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Introduction

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS
• The Need for Reform
• The Value of a Framework
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• Standards Initiatives in Language Arts
• How Was This Framework Developed?

The Need for Reform

All over this country, educators, citizens, and political and business leaders are working toward education reform. An increasingly service-oriented, information-based society that is virtually exploding with expanding knowledge demands that everyone have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to succeed in the information age. Reform is needed to keep pace with opportunities presented by technological advances, new knowledge about how students learn, and new ideas about how people can improve the productivity and quality of their organizations. The need for schools to change is reinforced by the recognition that teaching and learning are most effective when the diverse needs of students are met. Worldwide economic changes and an array of political and social issues also call for new ways of operating schools.

These new conditions require citizens who are prepared to make well-reasoned, thoughtful, and healthy lifelong decisions in an ever-changing world. Students must learn how to locate, comprehend, interpret, evaluate, manage, and apply information from a variety of sources and media. They must learn how to communicate effectively in a variety of settings and for a variety of purposes through many different media. They must develop mathematical skills to analyze information, solve problems, and create products to meet new needs. They must become creative and critical thinkers, skilled in systematic problem solving. They must learn to wisely allocate resources
used to solve problems. They must learn to understand systems and to use technology. They must develop the integrity to work cooperatively and effectively with people from many diverse backgrounds.

Florida has created a school improvement and accountability initiative to reform education in its public schools. The goal of this initiative is to raise student achievement to world-class levels. To this end, new, high-level academic standards, called the Sunshine State Standards, have been created delineating expected achievement by all students. The language arts standards are presented in this document in chapter 3.

Florida’s reform effort is based on a commitment to continuous quality improvement in every school across the state. As such, it calls for improvement teams in schools to articulate a fundamentally new direction for instruction and to reexamine the ways in which the day-to-day business of schools is conducted.

A number of assumptions provide a foundation for Florida’s school improvement and accountability initiative. These include the following:

- All children can learn at high levels, given proper instruction in a supportive environment.
- All schools can be successful.
- The state focuses on accountability for student achievement; schools focus on schooling and instructional processes necessary to raise student achievement.
- Children’s health, safety, social, and educational needs must be met collaboratively by schools, parents, agencies, and the community.
- The education stakeholders closest to the learners are best able to determine the appropriate strategies to identify and solve school problems and to improve instruction.
- The individual school is the unit of educational accountability for improving student performance, and school-level public reporting of effectiveness is a critical component of accountability.
- Continuous quality improvement is “the way of work”: It results in a focus on education stakeholders, collegiality, teamwork, collaboration, responsiveness, flexibility, innovations, risk taking, and effectiveness.
• The focus of Florida’s reform initiative is on what students need to know and be able to do for the 21st century.

The ultimate goal of education reform is to move from schooling that was designed in, and quite appropriate for, an industrial age to one that reflects and meets the needs of the new information age. Florida’s initiative invites schools to develop learning activities for students that deal with substantial, meaningful knowledge as it relates to performance in real life. Instead of teaching only content knowledge and skills, teachers must practice the difficult art of finding ways for each student to learn and to demonstrate that learning.

This current Florida education initiative differs from earlier approaches to school reform, which were often characterized by detailed legislative mandates and minimum standards. This initiative represents a decentralized approach to reform. The state will hold schools accountable for high levels of student achievement. Local districts and schools are free to design learning environments and experiences that best help their unique students meet the Sunshine State Standards.

Education reform, then, is about developing the capacity at the local level to identify and solve problems related to raising student achievement. Raising student achievement requires both (1) raising expectations through high academic standards grounded in a foundation of reading, writing, and mathematics, applied in real-world contexts, and (2) improving the environment for effective teaching and learning based on current research about how people learn.

The Value of a Framework

This curriculum framework is a resource and a guide for local education communities as they restructure their schools and improve their language arts programs. Local planners who recognize the diversity of their students’ unique learning styles, backgrounds, attitudes, interests, aptitudes, and needs know best what specific programs will help their students reach the Sunshine State Standards.

Grounded in national and state reform initiatives, this framework does not prescribe the specifics of classroom instruction. It presents broad, overarching concepts and ideas for the development of curriculum and instruction. Curriculum guides will need to be developed at the local level to provide specific content and specific
teaching, learning, and classroom assessment activities. They will need to be far more detailed than this framework and reflect the qualities and flavor of the community as well as the unique needs of the students in the community. This framework also provides overviews of instructional strategies and assessment that can help local educators create supportive, effective educational environments in which all students can achieve Florida’s high academic standards and benchmarks.

A statewide external assessment program will monitor student learning in reading, writing, mathematics, and thinking skills. This system will be based on the language arts standards articulated in this curriculum framework and on the standards articulated in the mathematics framework. However, in all subject areas, instruction must support the development of these essential skills.

To help local language arts educators meet these challenges, this framework

- delineates for stakeholders what knowledge and skills the state will hold schools accountable for students learning at four developmental levels (grades preK-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12);
- gives sample performance descriptions of how students might demonstrate these skills and knowledge, often in authentic, real-world contexts;
- correlates the sample performance descriptions to Florida’s Education Goal 3 Standards;
- encourages districts and schools to develop curricula guided by a locally developed vision designed to improve instruction through sound strategies and community support;
- promotes the selection and use of sound, well-developed, flexible, and innovative instructional strategies;
- provides overviews of models of good teaching, learning, and assessment that local education planners are encouraged to investigate and consider;
FLORIDA CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

• presents ideas for developing connections within language arts and with other disciplines;
• discusses the practical aspects of designing a quality learning environment;
• provides suggestions for the professional development of teachers; and
• includes suggestions and criteria for continuous district and school language arts program improvement.

Florida’s school improvement and accountability initiative envisions more effective education for students in Florida’s public schools. This system describes a vision of learning and schooling that is innovative, yet sound; ambitious, yet feasible; rigorous for students and demanding of teachers, yet achievable. The ultimate goal is success for every student.

The Standards Movement

The current effort to develop national standards in various subject areas can be traced back to September 1989, when the nation’s governors recommended that America establish national education goals. Leading education reformers established goals through America 2000, later renamed Goals 2000, along with a plan to meet these goals. The National Council on Education Standards and Testing recommended the development of voluntary national standards. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics led the way in the development of national standards; subsequently, standards have been developed in many other academic areas.

The Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) Report, developed by the U.S. Department of Labor, verified the need for a plan for education reform. The Commission was charged with examining the demands of the workplace and determining whether the young people of the United States are prepared to meet those demands. Specifically, the Commission was directed to define the skills and competencies needed for employment, propose acceptable levels of proficiency, suggest effective ways to assess proficiency, and develop a strategy for assuring that the identified skills and competencies become a part of the learning opportunity for every American student.

The SCANS Report, What Work Requires of Schools, published in June 1991, defined the workplace competencies and foundational skills required for effective job
performance in today’s marketplace as well as for the future. This report has had a continuing impact on schools as they work to equip students with marketable skills. Florida’s Schoolyear 2000 Initiative conducted research that verified the importance of these skills for Florida’s job market. The SCANS competencies provide the basis for Florida’s Education Goal 3 Standards.

Standards Initiatives in Language Arts

Language arts standards have been drafted by national groups, specifically the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the International Reading Association (IRA). Their joint efforts produced a document entitled Standards for the English Language Arts (1996). This document articulates eleven language arts standards. The development of the Standards for the English Language Arts began in 1992 as a cooperative effort among NCTE, IRA, and the Center for the Study of Reading at the University of Illinois. Task forces across the nation, representing early, middle, and high school educators, worked for the next four years helping to develop these standards.

How Was This Framework Developed?

In response to the education reform initiative reflected in Florida’s System of School Improvement and Accountability, the Florida Department of Education began the development of a new design for curriculum frameworks in the fall of 1993. This new design is based on approaches being used in other states and was specifically based on a prototype document for science developed through the support of a National Eisenhower Curriculum Framework grant from the United States Department of Education.

In January 1994, a statewide advisory committee was formed, in cooperation with the Florida Organization of Instructional Leaders, to guide the framework activities. The Principles Guiding the Development of Florida’s New Curriculum Frameworks was produced by this committee. The writing of draft frameworks in the areas of language arts, mathematics, social studies, the arts, foreign languages, and health education/physical education, along with the revision of the science framework, was coordinated by the Department of Education through representative statewide writing teams for each subject area, under the leadership of curriculum specialists from the Department of Education. The writing teams conducted extensive research.
on content standards and instructional practices, received input from their professional organizations, deliberated issues, reached consensus, and crafted strong initial drafts.

In 1995, systematic analysis of the drafts of the curriculum frameworks in language arts and other subject areas was conducted to determine the extent to which each draft addressed the Principles, Florida’s System of School Improvement and Accountability, other major state initiatives, and national curriculum standards. The analysis also examined consistency in content, style, and format across the documents. The Center for Educational Technology (CET) at Florida State University and the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL) Institute in Aurora, Colorado, conducted this analysis and developed a plan for revising and preparing the final versions of the documents. The McREL Institute was selected for this work because of its expertise in the analysis of standards for curriculum and because of its knowledge of national standards. With continued input from the original curriculum framework writing teams and experts, and the assistance of CET and the McREL Institute, the revisions for each framework were prepared and reviewed.

Statewide reviews of the drafts were conducted through meetings of the original writing teams, focus groups of education stakeholders including business leaders and members of the Florida PTA, conference presentations, and mailings to each school district. The revisions were completed early in 1996. The new curriculum frameworks will provide assistance to all education stakeholders in their collaborative efforts to raise student achievement of Florida academic and work-related standards to world-class levels.
**Key Chapter Points**

- Education reform is needed to keep pace with a changing world.

- Florida has created an education reform initiative to raise student achievement to high levels.

- This initiative empowers schools to identify and solve problems at the local level.

- The *Florida Curriculum Framework for Language Arts* articulates state-mandated academic standards that raise expectations for student achievement. It also includes overviews of best practices in instruction for local educators to further investigate.

- This framework has drawn on standards initiatives at national and state levels.
Chapter 1: Visioning

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

• The Importance of a Local Vision
• Creating a Vision: The Local Process
• Underlying Assumptions of a Vision for Language Arts Learning
• Language Arts Vision Statement

The Importance of a Local Vision

A vision is a vivid picture of the desired future: a detailed description of what should be, could be, and might become. Effective leaders and organizations need a clear vision of their goals if they wish to make real improvement. Similarly, Florida’s education improvement initiative can best be realized if local community members come together to articulate a shared vision for educational excellence in their community.

Visioning is not about simply talking or writing about missions or goals; visioning uses words to create a dynamic picture of a new condition that will be intellectually and emotionally satisfying when achieved. Unless the stakeholders—educators, support staff, students, parents, and community members—understand the reasons for change and envision the desired changes in place, education reform cannot happen. Once the picture of a new way of doing things in schools and classrooms is clearly in the minds of education stakeholders, they often are not content with the old ways.

Education leaders need to work with the community to create and communicate visions of improved schools, language arts classrooms, and student achievement that education stakeholders can accept and work toward. In fact, if the vision is powerful, education stakeholders will think up new strategies along the way, find unexpected resources, work beyond expectations, and make extraordinary things happen in order to fulfill their vision.
Creating a Vision: The Local Process

Real reform of education cannot take place unless local stakeholders share a vision of the future. Schools often develop a vision for their improvement efforts, but the visioning process does not have to stop there. Language arts educators in every Florida school and district are also encouraged to develop and embrace a vision that defines their discipline, provides purpose and direction for improvement efforts, unifies the school community, and articulates the goals and value of a language arts education.

All those interested in school improvement should contribute to the development of a school’s vision. Parents and guardians, business and community leaders, and other interested stakeholders are invited to join with students, educators, and other professionals in formulating a vision for substantial change. The intellectual and cultural diversity of the vision crafters will help ensure a strong, unique community vision for language arts education. Involvement of all stakeholders in education builds ownership of both the process and the outcomes.

Vision crafters should focus their primary attention on how best to help their students reach Florida’s high academic standards. National, state, and local trends as well as best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment need to be considered. The vision described in this framework may also be helpful in the development of a vision for language arts education in each local Florida school.

Underlying Assumptions of a Vision for Language Arts Learning

Certain underlying assumptions support the vision for language arts education articulated in this framework. These include

- Every person is a learner; educational professionals, students, and family form a community of learners.
• Effective teaching and learning connect concepts and processes to everyday events.
• A learning environment conducive to quality teaching and learning is the responsibility of the school community.
• Learning takes place both in schools and in communities.
• Cultural diversity enriches the learning environment.
• Instructional programs and teaching strategies should accommodate diverse learning styles and needs.
• Excellence in language arts teaching and learning grows from a commitment shared by teachers, students, parents, administrators, and the community at large.
• Learning is a lifelong process. Successful learners are lifelong learners.

Language Arts Vision Statement

The following vision for language arts education, developed by the statewide curriculum framework writing team, is presented as a starting point to encourage local communities to develop language arts visions for their students, their classrooms, their schools, and their district.

Fully literate students are seekers of meaning in a world rich with language. Curious about life's complexities, adept at inquiry, and disciplined to pursue understanding, they use the processes of language arts effectively.

They take advantage of their world of language, originating and responding daily to a myriad of communications. They participate in interesting conversations, produce timely reports, make clear presentations, and rehearse scenarios yet to occur. They listen effectively. They may write comforting letters to friends, make a compelling statement of their views on important topics, or entertain others by sharing a funny article or a passage from a book.

Literacy can also cultivate more subtle modes of expression: writing or recalling a poem in an hour of private need, reflecting in a journal about an intimate crisis, or simply enjoying the universal feeling of reading “to know we’re not alone,” as C.S. Lewis noted. These, of course, are not public demonstrations; they are as invisible as roots and just as vital to growth.

Literate students explore many landscapes, real and imaginary, heavy with fact and fine in detail. Classical and contemporary literature—fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry—present opportunities for students to gain personal enrichment and to experience a myriad of
emotions. The literate discover the old and hold it up to the new as they strive to clarify their
own identity and understand a world of many cultures.

