



Using this database

Education Commission
of the **States**

When using this database, please be aware that:

- The test items and instruments in this database have not yet been pilot tested together to determine their psychometric properties. Any tests built with these items would need to be pilot tested to determine reliability.
- All items and composite scales have been used in other contexts and have been reviewed before being entered into this database. Minor changes have been made to some items. Pictures or introductory material that seemed unnecessary to understand a question were deleted. Each item is identified by its original source.
- NCLC staff and advisors have made every effort to credit the original developer(s) of an item, but are not responsible if the source we consulted used an item without attributing an earlier source.
- All these items have been publicly released, meaning that a motivated individual searching the Internet could find almost all of them. Because these questions are not completely secure, we do not recommend them as formal or high stakes assessments for which students and schools are held accountable. They should, however, be useful in program evaluation, as well as for teachers and for district personnel conducting strategic planning (especially related to civic-related subjects such as history, social studies and language arts).
- The *knowledge items*, all of which are *keyed with correct answers*, may be used individually or in groupings made by the user. This is also the case for those *skills items where a correct answer is designated*. Each knowledge or skills item that has a keyed correct answer is presented on a separate page.
- Each composite scale (a series of questions presented together which measure different but related aspects of a *skill* or *disposition* using a rating scale without a correct answer key) is designed to be used as a unit. It is necessary to use a scale in its totality to draw a reliable conclusion. The items in a composite scale are presented together on the same page.
- Be sure when making a test for students from the knowledge items that CORRECT ANSWER has been deleted and spacing in that line corresponds to spacing in the other lines.
- There are fewer items in the dispositions category than in the other categories. The role of assessment in this area is not as clear as in the other areas, since it is misleading to designate “correct answers.” It is expected that future versions of this database will include more dispositions scales, in particular more measures of participation or expected participation. Those who wish to examine more items assessing dispositions should



consult the Web sites listed at the end of this document (especially CART, CASEL, and IEA/CEDARS). For more information, see the [*Civic and Political Health of the Nation: A Generational Portrait*](#) developed by Keeter and his associates.

