

Supplemental Guide for the Florida Civic Literacy Examination (FCLE)

Disclaimer: The purpose of this supplemental guide is to orient faculty and students to the types of questions and content covered on the Florida Civic Literacy Examination. The content described below is not intended to replace associated coursework or other preparation methods required to demonstrate civic literacy, as described in [Florida Statute](#); however, students and faculty may use this document to inform preparation needs.

[CPALMS](#) is introduced as one place to access supplemental resources, but it is not intended to be an exhaustive source. CPALMS is an online toolbox of information, vetted resources, and interactive tools that helps educators effectively implement teaching standards. It is the State of Florida's official source for standards information and course descriptions. Where CPALMS resources are available, links have been provided. In some instances, additional hyperlinks drawing from the National Archives, United States government and Florida government websites, and www.oyez.org have been included.

Additionally, this document is not intended to guide classroom instruction.

The Four Civic Literacy Competencies

Competency One: Understanding of the basic principles and practices of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government

Competency Two: Understanding of the United States Constitution and its application

Competency Three: Knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-government

Competency Four: Understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation, and landmark executive actions and their impact on law and society

It should be noted that all four competencies overlap in content and that material addressed in one competency may be used to assess understanding of another competency.

Items

Types of items that students may see on this examination will be multiple choice and reflect [Webb's Depth of Knowledge](#) in terms of item complexity in item development and construction. Students may be asked to recall, explain, interpret, categorize, or draw conclusions, among other approaches.

Items may use a variety of stimuli, such as primary sources, charts or graphs, or similar stimuli. Items may also ask students to consider or interpret a scenario to answer questions.

Competency One:

Understanding of the basic principles and practices of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government

Students should be able to identify, explain, interpret, and apply the principles and practices of American democracy and the republican form of government. Click the hyperlinks for relevant [CPALMS](#) references where applicable.

Which basic principles and practices should students be familiar with?

1. The Social Contract
 - a. [Locke](#) and [Consent of the Governed](#)
2. Checks and Balances/Separation of Powers
 - a. [Montesquieu](#) and [limited government](#)
 - b. motivations, purpose, and practice, with a demonstrated understanding of [constitutional implications and role](#)
3. Rule of Law
 - a. essential component of democratic government
 - i. [limits on the use of power by government](#)
4. Due Process
 - a. [Fair procedures within the boundaries of the law](#)
 - b. [the justice system](#) and [how the justice system works](#)
5. Equality under the Law
 - a. [equal treatment](#) and [equal protection without the guarantee of equal outcomes](#)
6. Popular Sovereignty
 - a. [government is created by and subject to the will of the people](#)
 - i. connect [these ideas](#) to the [founding documents](#)
 1. [the concept of “We the People”, etc.](#)
7. Natural Rights and Natural Law
 - a. [as understood by the Founders](#) and seen [in our founding documents](#)
8. Federalism
 - a. what does federalism look like [in theory](#) and [in practice](#)
 - b. how [federalism has influenced](#) the development of the United States government
9. Individual Liberty
 - a. [the importance of political and religious liberty to the Founders](#)
 - b. [what religious liberty looks like over time](#) and [in contemporary practice](#)
10. Republicanism and Representative Democratic Government
 - a. [the constitutional guarantee of a republican \(representative\) form of government for each state](#)
 - b. [origins of the ideas of democracy and the republic](#)
 - c. [differences between republican and democratic \(small “r”, small “d”\) forms of government](#)
 - d. [how the United States functions as a constitutional republic](#)
 - i. [why the Founders did not favor a purely democratic form of government](#)

11. Constitutionalism

- a. [adherence to a constitutional form of government](#)
- b. [philosophical](#) and practical foundations

12. Majority Rule and Minority Rights

- a. [constitutional and practical applications](#)

13. Equal Protection

- a. [its meaning and practice under the Constitution and associated amendments](#)

14. Bill of Rights and the Protections of Civil Rights and Liberties

- a. what the Bill of Rights looks like in [historical and contemporary practice](#)
- b. [reasons for and ways in which rights and liberties guaranteed under the Bill of Rights may be limited](#)

15. Elections

- a. [the importance of free, fair, and secure elections](#)
- b. [how elections work at the state and federal levels](#)

Competency Two:

Understanding of the United States Constitution and its application

Students should be able to identify the articles, amendments, and structures of the United States Constitution. This includes the principles of the Constitution and how they apply to various aspects of government and life. Click the hyperlinks for relevant CPALMS or support references where applicable.

Which aspects of the United States Constitution should students be familiar with?

