

Standard Setting Recommendations – Social Studies Grades 3-8

TNReady standard setting is a qualitative review of content standards conducted with educators who are content area experts, as well as parents and community members. In order to complete the reporting of social studies achievement data, it is necessary to develop cut scores that will be used to assign students to performance categories on the social studies TNReady assessments. These cut scores are the basis of a criterion-referenced assessment in which student performance is judged based on the expectations determined by content experts who are educators in Tennessee. During the week of July 16, 2018, panels of Tennessee educators convened in Nashville, TN to recommend cut scores for the social studies TNReady assessments in grades 3-8.

In order to develop the cut score recommendations, the panels followed the bookmark standard setting process (Lewis, Mitzel, Mercado, & Schulz, 2012). The Bookmark Method is a three-round standard setting process that requires panelists to independently examine test items and place “bookmarks” (set cut scores) at the points at which they consider students to have demonstrated sufficient knowledge and skills at each performance level. The Bookmark Method is an item-mapping procedure that is one of the most widely used standard-setting methods in statewide assessments. This method has been used in Tennessee for more than a decade.

After the standard setting process, the department’s staff psychometricians completed additional analysis to perform a quantitative check of the standard setting results. The psychometric team also conducted concordance studies, comparing the 2017 panel recommendations to multiple sources of data to ensure that the recommendations were appropriately rigorous. In addition, department content teams were consulted to provide expert validity checks of the results focused on content progression. This additional analysis and consultation is reflected in the recommended cut scores as appropriate.

Recommended Cut Scores for TNReady Social Studies Assessments

All grades have a scale score range from 200-450. The minimum scale score for each content area is 200 (the “cut score” for level 1) and the maximum scale score is 450 (the highest score for level 4). Please note, the shortened length of the grades 3 and 4 social studies tests results in only two achievement levels.

Grade	Level 1 (Below)		Level 2 (Approaching)		Level 3 (On Track)		Level 4 (Mastered)	
	%	Scale Score Range	%	Scale Score Range	%	Scale Score Range	%	Scale Score Range
3			61.1	200-340	38.9	341-450		
4			63.3	200-324	36.7	325-450		
5	18.8	200-290	46.3	291-323	29.6	324-357	5.3	358-450
6	25.0	200-298	43.2	299-328	26.6	329-357	5.2	358-450
7	40.3	200-304	20.0	305-315	30.7	316-343	9.1	344-450
8	33.1	200-312	26.4	313-331	29.1	332-355	11.4	356-450