

# Test Taking Strategies

Introductions

Overview of Packet

Proposed course of study:

- Go onto website [www.cset.nesinc.com](http://www.cset.nesinc.com)
- Let's look at the questions
- After you complete the test, identify areas of need
- Go to [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov)
- Match up needs with grade level content standards
- Identify key themes for study
- Review frameworks, get resources (study materials, classroom texts)

Using cultural universals to frame constructs

Using a classroom text to study

Key strategies:

Close attention to what is being asked

Circle, underline, rephrase

SQ3R

Process of Elimination

Treat this as a contest, not something that defines you.

# Test Taking Strategies & Study Skills

## *MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST STRATEGIES:*

Read the question carefully at least 2 times.

Underline the key points in the question.

Anticipate the answer before you look at them, but be sure to read all your options.

Never leave a multiple choice question blank. You will not be penalized for guessing. There is a good chance you will guess the correct answer.

**When you have to guess, use these tips:**

Eliminate those that are obviously wrong, or highly doubtful. Typically there will be two alternatives that are clearly not the correct choice.

Check to see if a key word in the question is repeated in one of the answers.

Check to see if one answer is longer than the other answers. For the answer to be completely true, it may need to be more descriptive than the other answers.

If numbers are in the answers, choose the number that is in the middle range. Avoid the extreme numbers.

Be cautious of answers that contain words like "always" "never" "only" and "completely". These are usually the wrong answers since there are many exceptions to the rules.

Be cautious of negative words in the instructions or question.

Consider each possible answer as a true/false question.

If you are having difficulty answering a question and decide to skip the question and come back to it later, mark the questions in the test booklet and be sure to skip that line on the answer sheet.

## *CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE TEST STRATEGIES:*

Make an outline in the margin before you begin writing. Organizing your thoughts will help you to write a clear, well thought out response.

Do not repeat the question as the introduction to your response.

Get right to the main points of your response.

Construct your response as the instructions or question indicates. If the instructions state that an essay is required, write an appropriate essay. If a chart or graph is requested with a summary explanation, then prepare the chart or graph and be sure your summary explanation is thorough. You may be instructed to complete more than one task (e.g. compare, contrast, and summarize). Be sure that you address all the tasks in the instructions.

Write legibly and use proper grammar.

Allow about 12 minutes for each constructed response. These are short responses and typically should be no longer than one page.

### ***STUDY SKILLS:***

Read the test specifications for each area that you will be tested on. This information provides you with the specific content of the exam. To access this information, follow these steps:

[www.cset.nesinc.com](http://www.cset.nesinc.com)

Click on: CSET Test Guides

Click on: Specific Information About Each Examination of the CSET

After reading the content areas for the exam(s) you are taking, identify those areas that you are lacking in knowledge. You will need to study all content areas, but when planning your study time, be sure to allow sufficient time to focus on your areas of least knowledge.

Let your family and friends know when you will be studying. It is important that family and friends understand that you have a short timeframe for studying before this exam and you need remain focused. You may choose to put a "do not disturb" note on you door.

Pick a study place where there are few distractions. Take breaks, most people concentrate completely for about 45 minutes.

Make time daily to study for this exam. Try to study at the same time each day and be sure to stick to your study timetable.

Use flashcards for unfamiliar terms. The process of making flashcards is a good study skill in itself because writing out the cards helps commit the information to memory.

Make timelines when you must know historical dates and periods (samples are attached).

Tape charts, lists, timelines, etc. to your bathroom mirror, kitchen cabinets, and near the kitchen sink. Put these study materials any place where you are doing mindless tasks around the house.

**Learning Content:**

Highlight  
Skimming  
Outline  
Study notes  
Multiple exposures  
Listen to a recording

**Reviewing Content:**

Summarize, aloud or written  
Group review  
Verbal rehearsal of fact  
Rereading  
Sort or group information in categories  
Use question/answer format with self or others

**Memory strategies:**

Repeated exposure to information.  
Link facts with what you already know.  
Use memory clues for dates (In 1492...).  
Say facts/information in a chant or poem.  
Organize facts in a story.  
Turn main topics into questions. Try to answer the question with as many specifics as you can quickly and correctly.

