



Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators®



GACE® Study Companion

Middle Grades Social Science Assessment

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Last Updated: December 2022

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	3
About the Assessment.....	4
Content Specifications.....	5
Test Subareas.....	6
Test Objectives.....	6
Subarea I: The United States and Georgia: Historical, Geographic, Economic, and Civic Understanding.....	6
Subarea II: Government and Economics.....	7
Subarea III: World Regions.....	8
Practice Questions.....	10
Answer Key and Rationales.....	21
Preparation Resources.....	29
Guide to Taking a GACE Computer-delivered Assessment.....	29
Reducing Test Anxiety.....	29
Study Tips: Preparing for a GACE Assessment.....	29
Journals.....	29
Other Resources.....	29
Online Resources.....	30

About the Assessment

Assessment Name	Middle Grades Social Science
Grade Level	4–8
Test Code	015
Testing Time	2 hours and 10 minutes
Test Duration	2.5 hours
Test Format	Computer delivered
Number of Selected-response Questions	80
Question Format	The test consists of a variety of short-answer questions such as selected-response questions, where you select one answer choice or multiple answer choices (depending on what the question asks for), questions where you enter your answer in a text box, and other types of questions. You can review the possible question types in the <i>Guide to Taking a GACE Computer-delivered Test.</i>
Number of Constructed-response Questions	0

The GACE Middle Grades Social Science assessment is designed to measure the professional knowledge of prospective teachers of middle school social science in the state of Georgia.

The testing time is the amount of time you will have to answer the questions on the test. Test duration includes time for tutorials and directional screens that may be included in the test.

The questions in this assessment assess both basic knowledge across content areas and the ability to apply principles.

The total number of questions that are scored is typically smaller than the total number of questions on the test. Most tests that contain selected-response questions also include embedded pretest questions, which are not used in calculating your score. By including pretest questions in the assessment, ETS is able to analyze actual test-taker performance on proposed new questions and determine whether they should be included in future versions of the test.

Content Specifications

This assessment is organized into content **subareas**. Each subarea is further defined by a set of **objectives** and their **knowledge statements**.

- The objectives broadly define what an entry-level educator in this field in Georgia public schools should know and be able to do.
- The knowledge statements describe in greater detail the knowledge and skills eligible for testing.
- Some tests also include content material at the evidence level. This content serves as descriptors of what each knowledge statement encompasses.

See a breakdown of the subareas and objectives for the tests in this assessment on the following pages.

Test Subareas

Subarea	Approx. Percentage of Test
I. The United States and Georgia: Historical, Geographic, Economic, and Civic Understanding	50%
II. Government and Economics	20%
III. World Regions	30%

Test Objectives

Subarea I: The United States and Georgia: Historical, Geographic, Economic, and Civic Understanding

Objective 1: Understands fundamental historical, geographic, economic, and civic concepts in U.S. history to 1860

The beginning Middle Grades Social Science teacher:

- A. Locates prominent places in the United States, including physical features and major cities relevant to the development of North America
- B. Demonstrates knowledge of the geography of North America and the development of early Native American cultures
- C. Describes the economic, political, cultural, and environmental causes and effects of European exploration and colonization of North America
- D. Explains the causes, events, and results of the American Revolution
- E. Analyzes the challenges faced by the new nation
- F. Explains the economic, political, cultural, and environmental causes and effects of the westward expansion of the United States between 1801 and 1860

Objective 2: Understands fundamental historical, geographic, economic, and civic concepts in U.S. history since 1860

The beginning Middle Grades Social Science teacher:

- A. Explains the causes, events, and consequences of the American Civil War and Reconstruction
- B. Describes major political, economic, social, and cultural developments in the United States, from the Progressive Era to the New Deal
- C. Describes the causes and consequences of United States involvement in the First and Second World Wars

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- D. Describes the origins and consequences of the Cold War
 - E. Describes political, economic, social, and cultural developments in the United States between 1940 and 1975
 - F. Describes political, economic, social, and cultural developments in the United States since 1975

