

**Texas University Interscholastic League**

**Contest Event: Current Issues and Events**

The contest focuses on a basic knowledge of current state, national and world events and issues. The contest consists of 40 multiple-choice questions and an essay that challenges students to understand not just what is happening in the world today, but why and how it's happening and what it means to us as citizens of the United States.

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills are categorized by course area and grade level. The following are course area abbreviations used for the TEKS in Current Issues & Events:

English Language Arts and Reading = ELAR 1-4  
 US History = US Hist; World History = World Hist; World Geography = World Geo  
 US Government = US Gov't; Economics = ECON

Each TEKS begins with the outline number for the appropriate course area.

<b>Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills</b>	<b>Contest Knowledge and Skills</b>
<p><u>Information Gathering, Storage and Retrieval Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <p>(23) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology. The student is expected to:</p> <p>(A) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;</p> <p>(B) create economic models such as production-possibilities curves, circular-flow charts, and supply-and-demand graphs to analyze economic data;</p> <p>(C) create a product on a contemporary economic issue or topic using critical methods of inquiry;</p> <p>(D) explain a point of view on an economic issue;</p> <p>(E) analyze and evaluate the validity of information from primary and secondary sources for bias, propaganda, point of view, and frame of reference;</p> <p>(F) evaluate economic-activity patterns using charts, tables, graphs, and maps; and</p> <p>(G) use appropriate mathematical skills to interpret social studies information. (ECON 118.2)</p> <p>(21) Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather. Students are expected to:</p> <p>(A) follow the research plan to gather evidence from experts on the topic and texts written for informed audiences in the field, distinguishing between reliable and unreliable sources and avoiding over-reliance on one source;</p> <p>(B) systematically organize relevant and accurate</p>	<p><u>Information Gathering, Storage and Retrieval Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <p>-Read national daily newspapers or Texas metropolitan newspapers, business newspapers, specialized periodicals, weekly news magazines, journals of political or social nature, and other periodicals that report, summarize or explain world events.</p> <p>-Conduct Web-based research and understand use of Internet search engines.</p> <p>-Watch regular network news programs as well as special feature news programs.</p> <p>-Know who, what, when, where, and why of news.</p> <p>-Create and maintain systematic means of data storage and retrieval.</p>

