



Edits to History and Social Science SOLs and Instructional Guides (Grades 5–12)

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Introduction

The Virginia Coalition for Human Rights (VCHR) and its affiliate organizations submit this document that represents edits and suggestions to the Virginia History and Social Science Standards of Learning (SOL) adopted in 2023 and to the recently published Instructional Guides.

VCHR edits for Grade 5 to Grade 12 (with the exception of Grade 8) are found in the “Substandards” of the SOLs and in three components of the Instructional Guides: “Understanding the Standard”, “Concepts and Connections”, and “Supporting Questions.”

In the aforementioned documents, VCHR is concerned by the omission of critical, evidence-based facts about Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) history and by the omission of Arab American history. For example, we note only one mention of Palestine and that is only as part of the term the “British Mandate of Palestine”. And the word “Palestinians” is completely absent even though the history of Palestine is critical for the understanding of the modern Middle East. Furthermore, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is not included under Revolutionary Movements (WHII.10b), and the ongoing genocide in Gaza is not listed in the Genocide substandard (WHII.12a).

Similarly, there is no mention of Arab immigration to the United States or Arab American migration to Virginia—even though Arab Americans represent its 10th largest community. Also omitted are Arab American civic movements, leaders, communities, and accomplishments in the social, cultural, and economic fields.

Besides these omissions that pertain to MENA and Arab American communities, our scholars have suggested edits that pertain to other fields, such as current U.S. domestic policy. And, lastly, the World History and Geography to 1500 A.D. section, which begins on page 7, requires substantial revision to conform with historical authenticity.

In most cases, we have utilized a graphic organizer with a three-columned format. Its headings are: “SOL”, “VCHR Edit”, and “Instructional Guide/VCHR Comment”. The yellow highlighted text represents edits and suggestions by VCHR scholars.

US History to 1865—Grade 5

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
USI.8 The student will apply HSS skills to explain westward expansion and reform in America from 1801 to 1861 by...		
Substandard USI.8h is absent.	Add substandard USI.8h ...explaining how the discovery of gold in California in 1849 increased westward expansion.	Economic motivations for westward migration are alluded to in <i>Understanding the Standard</i> and in <i>Supporting Questions</i> , but discovery of gold is not mentioned. Some 300,000 settlers migrated to California between 1848-1855.
USI.9 The student will apply HSS skills to understand the cause, major events, and effects of the Civil War by		
Substandard USI.9g is absent.	Add substandard USI.9g ...understanding the concept of “The Lost Cause of the Confederacy” and its effect on civil war interpretations.	“The Lost Cause” is not addressed in any of the five sections of the Instruction Guide.

U.S. History 1865 to the Present—Grade 6

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
USII.4 The student will apply HSS skills to understand the changing role of the U.S. from the late 19 th century through WWI by...		
USII.4b substandard reads: ...explaining the reasons for and results of the Spanish-American War, including the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine	Edit USII.4b substandard to read: ...explaining the reasons for and results of the Spanish-American War, including the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, and the effects on the lives of people in the Philippine Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, and Cuba as pawns in this war.	There is no specific comprehension question, concept, or practice skill that addresses how the Spanish-American War affected the lives of those living in the Philippines, Guam, Puerto Rico, and Cuba.
USII.5 The student will apply HSS skills to understand the social, political, economic, and technological changes of the early 20 th century by...		
Substandard USII.5j is absent.	Add substandard USII.5j to read: ...explaining how the rise of labor unions guaranteed the rights of workers to work in humane conditions.	The rise of labor unions is partially addressed in the <i>Understand the Standard</i> section, but unions are described pejoratively. No mention is made of the positive aspects of labor unions, such as the ending of child labor and the beginning of the 40-hour workweek.
USII.6 The student will apply HSS skills to understand the major causes, events, and effects of America's role in World War II by...		

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
USII.6j substandard is absent.	Add substandard USII.6j to read: ...examining sacrifices of the British, French, and Soviet peoples, including the siege of Leningrad.	There is no question, concept, or practice skill that pertains to the sacrifices made by the British, French, and Soviet peoples during WWII. There is no mention of the siege of Leningrad.
USII.7 The student will apply HSS skills to understand the transformation of US foreign policy between the end of WWII and the new millennium by...		
USII.7f substandard is absent.	Add substandard USII.7f to read: ...examining the implementation of international trade agreements, such as NAFTA and their impacts on workers, foreign and domestic.	There is no question, concept, or practice skill that pertains to the creation of NAFTA in 1994, which eliminated trade barriers between the U.S., Mexico, and Canada.
USII.8 The student will apply HSS skills to analyze the key changing patterns of society during the second half of the 20 th and early 21 centuries by ...		
Substandard USII.8h reads: ...describing how the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, including the heroic sacrifices of Flight 93 passengers, significantly impacted domestic policies, American society, and global perspectives on the war on terror.	Edit substandard USII.8h to read: ...describing how the events of 9/11 (September 11, 2001) changed domestic policies, how it affected Muslim Americans, and how it changed global perspectives on the War on Terror—including the many wars triggered by using the War on Terror as justification.	USII.8h is addressed in two sections of the Instructional Manual, but there is no mention of the Patriot Act that, in practice, denies Muslims their civil liberties by empowering law enforcement authorities to raid their homes, offices, and mosques.
Substandard USII.8i is absent.	Add substandard USII 8i to read: ...examining the movement for decarceration, a response to mass incarceration that aims to reduce the number of prisoners through the implementation of effective, sustainable, and socially just policies.	There is no question, concept, or practice skill that pertains to the decarceration movement.