Objective 3: Understands fundamental historical, geographic, economic, and civic concepts in Georgia history

The beginning Middle Grades Social Science teacher:

- A. Describes basic Georgia geography, the development of Native American cultures, and the impact of European exploration and settlement
- B. Describes key economic, political, environmental, and cultural features of colonial Georgia
- C. Explains the role of Georgia in the American Revolution and the new republic
- D. Explains the political, economic, social, and cultural factors that affected the development of Georgia between 1789 and 1840
- E. Describes the political, economic, social, and cultural impact of the American Civil War and Reconstruction on Georgia
- F. Describes key political, economic, social, and cultural changes that occurred in Georgia between 1877 and 1970
- G. Describes the role of Georgia in the modern Civil Rights movement
- H. Explains the importance of significant social, economic, and political developments in Georgia since 1970
- I. Describes the basic structure and functions of Georgia government
- J. Describes the role of local governments in Georgia, including the structure and functions

Subarea II: Government and Economics

Objective 1: Understands the fundamental concepts of government

The beginning Middle Grades Social Science teacher:

- A. Describes who holds the power and how citizens participate in various political systems including, autocracy, oligarchy, and democracy (presidential and parliamentary)
- B. Describes how power is distributed in different governmental systems, including unitary, federal, and confederation

Objective 2: Understands the fundamental concepts of economics

The beginning Middle Grades Social Science teacher:

- A. Describes the four basic economic systems, including traditional, market, command, and mixed
- B. Understands basic economic concepts such as wants, needs, supply, demand, trade and trade barriers, gross domestic product (GDP), scarcity, and the four factors of production

Subarea III: World Regions

Objective 1: Understands historical, geographic, economic, and civic concepts in Latin America, Canada, Europe, and Australia

The beginning Middle Grades Social Science teacher:

- A. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical and human geography of Latin America and Canada, including location, physical, and artificial features, political boundaries, climate, distribution of natural resources, environmental issues, distribution of population, and cultural characteristics
- B. Describes the impact of European exploration and colonization on Latin America and Canada, including the effects of diseases and weapons
- C. Describes the development of Latin America from European colonies to independent nations
- D. Explains contemporary issues in Latin America and Canada
- E. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical and human geography of Europe, including location, physical and artificial features, political boundaries, climate, distribution of natural resources, environmental issues, distribution of population, and cultural characteristics
- F. Describes the causes and effects of European exploration and colonization
- G. Describes continuity and change in Europe through the 21st century, including the causes and effects of the First World War, Second World War, and Cold War
- H. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical and human geography of Australia, including location, physical and artificial features, political boundaries, climate, distribution of natural resources, environmental issues, distribution of population, and cultural characteristics
- I. Describes the culture and development of Australia prior to contact with Europeans, including the origins and culture of the Australian Aborigine people
- J. Explains the impact of European exploration and colonization on Australia, including the use of prisoners as colonists and the effects of diseases and weapons

Objective 2: Understands historical, geographic, economic, and civic concepts in Africa and Asia

The beginning Middle Grades Social Science teacher:

- A. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical and human geography of Africa, including location, physical and artificial features, political boundaries, climate, distribution of natural resources, environmental issues, distribution of population, and cultural characteristics
- B. Explains the impact European exploration and colonization had on Africa, including how the European partitioning across Africa contributed to conflict, civil war, and artificial political boundaries
- C. Describes continuity and change in Africa, including independence movements (Pan-African movement and nationalism) and contemporary issues (e.g., HIV/AIDS)
- D. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical and human geography of southwest Asia (the Middle East), including location, physical and artificial features, political boundaries, climate, distribution of natural resources, environmental issues, distribution of population, and cultural characteristics
- E. Explains the impact of European contact on southwest Asia (the Middle East), including how European partitioning in the Middle East after the breakup of the Ottoman Empire led to regional conflict and how Zionism and the Balfour Declaration led to the establishment of Israel
- F. Describes continuity and change in southwest Asia (the Middle East), including conflicts (Arab-Israeli, United States involvement in the Middle East) and contemporary issues
- G. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical and human geography of southern and eastern Asia, including location, physical and artificial features, political boundaries, climate, distribution of natural resources, environmental issues, distribution of population, and cultural characteristics
- H. Analyzes continuity and change in southern and eastern Asia leading to the 21st century, including independence movements in India, the impact of communism, and foreign intervention (e.g., the Korean War and the Vietnam War)

