

The University of the State of New York  
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
Office of State Assessment  
Albany, New York 12234

**General Information  
Concerning the Component Retesting Program  
in Social Studies  
(Revised January 2003)**

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## **Advisory on Component Retests in Social Studies**

The Component Retests in Global History and Geography and in United States History and Government, planned for administration once per year beginning in spring 2004, will assess student achievement of the New York State Learning Standards in social studies at the commencement level. Each of the component retests will be administered in two sessions on successive school days. Each day's component retest module (session) will take approximately one hour to administer, which includes 50 minutes of testing time and approximately 10 minutes for distribution/collection of test materials. Students must be present for both modules to earn an official component retest score.

Global History and Geography and United States History and Government will each have two component retests identified as Component A and Component B. For Global History and Geography, Component A will test the Global History Standard, Component B will test the Geography, Economics, and the Civics/Government Standards in the Social Studies Resource Guide with Core Curriculum. For United States History and Government, Component A will cover the United States History Standard, Component B will cover the Government/Civics, Economics, and Geography Standards as presented in the Social Studies Resource Guide with Core Curriculum. Each component retest will include 40 multiple choice items (module 1) and 3 extended response questions (module 2).

See page 7 for a diagram of the component retesting program for social studies.

### **Questions and Answers About Component Retesting in Social Studies**

#### **1. Why do we have component retesting for social studies Regents Examinations?**

Component Retesting is part of an overall program of prevention and intervention strategies for students who are at risk of not meeting the New York State Learning Standards. The program is designed to provide high school seniors who have failed the required Regents Examinations (at least twice) an additional opportunity to show they can meet the standards using an alternative assessment.

The underlying assumption is that student weaknesses in meeting the learning standards can be identified, and instructional intervention can be targeted to address those weaknesses. This calls for retesting a student only in the social studies component in which the student has proven deficient. For seniors who have taken the social studies Regents Examination at least twice, and earned a minimum score of 48 on at least one of their last two attempts, a component retest provides an alternative to retaking the complete Regents Examination.

#### **2. Who will be eligible to take a component retest?**

To be eligible for component retesting, a student *must*

- 1) be a high school senior, and
- 2) have taken a Regents Examination in the subject in question at least *two* times without achieving a passing score, and
- 3) have earned a score of 48 or better on at least one of the two most recent administrations of the examination the student has taken.

### **3. How will schools determine which component retest the student should take?**

Using worksheets that will be provided by the Department, the school will identify patterns of weakness in senior students who have failed the Regents Examinations in Global History and Geography and/or in United States History and Government. Worksheets will enable schools to compare the senior's scores on test questions on the Regents examinations related to each of the two components to that of students scoring 65 on that test. To identify which component retest that student must take, administrators must review a student's level of achievement on the two most recent administrations of the examination. Three general considerations follow in order of priority:

#### ***First consideration:***

When both of the most recent Regents Examinations indicate weakness in the same component, the student should be retested on that component.

#### ***Second consideration:***

When one of the two most recent Regents Examinations indicates a weakness on one component while the other test shows a weakness on the other, the student should be retested on the weakness identified by the most recently administered examination.

#### ***Third consideration:***

When the student shows a weakness in both components on each of the last two Regents Examinations, the student should be retested on Component A.

### **4. How will the component retests differ from the Regents Examinations?**

The component retests will be given over a two-day period, with one module given each day. Students will be allowed 50 minutes to work on each module. The component retests will include multiple-choice questions that will be similar in format to multiple choice questions on the current Regents Examinations. However, the open-ended questions on the component retests will use a different format from the essay questions on the Regents Examination to assess writing in a content area. Questions on the component retests will be similar in level of difficulty to those on the Regents Examinations. The scales for the component retest score ranges will be derived by equating the test questions on the component retests with those on Regents Examinations.

### **5. What are extended response questions?**

They are open-ended writing exercises that test writing in a content area. They are not constructed response questions or essays. These questions can *not* be answered successfully using a single phrase or sentence. The extended response questions will require the student to write a one-or two-paragraph response on a specific social studies topic. They will be scored using a 3-point holistic rubric instead of the 5-point holistic rubric used to score the thematic essays and document-based questions on the Regents Examinations.

**6. How will Module II of the component retests (the extended response questions) be scored?**

The answer papers for Module 2 of the component retests will be scored by teams of social studies teachers in the schools and will require scorer preparation that is similar to the scoring of essays on the current social studies Regents Examinations. Two raters will score each extended response question. A third rating will be required if the score assigned by the two raters for an extended response question varies by more than 1 point.

**7. When and where will I be able to obtain additional information about component retesting in social studies?**

Additional information for determining the appropriate components for eligible seniors and administering and scoring of component retests will be posted on the Department's web site as available. The web site address will be: <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/cia/testing/component.html>.

