

Transcript to Accompany NYSED Enduring Issues Essay Update Video Presentation

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The New York State Education Department presents an Enduring Issues Essay Update, May 2017, narrated by Donna Merlau and Dan King from the Office of State Assessment.

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The New York State Education Department, the Content Advisory Panel, and the Field are in a partnership. We worked together to create the NYS K–12 Social Studies Framework and to lay the groundwork for the new Global History and Geography II assessment, as well as the new United States History and Government assessment. We have sought the field’s input through various surveys on several occasions.

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Three different Regents examinations in Global History and Geography are currently in various stages of development.

- The first is the current-style examination in Global History and Geography based on two years of study, Grades 9 and 10. This examination measures the New York State Learning Standards for Social Studies (published in 1996) and the skills and content for Grades 9 and 10 found in the Social Studies Resource Guide and Core Curriculum (published in 1998). The current-style exam has 50 multiple-choice questions, one thematic essay, and one DBQ essay with scaffold questions.
- The second is the Transition Regents Examination in Global History and Geography based on one year of study, Grade 10. This examination will measure the New York State Learning Standards for Social Studies and the skills and content for Grade 10 found in the Social Studies Resource Guide and Core Curriculum in Units 5–8, which are found on pages 105–120. Skills-based questions from the Methodology Unit, found on pages 92–93, may also be measured on this examination if the content of the questions relates to Units 5–8. The essays will be based on the themes on page 89 and topics in Units 5–8. This includes human and physical geography. Note that the themes and concepts assessed are defined on pages 8–11 and the skills are presented on pages 12–18.
- The third is the **new** Regents Examination in Global History and Geography II, which is different from both the current-style examination and the Transition examination. The new Global History and Geography II examination is based on Grade 10 and will measure the content and skills in the NYS K–12 Social Studies Framework that was approved by the Board of Regents in April 2014. The new Global History & Geography II examination will have three parts:
 - 25–30 stimulus-based multiple-choice questions
 - 2 or 3 sets of short-answer constructed-response questions, and
 - 1 extended Enduring Issues essay. The Enduring Issues essay does not include scaffold questions. The Enduring Issues essay is the topic of this presentation.

The number of multiple-choice questions and short-answer constructed-response questions included on the new Global History & Geography II examination will be determined based on timing studies and, once established, will be consistent from one administration to the next.

- Please refer to Steve Katz’s November 2016 memo for more information on the Transition Timeline for Global History and Geography. The memo can be found at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/ss/hs/ghg-faqtransitiontimeline.pdf>.

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We have used Evidence-Centered Design, or ECD, to create the new Regents examination in Global History and Geography II. ECD is a systematic process intended to ensure comparable scores across multiple test forms. ECD is a way to focus testing on the most valuable aspects of learning: skills and content. Skills and content are the first domain in ECD development, and they are rooted in the Framework.

ECD uses claims about what students can do, evidence of student achievement of those claims, and performance level descriptors, or PLDs, that define the level at which a student has demonstrated evidence of meeting a claim. You will see the terms claims, evidence, and PLDs later in this presentation when we discuss ECD as it applies specifically to the Enduring Issues Essay.

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The Social Studies Practices represent the social studies skills found in the Framework. The Practices represent social science and historical thinking skills that students should develop throughout their K–12 education. The Practices are also rooted in the five Social Studies Standards: United States and New York State History; World History; Geography; Economics; and Civics, Citizenship, and Government.

- “Gathering, Interpreting, and Using Evidence” is rooted in Standards 1–5: United States and New York State History, World History, Geography, Economics, and Civics
- “Chronological Reasoning and Causation” is rooted in Standards 1 and 2: the history standards
- “Comparison and Contextualization” is rooted in Standards 1 and 2: the history standards and has applications in other social science areas such as geography, economics, and civics
- “Geographic Reasoning” is rooted in Standard 3: Geography
- “Economics and Economic Systems” is rooted in Standard 4: Economics
- “Civic Participation” is rooted in Standard 5: Civics, Citizenship, and Government

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The NYS K–12 Social Studies Framework is structured around Key Ideas, Conceptual Understandings, and Content Specifications, which form the content base. The new Global History and Geography II examination is tied to **both** the content and the Social Studies Practices found in the Framework.

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The new Regents Examination in Global History and Geography II has three parts:

- 25–30 stimulus-based multiple-choice questions,
- 2 or 3 sets of stimulus-based constructed-response questions, or CRQs, and
- 1 Enduring Issues essay with no scaffold questions

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The Enduring Issues Essay will always have the same prompt on every exam, with each exam providing a different set of five documents. Students will identify and define an enduring issue found within the provided documents, and argue why the issue is enduring and significant.

An enduring issue is a challenge or problem that a society has faced and debated or discussed across time. An enduring issue is an issue that many societies have attempted to address with varying degrees of success.

