

HEIghten® Civic Competency & Engagement Assessment

Civic Competency Performance Level Descriptions

Advanced (Score Range 173–180)

A typical student at the Advanced level has demonstrated the ability to:

- understand how knowledge of fundamental government institutions and processes enables more effective civic participation.
- evaluate strengths and weaknesses of potential solutions to public debates over major political or social issues.
- apply appropriate evaluative standards to different types of media (e.g., social media, online newspapers, network television) used to convey political information.
- relate historical events and trends to current political discourse and debates.
- understand the potential effects of laws or policies on different communities or groups.
- apply principles from foundational political documents to current political or community issues.
- understand fundamental principles of democratic processes, civil rights and the rule of law.
- understand legal aspects of citizenship, voting and representation.
- consistently distinguish evidence-backed facts from unsubstantiated opinions.
- apply appropriate ethical and/or democratic principles to political decisions or practices.
- consistently choose the most appropriate mode of participation to resolve political or community issues.
- analyze social or political systems to plan processes of problem solving and public action.
- relate national policy and political events to a global or international perspective.

Proficient (Score Range 157–172)

A typical student at the Proficient level has demonstrated the ability to:

- understand fundamental government institutions and processes.
- identify potential solutions to public debates over major political or social issues.
- recognize differences in how political information is conveyed through different types of media (e.g., social media, online newspapers, network television).
- understand current political discourse and debates.
- understand the potential effects of laws or policies.
- understand the relationship of foundational political documents to current political or community issues.
- understand fundamental principles of democratic processes, civil rights and the rule of law.
- understand legal aspects of citizenship, voting and representation.
- consistently distinguish evidence-backed facts from unsubstantiated opinions.
- apply appropriate ethical and/or democratic principles to political decisions or practices.
- consistently choose the most appropriate mode of participation to resolve political or community issues.

Developing (Score Range 150–156)

A typical student at the Developing level may sometimes:

- display knowledge of fundamental government institutions and processes.
- identify different positions in public debates over major political or social issues.
- recognize when political information and opinion is being conveyed through different types of media (e.g., social media, online newspapers, network television).
- display some knowledge of current political discourse and debates.
- recognize the effects of laws or policies.
- comprehend the content of foundational political documents.
- display knowledge of fundamental principles of democratic processes and civil rights.
- display knowledge of the legal aspects of citizenship, voting and representation.
- distinguish evidence-backed facts from unsubstantiated opinions.
- identify ethical and/or democratic principles relevant to political decisions or practices.
- choose an appropriate mode of participation to resolve political or community issues.

Civic Attitudes Performance Level Descriptions

Test takers are divided into three groups based on their responses to civic-related scenarios involving the expression of different perspectives.

Higher Level (Score Range 130–150)

In responding to descriptions of civic-related scenarios with expressions of different perspectives on those scenarios, test takers at this level are **very likely to agree** with

- assertions that are in line with commonly accepted democratic values (e.g., sense of civic responsibility).
- proposals that tend to encourage a democratic exchange of views.
- proposals that take into account community needs.
- assertions that acknowledge diverse opinions and the value of hearing them expressed.
- assertions that express a willingness to engage in political or community issues and activities.
- assertions that individual participation in political or community issues is inherently worthwhile.
- assertions that individuals can effect meaningful change by engaging in the political process.
- proposals that would lead to increased civic participation by individuals or groups.

Medium Level (Score Range 112–129)

In responding to descriptions of civic-related scenarios with expressions of different perspectives on those scenarios, test takers at this level are **likely to agree** with:

- assertions that are in line with commonly accepted democratic values (e.g., sense of civic responsibility).
- proposals that tend to encourage a democratic exchange of views.
- proposals that take into account community needs.
- assertions that acknowledge diverse opinions and the value of hearing them expressed.

- assertions that express a willingness to engage in political or community issues and activities.
- assertions that individual participation in political or community issues is inherently worthwhile.
- assertions that individuals can effect meaningful change by engaging in the political process.
- proposals that would lead to increased civic participation by individuals or groups.

Lower Level (Score range 90–111)

In responding to descriptions of civic-related scenarios with expressions of different perspectives on those scenarios, test takers at this level are **somewhat likely to agree with, but occasionally disagree** with:

- assertions that are in line with commonly accepted democratic values (e.g., sense of civic responsibility).
- proposals that tend to encourage a democratic exchange of views.
- proposals that take into account community needs.
- assertions that acknowledge diverse opinions and the value of hearing them expressed.
- assertions that express a willingness to engage in political or community issues and activities.
- assertions that individual participation in political or community issues is inherently worthwhile.
- assertions that individuals can effect meaningful change by engaging in the political process.
- proposals that would lead to increased civic participation by individuals or groups.