

Student Guide to the California Standards

The Student Guide to the California Standards offers a simplified, student-friendly rephrasing of the language of the California History–Social Science Standards. This guide is provided in two versions: a two-page version that can be three-hole punched, and a fold-up version. Use this guide to introduce the standards to students and parents.

Using the Student Guide to the California Standards

1. *Duplicate and distribute the guide to students.* Have them place the two-page version in their notebook. Copy the two sides of the fold-up version back to back, on sturdy stock, for students to use as a bookmark in their textbook.
2. *Refer students to the Student Guide to the California Standards when introducing new standards.* After previewing the standards that will be covered in a new chapter, tell students to find the corresponding topic on the student guide. Ask students to rephrase the standard in their own words.
3. *As topics are covered in class, have students mark these on the student guide.* Refer students back to their student guide toward the end of each lesson. Have them check off each topic covered or note a specific page number in their textbook or Interactive Student Notebook where the topic is covered.
4. *Provide parents with either version of the Student Guide to the California Standards.* Attach a copy to the letter you send home so that the family knows what topics will be taught throughout the year.
5. *Encourage students to use this guide for review.* Reading over the standards that have been covered serves as a good review at the end of a chapter or before the midyear and year-end benchmark exams.



Student Guide to the Grade 8 California Standards

This guide explains the California History–Social Science Standards for Grade 8. Think of standards as your learning targets. Listed below each standard are the key events and ideas for you to understand.

As you begin a unit of instruction, look at the standards to see what your learning targets are. Before a test, review this guide as an outline of what you will be expected to know. Keeping the learning targets in mind will help you focus on the most important information.

8.1 Colonial and Revolutionary Periods

Understand the events that led to the founding of the nation and the development of American democracy.

- Influence of the religious Great Awakening on the Revolution
- Ideas about government and key phrases in the Declaration of Independence
- Influence of the American Revolution on other countries
- Meaning of civic republicanism, classical liberal principles, and English parliamentary traditions

8.2 The Constitution

Analyze the political ideas and governmental powers outlined in the Constitution.

- Influence of the Magna Carta, English Bill of Rights, and Mayflower Compact
- Ideals of the Declaration of Independence in the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution
- Major debates in writing the Constitution and their outcomes
- Political ideas behind the Constitution and the role of such leaders as James Madison and George Washington
- Differing views about the separation of church and state
- Powers of the government and the rights of citizens under the Bill of Rights
- Meaning of federalism, dual sovereignty, separation of powers, checks and balances, majority rule, and individual rights

8.3 The American Political System

Understand the foundation of America’s political system and the role of citizens.

- Influence of early state constitutions on the nation’s Constitution
- Ordinances of 1785 and 1787, ownership of property, and the development of the nation
- Advantages of a common market among the states
- Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and the development of political parties
- Shays’ and Whiskey Rebellions and the government’s response to them
- Lawmaking process and citizen roles
- Roles and responsibilities of a free press

8.4 The Ideals of the New Nation

Analyze the hopes and ideals of the people of the new nation.

- America’s landscapes, political divisions, and early expansion
- Three important speeches—Washington’s Farewell Address, Jefferson’s 1801 Inaugural Address, and Adams’s Fourth of July Address
- Development of capitalism
- Daily life and arts in the early 1800s

8.5 Foreign Policy in the Early 1800s

Analyze America’s dealings with other nations before the Civil War.

- War of 1812—causes and effects
- Expanding U.S. boundaries and relations with other nations
- Significance of the Monroe Doctrine
- Relations with Indian nations

8.6 The Northeast

Analyze life in the Northeast from 1800 to 1860 and the challenges it posed.

- New technologies and the role of industrialization
- Interactions between land and people
- Growth of network of roads, canals, and railroads
- Immigration and growth of cities
- Lives of free black Americans and their communities
- Development of free public education
- Birth of women's suffrage movement
- Themes in art and literature, such as individualism and transcendentalism

8.7 The South

Analyze life in the South from 1800 to 1860 and the challenges it posed.

- Development of a farming economy and the importance of cotton
- Slavery: beginnings, growth, effects
- White southern society and the effects of land on human activity
- Contrasts in lives of free blacks in North and South

8.8 The West

Analyze life in the West from 1800 to 1860 and the challenges it posed.

- Andrew Jackson and growth of democracy
- Causes and effects of expansion
- Changing roles of women in the West
- Importance of water and water rights
- Mexican settlements, culture, ideas
- Texas War for Independence and Mexican American War: causes, effects

8.9 Struggles over Slavery

Analyze efforts to abolish slavery and realize ideals of the Declaration of Independence.

- Efforts by leaders of abolition movements
- Abolition in early state constitutions
- Northwest Ordinance and its impact on education and slavery
- Slavery in the West, Compromise of 1850
- steps in the struggle over slavery: the State's Rights Doctrine, Missouri Compromise, Wilmot Proviso, Compromise of 1850, Henry Clay's efforts, Compromise of 1850, Kansas-Nebraska Act, Dred Scott decision, Lincoln-Douglas debates
- Challenges in the lives of free blacks

8.10 The Civil War

Analyze the causes, key events, and consequences of the Civil War.

- Conflict between states' rights and strong federal authority
- North and the South: different landscapes, economies, political ideas
- Significance of Doctrine of Nullification in origins of secession
- Relationship of Lincoln's ideas to Declaration of Independence
- Civil War leaders and soldiers
- Civil War's key events, advantages and disadvantages on each side
- Effects of the Civil War

8.11 The Reconstruction Era

Analyze the characteristics and consequences of Reconstruction.

- Aims of Reconstruction and its effects in different regions
- Migration of former slaves to the North and West
- Effects of the Freedmen's Bureau and beginnings of racial segregation
- Rise of the Ku Klux Klan
- Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments

8.12 The Industrial Revolution

Analyze the impact of industrialization.

- Patterns of change in farming and industry
- Forces shaping Federal Indian Policy, leading to Plains Wars
- Government support for business
- Role of big business in politics, commerce, and industry
- Patterns and consequences of immigration, urbanization, and industrialization
- Reasons for birth of labor movement
- Effects of new immigration and cultural diversity
- Granger and Populist reform ideas
- Significant inventors and inventions

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