



## 2015–2016 NC Final Exams of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies

### North Carolina Assessment Specifications

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#### **Purpose of the Assessments**

- NC Final Exams were developed to replace locally developed assessments, providing teachers and principals with a common measure for all students state-wide during a given testing window.
- North Carolina’s Final Exams for Elementary Social Studies courses will measure students’ academic progress in the NC *Essential Standards*, adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in June 2010. The NC *Essential Standards* are posted at:  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/new-standards>.
- NC Final Exam scores (along with any other relevant end-of-course or end-of-grade assessment scores) will be used in the Educational Value Added Assessment System (EVAAS) to produce student growth measures to satisfy Standards 6 and 8 of the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System. For more information on the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System, go to:  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/effectiveness-model/>.
- NC Final Exams will not be used for school and district accountability under the READY Accountability Model or for Federal reporting purposes.

#### **Developing Assessments**

North Carolina educators were recruited and trained to write new items for the NC Final Exams. The diversity among the item writers and their knowledge of the current standards was addressed during recruitment. Trained North Carolina educators also review items and suggest improvements, if necessary. The use of North Carolina educators to develop and review items strengthens the instructional validity of the items. If a teacher is interested in training to become an item writer or reviewer for the North Carolina Testing Program, he/she can visit [https://center.ncsu.edu/nc/x\\_courseNav/index.php?id=21](https://center.ncsu.edu/nc/x_courseNav/index.php?id=21).

- For an in-depth explanation of the test development process see State Board policy GCS-A-013 or reference <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/shared/testdevprocess>

#### **Curriculum and Assessment Cycle**

- 2010: North Carolina State Board of Education adoption of the NC *Essential Standards*.
- 2012–13: Operational administration of the Measures of Student Learning: Common Exams.
- 2013–14: Redesign and subsequent first operational administration of the NC Final Exams.
- 2014–15: Second operational administration of the NC Final Exams.
- 2015–16: Third operational administration of the NC Final Exams.

## Prioritization of Standards

□ Members of the Test Development section of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) invited teachers to collaborate and develop recommendations for a prioritization of the standards indicating the relative importance of each standard, the anticipated instructional time, and the appropriateness of the standard for multiple-choice and constructed response item formats.

□ Tables 1 and 2 describe the percentage range of total score points that will appear on the NC Final Exam forms. All of the NC Final Exams for Grades 4 and 5 will contain only multiple-choice items. The multiple-choice items are worth one point each. In order to ensure that the four dimensions of historical thinking remain central to the history tests, item developers incorporated Standard 1 across as many items as possible. The table of test specification weights describe the percent of total score points, rather than the percent of total items.

*Table 1. Test Specification Weights for the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies NC Final Exam*

Standards	Percent of Total Score Points
<b>History</b>	
H 1.1, H 1.2, H 1.3, H 1.4	14-18%
H 2.1, H 2.2	7-10%
<b>Geography and Environmental Literacy</b>	
G 1.1, G 1.2, G 1.3, G 1.4	14-18%
<b>Economics and Financial Literacy</b>	
E 1.1, E 1.2, E 1.3, E 1.4	14-18%
E 2.1, E 1.2	7-10%
<b>Civics and Government</b>	
C&G 1.1, C&G 1.2, C&G 1.3, C&G 1.4	14-18%
C&G 2.1, C&G 2.2, C&G 2.3	7-12%
<b>Culture</b>	
C 1.1, C 1.2	7-10%
Total	100%

*Table 2. Test Specification Weights for the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies NC Final Exam*

Standards	Percent of Total Score Points
<b>History</b>	
H 1.1, H 1.2, H 1.3	9-16%
H 2.1, H 2.2, H 2.3	10-13%
<b>Economics and Financial Literacy</b>	
G 1.1, G 1.2, G 1.3, G 1.4	10-13%
<b>Geography and Environmental Literacy</b>	
E 1.1, E 1.2	8-10%
E 2.1, E 2.2	9-14%
<b>Civics and Government</b>	
C&G 1.1, C&G 1.2, C&G 1.3,	9-14%
C&G 2.1, C&G 2.2, C&G 2.3, C&G 2.4	14-18%
<b>Culture</b>	
C 1.1, C 1.2, C 1.3, C 1.4	14-18
Total	100%

## Cognitive Rigor

□ The items on the NC Final Exams in Social Studies were aligned to the NC *Essential Standards* using the Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy (RBT). To learn more about RBT go to: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards/>.

