority leaders, the president pro tempore, the role of the Vice president, and the Speaker of the House.

9-12.GOV.47 Understand the structure, powers, and lawmaking process of local government (county, city, special district) by analyzing the relationships between state and local governments and the roles of regional authorities, governing boards, and commissions.

Additional Standards

If time allows, these standards may be taught and/or assessed

9-12.GOV.20 Explain the history and significance of dual citizenship regarding American Indians.

9-12.GOV.27 Evaluate the government’s establishment and maintenance of the rules and institutions in which markets operate, including the establishment and enforcement of property rights, contracts, consumer rights, labor management relations, environmental protection, and competition in the marketplace.

9-12.GOV.29 Describe how the Federal Reserve can use monetary policy to pursue price stability, full employment, and economic growth with the goal of stabilizing the economy.

Instructional Grouping 8: The United States and the International System

Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

9-12.GOV.58 Identify and evaluate the role of the United States in international organizations, agreements, treaties, and humanitarian relief efforts.

Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

9-12.GOV.56 Compare the different forms of domestic and foreign political systems, electoral systems, economic systems, and civil societies including presidential vs parliamentary, unitary vs federal, and autocracy vs democracy.

9-12.GOV.57 Describe the characteristics of United States foreign policy and how it has been created and implemented over time.

9-12.GOV.59 Evaluate the changing role of the United States in supporting democratic principles and institutions in the international system.

For Questions Contact

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