



MASSACHUSETTS
Department of Elementary
and Secondary Education

**Alternate Academic Achievement
Standards (AAAS) for the
Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
(Resource Guide)**

CIVICS (Grade 8)

Updated Fall 2025



This document was prepared by the
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Pedro Martinez
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, an affirmative action employer, is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.

Inquiries regarding the Department's compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws may be directed to the Human Resources Director, 135 Santilli Hwy., Everett, MA 02149 – 781-338-6105.

© 2025 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
*Permission is hereby granted to copy for non-commercial educational purposes any or all parts of this document.
Please credit the "Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education."*

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
135 Santilli Hwy., Everett, MA 02149
Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370
www.doe.mass.edu

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	3
Introduction and Purpose	4
How to Use this Resource Guide	4
Organization of the Civics (Grade 8) Resource Guide	5
Definition of Terms Used in the Resource Guide	5
Standards for Civics Practices	6
Grade 8 Content Standards	8
Access Skills (Grade 8)	17
Entry Points (Grade 8)	23

Acknowledgments

Contributors

Sheila Chamberlin, MCAS-Alt Teacher Consultant; Educational Consultant

Dianne Costello, MCAS-Alt Teacher Consultant; Educational Consultant

Kevin Froton, Project Manager, Cognia

Ann Marie Gleeson, History & Social Science Test Development Coordinator, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Debra Hand, MCAS-Alt Coordinator (retired), Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Laura Hines, MCAS-Alt Teacher Consultant; Educational Consultant

Robert Pelychaty, Manager of Inclusive Assessment; Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Marissa Roque, MCAS Civics Test Development Specialist; Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Patricia Sprano, MCAS-Alt Teacher Consultant; Autism Specialist, Holyoke Public Schools

Introduction and Purpose

The *Alternate Academic Achievement Standards for the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in Civics* (Resource Guide) incorporates the curriculum content standards in the *2018 History and Social Science Curriculum Framework*. The Resource Guides align achievement of grade-level standards with the requirements of the state's alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards. The Resource Guide is intended to be used for students participating in the alternate assessment.

The Resource Guides are assessment guides for teachers who work with students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are eligible to participate in the MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt).

The Resource Guide identifies standard-based outcomes called **entry points** for each civics core idea/topic/practice to assist educators in teaching and assessing appropriately challenging standards-based skills and content that are aligned with grade-level standards, as required by law. Entry points also provide a roadmap for students to make steady progress toward standards at grade-level complexity.

In cases where students are unable to address entry points even at the lowest levels of complexity, due to the severity of their disability, teachers will use access skills that address early developmental communication and motor skills practiced during age-appropriate, standard-based activities. Entry points and access skills are listed for each core idea in this Resource Guide.

Resource Guides in other content areas of English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) are available online at doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html.

How to Use the Resource Guide

Submission requirements for the Civics strand outlining how to document student performance and progress throughout the school year can be found in the [*Educator's Manual for MCAS-Alt*](#).

Organization of the Civics (Grade 8) Resource Guide

The Resource Guide is organized by Civics practices and topic/content standards. The practices and topics are arranged to form three groups of core ideas:

A. Foundations and Development of the U.S. Political System & Government (Topics 1 and 2)

Practices 1, 4, 5

- Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.
- Practice 4 - Analyze the purpose and point of view of each source; distinguish opinion from fact.
- Practice 5 - Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and relevance of each source.

B. Institutions and Structure of US Government & Massachusetts State and Local Government (Topics 3 and 6)

Practices 1, 3, 6

- Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.
- Practice 3 - Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources.
- Practice 6 - Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence.

C. Rights and Responsibilities, the US Constitution, and News and Media Literacy (Topics 1, 2, and 7)

Practices 1, 2, 7

- Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.
- Practice 2 - Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries.
- Practice 7 - Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate.

Definitions of Terms Used in this Resource Guide

- **Access Skills** are developmental (communication or motor) skills identified as instructional outcomes in the content area being assessed. Access skills should be addressed during standards-based civics activity.
- **Civics Practices** define a set of skills that encompass the processes of inquiry and research that are integral to a rich and robust social science curriculum. The practices serve as the foundation for active and responsible citizenship and are integrated within the content contained in the core idea being assessed.
- **Civics Topics** are clusters of content standards for each grade-level related to a particular overarching theme in civics, such as the development of the U.S. government and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. There are seven civics topics in the Grade 8 History and Social Science Content standards.
- **Core Ideas** are content that consist of clusters of practices and topics in a related area of civics.
- **Entry Points** are academic outcomes below grade-level expectations that are aligned with each core idea. Entry points are intended for use by educators to instruct students with disabilities who are performing below grade-level expectations.
- **Standards** define what all students should understand and be able to do in a content area. Each standard in the Resource Guide is listed precisely as it appears in the 2018 Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework.