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Here are the guidelines that are being used in the construction of Enduring Issues Essay document sets:

- Each essay will have a total of five documents
- At least **one** document in the set of five will be connected to Key Ideas 10.1 through 10.6 in the Framework
- At least **two** documents will be connected to Key Ideas 10.7 through 10.10 in the Framework
- At least **one** of the five documents will be a visual, such as a cartoon, map, photograph, chart, timeline, or graph
- More than one enduring issue will be found within each document
- Common enduring issues will be found across the five documents
- Availability of potential outside information will be considered when constructing each Enduring Issues Essay

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Earlier in this presentation, it was mentioned that this examination has been constructed using Evidence-Centered Design, which uses claims, evidence, and performance level descriptors, or PLDs, to ensure reliability across forms and to focus tests on the most important aspects of learning.

There are four claims around which the Global History and Geography II examination design has been built. The Enduring Issues Essay is tied to Claim 4: “Students can analyze disciplinary-based (e.g., geographic, economic, political, and/or historical) issues and demonstrate an informed course of action”; and to Claim 1: “Students can analyze sources and use evidence to create and analyze disciplinary-based (e.g., geographic, economic, political, and/or historical) claims.”

This chart shows the performance level descriptors, or PLDs for various levels, indicating what a student may demonstrate as evidence of meeting claims 4 and 1.

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Here is the task for the Enduring Issues Essay, which will be the same for every administration of the test.

An enduring issue is a challenge or problem that a society has faced and debated or discussed across time. An enduring issue is one that many societies have attempted to address with varying degrees of success.

In their essays, students will have to identify and define an enduring issue raised by the set of documents provided. They will have to use their knowledge of social studies and evidence from the documents to argue why the issue they selected was significant and how it has endured across time.

In writing their essays, students will need to be sure to

- Identify the issue based on a historically accurate interpretation of three documents
- Define the issue using evidence from *at least three* documents
- Argue that this is a significant issue that has endured by showing:
 - How the issue has affected people or has been affected by people, and
 - How the issue has continued to be an issue or has changed over time
- Include outside information from their knowledge of social studies and evidence from the documents

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The Office of State Assessment, using feedback from teachers in the field and working with the CAP, has created a list of possible Enduring Issues (see document set). It is essential to understand that the Enduring Issues list is not prescriptive. It is also not all-inclusive or comprehensive. It is not to be memorized. It is a suggested list of possible enduring issues and it represents only one method of thinking about enduring issues. Trying to teach the Enduring Issues list as something to be memorized is not recommended and may become a disadvantage to students by creating unnecessary barriers to their thinking about enduring issues.

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Here is a sample from the Enduring Issues list. Enduring Issues can be thought of as having “nested” components. In this sample, the enduring issue is Human Rights Violations. This issue has nested components that students might identify within individual documents. We call these “nested issues” as they may be possible subsets of a broader issue. Nested issues within the broader enduring issue of Human Rights include: injustice, inequality, discrimination, exclusion, unfair treatment, cruel treatment, persecution for beliefs, and so on.

Students can identify issues within individual documents and then categorize those issues across documents to identify their Enduring Issue.

Understand that in the columns provided next to the Enduring Issues are connections to the Key Ideas in both grade 10 and grade 9 so that teachers can find ways to integrate this into their lesson planning and make connections between issues and key ideas.

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Another example of an Enduring Issue with nested issues is Conflict, which contains the nested issues of war, competition, armed struggle, resistance, and threats to balance of power.

It is important to note that Enduring Issues can be expressed positively or negatively.

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The concept of “Nested Issues” mentioned earlier is one way to think about Enduring Issues. When choosing an Enduring Issue to write about, a student might choose one of the issues we’ve identified in the Enduring Issues column of the chart we looked at earlier (slide 14); they might pick one of the “nested issues” as their Enduring Issue”; **or**, they might select an Enduring Issue of their own.

What presents itself as a nested issue in one document set might be the Enduring Issue in a different document set; it depends on the documents provided and on the student’s perspective.

For example, one document set could contain the nested issues of discrimination, inequality, and threats to cultural identity, which could all be categorized under the Enduring Issue of “human rights violations.” In a different document set, inequality could be the Enduring Issue if that document set contains issues related to inequality such as discrimination or apartheid.

Remember that the Enduring Issues list is not prescriptive. Students **do not** have to pick one of the issues we have selected as examples. Any issue a student can identify and can argue has endured across time and has significantly affected people, using support from the documents and their outside information, qualifies as an enduring issue.

It is important to teach students a process for identifying issues in each document and how to categorize those issues rather than having students apply an issue from a memorized list to a document set. A memorized issue as the enduring issue may be an artificial fit for a given document set and may make it more difficult for a student to produce a well-written essay.

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Here is the process by which a student should identify their Enduring Issue.

1. Students should read and analyze each of the five documents in the document set
2. Students should determine the issues in each document
3. Students should group the issues they find under a common category that encompasses all those issues. That common category is the student’s possible Enduring Issue.

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After identifying a possible Enduring Issue across the document set, students need to make sure that:

- the issue they’ve chosen affected people or has been affected by people
- the issue has continued to be an issue or has changed over time

If the issue they’ve chosen does not meet **both** criteria, it is not suitable as an Enduring Issue.

