

David Randall: Recommendations for the SBOE on the Work Group Draft Documents

February 2026

Please review the Work Group Draft Documents and provide your input either by individual grade level, grade level groups, or as a whole document. Include the following information per step 24 in the process. Grade Level recommendations on additional work to be completed

- General Statements about the draft?
 - *Content Knowledge Focus:* The TEKS should have a content knowledge focus, not a skills focus. The Workgroups made a great many changes to re-introduce an unnecessary-to-counterproductive skills focus. All these suggested additions should be removed. Indeed, it would be better to eliminate every verb such as *analyze* or *explain* or *evaluate*, and simply have a list of content knowledge. Skills listed briefly at the bottom of each grade’s standard is a better choice.
 - *Inquiry-Based Impositions:* Relatedly, the Workgroups inserted a great deal of “inquiry-based learning” pedagogy. These should not be inserted into the TEKS. Teachers may use these if they so desire, but they should not be required to use that pedagogy.
 - *Civic Thinking Skills:* It is worth noting that the Workgroups appended *Civic Thinking Skills* and *multiple perspectives* disproportionately to material that they appeared to be uncomfortable with in substance. This disproportionate application of a “skill” as a way to require “problematization” of select topics is another reason to remove the skills focus generally from the TEKS.
 - *Abbreviation:* The workgroups abbreviated a great deal of material on various grounds—age appropriateness, excessive detail, teacher autonomy. These arguments are belied by the material they retained or added. All such abbreviations largely seem to be in service of substantive curricular preferences that are not within the Workgroups’ remit. The especially marked desire to remove material relating to Faith and Liberty registers that the Workgroups curricular preferences, rather than an actual need to abbreviate material, is at issue. I have recommended restoring much of what the Workgroups abbreviated, since it is both essential for social studies instruction and part of the Outline approved by the SBOE. I have made these recommendations not least because 1) core social studies material ought to be specified in the TEKS; and 2) a content-knowledge focus TEKS may appear longer than a skills-focus TEKS, but it actually takes up less classroom time. The Workgroups’ unfamiliarity with or dislike of a content-focus approach may be leading them to overestimate the difficulty of the content-focus approach.
 - *Excessive Initiative in Workgroups:* The Workgroups for World Geography, World History, and United States History, and United States Government were particularly eager to make substantive changes that distorted the intent of the Outlines. World Geography was the worst offender. Those Workgroups might consider that their initiative has carried them more than usually beyond their remit.

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- *Specification*: Uses of “e.g.” and “such as” generally should be transformed to “including”.
 - *Impact*: The word *impact* generally should be transformed to *affect*, *effect*, or *consequence*. *Impact* generally only should be used to discuss artillery barrages.
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- What work should be completed in the next work group convening?
 - They could remove all skills and inquiry-based education language, so as to present a content-knowledge focused draft.

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Kindergarten

(1)(D) “Relations” should include war and diplomacy; the examples reduce “relations” to economics.

(2)(A) No “e.g.” necessary; the addition names all three ships of the first expedition.

(3) The additions weaken the geographic requirements from precise knowledge to fuzzy “sorta have it” knowledge. Preferred verbs are “locate” and “identify”.

(4)(D) Should restore “Identify Plymouth Rock as a symbol.” It is extraordinarily famous and worth classroom time to mention.

(7) Should restore Washington as a Youth [(7)(B)] as a category. Should not streamline content; Washington is the Father of Our Country.

(13) Only include “artifacts using historical sources” if that will not reduce essential classroom time of the Other Symbols (Bald Eagle, Liberty Bell, Statue of Liberty, National Anthem).

(14) Remove “by applying inquiry and research methods to create and answer questions.” There should be no state requirement for “inquiry-based education” or any of its components. Note: “to demonstrate understanding of information gathered” is a catch-phrase of inquiry-based education, but does not require inquiry-based education. Therefore it may be retained.

(15) Should not be “such as”, since that will allow teachers not to present core content. “Including” is preferable, throughout.

(16) Should not be “such as”, since that will allow teachers not to present core content. “Including” is preferable, throughout.

(17) Should not be “such as”, since that will allow teachers not to present core content. “Including” is preferable, throughout.

(19) I am skeptical of the low estimate of kindergarteners’ abilities. Note that “impact” should never be used, and that TEA should substitute *affect*, *effect*, or *consequence*, as appropriate.

(20) Should restore the story of the Key and the Kite. It is Franklin’s most important scientific discovery by a country mile, vivid, and easily comprehensible by Kindergarteners.

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Grade One

(2)(A) The additions weaken the geographic requirements from precise knowledge to fuzzy “sorta have it” knowledge. Preferred verbs are “locate” and “identify”.

(3)(D) I am skeptical of the low estimate of Grade One students’ abilities. This should be restored.

(4) The Texas Declaration of Independence should be associated explicitly in instruction with the American Declaration of Independence; I suggest its retention here. Paul Revere and his Ride is a foundational American story and should be retained.