Practice Questions

The practice questions in this study companion are designed to familiarize you with the types of questions you may see on the assessment. While they illustrate some of the formats and types of questions you will see on the test, your performance on these sample questions should not be viewed as a predictor of your performance on the actual test. Fundamentally, the most important component in ensuring your success is familiarity with the content that is covered on the assessment.

To respond to a practice question, choose one of the answer options listed. Be sure to read the directions carefully to ensure that you know what is required for each question. You may find it helpful to time yourself to simulate actual testing conditions. A correct answer and a rationale for each sample test question are in the section following the practice questions.

Keep in mind that the test you take at an actual administration will have different questions, although the proportion of questions in each subarea will be approximately the same. You should not expect the percentage of questions you answer correctly in these practice questions to be exactly the same as when you take the test at an actual administration, since numerous factors affect a person's performance in any given testing situation.

Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by four suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

1. “Rather than having to pay for costly fortifications, armies, and navies, this country enjoyed free protection provided by nature. Furthermore, for more than a century, British subjects manned and paid for the costly navy that policed and defended the Atlantic and provided this country cost-free added security.”

The country that benefited from the added security referred to above was which of the following?

- A. Germany
- B. Holland
- C. Sweden
- D. United States

Answer and Rationale

2. The widespread adoption of the cotton gin had which of the following effects in Georgia?
 - A. It caused many textile mills to go out of business
 - B. It made it harder for large plantation owners to make money
 - C. It made harvesting cotton easier so that slaves were no longer needed
 - D. It made harvesting cotton more efficient and increased the state’s dependence on the crop

Answer and Rationale

-
3. The majority of immigrants who arrived in the United States before the Civil War came from
- A. northern and western Europe.
 - B. southern and eastern Europe.
 - C. Latin America and the Caribbean.
 - D. Asia and the Pacific Islands.

Answer and Rationale

4. A transportation network that included roads, canals, and steamboats, constructed in the United States in the early 1800s, had which of the following effects in the years before the Civil War?
- A. It decreased the need for immigrant labor
 - B. It stimulated the development of a market revolution
 - C. It weakened the plantation system in the southern states
 - D. It transformed the United States into an international military power

Answer and Rationale

-
5. President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation declared free only those slaves who
- A. were living in the areas still in rebellion.
 - B. were serving in the Union armies.
 - C. were living in the border states.
 - D. had escaped to Northern states.

Answer and Rationale

6. Which TWO of the following were leaders of the women's rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s?
- A. Susan B. Anthony
 - B. Betty Friedan
 - C. Harriet Tubman
 - D. Gloria Steinem

Answer and Rationale

-
7. The Sibley Commission was formed to address which specific issue during the Civil Rights movement in Georgia?
- A. Voter registration
 - B. The county unit system
 - C. A new state flag
 - D. School segregation

Answer and Rationale

8. Which of the following was a charge made by Senator Joseph McCarthy about dangers facing the United States in the 1950s?
- A. There were a significant number of Communists in positions of authority in the United States government
 - B. Most United States voters were sympathetic to the Communists
 - C. The United States economy was threatened by cheap foreign imports
 - D. An increase in the rate of illegal immigration was threatening the stability of United States society

