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# **SOCIAL STUDIES ZINGERS**

**Answering the Most-Missed STAAR® Test Items** 



#### To the Teacher

Grade 8 Social Studies Zingers help prepare all students for the STAAR test by focusing on how to **approach** and **answer** STAAR test items by:

- 1. reading items carefully and looking for clues,
- 2. using what they already know, and
- 3. applying logical reasoning to eliminate wrong answer choices.

The 15 Zinger lessons are organized **chronologically** and can be used in many ways, including:

- Warm Ups by splitting each Zinger in half so that Guided Practice is used separately.
- **Transition Activities** that can be used with partners or small groups.
- Spaced Review, such as one day a week, to review content in the format of the test.
- Intense Review/Preparation in the weeks before the STAAR test.

Stronger students will appreciate the challenge of solving the most-missed STAAR test items and will become more aware of their thinking and the value of logic. Average and struggling students will grow in logical reasoning and confidence as they successfully work through difficult test items. All students will enjoy Zingers while improving their test-taking skills.

**On Your Own** is the second section in this workbook. It contains 15 STAAR practice items, each with a stimulus, such as a quote, image, or diagram (graphic organizer). About 50% of the STAAR test items include a stimulus, and students benefit from practice and feedback with items that require the use of information provided by a stimulus.



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### **Using the Grade 8 Social Studies Zingers**

Each Zinger examines one of the most-missed items from a recent STAAR Social Studies test and models how to approach the question and answer it by eliminating weak answer choices.

#### 1 READ CAREFULLY

This section shows a difficult test item from the 2016, 2017, or 2018 STAAR. If the item uses hard words or refers to an idea or event that might be unfamiliar, the question or questions in this section will help you understand them.

#### (2) THINK ABOUT IT

Here you see what two students are thinking as they read the question and answer choices.

- Which student will probably do better?
- What can you learn from how these students think?

Seeing how other students think can help you become more aware of your own thinking and avoid problems and negative thoughts.

#### 3 USE LOGIC

In this part, you answer questions about things you know. Your answers will help you narrow down the answer choices.

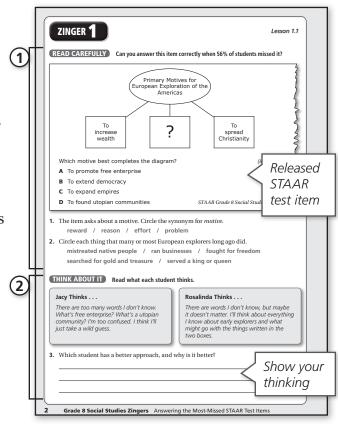
- Which answer choices can you eliminate?
- Can you answer the test question?

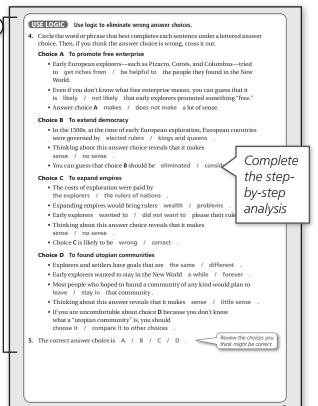
#### **GUIDED PRACTICE**

Here, you apply what you learned by answering a question similar to the STAAR one. Again, questions about what you know will steer you in the right direction.

#### TAKE-AWAY

On the last page of the lesson, which is not pictured here, there may be a "Take-Away." This summarizes a strategy you learned in the lesson. You will write down your own ideas about how this way of thinking can help you take a test.





# **Introducing Zingers!**

Can you learn more powerful ways to think? Yes! Will that help you do better on the STAAR Social Studies test? Yes! Will you enjoy learning what Zingers teach? Yes!

#### **What Zingers Are**

Zingers are lessons that you can do alone or with other students to help you do better on the STAAR Social Studies test. Each Zinger begins by presenting one of the most difficult STAAR test items from the last few years.

Then it asks you questions about things you already know or can figure out. As you answer these questions, you get closer and closer to deciding what the correct answer is. Then you answer it! Finally, you apply what you have just learned by practicing with a new and similar test item.

#### **How Zingers Can Help You**

If you get nervous about taking tests, working with Zingers will help you feel calmer. If you sometimes do poorly on tests, working with Zingers will help you do better. By working on Zingers, you will learn the following test-taking strategies and why they work.