**8. What type of scores will students earn on component retests?**

For each component retest, the student's final score will initially be designated as one of three possible score ranges:

- *Score range 65 and above*  
Achieving a component retest result of *score range 65 and above* is equivalent to earning a score of 65 or better on a Regents Examination. This result satisfies the State requirement for a local or Regents diploma.
- *Score range 55–64*  
Achieving a component retest result of *score range 55–64* is equivalent to earning a score between 55 and 64 on the corresponding Regents Examination. In schools that have designated 55 as the passing score on a Regents Examination in Global History and Geography or United States History and Government for the awarding of a local diploma, achieving a component retest result of *score range 55–64* satisfies the State requirement for the local diploma.
- *Score range below 55*  
Achieving a component retest result of *score range below 55* is equivalent to earning a score below 55 on the corresponding Regents examination. Such a result does *not* satisfy the State testing requirement for a local or Regents diploma.

As is the case when taking Regents examinations, it is the student's cohort that determines their eligibility for the low pass score of 55-64 in school districts that have approved this option. Eventually, only two possible score ranges will remain, score range above 65 and score range below 65.

**9. How will the results of this test be recorded on the student’s permanent record?**

School personnel will record on the student's permanent record the name and date of the component retest that the student has taken and the score range earned. Regardless of the score attained by the student on the component retest, scores previously earned by a student on any Regents Examination and entered in the student’s permanent record should not be adjusted in any manner.

**10. Will training for raters be provided prior to the first administration of these component retests?**

Turnkey training (at the BOCES/ large city district level) on the scoring of component retest extended response questions will be conducted prior to the first administration of these examinations. These organizations will then conduct training sessions at the district and/or building level.

**11. Are samples available of the extended response type questions that will appear in the component retests in social studies?**

Yes. See page 8 for samples of extended response questions for component retests in Global History and Geography and page 10 for samples of extended response questions for component retests in United States History and Government.

**12. Will any extended response questions be based on prompts?**

Yes, prompts *may* be used as a basis for some of the extended response questions. Historical photographs, quotations, reading passages, maps, political cartoons, charts, primary source documents, and diagrams could all be used as a basis for extended response questions.

**13. Can students choose which extended response questions to answer?**

No, there will be 3 extended response questions on each test and students must answer those 3 questions. However, students will often have a choice within the question, as they formulate a response.

**14. How does the generic rubric for the extended response questions on component retests differ from the rubric for essay questions on Regents Examinations?**

Unlike the 5-point rubric used for the thematic essays and document-based questions found on the social studies Regents Examinations, a 3-point rubric will be used to score the extended response questions on component retests. The 3-point rubric focuses on judging specific social studies content and supporting answers with facts, examples, and details. Because these questions are not essays, the rubric does not emphasize the need for any type of thesis statement or the scoring of an introduction and/or conclusion.

**15. How much detail will be expected of students at each rubric score point?**

See the samples of student responses and scoring commentaries for an Extended Response question provided in the publication **Scoring Information and Samples of Scoring Materials for the Component Retesting Program in Social Studies** that accompanies this publication.

**16. How will each part of a component retest be weighted?**

While a final decision is yet to be made concerning the weighting of the parts of the component retest, preliminary discussions on this topic call for a 60%–40% split between the two modules of each component retest. A student will have to sit for both Modules of a component retest to be eligible for an official score.

**17. What other publications or information will SED publish before component retests in social studies are administered for the first time?**

Two publications, *Directions for Administering and Scoring Component Retests* and the *Information Booklet for Administering and Scoring the Component Retests in Social Studies* should be available on the department's web site by January 2004.

[.http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/assess.html](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/assess.html)

**18. Will component retests be available in the 5 alternate languages that the Regents Examinations come in?**

Yes.

**19. How will schools receive the scoring materials for these examinations.**

As is the case with both the Math A and ELA, Component Retests and the rating materials for the social studies retests will be available on the SED web site the day of the exam, but after the Statewide Admissions Deadline has passed for each exam. They will **not** be sent to schools in hard copy.

**20. Who is responsible for developing these tests, shipping the tests to schools and developing the scoring materials for these tests?**

As with all other social studies tests developed by SED, items on the tests were written by New York State teachers. However, an outside vendor selected by SED will handle the field testing of these items, printing of the tests, the development of scoring materials, the order processing and the shipping of tests to schools.

# Social Studies Component Retesting Program

## 4 Social Studies Component Retests

### 2 Global History & Geography Component Retests

**Component A**  
will test the Global History Standard

Each Component Retest has 2 Modules (Sessions)

**Module 1** 40 Multiple Choice Questions  
**Module 2** 3 Extended Response Questions

**Component B**  
will test the Geography, Economics, & Civics/Government Standards

Each Component Retest has 2 Modules (Sessions)

**Module 1** 40 Multiple Choice Questions  
**Module 2** 3 Extended Response Questions

### 2 U.S. History & Government Component Retests

**Component A**  
will test the United States History Standard

Each Component Retest has 2 Modules (Sessions)

**Module 1** 40 Multiple Choice Questions  
**Module 2** 3 Extended Response Questions

**Component B**  
will test the Civics/Government, Economics, & Geography Standards

Each Component Retest has 2 Modules (Sessions)

**Module 1** 40 Multiple Choice Questions  
**Module 2** 3 Extended Response Questions

- Students take only one Global History & Geography and/or one United States History & Government Component Retest.
- Students must take both modules (sessions) of a given component retest.
- Students will have 50 minutes to complete each module (session).