**Find your individual study strengths:**

What time of the day are you sharpest? Lowest?  
Do you study more effectively in private or in interaction with others?  
What distractions must you cope with?  
What supports do you need to assist you in finding time to study?  
    Childcare  
    Meal prep  
    Housekeeping

If possible study with a partner or join a study group (be sure to stay on task).

Get plenty of rest.

***DAY OF THE TEST:***

Be sure you have your Admission Ticket.

Allow yourself plenty of time in the morning. Eat a nutritional breakfast.

Know ahead of time the exam location. Arrive early. Enter the exam alert and calm.

If environmental noise bothers you (outside traffic, air movement, coughing, etc.) use ear plugs.

Wear comfortable clothes. Wear clothing in layers so you can discard clothes if the room is too warm or put clothes on if the room is too cool. It is recommended that you wear soft soled shoes so as not to disturb others if you have to leave your testing table.

Bring extra sharpened pencils.

Food and drink can only be consumed during breaks between morning and afternoon exams.

If you are taking multiple sub-tests, it is recommended that you complete one sub-test before moving on to the next. Be sure to pace yourself. One sub-test may be more difficult for you than the other. You want to allow yourself plenty of time to complete all sub-tests.

Look over the test and determine how much time you will need to complete each portion of the test. Try not to mismanage your time. Set a watch on your desk to assist with your time management.

A lapse in memory is very normal. If you draw a blank on a question, move on the next question and return to it later.

Calculators (model Texas Instruments TI-108) will be provided for the Multiple Subjects Sub-test II: Science and Mathematics. Operating instructions will not be provided.

# History-Social Science Content Standards.

## Grade Four

### History-Social Science Content Standards.

#### California: A Changing State

Students learn the story of their home state, unique in American history in terms of its vast and varied geography, its many waves of immigration beginning with pre-Columbian societies, its continuous diversity, economic energy, and rapid growth. In addition to the specific treatment of milestones in California history, students examine the state in the context of the rest of the nation, with an emphasis on the U.S. Constitution and the relationship between state and federal government.

4.1 Students demonstrate an understanding of the physical and human geographic features that define places and regions in California.

1. Explain and use the coordinate grid system of latitude and longitude to determine the absolute locations of places in California and on Earth.

2. Distinguish between the North and South Poles; the equator and the prime meridian; the tropics; and the hemispheres, using coordinates to plot locations.

3. Identify the state capital and describe the various regions of California, including how their characteristics and physical environments (e.g., water, landforms, vegetation, climate) affect human activity.

4. Identify the locations of the Pacific Ocean, rivers, valleys, and mountain passes and explain their effects on the growth of towns.

5. Use maps, charts, and pictures to describe how communities in California vary in land use, vegetation, wildlife, climate, population density, architecture, services, and transportation.

4.2 Students describe the social, political, cultural, and economic life and interactions among people of California from the pre-Columbian societies to the Spanish mission and Mexican rancho periods.

1. Discuss the major nations of California Indians, including their geographic distribution, economic activities, legends, and religious beliefs; and describe how they depended on, adapted to, and modified the physical environment by cultivation of land and use of sea resources.

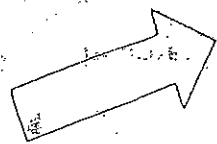
2. Identify the early land and sea routes to, and European settlements in, California with a focus on the exploration of the North Pacific (e.g., by Captain James Cook, Vitus Bering, Juan Cabrillo), noting especially the importance of mountains, deserts, ocean currents, and wind patterns.

3. Describe the Spanish exploration and colonization of California, including the relationships among soldiers, missionaries, and Indians (e.g., Juan Crespi, Junipero Serra, Gaspar de Portola).