Looking to the future, students harness the power of today's media in enriching and productive
ways. Both searchers and researchers, they are comfortable accessing the data banks of a
computer, perusing the columns of a newspaper, evaluating the effects of broadcast media, and
rummaging in the stacks of a neighborhood library.

Students develop competence for the workplace and for a society of new dimensions. True learners
of the language arts are inspired to practice the art of communication with confidence.

When members of a community work together to form a vision, they assess their
programs and goals, discuss their options, and chart a course for action. A local vision
of teaching and learning in language arts reflects the highest ideals of a school
community, serving to unify the community and to clarify its commitment to
program improvement. Developing a local vision for improving language arts
education is an ongoing process, one that reflects the best of language arts teaching,
learning, and community values.
KEY CHAPTER POINTS

• A vision is a picture created to describe the desired future.

• Visions unify a group by sensitizing everyone to the nature of commitment.

• Because they are products of communication, visions are neither static nor restrictive.

• The vision statement serves to inspire participants to believe that learning in the language arts can be different and better.

• Local educators are challenged to become actively involved in assuring the quality of language arts education for all students.

• A vision statement helps generate a sense of deliberate and conscious effort in all that is done, serving to focus a community’s imagination and energy.

• The vision for language arts developed by the statewide curriculum framework writing team can serve as a starting point for local communities to develop their own vision.
Chapter 2: Goal 3 Standards

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS
• The Impact of Goal 3 Standards
• Using the Goal 3 Standards
• Suggestions for Language Arts Educators

There are a number of general processes and abilities that are used in all subject areas. For example, locating information, organizing that information, and then using it to solve a problem or produce a product are useful abilities in virtually any area of study. Similarly, identifying the resources necessary for accomplishing a goal, setting milestones, and then managing those resources are abilities that are common to many subject areas. They are also important to success in everyday life at home, in the community, and in the workplace.

These practical but highly important cross-disciplinary processes and abilities have been identified as standards under Goal 3 in the document Florida’s System of School Improvement and Accountability. One of the seven goals that are the foundation for school reform in Florida, Goal 3 deals with student performance. It states,

Students successfully compete at the highest levels nationally and internationally and are prepared to make well-reasoned, thoughtful, and healthy lifelong decisions.

In all, eleven standards are identified within Goal 3, ten dealing specifically with student achievement. This chapter describes ways in which these ten general standards can be addressed in language arts.

It is important to realize that the term standard is used somewhat differently in this chapter than it is in Chapter 3. A Goal 3 standard describes a general category of processes and abilities that are important to all subject areas and the world of work.
The Sunshine State Standards described in chapter 3 of this framework refer to the knowledge and skills specific to language arts.

Both the first ten standards of Goal 3 and the language arts standards have been adopted by the State Board of Education and represent what the state will hold schools accountable for reaching. The Goal 3 standards can be summarized as follows:

**GOAL 3 STANDARDS**

- Standard 1 Information Managers
- Standard 2 Effective Communicators
- Standard 3 Numeric Problem Solvers
- Standard 4 Creative and Critical Thinkers
- Standard 5 Responsible Workers
- Standard 6 Resource Managers
- Standard 7 Systems Managers
- Standard 8 Cooperative Workers
- Standard 9 Effective Leaders
- Standard 10 Multiculturally Sensitive Citizens
- Standard 11 Involvement of Families

In each subject area in the state of Florida, students will be expected to develop their skills and abilities as information managers, effective communicators, and so on. Indeed, Florida’s public schools are accountable to their stakeholders for students learning to apply the first ten standards of Goal 3 to all subject areas. Schools are expected to conduct assessments that will, along with external assessments conducted by the state on the first four standards, show that students are making progress toward Goal 3.

**Impact of Goal 3 Standards**

Many stakeholders will be affected by the teaching and assessment of Goal 3 standards. Students have a vested interest in understanding and attaining the Goal 3 standards because these standards will affect their ability to function effectively in their personal and professional lives. Parents or other caregivers must participate in their children’s learning process and in the assessment of their children’s performance.
on Goal 3 standards. Standard 11 of Goal 3 calls on families to “share the responsibility of accomplishing the standards set in Goal 3 throughout a student’s education from preschool through 12th grade.” School administrators and staff should welcome parents as full partners in helping students improve their academic performance by making time and opportunities for mutual communication available. Parents need to communicate with school personnel regarding curriculum, assessment, and goals for individual students, provide a home environment that is supportive of improving student performance, and provide encouragement and discipline as appropriate to support school success.

Teachers must assume new and different roles in assessment. New approaches to understanding student learning and performance will place teachers in the position of assessing student progress in more authentic ways. These expanded assessments should reflect how students will need to use content knowledge, as well as the Goal 3 general processes and abilities, in real life—now and in their future.

Florida’s school administrators have primary responsibility for encouraging, facilitating, and initiating changes within their schools. School administrators will be primarily responsible for identifying strategies for accessing teacher training offered by their district, the state, and other sources such as universities and colleges. Administrators’ primary responsibilities within the framework of Goal 3 assessment will be to support the integration of assessment and instruction in the classroom and establish school reporting systems for the multiple data sources that will be derived from Goal 3 assessment activities.

The business community stands to benefit greatly from the emphasis on Goal 3 standards. Indeed, the Goal 3 standards directly address skills effective workers need to be successful in the 21st century. The skills identified in the U.S. Department of Labor’s SCANS Report on necessary skills for the workplace are the basis of the Goal 3 standards. Consequently, Florida’s emphasis on the Goal 3 standards is an investment in the success of the business community.

Using the Goal 3 Standards

The Goal 3 standards do not exist in isolation; they should be an integral part of daily classroom instruction and assessment. To a great extent, the Goal 3 standards can be thought of as generic processes and abilities that help students apply specific
language arts content knowledge to real-world situations. As students learn language arts content, they are using the processes and abilities involved in being an information manager, effective communicator, numeric problem solver, and so on.

Teachers should directly address the processes and abilities involved in the Goal 3 standards. In fact, the Goal 3 processes and abilities can and should become a common “language” that is used in every classroom at every grade level. In this section, examples are provided to illustrate how each of the first ten standards can be used in language arts. All of the examples depict activities that the teacher designs to help students learn new knowledge and apply that knowledge to classroom and real-world activities. The designing of classroom tasks is one of the most important parts of the art of teaching. In the past, classroom activities often provided little flexibility in terms of the knowledge involved, what students do with that knowledge, and how students demonstrate their competence. The tasks designed around the Goal 3 standards should not be limiting. Each of the Goal 3 standards can play a significant role in tasks designed to integrate real-world problems and situations into classroom activities.

**Standard 1:** Florida students locate, comprehend, interpret, evaluate, maintain, and apply information, concepts, and ideas found in literature, the arts, symbols, recordings, video and other graphic displays, and computer files in order to perform tasks and/or for enjoyment.

Proficient **information managers** acquire, use, and manage information purposefully. Developing information managers involves creating tasks that require skills in information acquisition, use, and management. These tasks range from daily functions in school and work settings to everyday activities at home and in the community.

The infusion of technology and multimedia in various spheres of life has placed increased demands on information management skills. People frequently face challenges in locating, interpreting, applying, evaluating, and storing information. Numerous daily tasks require competence in the skills and abilities of Standard 1. Common examples include

- interpreting weather maps on television or in the newspaper;
- reading or giving directions to get to places;
• accessing information from data storage systems, such as electronic encyclopedias or atlases;
• setting up and operating a new appliance, such as a VCR;
• following instructions to complete income tax returns;
• keeping important documents and records organized;
• interacting on electronic networks, such as the Internet; and
• interpreting statistical data.

**Standard 2:** Florida students communicate in English and other languages using information, concepts, prose, symbols, reports, audio and video recordings, speeches, graphic displays, and computer-based programs.

**Effective communicators** convey thoughts, ideas, and information purposefully. Developing effective communicators involves creating tasks that require skills for transmitting and receiving communications. Communications are transmitted when a student speaks, writes, performs, or creates products. Communications are received by students through observing, reading, and listening—the skills of Standard 1. Media technology can significantly enhance communications.

To be competitive in the 21st-century global economy, students should be able to communicate effectively, not only in English, but also in one or more foreign languages. It is also important for students to be able to use languages pertinent to specialized areas, for example, mathematical notation and vocabulary, scientific language, Latin terminology, musical notation, and computer languages.

Communication is an essential form of human engagement. Success in the skills and abilities that are part of Standard 2 is vital to success in school, at home, and the workplace. Common examples of activities that involve communication skills include
• making a multimedia presentation to introduce a new marketing strategy;
• writing letters of application for jobs or educational programs;
• making formal or informal announcements;
• writing a technical report or a business plan;
• initiating and making conversation;
• writing or reciting a poem;
• viewing and listening to an opera or play; and
• discussing, as a member of a team or committee, ways to solve a problem.

**Standard 3:** Florida students use numeric operations and concepts to describe, analyze, disaggregate, communicate, and synthesize numeric data, and to identify and solve problems.

**Numeric problem solvers** analyze and solve mathematical or quantitative problems in applied situations in school, life, and the workplace. Developing numeric problem solvers involves creating tasks that require students to gather, read, manipulate, interpret, organize, and analyze quantitative data. Numeric problem solvers also verify, explain, and justify solutions to quantitative or mathematical problems. Students must be able to take advantage of technology such as calculators and computers that support mathematical problem solving. Common examples of activities that require competence in the skills and abilities of Standard 3 include

• understanding bus, train, and plane schedules;
• determining the best value of things to buy;
• keeping accounts and budgets for different purposes;
• measuring ingredients for recipes and distances for travel; and
• gathering, summarizing, and analyzing data to determine needs in particular situations.

**Standard 4:** Florida students use creative thinking skills to generate new ideas, make the best decision, recognize and solve problems through reasoning, interpret symbolic data, and develop efficient techniques for lifelong learning.

**Creative and critical thinkers** gather new information to answer questions and make conclusions, connections, and inferences from existing information. Creative thinking involves divergent thinking, originality, and the ability to find novel or
unique relationships and solutions. Creative thinkers have a high tolerance for ambiguity; they seek out opposing viewpoints.

Developing creative and critical thinkers involves creating tasks that require students to become proficient in using creative and critical thinking processes to solve problems. As they progress through their school years, students are expected to apply various problem-solving processes to the scientific method, logical analysis, trial-and-error techniques, and the creation of functional objects, works of arts, and performances. Students also must be able to creatively deal with limitations imposed upon the creative process, such as space limitations or lack of availability of materials. Teachers should nurture attitudes of persistence and perseverance during problem-solving activities.

**Standard 5:** Florida students display responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity, and honesty.

In order to develop responsible workers, educators should emphasize the personal and social attributes that form positive social skills, such as self-management behaviors, self-esteem, and honesty. These attributes are used in day-to-day interactions with people in school, at home, in the community, and in the workplace.

Unlike Standards 1 to 4, which focus on cognitive and academic development, Standard 5 emphasizes affective and social growth as well as self-discipline. Instruction in the skills and abilities identified in Standard 5 occurs in formal and informal interactive settings. Teachers, parents, the school community, and the community at large should work as partners to develop students as responsible workers. The learning environment must be conducive to nurturing the personal and social attributes that define Standard 5. Positive behaviors can be reinforced through consistent role modeling by peers and adults. Mentoring, counseling, individual educational plans, and contracts between teachers and students are effective ways to help students become responsible workers.

**Standard 6:** Florida students will appropriately allocate time, money, materials, and other resources.

Developing effective resource managers involves helping students learn to allocate and manage resources to complete projects and tasks. Instruction in and assessment
of the skills and abilities delineated in Standard 6 occurs as students prepare action plans to accomplish tasks, allocate time and necessary resources, implement the plans, and evaluate whether or not the resources allocated were adequate. Students can demonstrate their effectiveness as resource managers at home, in school and school-related activities, in the community, and in the workplace.

The intent of Standard 6 is to help students become proficient in allocating time, preparing and following time lines, preparing budgets, and acquiring and distributing materials and other resources, such as facilities, technology, or environmental resources. These skills can be used when conducting research, developing products, or preparing presentations.

**Standard 7:** Florida students integrate their knowledge and understanding of how social, organizational, informational, and technological systems work with their abilities to analyze trends, design and improve systems, and use and maintain appropriate technology.

Developing proficient **systems managers** involves helping students understand what systems are, how they work, and how to use the systems approach to solve problems or design solutions. Instruction in and assessment of the skills and abilities of Standard 7 occur as students analyze information and solve problems that help them see the big picture and its parts.

The intent of Standard 7 is to help students use the systems approach as a way of getting a better grasp of events and phenomena in their world. Thus, helping students learn about the natural systems of science, the systems of language, and systematic mathematical thinking is a good way to introduce the concept of systems. Efficient systems managers use systems concepts to process information, solve problems, develop new models, or change existing systems to produce better results.

Various concepts can be studied using the systems approach. Students should be able to identify and understand natural, social, organizational, informational, and technological systems. Systems in their world include grading systems, the education system, the lunchroom system, computer systems, government systems, and the judicial system.
Standard 8: Florida students work cooperatively to successfully complete a project or activity.

In order to develop cooperative workers, educators should emphasize the attributes and interpersonal skills necessary to work effectively in teams, a process that is used extensively in the work world. The goal is to develop students and workers who can interact cooperatively and productively in groups.

Unlike Standard 5 (responsible workers), which deals with affective and social growth on a personal level, Standard 8 deals with goal- or task-oriented social behaviors that involve group work. To help develop cooperative workers, opportunities must be provided for students to perform tasks in cooperative groups. Such opportunities should help students understand group processes, assume various roles in the group, keep the group on task, motivate the group toward task completion, and evaluate the effectiveness of the group in accomplishing goals. Instruction in the skills and abilities of Standard 8 might occur in classroom, community, or workplace-like settings.

Standard 9: Florida students establish credibility with their colleagues through competence and integrity, and help their peers achieve their goals by communicating their feelings and ideas to justify or successfully negotiate a position that advances goal attainment.