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
Substandard USII.8j is absent.	Add substandard USII.8j to read: ...examining the impact of the high cost of post-secondary education on students including student accumulation of debt.	There is no question, concept, or practice skill that pertains to the high cost of post-secondary education and its impact on student debt.

Civics Education—Grade 7

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
CE.4 The student will apply HSS skills to analyze American constitutional government at the local level by...	Add substandard CE.4(d) to read ...understanding the process of redistricting and how it affects representation.	There is no question, concept, or practice skill that pertains to redistricting and how it affects representation.
CE.10 The student will apply HSS skills to analyze the role of public participation in American civic life by...	Add substandard CE.10(d) to read ...examining the obstacles that prevent civic participation, such as requirements for voter ID cards, removal of mail-in ballot boxes, and removal of polling places.	There is no question, concept, or practice skill that pertains to the obstacles that prevent civic participation.
	Add substandard CE.10(e) to read ...examining the effect of corporate influence on elections due to the Supreme Court 2010 ruling in the <i>Citizens United</i> case.	There is no question, concept, or practice skill that pertains to the influence that money has on politics. The <i>Citizens United</i> case ruling effectively allowed corporations and unions to spend unlimited amounts of money on political campaigns, leading to a surge in outside spending and increasing the influence of special interest groups.

World History and Geography to 1500—Grade 9

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
Skills WHIa	selecting and synthesizing evidence from information sources including, but not limited to artifacts, primary/secondary sources, charts, graphs, and diagrams events in world history;	Students at the 9th grade level are still developing the skills to select sources for credible and relevant evidence. Remove “selecting.” This skill is a combination of 2015 WHI.1a and WHI.1c SOLs, which separate the use of artifacts, primary, and secondary sources (1a) from charts, graphs, and images (1c). The 2023 revision implies that the same kinds of evidence and conclusions can be extrapolated from very different sources, which is inaccurate. Students’ ability to synthesize written source material from graphics should be separated in the 2023 revision.
Skills WHIb	applying geographic skills to determine and predict patterns and trends of people, places, or events;	Remove “predict;” this language implies that prediction is possible if patterns and trends are determined, which is incorrect.
Skills WHIc	questioning to construct arguments using evidence from multiple sources;	Unclear why “questioning” is relevant to and necessary for the construction of arguments
Skills WHId	investigating and analyzing evidence from multiple sources to construct arguments and draw conclusions;	Delete “draw conclusions”
Skills WHIe	comparing and contrasting historical, cultural, economic, and political perspectives;	2015 SOL WH1.e–has “in world history” at the end of the phrase–add here

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
Skills WHIf	determining cause and effect to analyze connections;	2015—adds “indirect” as qualifier describing causes/effects –also
Skills WHIg	using economic decision-making models to analyze and explain the incentives for and consequences of a specific choice;	Edit: delete “economic;” while economic impacts/repercussions have been and continue to be important factors in decision-making, by limiting this skill to “economic decision-making models” specifically, this skill implicitly limits students’ thinking and understanding of historical decision-making
Skills WHIh	engaging and communicating as civil and informed individuals with different perspectives;	Seems to be a reworking of WH1.i (2015): “identifying the rights and responsibilities of citizens and ethical use of materials and intellectual property. Asking 9th graders to be “informed individuals” is inappropriate, as they are in school to learn and become more informed. The 2015 SOL WH1.i implies that students should demonstrate an understanding of how and when to use and cite sources appropriately and ethically. This 2023 revision does not describe a skill, but rather a basic norm of any classroom.
Skills WHIi	developing products that reflect an understanding of research and content; and	Reword. The current phrasing implies that it is acceptable for students to “understand” research without conducting it.

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
Skills WHIj	contextualizing and corroborating sources to evaluate sources for credibility, propaganda, and bias to determine patterns and trends to understand the ancient world.	This skill should not be limited to “the ancient world” as is implied by the current wording. Students should be able to evaluate sources’ credibility, propaganda, and bias regardless of their antiquity.
WHI.1	The student will apply history and social science skills to describe the period from the Paleolithic era into the Neolithic era by	This SOL should mention the agricultural revolution specifically, which was an important phenomenon within the Neolithic era.
WHI.1a	describing the archaeological evidence of the first human, and their geographic locations;	Typo (should read “first humans” –plural)
WHI.1b	explaining the effect that geography had on the emergence and migration of hunter-gatherer societies;	
WHI.1c	describing characteristics of hunter-gatherer societies, including their use of tools and fire;	
WHI.1d	analyzing how technological and social developments gave rise to sedentary settlements; and	
WHI.1e	analyzing how archaeological discoveries change current understanding of early societies.	