- If you don't know the answer, guess!
- Before guessing, try to eliminate (get rid of) some of the choices.
- Use what you do know to figure out what you don't know.
- When details confuse you, see if ignoring them helps.
- Think about what makes sense and what doesn't.
- Use familiar words to try to understand unfamiliar ones.
- If a passage is difficult, read it over again slowly.
- Don't give up!

Would you like to discover that you know more than you thought you did? Would you like to do the best you can on the STAAR Social Studies test? Would you like to do better on lots of tests? Try . . . Zingers!

# ZINGER 4

#### READ CAREFULLY

Can you answer this item correctly when 57% of students missed it?

One Way to Amend t	ne U.S. Constitution
--------------------	----------------------

Proposal	Ratification
Proposal by a(1) vote in both houses of Congress.	Ratification by three-fourths of the $\frac{(2)}{}$ .

Which numbered pair correctly replaces (1) and (2) in this table?

- **F** (1) three-fourths
  - (2) eligible voters
- **G** (1) two-thirds
  - (2) Electoral College
- **H** (1) three-fourths
  - (2) Supreme Court
- **J** (1) two-thirds
  - (2) state legislatures

STAAR Grade 8 Social Studies 2018 #24

1. Look at the words at the top of the two columns in the chart. It makes sense that an amendment has to be proposed before it can become a law. But a proposal is just a suggestion. What must people do before any proposal can be carried out?

ignore it / reject it / accept it

**2.** So, what is a likely meaning for *ratification*?

acceptance / discussion / rejection

**3. a.** Which person is a famous singer?

LeBron Raymond James, Sr. / Taylor Alison Swift

**b.** Did you need to know both entire real names to answer the question? Yes / No

#### THINK ABOUT IT

Read what each student thinks.

#### Kona Thinks . . .

I have no idea what fraction should go in the first blank, and there's no way to figure it out. So, I can't answer this question, and the lesson isn't helping one bit!

#### Jesse Thinks . . .

Hmm . . . If a question or answer choice includes information you don't need to know, you can answer without knowing it. Cool! I hope that helps with this sample question!

4.	. Which student has a better approach, and why is it better?			

#### **USE LOGIC** Use logic to eliminate wrong answer choices.

**5.** Answer the questions that follow each lettered answer choice. Then, if you know the answer is wrong, cross it out. Remember that every choice is about two steps, proposal and ratification, that must be completed to amend the U.S. Constitution.

#### Choice F (1) three-fourths (2) eligible voters

- Do you know what fraction belongs in the first blank? Yes / No
- Have you ever heard of a voting day that decided whether an amendment would go into the U. S. Constitution? Yes / No
- Could choice **F** be right even though you don't know that it is? **Yes** / **No**
- So, is it right, wrong, or possibly right? Right / Wrong / Possibly right

#### Choice G (1) two-thirds (2) Electoral College

- Did you suddenly remember what fraction goes here? Yes / No
- Since the Electoral College is mentioned only during presidential elections, is there any reason to think it votes on Constitutional amendments? Yes / No
- How likely is it that choice **G** is correct? **Likely** / **Not Likely**

#### Choice H (1) three-fourths (2) Supreme Court

- Did you suddenly remember what fraction goes here? Yes / No
- What branch of government is the Supreme Court part of?
   executive / legislative / judicial
- You know the Supreme Court can decide if a law is Constitutional or not.
   Does it do this *before* an amendment has become a law and *before* a lawyer has filed a case about it, or *after*? Probably before / Probably after
- How likely is it that choice H is correct? Likely / Not Likely

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#### **Choice J** (1) two-thirds (2) state legislatures

- Did you suddenly remember what fraction goes here? Yes / No
- What does a state legislature do? makes state laws / enforces state laws
- What branch of government are all state legislatures? executive / legislative / judicial
- Is a Constitutional amendment a kind of law? Yes / No
- Does it make sense that many state legislatures must approve a proposal before it becomes an amendment, which affects the entire nation? Yes / No
- How likely is it that choice J is correct? Likely / Not Likely
- **6.** The correct answer choice is **F** / **G** / **H** / **J** .
- 7. Did you need to know which fraction was correct for the (1) blank in order to choose the correct answer for the question? Yes / No

#### **GUIDED PRACTICE** Read the item carefully. Think about what you already know.

The U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights

Amendment	What It Provides
This is the(1) Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.	It adds the right of(2) to the Constitution.

Which numbered pair correctly replaces (1) and (2) in this table?

