

Results from the 2018 Civics, Geography, and U.S. History Assessments



AVERAGE SCORES AND PERCENTILES

Scores lower compared to 2014 in geography and U.S. history

Eighth-grade students scored lower on average on the 2018 geography and U.S. history assessments compared to 2014; there was no significant change in the average score in civics. Over the long term, students scored higher on average in civics and U.S. history compared to 1998 and 1994, respectively, the first assessment years for these subjects.

Compared to 2014, performance in 2018 at selected percentiles varied by subject, with lower scores at the 10th and 25th percentiles in geography and lower scores at all but the 90th percentile in U.S. history. In civics, there was no significant change in the score at any selected percentile in 2018 compared to 2014. Compared to the first assessment years, the 2018 scores were higher for the 10th and 25th percentiles in civics and for all percentiles except the 90th in U.S. history. In geography, however, scores were lower than in the first assessment year for students at the 75th and 90th percentiles.

Average and percentile scores	CIVICS			GEOGRAPHY			U.S. HISTORY			
	2018 score	2018 compared to 2014	1998	2018 score	2018 compared to 2014	1994 ¹	2018 score	2018 compared to 2014	1994 ¹	
Overall average score	153	◆	↑ 3	258	↓ 3	◆	263	↓ 4	↑ 4	
Percentile	10th	107	◆	↑ 4	215	↓ 6	◆	222	↓ 7	↑ 6
	25th	131	◆	↑ 3	237	↓ 4	◆	243	↓ 5	↑ 4
	50th	156	◆	◆	261	◆	◆	265	↓ 4	↑ 4
	75th	177	◆	◆	282	◆	↓ 3	285	↓ 3	↑ 3
	90th	193	◆	◆	298	◆	↓ 5	301	◆	◆

↑ Score increase ↓ Score decrease ◆ No significant change ¹ Accommodations not permitted

RESULTS BY STUDENT GROUPS

Score decreases for some racial/ethnic groups since 2014 in geography and U.S. history

Compared to 2014, White and Black eighth-graders scored lower on the 2018 geography assessment and White, Black, and Hispanic students scored lower in U.S. history; there was no significant score change for White, Black, or Hispanic students in civics in 2018. Male and female eighth-graders showed score decreases in geography and U.S. history since 2014 but no significant score change in civics.

Student group	CIVICS		GEOGRAPHY		U.S. HISTORY	
	2018 score	2018 compared to 2014	2018 score	2018 compared to 2014	2018 score	2018 compared to 2014
Race/ethnicity						
White	162	◆	270	↓ 4	272	↓ 5
Black	135	◆	235	↓ 5	246	↓ 5
Hispanic	141	◆	247	◆	253	↓ 4
Gender						
Male	151	◆	260	↓ 3	265	↓ 5
Female	154	◆	257	↓ 3	261	↓ 4