<p>information to support central ideas, concepts, and themes, outline ideas into conceptual maps/timelines, and separate factual data from complex inferences; and</p> <p>(C) paraphrase, summarize, quote, and accurately cite all researched information according to a standard format (e.g., author, title, page number), differentiating among primary, secondary, and other sources. (ELAR 1-2)</p> <p>(22) Research/Synthesizing Information. Students clarify research questions and evaluate and synthesize collected information. Students are expected to:</p> <p>(A) modify the major research question as necessary to refocus the research plan;</p> <p>(B) differentiate between theories and the evidence that supports them and determine whether the evidence found is weak or strong and how that evidence helps create a cogent argument; and</p> <p>(C) critique the research process at each step to implement changes as the need occurs and is identified. (ELAR 1-2)</p> <p>(21) Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather. Students are expected to:</p> <p>(A) follow the research plan to gather evidence from experts on the topic and texts written for informed audiences in the field, distinguishing between reliable and unreliable sources and avoiding over-reliance on one source;</p> <p>(B) systematically organize relevant and accurate information to support central ideas, concepts, and themes, outline ideas into conceptual maps/timelines, and separate factual data from complex inferences; and</p> <p>(C) paraphrase, summarize, quote, and accurately cite all researched information according to a standard format (e.g., author, title, page number), differentiating among primary, secondary, and other sources. (ELAR 3-4)</p> <p>(22) Research/Synthesizing Information. Students clarify research questions and evaluate and synthesize collected information. Students are expected to:</p> <p>(A) modify the major research question as necessary to refocus the research plan;</p> <p>(B) differentiate between theories and the evidence that supports them and determine whether the evidence found is weak or strong and how that evidence helps create a cogent argument; and</p> <p>(C) critique the research process at each step to</p>	
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<p>implement changes as the need occurs and is identified. (ELAR 3-4)</p>	
<p><u>Topic Research and Analysis Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <p>(1) History. The student understands how geography and processes of spatial exchange (diffusion) influenced events in the past and helped to shape the present. The student is expected to:</p> <p>(A) analyze the effects of physical and human geographic patterns and processes on the past and describe their impact on the present, including significant physical features and environmental conditions that influenced migration patterns and shaped the distribution of culture groups today; and</p> <p>(B) trace the spatial diffusion of phenomena such as the Columbian Exchange or the diffusion of American popular culture and describe the effects on regions of contact.</p> <p>(2) History. The student understands how people, places, and environments have changed over time and the effects of these changes. The student is expected to:</p> <p>(A) describe the human and physical characteristics of the same regions at different periods of time to evaluate relationships between past events and current conditions; and</p> <p>(B) explain how changes in societies have led to diverse uses of physical features. (World Geo 113.43)</p> <p>(5) Economics. The student understands the roles played by local, state, and national governments in both the public and private sectors of the U.S. free enterprise system. The student is expected to:</p> <p>(A) explain how government fiscal, monetary, and regulatory policies influence the economy at the local, state, and national levels;</p> <p>(B) identify the sources of revenue and expenditures of the U. S. government and analyze their impact on the U.S. economy;</p> <p>(C) compare the role of government in the U.S. free enterprise system and other economic systems; and</p> <p>(D) understand how government taxation and regulation can serve as restrictions to private enterprise.</p> <p>(6) Economics. The student understands the relationship between U.S. government policies and the economy. The student is expected to:</p> <p>(A) examine how the U.S. government uses economic resources in foreign policy; and</p>	<p><u>Topic Research and Analysis Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <p>-Focus on basic knowledge of current state, national and world events and issues.</p> <p>-Understand state and national politics and elections.</p> <p>-Understand basics of executive, legislative and judicial branches of U.S. government.</p> <p>-Understand basics of executive, legislative and judicial branches of Texas government.</p> <p>-Understand basics of free market economic system and philosophy as well as of competing economic systems and philosophies.</p> <p>-Understand cause and effect of current social and cultural issues and events.</p> <p>-Understand genesis and impact of major scientific and technological advancements.</p>

(B) understand the roles of the executive and legislative branches in setting international trade and fiscal policies. (US Gov't. 113.44)

(9) Government. The student understands the concept of federalism. The student is expected to:

(A) explain why the Founding Fathers created a distinctly new form of federalism and adopted a federal system of government instead of a unitary system;

(B) categorize government powers as national, state, or shared;

(C) analyze historical and contemporary conflicts over the respective roles of national and state governments; and

(D) understand the limits on the national and state governments in the U.S. federal system of government. (US Gov't. 113.44)

(11) Government. The student understands the role of political parties in the U.S. system of government. The student is expected to:

(A) analyze the functions of political parties and their role in the electoral process at local, state, and national levels;

(B) explain the two-party system and evaluate the role of third parties in the United States; and

(C) identify opportunities for citizens to participate in political party activities at local, state, and national levels. (US Gov't. 113.44)

(16) Understand the changing relationships among the three branches of the federal government.

(23) Citizenship. The student understands efforts to expand the democratic process. The student is expected to:

(A) identify and analyze methods of expanding the right to participate in the democratic process, including lobbying, non-violent protesting, litigation, and amendments to the U.S. Constitution;

(B) evaluate various means of achieving equality of political rights, including the 19th, 24th, and 26th amendments and congressional acts such as the American Indian Citizenship Act of 1924; and

(C) explain how participation in the democratic process reflects our national ethos, patriotism, and civic responsibility as well as our progress to build a "more perfect union."

