

Social Studies

The Social Studies Test

The Social Studies section of the GED® test measures your knowledge of key social studies topics and how well you are able to analyze and interpret documents and other social studies information. Half of the questions focus on US government and civics. The rest cover US history, world history, economics, and geography.

Questions on the Social Studies test may ask about the information in a short passage, a map, a graph, a table, or some other graphic presentation of social studies data. Sometimes two or three questions will refer to the same passage, graph, or table.

The Social Studies Review

The following section of this book will introduce you to the basic skills and topics that are tested on the Social Studies test. Each main topic is followed by a short exercise to measure how well you have mastered that subject. When you are finished with your review, test your mastery of basic social studies skills by taking the Social Studies Posttest at the back of this book.

This Social Studies review section is organized as follows:

Social Studies

Chapter 1 US Civics and Government

Chapter 2 US History

Chapter 3 Economics

Chapter 4 Geography and World History

Answers for all of the exercises in these chapters are located in the Exercise Answer Keys section at the back of this book.

The Top 25 Things You Need to Know for the GED® Social Studies Test

Use this list as a guide for your studies. Be sure to study and practice each topic until you feel that you have mastered it.

- 1. Influences on American Government:** Be familiar with the ways the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights influenced the formation of American government.
- 2. Independence:** Understand the basic outline of the Articles of Confederation and the Declaration of Independence.
- 3. Creation of the US Constitution:** Know the six basic principles that underlie the Constitution and understand the compromises that were made in writing the Constitution.
- 4. Articles of the US Constitution:** Know the basic ideas set forth in each of the seven Articles.
- 5. Bill of Rights:** Understand the reasons for the Bill of Rights and its contents.
- 6. Later Amendments:** Know the basic topic of each subsequent Amendment to the Constitution; understand the process of amending the Constitution.
- 7. Branches of Government:** Understand the functions of each of the three branches of the US government and how the system of checks and balances works.
- 8. Elections:** Know the steps in the presidential election process and how elections are decided.
- 9. Supreme Court:** Be familiar with landmark Supreme Court cases.
- 10. Legislation:** Understand the process of making a law.
- 11. Interest Groups:** Understand the function and influence of special interest groups.
- 12. Colonial History:** Know how America was first discovered by Europeans and how the first thirteen colonies were established.
- 13. Revolutionary War:** Know the reasons behind the war; be familiar with important battles.
- 14. US Expansion:** Know the basic ideas of the Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny; trace the westward expansion of America.
- 15. Civil War and Reconstruction:** Know the reasons behind the war; be familiar with important battles; understand the effects of the war and the reconstruction effort.
- 16. Industrialization:** Understand how the United States underwent industrialization and urbanization; know the effects of those transitions.

17. **World Wars:** Know the reasons behind US involvement in WWI and WWII; be familiar with important battles of WWI and WWII.
18. **United States as World Power:** Explain the Cold War; understand how the United States became a superpower and what that entails in terms of foreign policy.
19. **Factors of Production:** Know the four factors of production (natural resources, labor, capital, and entrepreneurship).
20. **Markets:** Understand the relationships among price, supply, and demand.
21. **Macroeconomics:** Understand fiscal and monetary policies and the basics of international trade; define GDP, tariff, inflation, deflation, and unemployment.
22. **Microeconomics:** Understand the law of supply and demand, banking, and credit.
23. **Maps:** Be familiar with several different types of maps, such as topographical maps, climate maps, political maps, etc.; understand how to read maps, legends, and keys.
24. **Movements of People:** Understand migration and push and pull factors; be familiar with migration patterns and population trends.
25. **Elements of Culture:** Understand what makes a culture unique (language, religion, ethnic groups, form of government, economic system, etc.).

Social Studies

Chapter 1 US Civics and Government

Exercise 1: Early Forms of Government (page 654)

1. Choice **C** is correct. A theocracy is ruled by priests or a ruler who believes he or she has divine power.
2. Choice **A** is correct. A single person could not perform all the tasks of government. A bureaucracy aids in administration.
3. Choice **B** is correct. When the people who are not in power demand a voice in their government, a democracy may be formed.

Exercise 2: Athenian Democracy (page 656)

1. Choice **B** is correct. Democracy is rule by the people.
2. Choice **A** is correct. Pericles said, "while there exists equal justice to all and alike."
3. Choice **D** is correct. Pericles said, "a man may benefit his country whatever the obscurity of his condition." This means that all people can (and should) serve in some way.

Exercise 3: The Roman Republic (page 659)

1. Choice **B** is correct. The passage says Polybius "outlined how each part of the government had ways to check, or limit, the powers of the other two parts."
2. Choice **D** is correct. The passage says several delegates, including James Madison, had studied *The Histories*.