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.2	The student will apply history and social science skills to describe early societies in the Fertile Crescent	This SOL severely restricts the geographic scope of the study of ancient river valley civilizations. It should specify which civilizations are meant by the catch-all term “Fertile Crescent.” The 2015 WHI.3 SOL specifies Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus River Valley, and China. These specifics and expanding of the geographic scope of the SOL should be incorporated into the 2023 revision.
WHI.2a	locating and explaining the development of Egypt and Nubia;	The wording is vague. What is meant by “development”? Cultural? Political? Territorial? Specifics of what students should be able to explain about Egypt and Nubia should be fleshed out, as well as the specific time period.
WHI.2b	locating and explaining the development of Mesopotamia;	The wording is vague. What is meant by “development”? Cultural? Linguistic? Political? Territorial? Specifics of what students should be able to explain about Mesopotamia should be fleshed out, as well as the specific time period.

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.2c	describing the development of the Israelites as well as the origins, beliefs, traditions, customs, persecution and spread of Judaism; and	The Hebrew Kingdoms would be covered in a manner that later in the course connects with Hellenization and still later the rise of Christianity in the region. The term “Israelites” is too limited for effective coverage of Judaism and its religious, cultural and political unfolding. The topic belongs in WHI.3 along with Hinduism and Buddhism, as well as later thought developments in China.
WHI.2d	describing the development of the Phoenicians.	The Phoenicians should be covered under trade during the Bronze Age
WHI.3	The students will apply history and social science skills to describe ancient Asian societies by	This SOL is too broad. The time period should be more precisely defined (rather than just “ancient”) as well as which specific civilizations, peoples, and developments students should understand.
WHI.3a	analyzing the impact of geography on the development of ancient India and China, including locating them in time and place and describing their major geographic features;	Ancient India and ancient China should have separate SOLs.
WHI.3b	describing the social, cultural, political, and economic characteristics that define the societies of the Indian subcontinent including, but not limited to contributions and the concepts of varna and Jati;	It is unclear why the concepts of <i>varna</i> and <i>jati</i> are highlighted in this SOL. It seems to be an attempt to connect the modern caste system in India to an ancient one, which is an irresponsible and inaccurate approach to the study of history.

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.3c	describing the origins, beliefs, customs, and spread of Hinduism;	
WHI.3d	describing the origins, beliefs, customs, and spread of Buddhism;	
WHI.3e	describing social, cultural, political, and economic development of ancient China; and	
WHI.3f	describing the impact of Confucianism, Taoism, and Legalism.	Legalism—not highlighted in 2015, seems to be attempting to create a false sense of continuity/inevitability between ancient/pre-modern and contemporary China. Buddhism should also be added to this SOL.
WHI.4	The student will apply history and social science skills to understand Persia and Greece by	
WHI.4a	describing the major geographic features of the region and analyzing the effect that geography had on its development;	Unclear which “region” is being referenced here. The ancient Mediterranean? Greece or Persia specifically?
WHI.4b	The student will apply history and social science skills to understand Persia and Greece	typically inadequate treatment of Persia only in the perspective of its encounter with the Greeks, when in fact Persian civilization was enormously long-lasting, influential and culturally fruitful, and not as a function of the study of classical Greece.

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.4c	describing the social, cultural, political, and economic development of Greece including, but not limited to the significance of Athens and Sparta, the development of citizenship, and the different forms of democracy;	The social, cultural, political and economic development of Greece should be its own standard, and the significance of Athens and Sparta should be a separate one. It is also unclear what is meant by “different forms of democracy.” The Greek city-states generally practiced the same/similar form, based on Athens’. This SOL implies that it is appropriate to discuss ancient Greek and modern forms of democracy as comparable.
WHI.4d	evaluating the causes and consequences of the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars;	This SOL could be tied in with the previous one on the political development of Greece, as both wars were influential on and influenced by political developments in Greece.
WHI.4e	evaluating the significance of Alexander the Great’s conquest of Greece and the formation and the spread of Hellenistic culture; and	Unclear why an SOL needs to be devoted solely to Alexander the Great. It could be reworked to highlight the economic, political, and cultural interactions that occurred as a result of Macedonian (Alexander’s) expansion of empire.
WHI.4f	explaining the influence of ancient Greek contributions including, but not limited to science, art, architecture, philosophy, and mathematics on the present day.	Replace “influence” with “contributions” and delete “on the present day.” This SOL implies that there is direct continuity between ancient Greek and present-day cultural production, which is historically inaccurate.

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.5	The student will apply history and social science skills to understand Rome and the Byzantine Empire by	The Byzantine Empire should have its own section within the SOL. The SOL pertaining to Rome should be temporally defined as in 2015 SOL WHI.6 (700 BCE-500 CE).
WHI.5a	describing the influence of geography on Rome's development and the factors that threatened territorial cohesion;	The wording of this SOL is vague and makes little sense. Why is students' understanding of the geography of ancient Rome limited to its effects on development and threats to territorial cohesion? Is this a nod at Roman colonial expansion? The source of this SOL's vagueness stems from the combination of the Roman and Byzantine Empires into one SOL. The Roman Republic, Roman Empire, and Byzantine Empires should be studied as related but different political/social/cultural phenomena.
WHI.5b	comparing and contrasting the political, social, and religious structure and development of the Roman Republic and Roman Empire;	Students' understanding of Republican and imperial Rome should not be limited to the task of comparing and contrasting. The shift from republic to empire was gradual and imperial institutions and practices were deeply intertwined with and influenced by republican ones. This SOL should be separated so that students are expected to understand Republican Rome and the Empire on their own terms <i>and</i> in relation to each other.