(24) Citizenship. The student understands the importance of effective leadership in a constitutional republic. The student is expected to:

(A) describe qualities of effective leadership; and

(B) evaluate the contributions of significant political and social leaders in the United States. (US Hist. 113.41)

(18) Economics. The student understands the economic effects of increased worldwide

interdependence as the United States enters the 21st century. The student is expected to:

(A) discuss the role of American entrepreneurs such as Bill Gates, Sam Walton, Estée Lauder, Robert Johnson, Lionel Sosa, and millions of small business entrepreneurs who achieved the American dream; and

(B) identify the impact of international events, multinational corporations, government policies, and individuals on the 21st century economy. (US Hist.113.41)

(27) Science, technology, and society. The student understands the impact of science, technology, and the free enterprise system on the economic development of the United States. The student is expected to:

(A) explain the effects of scientific discoveries and technological innovations such as electric power, telephone and satellite communications, petroleum-based products, steel production, and computers on the economic development of the United States;

(B) explain how specific needs result in scientific discoveries and technological innovations in agriculture, the military, and medicine, including vaccines; and

(C) understand the impact of technological and management innovations and their applications in the workplace and the resulting productivity enhancements for business and labor such as assembly line manufacturing, time-study analysis, robotics, computer management, and just-in-time inventory management. (US Hist. 113.41)

(30)(B)Use correct social studies terminology to explain historical concepts. (US Hist. 113.41)

(21) Citizenship. The student understands the significance of political choices and decisions made by individuals, groups, and nations throughout history. The student is expected to:

(A) describe how people have participated in supporting or changing their governments;

(B) describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens and noncitizens in civic participation throughout history; and

(C) identify examples of key persons who were successful in shifting political thought. (World History 113.42)

(25) Culture. The student understands how the development of ideas has influenced institutions and societies. The student is expected to:

(A) summarize the fundamental ideas and institutions of Eastern civilizations that originated in China and India;

(B) summarize the fundamental ideas and institutions of Western civilizations that originated

<p>in Greece and Rome;  (C) explain the relationship among Christianity, individualism, and growing secularism that began with the Renaissance and how the relationship influenced subsequent political developments; and  (D) explain how Islam influences law and government in the Muslim world. (World History 113.42)</p> <p>(18) Culture. The student understands the ways in which cultures change and maintain continuity. The student is expected to:  (A) analyze cultural changes in specific regions caused by migration, war, trade, innovations, and diffusion;  (B) assess causes, effects, and perceptions of conflicts between groups of people, including modern genocides and terrorism;  (C) identify examples of cultures that maintain traditional ways, including traditional economies; and  (D) evaluate the spread of cultural traits to find examples of cultural convergence and divergence such as the spread of democratic ideas, U.S.-based fast-food franchises, the English language, technology, or global sports. (World Geo 113.43)</p>	
<p><u>Critical Thinking Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <p>(29) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:  (A) use a variety of both primary and secondary valid sources to acquire information and to analyze and answer historical questions;  (B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing and contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations, making predictions, drawing inferences, and drawing conclusions;  (C) understand how historians interpret the past (historiography) and how their interpretations of history may change over time;  (D) use the process of historical inquiry to research, interpret, and use multiple types of sources of evidence;  (E) evaluate the validity of a source based on language, corroboration with other sources, and information about the author, including points of view, frames of reference, and historical context;  (F) identify bias in written, oral, and visual material;</p>	<p><u>Critical Thinking Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Identify and clarify the question or essay prompt.</li> <li>-Analyze and interpret meaning of the question or essay prompt.</li> <li>-Determine cause and effect of issue or event.</li> <li>-Evaluate credibility of source of information.</li> <li>-Recognize faulty, illogical, incomplete or deceptive arguments.</li> </ul>

(G) identify and support with historical evidence a point of view on a social studies issue or event; and

(H) use appropriate skills to analyze and interpret social studies information such as maps, graphs, presentations, speeches, lectures, and political cartoons. (US History 113.41)

(22) Social studies skills. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings. The student is expected to: (A) use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and

(B) use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision. (US Gov't. 113.44)

(25) Social studies skills. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings. The student is expected to: (A) use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and

(B) use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision. (ECON 118.2)

(10) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Persuasive Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about persuasive text and provide evidence from text to support their analysis. Students are expected to:

(A) evaluate the merits of an argument, action, or policy by analyzing the relationships (e.g., implication, necessity, sufficiency) among evidence, inferences, assumptions, and claims in text; and

(B) draw conclusions about the credibility of persuasive text by examining its implicit and stated assumptions about an issue as conveyed by the specific use of language. (ELAR 1-4)

(11) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Procedural Texts. Students understand how to glean and use information in procedural texts and documents. Students are expected to:

(A) draw conclusions about how the patterns of organization and hierarchic structures support the

<p>understandability of text; and  (B) evaluate the structures of text (e.g., format, headers) for their clarity and organizational coherence and for the effectiveness of their graphic representations. (ELAR 1-4)  (12) Reading/Media Literacy. Students use comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts. Students are expected to:  (A) evaluate how messages presented in media reflect social and cultural views in ways different from traditional texts;  (B) evaluate the interactions of different techniques (e.g., layout, pictures, typeface in print media, images, text, sound in electronic journalism) used in multi-layered media;  (C) evaluate how one issue or event is represented across various media to understand the notions of bias, audience, and purpose; and  (D) evaluate changes in formality and tone across various media for different audiences and purposes. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	
<p><u>Critical Reading Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <p>(24) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology. The student is expected to:  (A) locate and use primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about the United States;  (B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions; (US History 113.32)  (9) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Expository Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about expository text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to:  (A) summarize text and distinguish between a summary that captures the main ideas and elements of a text and a critique that takes a position and expresses an opinion;  (B) differentiate between opinions that are</p>	<p><u>Critical Reading Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Determine central point of text.</li> <li>-Determine audience for whom the text is written.</li> <li>-Examine supporting facts, evidence or conclusion in text.</li> <li>-Assess strengths and weaknesses of information and/or arguments in text.</li> </ul>



<p>substantiated and unsubstantiated in the text;  (C) make subtle inferences and draw complex conclusions about the ideas in text and their organizational patterns; and  (D) synthesize and make logical connections between ideas and details in several texts selected to reflect a range of viewpoints on the same topic and support those findings with textual evidence. (ELAR 1-4)  (10) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Persuasive Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about persuasive text and provide evidence from text to support their analysis. Students are expected to:  (A) analyze the relevance, quality, and credibility of evidence given to support or oppose an argument for a specific audience; and  (B) analyze famous speeches for the rhetorical structures and devices used to convince the reader of the authors' propositions. (ELAR 1-4)  (11) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Procedural Texts. Students understand how to glean and use information in procedural texts and documents. Students are expected to:  (A) analyze the clarity of the objective(s) of procedural text (e.g., consider reading instructions for software, warranties, consumer publications); and  (B) analyze factual, quantitative, or technical data presented in multiple graphical sources. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	
<p><u>Writing Process (Organization, application of ideas and material, revision of drafts, etc.) Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <p>(25) Communicate in written, oral and visual forms. (US History 113.32)  (13) Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. Students are expected to:  (A) plan a first draft by selecting the correct genre for conveying the intended meaning to multiple audiences, determining appropriate topics through a range of strategies (e.g., discussion, background reading, personal interests, interviews), and developing a thesis or controlling idea;  (B) structure ideas in a sustained and persuasive way (e.g., using outlines, note taking, graphic organizers, lists) and develop drafts in timed and open-ended situations that include transitions and the rhetorical devices used to convey meaning;  (C) revise drafts to improve style, word choice, figurative language, sentence variety, and subtlety</p>	<p><u>Writing Process (Organization, application of ideas and material, revision of drafts, etc.) Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use writing process to compose an expository essay.</li> <li>-Draw information from a wide range of sources: political, social, cultural, economic, scientific and technological.</li> <li>-Develop a full range of points relative to the essay prompt.</li> <li>-Organize ideas, facts and arguments.</li> <li>-Develop and state a thesis and provide supporting statements and facts about the thesis.</li> <li>-Write an effective introduction.</li> <li>-Develop essay in a clear, organized and logical order.</li> </ul>