1. Articles

- a. What each [Article of the United States Constitution](#) contains
 - i. [Article I: The Legislative Branch](#)
 - ii. [Article II: The Executive Branch](#)
 - iii. [Article III: The Judicial Branch](#)
 1. [Federal Courts](#)
 - iv. Students should also be familiar with the general content of Articles IV-VII
 1. [Article IV: The Full Faith and Credit Clause and the admittance of new states](#)
 2. [Article V: The Amendment Process](#)
 3. [Article VI: The Supremacy Clause](#)
 4. [Article VII: Ratification](#)
- b. [Expressed/Enumerated/Delegated and Implied Powers](#)

2. Amendments and Selective Incorporation

- a. [The Amendment Process](#)
- b. Bill of Rights and later amendments
 - i. [Identify the Rights in the Bill of Rights and Later Amendments](#)
 - ii. [How the Constitution Safeguards and Limits Individual Rights](#)
 - iii. Reserved Powers in the 10th Amendment
- c. How amendments have impacted civic participation over time and/or changed government and society
 - i. [How the Constitution Safeguards and Limits Individual Rights](#)
 - ii. [Constitutional Provisions that Impact Citizenship](#)
 - iii. [Factors that Contribute to Voter Turnout](#)
- d. How the amendments apply to the federal government and the state governments
 - i. [How the Constitution Safeguards and Limits Individual Rights](#)
 - ii. [Federalism and Selective Incorporation](#)

3. Federalists vs Anti-Federalists

- a. [Arguments in Favor of and Against Ratification of the United States Constitution](#)
 - i. [A bill of rights as a necessary addition for ratification](#)

4. Clauses of the United States Constitution

- a. Knowing the significant clauses of the Constitution and how have they been interpreted and applied over time

- i. [Including Supremacy Clause; Full Faith and Credit Clause; Commerce Clause; Emoluments Clause; Due Process Clause; Equal Protection Clause; Necessary and Proper/Elastic Clause; First Amendment Clauses](#)

Note that Competency Two overlaps with other competencies, particularly Competency One and Competency Four.

Competency Three:

Knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-government

Students should be able to recall, identify, and explain documents from the founding era (1776-1791). Students should be able to identify the influences of earlier documents on the founding of the United States and conceptions of government within a provided context. Note that most documents are covered by the state K-12 civics and U.S. government benchmarks. Click the hyperlinks for relevant CPALMS references where applicable.

Which documents should students be familiar with?

Core Documents:

1. Declaration of Independence (1776)
 - a. [The Influence of Enlightenment Ideas](#)
 - b. [Intellectual Influences of Various Primary Documents](#)
 - c. [Ideas and Principles that Shape the United States as a Constitutional Republic](#)
 - d. [How Ideas and Principles Contributed to the Expansion of Civil Rights Over Time](#)
2. The Constitution of Massachusetts (1780)
 - a. [Its Influence on the Development of the United States as a Constitutional Republic](#)
3. The Articles of Confederation (1781)
 - a. [Intellectual Influences of Various Primary Documents](#)
 - b. [Ideas and Principles that Shape the United States as a Constitutional Republic](#)
 - c. [Strengths and Weaknesses of the Articles and How They Reflect the Declaration of Independence and Influenced the U.S. Constitution](#)
4. The Northwest Ordinances (1784, 1785, 1787)
 - a. [Intellectual Influences of Various Primary Documents](#)
5. Federalist Papers (i.e., No. 10, No. 14, No. 31, No. 39, No. 51)
 - a. Students should be able to recall authors and central arguments of the listed papers; other Federalist papers may potentially be included, but context will be provided.
 - i. [Ideas and Principles that Shape the United States as a Constitutional Republic](#)
 - ii. [Arguments in Favor of Ratification of the United States Constitution](#)
6. United States Constitution (1787)
 - a. Note that this document will overlap with other competencies. Students should be familiar with:
 - i. [The Influence of Enlightenment Ideas](#)
 - ii. [Intellectual Influences of Various Primary Documents](#)
 - iii. [Ideas and Principles that Shape the United States as a Constitutional Republic](#)

- iv. [How Ideas and Principles Contributed to the Expansion of Civil Rights Over Time](#)
- v. [Arguments in Favor of Ratification of the United States Constitution](#)

7. Bill of Rights (1791)

- a. Note that this document will overlap with other competencies. Students should be familiar with:
 - i. [Intellectual Influences of Various Primary Documents](#)
 - ii. [How Ideas and Principles Contributed to the Expansion of Civil Rights Over Time](#)
 - iii. [Ideas and Principles that Shape the United States as a Constitutional Republic](#)
 - iv. [Arguments in Favor of Ratification of the United States Constitution](#)

Additional Documents

- 1. Magna Carta (1215)
 - a. [Intellectual Influences of Various Primary Documents](#)
- 2. Mayflower Compact (1620)
 - a. [Intellectual Influences of Various Primary Documents](#)
- 3. English Bill of Rights (1689)
 - a. [Intellectual Influences of Various Primary Documents](#)
- 4. Common Sense (1776)
 - a. [Intellectual Influences of Various Primary Documents](#)
- 5. Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776)
 - a. [Intellectual Influences of Various Primary Documents \(National Archives Link\)](#)
- 6. Anti-Federalist Papers (e.g., Brutus 1)
 - a. [Arguments in Favor of Ratification of the United States Constitution](#)

Competency Four:

Understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation, and landmark executive actions and their impact on law and society

Students should be able to recall, identify, and explain landmark U.S. Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation, and executive actions. They should also be able to explain their impact on law and society. Most landmark cases, legislation, and executive actions are drawn from Florida’s K-12 civics, U.S. government, and U.S. history course content.