Standards for Civics Practices

The following Standards for Civics Practices encompass civic knowledge, dispositions, and skills and reflect the range of disciplinary skills often used by historians, political scientists, economists, geographers, historians, and ordinary citizens. Designed for integration with the Content Standards and Literacy Standards for History and Social Science, the seven practices encompass the processes of inquiry and research that are integral to a rich and robust social science curriculum and the foundation for active and responsible citizenship. All seven practices can be applied from Pre-K–12 and across all of the social science disciplines.

1. Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

- **Civic knowledge** includes the core knowledge in the Content Standards relating to civics and government, economics, geography, and history.
- **Civic intellectual skills** encompass knowing how to identify, assess, interpret, describe, analyze and explain matters of concern in civic life.
- **Civic participatory skills** encompass knowing how to make and support arguments, use the political process to communicate with elected officials and representatives of government, and plan strategically for civic change.
- **Civic dispositions** encompass values, virtues, and behaviors, such as respect for others, commitment to equality, capacity for listening, and capacity for communicating in ways accessible to others.

2. Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries.

The ability to develop focused research questions in history and social science or define the dimensions of a particular policy problem is central to learning in these disciplines. Students learn that each field in the social sciences has its own ways of defining questions. For example, in studying the Great Depression,

- **A political scientist** might ask, how did the major political parties, government institutions and the private sector respond?
- **An economist** might ask, what were the economic causes of the Depression?
- **A geographer** might ask, how did the Depression affect areas of the United States differently?
- **A historian** might ask, what related economic, political and social events preceded the Depression?

3. Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources.

Student researchers gather and organize information from a variety of online, print, and other sources. In the history and social science fields, they pay close attention to whether the source is primary or secondary. Primary sources are documents written or created during the period under study (e.g., census data, a map, an interview, a speech, or an artifact such as a building, painting, or tool) and considered first-hand accounts. Secondary sources are later interpretations or commentaries based on primary sources. Often students will use primary and secondary sources together to compose an argument, because each source provides a different type of information.

4. Analyze the purpose and point of view of each source; distinguish opinion from fact.

Students need exposure to readings that represent a variety of points of view in order to become discerning and critical readers. They need to be able to identify the purpose of a document and the point of view of its author. As students search primary sources for answers to questions, such as what really happened in Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775, they begin to understand that eyewitness accounts of the same event can differ.

5. Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and relevance of each source.

Students investigating a question using online sources often find all too much material, some of it conflicting. The ability to be discerning and skeptical consumers of information is a crucial college, career, and civic skill. Beginning in elementary school, students should learn how and why to assess, verify, and cite sources.

6. Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence.

The strength of an argument or explanation lies in its logical development of ideas, acknowledgement of counterclaims, and use of reliable supporting evidence. Effective arguments and explanations often go beyond text alone to include well-chosen and relevant visual elements such as photographs, maps, and displays of quantitative data. Students' ability to adapt a presentation to the task, purpose, and audience and their ability to respond to questions are important skills for civic participation.

7. Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate.

One of the main goals of teaching history and the social science is to provide opportunities for students to practice using the knowledge and skills that enable them to participate in civic life. Some examples of those opportunities include

- Exploring questions or problems in the form of classroom discussions, essays, research papers, and other products of research;
- Engaging in discourse about public policy beyond the classroom through social media, letters to the editor, oral presentations in public settings, or community service learning project

Grade 8

Content Standards

Topic	ID	Content Standard
TOPIC 1 The philosophical foundations of the United States political system	8.T1	<p>Supporting Question: What were the roots of the ideas that influenced the development of the United States political system?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain why the Founders of the United States considered the government of ancient Athens to be the beginning of democracy and explain how the democratic political concepts developed in ancient Greece influenced modern democracy (e.g., civic participation, voting rights, trial by jury, legislative bodies, constitution writing, rule of law). 2. Describe the government of the Roman Republic and the aspects of republican principles that are evident in modern democratic governments (e.g., separation of powers, rule of law, representative government, and the notion of civic duty/common good). 3. Explain the influence of Enlightenment thinkers on the American Revolution and framework of the American government (e.g., John Locke, Charles de Montesquieu). 4. Explain how British ideas about and practices of government (e.g., the Magna Carta, the concept of habeas corpus, the Mayflower Compact, self-government, town meetings, the importance of education and literacy, the House of Burgesses, colonial legislatures, the Albany Plan of Union) influenced American colonists and the political institutions that developed in colonial America. 5. Analyze the evidence for arguments that the principles of government of the United States were influence by the governments of Native Peoples (e.g. the Iroquois Confederacy).
TOPIC 2 The development of the United States government	8.T2	<p>Supporting Question: <i>How did the framers of the Constitution attempt to address issues of power and freedom in the design of the new political system?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply knowledge of the history of the American Revolutionary period to determine the experiences and events that led the colonists to declare independence; explain the key ideas about <i>equality, representative government, limited government, rule of law, natural rights, common good</i>, and the <i>purpose of government</i> in the Declaration of Independence. 2. Analyze the weaknesses of the national government under the Articles of Confederation; and describe the crucial events (e.g., Shays' Rebellion) leading to the Constitutional Convention.

