



# **Revised Generic Scoring Rubric for Regents Examinations in**

*Global History and Geography,*

Beginning in June 2004 and

*United States History and Government,*

Beginning in January 2005

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The generic scoring rubrics for the Social Studies Regents examinations have been revised. These revised rubrics will first be used with the June 2004 Global History and Geography Regents examination. They will **not** be used with the United States History and Government Regents until January 2005 (see chart below). These revised rubrics provide the general criteria for scoring the essay questions and form the basis for the content-specific scoring rubrics and scoring commentaries that are part of the rating guide for each examination. The revised rubrics are found in Appendices A and B.

The revisions to these generic rubrics are drawn from comments and suggestions from social studies teachers and supervisors and from the Education Department staff review of the scoring criteria provided with the twenty-one Regents examinations from June 2000 to January 2004. These revisions were guided by six primary goals.

- (1) To improve the alignment of scoring criteria between the Thematic essay and DBQ essay;
- (2) To reduce or eliminate overlap among the different scoring criteria (bullets) within the rubric;
- (3) To formally adopt minor changes previously made to specific rubrics that clarified scoring criteria within and between individual score points;
- (4) To clarify the issue of using information copied directly from documents in the DBQ essay;

- (5) To revise the score points of 1 and 0;
- (6) To revise the score point of 3 (on the DBQ essay only) to require at least “some” outside information as **one** of the criteria.

*While most revisions only clarify existing scoring criteria, a few changes do modify the conditions under which different score points are evaluated.*

Appendices C and D provide a side-by-side comparison between the original social studies generic rubrics first released in 2000 and the revised version now being released.

**It is important to note that these revised rubrics do not go into effect for both the Global History and Geography Regents examination and the United States History and Government Regents examination at the same time. The revised rubric will apply to the June 2004 and all future administrations of the Global History Regents examination. The revised rubric will not be used for the United States History Regents examination until January 2005 and thereafter.**

**Grade 8 Social Studies Test Note:** The original Regents/Grade 8 generic rubric will be used with the Grade 8 social studies test for the June 2004 administration of that exam. The revised generic rubric for the grade 8 social studies test planned for June 2005 may contain minor revisions in addition to those provided in the Regents-level rubrics introduced here.

### Implementation Schedule for the Revised Regents Level Generic Rubrics

Exam Administration Dates	Global History and Geography Regents Examinations	United States History and Government Regents Examinations
January 2004	Original Generic Rubric	Original Generic Rubric
June 2004	Revised Generic Rubric	Original Generic Rubric
August 2004	Revised Generic Rubric	Original Generic Rubric
January 2005 and thereafter	Revised Generic Rubric	Revised Generic Rubric

***Primary Scoring Criteria for the  
Generic Rubrics***

Each bullet (scoring criteria) in the generic scoring rubrics was designed to measure a particular aspect of writing in the social studies content area.

The social studies thematic essays are scored based on *four* primary criteria:

- The extent to which students address the assigned task;
- The extent to which students utilize higher level thinking skills in their response;
- The extent to which students support their ideas with fact, examples, and details;
- The extent to which students organize and develop a social studies essay.

These *four* criteria also apply to the scoring of the DBQ essay with the addition of *two* other criteria:

- The extent to which students use the information provided in the documents;
- The extent to which students incorporate relevant outside information in their DBQ essay.

***Explanation of Changes in the  
Revised Generic Rubrics***

**Goal #1: To improve the alignment of scoring criteria between the Thematic essay and DBQ essay**

The same or similar scoring criteria existed between the original Thematic and DBQ essay generic rubrics. However, in the revised rubrics, the scoring criteria are better aligned, rephrased, or expanded to reinforce the scoring similarities between the thematic essay and the DBQ essay. For example, in the DBQ rubric, Bullets 2 and 3 for the score of 2 and Bullet 2 for a score of 1 have been added to better align these scoring criteria between the two types of essays.

**Goal #2: To reduce or eliminate overlap among the different scoring criteria (Bullets) within the rubric.**

The original generic rubrics had a few scoring criteria that overlapped. For example, in the original rubric for the thematic essay, bullet 1 was intended to address the overall level of knowledge brought to the task. It read, “The response showed a thorough understanding of the task or theme”, a “good understanding”, a “satisfactory understanding”, etc. However, the degree to which that specific criterion is being met is determined by measuring the remaining scoring criteria. In the revised generic rubrics, the first criterion from the original rubrics is deleted.