↓ Score decrease ◆ No significant change

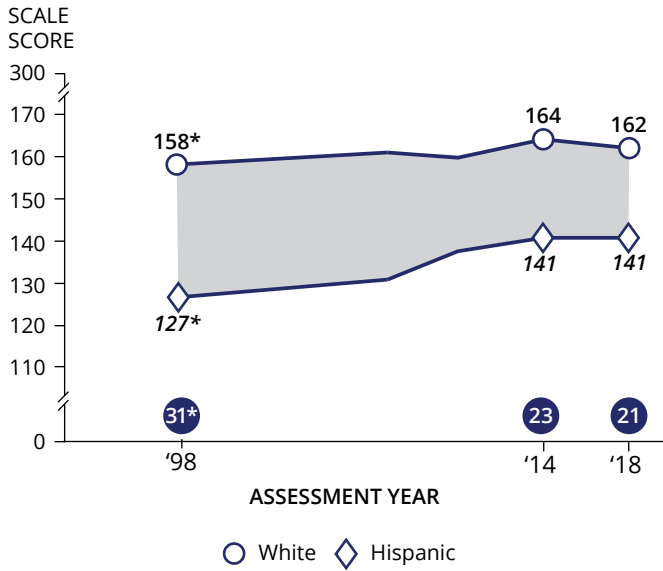
SCORE GAP RESULTS

White–Hispanic score gaps narrow over the long term in civics and geography

Compared to 2014, there were no significant changes in the White–Black, White–Hispanic, or male–female score gaps for any of the social science subjects in 2018; however, some of these score gaps narrowed in comparison to the first assessment years in civics and geography. The White–Hispanic score gap narrowed in both civics and geography, compared to 1998 and 1994, respectively. The White–Black gap narrowed in geography compared to 1994. In U.S. history, there were no significant changes in the White–Black or White–Hispanic score gaps compared to 1994; however, the score difference between male and female students widened by three points compared to 1994.

