

From Standards to Success: Expanded Historical Thinking Skills Reference

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Use this reference to clarify the definitions and applications of the six Historical Thinking Skills (HTS): Comparison (CO), Causation (CE), Periodization (P), Contextualization (CX), Continuity and Change (CC), and Use of Evidence (E). Refer to it when identifying the historical thinking required by a standard or indicator and when aligning instruction and assessment to the targeted skill.

Skill Code	Skill	What Students Should Be Able to Do
CO	Comparison	• Identify characteristics of historical events over time, place, and culture • Categorize events by similarities and differences • Construct conclusions based on comparative analysis • Analyze reasons for similarities and differences
CE	Causation	• Justify long-term and short-term causes and consequences of significant events • Compare causes and effects across developments • Differentiate causation from correlation or mere context
P	Periodization	• Identify major turning points in U.S. history • Define and understand the characteristics of an era • Describe methods historians use to categorize events into periods • Summarize events and developments according to eras and themes
CX	Contextualization	• Distinguish events based on time and place • Establish connections between related developments • Connect specific events to broader historical themes and trends
CC	Continuity & Change	• Define the concepts of continuity and change • Identify patterns of continuity and change both chronologically and thematically • Compare the relative importance of continuities and changes across periods
E	Use of Evidence	• Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources • Identify author's point of view, bias, and context • Utilize multiple points of view to construct and support historical arguments