<p>of meaning after rethinking how well questions of purpose, audience, and genre have been addressed;</p> <p>(D) edit drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling; and</p> <p>(E) revise final draft in response to feedback from peers and teacher and publish written work for appropriate audiences. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Analyze, interpret and explain in the essay.</li> <li>-Recognize arguments, anticipate and refute counter-arguments.</li> <li>-Draw conclusions to demonstrate understanding.</li> <li>-Reach and support a conclusion.</li> <li>-Review and revise drafts of the essay.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Language Use (diction, grammar, punctuation, structure, organization, etc.) Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <p>(25)(B) Use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure and punctuation. (US History 113.32)</p> <p>(24) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:</p> <p>(A) use social studies terminology correctly;</p> <p>(B) use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation;</p> <p>(C) transfer information from one medium to another including written to visual and statistical to written or visual using computer software as appropriate; (ECON 118.2)</p> <p>(17) Oral and Written Conventions/Conventions. Students understand the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:</p> <p>(A) use and understand the function of the following parts of speech in the context of reading, writing, and speaking:</p> <p>(i) more complex active and passive tenses and verbals (gerunds, infinitives, participles);</p> <p>(ii) restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses; and</p> <p>(iii) reciprocal pronouns (e.g., each other, one another);</p> <p>(B) identify and use the subjunctive mood to express doubts, wishes, and possibilities; and</p> <p>(C) use a variety of correctly structured sentences (e.g., compound, complex, compound-complex). (ELAR 1-2)</p> <p>(18) Oral and Written Conventions/Handwriting, Capitalization, and Punctuation. Students write legibly and use appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions in their compositions. Students are expected to:</p> <p>(A) use conventions of capitalization; and</p>	<p><u>Language Use (diction, grammar, punctuation, structure, organization, etc.) Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use proper sentence structure.</li> <li>-Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.</li> <li>-Avoid unnecessary verbiage, difficult wording and padding.</li> <li>-Use concrete details and apt quotations.</li> <li>-Avoid generalizations.</li> <li>-Master transitional or directional words.</li> <li>-Emphasize conciseness, brevity, relevance, accuracy, clarity and timeliness.</li> </ul>

<p>(B) use correct punctuation marks including:  (i) quotation marks to indicate sarcasm or irony;  (ii) comma placement in nonrestrictive phrases, clauses, and contrasting expressions; and  (iii) dashes to emphasize parenthetical information. (ELAR 1-2)</p> <p>(17) Oral and Written Conventions/Conventions. Students understand the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:</p> <p>(A) use and understand the function of different types of clauses and phrases (e.g., adjectival, noun, adverbial clauses and phrases); and  (B) use a variety of correctly structured sentences (e.g., compound, complex, compound-complex). (ELAR 3-4)</p> <p>(18) Oral and Written Conventions/Handwriting, Capitalization, and Punctuation. Students write legibly and use appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions in their compositions. Students are expected to correctly and consistently use conventions of punctuation and capitalization. (ELAR 3-4)</p> <p>(19) Oral and Written Conventions/Spelling. Students spell correctly. Students are expected to spell correctly, including using various resources to determine and check correct spellings. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	
<p><u>Listening, Note-taking and Teamwork Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <p>(24)(A) listen responsively to a speaker by taking notes that summarize, synthesize, or highlight the speaker's ideas for critical reflection and by asking questions related to the content for clarification and elaboration; (ELAR 1-4)</p> <p>(26) Listening and Speaking/Teamwork. Students work productively with others in teams. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to participate productively in teams, building on the ideas of others, contributing relevant information, developing a plan for consensus-building, and setting ground rules for decision-making. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	<p><u>Listening, Note-taking and Teamwork Knowledge and Skills:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Take notes on written and broadcast messages found while researching.</li> <li>-Synthesize and evaluate written and oral messages to select valuable or pertinent information.</li> <li>-Work with other team members and coach to discuss, analyze materials and prepare for contest events.</li> </ul>