

From Standards to Success: USHC 2 | EOCEP Assessment Design Exemplar

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This completed exemplar demonstrates how EOCEP-style assessment items can align with a U.S. History indicator, Historical Thinking Skill (HTS), and Depth of Knowledge (DOK). Using the Missouri Compromise as an instructional anchor, the exemplar models selected-response, evidence-based selected-response, and technology-enhanced items that assess students' ability to reason about historical causation. Educators can use the exemplar as a reference when designing or refining their own evidence-centered assessments.

Instructional Anchor: Missouri Compromise (1820)

Indicator: USHC.2.CE

Historical Thinking Skill: Causation (CE)

DOK Levels Assessed: 2–3

1. Selected-Response (SR) Item

- **DOK Level:** 2
- **HTS:** CE (Causation)
- **Stem:** Which development best demonstrates a long-term consequence of efforts to resolve sectional conflict through the Missouri Compromise?
 - A. Sectional disagreements over the expansion of slavery continued as the nation expanded westward.
 - B. Congress permanently resolved disagreements over slavery in western territories.
 - C. Southern states immediately began withdrawing from the Union.
 - D. The federal government ended the expansion of slavery into all western territories.
- **Correct Answer:** A
- **Rationale:** The Missouri Compromise temporarily addressed sectional disagreement over the expansion of slavery, but westward expansion continued to generate disputes over slavery and political compromise. These tensions resurfaced in later measures such as the Compromise of 1850 and Kansas-Nebraska Act (CE, DOK 2).

2. Evidence-Based Selected-Response (EBSR) Item

- **DOK Level:** 3
- **HTS:** CE (Causation)

Source:

In an 1820 letter to Andrew Jackson, John Eaton described intense disagreement over slavery and possible dissolution of the Union. He argued that the Missouri Compromise's restriction of slavery north of 36½ degrees had helped preserve peace and reduce threats to national harmony.

Adapted from John Eaton to Andrew Jackson, March 11, 1820

Part A:

Which conclusion about the Missouri Compromise is best supported by the source?

- A. It attempted to reduce sectional conflict over the expansion of slavery.
- B. It permanently resolved disagreements between free and slave states.
- C. It transferred decisions about slavery entirely to individual territories.
- D. It ended congressional involvement in the admission of new states.

- **Answer A:** A

Part B:

Which evidence from the source best supports the answer to Part A?

- A. Eaton describes disagreement over slavery as threatening the Union.
- B. Eaton argues that Congress had no authority over territories.
- C. Eaton states that sectional disagreements had disappeared before 1820.
- D. Eaton argues that new states should determine congressional policy.

- **Answer B:** A
- **Rationale:** Part A requires students to draw a conclusion about the purpose and effect of the Missouri Compromise. Part B requires students to identify evidence supporting that conclusion, connecting source analysis with causal reasoning (CE, DOK 3).

3. Technology-Enhanced (TE) Item: Drag and Drop

- **DOK Level:** 2
- **HTS:** CE (Causation)

Task:

Drag each event into the correct chronological position on the timeline.

Events:

- Compromise of 1850
- Missouri Compromise (1820)
- Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854)

Timeline:

Earliest → _____ → _____ → _____ → Latest

Then drag each statement to the event it best describes:

Missouri Compromise (1820): Attempted to address sectional disagreement over the expansion of slavery through geographic restrictions.

Compromise of 1850: Attempted to address renewed sectional conflict following additional territorial expansion.

Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854): Reopened the issue of slavery in western territories and contributed to increasing sectional conflict.

Correct Response:

Students correctly sequence all three events and match each statement to the appropriate event.

PLD-Informed Considerations:

Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) can help educators anticipate differences in the quality of students' historical reasoning, evidence use, and independence. Evidence from student responses can inform feedback and instructional supports while maintaining consistent historical thinking expectations for all students.

Teacher Notes:

- Each item aligns to **USHC.2.CE** and engages students in causal reasoning at DOK 2–3.
- The SR requires students to identify a long-term consequence of the Missouri Compromise (DOK 2).
- The EBSR combines content selection and evidence justification (DOK 3).
- The TE item requires students to sequence related political compromises and connect each development to the evolving relationship between westward expansion and sectional conflict.