

8TH GRADE SOCIAL SCIENCE CHECKLIST
Goals 14-16
Illinois Learning Standards A – F
Assessment Frameworks

While ISBE is not currently assessing social science, many educators have requested copies of the framework for use in local school districts. Use as a curriculum guide.

U.S. GOVERNMENT

- _____ Identify the basic principles of American democracy expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the Illinois State Constitution, including: inalienable rights, popular sovereignty, rule of law, due process, separation of powers and checks and balances.

- _____ Identify the similarities (written document, rule of law, consent of the governed, three separate branches of government) and differences (scope of jurisdiction, limits on government powers, use of the military) between the U.S. and Illinois Constitutions.

- _____ Compare the powers granted to the federal legislative, executive and judicial branches of government to the powers reserved to the states.

- _____ Identify how the Constitution is designed to secure individual liberty by both empowering and limiting central government.

- _____ Identify unique features of the U.S. Constitution, including the Presidency and an independent judiciary.

POLITICAL SYSTEMS

- _____ Identify the advantages and disadvantages of the system of shared powers that the federal government has with the states, as well as the basis on which the writers of the Constitution establish such a system.

- _____ Describe the unique responsibilities of elected and appointed officials in local, county and state government, including: mayor, city council, judges, governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, comptroller, treasurer, and state representative.

- _____ Describe how a bill becomes a law in both the Illinois and U.S. legislatures.

ELECTION PROCESS AND CITIZEN RESPONSIBILITIES

_____ Identify the evolution, function and tenets of the major political parties in the U.S.

_____ Identify the major aspects of the electoral process in the U.S., including: primaries, conventions, general elections and the Electoral College.

_____ Define the concept of “rule of law.”

ROLES OF INDIVIDUALS AND INTEREST GROUPS

_____ Identify how non-governmental organizations and individual citizens play a role in local, state and federal political activities and how these roles compare to those of elected government leaders.

_____ Identify the role of television, the press and other ways in which information is shared in a democracy.

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

_____ Identify the provisions of the Constitution that empower the government to form relationships with other countries, including: declaring war, making treaties, trade agreements, and conducting foreign policy.

_____ Identify the effects of the American Revolution on the establishment of constitutional government in other nations (e.g., France).

_____ Identify the development of U.S. foreign policy from the American Revolution to the U.S. Civil War, including: Washington’s Farewell Address, major treaties with American Indian Nations, the Louisiana Purchase, the causes and effects of the War of 1812, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Mexican-American War.

_____ Identify significant events in the expansion of U.S. territory after the Civil War.

_____ Understand why the U.S. became increasingly involved in the affairs of other nations in the late 19th century, including U.S. involvement in the Philippines and Cuba.

_____ Compare isolationist policy with interventionist policy and describe the possible benefits and consequences of each (e.g., greater influence in world affairs; conflict with other nations and native peoples as a consequence of expansionism).

_____ Identify the significance of American entrance into World War I, including: it turned the tide of battle in favor of the allies; it broke the American policy of isolationism; it marked America’s emergence as a world power.

- _____ Identify alternate views of the Treaty of Versailles with Germany (e.g., it was a harsh treaty that angered Germany; it was a fair treaty that was not enforced by the allied powers.)
- _____ Identify the events leading to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.
- _____ Identify strategies of Allied and Axis powers during World War II, and understand how the Allied powers were able to win the war.
- _____ Identify significant foreign policies of the U.S. during the Cold War and their efforts, including: the Truman Doctrine, containment theory, the Domino Theory and the formation of alliances (e.g., NATO).
- _____ Define and identify the significance of the following terms to the Cold War: “peaceful coexistence,” détente, containment, iron curtain, and satellite states.
- _____ Identify significant individuals associated with the Cold War and their role during that era, including: U.S. presidents (e.g., Harry Truman, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Ronald Regan) and Communist leaders (e.g., Joseph Stalin, Nikita Khrushchev, Fidel Castro, Marshall Tito, and Mikhail Gorbachev).
- _____ Understand motivation for U.S. involvement in the Middle East since the end of the Cold War era.