Topic	ID	Content Standard
TOPIC 2 The development of the United States government (cont.)	8.T2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the various leaders of the Constitutional Convention and analyze the major issues (e.g., distribution of political power, rights of individuals, representation and rights of states, slavery) they debated and how the issues were resolved. Compare and contrast key ideas debated between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists over ratification of the Constitution (e.g., federalism, factions, checks and balances, independent judiciary, republicanism, limited government). Note: Important topics of individual Federalist Papers: Federalist -factions; Federalist 9- strong union; Federalist 39- republican government; Federalist 51-three branches of government independent of each other to ensure liberty; Federalist -importance of an independent judicial branch and judicial review.
TOPIC 3 The institutions of United States government	8.T3	<p>Supporting Question: <i>How do the institutions of the U.S. political system work?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Distinguish the three branches of government (separation of powers): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congress as the legislative branch the Presidency and the executive agencies as the executive branch and the Supreme Court and other federal inferior courts as the judicial branch Examine the interrelationship of the three branches (the checks and balance system) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Congress</u>: enumerated powers, general powers, limits on power, checks on other two branches; roles of political parties in the organization of Congress; roles within the legislative branch, such as the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate, minority party leaders; the system for accomplishing legislation, including committees, hearings and legislative procedures <u>the Presidency</u>: roles, powers and limits, checks on other two branches, role of the Cabinet, such as the Vice President, Attorney General and Secretaries of State, Defense, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security; executive departments and agencies (such as the Department of Education, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or the Food and Drug Administration), and branches of the military <u>the Supreme Court</u>: role and powers, checks on other two branches, lower courts Distinguish the three branches of government (separation of powers): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congress as the legislative branch the Presidency and the executive agencies as the executive branch and the Supreme Court and other federal inferior courts as the judicial branch

Topic	ID	Content Standard
TOPIC 3 The institutions of United States government (cont.)	8.T3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Examine the interrelationship of the three branches (the checks and balance system) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Congress</u>: enumerated powers, general powers, limits on power, checks on other two branches; roles of political parties in the organization of Congress; roles within the legislative branch, such as the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate, minority party leaders; the system for accomplishing legislation, including committees, hearings and legislative procedures • <u>the Presidency</u>: roles, powers and limits, checks on other two branches, role of the Cabinet, such as the Vice President, Attorney General and Secretaries of State, Defense, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security; executive departments and agencies (such as the Department of Education, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or the Food and Drug Administration), and branches of the military • <u>the Supreme Court</u>: role and powers, checks on other two branches, lower courts 5. Describe the respective roles of each of the branches of government. 6. Explain the process of elections in the legislative and executive branches and the process of nomination/confirmation of individuals in the judicial and executive branches. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elections: running for legislative office (U.S. Representative – unlimited two-year terms, U.S. Senator – unlimited six-year terms), or executive office (President – two four-year terms and Vice President –unlimited four-year terms) and the function of the Electoral College in Presidential elections • Nomination by the President and confirmation by Congress: Supreme Court Justices and Secretaries/agency heads in the executive branch) 7. Describe the role of political parties in elections at the state and national levels.

Topic	ID	Content Standard
TOPIC 4 Rights and responsibilities of citizens	8.T4	<p>Supporting Question: <i>What is the role of the individual in maintaining a healthy democracy?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the different ways one becomes a citizen of the United States. 2. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens (e.g., voting, serving as a juror, paying taxes, serving in the military, running for and holding elected office) as compared to non-citizens. 3. Distinguish among civic, political, and private life. 4. Define and provide examples of fundamental principles and values of American political and civic life (e.g., liberty, the common good, justice, equality, tolerance, law and order, due process, rights of individuals, diversity, civic unity, patriotism, constitutionalism, popular sovereignty, and representative democracy). 5. Describe how a democracy provides opportunities for citizens to participate in the political process through elections, political parties, and interest groups. 6. Evaluate information related to elections (e.g., policy positions and debates among candidates, campaign financing, campaign advertising, influence of news media and social media, and data relating to voter turnout in elections). 7. Apply knowledge of the meaning of leadership and the qualities of good leaders to evaluate political leaders at the community, the state and national levels. 8. Explain the importance of individuals working cooperatively with their elected leaders. 9. Explain the importance of public service, and identify career and other opportunities in public service at the local, state, and national levels. 10. Analyze issues involving liberty in conflict with equality or authority, individual rights in conflict with the common good, or majority rule in conflict with minority rights. 11. Examine the varied understandings of the role of elected representatives and discuss those who have demonstrated political courage or those whose actions have failed to live up to the ideals of the Constitution. 12. Examine the role of political protest in a democracy. 13. Examine the influence of public and private interest groups in a democracy, including policy research organizations (e.g. Pew Research Center, Brookings Institute, Heritage Foundation) in shaping debate about public policy.