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.5c	The student will apply history and social science skills to understand Rome and the Byzantine Empire by describing the social, cultural, political, and economic development of the Byzantine Empire including, but not limited to the establishment of Constantinople, and the eventual division of the Roman Empire;	
WHI.5d	The student will apply history and social science skills to understand Rome and the Byzantine Empire by describing the origins, beliefs, customs, and spread of Christianity, including the persecution of Christians throughout the Roman Empire and eventual adoption and transmission of Christianity, New Testament, differences between the Eastern and Western churches, and the influence of Christianity throughout Europe, Middle Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa; and	In contrast to many of the other SOLs which are vague and have minimal detail, this one pertaining to Christianity is quite lengthy. It should be separated into individual SOLs that reflect the most important aspects of understanding Christianity in this period, as reflected in 2015 SOLs WHI.7 a-c. Delete “persecution of Christians throughout the Roman Empire.”
WHI.5e	explaining the influence of Rome including, but not limited to citizenship, the existence of slavery, rights under Roman law, Roman art, architecture, engineering, philosophy.	Roman cultural production (literature, art, architecture, engineering) should be given a separate SOL from Roman institutions (the law, slavery, governance). They are related but should not be conflated.

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.6	The student will apply history and social science skills to understand Islamic societies by	Edit: “Muslim” rather than “Islamic;” The term “Islamic” should be used to refer to that which pertains directly to the religion and its tenets and practices, while “Muslim” refers to the works and attributes of its followers. “Islamic societies” should be more clearly defined. The phrasing is inconsistent through SOL WHI.6. At times the focus is on the Arabian Peninsula specifically, while at other times it is “Islamic societies.” The geographic and temporal limitations should be defined.
WHI.6a	identifying the physical features and describing the relationship between climate, land and surrounding bodies of water, as well as nomadic and sedentary ways of life of the Arabian Peninsula;	This SOL implicitly advances an orientalist narrative by tying physical geography to nomadic versus sedentary “ways of life.” Climate and geography should be separated from social and political development in the Arabian Peninsula.
WHI.6b	describing the origins, beliefs, traditions, customs, persecution and spread of Islam;	Delete “persecution”
WHI.6c	explaining the significance of the Qur’an and the Sunnah as the primary sources of Islamic beliefs, practice, and law, and their influence in Muslims’ daily lives;	Remove “their influence in Muslims’ daily lives.” Practice and belief are highly individual, and this phrasing implies that all Muslims express and are influenced by their faith in the same ways, which is (historically) and irresponsible.

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.6d	describing the expansion of territory under Muslim rule and the spread of Islam and Arabic language among people in these territories, and the cultural and religious acceptance of Islam and the Arabic language; and	The spread of Islam and Arabic should have a separate SOL that should also highlight the much later spread of Arabic language alongside the spread of Islam among populations in the regions under Muslim rule.
WHI.6e	describing the growth of cities and the role of merchants in Muslim society, the expansion of trade routes in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Indian Ocean, and identifying the products and inventions that traveled along these routes, including spices, textiles, paper, steel, new crops.	It is notable that scientific and cultural developments and achievements of Muslim societies are completely absent from SOL WHI.6. The focus on trade, territorial expansion, and economic development perpetuates an orientalist narrative that presents Arabs/Muslims/anyone from the region as uncultured and implicitly money- and resource-focused.
WHI.7	The student will apply history and social science skills to understand the civilizations of China in the Middle Ages by	The limiting of the study of the Middle Ages to China makes little sense. The substandards for SOL WHI.7 reference Korea and Japan, yet the overall SOL pertains solely to China. Again, the geographic and temporal limitations of the SOL are unclear.

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.7a	describing the reunification of China under the Tang Dynasty and reasons for the spread of Buddhism in Tang China, Korea, and Japan;	The reunification of China and the spread of Buddhism should be separated. Additionally, delete “reasons for;” students should demonstrate an understanding of the factors that influenced the spread of Buddhism, but that is not the same thing as naming specific causes that may or not be supported.
WHI.7b	describing agricultural, technological, and commercial developments during the Tang and Sung periods;	
WHI.7c	analyzing the influences of Confucianism and changes in Confucian thought during the Sung and Mongol periods;	
WHI.7d	explaining the importance of both overland trade and maritime expeditions between China and other civilizations in the Mongol Ascendancy and Ming Dynasty;	
WHI.7e	tracing the historic influence of such discoveries as tea, the manufacture of paper, the development of woodblock printing, the invention of the compass, and the invention of gunpowder; and	
WHI.7f	describing the development of the imperial state and the scholar-official class.	The study of cultural production and social dynamics should not be limited solely to state institutions and class systems.

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.8	The student will apply history and social science skills to describe the sub-Saharan civilizations of Ghana and Mali in medieval Africa by	By limiting the study of pre-modern Africa to Ghana and Mali, this SOL implies that empire is the only form of social and political organization worthy of study which is obviously false.
WHI.8a	describing the Niger River and the relationship of vegetation zones of forest, savannah, and desert to trade in gold, salt, food, and enslaved people; and the growth of the Ghana and Mali empires;	Separate geography and trade into separate SOLs. Students should be able to locate and describe the geography, and also understand dynamics of trade in medieval Africa, but the study of trade and commerce and the expansion of empire should not be limited to their relationship to geography as this advances false narratives of climate determinism.
WHI.8b	analyzing the importance of family, labor specialization, and regional commerce in the development of states and cities in West Africa;	Unclear why family, labor specialization, and regional commerce would be put together in the same SOL. Their influence on state development is unclear per this SOL.
WHI.8c	describing the role of the trans Saharan caravan trade in the changing religious and cultural characteristics of West Africa and the influence of Islam;	The influence of Islam in West Africa should be its own SOL, but also seems unnecessary if the spread of Islam and the Arabic language are covered in SOL WHI.6a & 6e.
WHI.8d	tracing the growth of the Arabic language in government, trade, and Islam; and	See above comment.