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To define means to explain features of a thing or concept so that it can be understood. In defining their chosen Enduring Issue, students will need to use information from **at least** three of the documents in the document set, as well as apply their social studies knowledge.

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The Enduring Issue a student identifies will depend on the documents provided, the context of those documents, and the perspective the student uses to interpret those documents. This set of circumstances will affect how the Enduring Issue is defined.

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Let's work with the prototype Enduring Issue essay found on EngageNY. Here is the first document in that five-document set. It is a quote from Julius Streicher, a member of the Nazi Party. What types of issues can be identified in this document?

(PAUSE 30 SECONDS)

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Here are some of the issues identified by SED staff within the Streicher document.

In yellow, we've highlighted language that points to the manipulation of nationalistic feelings and appeals to ultranationalism. These issues could potentially fit within the category of "impact of nationalism."

In blue, we've highlighted language that points to Jews being denied the right to make a living, which could be categorized under "human rights violations."

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Here is document two in this five-document set. It is an eyewitness account of growing up in Ukraine under Stalin. Read the document and think about what issues are included within it.

(PAUSE 30 SECONDS)

Some issues that could be included within this document are: the Holodomor; human rights violations; cruel treatment of Ukrainians by Russians; ethnic tensions between Russians and Ukrainians; Soviet campaigns against Ukrainian nationalism; and manipulation of nationalistic feelings.

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Here is document three in this five-document set. It is an excerpt from a resolution by the United Nations General Assembly, unanimously adopted on December 9, 1948. Read the document. What issues can be identified within it?

(PAUSE 30 SECONDS)

Some issues that can be identified within document 3 are: genocide; human rights violations; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of a group; deliberately inflicting upon a group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction; forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

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Here is document four in this set. It is an account by Debbie Wolfe about growing up as a white child under apartheid. Read the document, and think about what issues can be identified within it.

(PAUSE 30 SECONDS)

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Here are some of the issues identified by SED staff within the apartheid document.

In yellow, we've highlighted language that points to apartheid and language describing discrimination and inequality. These could be classified as "human rights violations."

In blue, we've highlighted language describing social class tensions and unfair distribution of power. This could be categorized under the broader category of "power."

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Here is the fifth and last document in this set. It is a map showing the division of British India into India and Pakistan, as well as movement of refugees and locations of inter-communal conflicts. Look at this document and think about what issues can be identified within it.

(PAUSE 30 SECONDS)

Some issues that can be identified within document 5 include: tensions between Hindus and Muslims; impact of imperialism; conflict; impact of nationalism; fear of discrimination; and impact of refugees.

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To identify or name an Enduring Issue across this set of documents, let's review what students have to do:

1. Analyze each of the documents
2. Determine the issues in each document
3. Group those issues under a common category that encompasses all the other issues

Then ...

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The issue that they pick has to meet the following criteria:

1. It has affected people or has been affected by people
2. It has continued to be an issue or has changed over time

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What Enduring Issue might a student identify across this set of five documents?

Human Rights Violations is one enduring issue that a student might have chosen based on how they categorized the issues they found in these five documents.

This image of eggs in a nest is a metaphor we came up with to represent the idea of Enduring Issues and nested issues. In this image, we have the Enduring Issue — represented by the nest — labeled “human rights violations.” Within the nest are three eggs. These eggs represent the nested issues of forced starvation of Ukrainians (as found in document 2), discrimination through boycotting (as found in document 1), and apartheid (as found in document 4). The student identified the nested issues from analysis of the individual documents, then categorized them within the broader category of “human rights violations” — that broader category is their Enduring Issue.

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Here is another nest showing how the same document set could lead a student to pick a different enduring issue: in this case, nationalism.

In this scenario, the student found the nested issues of encouraging ultra-nationalism (in document 1), Soviet campaign against Ukrainian nationalism (found in document 2), and impact of nationalism on Hindu and Muslim migrations (found in document 5).

This student has categorized the nested issues they identified into the broader category of “nationalism.” Nationalism is their enduring issue. Remember that all Enduring Issues must meet the criteria of affecting people or being affected by people, and continuing to be an issue or changing over time.

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Not all students will categorize their issues wisely. This nest shows how a student might correctly identify some issues in the documents: Jewish shops being boycotted (document 1), separate train platform for blacks (document 4), and grain stolen from Ukrainians (document 2), but wrongly categorizes them as all fitting within the larger category, the Enduring Issue, of “boycotting.”

Because the issues this student identified don’t all fit within the broader category of “boycotting,” this student has misinterpreted the issue. When this occurs, the student may have difficulty meeting all of the criteria called for in the task.

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Thank you very much for watching this presentation. We hope you have found it useful. To accompany this presentation, we have provided a document set that will be useful to you in your schools. This includes a transcript of this presentation.

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If you have any questions or comments, please e-mail the Office of State Assessment at emscassessinfo@nysed.gov