(4)(B) Suggest retain Story of Paul Revere. It is foundational, easy to understand, associated with Longfellow’s iconic and memorable poem, and should be introduced early (here, Grade One) precisely to support spiraled, repeating knowledge when it is covered again in Grade 5. William Dawes, at least, also can be taught in Grade 1 by means of splendid parody poem, “The Midnight Ride of William Dawes”: <http://www.paul-revere-heritage.com/midnight-ride-william-dawes.html>

(4)(C) Suggest retain Crispus Attucks. Another foundational story. Should be introduced early (here, Grade One) precisely to support spiraled, repeating knowledge when it is covered again in Grade 5. Can be tied to Robert Hayden’s short, moving poem “Crispus Attucks”: <https://www.afropoets.net/roberthayden19.html>

(4)(C) Purpose of map location of Boston and Philadelphia is to learn the historical and civic geography of our country, not “to illustrate geographic features and relative location”.

(5) The Texas Declaration of Independence should be associated explicitly in instruction with the American Declaration of Independence; I suggest its retention here. Add Places and Dates as subcategories rather than removing them as categories.

(5)(A) Suggest keeping Stars and Stripes and America the Beautiful as separate topics, so they are both scanted to “maximize instructional time”.

(5)(B) Insertion of “by using pictures” suggests that no text will be used, which will minimize what actually can be taught about the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall. Suggest “by using pictures and text”.

(6) The Texas Declaration of Independence should be associated explicitly in instruction with the American Declaration of Independence; I suggest its retention here.

(7) Suggest keeping Stars and Stripes and America the Beautiful as separate topics, so they are both scanted to “maximize instructional time”.

(7) The Texas Declaration of Independence should be associated explicitly in instruction with the American Declaration of Independence; I suggest its retention here.

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(8) The Texas Declaration of Independence should be associated explicitly in instruction with the American Declaration of Independence; I suggest its retention here.

(8)(A) and (8)(B) Since (8) should be retained as a category, these subcategories (Austin, Travis) also should be retained here.

(9) The Texas Declaration of Independence should be associated explicitly in instruction with the American Declaration of Independence; I suggest its retention here.

(7)(B) Purpose of map location of the Lincoln Memorial is to learn the historical and civic geography of our country, not “to illustrate relative location”.

(9) “Artifacts” seems unnecessary.

(10) The focus of the “Civil Rights Movement” should be the historical Civil Rights Movements. The verb should be “Retell” or “Identify,” not “Compare”; there should be no phrase “of people in the past to people in the present”. Since the Workgroup recommends streamlining content elsewhere, they should not seek to add this content here.

(14) (including A, B, and C) All this should be retained. It is part of the early sequence of Texas history, and its absence will give the early and enduring impression that Texas had no American Indian history. Should be introduced early (here, Grade One) precisely to support spiraled, repeating knowledge when it is covered again in Grade 4.

(11) The Story of Antonio de Olivares & the Mission would appear to be more about the introduction of Catholicism to Texas than a story of “Spanish and Native cultures blend”. The addition seems unnecessary and distorting.

(11)(B) “Spanish missions and presidios” should be introduced early (here, Grade One) precisely to support spiraled, repeating knowledge when it is covered again in later grades.

(11)(C) “Spanish and Native cultures blend” is appropriate as a separate subtopic. It should be introduced early (here, Grade One) precisely to support spiraled, repeating knowledge when it is covered again in later grades.

(12) Specify other Settlement of Texas & Texas Heroes Stories to replace those of Austin, Travis, and the Alamo, since those should be retained above.

(14) I am skeptical of the low estimate of Grade One students’ abilities. “Countries” should be restored.

(15) Remove “Apply inquiry and research methods to create and answer questions about.” There should be no state requirement for “inquiry-based education” or any of its components. Note: “to demonstrate understanding of information gathered” is a catch-phrase of inquiry-based education, but does not require inquiry-based education. Therefore it may be retained.

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(15)(A-D): Should not be “such as”, since that will allow teachers not to present core content. “Including” is preferable, throughout.

(15, 20) Retain “Oil in Texas led to new towns, transportation and products” as a distinct category or subcategory. The amalgamation is more confusing than the original.

(20)(Content Questions): The word “including” would allow teachers to add “local examples”.

(20)(Alignment) The Amplify curriculum is aligned with the Common Core, which has had negative effects on student achievement nationwide. If the Key Topics happen to align with Amplify, this should not be taken as an excuse to align Texas’ education with the Common Core’s failed framework.

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Grade Two

(1) The additions weaken the geographic requirements from precise knowledge to fuzzy “sorta have it” knowledge. Preferred verbs are “locate” and “identify”.

(2) Suggest replace “e.g. Leaders (kings, chiefs, presidents), Natural Resources available for daily life and innovations such as irrigation systems, farming, and aqueducts” with “including leaders (kings, legislators, prophets), faiths, civic and martial virtues, and technologies including farming, metallurgy, irrigation systems, and aqueducts).”

(3) Add “locate and” before “identify”.

(5) Remove “Apply inquiry and research methods to create and answer questions.” There should be no state requirement for “inquiry-based education” or any of its components. Note: “to demonstrate understanding of information gathered” is a catch-phrase of inquiry-based education, but does not require inquiry-based education. Therefore it may be retained.

(6) The emendations shift attention from the Constitutional Convention to the skills used to study the Constitutional Convention. This should be rephrased so that the focus is the Constitutional Convention itself and not the skills.