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.8e	describing the importance of written and oral traditions in the transmission of African history and culture.	Oral transmission was also central to ancient Greek cultural production and transmission. It is confusing as to why oral traditions of cultural transmission is highlighted in the SOL only in regard to medieval Africa when the Homeric epics only survive due to oral transmission.
WHI.9	The student will apply history and social science skills to understand the civilizations of medieval Japan by	
WHI.9a	describing the significance of Japan's proximity to China and Korea and the intellectual, linguistic, religious, and philosophical influence of those countries on Japan;	It seems odd that highlighting the influence of Korea and China on Japan without having an SOL that pertains specifically to cultural, economic, intellectual, and political developments in medieval Japan. This SOL presents medieval Japan as passively influenced by neighboring empires, rather than an political/economic/cultural actor
WHI.9b	discussing the reign of Prince Shōtoku of Japan and the characteristics of Japanese society and family life during his reign;	Unclear why social and familial structures should be discussed in relation to the reign of a specific monarch.
WHI.9c	describing the values, social customs, and traditions prescribed by the lord-vassal system consisting of shogun, daimyo, and samurai and the lasting influence of the warrior code in the 21st century;	This SOL creates a false sense of continuity between medieval and modern Japan, which is historically inaccurate and irresponsible. Delete "the lasting influence of the warrior code in the 21st century."

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.9d	tracing the development of distinctive forms of Japanese Buddhism;	
WHI.9e	examining the ninth and 10th centuries' golden age of literature, art, and drama and its lasting effects on culture today, including Murasaki Shikibu's Tale of Genji; and	
WHI.9f	analyzing the rise of a military society in the late 12th century and the role of the samurai in that society.	
WHI.10	The student will apply history and social science skills to understand the civilizations of medieval Europe by	
WHI.10a	describing the geography of the European and the Eurasian landmass including location, topography, waterways, vegetation, and climate and their relationship to ways of life in medieval Europe;	
WHI.10b	describing the spread of Christianity north of the Alps and the roles played by the early church and by monasteries in its diffusion after the fall of the western half of the Roman Empire; and	Why is this SOL separate from WHI.5d?

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.10c	explaining the development and role of feudalism in the medieval European economy, and the role of the manor as the center of feudal relationships at the foundation of the political order; and	
WHI.10d	describing the growth of towns and trade as Europe emerged from feudalism.	
WHI.11	The student will apply history and social science skills to analyze the conflict and cooperation between the papacy and European monarchs by	
WHI.11a	explaining the significance of developments in medieval English legal and constitutional practices including, but not limited to the Magna Carta, parliament, development of habeas corpus, an independent judiciary in England;	
WHI.11b	analyzing the reasons for the Great Schism in 1054;	
WHI.11c	tracing the causes and course of the Crusades, and the effects on the Christian, Muslim, and Jewish populations in Europe and territorial claims;	

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.11d	describing the history of the decline of Muslim rule in the Iberian Peninsula that resulted in the expansion of Christian rule and the rise of Spanish and Portuguese kingdoms; and	
WHI.11e	explaining the importance of the Catholic church as a political and intellectual institution, and its effects on education, religious orders, preservation of languages and texts, and philosophy.	
WHI.12	The student will apply history and social science skills to understand the Mesoamerican and Andean civilizations	“Mesoamerican” is extremely broad. Reword to specify which civilizations students should be expected to know. 2015 SOL WHI. 13 specifies Mayan, Aztec, and Incan civilizations.
WHI.12a	describing the locations, landforms, and climates of Mexico, Central America, and South America and their effects on Mayan, Aztec, and Incan economies, trade, and development of urban societies;	The geography should be separated from discussion of social/economic development. Again, this SOL smacks of climate determinism.
WHI.12b	explaining how and where each empire arose and how the Aztec and Incan empires were defeated by the Spanish;	This SOL frames European & indigenous interactions is solely that of conquest. Rework to include the economic interdependence.
WHI.12c	describing the artistic and oral traditions and architecture in the three civilizations;	Again, why are oral traditions specifically highlighted here (but not in the SOLs pertaining to ancient Greece, for example)

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.12d	describing the Mesoamerican achievements in astronomy and mathematics including the development of the calendar and the effects of the Mesoamerican knowledge of seasonal changes to the civilizations' agricultural systems; and	"Mesoamerican achievements" is too broad. This SOL seems to be in reference to the Mayan calendar, yet this is not specified.
WHI.12e	examining the roles of people in each society, including class structures, family life, warfare, religious beliefs and practices, and slavery.	What specifically should students be able to understand and/or explain about these aspects of "society"? This SOL is quite broad and it is unclear what is meant by "each society."