Topic	ID	Content Standard
TOPIC 5 The Constitution, Amendments, and Supreme Court decisions	8.T5	<p>Supporting Question: <i>How has the content and interpretation of the Constitution evolved over time?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the “necessary and proper” clause and why it is often referred to as the “elastic clause.” 2. Explain the historical context and significance of changes in the Constitution, including key amendments. Examples of amendments include the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 14th Amendment (1868): citizenship rights, equal protection of laws b. 19th Amendment (1920): women’s right to vote in federal and state elections c. 26th Amendment (1971): lowering the voting age from 21 to 18 in federal elections 3. Analyze the Constitutional issues that caused the Civil War and led to the eventual expansion of the power of the Federal government and individual civil rights. 4. Explain the historical context and significance of laws enacted by Congress that have expanded the civil rights and equal protection for race, gender, disability (e.g., the 1964 Civil Rights Act, 1965 Voting Rights Act, 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), and explain how the evolving understanding of human rights has affected the movement for civil rights for all. 5. Explain the principle of judicial review established in <i>Marbury v. Madison</i> (1803) and explain how cases come before the Supreme Court, how cases are argued, and how the Court issues decisions and dissents. 6. Research, analyze, and report orally or in writing on one area (a, b, or c, below) in which Supreme Court decisions have made significant changes over time in citizens’ lives. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Interpretations of freedoms of religion, assembly, press, petition, and speech under the First Amendment; for example, <p><i>Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District</i> (1969) The Court held, 7-2, that students’ right to protest is protected in schools.</p> <p><i>Bethel School District v. Fraser</i> (1986) The Court held, 7-2, that students’ right to use vulgar language is not protected in schools.</p> <p><i>Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier</i> (1988) The Court ruled, 5-3, that students’ right to school-sponsored student speech in a school newspaper may be restricted with educational justification.</p> <p><i>Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission</i> (2010) The Court ruled, 5-4, that contributions by corporations and organizations such as unions to political campaigns are protected as free speech.</p>

Topic	ID	Content Standard
TOPIC 5 The Constitution, Amendments, and Supreme Court decisions (cont.)	8.T5	<p>b. Interpretations of the due process clause and the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment, for example,</p> <p><i>Dred Scott v. Sandford</i> (1857) The Court dismissed the case brought by Dred Scott, an African American, to obtain his freedom from slavery, 7-2, on the grounds that African Americans were not citizens, that the Congress could not ban slavery in federal territories, and that the due process clause prohibited the government from freeing slaves brought into territories.</p> <p><i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> (1896) The Court upheld, 7-1, the ruling that racial segregation was constitutional under the “separate but equal” doctrine</p> <p><i>Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka</i> (1954) The Court unanimously overturned the “separate but equal” doctrine, ruling that state laws establishing separate schools for white and black students were unconstitutional.</p> <p><i>Mapp v. Ohio</i> (1961) The Court, redefined, 6-3, the implementation of the exclusionary rule (evidence collected in violation of an individual’s Fourth Amendment rights is inadmissible for a criminal prosecution in a court of law) to apply to states.</p> <p><i>Loving v. Virginia</i> (1967) The Court unanimously recognized the right to interracial marriage and declared race-based restrictions on marriage unconstitutional.</p> <p><i>Romer v. Evans</i> (1996) The Court determined, 6-3, that the Equal Protection Clause prevents states from denying civil rights protections to sexual minorities, including lesbian, gay, and bisexual people.</p> <p><i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i> (2015) The Court held, 5-4, that same sex marriage is protected under the 14th Amendment.</p>

Topic	ID	Content Standard
TOPIC 5 The Constitution, Amendments, and Supreme Court decisions (cont.)	8.T5	<p>c. Interpretations in cases where individual rights and perceived community or national interests were in conflict, for example,</p> <p>The United States Flag and the Pledge of Allegiance</p> <p><i>Minersville School District v. Gobitis</i> (1940) The Court held, 8-1, that the state's interest in national unity allowed school boards to require students to salute the flag.</p> <p><i>West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette</i> (1943) Court held, 6-3, that students are protected from having to salute the flag or recite the Pledge of Allegiance through the free exercise clause of the First Amendment.</p> <p><i>Texas v. Johnson</i> (1989) The Court held, 5-4, that an individual has a right to burn the flag under the First Amendment free expression clause.</p> <p>School Prayer</p> <p><i>Engel v. Vitale</i> (1962) The Court held, 6-2, that requiring school prayer in public schools was a violation of the First Amendment establishment clause.</p> <p>National Security</p> <p><i>Korematsu v. United States</i> (1944) The Court held, 6-3, that a government order during World War II sending Japanese-Americans to internment camps, rather than allowing them to remain in their homes, was constitutional.</p> <p><i>Clapper v. Amnesty International</i> (2012) The Court, 5-4, dismissed a challenge to the government's power to conduct surveillance on international phone calls and emails under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Courts.</p> <p>Gun Control</p> <p><i>District of Columbia v. Heller</i> (2008) The Court, 5-4, upheld the right of individuals to own guns under the Second Amendment and found the District of Columbia's ban on owning handguns to be unconstitutional.</p>

