



11th-12th Grade Guidance for Designing Literacy Tasks in the Social Science Classroom

(Literacy tasks have reading and writing about social science topics at the core of all multi day lessons/units).



11th-12th Grade Literacy Task Design

The purpose of providing guidance for designing literacy tasks is to provide classroom teachers with crucial steps in designing high quality student learning tasks that integrate reading and writing aligned with the standards. This document provides guidance into the necessary steps of task design. Literacy tasks should be a part of multi-day lessons and units in order to integrate and implement the standards.

Steps for Designing Literacy Tasks

Step 1 Determine the focus of the task. Standards can be clustered to help drive a number of key components of multi-day lessons/units. (For example, essential questions, assessments, writing to reading prompts, etc.) Examples of ways standards can be clustered for a task are as follows:

Possible Combined Standards for Literacy Task Prompts

- Cite evidence to evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence
Clustered Standards: (RH. 1 & 6)

- Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats/media/texts in order to address a question or solve a problem.
Clustered Standards: (RH. 1 & 7)

- Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
Clustered Standards: (RH.1 & 8)







- Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.
Clustered Standards: (RH.1 & 3)

- Cite evidence and integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.
Clustered Standards: (RH.1 & 9)

RH: Reading for History/Social Studies

Step 2

Determine anchor text (focus text) and coordinating texts/multimedia to accompany the anchor text.

Literacy Task Texts	Anchor Text		Coordinating Text		Coordinating Text
	 Textbook Segment	+	 Article	+	 Video
	Anchor Text		Coordinating Text		Coordinating Text
	 Article	+	 Primary Source	+	 Textbook Segment

Online Resources for Texts

- **Illinois Classrooms in Action Social Science Resources** – This site provides teachers with a one-stop shop of all resources for Illinois Social Science Teachers:
<http://www.ilclassroomsinaction.org/social-science.html>
- **Readworks** – www.readworks.org: ReadWorks provides research-based units, lessons, and authentic, leveled non-fiction and literary passages directly to educators online, **for free**, to be shared broadly. The link for Social Studies content is as follows:
<http://www.readworks.org/social-studies-reading-passages>
- **Newsela** – www.newsela.com: Newsela is a free resource that presents articles on a range of topics such as: War and Peace, Science, Kids, Money, Law, Health, Arts, and Sports. The system enables you to convert the articles into higher or lower Lexiles so you can use them with any grade from 3-12.
- **Library of Congress** - <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/>: The Library of Congress offers classroom materials to help teachers effectively use primary sources. Grade Specific Primary Source Information is at the following link:
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/standards/standards.php?standards=common&st=CCK12&gr=6&su=Language+Arts&loid=&formLocation=> Choose a grade level and search for resources.

Step #3

Develop questions for each text using the reading standards for 9th-10th grades. Question Guidance: <http://achievethecore.org/page/46/complete-guide-to-creating-text-dependent-questions>

Question Consideration: Transform the following *Reading for History/Social Science Standards* into questions/tasks/activities throughout the unit.

RH.1	<input type="checkbox"/> Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
RH.2	<input type="checkbox"/> Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
RH.3	<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.
RH.4	<input type="checkbox"/> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines <i>faction</i> in <i>Federalist No. 10</i>).
RH.5	<input type="checkbox"/> Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.
RH.6	<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.
RH.7	<input type="checkbox"/> Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
RH.8	<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
RH.9	<input type="checkbox"/> Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.
RH.10: By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.	

Step 4

Determine what type of writing required by students to show understanding of content we want students to do during and/or after to show understanding and hold thinking.

Writing in the Social Science classroom should happen routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences (WHST.10).

When creating culminating task/writing prompts, teachers can return to step 1 to view clustered standards for ideas. The standards require students to be able to write arguments (WHST.1) and informational/explanatory (WHST.2) writings. Writing can appear in many forms – from note taking, to short summaries, to learning logs, essays, a quick write or a formal report. See the following link for the 9th-10th Grade Social Science Writing Standards: <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/WHST/9-10/>

Task Template for Culminating Tasks

The following task frame is **one way** to design a prompt where students can show their learning after reading/researching a variety of sources.

Today you will research _____ by reading _____ and watching a video clip about _____. As you review these resources think about the following question:
“ _____?”
Gather evidence from each source to answer the question.

Classroom Sample

After researching the Arab Spring and pre-Revolution America, students write an evidence-based essay that explains the differences and similarities between the conditions leading to the Arab Spring with those leading to the American Revolution, drawing conclusions and implications from the evidence.