(6)(B) The focus should be on America as a whole—our republic. Delete “By making decisions together in the school and community”.

(6)(C) Recommend emend: “the purpose of the Constitution is to protect liberties and freedoms of Americans”. The Constitution doesn’t do this incidentally, but fundamentally.

(7) Recommend retain all of the War of 1812. It is a very important part of American history and merits sustained Grade 2 coverage.

(7)(A) Suggest retain “Strengthens American Identity”. Very important result of war; also important to teach children of the existence, endurance, and great positive value of their common American identity.

(7)(B-F) Recommend retain all War of 1812 subtopics. The workgroups are suggesting deleting a substantial amount of content approved by SBOE, and radically distorting the intent. All this material merits sustained Grade 2 coverage.

(9) Students should summarize using words, and not just pictures, maps, and charts. This rendition also subordinates content knowledge about the Texas Revolution to skills; this should be rephrased so the focus is the content, not the skills.

(9)(F) I believe the Battle of Goliad was intended, not the Massacre.

(10) Suggest retain Thomas Jefferson Rusk. His role in the Battle of San Jacinto merits mention.

(13) Suggest specifics be added, as per WG.

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(14) Suggest remove “including the economic benefits for self and community”, to retain focus on “How Immigrants and settlers came to and shaped Texas”.

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Grade Three

(1)(E) Suggest replace “shapes settlement patterns” with “laid the foundations for Western civilization”. Might add “law codes, empires” to the list of “irrigation systems” and the Phoenician alphabet.

(1)(E) Suggest retain “Phoenician alphabet and Texas and United States”; incredibly important contribution from Fertile Crescent. Strongly disagree with the contention that the origin of the alphabet is not “developmentally appropriate” for Grade Three students.

(1)(F) Suggest retain “slavery” and “prepare them for the afterlife”. Central to Egyptian civilization; developmentally appropriate. Knowing about Egyptian slavery is essential both for knowledge of Western civilization as a whole and for knowledge about world slavery. Preparing for the after life is one of the more alluring parts of Egyptian history for children; this suggestion would erase a time-tried classroom winner.

(2)(B): Suggest “Identify Land-Bridge Beringia, state when it possessed an ice-free corridor, and explain its role in the American Indian settlement of the Americas.”

(2)(D) The focus should be the Clovis culture as a whole, not just how it was shaped by physical geography.

(2)(E) Suggest retain Maya civilization. This is where it comes in the chronological sequence; students may never have another opportunity to learn about the Maya. Strongly doubt that teaching about the Maya would be developmentally inappropriate. See Louisiana’s Grade 4 Teacher Guide: https://doe.louisiana.gov/docs/default-source/academic-curriculum/unit-6-the-maya-teacher-guide.pdf?sfvrsn=92bd6118_1

(3)(A) Suggest specifying that one also can use words to help understand and analyze geography, and not just maps.

(3)(B) Suggest specifying that one also can use words to help the Gault Site, and not just pictures.

(3)(C-D) These are important distinctive points which not just be collapsed into the Gault Site.

(4)(A) Suggest specifying that it is not just physical geography that shapes settlement.

(4)(B) The existence of agricultural trade is an important datum. The argument for economic and social complexity in pre-Columbian North America depends significantly on its existence.

(4)(D) The Workgroup’s emendation makes this incoherent, as it attempts to amalgamate instruction in an economic concept and Precolumbian history.

(4)(E) Suggest remove “Identify ways people made decisions together through”, which is edu-school cliché that has no necessary relation to the actual history. Suggest restore the deleted materials; the varying geography, linked with social structure, is an essential part of this standard, and the Workgroup would eliminate it.

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(5)(A) Insert “and” between “Ancient Israel” and “Jerusalem”.

(5)(B) Should restore this standard entirely. The workgroups are suggesting deleting a substantial amount of content approved by SBOE, and radically distorting the intent. All this material merits sustained Grade 3 coverage.

(5)(D) Abraham always has been identified as the progenitor of the Jewish people, the nation of Israel. This deletion should be restored. Note that the Workgroup may be conflating the kingdom and the nation of Israel; one might emend to “Abraham who founded the nation of Israel” for clarity.

(6)(B) Recommend restore connection between Greek alphabet and the English alphabet used today in America and Texas; this connection helps satisfy the SBOE mandate for a stated proportion of American and Texan content. Also suggest retain polytheism. Both are important, and the concept of polytheism is distinct from specific knowledge about individual myths and legends.

(6)(C) Pottery also had a specific economic role (production, use for storing and trading wine, etc.). It is important as a primary source, but not only for that. If you are going to focus on primary sources, I would mention monumental inscriptions (epigraphy) – see this link, <https://www.atticinscriptions.com/papers/introduction-ae-teachers/>. Also allows connection to poem Ozymandias: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46565/ozymandias>

(6)(D) Suggest restore “their influence on”, not “make connections to”. These aren’t random parallels; the influence of the example of ancient Greece throughout the West, consciously known century after century, is part of what students need to know. Note that Grade Four, (4)(H) includes “influences”; if it is appropriate to discuss Mexican and South American cultural heritage, it is appropriate to discuss the Western heritage.