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.13	The student will apply history and social science skills to understand the factors contributing to the European Renaissance	portrays the European Renaissance as a self-contained phenomenon rather than the result of expanding urban growth in Europe and its trade and cultural relationships in the Mediterranean realm. It is settled scholarship that translations were made in Spain on a wide range of subjects from Arabic to Latin, that they became available to Europeans through schools of medicine in Italy, universities and cathedral schools, and through Italian trade relations with North Africa. Many primary sources allow students to explore the evidence and transmission paths of scientific learning from adjacent Islamic civilization in the Mediterranean, and inventions from further afield such as silk brocade weaving, paper and printing, and introduction of new crops and spices. Here too, this document does not reflect widely acknowledged transfers of learning that are found in most current textbooks and have had a place in 20 years of previous VA SOLs, as they do in many states.
WHI.13a	determining the economic, political, philosophical, and cultural foundations of the Italian Renaissance;	

SOL Number	SOL Standard/ Substandard	Comments
WHI.13b	sequencing events related to the rise of Italian city-states and their political development including Machiavelli's theory of governing; and	
WHI.13c	analyzing the contributions of artists and philosophers of the Italian Renaissance including Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Petrarch.	

World History and Geography 1500 to the Present—Grade 10

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
WHII.8 The student will apply history and social science skills to understand WWI by...		
Substandard WHI.8d reads: ...analyzing and explain the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, the actions of the League of Nations, and the mandate system.	<p>Understanding the Standard could read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treaty of Versailles, formally ended WWI between Germany and the Allied Powers. • League of Nations was established by the Treaty of Versailles and was the first international organization aimed at maintaining peace. • The Mandate System was created by the League of Nations and redistributed former German and Ottoman territories 	<p>WHII.8d suffers from omission of critical information. Students require a structured breakdown of these three interconnected events that shaped the post WWI global order. This information could be included in the Understanding the Standard section.</p>
WHII.8e	<p>WHII.(e) to read: ...describing the role of the Ottoman Empire in WWI and the consequences of its defeat.</p>	<p>WHII.e is absent. Its inclusion will give students context for exercising one of the listed Skills in Practice: Use critical thinking skills to analyze information sources to make evidence-supported claims about the impact of the fall of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires.</p>
WHII.8 Concepts and Connections	<p>Concepts and Connections should include definition... Zionism is a nationalist movement that emerged in Europe in the late 19th century. It aimed for the establishment of a Jewish state through the colonization of a land outside Europe. Following the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Zionism became Israel's national ideology.</p>	<p>WHII.8 Concepts and Connections. The definition of Zionism is absent. Students, without understanding the concept of Zionism, will not be able to attain historical understanding. In 1975, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 3379, which declared Zionism a form of racism and racial discrimination.</p>

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
WHII.8 Concept and Connections	Concepts and Connections should include definition... Pan-Arabism is a political ideology advocating for the unification of all Arab countries into a single state. It's rooted in the belief that shared language, culture, and history should supersede national borders, creating a unified Arab world. This movement gained significant traction in the mid-20th century, particularly with figures like Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt	WHII.8 Concepts and Connections. The definition of pan-Arabism is absent. Students, without knowing about it, will have an incomplete picture of the political dynamics of the Middle East during that time. Its importance lies in its role in advocating for Arab unity, in fostering a sense of shared identity, and in resisting colonialism, and imperialism.
WHII.8 Supporting Questions	WHII.8 Supporting Questions should include... How did the Balfour Declaration conflict with the intentions of the Mandate System? How did the Sykes Picot Agreement set the stage for the Mandate System?	WHII.8 Supporting Questions. These questions are absent. Without knowing answers to them, students will have no knowledge of two pivotal documents that contributed to western imperialism in the Middle East and to the establishment of the State of Israel.
WHII.9 The student will apply history and social science skills to understand WWII by...		
WHII.9 Understanding the Standard, Bullet 4 reads: Other victims of Hitler's devastation included the Poles, Roma and Sinto men, women and Children, Jehovah's witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, homosexuals, trade unionists and political dissidents.	Understanding the Standard, Bullet 4 to read: Other victims of Hitler's devastation included the Poles, Roma and Sinto men, women and children, Jehovah's witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war—including Muslims—, homosexuals, trade unionists and political dissidents.	Although not targeted as a group in the same systematic way as Jews or Roma, some Arabs and Muslims were victims of Nazi persecution: Muslim Soviet POWs; North African and Middle Eastern Muslims; Arab intellectuals and anti-colonial activists.
WHII.10 The student will apply history and social science skills to understand the significance of the Cold war during the second half of the 20 th century by ...		