4. Describe the mapping of, geographic basis of, and economic factors in the placement and function of the Spanish missions; and understand how the mission system expanded the influence of Spain and Catholicism throughout New Spain and Latin America.

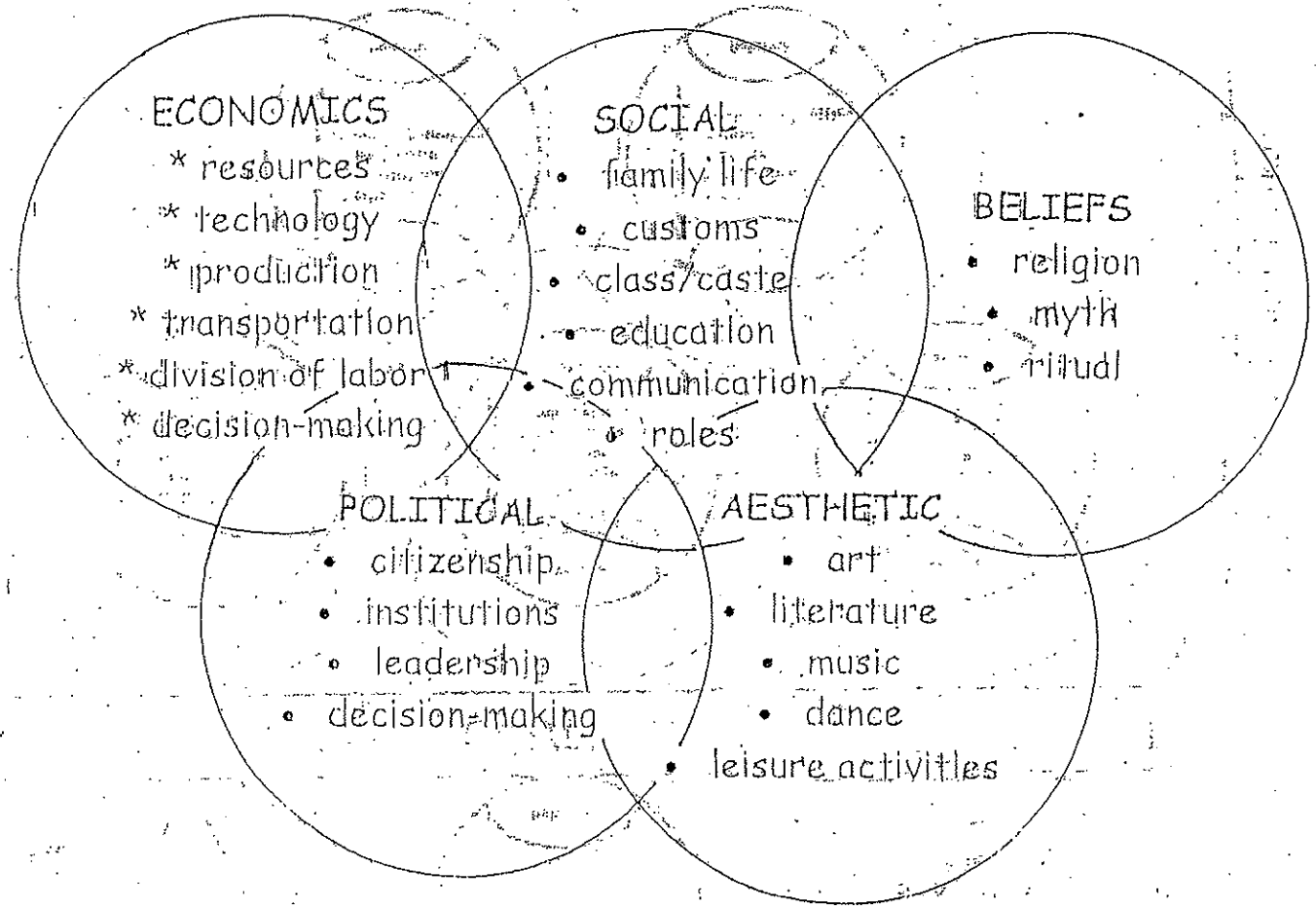
*physical  
human  
geographic*

# World Cultures Model



Change...