In order to develop effective leaders, educators should emphasize the attributes and interpersonal skills necessary for students to advance group and individual goals. Students must learn to develop skills in listening, communicating, decision making, conflict resolution, and negotiation. This standard aims to develop students who can lead groups productively.

Standard 9 is closely related to Standard 5 (responsible workers), which deals with affective and social growth on a personal level, and Standard 8 (cooperative workers), which deals with goal- or task-oriented group behaviors. In order to help develop effective leaders, opportunities must be provided for students to take on leadership responsibilities in safe, nonthreatening environments. Such opportunities should help students learn to communicate directly, treat individuals fairly, and separate work- and group-related issues from personal ones.
Standard 10: Florida students appreciate their own culture and the cultures of others, understand the concerns and perspectives of members of other ethnic and gender groups, reject the stereotyping of themselves and others, and seek out and utilize the views of persons from diverse ethnic, social, and educational backgrounds while completing individual and group projects.

In order to develop **multiculturally sensitive citizens** and workers, educators should help students become knowledgeable about their own cultural backgrounds and the cultures of others. Instruction in and assessment of the skills and abilities of Standard 10 should help students understand the importance of treating others with dignity and respect. This standard involves broadening students' knowledge and understanding of the languages, customs, beliefs, traditions, and values of different cultures.

Standard 11: Families will share the responsibility of accomplishing the standards set in Goal 3 throughout a student’s education from preschool through 12th grade.

Educators are encouraged to invite and facilitate the **involvement of families** in their children’s education. Parents should be encouraged to volunteer in the classroom, help at home with homework and projects, monitor progress through parent-teacher conferences, generate community support for education, and model lifelong learning.

**Suggestions for Language Arts Educators**

Schools will be held accountable for incorporating the Goal 3 student-achievement standards into instruction and classroom assessment. The following are examples of language arts classroom activities that integrate the Goal 3 standards:

Students are asked to bring in a job description or job advertisement that interests them; each student must write a cover letter and a resume for that job, using the correct format and business-writing skills learned in class. Afterwards, students pair up to role play an interview situation in which one student acts as a job applicant and the other as an interviewer. After each pair performs its role play for the class, the class holds a discussion in which students offer constructive feedback. Through this activity, students apply their oral and written communication and analytical skills to a real-life scenario.
This example uses Standard 1, information managers; Standard 2, effective communicators; Standard 4, creative and critical thinkers; and Standard 8, cooperative workers.

Students read versions of a common fairy tale, such as *Cinderella*, from other cultures. Working in groups, they compare and contrast the versions they read, noting similarities and differences. They then discuss the possible cultural factors that influenced the differences. Each group makes a presentation to the class in which the students discuss their findings.

This example uses Standard 1, information managers; Standard 2, effective communicators; Standard 4, creative and critical thinkers; Standard 8, cooperative workers, and Standard 10, multiculturally sensitive citizens.

Students investigate the history of information formats by listing and researching communication tools such as stone, papyrus, print media, and electronic media. They use their research to create timelines of the progress of communication throughout human history. In their timelines, students approximate the length of time each communication format was used to facilitate human interaction; they also write paragraphs explaining why and how a new method grew out of an older one. Students present their timelines and analyses to the class.

This example uses Standard 1, information managers; Standard 2, effective communicators; Standard 3, numeric problem solvers; Standard 6, resource managers; and Standard 7, systems managers.

Working in pairs, students critique each other's essays on an assigned topic. Each student critiques his or her partner's essay, based on criteria created by the class and the teacher. Before the exercise, the instructor leads the students in an activity that demonstrates how to give constructive criticism. As the students critique each other's work, they use the instructor's guidelines for giving and receiving constructive criticism.

This example uses Standard 2, effective communicators; Standard 4, creative and critical thinkers; Standard 5, responsible workers; Standard 8, cooperative workers; and Standard 9, effective leaders.
Key Chapter Points

• The first ten standards of Florida’s Goal 3 Standards are general processes and abilities that cut across all subject areas.

• These processes and abilities are important to success in school and in everyday life at home, in the community, and in the work world.

• These Goal 3 Standards should be an integral part of daily classroom instruction and assessment in every subject area at every grade level; they will help students apply specific content knowledge in real-world situations.
The standards and benchmarks for language arts represent the heart of this curriculum framework because high standards are the center of the efforts to reform and enhance education in Florida. Before addressing the language arts standards, it is useful to consider why we need academic standards. In her book *National Standards in American Education: A Citizen’s Guide*, Diane Ravitch, former Assistant Secretary of Education at the U.S. Department of Education, explains that standards are a necessary and accepted part of American life in almost every field but education:

> Americans clamor for standards in nearly every part of their lives. They expect strict standards to govern construction of buildings, bridges, highways, and tunnels; shoddy work would put lives at risk. They expect explicit standards in the field of telecommunications; imagine how difficult life would be if every city, state, and nation had incompatible telephone systems. They expect stringent standards to protect their drinking water, the food they eat, and the air they breathe…. Even the most ordinary transactions of daily life reflect the omnipresence of standards. (pp. 8-9)

Standards have the potential of affecting many aspects of schooling in Florida. The language arts curriculum—what teachers teach and how they teach it—should be organized around the language arts standards. Assessment is one of the most obvious areas that will be affected. The state will be assessing reading, writing, and mathematics based on the language arts and mathematics curriculum frameworks. However, on the local level, the state standards for language arts should form the basis of classroom assessments for language arts. Finally, the systems used to report
student progress—report cards and transcripts—should have a clear relationship with these academic standards. In short, the language arts standards presented in this framework should be the starting point for language arts education in Florida's education system. This chapter presents those standards in detail.

The Hierarchic Structure of Strands, Standards, and Benchmarks

The standards presented in this chapter have a specific hierarchic structure. There are several levels of information, each more specific than the next.

- **Subject area** = domain, content area, such as language arts, mathematics, science, music
- **Strand** = label (word or short phrase) for a category of knowledge, such as reading, writing, culture, nature of matter
- **Standard** = general statement of expected learner achievement
- **Benchmark** = learner expectations (what a student should know and be able to do) at the end of the developmental levels of grades PreK-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12
  - with
- **Sample Performance Descriptions** = examples of things a student could do to demonstrate achievement of the benchmark
  - and
- **Correlations to Goal 3 Standards** = identification of the specific Goal 3 standards that are incorporated into the sample performance descriptions.

The strands, standards, and benchmarks make up the Sunshine State Standards. These have been adopted by the State Board of Education as a rule, 6A-1.09401, FAC. This rule requires public schools to provide appropriate instruction to assist students in the achievement of these standards. Each district school board must incorporate the Sunshine State Standards into the district Pupil Progression Plan.

A **strand** is the most general type of information. A strand is a label for a category of knowledge under which standards are subsumed. For example, there are five strands in the language arts:
Each of these strands contains two or more standards. A standard is a description of general expectations regarding knowledge and skill development within a strand. For example, within language arts strand A: Reading, there are two language arts standards:

**Standard 1:** The student uses the reading process effectively.

**Standard 2:** The student constructs meaning from a wide range of texts.

These language arts standards provide more specific guidance concerning what students should know and be able to do in relationship to the Reading strand.

The most specific level of information is the benchmark. A benchmark is a statement of expectations about student knowledge and skill at the end of one of four developmental levels: grades PreK-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Benchmarks translate language arts standards into expectations at different levels of student development. Within a standard, one would expect high school students to be performing differently from primary students. The benchmarks describe these differing levels of expectations. Although the identified developmental levels span several grades in order to accommodate continuous progress approaches, the benchmarks describe expected achievement as students exit the developmental level, that is, at the end of second grade, at the end of fifth grade, at the end of eighth grade, and at the end of twelfth grade. It is expected that several benchmarks might often be combined in a single teaching or assessment activity. The listing of separate benchmarks should not be construed to mean that students must demonstrate achievement of them one at a time, to be checked off by the teacher.

Expectations of student knowledge and skills are described in the benchmarks, but the benchmarks are also written with some assumptions regarding student learning. Although knowledge and skills stated at an earlier level of schooling might not be reiterated within benchmarks at later levels, they remain important and should be
reinforced and even retaught, if necessary. For example, in the early years, if students are expected to master the fundamentals of word identification, learning and assessments in later grades should also incorporate this skill, even though the expectation is not explicitly restated within benchmarks for the later years. It is also assumed that in meeting the expectations described in these benchmarks, students are working with material that is developmentally appropriate with regard to their age, developmental level, and grade level.

Accompanying the benchmarks are sample performance descriptions. These sample performance descriptions suggest how teachers might ask students to apply the knowledge and skill described in the benchmark. For example, consider the following benchmark at the 3-5 level within Language Arts Strand A, Standard 2:

The student reads and organizes information for a variety of purposes, including making a report, conducting interviews, taking a test, and performing an authentic task.

The sample performance description that accompanies this benchmark is

[Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student] reads an autobiography or biography of a self-selected Florida writer and writes a book review about how the writer was influenced by the flora and fauna of the Florida ecosystem.

To perform this activity, students must apply the knowledge and skill described in the benchmark.

Each sample performance description is keyed to specific Goal 3 standards; for example, in the above sample performance description, students are using the processes and abilities associated with Goal 3 Standards 1, 2, 4, and 7. In addition, these sample performance descriptions incorporate Goal 3 performance at the appropriate developmental levels. In chapter 2, Goal 3 standards were described as an integral part of Florida education. The first ten standards within Goal 3 are to be integrated into each content area.

The sample performance descriptions and their Goal 3 correlations are meant to suggest to local curriculum and assessment developers and teachers the kinds of classroom assessment activities that can be used with the benchmarks. They are not
one-to-one assessment items for the benchmarks; neither are they state-mandated assessment activities. They serve only to suggest to local curriculum and assessment designers and teachers how they might begin to think about ways to determine if students are achieving or are making adequate progress toward achieving the benchmarks. They also provide examples of ways in which to integrate knowledge and skills from other content areas. As districts implement these frameworks, it is anticipated that more sample performance descriptions will be developed that are grade specific and will cover the scope of the benchmarks. Designers and teachers should choose the content, topic, or processes for the activities appropriate to the local curriculum and develop completely new performance descriptions.

For ease of reference, the table of standards and benchmarks uses an identification system that mirrors the hierarchic structure just described. Each strand, standard, benchmark, and sample performance description has been assigned a unique identification code. The codes associated with the benchmarks and sample performance descriptions reflect the structure of this coding system. For example, note the following benchmark:

**LA.D.2.2.3**

The student recognizes different techniques used in media messages and their purposes.

This code indicates that the benchmark is in the content area of language arts (LA) under strand D, Language. The next two numbers identify the standard (2) under which the benchmark is categorized, and the developmental level (2) designated for this benchmark, that is, grades 3-5. The last number, 3, signifies that this is the third benchmark found under the standard at this developmental level. Sample performance descriptions share a similar identification code but differ in having a lowercase letter appended. This can be seen in the code for a sample performance description associated with the benchmark above:

**LA.D.2.2.3.b**

[Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student] views breakfast cereal commercials and identifies and discusses the use of media techniques such as animation, endorsement by popular personalities, and omission of information.

The letter 'b' indicates that this is the second sample performance description
provided for this benchmark.
In addition to the coding system, the layout of the table that follows reflects the hierarchic structure: Each new strand, standard, and benchmark level begins a new page. This offers an easy way for teachers to re-sort and organize the material by developmental level.

The standards and benchmarks in the curriculum frameworks identify the essential knowledge and skills that students should learn and for which the state will hold schools accountable. Nevertheless, how the standards and benchmarks are organized, what specific curriculum, instructional strategies, materials, and activities are designed to teach them, how much time is spent teaching them, and when they are taught within the developmental levels are local decisions.

**Introduction to Strand A: Reading**

Learning to read is essential to full participation in a modern society. Positive early experiences with reading, including mastery of alphabetic principles, establish the foundation for the lifelong habit of reading for pleasure and information. Reading is an interactive and strategic process involving the construction of meaning. This active process includes the reader, the text, and the task. At the point that students learn to read, they come to understand that they read to learn.

**Introduction to Strand B: Writing**

Writing is a powerful tool for thinking and communicating. It is a process for discovering meaning, exploring possibilities, reflecting on experiences, and exercising the imagination as well as communicating with others. The ability to use writing processes constructively is essential for organizing and clarifying information so that it can be used by others, and the ability to use writing processes in a variety of situations allows the writer to clarify his or her own thinking in all subject areas. Writing enables individuals to communicate ideas and information effectively for a variety of purposes and occasions, and for a wide range of audiences.
Introduction to Strand C: Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

Listening, viewing, and speaking are interrelated and are critical components of literacy. Active listening stimulates thinking, involving both analysis and judgment. Effective listening is an active process for communication and understanding in the academic setting as well as the family, community, and the workplace. Effective viewing is also an active process that requires the recognition of nonverbal cues and their effects on a message. The ability to view critically is becoming an essential component of literacy as our society relies more and more on nonprint media. Finally, speaking is a foundation of the language arts. People vary their speech to accomplish tasks, take charge of their lives, express their opinions, function as productive citizens, and entertain themselves and others.

Introduction to Strand D: Language

Language is the most powerful tool we have for representing the world to ourselves and ourselves to the world. It is not only a means of communication; it is a primary instrument of thought, a defining feature of culture, and an unmistakable mark of personal identity.

Language learning begins at birth and continues as children are immersed in various aspects of language at home and in the community. Students come to school with abilities in speaking and listening. Through exposure to the concepts of language and with increased use of formal language, children develop a bridge to reading and writing. The language learning process is a joyful experience in which students develop a variety of strategies, behaviors, and attitudes to fulfill their educational and personal goals.

Introduction to Strand E: Literature

Literature is an expression of the human power of imagination, not simply a matter of fantasy, but the power to imagine and enter empathically other lives, other places, other cultures, other times. The enlightenment that comes from literature can influence behavior and attitudes as well as expand knowledge.

