VS.10 VIRGINIA’S GOVERNMENT, GEOGRAPHY, AND ECONOMICS

**STANDARD VS.10A**

**THREE BRANCHES OF VIRGINIA GOVERNMENT**

*Virginia state government is made up of three parts (branches) that ensure Virginia laws agree with the state constitution.*

The government of Virginia is divided into three branches.

- The **General Assembly** is the legislative branch of the Virginia government that makes state laws. It is divided into two parts—the **Senate** and the **House of Delegates**.
- The **governor** heads the executive branch of the state government. The executive branch makes sure that state laws are carried out.
- The **judicial branch** is the state’s court system.
  - The judicial branch decides cases about people accused of breaking the law and whether or not a law agrees with Virginia’s constitution.

**STANDARD VS.10B**

**PRODUCTS & INDUSTRIES**

*Available resources (natural, human and capital), as well as geography, are major factors in what is produced in the state.*

*Major products and industries change over time as people and businesses buy different goods and services.*

Selected examples of products and industries important to Virginia’s economy:

- **Top products and services** for Virginia include:
  - Architectural or engineering services
  - Banking and lending
  - Computer programming or systems design
  - Food products
  - Shipbuilding

The **service industry** is important to Virginia’s economy. Virginians earn income through jobs in

- Private health care, computer programming or systems design, and engineering.
- Government services including operation of public schools, hospitals and military bases.

**Manufacturing** (making goods on a large scale using machinery) is also a top industry. Top manufactured products in Virginia include:

- Ships
- Tobacco products
- Beverages (such as soft drinks)

- Chemical goods
- Motor vehicle parts and trucks

*Fertile soil and a favorable climate make agriculture an important industry in Virginia.*

- Chickens (broilers), beef, milk, turkeys, and hogs are Virginia’s leading livestock products.
- Soybeans, corn, tobacco, tomatoes, apples, and peanuts are among Virginia’s leading cash crops.
  - Tobacco, once the basis of Virginia’s economy, has been replaced by livestock and livestock products as the state’s most valuable source of agricultural income.

Access to **deep water ports** and proximity to the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean make shipbuilding, fishing, crabbing and oyster harvests possible.

Historically, the success of **Appalachian coalfields** is due to the expansion of railroads that transport coal to piers in Tidewater for shipment to both domestic and international markets.

- Today, coal is less crucial to Virginia’s economy as businesses and individuals shift to other sources of energy.

**STANDARD VS.10C**

**TRANSPORTATION & TECHNOLOGY**

*Advances in transportation, communications, and technology have facilitated migration and led to economic development in Virginia.*

Industries in Virginia produce goods and services used throughout the United States and the world.

Virginia’s **transportation system** (highways, railroads, and air transportation) moves raw materials to factories and finished products to markets.

- Virginia exports agricultural and manufactured products, including tobacco, poultry, coal, and large ships.

Virginia has a large number of communications and other technology industries.

**Tourism** is a major part of Virginia’s economy.

Because many **federal workers** live and/or work in Virginia, the federal government has a significant impact on Virginia’s economy.

Virginia has increased trade relationships with other countries.