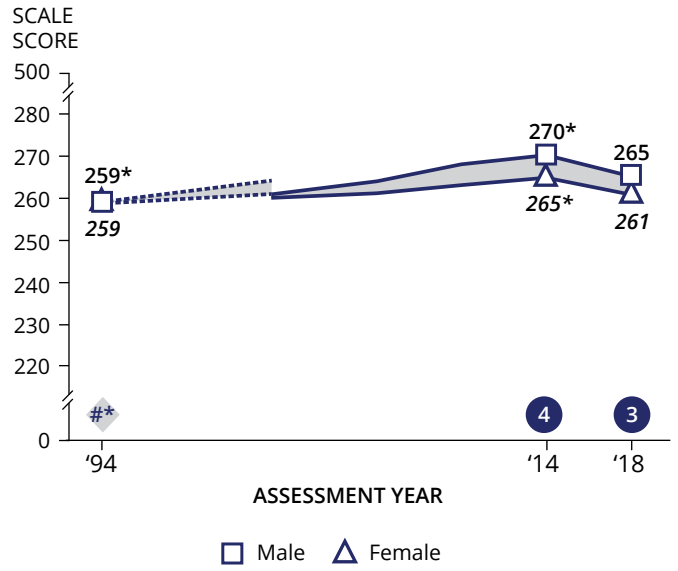
CIVICS

WHITE–HISPANIC SCORE GAP RESULTS



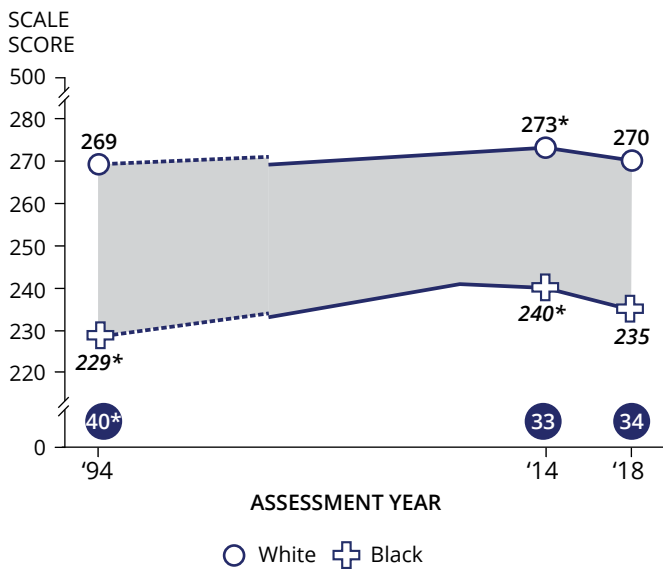
U.S. HISTORY

MALE–FEMALE SCORE GAP RESULTS



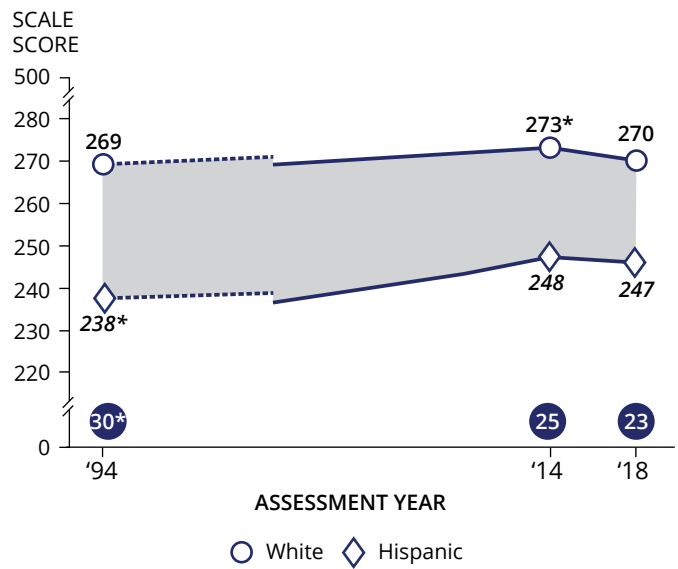
GEOGRAPHY

WHITE–BLACK SCORE GAP RESULTS



GEOGRAPHY

WHITE–HISPANIC SCORE GAP RESULTS

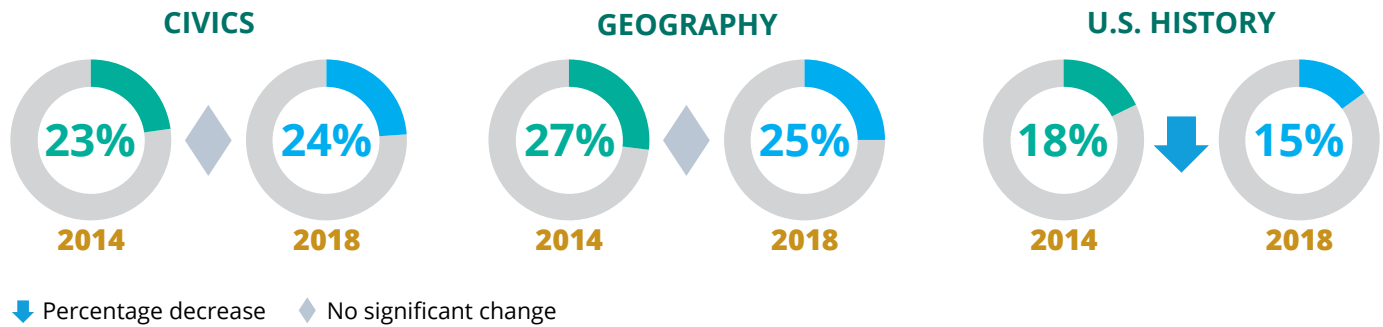


..... Accommodations not permitted	● Significant difference	# Rounds to zero.
———— Accommodations permitted	◆ No significant difference	* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from 2018.

NAEP ACHIEVEMENT-LEVEL RESULTS

Across social science subjects one-quarter or less of eighth-graders perform at or above *NAEP Proficient*

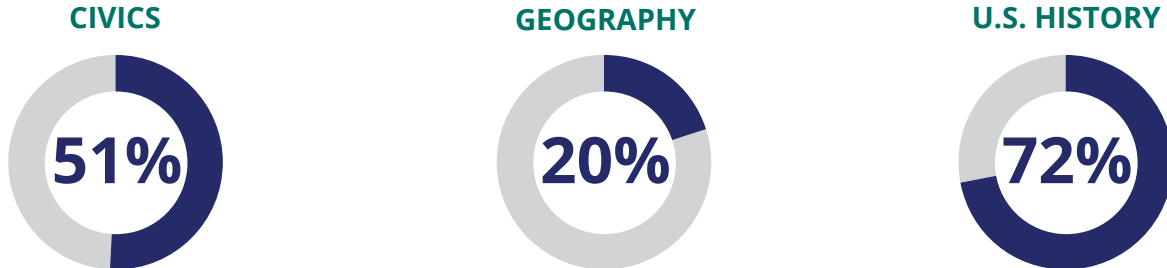
In 2018, there was no significant change in the percentage of eighth-graders performing at or above *NAEP Proficient* on the civics or geography assessments compared to 2014; however, a smaller percentage of students performed at or above *NAEP Proficient* on the U.S. history assessment in 2018.



SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

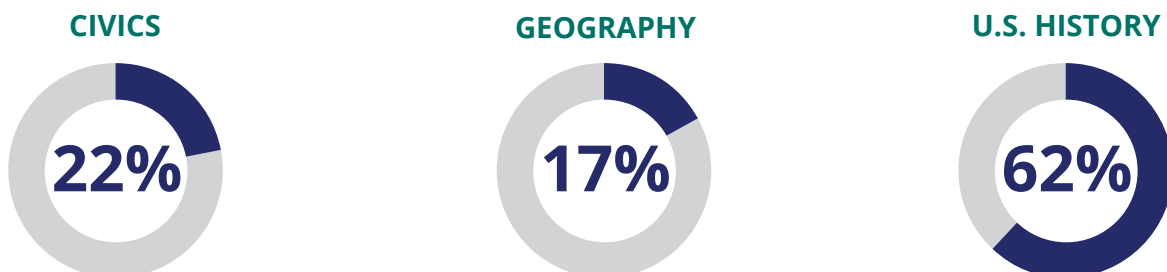
Coursetaking in eighth grade varies by subject

The percentage of students at grade 8 who took a class *mainly focused on either civics, geography, or U.S. history* varied by subject. In 2018, fifty-one percent of students reported taking an eighth-grade class *mainly focused on civics and/or U.S. government* and 72 percent of students reported taking a class *mainly focused on U.S. history*. Less than a quarter of students (20 percent) reported taking a class *mainly focused on geography* in eighth grade.



Percentages vary among students whose eighth-grade teachers primarily teach civics, geography, or U.S. history

As part of the 2018 civics, geography, and U.S. history assessments, teachers of eighth-grade students were asked to describe their role in teaching civics and/or U.S. government, geography, and U.S. history to their class. In 2018, twenty-two percent of students at grade 8 had teachers with *primary responsibility for teaching civics and/or U.S. government* to their class, 17 percent had teachers with *primary responsibility for teaching geography*, and 62 percent had teachers with *primary responsibility for teaching U.S. history*.



ABOUT THE ASSESSMENTS

- The civics assessment measures students' knowledge and understanding of civics with three interrelated components: knowledge, intellectual and participatory skills, and civic dispositions. Taken together, these three elements are defined in the framework as the core elements of civics instruction in the U.S.
- The geography assessment combines key physical science and social science aspects of geography into a cohesive and topical whole by focusing on what students should know about geography to be competent and knowledgeable 21st century citizens. Its purpose is to provide a measure of students' knowledge, understanding, and application of geography's content and perspectives.
- The U.S. history assessment measures students' knowledge and understanding of U.S. history in all its complexity – its major themes, periods, events, people, ideas, turning points, movement, and historical sources. The assessment examines students' understanding of chronology, differing perspectives across time, and their grasp of historical facts and contexts.

ASSESSMENT DESIGN AND ADMINISTRATION

- The civics, geography, and U.S. history assessments were administered between January and March of 2018.
- Nationally representative samples of eighth-graders from about 780 schools across the nation participated in 2018.
 - 13,400 in civics
 - 12,900 in geography
 - 16,400 in U.S. history
- The assessments were delivered on digital devices for the first time in 2018, as well as in the conventional paper-and-pencil format.
- Performance is reported as
 - Average scale scores
 - Civics (0 to 300 scale)
 - Geography (0 to 500 scale)
 - U.S. history (0 to 500 scale)
 - NAEP achievement levels (*NAEP Basic, NAEP Proficient, NAEP Advanced*)