Answer and Rationale

-
9. Which of the following is a feature of physical geography that Japan, the Philippines, and Indonesia share?
- A. Location in the center of tectonic plates
 - B. Semiarid grassland vegetation
 - C. A humid tropical climate
 - D. Land composed of an archipelago

Answer and Rationale

10. The greatest expansion of direct European colonial rule in Africa occurred in which of the following periods?
- A. 1450–1500
 - B. 1750–1800
 - C. 1850–1900
 - D. 1900–1950

Answer and Rationale

-
11. Which of the following was an outcome of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919-1920 at the conclusion of the First World War?
- A. The Treaty of Versailles forced Germany to give up land, population, and important resources
 - B. The Treaty of Versailles divided Germany into eastern and western states
 - C. The British gave control of Palestine to the Arabs living there
 - D. The Austrian Empire remained intact

Answer and Rationale

12. “We hold these truths to be self-evident. That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

This statement from the *Declaration of Independence* was most directly influenced by which of the following intellectual traditions?

- A. Classical Greek
- B. The Enlightenment
- C. Puritanism
- D. The Great Awakening

Answer and Rationale

-
13. Which of the following is most essential to the successful functioning of a democracy?
- A. Existence of three branches of government
 - B. Participation of citizens
 - C. Direct election of the head of government
 - D. Federalism

Answer and Rationale

14. In one hour, Amanda can type five pages of a report or she can make 10 sandwiches. The opportunity cost of typing one page of a report is
- A. two sandwiches.
 - B. five sandwiches.
 - C. 10 sandwiches.
 - D. 50 sandwiches.

Answer and Rationale

15. If the tax rate for a single person with \$25,000 in taxable income is 24 percent, and the tax rate for a single person with \$20,000 in taxable income is 20 percent, the tax rate over this income range is
- A. regressive.
 - B. progressive.
 - C. proportional.
 - D. revenue-neutral.

Answer and Rationale

-
16. Opposition to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 was mostly based on the
- A. costs imposed on private business to comply with the act.
 - B. impact the act would have on the national debt.
 - C. burden the act would place on military recruitment efforts.
 - D. effect the act would have on partisan voting patterns in congressional elections.

Answer and Rationale

17. As a country, the People’s Republic of China can best be classified as a
- A. multiethnic state.
 - B. stateless nation.
 - C. supranational organization.
 - D. special autonomous region.

Answer and Rationale

18. The legacy of European colonialism in Southeast Asia is evidenced by
- A. Islam in Indonesia and modern architecture in Malaysia.
 - B. Catholicism in the Philippines and French architecture in Vietnam.
 - C. Buddhism in Thailand and the Dutch language in Indonesia.
 - D. Taoism in China and the Khmer language in Cambodia.

Answer and Rationale

-
19. Which of the following is a role of the state of Georgia's executive branch of government?
- A. To propose and vote on legislation before the United States House of Representatives
 - B. To propose and vote on legislation before the United States Senate
 - C. To judge the constitutionality of laws created by the Georgia General Assembly
 - D. To administer and enforce the laws created by the Georgia General Assembly

Answer and Rationale

20. Which of the following were signers of the United States Constitution on behalf of the state of Georgia?
- A. John Hancock and John Adams
 - B. George Walton and Button Gwinnett
 - C. William Few and Abraham Baldwin
 - D. Charles Pinckney and Robert Morris

Answer and Rationale

21. Which TWO of the following were New Deal government economic policies created during the Great Depression?
- A. A system of interstate highways
 - B. Bank deposit insurance for consumers
 - C. Social security pension savings plan
 - D. Antitrust laws to break up monopolies

Answer and Rationale

-
22. Under which of the following systems of government is political power decentralized to the state or local level?
- A. A constitutional monarchy
 - B. A unitary system
 - C. A parliamentary system
 - D. A confederation

Answer and Rationale

23. Which of the following is the dominant type of vegetation found in the subarctic taiga of Russia and the boreal forest of Canada?
- A. Deciduous trees
 - B. Scrub trees
 - C. Coniferous trees
 - D. Mangrove trees