U.S. POLITICAL IDEAS AND TRADITIONS

- _____ Analyze historic and contemporary arguments for expanding or limiting rights outlined in the Bill of Rights, including: freedom of speech, the right to bear arms and voting rights.
- _____ Analyze significant works of American letters for their historical, literary and political import, including: the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, Kennedy’s inaugural speech, and Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech.

ILLINOIS POLITICAL SYSTEMS

- _____ Identify how individuals can change Illinois laws and policies for the public good.
- _____ Identify how a bill becomes a law in Illinois.

ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

- _____ Compare different economic systems, including: command, market, traditional and mixed.
- _____ Identify the causes of unemployment, including seasonal fluctuation of demand, changing jobs, changing skill requirements, and national spending.
- _____ Define inflation and deflation.
- _____ Define advertising and describe the ways in which producers market goods and services.

SCARCITY AND CONSUMERS

- _____ Identify the impact of competition on prices.
- _____ Identify the costs and benefits of personal spending, saving, investing, and credit choices.
- _____ Identify the “market clearing price” of a good or service.

SCARCITY AND PRODUCERS

- _____ Analyze the effect of current events on the availability of resources.
- _____ Identify the effect of labor costs on productivity.
- _____ Understand how competition among sellers lowers costs and prices, and encourages producers to produce more.

TRADE

- _____ Define and give an example of a cost/benefit analysis.
- _____ Identify the ways in which currency makes trade easier.
- _____ Define imports and exports.
- _____ Define transaction costs.

GOVERNMENT AND THE ECONOMY

- _____ Identify government policies that constrain/protect property rights, enforce contracts, and discourage/encourage competition.

_____ Understand how laws and government policies establish rules that help market economy function efficiently, including property rights, contract enforcement, and standard weights and measures.

_____ Identify governments as the providers of public goods and services.

_____ Define and describe the differences among income tax, sales tax and property tax.

_____ Define a balanced budget.

_____ Identify the social and environmental benefits and consequences of a particular example of production or consumption.

ILLINOIS ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

_____ Understand how prices indicate to Illinois producers how much to produce.

_____ Identify Illinois exports and imports.

_____ Identify the effects of weather and war on consumer prices in Illinois.

_____ Identify Illinois economic strengths in terms of locations, resources, labor force, and education level.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

_____ Identify multiple causes and effects when analyzing historical events.

_____ Identify the differences between primary and secondary sources.

_____ Use visual and literary sources, including: a) photographs, paintings, cartoons, and architectural drawings and b) novels, bibliographies, poetry, and plays to clarify, illustrate, or elaborate upon information presented in historical narratives or arguments.

_____ Recognize the differences between two interpretations/points of view of a single historical event and differentiate between unsupported expressions of opinion and informed hypotheses grounded in historical evidence and reasoning.

U.S. HISTORY

_____ Identify the development and institutionalization of African slavery and its relationship to the development of and institutionalism of U.S. slavery.