3. Choice **C** is correct. The Senate and the military were from two different branches of government, so having the Senate fund the military acts was a check on military power.

Exercise 4: The Rise of Modern Government (page 662)

1. Choice **D** is correct. A monarch is a king or queen, and giving people civil rights would limit the absolute power of the monarch.
2. Choice **B** is correct. The passage mentions "regal authority," which is the authority of the monarch. The passage limits the power of the monarch, so it is describing a limited monarchy.
3. Choice **A** is correct. Locke outlined natural rights, including life, liberty, and property. These are very similar to the rights asserted in the *Declaration of Independence*.

Exercise 5: The US Government (page 664)

1. **B.** The first group to get voting rights was African American males through the Fifteenth Amendment (females did not get the right to vote until the Nineteenth Amendment).
2. **C.** The Russian imperial government had no influence on the writing of the US Constitution.
3. **D.** The president nominates Supreme Court justices, which acts as a check on judicial power.

EXERCISE ANSWER KEYS

Exercise 4: The Sun–Earth System (page 627)

- Choice **A** is correct. The equation $P^2 = a^3$, where P is a planet's orbital period and a is its radius of orbit, reflects a direct relationship between these two values. The longer it takes a planet to orbit the sun, the greater its average distance from the sun.
- Choice **D** is correct. Nicolaus Copernicus developed the heliocentric model that states that the sun is the center of the universe.

Exercise 5: The History of Planet Earth (page 631)

- Choice **C** is correct. The solar nebula formed from the big bang and then hydrogen and helium swirling in the nebula formed the sun, heavier elements formed asteroids that developed into the terrestrial planets, and lighter gases swirling in the outer areas of the nebula formed the Jovian planets.
- Choice **A** is correct. Continental drift explains why Pangaea broke up into separate continents, and it explains why the North American continent continues to drift slowly away from the European continent.

Exercise 6: The Hydrosphere (page 633)

- Choice **C** is correct. Carbon dioxide dissolves into the ocean surfaces through the carbon cycle.

Exercise 7: Earth's Atmosphere and the Weather (page 635)

- Choice **B** is correct. The destructive forces of tornadoes and hurricanes displace and sometimes destroy wildlife populations by destroying ecosystems and habitats.

Exercise 8: The Lithosphere (page 640)

- Choice **C** is correct. In mass wasting, rock slides and avalanches can cause igneous rocks to slam into other rocks, breaking them down into sediments.
- Choice **B** is correct. The mantle makes up more than 80 percent of Earth's total mass.

Exercise 9: Interactions of Earth's Systems (page 642)

- Choice **A** is correct. Earthquakes are violent events, but they do not cause changes in the climate.

Exercise 10: Climate and Weather (page 643)

- Choice **B** is correct. By definition, weather occurs within a very short time frame such as hours, days, or weeks. It is a snapshot of a point in time. The time frame for climate is considerably longer—months, years, or longer.

Exercise 11: Natural Resources and Human Activity (page 645)

- Choice **B** is correct. Increased carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere have the effect of trapping solar radiation, which raises global temperatures. In the arctic regions of the North and South Poles, higher temperatures lead to melting of glaciers and polar ice caps.

Exercise 12: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth (page 647)

- Choice **C** is correct. The process of fracking creates jobs and produces cleaner-burning fuel with costs rivaling those of imported oil. However, environmentalists claim that the process of fracking can destroy water sources and stress ecosystems.

EXERCISE ANSWER KEYS

Chapter 2 US History

Exercise 1: Ideas from Greece and England (page 666)

1. Choice **B** is correct. A jury is "the lawful judgement of his peers."
2. Choice **D** is correct. Failing to reach a verdict does not deny justice; it is just one possible outcome of the application of justice.

Exercise 2: The Mayflower Compact (page 667)

1. Choice **C** is correct. A "civil body politic" would be a governing body.
2. Choice **A** is correct. The passage says the group will "enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal laws."
3. Choice **B** is correct. The Mayflower Compact is a written document outlining how the group will govern itself.

Exercise 3: The Declaration of Independence (page 669)

1. Choice **B** is correct. The paragraph ends by saying they will "declare the causes."
2. Choice **C** is correct. The preamble says government gets its power "from the consent of the governed."
3. Choice **D** is correct. The preamble describes unalienable rights and says governments are instituted "to secure these rights."