(7)(B) Suggest retain standard entirely. The Workgroup’s inability to suggest selected cuts itself registers the importance of every part of this standard.

(7)(B) “Research and answer questions about” shifts the focus from content knowledge to skills. This should be rephrased to clarify that learning these facts is central.

(18) Suggest retain standard entirely. The workgroups are suggesting deleting a substantial amount of content approved by SBOE, and radically distorting the intent. All this material merits sustained Grade 3 coverage. The comment that this is “Redundant” appears specious.

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Grade Four

- (1)(B) Endorse Workgroup suggestion to mention Ethiopia. Aksumite Empire also a possibility.
- (1)(E) Suggest retain gunpowder and printing, which possess great importance in world history, perhaps as part of an “including” list.
- (1)(F) “Distribution of resources” is unclear. “how goods were traded”?
- (2)(A) You need Israel on the map to understand the Crusades.
- (3)(A) Viking raids incredibly important for European and English history; suggest retain. See the Core Knowledge Foundation’s Vikings unit: <https://www.coreknowledge.org/free-resource/ckhg-unit-3-vikings/>.
- (3)(B) English common law should go with, or beneath, Magna Carta. Feudalism might be connected to property rights, and their influence on modern America and Texas.
- (4)(B) Physical geography not the only influence on settlement.
- (4)(D) Note that this includes the later Maya, but the earlier Maya also have to be in Grade 3, to fit the SBOE’s chronological requirements.
- (4)(E) I’m not a specialist, but I thought the quipus mattered—not just as a source, but as a civilizational accomplishment. Indeed, can we even “read” the quipus, to use them as a source?
- (4)(G) Glyph writing also is an accomplishment, but not necessarily a source. Aren’t the glyphs still imperfectly translated at best?
- (6)(B) Suggest retain entire “humanism” section. The Renaissance is about the rebirth of liberty, the refocus on human beings, and only thirdly about art. Indeed, the art derives from humanism, and needs humanism to explain it. This section should be reordered to be liberty, humanism, and art, in that order. Grade Four students can understand that there was a shift of interest to human beings, and their dignity and individuality.
- (7)(C) Columbus Day is a federal holiday that honors a great man. Nothing should be added to distract or detract students from learning about Columbus, his unique and world-changing, accomplishment, and why he continues to matter for America and for Texas. Further additions also can be used as an excuse to insert radical polemic into Texas social studies instruction, quite possibly in defiance of Texas state law. The TEA would be prudent not to provide material that can place Texas teachers and school districts in legal and financial jeopardy.
- (7)(E) Suggest you do not include this addition. It can be used as an excuse to insert radical polemic into Texas social studies instruction, quite possibly in defiance of Texas state law. The TEA would be prudent not to provide material that can place Texas teachers and school districts in legal and financial jeopardy.

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Grade Five

(1)(A) Suggest retain standard entirely. The Workgoup’s inability to suggest selected cuts itself registers the importance of every part of this standard.

(1)(B) Suggest retain standard entirely. The Workgoup’s inability to suggest selected cuts itself registers the importance of every part of this standard. Copernicus does not appear elsewhere in Grade Five.

(2)(A) Students know locate and identify European exploration in the Americas, not just “analyze” it.

(2)(F) Suggest retain standard entirely. Suggest do not add “Develop and utilize routines for civil discourse and engage in civil discourse including those with multiple perspectives about”. This phrase can be used as an excuse to insert radical polemic into Texas social studies instruction, quite possibly in defiance of Texas state law. The TEA would be prudent not to provide material that can place Texas teachers and school districts in legal and financial jeopardy.

(2)(G) Suggest retain standard entirely. The material can be presented appropriately for Grade 5 students.

(3))B) Move the section on Hernando de Soto up to section (2).

(4)(A) Privates and privateers refers to English, French, and Dutch pirates and privateers in the Atlantic and the Caribbean; it should not be amalgamated with the Ottoman empire. The battles of Malta, Lepanto, and Vienna should be retained; they helped change the course of history, and they highlight the Ottoman Empire’s confrontations with the Christian states of Europe. One might add the role of North African corsairs, under Ottoman sovereignty, to raid and take slaves from the Christian states.

(4)(B) Suggest retain standard entirely. The Workgoup’s inability to suggest selected cuts itself registers the importance of every part of this standard.

(4)(C) Privates and privateers refers to English, French, and Dutch pirates and privateers in the Atlantic and the Caribbean; it should not be amalgamated with the Ottoman empire.

(5)(B) The geographical character of the different colonial regions is crucial for explaining their relative dependence on slavery, among other essential historical facts. This should be included in any catalogue of traits.

(5)(E) Suggest restore “ideas”. The ideas are crucial in themselves for American history, and Grade 5 students should begin to learn the importance of intellectual history as a category of historical knowledge. “Merit,” aside from being an important secular concept, also has important religious roots. “Spiritual credit” before it is applied to this-worldly endeavor. Worth preserving.

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(5)(F) Suggest retain standard entirely; every part is important. What matters is the history of Jamestown and Plymouth, not “Evaluate the credibility of primary and secondary sources related to”. That phrase would be best removed.

