



Grade 8 Social Studies

Short Constructed-Response Scoring Guide

Spring 2025

General Information

Beginning with the 2022–2023 school year, social studies assessments include short constructed-response questions at every assessed grade level. Students are asked to provide a short response to a question. Responses are scored using a prompt-specific, two-point rubric.

This State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR[®]) constructed-response scoring guide provides student exemplars at all score points for short constructed-response questions from the STAAR grade 8 social studies operational test. The questions are presented as they appeared on the test, and responses were scored based on the two-point rubrics that were developed with the input of Texas educators. A response earns a specific score point based on the completeness of the response provided as measured against the rubric.

The responses in this guide are actual student responses submitted online during the testing window. To protect the privacy of individual students, all names and other references of a personal nature have been altered or removed. Otherwise, the responses appear as the students wrote them and have not been modified.

Grade 8 Social Studies Short Constructed Response

Prompt

This excerpt is from the majority opinion in a Supreme Court case from 1832.

The Cherokee nation, then, is a distinct community, occupying its own territory. . . .

The Indian nations had always been considered as distinct, independent political communities, retaining their original natural rights, as the undisputed possessors of the soil. . . . The very term “nation,” so generally applied to them, means “a people distinct from others.”

—*U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall,*
Worcester v. Georgia, 1832

What was President Andrew Jackson’s plan for American Indians in the Southeast, **AND** what is one way his plan would be in conflict with the *Worcester v. Georgia* ruling?

Think about the questions carefully. Then enter your answers in the box provided.

Item-Specific Rubric

Score: 2

Score 2 points for correct answers that include a reference to both:

- President Jackson’s plan for American Indians:
 - Jackson wanted to remove the tribes from their land.
 - Jackson wanted the tribes to leave in order to provide more land for settlement.
 - Jackson had previously signed the Indian Removal Act.
 - Jackson had authorized the American Indians to be removed from their land.
- Conflict with *Worcester v. Georgia* ruling:
 - It was in conflict with *Worcester v. Georgia* because Jackson did not recognize the tribes as separate nations.
 - It was in conflict with *Worcester v. Georgia* because Jackson did not recognize the rights of American Indian tribes.
 - It was in conflict with *Worcester v. Georgia* because Jackson did not recognize treaties with American Indian tribes.
 - It was in conflict with *Worcester v. Georgia* because Jackson did not want to protect American Indian tribes.

Score: 1

The response provides only half of the correct details.

Score: 0

The response is incorrect or irrelevant.

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0

Response 1

they will share the land

The response receives no credit. The response is inaccurate ("they will share the land").

Response 2

It was to fight back and win but they changed a few plans

The description of Jackson's plan is too vague to be creditable ("It was to fight . . . and win").

Response 3

He didnt want to relocate them which is agianst the ruling because the gov wanted to relocate them.

The response receives no credit. The response states the opposite of Jackson's plan ("He didnt want to relocate them") and the government's position on the plan ("the gov wanted to relocate them").

Response 4

He disliked the indians and wanted them dead. He wanted to tie worcester down

This response is speculative about Jackson's attitude toward Indians ("He disliked the indians and wanted them dead") and contains no specific details of Jackson's plan or a way that it created conflict with the ruling.

Score Point 1

Response 1

His plan was to run them out of Georiga.

This response receives partial credit. The response briefly but accurately describes the gist of Jackson's plan ("His plan was to run them out of Georiga").

Response 2

His plan would be to take the land from the American Indians and the court case was ruled that it was Georgia's land.

The response accurately describes Jackson's plan ("His plan would be to take the land from the American Indians"). The attempt to address the conflict issue is inaccurate ("the court case was ruled that it was Georgia's land").

Response 3

What andrew jackson was gonna do to the american indians was he was gonna move them somewhere else but along the way many of them died and this is called the "trail of tears" and his plan with worcester was to be in a war with him

The response adequately describes Jackson's plan ("he was gonna move them somewhere else"). The student's reference to the Trail of Tears may have been an attempt to address the conflict issue, but it is not creditable as it is not within the context of the court decision.

Response 4

He was going to relocat them to oklahamoma.By getting the indians to go to oklahamoma.

This response accurately describes Jackson's plan ("He was going to relocat them to oklahamoma"). The attempt to address the conflict issue ("By getting the indians to go to oklahamoma") is incorrect in that it describes the execution of Jackson's plan and not the conflict with the court case that execution caused.

Score Point 2

Response 1

Jackson wanted the cherokee indians to leave. The indians had their right to stay.

The response receives full credit. This response briefly but accurately describes Jackson's plan ("Jackson wanted the cherokee indians to leave") and a way it conflicted with the court's ruling ("The indians had their right to stay").

Response 2

President Andrew Jackson's plan was to move the American Indians to the West (Oklahoma). One way his plan would conflict with *Worcester v. Georgia* is him removing the Natives from their land.

The student response accurately describes Jackson's plan ("to move the American Indians to the West [Oklahoma]") and the conflict that ensued ("One way his plan would conflict with *Worcester v. Georgia* is him removing the Natives from their land"). In this response, the student has explicitly put the execution of Jackson's plan ("him removing the Natives from their land") in the context of the court case ("One way his plan would conflict with *Worcester v. Georgia*") as required by the prompt. This demonstrates understanding of the ruling in the case.

Response 3

President Jackson's plan for American Indians was to put them in reservations. He wanted them to be out of the way so American colonists had more land to live on. This conflicted with the *Worcester v. Georgia* ruling because the ruling said that the Cherokee had the right to remain on their land.