## Types of Items and Supplementary Materials

- The NC Final Exams in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies will consist of four-response-option multiple-choice items.
- Many of the items will require students to process factual content as they read, interpret, and/or analyze stimulus material, including maps, graphs, and excerpts of primary and secondary-source documents.
- A complete list of the supplemental test materials (i.e., *NC Final Exams Materials List*) may be reviewed at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/common-exams/>.
- Released items are available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/common-exams/released-items15/>. Released items may be used by school systems to help acquaint students with items. These materials must not be used for personal or financial gain.

## Testing Structure and Test Administration Time

- The NC Final Exams in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies will contain a total of 42 multiple-choice items.
- Included in the total item counts are embedded multiple-choice field test items that will not count toward the students score but will be used for purposes of developing items for future test forms.

NC Final Exam 2015–16	Number of Operational Items	Number of Field Test Items*	Total Number of Items
Social Studies Grade 4	38 multiple-choice	4 multiple-choice	42
Social Studies Grade 5	38 multiple-choice	4 multiple-choice	42

\*Field test items will not count toward the students score but will be used for purposes of developing items for future test forms.

- Students will be given 120 minutes to answer all items.
- Appendices A-B show the number of operational test items for each clarifying objective for the 2015–16 exams. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the content category weights in *Tables 1 and 2*.

## Test Cycle and Delivery Mode

- The NC Final Exams are administered to students enrolled in fall and spring courses. A list of course codes that align with the 2015-16 NC Final Exams (i.e., *Course Codes that Align with the NC Final Exams*) is available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/common-exams/>.
- The NC Final Exams are available for paper-and-pencil and online administration modes for the 2015–16 academic year. The NC Final Exams in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies are available for administration during the spring cycle only.

**Appendix A**  
**Grade 4 NC Final Exam 2015–16**  
**Number of Items by Clarifying Objectives**

The following table shows the number of operational test items for each clarifying objective. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in *Tables 1 and 2*. Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective or may be included as an embedded field test item.

Grade 4 Social Studies Clarifying Objectives	Number of Items Per Objective
<b>Analyze the chronology of key historical events in North Carolina history.</b>	
4.H.1.1	2
4.H.1.2	2
4.H.1.3	2
4.H.1.4	–
<b>Understand how notable structures, symbols and place names are significant to North Carolina.</b>	
4.H.2.1	2
4.H.2.2	2
<b>Understand how human, environmental and technological factors affect the growth and development of North Carolina.</b>	
4.G.1.1	–
4.G.1.2	3
4.G.1.3	2
4.G.1.4	1
<b>Understand how a market economy impacts life in North Carolina.</b>	
4.E.1.1	3
4.E.1.2	1
4.E.1.3	1
4.E.1.4	1
<b>Understand the economic factors when making personal choices.</b>	
4.E.2.1	1
4.E.2.2	2
<b>Understand the development, structure and function of North Carolina's government.</b>	
4.C&G.1.1	3
4.C&G.1.2	–
4.C&G.1.3	–
4.C&G.1.4	3

<b>Analyze the North Carolina Constitution.</b>	
4.C&G.2.1	3
4.C&G.2.2	1
4.C&G.2.3	–
<b>Understand the impact of various cultural groups on North Carolina.</b>	
4.C.1.1	2
4.C.1.2	1

**Appendix B**  
**Grade 5 NC Final Exam 2015–16**  
**Number of Items by Clarifying Objectives**

The following table shows the number of operational test items for each clarifying objective. Note that future coverage of objectives could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in *Tables 1 and 2*. Some objectives not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite objective, may be tested within the context of another objective or may be included as an embedded field test item.

Grade 5 Social Studies Clarifying Objectives	Number of Items Per Objective
<b>Analyze the chronology of key events in the United States.</b>	
5.H.1.1	1
5.H.1.2	2
5.H.1.3	3
<b>Understand the role of prominent figures in shaping the United States.</b>	
5.H.2.1	2
5.H.2.2	1
5.H.2.3	1
<b>Understand how human activity has and continues to shape the United States.</b>	
5.G.1.1	2
5.G.1.2	–
5.G.1.3	–
5.G.1.4	2
<b>Understand how a market economy impacts life in the United States.</b>	
5.E.1.1	3
5.E.1.2	–
<b>Understand that personal choices result in benefits or consequences.</b>	
5.E.2.1	4
5.E.2.2	1
<b>Understand the development, structure and function of government in the United States.</b>	
5.C&G.1.1	3
5.C&G.1.2	1
5.C&G.1.3	–
<b>Analyze life in a democratic republic through the rights and responsibilities of citizens.</b>	
5.C&G.2.1	3
5.C&G.2.2	2
5.C&G.2.3	–
5.C&G.2.4	1

<b>Understand how increased diversity resulted from migration, settlement patterns and economic development in the United States.</b>	
5.C.1.1	–
5.C.1.2	1
5.C.1.3	3
5.C.1.4	2