



**State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR™)  
Performance Level Descriptors  
Grade 8 Social Studies**

**Performance Level Descriptors**

**Students achieving Level III: Advanced Academic Performance can**

- Evaluate historical perspectives on major events and issues in U.S. history
- Apply content knowledge in multiple contexts to make historical connections and evaluate change over time
- Evaluate historical justifications and interpretations through the examination of multiple and varied sources
- Analyze the foundation of representative government and how economic, political, and social changes impact representative government

**Students achieving Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance can**

- Describe the impact of European colonialism, including mercantilism, political conflict, colonial grievances, and revolution on the development of the United States
- Explain the political development of the United States, including the influence of historical documents, significant individuals, representative government, constitutional principles, the amendment process, and the ideals of citizenship
- Analyze the causes and effects of the Civil War including slavery, the development of sectionalism, states' rights, and Reconstruction
- Describe the economic, political, and social factors associated with U.S. expansion
- Explain how geographic factors influenced issues and events in the United States, including the impact of immigration and domestic migration, population distribution, settlement patterns, and modification of the environment
- Explain cultural influences on the development of the United States including the impact of immigrant groups, religion, reform movements, and fine arts
- Describe the factors that contributed to the economic development of the United States, including laissez-faire, free enterprise, monetary policy, tariff issues, and internal improvements
- Explain the social and economic effects of technological and scientific innovations on the development of the United States

**Students achieving Level I: Unsatisfactory Academic Performance can**

- Identify significant individuals, events, and issues in U.S. history
- Define major social studies terminology
- Identify and use social studies sources
- Recognize major historical points of reference