Topic	ID	Content Standard
TOPIC 6 The structure of Massachusetts state and local government	8.T6	<p>Supporting Question: <i>What is the role of state and local government in the U.S. political system?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare and contrast the functions of state government and national government. 2. Describe provisions of the United States Constitution and the Massachusetts Constitution that define and distribute powers and authority of the federal or state government. 3. Distinguish among the enumerated and implied powers in the United States Constitution and the Massachusetts Constitution. 4. Compare core documents associated with the protection of individual rights, including the Bill of Rights, the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution, and Article I of the Massachusetts Constitution. 5. Explain why the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution is important to state government and identify the powers granted to states by the Tenth Amendment and the limits to state government outlined in it. 6. Identify additional protections provided by the Massachusetts Constitution that are not provided by the U.S. Constitution. 7. Contrast the responsibilities of government at the federal, state, and local levels (e.g., protection of individual rights and the provision of services such as law enforcement, welfare payments, and the building and funding of schools). 8. Explain the leadership structure of the government of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the function of each branch <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the executive branch (governor and agencies) b. the legislative branch (state representatives and state senators) c. courts of law (Supreme Judicial Court, lower court system) 9. Give examples of tax-supported facilities and services provided by the Massachusetts state government and by local governments. 10. Explain the major components of local government in Massachusetts, including the roles and functions of mayors, city councils, and school committees in cities; town managers, select boards, representative and open town meetings and school committees, in towns, and courts and sheriff's departments in counties.

Topic	ID	Content Standard
TOPIC 7 Freedom of the Press and News/Media Literacy	8.T7	<p>Supporting Question: <i>How does a free press support a democratic government?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain why freedom of the press was included as a right in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and in Article 16 of the Massachusetts Constitution; explain that freedom of the press means the right to express and publish views on politics and other topics without government sponsorship, oversight, control, or censorship. 2. Give examples of how a free press can provide competing information and views about government and politics. 3. Explain the different functions of news articles, editorials, editorial cartoons, and “op-ed” commentaries. 4. Evaluate the benefits and challenges of digital news and social media to a democratic society. 5. Explain methods for evaluating information and opinion in print and online media (e.g., determining the credibility of news articles; analyzing the messages of editorials and op-ed commentaries; assessing the validity of claims and sufficiency of evidence). 6. Analyze the point of view and evaluate the claims of an editorial, editorial cartoon, or op-ed commentary on a public policy issue at the local, state, or national level (e.g., a mayoral or school committee decision, an action by a state legislature or Governor, a vote in Congress or an action by the President).

ACCESS SKILLS

CIVICS GRADE 8

Instructions for creating access skills for Civics:

Select the access skill from **Step 1** and then choose and merge with content from the provided lists in **Step 2** for Core Ideas A, B, and C.

Sample access skill for Core Idea A:

Track materials in an activity related to expressing why communities have rules or laws through images/visuals, text, or other forms of communication.

CORE IDEA	ACCESS SKILLS
<p>A. Foundations and Development of the U.S. Political System & Government (Topics 1 and 2)</p> <p><u>Practices 1, 4, 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Practice 4 - Analyze the purpose and point of view of each source; distinguish opinion from fact. Practice 5 - Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and relevance of each source. 	<p><u>Step 1: Select access skill student is addressing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Activate a device (within a specified amount of time) to participate in an activity related to...</i> <i>Choose from an array of errorless choices (within a specified amount of time) to participate in an activity related to...</i> <i>Choose within a specified amount of time from an errorless array of materials in an activity related to...</i> <i>Grasp, release, or give materials in an activity related to...</i> <i>Explore materials (tactilely) in an activity related to...</i> <i>Track materials in an activity related to...</i> <i>Functionally use materials in an activity related to...</i> <i>Gain attention within a specified time block(s) to explore materials in an activity related to...</i> <i>Imitate action in an activity related to...</i> <i>Initiate cause and effect response in an activity related to...</i> <i>Locate objects partially hidden or out of sight in an activity related to...</i> <i>Make a request to explore materials in an activity related to...</i> <i>Match object to object, or picture to picture of materials in an activity related to...</i> <i>Move materials in an activity related to...</i> <i>Orient or manipulate materials or a model in an activity related to...</i> <i>Sustain exploration activity (e.g., vocalize when activity is interrupted) with materials in an activity related to...</i> <i>Turn on/off technology within a specified amount of time in an activity related to...</i> <p><u>Step 2: Choose the Core Idea content in which data will be collected on the skill:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying examples of equality and inequality in fiction, informational texts, or civics-related scenarios identifying or creating a list of rights that all people should have (natural rights) and/or explain why it is important to have rules or laws to protect those rights