Answer and Rationale

Answer Key and Rationales

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
1	D	<p>Option (D) is correct. Of the countries named, only the United States enjoyed geographic isolation (“free protection provided by nature”). In addition, the British colonies that later became the United States constituted the only listed area that had been protected by the British navy.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
2	D	<p>Option (D) is correct. The cotton gin greatly increased the efficiency of cotton production. The increased efficiency led to a boom in cotton production that increased Georgia’s dependence on cotton, on the institution of slavery, and on the plantation system.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
3	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. Prior to the Civil War, immigration to the United States came almost exclusively from northern and western Europe, with large numbers of people coming from Ireland, Great Britain, Germany, and Scandinavia.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
4	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. By 1850, the United States had put in place a transportation network based on roads, canals, and steamboats. This network enabled factories and farms to get their goods to market much more efficiently and cheaply. Option A is incorrect because economic expansion increased the demand for immigrant labor rather than decreasing it. Option C is incorrect because the plantation economy was strengthened, not weakened. Option D is incorrect because the nation did not become an international military power during the period.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
5	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. The Emancipation Proclamation freed only those slaves who were living in the states or parts of states still in rebellion. President Abraham Lincoln feared that complete emancipation would cost the Union the loyalty of the border states (Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, and Delaware), slave states that had not seceded. Moreover, Lincoln did not believe he had the constitutional authority to declare free those slaves living in areas loyal to the Union.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
6	B, D	<p>Options (B) and (D) are correct. Author and activist Betty Friedan and journalist and activist Gloria Steinem were both leaders in the women's rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s, including cofounding the National Women's Political Caucus.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
7	D	<p>Option (D) is correct. The Sibley Commission was formed in 1960 to gather information about residents' opinions on school desegregation and report the findings back to the governor.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
8	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. Senator Joseph McCarthy gained prominence based on charges that Communists had attained positions of influence in the United States government. He did not, however, claim that most United States voters supported Communists, nor did he focus on the issues of imports or illegal immigration.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
9	D	<p>Option (D) is correct. Japan, the Philippines, and Indonesia are countries composed of several islands that are considered archipelagos.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
10	C	<p>Option (C) is correct. The largest expansion of African territory directly under European colonial control took place in the late 19th century, especially in the wake of the Berlin West Africa Conference of 1884. During this period, Britain substantially expanded its colonial territories in western Africa (Nigeria), eastern Africa (Kenya, Uganda, etc.), and southern Africa (Rhodesia, Botswana, etc.); France acquired large territories in western Africa (Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Niger, etc.), central Africa (Chad, Congo, etc.), and northern Africa (Tunisia); Germany created a substantial colonial presence (Namibia, Tanganyika, Togo, etc.); Portugal consolidated and expanded its African colonies (Angola, Mozambique, etc.); and the Belgian king Leopold II acquired a huge personal fiefdom in central Africa (the Congo Free State).</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
11	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. Germans believed that they had been cheated by the peace settlement that they had agreed to in signing the Treaty of Versailles, and this sense of resentment later fueled the rise of the Nazi Party.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
12	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. The statement draws from political ideas promoted by Enlightenment thinkers, most notably John Locke.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
13	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. Without the participation of its citizens, a nation cannot have a successful democracy. While the United States has three branches of government, this number of branches is not necessary for a successful democracy. Many successful democracies, including Great Britain, do not have direct election of the head of government. Federalism is a component of many, but not all, successful democracies. France, for example, does not have a federal form of government.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
14	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. The opportunity cost of typing one page of the report is calculated as the total number of sandwiches Amanda could make divided by the number of pages she could type. Therefore, the opportunity cost of typing one page is $10/5$, which equals two sandwiches.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
15	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. A progressive tax rate is one in which the tax rate increases as income rises. In this example, someone earning \$25,000 a year is taxed at a higher rate than someone earning a lower income; thus, the tax rate is progressive.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
16	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. The United States Chamber of Commerce and other groups lobbied against the act as an unfunded expense imposed on businesses.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
17	A	<p>Option (A) is correct. China's population is composed of over 50 ethnic groups who speak over 270 separate languages.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
18	B	<p>Option (B) is correct. Spanish colonizers brought Catholicism to the Philippines. And France’s colonization of Indochina, of which Vietnam was one part, is evidenced by French colonial-era architecture found in many historic buildings within the country.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
19	D	<p>Option (D) is correct. One role of the state’s executive branch, under the governor’s office and state agencies, is to administer and enforce state laws.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
20	C	<p>Option (C) is correct. William Few and Abraham Baldwin were the two delegates from Georgia who signed the Constitution.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Question Number	Correct Answer	Rationale
21	B, C	<p>Options (B) and (C) are correct. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Social Security Administration are agencies formed during the Great Depression to provide economic relief for the public.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
22	D	<p>Option (D) is correct. In a confederation, much of the political power is decentralized to the local or regional level of government.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>
23	C	<p>Option (C) is correct. Coniferous tree species, such as pine, spruce, and fir, dominate the cold northern forests of Russia and Canada.</p> <p><i>Back to Question</i></p>

