

Massachusetts Grade 8 Civics Local-Level Classroom Performance Task

Topic 2: Development of the U.S. Government

Overview, Materials, and Directions

Overview

Local-Level Classroom Performance Tasks should be completed after regular instruction has occurred for the Topic being addressed. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) will not collect work or scores for these classroom tasks. Therefore, teachers may use these tasks for either formative or summative purposes. Teachers may also adjust the classroom task to fit their classroom needs.

Prior to giving the task to students, teachers should read through all materials, including these practice test materials, the task summary, student handouts, and the scoring rubric and notes. Tasks will involve reading, analyzing, and discussing primary and secondary sources. Students will also be expected to write answers to questions related to the task topic. Teachers may modify or further explain the sources, as needed, for their students. In addition, teachers may use previous classwork during discussions, as needed.

Time

There are two components to this Local-Level Classroom Performance Task: small-group work and a whole-class discussion. The small-group work is expected to take 30-35 minutes to complete and the whole-class discussion is expected to take 10-15 minutes. Teachers may vary the time or skip the whole-class discussion if time does not permit.

Materials

- Task Summary and Standards Alignment (for educators only)
- Handout 1 (one for each student)
- Scoring Rubric and Notes (for educators only)

Directions

- At the beginning of class, explain the expectations for students for the class period. The following is an example of information to provide students. Teachers may modify it as needed.

“You will be breaking into groups to read, analyze, discuss, and then write about the creation of the U.S. Constitution. You will be given a handout with primary and secondary sources that are each followed by questions. In your groups, you will discuss each source and the questions that follow. After your discussion, you will individually write answers to the questions that follow the source. After all groups have completed the questions on the handout, each group will share out ideas to the whole class.”
- If the class can work in groups, assign groups of 3 or 4 students, varying the abilities of students in each group. You may assign roles to students, such as reading a source and leading a discussion about the source, presenting an initial answer to one of the questions, timekeeping, sharing out with the whole

class, or other roles that are typically used in class for group work. Have students move into their groups.

- Distribute Handout 1 to each student.
- Read aloud the supporting question: **What led to the creation of the U.S. Constitution and how did the new constitution resolve conflicts about government?**
- Tell students they may begin reading, analyzing, and discussing the sources in their groups. If groups are not possible, ask the students to begin working independently on each source.
- Teachers can answer any questions that arise from the discussions but should not provide the answers to the questions on the handout.
- For classes that are working in **groups**, have the groups complete the entire handout prior to a whole-class discussion. For classes where students are working **independently**, have a whole-class discussion after a set of questions associated with a source are completed by the students.
- After students have completed the handout or a set of questions, remind the students that they will have a whole-class discussion. Ask students to summarize their answers and share out with the class. The discussion should consider the role of conflict and compromise in the creation of the U.S. Constitution. Compare student answers with those in the provided scoring notes.
- If the task will be used for summative purposes, collect the completed handouts and use the Scoring Rubric and Notes document to evaluate student responses. Teachers may choose to go over any parts of the tasks that students did not understand before the State-Level Task is administered.