The response accurately describes Jackson's plan ("to put them in reservations") and a way this conflicted with the court case ("because the ruling said that the Cherokee had the right to remain on their land"). The student's reference to "American colonists" is considered a minor error and does not impact the score for this response. Georgia was a state, not a colony, during this time period.

Response 4

Andrew Jackson's plan for American Indians in the southeast is to move them or relocate them to another area, and forcefully moving them to get there land. This plan will would be in conflict with the Wircester v. Georgia ruling because according to the Court Chief Justice John Marshall, the Chereokee "nation" are distinct, independent political communities, retaining their orginal rights, as undisputed possessors of soil (there considered diffrent from our nation and cant be just move or relocated without there will).

The response receives full credit. Jackson's plan is adequately explained ("to move them or relocate them to another area, and forcefully moving them to get there land") as well as the conflict with the court case that ensued ("because according to the Court Chief Justice John Marshall, the Chereokee 'nation'. . . cant be just move or relocated without there will").

Grade 8 Social Studies Short Constructed Response

Prompt

Which **TWO** characteristics of the American Southwest reflect the influence of Spanish culture and colonization?

Think about the question carefully. Then enter your answer in the box provided.

Item-Specific Rubric

Score: 2

Score 2 points for correct answers that include details from two of the following:

- Spanish names of places, regions, and geographic features.
- Prominence of Catholic religion and religious influences from Spain and Mexico.
- Architectural styles influenced by Spanish and Mexican cultural patterns.
- The Spanish language is common in the region.
- Mexican cultural influences rooted in Spanish colonization, including food and music, are also present in the American Southwest.

Score: 1

The response provides only half of the correct details.

Score: 0

The response is incorrect or irrelevant.

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0

Response 1

Gold god and glory

The response receives no credit. The attempt to identify characteristics of the American Southwest is not relevant to the prompt ("Gold god and glory").

Response 2

they used and do the same things with spanish culture

The student does not provide any characteristics, only a generalized statement concerning Spanish culture ("they used and do the same things with spanish culture").

Response 3

Two characteristics of the American Southwest reflectd the influence of spanish culture and colonialization by showing that the spanish culture is influenced easily and shows that the spanish trusts america.

The characteristics cited by the student ("the spanish culture is influenced easily and shows that the spanish trusts america") is based on opinion and not relevant to the question posed by the prompt.

Response 4

Two characteristics that show the American Southwest reflect the influence of Spanish culture and colonization are that Mexico used to have most of the Southwest and many Mexicans lived there. Because of the Mexican Cession, the Southwest part of America is now apart of the U.S. Yet, you can still see that it is still heavily influenced by Spanish culture and colonization due to its past of being apart of Mexico.

The response receives no credit. The student has misinterpreted the prompt and is explaining why Spain and Mexico influenced Southwest America instead of providing us with the two characteristics requested by the prompt.

Score Point 1

Response 1

We have roads and cities named after spanish culture

The response receives partial credit. The student provides one acceptable characteristic per the rubric dealing with place names ("We have roads and cities named after spanish culture").

Response 2

The American Southwest was influenced by Spanish culture. The mainstream religion of the Southwest was Catholocism, which was caused by Spanish missionaries spreding thier faith.

The response provides one acceptable characteristic per the rubric dealing with religion ("The mainstream religion of the Southwest was Catholocism, which was caused by Spanish missionaries spreding thier faith").

Response 3

Southwest territories have spanish names because they were once spanish territory.

The response identifies one acceptable characteristic dealing with place names ("Southwest territories have spanish names because they were once spanish territory").

Response 4

Characteristics of the american southwest that reflected the influence of the spanish culture/colonization was the agriculture they had there. This couldve impacted their culture by influencing the food that they eat or make.

The student provides one acceptable characteristic per the rubric dealing with food under bullet point five ("the agriculture they had there. This couldve impacted their culture by influencing the food that they eat or make").

Score Point 2

Response 1

large amount of spanish speakers. catholicism.

The response receives full credit. The student has identified two characteristics acceptable per the rubric dealing with language ("large amount of spanish speakers") and religion ("catholicism").

Response 2

One characteristic of the American Southwest reflect the influence of Spanish culture and colonization is by serving Mexican food at restraunts. Another way is by how some people can speak spanish.

The response receives full credit. The student has identified two characteristics of the American Southwest dealing with food ("by serving Mexican food at restraunts") and language ("by how some people can speak spanish").

Response 3

Two characteristics in the American Southwest that reflect the influence of Spanish culture and colonization are religion and language. A lot of people in these areas are Catholic, which is a direct result of Catholic missionaries from Spanish people. As well as this, a lot of people know Spanish as a language; buildings have Spanish names.

The response identifies several characteristics of the American Southwest that reflect Spanish culture: religion ("A lot of people in these areas are Catholic, which is a direct result of Catholic missionaries from Spanish people"), language ("a lot of people know Spanish"), and place names ("buildings have Spanish names").

Response 4

Two characteristics of the American Southwest that reflect the influence of Spanish culture and colonization are food and religion. In the southwest, lots of food derives from Spanish culture. Foods like tacos and tamalies are served frequently in resturaunts and at home. Another way the Spanish have influenced the southwest is their religion. Lots of people who live in the southwest are Catholic or Christian, which are some very prominate religions in Spanish culture.

The student has identified two characteristics acceptable per the rubric dealing with food ("lots of food derives from Spanish culture. Foods like tacos and tamalies . . .") and religion ("Lots of people who live in the southwest are Catholic or Christian, which are some very prominate religions in Spanish culture").