

Student Expectations

The primary difference between the Texas and Louisiana expectations for students is that Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are focused on more specific knowledge while Louisiana Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) focus at a global, conceptual level. This difference is reflected in the number of strands that run across the grade levels in Social Studies. The eight strands of the TEKS, History; Geography; Economics; Government; Citizenship; Culture; Science, Technology, and Society; and Social Studies Skills, break down the knowledge students are to learn into discrete categories and specific statements of knowledge and skills that students are expected to master. In the introduction to the TEKS statements it is recommended that the skills listed in the geography and social studies skills strands be incorporated into the teaching of all the other essential knowledge and skills for social studies.

In contrast, the GLEs include four strands: History, Geography, Civics, and Economics. In addition to these four strands, the GLEs are also organized according to specific categories under each strand. Social studies skills are included at the higher level of Benchmarks suggesting that they should also be integrated where appropriate across the content strands.

In addition to the differences in the number of strands, the content focus is different under some strands. For example, the history strand in Texas includes the identification of ways in which public policy may be influenced. The GLEs require students to understand how other countries impact our society. This additional focus on other

countries is carried through in the GLEs in the government strand in expectations for students to learn the role of the United Nations and to analyze foreign policies. This strand in the TEKS focuses on issues such as why we have a federal system as opposed to a unitary system of government. Another contrast in student expectations falls under the culture strand in Texas where the TEKS require an understanding of specific policies and practices that have affected various groups in the United States, compared to a GLE that expects students to analyze discrepancies between American ideals and social/ political practices.

The complete side-by-side analysis illustrates several similarities and differences in the wording and the conceptual focus of the student expectations in Texas and Louisiana.

Assessment

Social Studies assessments in Texas and Louisiana differ in several ways. Louisiana students are tested in high school social studies only by the Graduation Exit Examination 21st Century (GEE21) at Grade 11. The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) for Social Studies is administered at Grade 10 and Exit Level (in Grade 11). The Social Studies TAKS for Grade 10 includes items based on Grade 8 TEKS and those that World History and World Geography have in common. The TAKS in Grade 11 assesses TEKS from Grade 8, World Geography/World History, and United States history. The Louisiana GEE 21, like the TAKS, is a criterion referenced test (CRT). It includes items to assess the GLEs from United States History after 1870 and 20th Century World History.

Coding in the Side-by-Side Analysis

Due to the differences in the degree of specificity of the student expectations and standards, some of the TEKS are matched to more than one Louisiana GLE or vice versa. In addition, although specific skills are not indicated in GLE statements, the Louisiana Content Standards Task Force identified “Communication”, “Problem-Solving”, “Resource Access and Utilization” and “Linking and Generating Knowledge” as foundational skills at all grade levels.

Numbering of GLE statements is sequential across the grade level. The number in parentheses following each GLE statement is a reference to the Louisiana Benchmark statement. For example, G-1A-H1 refers to the Geography Strand, Standard 1, Category A, High School Benchmark 1. Benchmark statements are similar to the Texas Knowledge and Skill statements. More information about the Louisiana Benchmarks is available from the Louisiana State Department of Education: <http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/2911.pdf>.

Regarding the codes and content in the middle column of the document:

- Notations regarding TAKS objectives are included in the analysis column.
- Notations are made when concepts are addressed in another grade level in Louisiana.
- *Implied* refers to components of concepts that are understood and addressed in the context of the statement, but may not be explicitly stated in the expectations.
- *Similar* or *approximates* means the concept is worded differently, but the intent appears to be the same.
- *Not specifically addressed* refers to concepts and skills that may be covered, but not necessarily addressed in all classrooms by all teachers.

- *Extend to/focus on* indicates the TEKS and GLE statements are similar, but some GLEs go beyond what appears in the TEKS.