

Using writing for success in Social Studies

Writing an effective extended response to an Enduring Issue on the Social Studies GED



The many facets of writing

- Learning to write
 - Not the focus today
 - Focus of ELA writing and language assessment targets & CCR anchor standards
- Writing to learn
 - Widely used across the curriculum
- Writing for assessment
 - Extended response on GED

Let's unpack the language!

- Enduring issue
- Social Studies practices
- High-impact indicators
- Extended response

Enduring Issues

- Always from the Civics & Government section (50%)
 - An individual's rights versus the good of the community
 - Separation of powers
 - Checks and balances
 - States' rights versus federal power

What's the enduring issue?

- **Match the issue and meaning**
- **Explain the enduring issue in own words**
- **Connect the two sources**

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Handout 1

Practices and HII

- Broadly applicable skills
- HII are sub-set of the practices that students often miss
 - SSP2a: determining central ideas, evidence
 - SSP2b: describe and make connections
 - SSP3c: cause and effect
 - SSP5c: analyze context
 - SSP8a: compare various sources

GED Assessment Guide for Educators (2014)

Extended response

- Approximately 25 minute task out of 90 minute testing session
- Students need to read and analyze some source text(s) and respond to a writing prompt
- Scored on three dimensions or “Traits”
 - Creation of arguments and use of evidence
 - Development of ideas and organizational structure
 - Clarity and command of Standard English conventions

Read before writing

- Suggestions from GED Testing Service
 - Number the paragraphs
 - Chunk the text
 - Underline and circle
 - Left margin: what is the author saying (summarize, paraphrase)
 - Right margin: dig deeper (what is the author doing, draw a picture, ask questions)

Allam, C. *Five close reading strategies to support the Common Core*. (2012)

Explicitly teach a strategy

- Unpack the prompt
 - What are you being asked to do?
- Read the excerpt/source materials/stimulus
 - Identify key words
 - Look for connections
- Determine which key issue is being addressed
- Develop a position/plan the response
 - Pick out key evidence from stimulus to include
- Include own knowledge
- Edit the response

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Handout 2 & 3

Support writing through a model

- Provide an exemplar
 - Identify the enduring issue
 - Connect the stimulus materials (if appropriate)
 - Show how evidence is brought into prompt response from the text
 - Point out transition words
 - Discuss how summary paragraph pulls together the answer

Steve Schmidt, Appalachian State University

<http://abspd.appstate.edu/teaching-resources>

Handout 4

Support writing through a writing frame

- Highly scaffolded
- Fill-in-the-blank
- As needed have students initially work in pairs or with assistance and gradually release responsibility to student

GED Testing Service, *Exploring Enduring Issues and Making Connections in Social Studies. 2015 20-21*

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Handout 5

Support writing with a graphic organizer (or 2)

- Making connections chart
- Social Studies Graphic organizer
- Checklist for writers

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Handout 6 & 7

Using the Trait rubric

- What is needed to earn a “1”; “2”?
- Try scoring one

Handout 8 & 9



Other writing to learn

- Simultaneous Roundtable/Rally Table
- Journaling
- RAFT
- Write from a word bank
- Quick writes, exit tickets
- Great set of writing strategies:
http://www.bcps.org/offices/lis/writing/secondary/docs/SSWAC_225020_7.pdf

Writing across the Curriculum, Michigan Dept. of Education

Handout 10

Final words

- Practice, practice, practice!
- GED free practice tests
 - <http://www.gedtestingservice.com/educators/freepracticetest>
- Using your own prompt
 - Adams/Kennedy (with organizer)
 - Jefferson/Gannett (with organizer)
 - 15th Amendment/Johnson (annotated response)
 - Dec of Indep/King (annotated response)
 - From Steve Schmidt, Appalachian State University
<http://abspd.appstate.edu/teaching-resources>
 - Handout 11

Feedback

- Please take a moment to complete the survey located at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ECAdultEd1516>