(5)(H) Suggest retain “cooperation and conflict” phrase. It matters that both occurred, and that they are distinctive modes of interaction. “Interactions between” is banal edu-jargon that removes all salient details from history. John Woolman is a very important individual in American history—the most influential single colonial-era anti-slavery activist—and Grade 5 students should know about him.

(6)(B) The Great Awakening merits discrete coverage—including the individual role of George Whitfield.

(6)(C) The Enlightenment merits discrete coverage.

(6)(C) Suggest replacement phrase: “Identify the intellectual background and the institutions of self-government”.

(8)(A) “Minutemen”, not “Minuteman”.

(8)(C) Thomas Paine should be mentioned explicitly, perhaps in (8)(A).

(8)(B) The Declaration of Independence and Inalienable Rights refer to the same and crucial document. Abigail Adams’ quotation is a comment in a private letter, of importance for later expansions of the Declaration’s principles of liberty. They should not be amalgamated. Adams and her quotation should remain in a discrete substandard.

(9) and (10) The Declaration of Independence and the War for Independence are both important and deserve sustained individual attention. These two standards should be kept discrete.

(8)(D) Thomas Paine belongs in the Revolutionary section above; he was not a military figure. Nathaniel Greene very much should be mentioned, not least to teach students about the importance of the Southern theater in the War. I also would retain the Newburgh Conspiracy, as a vivid illustration that Washington’s leadership prevented real dangers to America’s tradition of liberty and self-government.

(9)(A-B) The Northwest Ordinance, and especially its forbidding of slavery, merit discrete coverage from the Articles of Confederation.

(9)(B) The Electoral College, and the rationale for its existence, are of continuing importance for America. This should be restored.

(9)(C) The rule of law really matters; it should be restored.

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Grade Six

(2)(B) Suggest remove “interpret economic data and models to”. Skills focus rather than content focus.

(5)(A) Suggest remove” “and understand that point of view and frame of reference in historical sources influence perspectives”. Focus should be content knowledge.

(5)(C) Suggest remove “apply foundational language skills to engage in civil discourse about the presidency of Andrew Jackson, including multiple perspectives”. Focus should be content knowledge.

(7)(C) Suggest remove “analyze historical data, ...” Focus should be content knowledge.

(8)(C) The inspiration from Moses, the Israelites, and the Exodus refers to the entire abolitionist movement, not just to Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.

(8)(D) Suggest do not use version ending with “using reasoning skills”. Unnecessary alteration of content-knowledge framework to skills framework.

(8)(E) How can you remove Sherman’s March to the Sea?!?

(9)(B) Do not use the Historical Thinking SS Skills version.

(9)(D) Do not use the Research and Inquiry SS Skills version.

(9)(H) Suggest new substandard: “describe government actions responding to economic and social conditions, including the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and the McKinley tariff.”

(9)(I) Do not use the Media Literacy SS Skills version.

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Grade Seven

(1)(C) Do not use the Historical Thinking SS Skills version.

(1)(E) Spindletop's effect on the economy, not just on society. Also are the technological effects of developing the oil industry.

(2)(B) Do not use the Media Literacy SS Skills version.

(3)(A) Restore "the Wall Street bombing of 1920". Important to specify that there were violent, effectively murderous radicals in America, to understand the reasons for the anti-radical movement.

(3)(B) Do not use the Research and Inquiry SS Skills version.

(3)(B) Restore *The Great Gatsby*—the students aren't being required to read it in class, just to know that it exists. But if age-appropriateness really is a problem, alternates could be Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop*; Sinclair Lewis' *Arrowsmith*; Thornton Wilder's *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*; and Robert Frost's *New Hampshire*.

(3)(D) Do not use the Geographic SS Skills version.

(4)(C) Do not use the Economic SS Skills version.

(5)(E) Do not use the Historical Thinking SS Skills version.

(9)(G-H) Suggest put antisemitism, the Nuremberg Laws, and Kristallnacht in one discrete standard.

(7)(B) Do not use the Media Literacy SS Skills version.

(7)(C) The industrialization of the South and West was military-focused, but led to general industrialization. The distinct role of military bases indeed would be a good addition.

(7)(E) Code talkers should be mentioned elsewhere. Computers and weaponry are a distinctive category of technological innovation.

(7)(I) Do not use the Civics SS Skills version.

(7)(J) If you add other Nazi mass-murders, you might mention the Slavs, the Gypsies, the disabled, and homosexuals.

(9)(B) Do not use the Historical Thinking SS Skills version.

(9)(D) The Civil Rights movement should not be segregated from the rest of American history. *Brown v. Board of Education* should be retained in Eisenhower's presidency.

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(10)(B) It doesn't hurt to mention more than once that Texans participated in the Civil Rights Movement.

(10)(C) Do not use the Historical Thinking SS Skills version.

(11) LBJ is an under-sung hero of the Civil Rights Movement. But perhaps "The Johnson Era" as a title?

(11)(A) Restore, and perhaps expand, if (11) is retitled as The Johnson Era. Have this standard discuss LBJ's biography.

(14)(A) The students already have discussed the Holocaust this year; they can discuss the Cambodian Genocide.