The human record as expressed in literature invites students to develop a personal sense of meaning and explore common experiences. Literature offers enjoyment, connection, purpose, and insight through the aesthetic portrayal of life.
Summary of Strands and Standards for Language Arts

A. Reading
   1. The student uses the reading process effectively.
   2. The student constructs meaning from a wide range of texts.

B. Writing
   3. The student uses writing processes effectively.
   4. The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking
   5. The student uses listening strategies effectively.
   6. The student uses viewing strategies effectively.
   7. The student uses speaking strategies effectively.

D. Language
   8. The student understands the nature of language.
   9. The student understands the power of language.

E. Literature
   10. The student understands the common features of a variety of literary forms.
   11. The student responds critically to fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.
## A. Reading

1. The student uses the reading process effectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Sample Performance Descriptions</th>
<th>Goal 3 Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades PreK-2</td>
<td>LA.A.1.1.1 predicts what a passage is about based on its title and illustrations.</td>
<td>LA.A.1.1.1.a reacts to an illustration by discussing, drawing, and making guesses with other students about what happens.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.1.1.2 identifies words and constructs meanings from text, illustrations, graphics, and charts using the strategies of phonics, word structure, and context clues.</td>
<td>LA.A.1.1.2.a uses available reading software to improve reading skills by reading stories and interacting with the software. LA.A.1.1.2.b writes captions under pictures to identify key ideas.</td>
<td>1, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.1.1.3 uses knowledge of appropriate grade-, age-, and developmental-level vocabulary in reading.</td>
<td>LA.A.1.1.3.a creates and performs motions to the words and rhythms of a favorite song or poem.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.1.1.4 increases comprehension by rereading, retelling, and discussion.</td>
<td>LA.A.1.1.4.a with other students in a small group, changes the ending of a story or poem and presents changes to the class.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 9</td>
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</table>
### A. Reading

1. The student uses the reading process effectively.

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<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.A.1.2.1</td>
<td>makes predictions about the content of an unfamiliar text to be read, using a teacher-generated word list based on the text. With other students in a small group, the student then shares his or her predictions and helps the group reach a consensus on what the text will be about.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.1.2.2</td>
<td>explains how he or she uses self-questioning during reading by asking, for example, “Does this make sense?” to check for comprehension.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## A. Reading

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<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.A.1.2.3 uses simple strategies to determine meaning and increase vocabulary for reading, including the use of prefixes, suffixes, root words, multiple meanings, antonyms, synonyms, and word relationships.</td>
<td>LA.A.1.2.3.a when questioned, explains the meaning of appropriate vocabulary when reading aloud.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.1.2.4 clarifies understanding by rereading, self-correction, summarizing, checking other sources, and class or group discussion.</td>
<td>LA.A.1.2.4.a discusses in a small group the conflicts in a short story. LA.A.1.2.4.b writes letters to characters in a story asking questions that he or she would like clarified.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sunshine State Standards: Language Arts, 1996
A. Reading

1. The student uses the reading process effectively.

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<tr>
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</table>
| Grades 6-8 | LA.A.1.3.1 uses background knowledge of the subject and text structure knowledge to make complex predictions about content, purpose, and organization of the reading selection. | LA.A.1.3.1.a creates a web on the characteristics of poems before reading three specific poems.  
LA.A.1.3.1.b creates a reading check quiz.  
LA.A.1.3.1.c after reading the first part of a myth, presents a logical ending for the story. | 1, 2, 4 |
| | LA.A.1.3.2 uses a variety of strategies to analyze words and text, draw conclusions, use context and word structure clues, and recognize organizational patterns. | LA.A.1.3.2.a explains how he or she uses knowledge of a prefix and suffix in determining a word’s meaning (e.g., hexagram, millimeter, kiloliter). | 1, 2, 3 |
## A. Reading

1. The student uses the reading process effectively.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.A.1.3.3 demonstrates consistent and effective use of interpersonal and academic vocabularies in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.</td>
<td>LA.A.1.3.3.a after reading a passage dealing with careers in publishing, responds to questions in ways that reflect an understanding of targeted vocabulary. LA.A.1.3.3.b demonstrates vocabulary through games, role playing, charades, or artwork.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.1.3.4 uses strategies to clarify meaning, such as rereading, note-taking, summarizing, outlining, and writing a grade-level-appropriate report.</td>
<td>LA.A.1.3.4.a perseveres when the task requires rereading to clarify meaning. LA.A.1.3.4.b uses the outlining system to indicate the essential meaning of a chapter in a language arts textbook.</td>
<td>1, 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## A. Reading

1. The student uses the reading process effectively.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Grades 9-12</strong></td>
<td>LA.A.1.4.1 selects and uses prereading strategies that are appropriate to the text, such as discussion, making predictions, brainstorming, generating questions, and previewing to anticipate content, purpose, and organization of a reading selection.</td>
<td>LA.A.1.4.1.a keeps a journal of questions about texts read. LA.A.1.4.1.b using several prereading strategies, writes notes about expected content, purpose, and organization of a text to be read dealing with cultural differences. After reading the text, the student discusses which strategies were the most effective with other students in a small group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.1.4.2 selects and uses strategies to understand words and text, and to make and confirm inferences from what is read, including interpreting diagrams, graphs, and statistical illustrations.</td>
<td>LA.A.1.4.2.a uses such tools as learning logs, charts, Venn diagrams, or a matrix to record questions and major concepts during reading assignments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Goal 3 Standards

1, 2, 4

1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10

1, 2, 3
**A. Reading**

1. The student uses the reading process effectively.

<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
</table>
| Grades 9-12 | LA.A.1.4.3  
refines vocabulary for interpersonal, academic, and workplace situations, including figurative, idiomatic, and technical meanings. | LA.A.1.4.3.a  
with other students in a small group, writes and acts out dialogues that might occur between a coach and a football player and those that might occur between a bank president and a loan officer. With the full class, the student analyzes the differences in language use between the two pairs. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9 |
|         | LA.A.1.4.4  
applies a variety of response strategies, including rereading, note taking, summarizing, outlining, writing a formal report, and relating what is read to his or her own experiences and feelings. | LA.A.1.4.4.a  
chooses and uses an appropriate strategy, such as outlining or note taking, to summarize a chapter of a novel set during the Civil War.                                                                                         | 1, 2             |
A. Reading

2. The student constructs meaning from a wide range of texts.

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Grades PreK-2</td>
<td>LA.A.2.1.1 determines the main idea or essential message from text and identifies supporting information.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.1.1.a responds to a book about butterflies by observing their habits in the school yard and explaining how the butterflies’ behavior compares to the habits described in the book.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.1.2 selects material to read for pleasure.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.1.2.a selects materials to read according to his or her personal interests and keeps a log of favorite selections that includes notes about why they were interesting.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.1.3 reads for information to use in performing a task and learning a new task.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.1.3.a uses his or her own knowledge and experience to determine and explain whether events and settings in a self-selected story are real or imaginary.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 9</td>
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</table>
### A. Reading

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<td>Grades PreK-2</td>
<td>LA.A.2.1.4 knows strategies to use to discover whether information presented in a text is true, including asking others and checking another source.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.1.4.a after reading a text selection, discusses with classmates how he or she might go about investigating whether certain points made in the text are true.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.1.5 uses simple materials of the reference system to obtain information.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.1.5.a uses primary-level dictionaries and children’s encyclopedias to obtain information for a group project about different cultures.</td>
<td>1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### A. Reading

2. The student constructs meaning from a wide range of texts.

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<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.1 reads text and determines the main idea or essential message, identifies relevant supporting details and facts, and arranges events in chronological order.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.1.a makes a presentation that contrasts and compares different versions of the same story from different cultures by summarizing the essential message and identifying and comparing relevant details. LA.A.2.2.1.b reads, analyzes, and discusses works by other students in a group.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.2 identifies the author's purpose in a simple text.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.2.a reads an informative report about a particular city, then reads a poem about the city and describes how the two texts differ in terms of author's purpose.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.3 recognizes when a text is primarily intended to persuade.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.3.a compares an encyclopedia entry that describes a specific place in the world with a travel brochure that describes the same place and makes a list of ways in which the travel brochure makes the place sound more appealing.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## A. Reading

2. The student constructs meaning from a wide range of texts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.4.4 identifies specific personal preferences relative to fiction and nonfiction reading.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.4.a keeps a log of favorite texts read and uses this log to determine personal preferences for different forms of fiction and nonfiction.</td>
<td>1, 4, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.5 reads and organizes information for a variety of purposes, including making a report, conducting interviews, taking a test, and performing an authentic task.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.5.a reads an autobiography or biography of a self-selected Florida writer and writes a book review about how the writer was influenced by the flora and fauna of the Florida ecosystem.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.6 recognizes the difference between fact and opinion presented in a text.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.6.a reads another student's writing and points out specific facts and opinions that are stated in the writing.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A. Reading

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.7 recognizes the use of comparison and contrast in a text.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.7.a reads an article in a wildlife magazine and points out specific instances in which comparison and contrast is used to make an unfamiliar animal or place more familiar to the reader.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.8 selects and uses a variety of appropriate reference materials, including multiple representations of information such as maps, charts, and photos, to gather information for research projects.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.2.8.a uses reference system tools (such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, key words, indexes, cross references, maps, charts, and photos) to find information for projects dealing with cultural diversity.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 10</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## A. Reading

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<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.1 determines the main idea or essential message in a text and identifies relevant details and facts and patterns of organization.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.1.a identifies facts revealed by symbols contained in a graphic display, such as international travel symbols on a map.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.2 identifies the author's purpose and/or point of view in a variety of texts and uses the information to construct meaning.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.2.a evaluates an opinion survey on students' use of the lunchroom, in order to determine whether the survey's purpose was accomplished.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.3 recognizes logical, ethical, and emotional appeals in texts.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.3.a selects five different newspaper or magazine advertisements, identifies the techniques each advertisement uses to appeal to the reader, assigns values to the effectiveness of each advertisement, and then creates a chart or graph based on these values to illustrate the most and least effective advertisements.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# A. Reading

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<tr>
<td><strong>Grades 6-8</strong></td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.4 &lt;br&gt; uses a variety of reading materials to develop personal preferences in reading.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.4.a &lt;br&gt; gives personal reactions to letters to the editor in a newspaper.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.5 &lt;br&gt; locates, organizes, and interprets written information for a variety of purposes, including classroom research, collaborative decision making, and performing a school or real-world task.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.5.a &lt;br&gt; orally explains how to locate job vacancies by reading newspapers. &lt;br&gt; LA.A.2.3.5.b &lt;br&gt; assembles toys for charities by following manufacturers’ directions.</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A. Reading

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<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.6 uses a variety of reference materials, including indexes, magazines, newspapers, and journals, and tools, including card catalogs and computer catalogs to gather information for research topics.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.6.a makes limited but effective use of primary sources when researching topics for group projects. LA.A.2.3.6.b gathers information for a group project using note taking, indexes, card and computer catalogs, magazines, newspapers, dictionaries, schedules, and journals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.7 synthesizes and separates collected information into useful components using a variety of techniques, such as source cards, note cards, spreadsheets, and outlines.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.7.a conducts research on a topic of personal interest and uses note cards or a computer spreadsheet to assist in synthesizing the information into a consistent and cohesive thesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.8 checks the validity and accuracy of information obtained from research, in such ways as differentiating fact and opinion, identifying strong vs. weak arguments, and recognizing that personal values influence the conclusions an author draws.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.3.8.a uses the bibliography of a source document to locate material that validates information contained in the source document.</td>
</tr>
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Sunshine State Standards: Language Arts, 1996
## A. Reading

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<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.1</td>
<td>The student determines the main idea and identifies relevant details, methods of development, and their effectiveness in a variety of types of written material. LA.A.2.4.1.a with other students in a small group, examines three different technical reports on the same topic, identifies methods used in each report to explain and clarify the main idea, and then discusses which report is most effective and why.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.2</td>
<td>The student determines the author’s purpose and point of view and their effects on the text. LA.A.2.4.2.a presents an analysis of stereotyping, bias, propaganda, and contrasting points of view in material read. LA.A.2.4.2.b reads an essay to determine the author’s point of view and makes a personal determination of the validity of the author's argument.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.3</td>
<td>The student describes and evaluates personal preferences regarding fiction and nonfiction. LA.A.2.4.3.a keeps a log of materials he or she reads outside of class and uses this log to identify personal preferences regarding fiction and nonfiction.</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 6</td>
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## A. Reading

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.4</td>
<td>locates, gathers, analyzes, and evaluates written information for a variety of purposes, including research projects, real-world tasks, and self-improvement.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.4.a designs an effective resumé on a computer in response to a job advertisement. LA.A.2.4.4.b maintains a portfolio as an assessment tool that illustrates growth over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.5</td>
<td>identifies devices of persuasion and methods of appeal and their effectiveness.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.5.a selects a newspaper editorial that is especially effective in persuading the reader and describes the details and appeals that make this editorial convincing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.6</td>
<td>selects and uses appropriate study and research skills and tools according to the type of information being gathered or organized, including almanacs, government publications, microfiche, news sources, and information services.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.6.a uses information systems, such as graphs, almanacs, government publications, microfiche, new sources, videotapes, artifacts, and public telephone information services to gather information for a project.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
**A. Reading**

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<tr>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.7 analyzes the validity and reliability of primary source information and uses the information appropriately.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.7.a selects a historical document, gathers information from a variety of other sources that validate or reject the statements made in the document, and shares his or her findings with the class.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.8 synthesizes information from multiple sources to draw conclusions.</td>
<td>LA.A.2.4.8.a gathers, interprets, and evaluates information from reading, electronic sources, observations, surveys, and interviews and prepares a multimedia presentation on differences in verbal interaction patterns of males and females.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## B. Writing