**SOCIAL STUDIES COMPONENT RETESTING PROGRAM  
BY COMPONENT AND MODULE**

Global History and Geography Retests

	Component A	Component B
Module 1 (Day 1)	40 multiple choice items testing the global history standard	40 Multiple choice items (that include approximately 20 MC items testing the geography standard, 10 MC items testing the economics standard, and 10 MC items testing the civics/government standard)
Module 2 (Day 2)	3 extended response questions testing the global	3 extended response questions testing the 3 other social science standards ( 1ER item testing the geography standard, 1 ER item testing the economics standard, and 1 ER item testing the civics/government standard)

United States History and Government Component Retests

	Component A	Component B
Module 1 (Day 1)	40 multiple choice items testing the U.S. history standard	40 Multiple choice items (that include approximately 20 MC items testing the civics/government standard, 10 MC items testing the economics standard, and 10 MC items testing the geography standard)
Module 2 (Day 2)	3 extended response questions testing the U.S. history standard	3 extended response questions testing the 3 other social science standards (1 ER item testing the geography standard, 1 ER item testing the economics standards, and 1 ER item testing the civics/government standard)

**Samples of Extended Response Questions  
for Component Retests in Global History and Geography**

**Samples of Global History and Geography Component A Retest**

*Directions:* Write a one-or two-paragraph response for each of the questions below. Be sure to include facts, examples, and details to support your answers.

1. Throughout history, many civilizations have experienced a Golden Age, a period with new ideas and cultural advancements. Four such Golden Ages are listed below.

***Golden Ages***

Mayan civilization (6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century)  
Islamic civilization (9<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century)  
Italian (Renaissance) civilization (14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century)  
African Songhai civilization (16<sup>th</sup> century).

Choose *one* Golden Age and:

- Describe one specific achievement of that age
- Discuss one example of how that specific achievement influenced another culture

2. Individuals can have a major influence on history.

***Individuals***

Galileo Galilei  
Martin Luther  
John Locke  
Adam Smith

Select *one* individual from the list above and:

- Identify an important action or contribution made by this individual
- Explain how that action or contribution affected the course of world history

## Samples of Extended Response Questions for Global History and Geography Component B Retest

*Directions:* Write a one-or two-paragraph response for each of the questions below. Be sure to include facts, examples, and details to support your answers

1. The geographic features of a nation or region often influence the cultural and/or historical development of that nation or region. Four geographic features are listed below.

### *Geographic Features*

Location or size of a nation or region  
Natural resources found in the nation or region  
Mountains found in the nation or region  
Rain forests found in the nation or region

Choose **one** geographic feature and:

- Explain how the geographic feature has influenced the cultural and/or historical development of one nation or region  
(Do **not** use the United States in your answer.)

2. Throughout history, different political systems have been used to govern nations. Three such political systems are listed below.

### *Political Systems*

Parliamentary democracy  
Direct democracy  
Absolute monarchy

Choose **one** of these political systems and:

- Identify a nation **or** ruler that has used this political system
- Discuss **two** characteristics unique to this political system  
(Do **not** use the United States or a political leader from the United States in your answer.)

**Samples of Extended Response Questions for Component Retests  
in United States History and Government**

**Samples for United States History & Government Component A Retest**

*Directions:* Write a one-or two-paragraph response for each of the questions below. Be sure to include facts, examples, and details to support your answers.

1. During the Constitutional Convention of 1787, there was much debate over major issues facing the new nation. Four of these issues are listed below.

***Issues***

Representation in Congress  
States' rights  
Slavery  
Tariffs

Choose ***one*** of these issues and:

- Discuss the debate that arose over this issue during the Constitutional Convention

2. Many individuals in United States history identified conditions in American society that needed change and used a variety of means to bring about change. Some of these individuals are listed below.

***Individuals***

Harriet Beecher Stowe  
Elizabeth Cady Stanton  
Upton Sinclair  
Samuel Gompers

Choose ***one*** of these individuals and:

- Identify the condition in American society that this individual wanted to change
- Discuss one means the individual used to bring about this change

**Sample of Extended Response Questions for United States History & Government  
Component B Retest**

*Directions:* Write a one-or two-paragraph response for each of the questions below. Be sure to include facts, examples, and details to support your answers.

1. In the late 1800s, the rise of big business brought about major changes in the United States.

- Describe **one** positive and **one** negative change brought about by the rise of big business in the United States

2. Various Supreme Court decisions have affected the rights of students in schools. Several cases and the issue addressed by each case are listed below.

*Supreme Court Cases*

*Engel v. Vitale* (1962) – school prayer  
*Tinker v. Des Moines School District* (1969) – freedom of expression  
*New Jersey v. TLO* (1985) – illegal search and seizure  
*Vernonia School District 47J v. Acton* (1995) – drug testing

Choose **one** of these cases and:

- Discuss the situation surrounding this case
- Explain how the Court’s decision in the case affected the rights of students