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
Substandard WHII.10b reads: ...describing the events, conflicts, and revolutionary movements, including, but not limited to, the Berlin Blockade, the Suez Canal Crisis, Hungarian Revolution, Bay of Pigs, Cuban Missile Crisis, Prague Spring, and the impact of clandestine operations on the Cold War;	Edit substandard WHII.10(b) to read: ...describing the events, conflicts, and revolutionary movements, including, but not limited to, the Berlin Blockade, the Suez Canal Crisis, Hungarian Revolution, Bay of Pigs, Cuban Missile Crisis, Cuban Revolution, Iran's Islamic Revolution, Prague Spring, and the impact of clandestine operations on the Cold War;	There is no question, concept, or practice skills that pertains to the Cuban Revolution or to Iran's Islamic Revolution both of which had significant domestic, regional, and international repercussions.
Substandard WHII.10f reads: ...analyzing how nations around the world developed a culture of global interdependence.	Edit substandard WHII.10(f) to read: ...analyzing how nations around the world developed a culture of global interdependence and how aid has been used as a tool for leverage.	There is no question, concept, or practice skill that pertains to how aid has been used as a tool for leverage.
WHII.11 The student will apply HSS skills to understand World War II and its worldwide impact by...		
Substandard WHII.11c reads: ...describing the end of the League of Nations' mandate system and the creation of states in the Middle East, including the roles of Golda Meir and Gamal Abdel Nasser.	Edit substandard WHII.11(c) to read: ...describing the role of colonial powers to divide the Middle East into spheres of influence, the role of the League of Nations' mandate system, and the creation of states in the Middle East.	
WHII.11 Understanding the Standard, Bullet One reads: After WWII, new states were created in the Middle East, ending the mandate system established in 1919.	Edit Understanding the Standard, Bullet One to read...In the period between the wars, several states gained independence as sovereign nations; the mandate system that was established in 1919 came to an end. However, the Palestinian people—whose land was partitioned to create the State of Israel—did not gain an independent state of their own.	The mandate system was designed to prepare peoples for self-rule. The exception to this was Palestine. The end of the mandate was following by the Zionist colonization of Palestine and the establishment of Israel, and the ethnic cleansing of the territory on which Israel was established.

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
WHII.11 Understanding the Standard, Bullet Two reads: Pan-Arabism and Zionism led to completing ideas on the formation of these new states.	Edit Understanding the Standard, Bullet Two to read...The lines drawn for the creation of Israel in the wake of the Holocaust resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, an event known as the Nakba or "Catastrophe."	Israel was established after a war (1947-49) in which it ethnically cleansed the indigenous Palestinian people from 78 percent of historic Palestine. Israel's inclusion into the UN was conditional upon the return of the Palestinian refugees who had been expelled during the war. (Resolution 194)
WHII.11 Understanding the Standard, Bullet Four reads: Conflict ensued immediately following the creation of these new states. Events surrounding this still impacts political relationships in this region today.	Edit Understanding the Standard, Bullet Four to read...Conflict ensued immediately following the creation of these new states, particularly between Israel and its Arab neighbors, and the unresolved status of the Palestinians continues to shape political relationships in the region today.	
WHII.11 Supporting Questions, Bullet 5 reads...How did the creation of Israel impact cultural and political relationships in the Middle East?	Edit Bullet 5 to read...How did the creation of Israel affect political relationships in the Middle East, and why is it regarded by some as a destabilizing factor in the region?	
WHII.11 Supporting Questions, Bullet Six	Add Bullet Six to read...How did the partition of Palestine as delineated by the League of Nations become a factor in the creation of the Palestinian refugee crisis?	There is no mention of the Palestinian refugee crisis in the SOL documents.
WHII.11 Supporting Questions, Bullet Seven	Add Bullet Seven to read...How has the Palestinian struggle for independence evolved over the years?	
WHII.12 The student will apply HSS skills to explain global changes during the late 20 th and early 21 st centuries by...		

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
Substandard WHII.12(a) reads: ...identifying modern era genocides and crimes against humanity including, but not limited to Mao's Cultural Revolution, Stalin Regime, Armenia, Cambodia, Fidel Castros' Cuba, Darfur, Rwanda, and China's minority Uyghur population;	Edit substandard WHII.12(a) to read: ...identifying modern era genocides and crimes against humanity including, but not limited to Gaza , Mao's Cultural Revolution, Stalin regime, Armenia, Cambodia, Fidel Castros' Cuba, Darfur, Rwanda, and China's minority Uyghur population;	There is no question, concept, or practice skill that pertains to the genocide in Gaza, which has been designated as such by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Doctors without Borders. Over 250 other organizations have called for an immediate ceasefire and distribution of food.
Substandard WHII.12(d) reads: ...analyzing the increasing impact, events, and conditions that have given rise to international terrorism...	WHII.12d Under the <i>Supporting Questions</i> section on page 76, add: "How may U.S. political and military engagements in other countries have exacerbated international terrorism?"	
Substandard WHII.12(e) reads: ...describing economic interdependence, including the rise of multinational corporations, international organizations, and trade agreements.	Edit substandard WHII.12(e) to read: ...describing economic interdependence, including the rise of multinational corporations, international organizations, and trade agreements and their impact on workers worldwide who want better working conditions.	Although the negative effects of trade agreements are alluded to in the Instructional Guide, more specificity is needed to support VDoE's requirement that the student master cause-and-effect relationships.

Virginia-US History—Grade 11

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
VUS.4 The student will apply History and Social Science (HSS) skills to analyze the cooperation and conflict between the Indigenous Peoples and the new settlers by ...		
Substandard VUS.4f is absent	Add substandard VUS.4f to read: ...explaining the role of broken treaties and the factors that led to the defeat of the Indigenous Peoples, including but not limited to the resistance of Indian nations to the overwhelming force by the colonialists and the Trail of Tears.	
VUS.8 The student will apply HSS skills to analyze the development and abolition of slavery in the U.S. by ...		
Substandard VUS.8d reads: ...explaining the extension of rights provided in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.	Edit substandard VUS.8d to read: ...explaining the extension of rights provided in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the U.S. and identifying the ways in which these rights are being abridged in the 21 st century.	
VUS.14 The student will apply HSS skills to analyze America's involvement in WWII by ...		

