

Massachusetts Grade 8 Civics Local-Level Classroom Performance Task

Topic 2: Development of the U.S. Government

Scoring Rubric and Notes for Teachers

The implementation of this local-level classroom performance task may vary across classrooms. Teachers may adjust the score points or make other changes to the scoring notes as needed.

Scoring Rubric

Score	Description
8-9 points	Response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to the U.S. government and political system. The response demonstrates the ability to effectively engage in the process of history and social science inquiry, including the ability to organize information and data, analyze and evaluate information from multiple primary and secondary sources, and explain conclusions using valid evidence.
6-7 points	Response demonstrates a general understanding of the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to the U.S. government and political system. The response demonstrates the ability to generally engage in the process of history and social science inquiry, including the ability to organize information and data, analyze and evaluate information from primary and secondary sources, and explain conclusions using evidence.
4-5 points	Response demonstrates a partial understanding of the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to the U.S. government and political system. The response demonstrates the ability to partially engage in the process of history and social science inquiry.
1-3 points	Response demonstrates a minimal understanding of the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to the U.S. government and political system. The response demonstrates a minimal understanding of the process of history and social science inquiry.
0	Response is incorrect or contains some correct work that is irrelevant to the skill or concept being measured.
Blank	No response.

Scoring Notes

Part 1: An Event Leading Up to the Constitutional Convention: Shays' Rebellion (2 points, 1 pt. for each question)

Question 1, response may include any one of the following:

- There was a weak national government under the Articles of Confederation.
- The national government had no power to collect taxes from states.
- Many ex-soldiers had debts because they were not paid for their services. This created unrest across the states.
- There was no executive branch in the federal government to enforce laws.
- The national government did not have a national militia/army to enforce laws.
- There was no national currency so it was difficult to trade goods between states.
- Accept other reasonable responses.

Question 2, response may include any one of the following:

- The Founders created a new government with separate branches of government written in the Constitution: the executive, legislative, and judicial. They gave power to the executive branch/president to enforce the laws.
- The new Constitution created a national army which gave the federal government more power to enforce laws.
- The new Constitution gave the federal government/Congress the power to collect taxes.
- The Founders gave the federal government/Congress the power to issue money/currency so the country could have common money.
- Accept other reasonable responses.

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Topic 2: Development of the U.S. Government

Part 2: The Constitutional Convention: Federalists and Anti-Federalists (2 points, 1 pt. for each question)

Question 1, response may include any one of the following ideas from the Federalists that is in the Constitution today:

- The federal government has three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial.
- The federal government has power to collect taxes/create a national currency.
- The federal government has power to form an army/military.
- The United States has a federal judicial system, the Supreme Court.
- Accept other reasonable responses.

Question 2, response may include any one of the following ideas from the Anti-Federalists:

- The Constitution has the Bill of Rights, which protects individuals.
- States have any power not listed in the Constitution, as written in the 10th Amendment.
- States have their own governments.
- The United States has a federalist government, including a national government and state governments.
- Accept other reasonable responses.

Part 3: The Constitutional Convention: The Great Compromise (3 points, 1 pt. for question 1 and 2 pts. for question 2)

Question 1, responses may include any one of the following:

- Congressional representation could influence which states would have more power.
- Congressional representation could influence the types of laws that were passed and could favor certain states over others.
- Accept other reasonable responses.

Question 2:

- The Senate has two Senators for each state, which is equal representation for each state; and the House of Representatives has representation based on population (proportional representation), which means that larger states have more influence. Both houses work together to pass laws and perform other duties/tasks so that there is power-sharing.

Note for Part 3, Question 2: 1 point for describing general structure of Senate and House of Representatives, and 1 point for description of how they share power.

Part 4: Ratifying the Constitution: The Bill of Rights (2 points, complete, partial)

Question 1, responses may include any one of the following ideas about protections guaranteed by the amendments. A complete response should also use an example to illustrate how the amendment protects an individual's rights.

First Amendment

- Protects a person's right to speak out against the government/participate in a protest or demonstration.
- Protects people's right to practice their religion/attend religious service/house of worship.
- Accept other reasonable responses.

Fourth Amendment

- Protects a person from the government in that their property cannot be searched by the government without a fair legal process/warrant.
- Prohibits the government from entering a person's home without a legal reason/process.
- Accept other reasonable responses.

Note for Part 4 Question 1: A complete response will describe the amendment (not just a rewrite of the amendment) and will provide an example to which the amendment can be applied.