ACCESS SKILLS

CIVICS GRADE 8

CORE IDEA	ACCESS SKILLS
<p><i>(continued)</i></p> <p>A. Foundations and Development of the U.S. Political System & Government (Topics 1 and 2)</p> <p><u>Practices 1, 4, 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Practice 4 - Analyze the purpose and point of view of each source; distinguish opinion from fact. Practice 5 - Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and relevance of each source. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying or creating a list of rules that students follow in the classroom, school, or community using information from firsthand observations, texts, images, and/or other media expressing why communities have rules or laws through images/visuals, text, or other forms of communication labeling, illustrating, or using technology to create a list of key features of democratic government (e.g., voting, rule of law, self-government) using information from firsthand observations, texts, images, and/or other media sorting a set of statements about a civics topic (e.g., in a classroom, school, community, and/or state/nation) to determine whether each statement is a fact or an opinion retelling, identifying facts, or sorting a set of statements about the events and/or experiences that led the colonists to declare independence from Great Britain to determine whether each statement is a fact or an opinion labeling, illustrating, or using technology to create a product (e.g., pamphlet, speech, note cards) to show a historical figure's point of view on government during the colonial period, the American Revolution, or the establishment of the U.S. Constitution using information from an image, text, video, role-play, and/or field trip identifying key ideas that influenced the development of the U.S. government and/or match these influences to key characteristics of the U.S. government today using information from images, texts, and/or other media comparing and contrasting a personal experience (e.g. in home, school, community, or state/nation) of having no say in the decision-making process with the experience of participating in the decision labeling, drawing, or creating a chart to compare and contrast the government of the American colonies during British rule with the government under the U.S. Constitution

ACCESS SKILLS

CIVICS GRADE 8

CORE IDEA	ACCESS SKILLS
<p>B. Institutions and Structure of US Government & Massachusetts State and Local Government (Topics 3 and 6)</p> <p><u>Practices 1, 3, 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Practice 3 - Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources. Practice 6 - Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence. 	<p><u>Step 1: Select access skill student is addressing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Activate a device (within a specified amount of time) to participate in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Choose from an array of errorless choices (within a specified amount of time) to participate in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Choose within a specified amount of time from an errorless array of materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Grasp, release, or give materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Explore materials (tactilely) in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Track materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Functionally use materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Gain attention within a specified time block(s) to explore materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Imitate action in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Initiate cause and effect response in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Locate objects partially hidden or out of sight in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Make a request to explore materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Match object to object, or picture to picture of materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Move materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Orient or manipulate materials or a model in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Sustain exploration activity (e.g., vocalize when activity is interrupted) with materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Turn on/off technology within a specified amount of time in an activity related to...</i> <p><u>Step 2: Choose the Core Idea content in which data will be collected on the skill:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proposing or revising a classroom/community rule or a state/federal law and/or create a list of reasons to explain why the rule or law should be added/revised • roleplaying, illustrating, and/or describing how a national holiday (e.g., Independence Day, Juneteenth, Memorial Day, etc.) is observed and/or explain the significance using information from images, informational texts, and/or other media related to the holiday

ACCESS SKILLS

CIVICS GRADE 8

CORE IDEA	ACCESS SKILLS
<p><i>(continued)</i></p> <p>B. Institutions and Structure of US Government & Massachusetts State and Local Government (Topics 3 and 6)</p> <p><u>Practices 1, 3, 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Practice 3 - Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources. Practice 6 - Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> creating a list of statements that tell/show how the community provides services for community members (e.g., schools, libraries, community parks, etc.) by organizing information collected from multiple sources about the local community (e.g., town website, interviews with community members, field trips, local news, etc.) identifying/listing the roles and responsibilities of leaders in school, community, and national levels (e.g., using role-play, information from images, informational texts, and/or other media) comparing and contrasting (show/express similarities and/or differences) between the roles and responsibilities of leadership positions in a school with government positions at the local, state, or federal level (e.g., principal vs. president) illustrating, organizing, and/or labeling a diagram or model about a civics process (e.g., how a person becomes President, how a bill becomes a law, how a case progresses through the court system to the Supreme Court, etc.) sorting descriptions of the different responsibilities and/or roles of the three branches of the federal government (legislative, executive, and judicial) into the categories in which they belong comparing and contrasting the roles and responsibilities of the federal government and state governments by organizing information from images, informational texts, and/or other media into categories showing or expressing why or how leaders are elected in the United States using information from informational texts, images, or other media related to elections at the community, local, state, and/or federal levels of government showing, expressing, or describing how a decision, policy, or law at the local, state, or federal level affects you and/or others using information from images, text, or other media