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
Substandard VUS.14f reads: ...analyzing the Holocaust beginning with the history and role of antisemitism in the persecution of Jews, the persecutions of other targeted groups, challenges related to the immigration of Jews, Hitler’s “Final Solution,” liberation, postwar trials, and postwar immigration to the United States and the creation of the modern State of Israel.	Edit substandard VUS.14f to read: ...analyzing the Holocaust beginning with the history and role of antisemitism in the persecution of Jews, the persecutions of other targeted groups, challenges related to the immigration of Jews, Hitler’s “Final Solution,” liberation, postwar trials, and postwar immigration to the United States.	
VUS.15 The student will apply HSS skills to analyze the United States’ foreign policy during the Cold War era by		
Substandard VUS.15e reads: ...explaining how U.S. foreign policy pressure, economic power and defense policy, and the assertion of American values led to the end of the Cold War.	Edit substandard VUS15e to read: ...explaining how American foreign policy pressure and U.S. inflation of the military budget led to the end of the Cold War.	
Substandard VUS.15f is absent.	Add substandard VUS.15f to read... Examining the ways in which the U.S. seems headed for a new cold war with Russia and China in the first quarter of the 21 st century.	
VUS.17 The student will apply HSS skills to analyze political and social conditions in the United States during the second half of the 20 th century and early 21 st century by...		

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
<p>Substandard VUS.17b reads: ...analyzing key events and conditions that have given rise to terrorism as an attack on democracy and the United States' role in defending democracy including, but not limited to 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, the 2000 bombing of the USS Cole, attacks on US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the 9/11 attacks on the United States in 2001.</p>	<p>Edit substandard VUS.17b to read: ...analyzing key events and conditions that have given rise to terrorism both foreign and domestic, including but not limited to the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, the 9/11 attacks on the U.S. in 2001, and the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.</p>	<p>It is misguided to assume that foreign terrorist attacks are attacks solely against democracy as a system of government. The World Trade Center attacks of 1993 and the 9/11 attacks were primarily motivated by U.S. support of Israel's abuse of Palestinians. The second attack was also motivated by opposition to U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia.</p>
<p>Substandard VUS.17c reads: ...explaining social movements including but not limited to the Vietnam War and the rise of the anti-war movement, Woodstock, the rise of the conservative movement and the election of Ronald Reagan, women's movement, gay rights movement, pro-life movement, and an increased domestic focus on HIV/AIDS, the rise of antisemitism and hate crimes and domestic terrorism.</p>	<p>Edit substandard VUS.17c to read: ...explaining social movements, including but not limited to the Vietnam War and the rise of the anti-war movement, the counter-culture Hippy Movement, the rise of the conservative movement and the election of Ronald Reagan, the women's movement, the gay rights movement, the pro-life movement, the Black Lives Matter movement, the Poor People's Campaign, the campaign to abolish mass incarceration, the rise of white supremacy and Christian Nationalism with an increase in antisemitism and hate crimes against minorities.</p>	<p>How does a focus on HIV/AIDS constitute a social movement, any more than responding to the COVID-19 epidemic is a social movement?</p>

Virginia and U.S. Government—Grade 12

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
GOVT.1 The student will apply history and social science (HSS) skills to understand the foundations of American constitutional government by...		
GOVT.1a substandard reads: ...by describing the features of a democratic republic as influenced by forms of Athenian democracy and the Roman Republic	Edit substandard GOVT.1a to read: ...by describing the features of a democratic republic as influenced by forms of Athenian democracy and the Roman Republic and how these features differ from American constitutional government today.	Students should understand that Athenian and Roman democracy involved decision making only by the landholding elite. Most of the people living in those societies had no say in the decisions that impacted their lives. This helps explain why voting in the early days of our republic was restricted to men who held property
GOVT.11 The student will apply HSS skills to analyze civil liberties and civil rights by...		
GOVT.11c substandard reads: ...analyzing the rights of the accused and due process of law expressed in the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendments		There is no question, concept, or practice skill that addresses the restitutions that are available to people who are wrongfully convicted of a crime.
GOVT.13 The student will apply HSS skills to understand the role of the United States in a changing world by...		
GOVT.13b substandard reads: ...comparing the characteristics of economies as described by Adam Smith, Karl Marx, John Maynard Keynes, Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman, and Thomas Sowell		There is no question, concept, or practice skill that poses the question: "Who are some current economists who are examining the impact of the free-market economy on the increasing wealth gap between the rich and the poor of the world?"

SOL	VCHR Edit	Instructional Guide VCHR Comment
GOVT.13f substandard reads: ...explaining how competition and free enterprise influence the local, national, and global economies;		Add to Supporting Questions section: Who benefits the most and who gains the least when clothing that is made by cheap labor in poor countries is sold in large retail stores in the United States?
GOVT.14 The student will apply HSS skills to explain the role of government in the Virginia and United States' economies by ...		
GOVT.14a substandard reads: ...explaining government's limited but important role in free enterprise and how that affects individual economic freedoms.	Edit substandard GOVT.14a to read: ...explaining the different points of view about the role of government in economic policy and the impact these views could have on individual economic choice.	