1. The student uses writing processes effectively.

<table>
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<td></td>
<td>The student</td>
<td>Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades PreK-2</td>
<td>LA.B.1.1.1 makes a plan for writing that includes a central idea and related ideas.</td>
<td>LA.B.1.1.1.a experiments with and practices different ways of conveying meaning in writing.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.B.1.1.2 drafts and revises simple sentences and passages, stories, letters, and simple explanations that • express ideas clearly; • show an awareness of topic and audience; • have a beginning, middle, and ending; • effectively use common words; • have supporting detail; and • are in legible printing.</td>
<td>LA.B.1.1.2.a revises the sequence of events in his or her story after receiving feedback from peers and/or the teacher.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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B. Writing

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades PreK-2</td>
<td>LA.B.1.1.3 produces final simple documents that have been edited for</td>
<td>LA.B.1.1.3.a using the conventions for publication, writes a thank you letter to a firefighter who talked to the class about fire safety.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• correct spelling;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• appropriate end punctuation;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• correct capitalization of initial words, “I,” and names of people;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• correct sentence structure; and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• correct usage of age-appropriate subject/verb and noun/pronoun agreement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The student</td>
<td>Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>B. 1.2.1</strong>&lt;br&gt;prepares for writing by recording thoughts, focusing on a central idea, grouping related ideas, and identifying the purpose for writing.</td>
<td>Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student</td>
<td>1, 2, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades&lt;br&gt;3-5</td>
<td>LA.B.1.2.2&lt;br&gt;drafts and revises writing in cursive that • focuses on the topic; • has a logical organizational pattern, including a beginning, middle, conclusion, and transitional devices; • has ample development of supporting ideas; • demonstrates a sense of completeness or wholeness; • demonstrates a command of language including precision in word choice; • generally has correct subject/verb agreement; • generally has correct verb and noun forms; • with few exceptions, has sentences that are complete, except when fragments are used purposefully • uses a variety of sentence structure; and • generally follows the conventions of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling;</td>
<td>LA.B.1.2.2.a&lt;br&gt;uses peer reader response to improve the organization of a draft describing family experiences of different cultures.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10</td>
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**B. Writing**

1. The student uses writing processes effectively.

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<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.B.1.2.3 produces final documents that have been edited for • correct spelling; • correct use of punctuation, including commas in series, dates, and addresses, and beginning and ending quotation marks; • correct capitalization of proper nouns; • correct paragraph indentation; • correct usage of subject/verb agreement, verb and noun forms, and sentence structure; and • correct formatting according to instructions.</td>
<td>LA.B.1.2.3.a using the conventions for publication, publishes the final copy of a document in a classroom anthology.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## B. Writing

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</table>
| Grades 6-8 | LA.B.1.3.1 organizes information before writing according to the type and purpose of writing. | LA.B.1.3.1.a discusses memorable experiences or favorite hobbies with a partner and keeps a record of these discussions as possible topics for a later writing project, highlighting and clustering central ideas and groups of ideas.  
LA.B.1.3.1.b uses webbing, clustering, mapping, or brainstorming activities to plan an essay on the importance of poetry to all cultures.  
LA.B.1.3.1.c creates a list of research questions on the ecosystem of Florida freshwater streams that he or she thinks a marine biologist or environmental lobbyist might ask. | 1, 2, 6  
1, 2, 4, 6, 10  
1, 2, 4, 7 |
B. Writing

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<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.B.1.3.2 drafts and revises writing that</td>
<td>LA.B.1.3.2.a uses appropriate and effective writing and applies word-processing or desktop-publishing capabilities,</td>
<td>1, 2, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• is focused, purposeful, and reflects insight into the writing situation;</td>
<td>such as varying fonts, gridding, and bulleting information, in drafting a technical report.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• conveys a sense of completeness and wholeness with adherence to the main idea;</td>
<td>LA.B.1.3.2.b uses and applies to a piece of writing procedures</td>
<td>1, 2, 5, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• has an organizational pattern that provides for a logical progression of ideas;</td>
<td>learned in a writing workshop, including prewriting skills, first draft, self and peer editing, second draft,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• has support that is substantial, specific, relevant, concrete, and/or illustrative;</td>
<td>teacher edit, and final draft.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• demonstrates a commitment to and an involvement with the subject;</td>
<td>LA.B.1.3.2.c participates in peer-editing groups.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• has clarity in presentation of ideas;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• uses creative writing strategies appropriate to the purpose of the paper;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• demonstrates a command of language (word choice) with freshness of expression;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• has varied sentence structure and sentences that are complete except when fragments are used</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>purposefully; and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• has few, if any, convention errors in mechanics, usage, and punctuation.</td>
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</table>
# B. Writing

1. The student uses writing processes effectively.

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<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.B.1.3.3 produces final documents that have been edited for</td>
<td>• correct spelling; • correct punctuation, including commas, colons, and semicolons; • correct capitalization; • effective sentence structure; • correct common usage, including subject-verb agreement, common noun-pronoun agreement, common possessive forms, and with a variety of sentence structures, including parallel structure; and • correct formatting.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.B.1.3.3.a uses the conventions for publication to write a formal letter to the editor or to a school district official about a policy or practice he or she likes or dislikes.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.B.1.3.3.b submits, to a student anthology or a contest, an effectively written essay or creative writing piece that follows the conventions for publication.</td>
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<td><strong>Grades 9-12</strong></td>
<td>LA.B.1.4.1 selects and uses appropriate prewriting strategies, such as brainstorming, graphic organizers, and outlining.</td>
<td>LA.B.1.4.1.a creates a matrix to record and sort facts before writing a report on marine life in the Apalachicola Bay.</td>
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Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student

1, 2, 3, 4, 6
### B. Writing

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<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.B.1.4.2</td>
<td>Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>drafts and revises writing that</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• is focused, purposeful, and reflects insight into the writing situation;</td>
<td>LA.B.1.4.2.a</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• has an organizational pattern that provides for a logical progression of ideas;</td>
<td>revises word choice to add precision and clarity and to avoid repetition in an essay that compares and contrasts realism and naturalism.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• has effective use of transitional devices that contribute to a sense of completeness;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• has support that is substantial, specific, relevant, and concrete;</td>
<td>LA.B.1.4.2.b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• demonstrates a commitment to and involvement with the subject;</td>
<td>maintains a portfolio as an assessment tool that shows progress in the various drafts of specific pieces of writing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• uses creative writing strategies as appropriate to the purpose of the paper;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• demonstrates a mature command of language with precision of expression;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• has varied sentence structure; and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• has few, if any, convention errors in mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.</td>
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</table>
| Grades 9-12 | LA.B.1.4.3 produces final documents that have been edited for  
• correct spelling  
• correct punctuation, including commas, colons, and common use of semicolons;  
• correct capitalization;  
• correct sentence formation;  
• correct instances of possessives, subject/verb agreement, instances of noun/pronoun agreement, and the intentional use of fragments for effect; and  
• correct formatting that appeals to readers, including appropriate use of a variety of graphics, tables, charts, and illustrations in both standard and innovative forms. | LA.B.1.4.3.a creates a resumé to be sent to a personnel office or a college registrar, using available word-processing tools to check spelling, sentence formation, and grammar. | 1, 2, 7 |
### B. Writing

2. The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades PreK-2</td>
<td>The student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA.B.2.1.1</td>
<td>writes questions and observations about familiar topics, stories, or new experiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Performance Descriptions</th>
<th>Goal 3 Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LA.B.2.1.1.a uses personal observations to write questions about cultural differences.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA.B.2.1.1.b writes one or more sentences describing a picture in a class photo album.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA.B.2.1.1.c with other students in a small group, lists what he or she knows about a topic, what he or she wants to know, and what he or she has learned about a topic</td>
<td>1, 2, 5, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA.B.2.1.1.d develops a journal to record on a daily basis new understandings in mathematics.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| LA.B.2.1.2 | uses knowledge and experience to tell about experiences or to write for familiar occasions, audiences, and purposes. |

| LA.B.2.1.2.a uses available commercial story-building software to write a story about the job of a family member or about a class field trip. | 1, 2, 7 |
## B. Writing

2. The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grades PreK-2</strong></td>
<td>LA.B.2.1.3 uses basic computer skills for writing, such as basic word-processing techniques such as keying words, copying, cutting, and pasting; using e-mail; and accessing and using basic educational software for writing.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.1.3.a writes and sends an e-mail note to the media specialist inquiring if a book he or she wants to read is available.</td>
<td>1, 2, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.B.2.1.4 composes simple sets of instructions for simple tasks using logical sequencing of steps.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.1.4.a with other students in a small group, writes and sends an e-mail note to the principal describing how to send a message on the e-mail system.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### B. Writing

2. The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.B.2.2.1</td>
<td>writes notes, comments, and observations that reflect comprehension of content and experiences from a variety of media.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.2.1.a makes selections for a portfolio and writes an explanation for why these selections were chosen as the best pieces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.B.2.2.2</td>
<td>organizes information using alphabetical and numerical systems.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.2.2.a creates a word bank of unfamiliar words from a science textbook and alphabetizes the words.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### B. Writing

2. The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td><strong>LA.B.2.2.3</strong>&lt;br&gt;writes for a variety of occasions, audiences, and purposes.</td>
<td><strong>LA.B.2.2.3.a</strong>&lt;br&gt;writes a letter to a favorite author, asking for information or sharing personal reactions to his or her book.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>LA.B.2.2.4</strong>&lt;br&gt;uses electronic technology, including word-processing software and electronic encyclopedias, to create, revise, retrieve, and verify information.</td>
<td><strong>LA.B.2.2.4.a</strong>&lt;br&gt;with other students in a small group, creates a newsletter using desktop publishing to inform parents about upcoming community events at the school.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>LA.B.2.2.5</strong>&lt;br&gt;creates narratives in which ideas, details, and events are in a logical order and are relevant to the story line.</td>
<td><strong>LA.B.2.2.5.a</strong>&lt;br&gt;writes a story by first organizing events in a logical order along a time line.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>LA.B.2.2.6</strong>&lt;br&gt;creates expository responses in which ideas and details follow an organizational pattern and are relevant to the purpose.</td>
<td><strong>LA.B.2.2.6.a</strong>&lt;br&gt;writes a report on the history of an Olympic game.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### B. Writing

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.B.2.3.1 writes text, notes, outlines, comments, and observations that demonstrate comprehension of content and experiences from a variety of media.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.3.1.a takes notes to monitor understanding of a video presentation, filmstrip, or other audio-visual presentation. LA.B.2.3.1.b takes notes to monitor understanding of a lecture on the differences between a report and a research project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.B.2.3.2 organizes information using alphabetical, chronological, and numerical systems.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.3.2.a creates a time line of events by year for a story that spans several generations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**B. Writing**

2. The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

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<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.B.2.3.3 selects and uses appropriate formats for writing, including narrative, persuasive, and expository formats according to the intended audience, purpose, and occasion.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.3.3.a creates a persuasive writing piece by taking notes, selecting information, identifying key arguments, and maintaining a logical point of view.</td>
<td>1, 2, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.B.2.3.4 uses electronic technology including databases and software to gather information and communicate new knowledge.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.3.4.a using e-mail, exchanges drafts of a writing piece with students in other countries for peer review of key arguments and persuasive techniques used.</td>
<td>1, 2, 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. Writing

2. The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.B.2.4.1 writes text, notes, outlines, comments, and observations that demonstrate comprehension and synthesis of content, processes, and experiences from a variety of media.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.4.1.a summarizes information in the form of outlines, written summaries, graphs, charts, and tables, using systems such as indexing, filing, and databases.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.B.2.4.2 organizes information using appropriate systems.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.4.2.a with other students in a small group, collects information from the Internet, interprets quantitative data correctly, and constructs graphs comparing corporate profits in the publishing industry with corporate profits in the broadcast industry.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## B. Writing

2. The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.

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<tr>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.B.2.4.3 writes fluently for a variety of occasions, audiences, and purposes, making appropriate choices regarding style, tone, level of detail, and organization.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.4.3.a writes a letter to the governor that includes statistics to persuade him or her not to (or to) increase the state’s speed limit. LA.B.2.4.3.b produces written products that present complex information and ideas expressed completely and in ways appropriate to the intended audience.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.B.2.4.4 selects and uses a variety of electronic media, such as the Internet, information services, and desktop-publishing software programs, to create, revise, retrieve, and verify information.</td>
<td>LA.B.2.4.4.a produces written products that demonstrate knowledge of different presentational formats for print, quantitative, and graphic information that are visually appealing and that are appropriate for the intended audience. LA.B.2.4.4.b integrates research notes into an electronic database, arrays data on an electronic spreadsheet, and uses graphs to enhance a persuasive writing.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 7, 5, 7, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

1. The student uses listening strategies effectively.

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Grades PreK-2</td>
<td>LA.C.1.1.1</td>
<td>The student listens for a variety of informational purposes, including curiosity, pleasure, getting directions, performing tasks, solving problems, and following rules.</td>
<td>1, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.1.1.2</td>
<td>The student recognizes personal preferences in listening to literature and other material.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.1.1.3</td>
<td>The student carries on a conversation with another person, seeking answers and further explanations of the other’s ideas through questioning and answering.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.1.1.4</td>
<td>The student retells specific details of information heard, including sequence of events.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LA.C.1.1.1.a: follows short, simple directions about the system of classroom procedures or activities.

LA.C.1.1.2.a: draws and explains conclusions from a speaker’s message based on personal preferences.

LA.C.1.1.3.a: with other students in a small group, participates in discussions to generate new ideas, make the best decisions, solve problems, and allocate time and other resources.