ACCESS SKILLS

CIVICS GRADE 8

CORE IDEA	ACCESS SKILLS
<p>C. Rights and Responsibilities, the US Constitution, and News and Media Literacy (Topics 3, 5, and 6)</p> <p><u>Practices 1, 2, 7</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Practice 2 - Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries. Practice 7 - Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate. 	<p><u>Step 1: Select access skill student is addressing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Activate a device (within a specified amount of time) to participate in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Choose from an array of errorless choices (within a specified amount of time) to participate in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Choose within a specified amount of time from an errorless array of materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Grasp, release, or give materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Explore materials (tactilely) in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Track materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Functionally use materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Gain attention within a specified time block(s) to explore materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Imitate action in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Initiate cause and effect response in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Locate objects partially hidden or out of sight in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Make a request to explore materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Match object to object, or picture to picture of materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Move materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Orient or manipulate materials or a model in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Sustain exploration activity (e.g., vocalize when activity is interrupted) with materials in an activity related to...</i> ○ <i>Turn on/off technology within a specified amount of time in an activity related to...</i> <p><u>Step 2: Choose the Core Idea content in which data will be collected on the skill:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking or identifying questions about their civic and political life by interviewing a community member (e.g., family member, teacher, counselor, etc.) • illustrating or creating a list of the qualities that individuals should have in order to be an effective leader using information from literature, images, text, other media, and/or personal experiences • identifying or creating a list of rights and/or responsibilities that students, community members, or U.S. residents have using information from images, text, or other media • identifying/showing/expressing rule(s) that help solve a conflict/argument in the context of your friends, classroom, school, community, state, and/or the nation • creating a product to document participation in an action that would resolve a problem in the school, community, or country (e.g., create a poster, public service announcement video, etc.)

ACCESS SKILLS

CIVICS GRADE 8

CORE IDEA	ACCESS SKILLS
<p><i>(continued)</i></p> <p>C. Rights and Responsibilities, the US Constitution, and News and Media Literacy (Topics 3, 5, and 6)</p> <p><u>Practices 1, 2, 7</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Practice 2 - Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries. Practice 7 - Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying/showing/expressing/listing ways that actions (yours or others) have a positive impact on your family, classroom, school, community, state, and/or the nation using information from literature, images, text, other media, and/or personal experiences creating a Venn diagram or T-chart of actions that benefit a community (common good) and a list of actions that benefit an individual (individual rights) using information from images, literature, or informational text (e.g., recycling, picking up litter, etc.) asking or identifying questions to gather information about an activist's life and work (e.g., Frederick Douglass, Ruby Bridges, Cesar Chavez, Judy Heumann, etc.) using information from images, informational text, or other media creating and/or communicating a public service announcement that encourages individuals to vote by communicating the reasons that voting is important identifying/showing/expressing/listing qualities and/or actions that make people responsible citizens in the context of your classroom, school, community, state, and/or the nation identifying how individuals can participate in the political process using examples from informational text, images, or media to answer the question identifying examples of how individuals showed political courage or leadership using informational text, images, or media. conducting a survey based on a civics issue that affects the local, state, and/or national community (e.g., clean drinking water, food insecurity, etc.) and/or record the results of the survey listing reasons why doing a survey based on a civics issue that affects the local, state, and/or national community can be important when making decisions identifying how people's lives were changed by a Supreme Court ruling or a new law related to civil rights using information from text, images, or media comparing multiple news sources that report on the same event and identify similarities and differences in the reporting and/or show or express why media reports on the same event might not be identical showing or expressing how actions taken by individuals and/or groups brought about a change to the Constitution (e.g., the 14th amendment, the 19th amendment, the 26th amendment, etc.)

ENTRY POINTS

CIVICS GRADE 8

CORE IDEA	ENTRY POINTS
<p>A. Foundations and Development of the U.S. Political System & Government (Topics 1 and 2)</p> <p><u>Practices 1, 4, 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Practice 4 - Analyze the purpose and point of view of each source; distinguish opinion from fact. Practice 5 - Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and relevance of each source. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify examples of equality and inequality in fiction, informational texts, or civics-related scenarios. Identify or create a list of rights that all people should have (natural rights) and/or explain why it is important to have rules or laws to protect those rights. Identify or create a list of rules that students follow in the classroom, school, or community using information from firsthand observations, texts, images, and/or other media Show/express why communities have rules or laws through images/visuals, text, or other forms of communication Label, illustrate, or use technology to create a list of key features of democratic government (e.g., voting, rule of law, self-government) using information from firsthand observations, texts, images, and/or other media Sort a set of statements about a civics topic (e.g., in a classroom, school, community, and/or state/nation) to determine whether each statement is a fact or an opinion Retell, identify facts, or sort a set of statements about the events and/or experiences that led the colonists to declare independence from Great Britain to determine whether each statement is a fact or an opinion Label, illustrate, or use technology to create a product (e.g., pamphlet, speech, note cards) to show a historical figure's point of view on government during the colonial period, the American Revolution, or the establishment of the U.S. Constitution using information from an image, text, video, role-play, and/or field trip Identify key ideas that influenced the development of the U.S. government and/or match these influences to key characteristics of the U.S. government today using information from images, texts, and/or other media Compare and contrast a personal experience (e.g. in home, school, community, or state/nation) of having no say in the decision-making process with the experience of participating in the decision Label, draw, or create a chart to compare and contrast the government of the American colonies during British rule with the government under the U.S. Constitution