- A (1) Third
  - (2) voting rights for all citizens
- **B** (1) Fourth
  - (2) protection from unreasonable searches
- C (1) Sixth
  - (2) protecting one's property by any means
- **D** (1) Eighth
  - (2) the freedom to do anything in private

8.	Answer the questions that follow each lettered answer choice. Then, if you know
	the answer is wrong, cross it out. Remember, every choice is about two facts.

#### **Choice A** (1) Third (2) voting rights for all citizens

- Do you know all the rights or protections that are described in each numbered amendment? Yes / No
- Does it make sense to ignore the (1) part of each answer choice since you can't answer this part? Yes / No
- Did women have the right to vote when the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution? Yes / No
- Is this answer possibly correct? Yes / No

#### **Choice B** (1) Fourth (2) protection from unreasonable searches

- Can police officers search your home without reason? Yes / No
- Might this be because the Bill of Rights protects people from this? Yes / No
- Could choice **B** be the correct answer? Yes / No

#### Choice C (1) Sixth (2) protecting one's property by any means

- Do you think people today are allowed to put barbed wire or electrified fences around their backyards?
   Yes / No
- What are the chances that this answer is correct? Likely / Not Likely

#### **Choice D** (1) Eighth (2) the freedom to do anything in private

- Are you free to take illegal drugs if you stay in a private place? Yes / No
- Do you have the freedom to harm someone in private? Yes / No
- Is it possible that this answer is correct? Yes / No

9.	Choose an answer and write down why you think it is the best choice.			

#### TAKE-AWAY While taking any test, remember this:

You may not need all the information that it is part of a test question or its answer choices. Sometimes, the information is just picky and confusing. If it makes you think you can't figure out the answer, try ignoring it and see if that helps!

In your own words, explain this "Take-Away" and tell how using this strategy might help you do better on a test.

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Lesson 7.2

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# ZINGER 11

#### READ CAREFULLY

#### Can you answer this item correctly when 43% of students missed it?

Which factor encouraged more immigrants to settle in northern states than southern states during the mid-nineteenth century? (8.10B)

- **A** Northern states had a lower population density than southern states.
- **B** Citizenship requirements in southern states were not as strict.
- **C** Southern states had smaller industrial sectors.
- **D** Governments in northern states were less corrupt.

STAAR Grade 8 Social Studies 2017 #3

**1.** Circle the years that will be in the twenty-first century.

2000-2099 / 2100-2199

**2.** Circle the years that were in the nineteenth century.

1800-1899 / 1900-1999

THINK ABOUT IT Read what each student thinks.

#### Seth Thinks . . .

I don't know the answer, but it's better to guess than to skip a question. My chances of getting it right are one in four.

#### Yuki Thinks . . .

I don't which answer is correct. But if I think about each choice, maybe I can find one or two that I'm sure are wrong!

 William staucine mas a Sector approach, and wife is nester.		

#### (USE LOGIC) Use logic to eliminate wrong answer choices.

3. Which student has a better approach, and why is it better?

**4.** Answer the questions that follow each lettered answer choice. Then cross out any answer choices that you realize cannot be correct.

#### **Choice A** Northern states had a lower population density than southern states.

• Which word is most likely to be closely related to the word *density*? den / dens / dentist / dense

- If there is high population density in a region, what does this mean? (Think about *dense*.)
  - many people per square mile / few people per square mile
- In which region would people feel more crowded—the one with the higher or lower population density? higher / lower
- Were people more crowded in the North, where there were many large cities, or the South, where there were many plantations? North / South
- Could choice A possibly be correct? Yes / No

#### **Choice B** Citizenship requirements in southern states were not as strict.

- Would a new immigrant to the United States choose to live where it was more difficult to become a citizen? Yes / No
- Does choice **B** make any sense? Yes / No
- Is there a much of a chance that this choice is correct? Yes / No

#### **Choice C** Southern states had smaller industrial sectors.

- Which word is most likely to be closely related to the word *sectors*? (Pay attention to how *sectors* is used in the answer choice.)
  - secrets / sections / erectors / secretaries
- Which word is the best synonym for *sectors*?
  - parts / buildings / workers / products
- What would you expect to find in "industrial sectors"? farms and animals / factories and factory workers
- Did the South have smaller industrial sectors than the North? Yes / No
- Did many immigrants at the time find jobs in industrial sectors? Yes / No
- So, could choice **C** be the correct answer? Yes / No

#### **Choice D** Governments in northern states were less corrupt.

- Is there a reason you know of to think that the governments in northern states were less corrupt than those in southern states? Yes / No
- Could choice **D** be an untrue (false) statement? Yes / No
- If it is a false statement, could it be the right answer? Yes / No
- Does it make sense to choose this answer when you have already found one that makes sense and that you know is a true statement? Yes /
- 5. The correct answer choice is A / B / C / D .