LA.C.1.1.4.a: responds to an oral story about a natural Florida habitat by drawing a picture of that ecosystem and explaining the drawing in terms of details understood, including sequence of events.
# C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

1. The student uses listening strategies effectively.

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The student listens and responds to a variety of oral presentations, such as stories, poems, skits, songs, personal accounts, informational speeches.</td>
<td>Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student uses complex thinking to distinguish between facts and personal experiences in a discussion about the accuracy of an age-appropriate historical drama.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.C.1.2.1</td>
<td>LA.C.1.2.1.a participates in a group discussion in which students explain who their favorite characters are in a story that their teacher read to them.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.1.2.2 identifies specific personal listening preferences regarding fiction, drama, literary nonfiction, and informational presentations.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.2.2.a carries on an extended conversation with a group of friends.</td>
<td>1, 2, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.1.2.3 carries on an extended conversation with a group of friends.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.2.3.a talks with friends during an appropriate time about which movies they want to see on the weekend.</td>
<td>1, 2, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

1. The student uses listening strategies effectively.

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<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.C.1.2.4 listens attentively to the speaker, including making eye contact and facing the speaker.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.2.4.a listens quietly and attentively while a student performs a simple demonstration for the class.</td>
<td>1, 2, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.1.2.5 responds to speakers by asking questions, making contributions, and paraphrasing what is said.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.2.5.a asks a speaker a specific question by paraphrasing one of the speaker’s points and then asks the speaker for further clarification.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
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### C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

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<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.C.1.3.1</td>
<td>The student listens and uses information gained for a variety of purposes, such as gaining information from interviews, following directions, and pursuing a personal interest.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.3.1.a uses listening strategies when interviewing a primary source for a speech on career choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.1.3.2</td>
<td>The student selects and listens to readings of fiction, drama, nonfiction, and informational presentations according to personal preferences.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.3.2.a selects a book on tape that he or she thinks would be enjoyable to listen to during an extended car trip or plane ride, and explains why he or she has chosen this particular selection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

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<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.C.1.3.3 acknowledges the feelings and messages sent in a conversation.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.3.3.a shares feelings about a specific artwork with a partner, listens carefully to partner's response, then describes to the partner how he or she thinks the partner feels about the artwork.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.1.3.4 uses responsive listening skills, including paraphrasing, summarizing, and asking questions for elaboration and clarification.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.3.4.a asks a teacher to clarify or elaborate on points he or she made during a lecture.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
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</tbody>
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### C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

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<td><strong>Grades 9-12</strong></td>
<td><strong>LA.C.1.4.1</strong> selects and uses appropriate listening strategies according to the intended purpose, such as solving problems, interpreting and evaluating the techniques and intent of a presentation, and taking action in career-related situations.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.4.1.a listens to a radio commercial and participates in a class discussion on factors that made the commercial effective or ineffective in persuading him or her.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>LA.C.1.4.2</strong> describes, evaluates, and expands personal preferences in listening to fiction, drama, literary nonfiction, and informational presentations.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.4.2.a with others in a small group, discusses favorite books and authors, then chooses a new selection to read based on books and authors that other group members have recommended.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 9</td>
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## C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

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<td>The student</td>
<td>Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.C.1.4.3 uses effective strategies for informal and formal discussions, including listening actively and reflectively, connecting to and building on the ideas of a previous speaker, and respecting the viewpoints of others.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.4.3.a in conversations, demonstrates an awareness of and sensitivity to the various dialects, accents, and speech patterns in a multicultural community.</td>
<td>1, 2, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.1.4.4 identifies bias, prejudice, or propaganda in oral messages.</td>
<td>LA.C.1.4.4.a listens to political advertisements on the radio and discusses the advertisements’ biases with other students.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

2. The student uses viewing strategies effectively.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades PreK-2</td>
<td>LA.C.2.1.1 develops the main idea in a nonprint communication.</td>
<td>LA.C.2.1.1.a describes common themes in a set of works of art or pictures.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.2.1.2 recognizes simple nonverbal cues, such as use of eye contact, smiles, simple hand gestures.</td>
<td>LA.C.2.1.2.a uses nonverbal methods to demonstrate the concept of size. LA.C.2.1.2.b with a partner, takes turns creating pantomimes to describe simple objects or ideas, and then discusses with the class which objects or ideas in the pantomimes were easiest to recognize.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
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## C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

2. The student uses viewing strategies effectively.

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<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.C.2.2.1 determines main concept and supporting details in a nonprint media message.</td>
<td>LA.C.2.2.1.a accurately summarizes a film of factual or fictional content.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.2.2.2 recognizes and responds to nonverbal cues used in a variety of nonprint media, such as motion pictures, television advertisements, and works of art.</td>
<td>LA.C.2.2.2.a discusses his or her reactions to a work of art with other students in a small group.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

2. The student uses viewing strategies effectively.

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<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>LA.C.2.3.1 determines main concept, supporting details, stereotypes, bias, and persuasion techniques in a nonprint message.</td>
<td>Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student LA.C.2.3.1.a follows instructions presented as steps for completing a report.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>LA.C.2.3.2 uses movement, placement, juxtaposition, gestures, silent periods, facial expressions, and other nonverbal cues to convey meaning to an audience.</td>
<td>LA.C.2.3.2.a explains and identifies techniques in motion pictures, videos, and theatre to indicate a lapse in time. LA.C.2.3.2.b recognizes and responds orally to nonverbal cues, such as movement, fades, cuts, placement, juxtaposition, gestures, smile, and silent periods.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

2. The student uses viewing strategies effectively.

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</table>
| **Grades 9-12** | LA.C.2.4.1  
determines main concept and supporting details in order to analyze and evaluate nonprint media messages. | LA.C.2.4.1.a  
compares and contrasts video and print versions of the same work in terms of main concept, supporting details, stereotypes, bias, and persuasion techniques. | 1, 2, 4 |
| | LA.C.2.4.2  
understands factors that influence the effectiveness of nonverbal cues used in nonprint media, such as the viewer’s past experiences and preferences, and the context in which the cues are presented. | LA.C.2.4.2.a  
waits a subtitled foreign film and discusses with other students how people from different cultures use different gestures. | 1, 2, 4, 8, 10 |
C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

3. The student uses speaking strategies effectively.

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades PreK-2</td>
<td>LA.C.3.1.1</td>
<td>speaks clearly and at a volume audible in large- or small-group settings.</td>
<td>1, 2, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.1.2</td>
<td>asks questions to seek answers and further explanation of other people’s ideas.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.1.3</td>
<td>speaks effectively in conversations with others.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.1.4</td>
<td>uses eye contact and simple gestures to enhance delivery.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

3. The student uses speaking strategies effectively.

<table>
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</thead>
</table>
| Grades 3-5 | **LA.C.3.2.1**  
  speaks clearly at an understandable rate and uses appropriate volume. | **LA.C.3.2.1.a**  
  uses an appropriate volume when talking with classmates in the library. | 1, 2, 5          |
|         | **LA.C.3.2.2**  
  asks questions and makes comments and observations to clarify understanding of content, processes, and experiences. | **LA.C.3.2.2.a**  
  asks relevant questions after listening to a student’s presentation about a personal experience or favorite object. | 1, 2             |
|         | **LA.C.3.2.3**  
  speaks for specific occasions, audiences, and purposes, including conversations, discussions, projects, and informational or imaginative presentations. | **LA.C.3.2.3.a**  
  demonstrates interpersonal skills by rehearsing and telling a story to peers or younger students in which the student uses verbal and nonverbal strategies to engage listeners. | 1, 2, 5, 9       |
3. The student uses speaking strategies effectively.

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.C.3.2.4 uses eye contact and gestures that engage the audience.</td>
<td>LA.C.3.2.4.a gives a short demonstration in which he or she uses gestures to engage the other students, then discusses the effectiveness of the gestures he or she chose.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.2.5 participates as a contributor and occasionally acts as a leader in a group discussion.</td>
<td>LA.C.3.2.5.a actively participates in a class discussion about character development in a short story that the class has finished reading.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.2.6 organizes a speech using a basic beginning, middle, and end.</td>
<td>LA.C.3.2.6.a selects a topic for a demonstration and uses note cards to organize the information to be covered in the beginning, middle, and end of the speech.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

3. The student uses speaking strategies effectively.

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.C.3.3.1</td>
<td>The student understands how volume, stress, pacing, and pronunciation can positively or negatively affect an oral presentation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.3.1.a</td>
<td>LA.C.3.3.1.a watches a clip from a news or talk show and then discusses how the use of appropriate volume, stress, pacing, and pronunciation allowed some people on the show to be more effective speakers than others.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.3.2</td>
<td>LA.C.3.3.2 asks questions and makes comments and observations that reflect understanding and application of content, processes, and experiences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.3.2.a</td>
<td>LA.C.3.3.2.a reads a play from a different culture and then discusses with other students how conflicts in the play can be applied to real-life situations in his or her own culture.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.3.3</td>
<td>LA.C.3.3.3 speaks for various occasions, audiences, and purposes, including conversations, discussions, projects, and informational, persuasive, or technical presentations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.3.3.a</td>
<td>LA.C.3.3.3.a prepares and presents an oral summary of conclusions reached in a group activity on solving a current social or economic problem in the community. The summary identifies specific causes of the problem as well as proposed solutions, backed up with quantitative data.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## C. Listening, Viewing, and Speaking

3. The student uses speaking strategies effectively.

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<tr>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.C.3.4.1 uses volume, stress, pacing, enunciation, eye contact, and gestures that meet the needs of the audience and topic.</td>
<td>LA.C.3.4.1.a presents an impromptu speech to the class in which he or she uses volume, stress, pacing, enunciation, eye contact, and gestures effectively.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.4.2 selects and uses a variety of speaking strategies to clarify meaning and to reflect understanding, interpretation, application, and evaluation of content, processes, or experiences (including asking relevant questions when necessary, making appropriate and meaningful comments, and making insightful observations).</td>
<td>LA.C.3.4.2.a with a partner, creates a list of methods he or she could use to help explain a math problem to a foreign exchange student.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10</td>
</tr>
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</table>
3. The student uses speaking strategies effectively.

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<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.C.3.4.3 uses details, illustrations, analogies, and visual aids to make oral presentations that inform, persuade, or entertain.</td>
<td>LA.C.3.4.3.a presents a demonstration to the class in which he or she uses effective visual aids to clarify an unusual process.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 6, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.4.4 applies oral communication skills to interviews, group presentations, formal presentations, and impromptu situations.</td>
<td>LA.C.3.4.4.a works cooperatively in pairs to prepare a presentation, comparing differing responses to a meeting of the county commission concerning a local issue.</td>
<td>1, 2, 8, 9, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.C.3.4.5 develops and sustains a line of argument and provides appropriate support.</td>
<td>LA.C.3.4.5.a accurately uses quantitative data to persuade an audience to take action on an environmental or health issue.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## D. Language

1. The student understands the nature of language.

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<tr>
<td><strong>PreK-2</strong></td>
<td>LA.D.1.1.1</td>
<td>The student recognizes basic patterns in and functions of language (patterns such as characteristic sounds and rhythms and those found in written forms; functions such as asking questions, expressing oneself, describing objects or experience, and explaining).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.1.1.1.a</td>
<td>LA.D.1.1.1.a reads and writes from top to bottom and from left to right.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.1.1.1.b</td>
<td>LA.D.1.1.1.b writes sentences that ask questions and make statements.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.1.1.2</td>
<td>LA.D.1.1.2 recognizes the differences between language that is used at home and language that is used at school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.1.1.2.a</td>
<td>LA.D.1.1.2.a compares and explains how one talks to a friend and how one talks to a principal.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
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D. Language

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<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.D.1.2.1</td>
<td>Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>understands that there are patterns and rules in the syntactic structure, symbols, sounds, and meanings conveyed through the English language.</td>
<td>LA.D.1.2.1.a writes a personal narrative that illustrates that sentences contain a separate idea and that all sentences in the narrative are arranged in a specific order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.1.2.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>understands that language formality varies according to situations and audiences.</td>
<td>LA.D.1.2.2.a writes in a learning log or journal, using the appropriate level of formality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.1.2.2.b drafts an e-mail message to a teacher and to a classmate, using language appropriate for each audience and purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.1.2.2.c requests information from a local civic group, using appropriate level of formality.</td>
</tr>
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## D. Language

1. The student understands the nature of language.

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<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>LA.D.1.3.1 understands that there are patterns and rules in semantic structure, symbols, sounds, and meanings conveyed through the English language.</td>
<td>LA.D.1.3.1.a uses a basic foreign language textbook to compare some specific phonological, semantic, and syntactic features of English with those of the foreign language. LA.D.1.3.1.b discusses how specific aspects of the English language have evolved in recent history.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.1.3.2 demonstrates an awareness that language and literature are primary means by which culture is transmitted.</td>
<td>LA.D.1.3.2.a reads an English work by a non-American author and discusses with other students what the work reveals about the culture and time in which the work was written.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10</td>
</tr>
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## D. Language

1. The student understands the nature of language.

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<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.D.1.3.3 demonstrates an awareness of the difference between the use of English in formal and informal settings.</td>
<td>LA.D.1.3.3.a records in a journal the growth of a plant over a six-week period, writes a formal report based on the information, and uses appropriate formal displays, graphs, and charts.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.1.3.4 understands that languages change over time.</td>
<td>LA.D.1.3.4.a researches and reports on words in the English language that have changed or added a new meaning in the last ten years.</td>
<td>1, 2, 6</td>
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## D. Language

1. The student understands the nature of language.

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<td><strong>Grades 9-12</strong></td>
<td>LA.D.1.4.1</td>
<td>The student applies an understanding that language and literature are primary means by which culture is transmitted.</td>
<td>LA.D.1.4.1.a compares two different works from the same culture and time period and discusses with other students what the works reveal about the culture and time period in which they were written.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.1.4.2</td>
<td>The student makes appropriate adjustments in language use for social, academic, and life situations, demonstrating sensitivity to gender and cultural bias.</td>
<td>LA.D.1.4.2.a role plays a first meeting with other students or adults and then role plays a more formal interaction in a job interview. LA.D.1.4.2.b recognizes and appropriately uses denotation and connotation in literary, informational, or technical writing. LA.D.1.4.2.c rewrites the Declaration of Independence or Hamlet’s “To Be” soliloquy in colloquial language to demonstrate an understanding of the concepts and principles in the document.</td>
</tr>
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### D. Language

1. The student understands the nature of language.

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<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.D.1.4.3 understands that there are differences among various dialects of English.</td>
<td>LA.D.1.4.3.a reads literary works by authors from different regions of America and from different socioeconomic classes and discusses with other students the various dialects of English the authors use and why they are different.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 10</td>
</tr>
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2. The student understands the power of language.