ENTRY POINTS

CIVICS GRADE 8

CORE IDEA	ENTRY POINTS
<p>B. Institutions and Structure of US Government & Massachusetts State and Local Government (Topics 3 and 6)</p> <p><u>Practices 1, 3, 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Practice 3 - Organize information and data from multiple primary and secondary sources. Practice 6 - Argue or explain conclusions, using valid reasoning and evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose or revise a classroom/community rule or a state/federal law and/or create a list of reasons to explain why the rule or law should be added/revised Roleplay, illustrate, and/or describe how a national holiday (e.g., Independence Day, Juneteenth, Memorial Day, etc.) is observed and/or explain the significance using information from images, informational texts, and/or other media related to the holiday Create a list of statements that tell/show how the community provides services for community members (e.g., schools, libraries, community parks, etc.) by organizing information collected from multiple sources about the local community (e.g., town website, interviews with community members, field trips, local news, etc.) Identify/list the roles and responsibilities of leaders in school, community, and national levels (e.g., using role-play, information from images, informational texts, and/or other media) Compare and contrast (show/express similarities and/or differences) between the roles and responsibilities of leadership positions in a school with government positions at the local, state, or federal level (e.g., principal vs. president) Illustrate, organize, and/or label a diagram or model about a civics process (e.g., how a person becomes President, how a bill becomes a law, how a case progresses through the court system to the Supreme Court, etc.) Sort descriptions of the different responsibilities and/or roles of the three branches of the federal government (legislative, executive, and judicial) into the categories in which they belong Compare and contrast the roles and responsibilities of the federal government and state governments by organizing information from images, informational texts, and/or other media into categories Show or express why or how leaders are elected in the United States using information from informational texts, images, or other media related to elections at the community, local, state, and/or federal levels of government Show, express, or describe how a decision, policy, or law at the local, state, or federal level affects you and/or others using information from images, text, or other media

ENTRY POINTS

CIVICS GRADE 8

CORE IDEA	ENTRY POINTS
<p>C. Rights and Responsibilities, the US Constitution, and News and Media Literacy (Topics 3, 5, and 6)</p> <p><u>Practices 1, 2, 7</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Practice 2 - Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries. Practice 7 - Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask or identify questions about their civic and political life by interviewing a community member (e.g., family member, teacher, counselor, etc.) Illustrate or create a list of the qualities that individuals should have in order to be an effective leader using information from literature, images, text, other media, and/or personal experiences Identify or create a list of rights and/or responsibilities that students, community members, or U.S. residents have using information from images, text, or other media Identify/show/express/ rule(s) that help solve a conflict/argument in the context of your friends, classroom, school, community, state, and/or the nation Create a product to document participation in an action that would resolve a problem in the school, community, or country (e.g., create a poster, public service announcement video, etc.) Identify/show/express/list ways that actions (yours or others) have a positive impact on your family, classroom, school, community, state, and/or the nation using information from literature, images, text, other media, and/or personal experiences Create a Venn diagram or T-chart of actions that benefit a community (common good) and a list of actions that benefit an individual (individual rights) using information from images, literature, or informational text (e.g., recycling, picking up litter, etc.) Ask or identify questions to gather information about an activist's life and work (e.g., Frederick Douglass, Ruby Bridges, Cesar Chavez, Judy Heumann, etc.) using information from images, informational text, or other media Create and/or communicate a public service announcement that encourages individuals to vote by communicating the reasons that voting is important Identify/show/express/list qualities and/or actions that make people responsible citizens in the context of your classroom, school, community, state, and/or the nation Identify how individuals can participate in the political process using examples from informational text, images, or media to answer the question Identify examples of how individuals showed political courage or leadership using informational text, images, or media Conduct a survey based on a civics issue that affects the local, state, and/or national community (e.g., clean drinking water, food insecurity, etc.) and/or record the results of the survey List reasons why doing a survey based on a civics issue that affects the local, state, and/or national community can be important when making decisions

ENTRY POINTS

CIVICS GRADE 8

CORE IDEA	ENTRY POINTS
<p><i>(continued)</i></p> <p>C. Rights and Responsibilities, the US Constitution, and News and Media Literacy (Topics 3, 5, and 6)</p> <p><u>Practices 1, 2, 7</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice 1 - Demonstrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Practice 2 - Develop focused questions or problem statements and conduct inquiries. Practice 7 - Determine next steps and take informed action, as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify how people’s lives were changed by a Supreme Court ruling or a new law related to civil rights using information from text, images, or media Compare multiple news sources that report on the same event and identify similarities and differences in the reporting and/or show or express why media reports on the same event might not be identical Show or express how actions taken by individuals and/or groups brought about a change to the Constitution (e.g., the 14th amendment, the 19th amendment, the 26th amendment, etc.)