(14)(B) Better to have the Six Day War and Yom Kippur War here. Doesn't hurt to repeat coverage in Grade 8.

(18)(A) Do not use the Historical Thinking SS Skills version.

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Grade Eight

I will defer to Don Frazier on Grade 8 content generally. I generally would argue against the arguments of complexity, too much content, and coverage elsewhere. I have higher expectations of students and teachers, and spiraling doesn't hurt. Wherever the Workgroup suggests a SS Skills version, I strongly recommend against using it.

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World Geography

(General Note): The Workgroups stated that there was too little content. I note that there is a great deal of content for this subject, but that the Outline presented it very concisely, since the parallel structure had a repetitive effect on the page.

(1) Restore “History of geography and tools of cartography”; do not use “The Student applies geographic thinking skills to Think Like a Geographer”. Content knowledge should be the focus throughout, not skills; this is particularly important in World Geography, where too many students graduate with “geographic skills” but no geographic knowledge.

(1)(A) Do not use the Workgroup’s suggested language. This is a distortion of what was intended, not an elucidation. “Choices, limitations, and biases” above all distorts the intended content-knowledge focus.

(1)(C) Do not use this added standard. This is a distortion of what was intended, not an elucidation. World Geography should have a content-knowledge focus.

(1)(D) Do not use this added standard. This is a distortion of what was intended, not an elucidation. World Geography should have a content-knowledge focus.

(1)(E) Do not use this added standard. This is a distortion of what was intended, not an elucidation. World Geography should have a content-knowledge focus.

(1)(F) Do not use this added standard. This is a distortion of what was intended, not an elucidation. World Geography should have a content-knowledge focus.

(2) Do not use the Workgroup’s suggested language. This is a distortion of what was intended, not an elucidation. “Processes” above all distorts the intended content-knowledge focus.

(3-6) These four standards have been greatly increased in length, and given the same framework as previous World Geography standards. This is a distortion of what was intended, not an elucidation. World Geography should have a content-knowledge focus—and it should focus on historical geography, the history of civilizations, empires, and wars, and not on a superficial social-sciences approach to the contemporary world. None of these emendations should be accepted—and certainly not the additions in (3)(A), (3)(F), (4)(C), (5)(B), (5)(C), (5)(D), (6)(A), (6)(B), (6)(C), and (6)(D).

(7) This standard should focus on the geographical dimension of the history of civilizations, religions, philosophies, and exemplary architectural accomplishments. The Workgroup’s added language is a distortion of what was intended, not an elucidation. Every aspect focusing on “geography skills” and the contemporary world should be eliminated.

(8) This standard was meant to focus on the geographical dimension of the history of warfare. The Workgroup’s added language is a distortion of what was intended, not an elucidation. Every aspect focusing on politics and the contemporary world should be eliminated.

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(9) There should be separate, extended standards on the geographical dimensions of the history of empires and the history of technologies. Communication and transportation should be integrated into the geographical content knowledge about the history of civilizations, the history of warfare, the history of empires, and the history of technologies. It should be made clear that World Geography should focus far more on the historical material—the histories of civilizations, religions, philosophies, architectural accomplishments, empires, warfare, and technology—than it should on the contemporary material in standards (3-6). That material should be at most a quarter of the World Geography course.

(9-15) All thematic material should be integrated within the Regions of Study. The Regions of Study also should explicitly focus on fundamental map knowledge—the locations of the continents, the countries, the geological and geographic features, the current locations of major ethnic and religious groups. Students should not be assumed to have learned this material already; it should be reinforced by dedicated, spiraled instruction.

(13) Central Asia has far greater historical connections with South Asia. Central Asia should be kept united with South Asia, as part of the historical orientation of World Geography. “The Republics” also is a completely vague term. There is no reason to use it to replace Central Asia.

(Comments) Students should acquire basic knowledge of the geography, the historical geography, and (minimally) an outline of social studies knowledge of the contemporary world. The TEA should expect that every school district will ensure that its students acquire this knowledge about every region. The focus should be on the basic knowledge of the region, not “a cross-regional comparative lens.”

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World History Studies

(1) Retain “River Valley Civilizations”. They matter most and the focus should be on them. The point is to teach students what matters in World History, not to be “inclusive.” “Southwest Asian and Northwest African” likewise should be retained, as should specific mention of the neolithic age, ancient Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, and the ancient Levant. The origins of Western Civilization in the Fertile Crescent and Egypt merit sustained, dedicated attention. There is no need to add “using historical resources and geographic tools”; content knowledge focus, not skill focus. Ancient Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, and the ancient Levant each merit a standard of their own, as (1)(D-F).

(2) Restore “History of Kingdoms of Israel, Changes in Judaism from 500 BC to 200 AD). Essential components of World History.

(3)(A) Remove “by analyzing models of democratic processes”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(4) Remove “by analyzing patterns of continuity and change over time to explain historical transformation”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(4) Restore “Fall of the Roman Empire” as (4)(D).

(4)(A) Remove “by analyzing models of democratic processes”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(5)(B) Restore “Origins, meanings, and effects in history of the Nicene Creed.” Essential components of World History.