#### **GUIDED PRACTICE** Read the item carefully. Think about what you already know.

During Reconstruction, what was one reason Congress sent thousands of federal troops into the South? (8.9A, 8.9C)

- **F** To prevent the South from seceding again
- **G** To protect former slaves from embittered Southerners
- **H** To provide jobs for Union soldiers no longer fighting a war
- **J** To help those people who had been southern combatants
- **6.** Answer the questions that follow each lettered answer choice. Then cross out any answer choices that you realize cannot be correct.

#### **Choice F** To prevent the South from seceding again

- After the Civil War, did the South have more or fewer men able to be soldiers?
   more / fewer
- Was the South in better or worse shape after the war? better / worse
- Would the South have wanted to start the war over again? Yes / No
- Is choice F likely to be correct? Yes / No

#### **Choice G** To protect former slaves from embittered Southerners

- What is the base word in *embittered*? (A base word is a whole word with no prefixes or suffixes that is the "base" of another word.)
   bit / bitter / red
- Would a word created from that base word describe how many Southerners felt after the war? Yes / No
- Since white Southerners still owned all the land in the South and had most of the power, could they have caused harm to former slaves? Yes / No
- Might the federal troops have been sent to prevent such harm? Yes / No
- Might this choice be correct? Yes / No

#### **Choice H** To provide jobs for Union soldiers no longer fighting a war

- Do you think that soldiers at the end of a war want to remain in the army more than they want to return to the lives they had before? Yes / No
- Had the Civil War cost a great deal of money? Yes / No
- Would Congress have been likely to provide military jobs for thousands of former soldiers at this time just to make sure they were employed? Yes / No
- Is choice **H** likely to be correct? **Yes** / **No**

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#### **Choice J** To help those people who had been southern combatants

- Is the word *combatants* a familiar one? Yes / No
- Look at *combatants* carefully. What word makes sense as the base word that combatants comes from? comb / combat / bat / ants
- Write a word you think might be a synonym for *combatants*.
- Would Congress have wanted to help people who had been southern combatants? Yes / No
- Is this choice likely to be correct? Yes / No

7.	7. Choose an answer and write down why you think it is the best choice.			

#### **TAKE-AWAY** While taking any test, remember this:

If you see an unfamiliar word, ask yourself if you need to know what it means. Often, you do. Don't give up! You may be able to figure out what it means. Does it contain a base word that you do know? For example, *expertise* contains *expert*, so *expertise* probably has something to do with being an expert. Or is there another word that is almost the same but is different at the end? For example, *opportune* is unfamiliar, but it's a lot like *opportunity*, so the meanings of the two words are probably similar.

Many times, having just a general idea of a word's meaning will let you understand the question or answer choice the word is in. It's always worth a try!

In your own words, explain this "Take-Away" and tell how using this strategy might help you do better on a test.	
	_

ZINGER 4

Lesson 3.1

READ CAREFULLY

Can you answer this item correctly when 57% of students missed it?

Proposal	Ratification
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- **H** (1) three-fourths
  - (2) Supreme Court
- (J)(1) two-thirds
  - (2) state legislatures

STAAR Grade 8 Social Studies 2018 #24

1. Look at the words at the top of the two columns in the chart. It makes sense that an amendment has to be proposed before it can become a law. But a proposal is just a suggestion. What must people do before any proposal can be carried out?

2. So, what is a likely meaning for *ratification*?

**3. a.** Which person is a famous singer?

**b.** Did you need to know both entire real names to answer the question? Yes / No

#### THINK ABOUT IT Read what each student thinks.

#### Kona Thinks . . .

I have no idea what fraction should go in the first blank, and there's no way to figure it out. So, I can't answer this question, and the lesson isn't helping one bit!

#### Jesse Thinks . . .

Hmm . . . If a guestion or answer choice includes information you don't need to know, you can answer without knowing it. Cool! I hope that helps with this sample

Grade 8 Social Studies Zingers Answering the Most-Missed STAAR Test Items

**4.** Which student has a better approach, and why is it better? Jesse's approach is better. He's interested in any help he can get, and thinking about things has helped him get an important idea.