Change...



Environment  
Habitat

GEOGRAPHY

Resources

Change...

Change...

HISTORY

5. Describe the daily lives of the people, native and nonnative, who occupied the presidios, missions, ranchos, and pueblos.

6. Discuss the role of the Franciscans in changing the economy of California from a hunter-gatherer economy to an agricultural economy.

7. Describe the effects of the Mexican War for Independence on Alta California, including its effects on the territorial boundaries of North America.

8. Discuss the period of Mexican rule in California and its attributes, including land grants, secularization of the missions, and the rise of the rancho economy.

4.3 Students explain the economic, social, and political life in California from the establishment of the Bear Flag Republic through the Mexican-American War, the Gold Rush, and the granting of statehood.

1. Identify the locations of Mexican settlements in California and those of other settlements, including Fort Ross and Sutter's Fort.

2. Compare how and why people traveled to California and the routes they traveled (e.g., James Beckwourth, John Bidwell, John C. Fremont, Pio Pico).

3. Analyze the effects of the Gold Rush on settlements, daily life, politics, and the physical environment (e.g., using biographies of John Sutter, Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Louise Clapp).

4. Study the lives of women who helped build early California (e.g., Biddy Mason).

5. Discuss how California became a state and how its new government differed from those during the Spanish and Mexican periods.

4.4 Students explain how California became an agricultural and industrial power, tracing the transformation of the California economy and its political and cultural development since the 1850s.

1. Understand the story and lasting influence of the Pony Express, Overland Mail Service, Western Union, and the building of the transcontinental railroad, including the contributions of Chinese workers to its construction.

2. Explain how the Gold Rush transformed the economy of California, including the types of products produced and consumed, changes in towns (e.g., Sacramento, San Francisco), and economic conflicts between diverse groups of people.

3. Discuss immigration and migration to California between 1850 and 1900, including the diverse composition of those who came; the countries of origin and their relative locations; and conflicts and accords among the diverse groups (e.g., the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act).

4. Describe rapid American immigration, internal migration, settlement, and the growth of towns and cities (e.g., Los Angeles).

5. Discuss the effects of the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, and World War II on California.

6. Describe the development and locations of new industries since the turn of the century, such as the aerospace industry, electronics industry, large-scale commercial agriculture and irrigation projects, the oil and automobile industries, communications and defense industries, and important trade links with the Pacific Basin.

7. Trace the evolution of California's water system into a network of dams, aqueducts, and reservoirs.



8. Describe the history and development of California's public education system, including universities and community colleges.

9. Analyze the impact of twentieth-century Californians on the nation's artistic and cultural development, including the rise of the entertainment industry (e.g., Louis B. Meyer, Walt Disney, John Steinbeck, Ansel Adams, Dorothea Lange, John Wayne).

4.5 Students understand the structures, functions, and powers of the local, state, and federal governments as described in the U.S. Constitution.

1. Discuss what the U.S. Constitution is and why it is important (i.e., a written document that defines the structure and purpose of the U.S. government and describes the shared powers of federal, state, and local governments).

2. Understand the purpose of the California Constitution, its key principles, and its relationship to the U.S. Constitution.

3. Describe the similarities (e.g., written documents, rule of law, consent of the governed, three separate branches) and differences (e.g., scope of jurisdiction, limits on government powers, use of the military) among federal, state, and local governments.

4. Explain the structures and functions of state governments, including the roles and responsibilities of their elected officials.

5. Describe the components of California's governance structure (e.g., cities and towns, Indian rancherias and reservations, counties, school districts).