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<tr>
<td>PreK-2</td>
<td>LA.D.2.1.1</td>
<td>The student understands that word choice can shape ideas, feelings, and actions.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.1.1.a describes an object such as an apple in two different ways—first, in a way that makes it sound appealing, then in a less appealing way—and then discusses how word choice can shape ideas and feelings about an object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.1.2</td>
<td>The student identifies and uses repetition, rhyme, and rhythm in oral and written text.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.1.2.a discusses an author’s use of rhyming words and repetition. LA.D.2.1.2.b sings counting songs and discusses how they assist in learning numbers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.1.3</td>
<td>The student recognizes that use of more than one medium increases the power to influence how one thinks and feels.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.1.3.a recognizes and explains the contribution that pictures make to stories read or heard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.1.4</td>
<td>The student knows the various types of mass media (including billboards, newspapers, radio, and television).</td>
<td>LA.D.2.1.4.a talks about the differences between an audio cassette message and a video cassette message.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### D. Language

2. The student understands the power of language.

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</table>
| Grades 3-5 | **LA.D.2.2.1**  
understands that word choices can shape reactions, perceptions, and beliefs. | **LA.D.2.2.1.a**  
considers an audience’s likely knowledge of a topic and provides helpful explanations and definitions. | 1, 2, 9 |
| | **LA.D.2.2.2**  
identifies and refers to symbol, theme, simile, alliteration, and assonance in oral and written texts. | **LA.D.2.2.2.a**  
identifies how common similes affect negative and positive perceptions about wildlife. | 1, 2, 4 |
| | **LA.D.2.2.3**  
recognizes different techniques used in media messages and their purposes. | **LA.D.2.2.3.a**  
compares and explains the use of text animation, text only, and text along with animation in presenting a “how-to” program with other students in a small group.  
**LA.D.2.2.3.b**  
views breakfast cereal commercials and identifies and discusses the use of media techniques such as animation, endorsement by popular personalities, and omission of information. | 1, 2, 4, 8, 9 |
2. The student understands the power of language.

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<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.D.2.2.4 selects and uses appropriate technologies to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of communication.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.2.4.a using several electronic sources, such as CD-ROM and the Internet, and designs a health pamphlet on avoiding winter colds.</td>
<td>1, 2, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LA.D.2.2.5 understands that a variety of messages can be conveyed through mass media. | LA.D.2.2.5.a distinguishes and explains fact from opinion in newspapers, magazines, and other print media. | 1, 2, 4 |
D. Language

2. The student understands the power of language.

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<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.1 selects language that shapes reactions, perceptions, and beliefs.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.1.a reads a variety of poetry and recognizes situations in which slang or colloquial language are used to shape the reader's reactions or perceptions. LA.D.2.3.1.b adjusts word choice and writing style to reflect appropriate use of slang or colloquial language.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.2 uses literary devices and techniques in the comprehension and creation of written, oral, and visual communications.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.2.a uses metaphors and analogies when writing essays to help convey his or her main points.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.3 distinguishes between emotional and logical argument.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.3.a analyzes commercials to determine if they are trying to appeal to people's emotions or reason, and discusses his or her conclusions with other students.</td>
<td>1, 4, 5, 8</td>
</tr>
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## D. Language

2. The student understands the power of language.

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<td><strong>Grades 6-8</strong></td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.4</td>
<td>The student understands how the multiple media tools of graphics, pictures, color, motion, and music can enhance communication in television, film, radio, and advertising.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.4.a with other students in a small group, produces a rap song, skit, or a video that showcases various aspects of a career. LA.D.2.3.4.b produces an advertisement using multimedia tools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.5</td>
<td>The student incorporates audiovisual aids in presentations.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.5.a uses videotapes as an aid in demonstrating how to systematically perform a task involving multiple steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.6</td>
<td>The student understands specific ways that mass media can potentially enhance or manipulate information.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.6.a describes the possible cause-and-effect relationships between mass media coverage and public opinion trends, using quantitative data to support his or her position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.7</td>
<td>The student understands that laws exist that govern what can and cannot be done with mass media.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.3.7.a identifies an example of the need for truth in advertising.</td>
</tr>
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## D. Language

2. The student understands the power of language.

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<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.1 understands specific ways in which language has shaped the reactions, perceptions, and beliefs of the local, national, and global communities.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.1.a analyses the last two State of the Union addresses and explains how analogies, imagery, and other comparisons provide insight into the speaker's motives and opinions.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.2 understands the subtleties of literary devices and techniques in the comprehension and creation of communication.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.2.a considers whether his or her own writing takes into account the interests and background knowledge of intended or potential readers and uses personal reflection and voice to connect with known audiences such as friends, parents, or teachers.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.3 recognizes production elements that contribute to the effectiveness of a specific medium.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.3.a uses and critically analyzes the effects of specific production elements on the advertising of products and then observes and reports these effects on different audiences, such as senior citizens and college-age people, or different cultural groups.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 7, 10</td>
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D. Language

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<td><strong>Grades 9-12</strong></td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.4 effectively integrates multimedia and technology into presentations.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.4.a uses multimedia technology to integrate pictures, text, and sound into a presentation about a topic of personal interest.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.5 critically analyzes specific elements of mass media with regard to the extent to which they enhance or manipulate information.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.5.a analyzes mass-media messages by identifying the persuasive technique being used and describing possible cause-and-effect relationships between mass media coverage and public opinion trends.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.6 understands that laws control the delivery and use of media to protect the rights of authors and the rights of media owners.</td>
<td>LA.D.2.4.6.a explains that people have legal ownership over what they create and that others must obtain permission before these creations can be used.</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
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</table>
E. Literature

1. The student understands the common features of a variety of literary forms.

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<td>Grades PreK-2</td>
<td>LA.E.1.1.1 knows the basic characteristics of fables, stories, and legends.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.1.1.a makes a chart that illustrates the similarities and differences between present-day stories and fables.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.1.1.2 identifies the story elements of setting, plot, character, problem, and solution/resolution.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.1.2.a describes or draws the character traits of the main character in the story. LA.E.1.1.2.b talks about the likenesses and differences in the problem and solution/resolution of two stories read aloud by the teacher or through a shared reading experience.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8</td>
</tr>
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</table>
E. Literature

1. The student understands the common features of a variety of literary forms.

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<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.E.1.2.1 identifies the distinguishing features among fiction, drama, and poetry and identifies the major characteristics of nonfiction.</td>
<td>Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student LA.E.1.2.1.a reads an age-appropriate novel and watches a movie that has been made from the novel, then compares the two forms and discusses how and why they differ.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.1.2.2 understands the development of plot and how conflicts are resolved in a story.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.2.2.a reads the beginning of a story in which the plot is developed and a conflict is introduced, then writes his or her own ending to the story in which the conflict is resolved.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.1.2.3 knows the similarities and differences among the characters, settings, and events presented in various texts.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.2.3.a selects characters from two different books and explains to the class ways in which these characters are similar to and different from one another.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**E. Literature**

1. The student understands the common features of a variety of literary forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.E.1.2.4 knows that the attitudes and values that exist in a time period affect the works that are written during that time period.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.2.4.a reads a story that was written in the 19th century about a particular place, then reads a modern story that takes place in the same area, and compares how the authors view this same area.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.1.2.5 identifies and uses literary terminology appropriate to the grade level, including symbol, theme, simile, alliteration, and assonance.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.2.5.a prepares a short presentation for the class in which he or she discusses how alliteration or assonance is used in a favorite poem.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 9</td>
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<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.E.1.3.1 identifies the defining characteristics of classic literature, such as timelessness, deals with universal themes and experiences, and communicates across cultures.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.3.1.a selects a favorite novel he or she has read and writes a short report describing why it may or may not become a “classic.”</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.1.3.2 recognizes complex elements of plot, including setting, character development, conflicts, and resolutions.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.3.2.a makes a short presentation to the class in which he or she identifies degrees of character development in a major and a minor character in a favorite work of fiction or drama</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.1.3.3 understands various elements of authors’ craft appropriate at this grade level, including word choice, symbolism, figurative language, mood, irony, foreshadowing, flashback, persuasion techniques, and point of view in both fiction and nonfiction.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.3.3.a compares and describes the use and effects of first- and third-person point of view used in two different stories. LA.E.1.3.3.b selects a work and identifies specific examples in which the author uses jargon, dialect, multiple meanings, invented words, concrete or abstract terms, or sensory or figurative language for effect.</td>
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Sunshine State Standards: Language Arts, 1996
### E. Literature

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<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.E.1.3.4 knows how mood or meaning is conveyed in poetry (e.g., word choice such as dialect, invented words, concrete or abstract terms, sensory or figurative language; use of sentence structure, line length, punctuation, and rhythm).</td>
<td>LA.E.1.3.4.a with a partner, reads two poems written by poets from two different cultures, and discusses the different ways in which they create mood or meaning in their poetry.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.1.3.5 identifies common themes in literature.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.3.5.a keeps a journal of themes that he or she recognizes in the fiction, poetry, and drama that he or she reads, then creates a graph, pie chart, or other mathematical representation to illustrate which themes seem to recur most often.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 6</td>
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## E. Literature

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<tr>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.E.1.4.1 identifies the characteristics that distinguish literary forms.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.4.1.a with others in a small group, creates a chart of characteristics that distinguish various forms of fiction.</td>
<td>1, 2, 5, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.1.4.2 understands why certain literary works are considered classics.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.4.2.a writes a persuasive essay explaining why a selected literary work should be considered a classic.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.1.4.3 identifies universal themes prevalent in the literature of all cultures.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.4.3.a selects a universal theme and then conducts a search for examples of fiction, poetry, and drama from various cultures that focus on this theme.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 6, 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.E.1.4.4 understands the characteristics of major types of drama.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.4.4.a after studying a variety of types of drama, categorizes a list of familiar plays according to their characteristics.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.1.4.5 understands the different stylistic, thematic, and technical qualities present in the literature of different cultures and historical periods.</td>
<td>LA.E.1.4.5.a writes a paper in which he or she compares a novel written in the 19th century with a modern novel, in terms of stylistic and technical qualities.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
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</table>
### E. Literature

2. The student responds critically to fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Grades PreK-2</strong></td>
<td><strong>LA.E.2.1.1</strong> uses personal perspective in responding to a work of literature, such as relating characters and simple events in a story or biography to people or events in his or her own life.</td>
<td><strong>LA.E.2.1.1.a</strong> after listening to a story, tells others in the class ways in which a character or event in the story reminds him or her of a person or event in his or her own life.</td>
<td><strong>1, 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>LA.E.2.1.2</strong> recognizes rhymes, rhythm, and patterned structures in children’s texts.</td>
<td><strong>LA.E.2.1.2.a</strong> tells how the use of rhyme helps him or her anticipate the word choice and story structure in a poem.</td>
<td><strong>1, 2, 4</strong></td>
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<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.E.2.2.1 recognizes cause-and-effect relationships in literary texts.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.2.1.a reads a story and then writes a paragraph describing how the actions of a character in the story led to specific consequences.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.2.2 recognizes and explains the effects of language, such as sensory words, rhymes, and choice of vocabulary and story structure, such as patterns, used in children’s texts.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.2.2.a reads a variety of poems by poets of different cultures, then selects his or her favorite poem from those read and explains to other students how the language used in the poem affected him or her.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 9, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.2.3 responds to a work of literature by explaining how the motives of the characters or the causes of events compare with those in his or her own life.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.2.3.a selects a character from a work of literature and writes a simple comparison of how this character’s motives are like and unlike this or her own motives for doing certain things or making certain decisions.</td>
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<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>LA.E.2.2.4 identifies the major theme in a story or nonfiction text.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.2.4.a after reading a short story or nonfiction text, writes a paragraph describing what he or she feels is the major theme and why.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.2.5 forms his or her own ideas about what has been read in a literary text and uses specific information from the text to support these ideas.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.2.5.a selects a character from a play read, makes a statement about this character, then refers to specific sections of text that support this statement.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
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<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.1 understands how character and plot development, point of view, and tone are used in various selections to support a central conflict or story line.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.1.a selects what he or she thinks is the central conflict in a literary passage and writes an essay that uses character and plot development, point of view, and tone to support his or her selection.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.2 responds to a work of literature by interpreting selected phrases, sentences, or passages and applying the information to personal life.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.2.a selects a key passage that clearly reflects what he or she thinks is the work's most compelling theme and explains his or her views in an essay.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.3 knows that a literary text may elicit a wide variety of valid responses.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.3.a reads a short story and writes a personal response, then compares this response with that of a partner and discusses why their responses differ in some ways.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.4 knows ways in which literature reflects the diverse voices of people from various backgrounds.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.4.a reads works by authors from a variety of ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds and discusses with other students the similarities and differences among the authors' voices.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10</td>
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<td>Grades 6-8</td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.5 recognizes different approaches that can be applied to the study of literature, including thematic approaches such as change, personal approaches such as what an individual brings to his or her study of literature, and historical approaches such as how a piece of literature reflects the time period in which it was written.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.5.a analyzes how writers of different cultural backgrounds address the theme of “change.”</td>
<td>1, 4, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.6 identifies specific questions of personal importance and seeks to answer them through literature.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.6.a reads works about topics of personal interest and keeps a reading journal in which he or she reflects on how the works relate to questions of personal importance.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.7 identifies specific interests and the literature that will satisfy those interests.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.7.a forms a book club with other students who share a particular interest.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.8 knows how a literary selection can expand or enrich personal viewpoints or experiences.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.3.8.a chooses an issue of personal interest about which he or she has strong views and reads literature that adheres to the opposite point of view in order to expand his or her understanding of the issue. The student keeps a record of his or her thoughts in a reading journal.</td>
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<td>Grades 9-12</td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.1 analyzes the effectiveness of complex elements of plot, such as setting, major events, problems, conflicts, and resolutions.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.1.a writes an essay that analyzes how effectively an author uses complex elements of plot and draws conclusions as to the author’s strengths and weaknesses.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.2 understands the relationships between and among elements of literature, including characters, plot, setting, tone, point of view, and theme.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.2.a creates a matrix analyzing the way in which the characters in a literary work are influenced by the setting in which they live.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.3 analyzes poetry for the ways in which poets inspire the reader to share emotions, such as the use of imagery, personification, and figures of speech, including simile and metaphor; and the use of sound, such as rhyme, rhythm, repetition, and alliteration.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.3.a participates in a group presentation in which each member of the group discusses a different aspect of the same poem (for example, one person discusses rhythm and rhyme and another discusses figurative language).</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.4 understands the use of images and sounds to elicit the reader’s emotions in both fiction and nonfiction.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.4.a reads poems out loud to himself or herself, selects a passage that he or she finds particularly compelling, and writes an essay that explains how the poet uses sounds and images in the passage.</td>
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<td>The student</td>
<td>Achievement of the benchmarks may be demonstrated when the student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA.E.2.4.5</td>
<td>analyzes the relationships among author’s style, literary form, and intended impact on the reader.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.5.a rewrites a short story as a one-act play and reflects on the ways in which the content of the story changed when translated into a play.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA.E.2.4.6</td>
<td>recognizes and explains those elements in texts that prompt a personal response, such as connections between one’s own life and the characters, events, motives, and causes of conflict in texts.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.6.a keeps a reading journal in which he or she reflects on the connections between his or her own life and the characters, events, motives, and causes of conflict in a text.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA.E.2.4.7</td>
<td>examines a literary selection from several critical perspectives.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.7.a participates in a class project in which small groups of students research how a text is viewed according to a certain perspective (such as, feminist, historical, psychoanalytical, and various cultural perspectives) and present their perspectives to the class.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA.E.2.4.8</td>
<td>knows that people respond differently to texts based on their background knowledge, purpose, and point of view.</td>
<td>LA.E.2.4.8.a selects a work that people have read for generations and researches the different ways that people have interpreted it and responded to it over the years.</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Unique Perspective of Language Arts