Preparation Resources

The resources listed below may help you prepare for the GACE assessment in this field. These preparation resources have been identified by content experts in the field to provide up-to-date information that relates to the field in general. You may wish to use current issues or editions to obtain information on specific topics for study and review.

Guide to Taking a GACE Computer-delivered Assessment

This guide explains how to navigate through a GACE assessment and how to answer different types of test questions. This free download is available in the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare.

Reducing Test Anxiety

This guide provides practical help for people who suffer from test anxiety. Designed specifically for GACE test takers, but useful to anyone who has to take tests, this guide reviews the major causes of test anxiety and offers practical advice for how to counter each one. Download this guide for free from the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare.

Study Tips: Preparing for a GACE Assessment

This document contains useful information on preparing for selected-response and constructed-response tests. The instruction, tips, and suggestions can help you become a better-prepared test taker. See the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare for this free download.

Journals

The Geography Teacher, National Council for Geographic Education.

Georgia Social Studies Journal, University of Georgia.

The History Teacher, Society for History Education.

Journal of Economic Teaching, Eastern Illinois University.

Journal of Geography, National Council for Geographic Education.

Middle Level Learning, National Council for the Social Studies.

Social Education, National Council for the Social Studies.

Other Resources

Adler, Susan A., et al. (2011). *National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment*. Washington, D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies.

Barbour, Christine, and Gerald C. Wright (2016). *Keeping the Republic: Power and Citizenship in American Politics*, Eighth Edition. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly.

Beal, Candy M., and Cheryl Mason Bolick (2012). *Teaching Social Studies in Middle and Secondary Schools*, Sixth Edition. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson.

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- Loewen, James W. (2009). Teaching What Really Happened: How to Avoid the Tyranny of Textbooks and Get Students Excited About Doing History, Multicultural Education Series Edition. New York, N.Y.: Teachers College Press.
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- Roark, James L., et al. (2016). *The American Promise: A History of the United States*, Seventh Edition (Vol. 1 and 2). New York, N.Y.: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Rubenstein, James M., et al. (2012). *Introduction to Contemporary Geography*, First Edition. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson.
- Welton, David (2004). *Children and Their World: Strategies for Teaching Social Studies*, Eighth Edition. Boston, Mass.: Cengage Learning.

Online Resources

Best of History Websites — besthistorysites.net

Council for Economic Education — councilforeconed.org

Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) — www.eric.ed.gov

State of Georgia, Department of Education — www.gadoe.org

Historyteacher.net — www.historyteacher.net

National Center for History in the Schools — www.nchs.ucla.edu

National Council for Geographic Education — www.ncge.org

National Council for History Education — www.nche.net

National Council for the Social Studies — socialstudies.org