HISTORY, GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Elementary School Rubric



KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

September 14, 2023

Kansas State Board of Education

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Vision

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

SUCCESS DEFINED

A successful Kansas high school graduate has the

- Academic preparation,
- Cognitive preparation,
- Technical skills,
- Employability skills and
- Civic engagement

to be successful in postsecondary education, in the attainment of an industry recognized certification or in the workforce, without the need for remediation.

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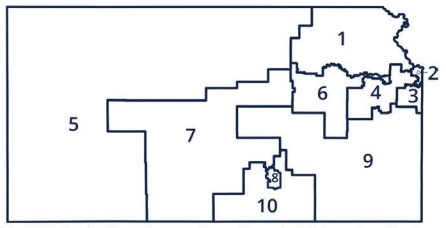


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Kansas divided into the ten State Board of Education districts.

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May 27, 2026

Introduction

The Kansas History, Government and Social Studies (HGSS) Standards document[1] identifies five standards and four associated benchmarks that support the discipline-specific application of content in authentic situations rather than focusing simply on discipline-specific content. The document includes details on effective HGSS classroom instructional best practices and highlights the historical thinking skills that develop when classroom educators successfully integrate these practices into their students' learning.

The Kansas Social Studies Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) is designed to measure student understanding of these standards, benchmarks and skills while allowing Kansas school districts, classroom teachers, and students the opportunity to develop their own assessment that best supports local decisions concerning content, sources, and products. The CBA is based on the fourth benchmark outlined in the state standards document and specifically asks **elementary school students** to create product(s) demonstrating their performance level in advancing a claim/thesis and supporting that claim/thesis using evidence and reasoning.

To prepare learners for the state-level CBA, classroom teachers should provide students with learning opportunities to become proficient in the skills described in the benchmarks under each of the five standards. These expectations are outlined in Benchmarks One, Two and Three:

Benchmark 1:

Recognize and Evaluate

The student is able to recognize and then evaluate one or more of the big ideas from the five Standards (i.e., choices, consequences, rights, responsibilities, identities, beliefs, ideas, actions, continuity, change or dynamic relationships).

Benchmark 2:

Analyze Context and Draw Conclusions

The student is able to analyze the circumstances surrounding one or more of the big ideas from the five standards (i.e., choices, consequences, rights, responsibilities, identities, beliefs, ideas, actions, continuity, change or dynamic relationships) and then draw conclusions or make judgments about what they have analyzed.

Benchmark 3:

Investigate and Make Connections

The student is able to investigate one or more of the big ideas from the five standards (i.e., choices, consequences, rights, responsibilities, identities, beliefs, ideas, actions, continuity, change or dynamic relationships) and then make connections to contemporary or real-world issues.

The evaluation of a student's ability to develop a product that answers a locally developed compelling question using evidence and argument satisfies the requirements of the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) state assessment mandate. This required state assessment is based on Benchmark Four:

Benchmark 4:

Make a Claim or Advance a Thesis Using Evidence and Argument

1 "HGSS Standards Documents." (2022) Kansas State Department of Education,

HGSS Classroom-Based Assessment description and criteria

Using skills developed during instructional tasks and activities, a student will create a cohesive product using grade-level appropriate communication skills that answer a locally developed compelling question focused on one or more of the big ideas from the five standards (i.e., choices, consequences, rights, responsibilities, identities, beliefs, ideas, actions, continuity, change or dynamic relationships).

To earn a proficient score using the KSDE Classroom-Based Assessment rubric, a student product must include:

- **The Claim/Thesis** includes a clear and accurate reason that answers the compelling question using evidence.
- **The Evidence** is from at least one relevant, trusted and accurate source that supports the claim/thesis **AND** tells where it came from and who created it.
- **The Reasoning** clearly connects at least one piece of primary or secondary evidence to support the claim/thesis.

Classroom-Based Assessment Definitions

Standard:

An overarching learning goal for students that guides instruction across grade levels.

Benchmark:

A measurable expectation of student performance.

Disciplinary Thinking Skills:

The critical thinking skills that are specific to the HGSS disciplines. Among others, these include analyzing problems, collecting information, evaluating sources, and creating solutions. It is what the CBA is designed to measure.

Compelling Question:

This is the foundation of the CBA. It is the question that launches and guides an inquiry/investigation.

Claim/Thesis:

A statement made by a student that answers the Compelling Question.

Evidence:

The details from the source(s) that support the claim/thesis and prove it to be true.

Reasoning:

The explanation of the evidence and how it proves the claim/thesis to be true.

Primary Source:

Primary sources are the raw materials of history - original documents and objects that were created at the time under study. Any piece of writing, image, video, sound recording or human-made object can be a primary source.

Secondary Source:

A secondary source does not give original information. It interprets or summarizes information from primary sources. Textbooks, biographies, and encyclopedias are examples of secondary sources.

Elementary School CBA Rubric

This rubric will be used to measure student products that **MUST** include Claim/Thesis, Evidence and Reasoning.

Classroom-Based Assessment Compelling Question:

Standard(s) addressed by the Compelling Question:

	Performance Levels				
Scoring Category	**1 Beginning**	**2 Developing**	**3 Proficient**	**4 Exemplary**	**Score**
Claim/Thesis: A statement that answers the compelling question using evidence.	**The Claim/Thesis** is absent **OR** is unclear.	**The Claim/Thesis** is unclear, inaccurate, or vague **OR** includes a reason that does not provide support for the argument.	**The Claim/Thesis** includes a clear and accurate reason that answers the compelling question using evidence.	**The Claim/Thesis** includes two or more clear and accurate reasons that answer the compelling question using evidence.	**Claim/ Thesis Score:**
Evidence: The details from the sources that supports the claim/thesis and prove it to be true.	**The Evidence** is absent **OR** is unclear.	**The Evidence** includes some evidence that is vague **OR** is not accurate, that inadequately supports the claim/thesis **AND** does not tell where it came from and who created it.	**The Evidence** is from at least one relevant, trusted, and accurate source that supports the claim/thesis **AND** tells where it came from and who created it.	**The Evidence** is from two or more relevant, trusted, and accurate sources that support the claim/thesis **AND** tells where it came from and who created it.	**Evidence Score:**
Reasoning: The explanation of the evidence and how it proves the claim/thesis to be true.	**The Reasoning** is absent **OR** is unclear.	**The Reasoning** tries to connect one piece of evidence but the connection is not clear or is confusing.	**The Reasoning** clearly connects at least one piece of primary or secondary evidence to support the claim/thesis.	**The Reasoning** clearly connects at least two pieces of primary and/ or secondary evidence to support the claim/thesis.	**Reasoning Score:**

For more questions, feedback or concerns please contact:

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Kansans CAN

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