The other scoring criteria that overlapped were the last two bullets of both generic rubrics that dealt with the organization of the essay and the introduction and/or conclusion. In practice, these two criteria are related. Introductions and conclusions are evidence of an organizational strategy. In the revised generic rubric, these two criteria are now combined under one bullet.

**Goal #3: To formally adopt minor changes previously made to specific rubrics that clarified scoring criteria within and between individual score points**

Since the administration of the first Global History and Government Regents exam in June 2000, minor wording changes have been made to specific rubrics to improve the clarity of the scoring criteria. The scoring criteria that measures the student’s ability to use higher level thinking skills (Bullet 2) is now reworded to focus on the degree to which students make historical connections using analytical statements rather than simpler, more general, descriptive statements. The parentheses provided in bullet 2 refer to the cognitive process dimension as described in *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching,*

*and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* by Lorin W. Anderson, David R. Krathwohl, eds., with Peter W. Airasian, et al., eds., by Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., 2001. In a level 5 response, analytical statements show a student's ability to analyze, evaluate, and/or create relevant historical information within the essay. The rewording of Bullet 2 clarifies this criterion.

**Goal #4: To clarify the issue of using information copied directly from documents in the DBQ essay**

While limited copying, using appropriate citation, to support positions or emphasize a particular point is encouraged as a legitimate social studies writing skill, massive or indiscriminate copying directly from the documents is not appropriate. The revised DBQ generic rubric adds one phrase to the scoring criteria of a score of 2 and one phrase to a score of 1 that helps clarify the issue of a student copying directly from the documents in a response. The phrases “the response consists primarily of relevant information copied from the documents” (at score point 2) and “the response consists primarily of relevant and irrelevant information copied from the documents” (at score point 1) makes a distinction regarding both the extent of material copied and the selection of material copied.

**Goal #5: To revise the score points of 1 and 0**

The original criteria for the 3rd bullet score of 1 allowed for “little or no accurate or relevant facts, examples or details.” This option could allow a paper to be scored a 1 despite the fact that it contained no accurate facts, examples, or details. In practice, a paper without any relevant facts would more often be scored a zero. This issue has been addressed in two ways. The revised rubric now calls for a “few relevant facts, examples and/or details” as one criterion for a score of 1 and having “no relevant facts, examples and details” has become a criterion for a zero paper. In addition, several other

scoring criteria have been added to a score of zero. These additional criteria are listed below.

- May only refer to the theme in a general way (both rubrics)
- Includes only the theme, task, or suggestions as copied from the test booklet (Thematic rubric only)
- Includes only the historical context and/or task as copied from the test booklet (DBQ rubric only)
- Includes only entire documents copied from the test booklet (DBQ rubric only)

For a score of 1, the last two bullets in the original rubric were also combined and expanded slightly in this revision.

**Please note:** Criteria listed for scores of 1 through 5 are intended to work together to define a particular score point, but the criteria for a score of zero do not. The criteria for a score of zero are intended to be distinct and as such, if only one of them is met, the paper may be scored 0. To illustrate this on the actual rubrics, bullets are not used for a score of zero.

**Goal #6: To revise the score point of 3 (on the DBQ essay only) to require at least “some” outside information as one of the scoring criteria**

Under the original DBQ generic rubric, a level 3 paper could have “limited **or no** relevant outside information.” But in the Department's reviews of thousands of level 3 papers, it has been noted that the vast majority of student responses receiving a score of 3 do include “a limited amount” of outside information. Comments from teachers also suggest that the requirement for some outside information is a realistic and appropriate expectation for a level 3 paper. Therefore, bullet 4 for a score level of 3 now reads, “Incorporates limited outside information,” and the criteria for a score of 2 reads, “Presents little or no relevant outside information.” This change does slightly elevate the level 3 criteria

for scoring a DBQ essay paper. Under holistic scoring guidelines, this change still allows a reasonably well-written paper without outside information to

receive a score of 3. On the other hand, this change does suggest it will be more likely that a paper will be scored at least a 3 on a DBQ essay if some relevant outside information is provided in the essay.