(6)(C) Remove “by assessing the impact of historical transformations on societies, economies, and political systems.” Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(7)(C) Remove “by assessing the impact of historical transformations on societies, economies, and political systems.” Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(8)(B) Restore as “Survival of Roman language, law, and culture in the Latin West.”

(8)(C) Charles Martel does matter. Alfred the Great would be an acceptable substitute.

(10) Remove “corroborate historical accounts by comparing multiple documents”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(10)(C) Remove “analyzing sources of economic information”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(11) Remove “Utilize reasoning skills such as sequencing, evaluating evidence, and contextualization” Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

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(11)(A) Restore “Indo-Persian culture”—extraordinarily important. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indo-Persian_culture. Note that recommendation to focus on “religious toleration” would be deceptive; period marked by Islamic destruction of Buddhism in India, and alternations between repression and tolerance of Hinduism—with repression gaining the upper hand toward 1700.

(11)(B) Workgroup misunderstands that the focus was the Mongol Conquest of China, not Mongol Conquests in general. The focus is Chinese history; scientific inventions matter, as does the Mongol Conquest.

(12) Remove “Analyze historical documents by examining their purpose, audience, and circumstance.” Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(12)(C) Do not place the Islamic slave trade here. It is appropriately placed with the other slave trades.

(13) Remove “by applying inquiry and research methods to craft evidence-based analysis by locating and researching a variety of relevant sources.” Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(13)(A-D) Restore all changes. These distort by compression and rearrangement.

(14) Remove added language, except “Understand”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(14)(B) Restore. This is important knowledge, which merits spiraled repetition.

(14)(D) Restore. This is not covered elsewhere—and is important knowledge.

(15)(A) Remove added language; substitute “Understand” for “Organize and evaluate”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(16)(A) Remove added language. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus. Restore “Aztec arrival in Mexico’s central valley, Aztec wars and dominance of the region”. Essential world historical knowledge—and highly relevant for Texas students, since this information determines the future course of history in Mexico, Texas’ neighbor.

(17)(A) Restore “westward”. Curious to know what direction the Workgroup thinks America is from Europe.

(17)(B) Restore all eliminated text; the nature and prevalence of world slave regimes is essential knowledge for world history. Remove all additions; content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(17)(C) Restore Spain in the Americas. All students should know about the Spanish Empire. Teachers should teach other empires as well, if they so desire, but Spain’s is essential. Remove all additions; content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(18) Remove added language, except “Understand”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

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(18)(B) Restore the Revolutionary Wars. They mattered as much as the Napoleonic Wars. E.g., you cannot understand the Haitian Revolution without knowing about the Revolutionary Wars.

(19) Remove added language, except “Understand”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(19)(C-D) The Industrial Revolution’s benefits and costs should be treated discretely, to forestall the temptation to skate over the benefits.

(20) Insert “Europe” at the end. “England” was a typographical error.

(20)(A) Insert “nineteenth-century” before “England”. Remove “Analyze models of democratic processes such as voting.” Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(21) Remove added language, except “Understand”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(21)(B) Restore “Apogee of British Raj”. The point was to focus on British India, not British imperialism generally. India and its particular history matters: this focus continues the previous focus on India throughout World History Studies.

(21)(C) Southeast Asia would be lovely, with world enough and time. As the Workgroups keep saying, there’s a lot of material. If you do include Southeast Asia, strong suggestion to include the Dutch East Indies, perhaps paired with earlier material on Java. Indonesia matters a great deal and is under-studied in American schools. But the priorities in this course should be India, China, and Japan.

(22) Remove added language, except “Understand”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(23) Remove added language, except “Understand”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(23)(A) Remove added language. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(24) Remove added language, except “Understand”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(24)(Comments) Workgroup correct that Chinese Revolution is 1911—but don’t know if changing the title to “India and China 1911 to 1945” might not align badly with section titles earlier. That decision needs to be made with a look backwards.

(24)(A) Add “including Indian nationalism, Mohandas Gandhi, the Congress Party, and the All-India Muslim League”.

(25) Remove added language, except “Understand”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(25) Should include the Fall of Nazism and Fascism somewhere, since it’s been removed from (24).

(25)(B) Keep “Course”. If you have Causes and Consequence, but no Course, students don’t actually learn what happened.

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(26) Remove added language, except “Understand”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(26)(C) Restore Lech Walesa, who really matters.

(26)(E-F) Restore both standards. Details can be added for both culture and religion, to give this specificity.

(27)(B) Restore postwar Japan language. These are the most important aspects of modern Japanese history.

(27)(C) Restore “British Raj’s end.” Really matters, needs to be mentioned somewhere, and Partition of India makes no sense without it.

(28) Remove added language, except “Understand”. Content knowledge focus; not skills focus.

(28)(C) Suggested recommendations (radical Islam, 9/11) acceptable.

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Economics

(General) Remove all added language that shifts from content knowledge to skills. This includes (2), (3)(A), (4)(A), (5)(A), (6), (7), (10), (12)(C), (13)(C), (13)(D), (15)(A), (16)(B), (16)(C), (19), (21)(D), (23), (26), (34)(F), (36)(A), (36)(B), (38)(B), (39)(A), (40)(C) [(40)(C), exceptionally may be acceptable], (46)(A), (55), and (57)(G).

