



**Achievement Level Descriptors**  
**for**  
**Grade 6 Social Studies**

Georgia Department of Education  
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## Achievement Levels and Achievement Level Descriptors

With the implementation of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System, Georgia educators have developed four achievement levels to describe student mastery and command of the knowledge and skills outlined in Georgia’s content standards. Most students have at least some knowledge of the content described in the content standards; however, achievement levels succinctly describe how much mastery a student has. Achievement levels give meaning and context to scale scores by describing the knowledge and skills students must demonstrate to achieve each level.

The four achievement levels on Georgia Milestones are *Beginning Learner*, *Developing Learner*, *Proficient Learner*, and *Distinguished Learner*. The general meaning of each of the four levels is provided below:

**Beginning Learners do not yet demonstrate proficiency** in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students ***need substantial academic support*** to be prepared for the next grade level or course and to be on track for college and career readiness.

**Developing Learners demonstrate partial proficiency** in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students ***need additional academic support*** to ensure success in the next grade level or course and to be on track for college and career readiness.

**Proficient Learners demonstrate proficiency** in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students ***are prepared*** for the next grade level or course and are on track for college and career readiness.

**Distinguished Learners demonstrate advanced proficiency** in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students ***are well prepared*** for the next grade level or course and are well prepared for college and career readiness.

More detailed and content-specific concepts and skills are provided for each grade, content area, and course in the **Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs)**. ALDs are narrative descriptions of the knowledge and skills expected at each of the four achievement levels and were developed for each grade level, content area, and course by committees of Georgia educators in March 2015 and July 2015. The ALDs are based on the state-adopted content standards.

**ALDs show a progression of knowledge and skills** for which students must demonstrate competency across the achievement levels. It is important to understand that a student should demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills within his/her achievement level *as well as all content and skills in any achievement levels that precede his/her own, if any*. For example, a Proficient Learner should also possess the knowledge and skills of a Developing Learner *and* a Beginning Learner.

POLICY ALDs			
Beginning Learner	Developing Learner	Proficient Learner	Distinguished Learner
<p><b>Beginning Learners do not yet demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills</b> necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students need substantial academic support to be prepared for the next grade level or course and to be on track for <i>college and career readiness</i>.</p>	<p><b>Developing Learners demonstrate partial proficiency in the knowledge and skills</b> necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students need additional academic support to ensure success in the next grade level or course and to be on track for <i>college and career readiness</i>.</p>	<p><b>Proficient Learners demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills</b> necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students are prepared for the next grade level or course and are on track for <i>college and career readiness</i>.</p>	<p><b>Distinguished Learners demonstrate advanced proficiency in the knowledge and skills</b> necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students are well prepared for the next grade level or course and are well prepared for <i>college and career readiness</i>.</p>
RANGE ALDs			
Beginning Learner	Developing Learner	Proficient Learner	Distinguished Learner
<p>A student who achieves at the <b>Beginning Learner</b> level demonstrates minimal command of the grade-level standards. The pattern exhibited by student responses indicates that students are most likely able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify impacts of European contact on Latin America, Australia, or Canada;</li> <li>• identify impacts of European exploration and colonization on various world regions;</li> <li>• locate selected features of Latin America, the Caribbean, or Canada;</li> <li>• identify various forms of government;</li> <li>• identify factors that influence economic growth in Latin America, Europe, or Australia; and</li> </ul>	<p>A student who achieves at the <b>Developing Learner</b> level demonstrates partial command of the grade-level standards. The pattern exhibited by student responses indicates that students are most likely able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe impacts of European contact on Latin America, Australia, or Canada;</li> <li>• describe the development of Latin America or the Caribbean from European colonies to independent nations;</li> <li>• identify important contemporary issues in Canada;</li> <li>• describe, using various sources, the impact of European exploration and colonization on various world regions, including the effects of the blending of</li> </ul>	<p>A student who achieves at the <b>Proficient Learner</b> level demonstrates proficiency of the grade-level standards. The pattern exhibited by student responses indicates that students are most likely able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain the impact of European contact on Latin America, Australia, and Canada;</li> <li>• describe the development of Latin America and the Caribbean from European colonies to independent nations;</li> <li>• identify, using various sources, important twentieth-century issues in Latin America and the Caribbean;</li> <li>• describe, using various sources, important contemporary issues in Canada;</li> </ul>	<p>A student who achieves at the <b>Distinguished Learner</b> level demonstrates advanced proficiency of the grade-level standards. The pattern exhibited by student responses indicates that students are most likely able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analyze the impact of European contact on Latin America, Australia, and Canada, including the effects of the blending of languages, religions, ethnic groups, and customs;</li> <li>• explain the development of Latin America and the Caribbean from European colonies to independent nations;</li> <li>• describe, using various sources, important twentieth-century</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify personal money management choices in terms of income and spending.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>languages, religions, ethnic groups, and customs;</li> <li>• identify conflict and change that occurred in Europe in the twenty-first century;</li> <li>• locate selected features of Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada;</li> <li>• identify environmental issues in Latin America, Europe, and Canada;</li> <li>• identify factors (e.g., location, climate, distribution of natural resources, population distribution) impacting Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada;</li> <li>• describe various forms of government;</li> <li>• identify the structures of national governments in Latin America, the Caribbean, Canada, Europe, or Australia;</li> <li>• identify different economic systems;</li> <li>• identify factors that influence economic growth in Latin America, Europe, and Australia; and</li> <li>• describe personal money management choices in terms of income and spending.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analyze, using various sources, the impact of European exploration and colonization on various world regions, including the effects of the blending of languages, religions, ethnic groups, and customs;</li> <li>• explain, using textual evidence, conflict and change that occurred in Europe in the twenty-first century;</li> <li>• locate selected features of Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, Canada, and Australia;</li> <li>• describe environmental issues in Latin America, Europe, and Canada;</li> <li>• explain the impact of location, climate, distribution of natural resources, or population distribution on Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada;</li> <li>• compare and contrast various forms of government;</li> <li>• explain the structures of national governments in Latin America, the Caribbean, Canada, Europe, and Australia;</li> <li>• describe different economic systems;</li> <li>• explain how the presence or absence of various factors influences economic growth in Latin America, Europe, and Australia; and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>issues in Latin America and the Caribbean;</li> <li>• compare, using various sources, important contemporary issues in Canada;</li> <li>• analyze, using textual evidence, conflict and change that occurred in Europe in the twenty-first century;</li> <li>• compare environmental issues in Latin America, Europe, and Canada;</li> <li>• compare the impact of location, climate, distribution of natural resources, and population distribution on Latin America, the Caribbean, Canada, Europe, and Australia;</li> <li>• compare and contrast the structures of national governments in Latin America, the Caribbean, Canada, Europe, and Australia;</li> <li>• compare different economic systems;</li> <li>• analyze how the presence or absence of various factors influences economic growth in Latin America, Europe, and Australia; and</li> <li>• compare personal money management choices in terms of income, spending, credit, saving, and investing.</li> </ul>
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