Exercise 4: The Constitution of the United States (page 672)

1. The first ten amendments are known as the Bill of Rights.
2. The Fifth and Sixth Amendments guarantee the right to an attorney, the right to a fair trial,

the right to a speedy trial, and freedom from self-incrimination (the right to remain silent), among many other rights.

3. **C.** The Constitution allows the federal government to levy taxes on its citizens, while the Articles of Confederation did not.

Exercise 5: Plessy v. Ferguson (page 674)

1. **A.** The passage says, "the assumption that the enforced separation of the two races stamps the colored race with a badge of inferiority. If this be so, it is not by reason of anything found in the act, but solely because the colored race chooses to put that construction upon it."
2. **B.** The passage says, "If one race be inferior to the other socially, the Constitution of the United States cannot put them upon the same plane." From this, one can infer that the court considers African Americans inferior to whites socially.

Exercise 6: Brown v. Board of Education (page 675)

1. Choice **A** is correct. The passage says segregation implies "the inferiority of the negro group."
2. **C.** The passage concludes by saying that the plaintiffs have been "deprived of the equal protection of the laws."
3. The Fourteenth Amendment.

Exercise 7: The Warren Court (page 677)

1. Choice **b** is correct.
2. Choice **a** is correct.
3. Choice **d** is correct.
4. Choice **c** is correct.

EXERCISE ANSWER KEYS

Exercise 8: *Roe v. Wade* (page 678)

1. **B.** The passage says, "in my view, its judgment is an improvident and extravagant exercise of the power of judicial review."
2. **A.** The court ruled that the first three months of pregnancy are protected under the woman's right to privacy.

Chapter 3 Economics

Exercise 1: Foundations of Economics (page 682)

1. Choice **B** is correct. Temples were the first institutions to lend money.
2. Choice **C** is correct. "Multinational" means many nations.
3. Choice **A** is correct. The Silk Road was an overland trading route between Asia and Europe.
4. Choice **B** is correct. Aristotle says when people have property, they have a "distinct interest" and "will make more progress."

Exercise 2: The First Global Economic System (page 684)

1. Choice **D** is correct. European explorers were primarily interested in finding new trade routes.
2. Choice **A** is correct. Mercantilism is the idea that a nation's prosperity is tied to gold and silver.
3. Choice **D** is correct. The Columbian Exchange created new markets for goods on both sides of the Atlantic.
4. Choice **C** is correct. The map shows that Europe "exported" some terrible diseases to the Americas.

Exercise 3: The Rise of Modern Economics (page 687)

1. Choice **B** is correct. Most Western industrialized countries are free-market capitalist economies.

2. Choice **D** is correct. The Industrial Revolution completely changed Great Britain's economy, shifting the bulk of production from agrarian to manufacturing and creating a middle class. It has had the same effect in other nations that have industrialized.
3. Choice **C** is correct. Socialism maintains that industrialization made a few very rich at the expense of the poor.

Exercise 4: Developments in American Economics (page 689)

1. Choice **A** is correct. The graph shows a huge increase in cotton production throughout the 1800s, except for a slight decline from 1845–1850.
2. Choice **B** is correct. Since cotton production was increasing through most of that period, one can infer that the demand for slave labor would have also increased.

Exercise 5: The Globalized Economy (page 692)

1. You should have circled: decline in global conflicts, an increase in shared prosperity, and increased interconnectedness of the world.
2. You should have circled: poverty, income inequality, corporations putting profits ahead of safety, and corporations ignoring environmental issues.

EXERCISE ANSWER KEYS

Chapter 4 Geography and World History

**Exercise 1: Environment and Society
(page 695)**

1. Choice **D** is correct. The Fertile Crescent lies between the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf.
2. Choice **C** is correct. The map shows a major feature of the Fertile Crescent is the pair of rivers that run through it, the Tigris and Euphrates.
3. The correct answer is "Euphrates." The Tigris and Euphrates define the borders of Mesopotamia.
4. Choice **B** is correct. The Fertile Crescent is bordered by three mountain ranges in the north and east and the Arabian Desert in the south. Both would have made expansion difficult.

**Exercise 2: Geographic Concepts and Tools
(page 697)**

1. Choice **A** is correct. Washington, DC, has defined boundaries.

2. Choice **C** is correct. The South means different things to different people, so it is considered a perceptual region.
3. Choice **A** is correct. Airline system maps show the areas served by the airline, so they define its functional region.

**Exercise 3: Cultural Diffusion
(page 700)**

1. **D.** Cultural diffusion is the process of spreading out from the center.
2. **C.** Silk originated in China, then was brought to Rome, then to India, and eventually to Europe.
3. **B.** Animals in the Galápagos Islands evolving separately does not show culture spreading.