(General) I will defer to Rob Koons on Economics content generally.

(7-9) Restore Keynesian economics, monetarism, and Austrian economics. I know they're mentioned elsewhere now, but I fear the shift away from this section will undermine this section's coherence and comprehensivity. But I will defer to Rob Koons if he's OK with these changes.

(10)(A) Remove "model". Reality, not models, is what students should learn.

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United States History Studies

(General) Remove all added language that shifts from content knowledge to skills. This includes (1)(A), (3)(C), (4)(D), (5)(A), (6)(B), (8)(B), (8)(C), (8)(D), (11)(A), (13)(A), (13)(E).

(General) The Workgroup pervasively attempts to remove essential content, heading toward a hasty, abstracted digest of American history. Its instincts are wrong throughout.

(1) The history of pre-Columbian peoples before contact should be a discrete contact. Migrations, technologies, social structure, and culture, all should be taught.

(1)(A) Restore “(French, Spanish, Dutch, and Swedish)”. Spiraling necessary; knowledge should not be assumed.

(2) Workgroup emendation now incoherent. English Colonies in North America is a good topic.

(2)(B) Retain focus on Virginia, including House of Burgesses. Individual study matters before you can proceed to comparison.

(2)(B) Retain separate study of Plymouth Colony and Mayflower Compact.

(2)(C) English colonies self-rule refers to the time between foundation and revolution. Examples should be drawn from the intervening 150-odd years.

(2)(D) Inheritance is true and vivid; “roots” is vaguer.

(2)(E) The specific institutions matter; “principles of self-rule” is a vague abstraction; restore common law, juries, and militia service.

(2)(F) Restore Colonial Wars. Matter in themselves as a vital aspect of Colonial America, not just as the French-and-Indian-War prologue to the American Revolution.

(2)(G) Restore society and culture. Matters—including Scots-Irish and German immigration.

(2)(I) First Great Awakening matters for colonial America, and not just as a cause of the American Revolution.

(3)(A) Restore all these details, which are not addressed sufficiently elsewhere.

(3)(B) Restore all these details, which are essential for American history.

(3)(B) This is about the intellectual role of significant Americans. It should be maintained as a discrete topic.

(3)(D) Since French and Indian War should stay above, changes here not necessary.

(3)(F) Individuals here are meant to be mentioned for their political and military roles. Individuals that matter should be explicitly mentioned in the final standards.

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(4)(B) Anti-slavery effect of Northwest Ordinance crucial; should be restored.

(4)(D) Restore mention of particular Federalist Papers to be read. The choice matters and these are vital for students to know.

(5)(A) Specifying the presidencies of Washington, Adams, and Jefferson matters—not least so students know that these presidents’ particular choices and policies significantly influenced the course of American history.

(General, hereafter) The Workgroup simply deletes essential material with the excuses that there is no time or that material has been covered before. Neither of these explanations is adequate or acceptable. All material should be restored, including (7), (8), (10), (6)(B), (6)(B), (7)(A), (7)(B), (7)(E), (8)(B), (16), (17), (18), (8)(C), (8)(D) [not just geography; economic, demographic, etc.]; (9)(A) [restore religion and add a sub-standard devoted to it], (24)(E), (10)(A) [Purchase of Alaska], (11)(A), (11)(C), (12)(B) [battles], (12)(E), (14) [Reagan’s presidency], (50)(B), (50)(C), (50)(D), (51)/(13)(E).

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United States Government

(General) Remove all added language that shifts from content knowledge to skills. This includes (2)(B), (3)(A), (11), (12), (12)(A), (12)(B), (13), (19), (26), (27)(A), (27)(B), (27)(C), (27)(D), (29), (30), (31), (33), (35), (36), (37).

(General) The Workgroup simply deletes essential material with the excuses that there is no time, that material has been covered before, or that it is not appropriate. None of these explanations is adequate or acceptable. All material should be restored, including (3)(A), (3)(B), (6), (7) [study of the grievances in the Declaration should be distinct from the Declaration itself], (9), (9)(A), (10)(A), (10)(B), (8), (11), (18) [enumerated], (31), (32), (37), (38)(A), (38)(B), (39), (39)(B), (39)(C),

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Personal Financial Literacy

(General) Remove all added language that shifts from content knowledge to skills. This includes (1), (3), (4), (6)(C), (6)(D), (6)(E), (6)(F), (6)(G), (7)(A), (7)(D), (7)(F), (7)(G), (7)(H), (7)(I), (8)(C), (9)(B), (10), (12)(A).

(9)(F-G) These have been moved—and, I think consolidated. Recommend that these are kept uncompressed, wherever located.

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Psychology

(General) Remove all added language that shifts from content knowledge to skills. This includes (1), (5), (7), (8), (9), (10), (12), (13), (14), (19), (21), (26), (29), (32).

(General) I will defer to Rob Koons on Psychology content generally.

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Sociology

(General) Remove all added language that shifts from content knowledge to skills. This includes (2)(A), (3)(A), (4)(A), (9)(C), (11)(B), (12)(B), (16)(C), (17)(A), (19)(A), (20)(C).

(General) I will defer to Doug Simon on Sociology content generally.