#### **USE LOGIC** Use logic to eliminate wrong answer choices.

5. Answer the questions that follow each lettered answer choice. Then, if you know the answer is wrong, cross it out. Remember that every choice is about two steps, proposal and ratification, that must be completed to amend the U.S. Constitution.

#### Choice F (1) three-fourths (2) eligible voters

- Do you know what fraction belongs in the first blank? Yes / (No.)
- · Have you ever heard of a voting day that decided whether an amendment would go into the U. S. Constitution? Yes / No
- Could choice F be right even though you don't know that it is? Yes / No
- So, is it right, wrong, or possibly right? Right / Wrong / Possibly right

#### Choice G (1) two-thirds (2) Electoral College

- Did you suddenly remember what fraction goes here? Yes / (No)
- Since the Electoral College is mentioned only during presidential elections, is there any reason to think it votes on Constitutional amendments? Yes / No
- How likely is it that choice **G** is correct? Likely Not Likely

#### Choice H (1) three-fourths (2) Supreme Court

- Did you suddenly remember what fraction goes here? Yes / No.
- What branch of government is the Supreme Court part of? executive / legislative / (judicial)
- You know the Supreme Court can decide if a law is Constitutional or not. Does it do this before an amendment has become a law and before a lawyer has filed a case about it, or after? Probably before / Probably after
- How likely is it that choice H is correct? Likely / Not Likely

To obtain a copy of the remaining answers to this Sampler, email:

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# **SAMPLER**

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Zinger 6 48% Incorrect

**Zinger 7** 56% Incorrect

Zinger 8 52% Incorrect

**Zinger 9** 45% Incorrect

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Zinger 14 52% Incorrect

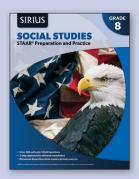
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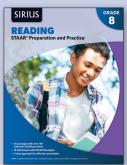
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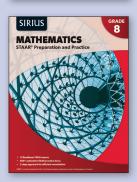
15 Mixed STAAR Practice Items with Stimuli

Use with your class for free!

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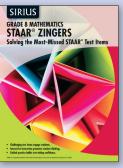
















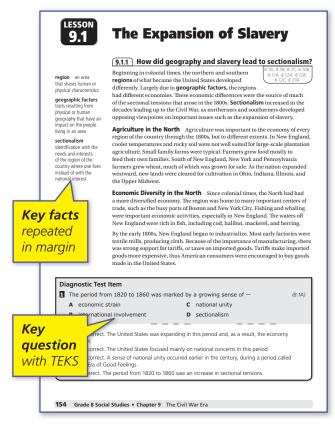


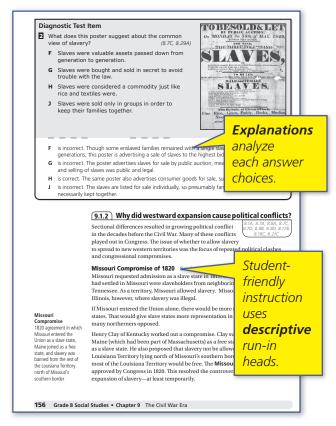


#### **SIRIUS GRADE 8 SOCIAL STUDIES**

# **STAAR® Preparation and Practice**

#### **TEKS Instruction – Systematic Instruction in all TEKS**

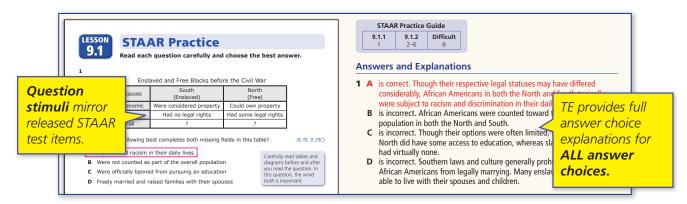




- **3-step approach** to efficiently prioritize and individualize remediation.
- **Document-Based Question** guides students through analyzing primary sources.
- English-Spanish Glossary with over 160 names, events, and key terms.

#### STAAR Practice—Over 300 authentic questions

About **50% of the questions contain stimuli** such as a quote, table, or graphic organizer. The **Teacher's Edition** has **answer choice explanations** so teachers can give student actionable feedback.



#### **STAAR GRADE 8 SOCIAL STUDIES**

# **STAAR Practice Tests Forms A & B**

Two distinct secure form tests that closely match the released STAAR test items and blueprint.