- _____ Identify reasons why settlers founded the thirteen original colonies, including: John Smith and the settlement of Virginia for economic purposes; the Pilgrims and Puritans and their quest for political and religious freedom in Massachusetts; Roger Williams and his quest for religious freedom in Rhode Island; the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam (later New York) for economic purposes; William Penn, Quakerism, and the settlement of Pennsylvania and Delaware.
- _____ Identify how the availability of land in the American colonies (and distance from Britain) allowed for the development of a middle class, and devotion of time and politics.
- _____ Identify the pre-revolutionary conflicts that solidified English power in North America (e.g., the conflict between the English and Dutch over New Amsterdam/New York, the French and Indian Wars, and King Philip's War).
- _____ Identify the practice of mercantilism and its impact on the relationship between European powers and the relationship between the American Colonies and England preceding the American Revolution.
- _____ Identify how the divergent political, religious and economic interests of American colonists gave rise to the American Revolution.
- _____ Identify the principal arguments for separation from England as set forth in the Declaration of Independence.
- _____ Understand the major course and consequences of the American Revolution, including: the roles of American and British leaders such as George Washington; the roles of Native American leaders and their alliances on both sides; Saratoga, and Yorktown; winter at Valley Forge and George Washington's crossing the Delaware; the Treaty of Paris.
- _____ Understand the reasons for the adoption of the Articles of Confederation and understand its shortcomings and consequences (e.g., Shay's Rebellion, lack of authority of Congress, lack of coordination among states, no control over printing of paper money).
- _____ Identify the people, debates, events and documents associated with the drafting and ratification of the Constitution, including: Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, James Madison, and George Mason; The Federalist Papers; the ways in which slavery had divided the colonies following the Revolution, its effect on the Revolutionary War and the impact of the 3/5 Compromise at the Constitutional Convention.

- _____ Identify the major challenges facing the early government of the United States (e.g., domestic and foreign affairs of the new Congress and the first four presidents; precedents established by George Washington including the cabinet and two terms as president; economic development, trade, tariffs, taxation, and trends in the national debt; the physical landscape and political divisions during the terms of the first four presidents).
- _____ Examine the presidency of Thomas Jefferson and understand the impact of the Louisiana Purchase.
- _____ Identify the significance of the following people and events related to the War of 1812: President James Madison and Dolly Madison, the British impressments of American sailors, the idea of “freedom of the seas,” the burning of the White House by the British, the story of For McHenry, Francis Scott Key, and the writing of “The Star Spangled Banner.”
- _____ Identify the success and failures of policy and reform during the Age of Jacksonian Democracy, including: the “spoils system,” the “kitchen cabinet” greater political involvement for all people, policy of Indian removal, excessive printing of money leading to the depression of the 1830s).
- _____ Understand the meaning and implications of the Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny and identify significant events associated with the concept, including the Texas independence movement and the Mexican-American War.
- _____ Identify the elements of early western migration (e.g., experiences and routes of settlers on overland trails; reasons for and destinations of major westward migrations, including those to Oregon, California, and Mormon settlements; impact of western expansion on American Indian nations).
- _____ Identify the abolition movement, the importance of the invention of the cotton gin in perpetuating the practice of slavery, and identify the people and events associated abolitionism, including: the Missouri Compromise, the 1857 Dred Scott v. Sanford decision, the Lincoln-Douglas Debates, John Brown, Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, Harriet Tubman, and Theodore Weld.
- _____ Examine the politics of the U.S. Congress during the period of crisis and compromise in the years leading up to the Civil War, including: abolitionists (e.g., William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, and John Brown); the controversy over whether to allow slavery in territories and new states as illustrated by the Missouri Compromise, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the Dred Scott Supreme Court Decision; the Lincoln-Douglas debates; Abraham Lincoln’s statement “A house divided against itself cannot stand.”
- _____ Identify economic, social and political causes of the U.S. Civil War, including: conflicting and interpretations of state and federal authority; geographical and

economic differences (between the North and South and between agrarians and industrialists).

_____ Understand the major political developments of the Civil War, including: the First Battle of Bull Run and the Battles of Antietam, Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and the Wilderness; the battle between the Monitor and the Merrimac (Virginia); the roles of Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and Jefferson Davis; the Emancipation Proclamation; the Gettysburg Address; the appointment of an African-American regiment under Robert Gould Shaw; Sherman's march to the sea; excerpts from Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address ("With malice toward none, with charity for all"); the surrender at Appomattox Court House; the assassination of Abraham Lincoln by John Wilkes Booth.

_____ Understand the impact of the Civil War strategies, including: the inclusion of African Americans in the ranks of the Union Army; the blockade of the South, W.T. Sherman's march to the sea and Ulysses S. Grant's Strategy of Attrition.