Landmark cases that students should know, as identified primarily in the Florida K-12 civics, U.S. government, or U.S. history benchmarks, involve the expansion or restriction of civil rights and liberties, the power of the federal government (including the various and specific powers and authority of the different branches), and how the U.S. Supreme Court has interpreted clauses of the U.S. Constitution. Be sure to consider the impact of selective incorporation (a principle students should know for Competency Two) within the context of federalism, as well as [sources and types of law](#). **Most cases will have appeared in the [7th grade civics](#), [9-12th grade U.S. government](#), or [8th grade](#) and [9th-12th grade U.S. history course content](#).** Click the hyperlinks below for Oyez summaries of each case.

[Marbury v. Madison \(1803\)](#)

[McCulloch v. Maryland \(1819\)](#)

[Dred Scott v. Sandford \(1857\)](#)

[Plessy v. Ferguson \(1896\)](#)

[Schenck v. U.S. \(1919\)](#)

[Korematsu v. United States \(1944\)](#)

[Brown v. Board \(1954\)](#)

[Mapp v. Ohio \(1961\)](#)

[Baker v. Carr \(1962\)](#)

[Engel v. Vitale \(1962\)](#)

[Gideon v. Wainwright \(1963\)](#)

[Miranda v. Arizona \(1966\)](#)

[Tinker v. Des Moines \(1969\)](#)

[New York Times v. United States \(1971\)](#)

[Wisconsin v. Yoder \(1972\)](#)

[Roe v. Wade \(1973\)](#)

[United States v. Nixon \(1974\)](#)

[Regents of the University of California v. Bakke \(1978\)](#)

[Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier \(1988\)](#)

[Texas v. Johnson \(1989\)](#)

[Shaw v. Reno \(1993\)](#)

[U.S. v. Lopez \(1995\)](#)

[Bush v. Gore \(2000\)](#)

[District of Columbia v. Heller \(2008\)](#)

[McDonald v. Chicago \(2010\)](#)
[Citizens United v. FEC \(2010\)](#)

Landmark Legislation

Landmark legislation that students should be familiar with, as identified primarily in the Florida K-12 civics, U.S. government, or U.S. history course content, involves:

- a) conflicts and compromises (e.g., the [Compromise of 1850](#); [Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854](#));
- b) territorial expansion and the structure and function of government (e.g., [Homestead Act of 1862](#); [Pendleton Act of 1883](#));
- c) expansion or restrictions of civil rights and liberties (e.g., various civil rights acts between the [19th](#) and [21st centuries](#); [Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798](#); [USA PATRIOT Act of 2001](#));
- d) expansions or restrictions in social programs (e.g., various [Great Society-related acts](#); [New Deal-related acts](#); [Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010](#));
- e) environmental protections (e.g., [Clean Air Act of 1970](#));
- f) expansions of presidential and war powers (e.g., [Tonkin Gulf Resolution of 1964](#)).

Note that this overview does not include all legislation that could be assessed; rather, it covers the types of legislation that students might see on the FCLE. Most landmark legislation will have appeared in the 7th grade civics, 9th-12th grade U.S. government, or 8th grade and 9th-12th grade U.S. history course content.

Landmark Executive Actions

Landmark executive actions that students should be familiar with, as identified primarily in the Florida K-12 civics, U.S. government, or U.S. history course content, primarily involve:

- a) efforts at foreign policy (e.g., various treaties that ended wars, such as the [Treaty of Paris of 1898](#));
- b) territorial expansion (e.g., treaties and agreements that expanded the United States, such as the [Louisiana Purchase of 1803](#) or the [Adams-Onis Treaty of 1821](#));
- c) restrictions or expansions of civil rights and liberties (e.g., [suspensions of habeas corpus](#); [Japanese-American internment](#); [enforcement of civil rights-related Supreme Court decisions](#));
- d) the use of executive orders (e.g., [military desegregation](#); [affirmative action](#));
- e) the presidential “bully pulpit” (e.g., advocacy for various programs and reforms, particularly in the 20th and 21st centuries);
- f) [presidential war powers](#).

Note that this overview does not include all executive actions that could be assessed; rather, it covers the types of executive actions that students might see on the FCLE. Most landmark executive actions will have appeared in the 7th grade civics, 9th-12th grade U.S. government, or 8th and 9th-12th grade U.S. history course content.

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