Language arts form the cornerstone of all learning. The strands of language arts—reading; writing; listening, viewing, and speaking; language; and literature—are not only means of communication, they are our primary instruments of thought, the defining features of our culture and unmistakable marks of our personal identities. Literacy and language learning begin at birth and continue as children are immersed in various aspects of the language arts at home and in the community. Students arrive in our PreK classrooms with a varied knowledge base, and an effective PreK-12 language arts program builds on this initial knowledge. For each child, reading, writing, listening, viewing, speaking, language development, and literature study are purposeful, integrated experiences in which students develop a variety of strategies, behaviors, and attitudes in order to fulfill their educational and individual goals. This chapter describes the kinds of learning and teaching that promote thoughtful,
creative, and responsible citizens able to communicate effectively in their local, state, and global communities.

**New Approaches to Teaching and Learning**

Florida’s education reform initiative calls on educators to redesign their instructional programs so that every student achieves high academic standards. This redesign may include the structure and context of the learning environment and the use of materials, equipment, and resources. School and district leaders must encourage change and look for creative approaches to teaching and learning. Sequencing of courses may be altered; language arts instruction may be integrated with other areas of the curriculum; schools and communities may form partnerships; classrooms may be modified to include community settings, museums, nature centers, and other cultural institutions; and electronic networks may link students and teachers across America and to other countries.

Learning theories and instructional practices can inform these new approaches. A tremendous amount of research is available to educators on how children learn and on how to design effective learning environments. This chapter highlights key elements that can help educators, through further investigation, collaborative consideration, implementation, and evaluation, to develop the best learning environments for their unique students.

**Developing a Learning-Centered, Authentic Environment**

Attempts to improve language arts teaching must be based on an understanding of how students learn. Learning is a natural process of discovering and constructing meaning from information and experience, filtered through the learner’s unique perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. The learner grapples with new knowledge until it makes sense and fits into his or her world of understanding.

Based on this knowledge of the learning process, educators are encouraged to design language arts curricula that allow students to encounter ideas, events, and materials in real-world contexts. Children learn most effectively when actively involved in a subject rather than just hearing or reading about it. Classrooms that are limited to the exclusive use of textbooks, lectures, and paper-and-pencil tasks do not tend to be as successful as those that actively engage students in the learning process. Curiosity,
creativity, and higher order thinking are stimulated when experiences are based on real, complex, and relevant ideas and materials. This immersion in direct experience should be balanced with opportunities for learners to reflect, discuss, and connect concepts with what they have felt, thought, and learned.

Identifying students’ interests and questions also helps engage students in the learning process by stimulating the natural curiosity that students bring to school. Children learn best when called upon to make choices and assume more responsibility for their own learning, while the teacher provides support and guidance.

Some of the most efficient learning occurs when students are collaborating with each other in pairs or small groups. Providing students with the opportunity to interact with others in a variety of settings can enhance knowledge and understanding. Feedback from fellow students can help students clarify areas of understanding as well as misconceptions and questions. Collaborative work can also encourage students to take intellectual risks. Students might pose their own problems, devise their own approaches to problem solving, clarify and defend their conclusions, explore possibilities, and use the results to make informed decisions. Students learn the valuable skill of working effectively with others to solve problems and perform investigations, a skill that will be useful in the workplace and in many other areas of their lives.

**Providing a Supportive Environment**

The teacher is key to creating a supportive, effective learning environment. Teachers provide this kind of environment when they maintain fair, consistent, and caring policies that respect the individuality of students and focus on individual achievement and cooperative teamwork. Students’ learning is enhanced when others see their potential, genuinely appreciate their unique talents, and accept them as individuals. In such an environment, students can learn the skills of being responsible for themselves, making decisions, working cooperatively, negotiating
conflicts, and taking risks; students also have more freedom to do quality work on their own initiative. In addition, a teacher who creates a supportive environment for students can reduce the negative effect of factors that can interfere with learning, such as low self-esteem; lack of self-control; lack of personal goals; expectations of failure or limited success; and feelings of anxiety, insecurity, or pressure. A supportive learning environment and a variety of teaching strategies that promote exploration, discussion, and collaborative learning will help ensure that all children have the opportunity to see themselves as capable students, successful in learning language arts.

**Instructional Strategies for the 21st Century**

In each language arts classroom, there is a diverse pool of talent and potential. The challenge is to structure the learning environment so that each student has the freedom to use his or her unique strengths to learn or perform, yet be urged, inspired, and motivated to reach high academic standards. Because all children do not learn in the same way and have varying backgrounds and experiences, flexible and innovative approaches are needed.

To support innovative language arts classrooms, the instructional strategies on the following pages are provided as examples of the many kinds of strategies that educators might use as they work toward providing the most useful and engaging educational experiences possible. After further investigation, teachers may use these and other instructional strategies for independent or group work. They can creatively adapt and refine them to best fit the needs of the students and the instructional plan, perhaps incorporating several of these strategies into a single lesson or using them in collaboration with a colleague.
COOPERATIVE LEARNING: A strategy in which students work together in small groups to achieve a common goal. Cooperative learning involves more than simply putting students into work or study groups. Teachers promote individual responsibility and positive group interdependence by making sure that each group member is responsible for a given task. Cooperative learning can be enhanced when group members have diverse abilities and backgrounds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW DO YOU USE IT?</th>
<th>WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| After organizing students into groups, the teacher thoroughly explains a task to be accomplished within a time frame. The teacher facilitates the selection of individual roles within the group and monitors the groups, intervening only when necessary, to support students working together successfully and accomplishing the task. | • fosters interdependence and pursuit of mutual goals and rewards  
• develops communication and leadership skills  
• increases the participation of shy students  
• produces higher levels of student achievement, thus increasing self-esteem  
• fosters respect for diverse abilities and perspectives |

There are numerous cooperative learning strategies that educators can use to enhance student learning. Four of these strategies are offered on the next two pages: Jigsawing; Corners; Think, Pair, and Share; and Debate.
Cooperative Learning Strategies

JIGSAWING

**What is it?** A cooperative learning strategy in which everyone becomes an “expert” and shares his or her learning so that eventually all group members know the content.

**How do you use it?**
The teacher divides students into groups; each group member is assigned a numbered section or a part of the material being studied. Each student meets with the students from other groups who have the same number. This new group learns together, develops expertise on their material, and then plans how to teach the material to members of their original groups. Students return to their original groups and teach their area of expertise to the other group members.

**What are the benefits?**
- builds depth of knowledge
- discloses a student’s own understanding and resolves misunderstanding
- builds on conceptual understanding
- develops teamwork and cooperative working skills

CORNERS

**What is it?** A cooperative learning strategy, similar to jigsawing, for learning about a topic and sharing that learning.

**How do you use it?**
The teacher assigns small groups of students to different corners of the room to examine a particular topic. They discuss various points of view concerning the topic. Corner teams discuss conclusions, determine the best way to present their findings to the class, and practice their presentation.

**What are the benefits?**
- elicits diverse points of view
- develops communication skills, especially listening and taking turns
- allows opportunities for shy students to function positively in small groups
Cooperative Learning Strategies (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How Do You Use It?</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **What Are the Benefits?** | • helps develop conceptual understanding of a topic  
• develops the ability to filter information and draw one's own conclusions  
• develops the ability to consider other points of view |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How Do You Use It?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **What Are the Benefits?** | • develops the ability to organize information  
• develops the ability to filter ideas and draw conclusions  
• provides opportunities for students to practice articulating their own ideas and building persuasive arguments |
**BRAINSTORMING:** A strategy for eliciting ideas from a group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How do you use it?</strong></th>
<th><strong>What are the benefits?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students contribute ideas related to a topic. All contributions are accepted without initial comment. After the list of ideas is finalized, students categorize, prioritize, and defend selections. | - reveals background information and knowledge of a topic  
- discloses misconceptions  
- helps students relate existing knowledge to content  
- strengthens listening skills  
- stimulates creative thinking |

**FIELD EXPERIENCE:** A planned learning experience for students to observe, study, and participate in a setting off the school grounds, using the community as a laboratory.

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>How do you use it?</strong></th>
<th><strong>What are the benefits?</strong></th>
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</table>
| Teachers and students plan and structure the experience before the visit and engage in follow-up activities after the trip. | - develops organizational and planning skills  
- develops observational skills  
- gives students an authentic educational experience |

**FREE WRITING:** A strategy for encouraging students to express ideas in writing.

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<th><strong>How do you use it?</strong></th>
<th><strong>What are the benefits?</strong></th>
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| After reflecting on a topic, students respond in writing for a brief time to a prompt, a quote, or a question. | - develops the ability to link previous knowledge and experience to a topic  
- develops creative and critical thinking skills  
- provides opportunities to express and share ideas in written form  
- encourages students to value the written word |
K-W-L (Know-Want to Know-Learned): An introductory strategy that provides a structure for recalling what students know regarding a topic, noting what students want to know, and finally listing what has been learned and is yet to be learned.

**How do you use it?**

Before engaging in an activity, reading a chapter, listening to a lecture, or watching a film or presentation, the teacher lists on the board under the heading “What We Know” all the information students know or think they know about a topic. Then, the teacher lists all the information the students want to know about a topic under “What We Want to Know.”

While engaging in the planned activity, the students research and read about the topic, keeping in mind the information they had listed under “What We Want to Know.”

After completing the activity, the students confirm the accuracy of what was listed and identify what they learned, contrasting it with what they wanted to know. The teacher lists what the students learned under “What We Learned.”

**What are the benefits?**

- builds on prior knowledge
- develops predicting skills
- provides a structure for learning
- develops research skills
- develops communication skills in cooperative groups
- strengthens teamwork skills

LEARNING LOG: A strategy to develop structured writing; an excellent follow-up to K-W-L.

**How do you use it?**

During different stages of the learning process, students respond in written form under three columns:

- “What I Think”
- “What I Learned”
- “How My Thinking Has Changed”

**What are the benefits?**

- bridges the gap between prior knowledge and new content
- provides a structure for translating concepts into written form
GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS: A strategy in which teachers and students transfer abstract concepts and processes into visual representations.

**How do you use it?**
The teacher provides a specific format for learning, recalling, and organizing.

**What are the benefits?**
- helps students visualize abstract concepts
- helps learners organize ideas
- provides a visual format for study

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### Graphic Organizer Strategies

#### Consequence Diagram/Decision Trees

**What is it?** A graphic organizer strategy in which students use diagrams or decision trees to illustrate real or possible outcomes of different actions.

**How do you use it?**
Students visually depict outcomes for a given problem by charting various decisions and their possible consequences.

**What are the benefits?**
- helps in transferring learning to application
- aids in predicting with accuracy
- develops the ability to identify the causes and effects of decisions

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![Decision Tree Diagram](image-url)
Graphic Organizer Strategies (continued)

**FLOWCHART**

**What is it?** A graphic organizer strategy used to depict a sequence of events, actions, roles, or decisions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you use it?</th>
<th>What are the benefits?</th>
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</table>
| Students structure a sequential flow of events, actions, roles, or decisions graphically on paper. | • fosters logical and sequential thinking  
• focuses on connections  
• develops the ability to identify details and specific points  
• develops organizational skills  
• aids in planning  
• provides an outline for writing |

![Flowchart diagram](image-url)
**VENN DIAGRAM**

**WHAT IS IT?** A graphic organizer strategy, derived from mathematics, for creating a visual analysis of information representing the similarities and differences among, for example, concepts, objects, events, and people.

**HOW DO YOU USE IT?**
Using two overlapping circles, students list unique characteristics of two items or concepts (one in the left part of the circle and one in the right); in the middle they list shared characteristics. More than two circles can be used for a more complex process.

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?**
- helps students organize knowledge and ideas
- helps students develop a plan for writing
- helps students compare and contrast
- develops the ability to draw conclusions and synthesize
- stimulates higher cognitive thinking skills
Graphic Organizer Strategies (continued)

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>WEBBING</strong></th>
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<td><strong>What is it?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How do you use it?</strong></td>
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| **What are the benefits?** | • provides opportunities for the visual learner to “recall” the connections for later use  
• helps students use and share their prior knowledge  
• helps students identify patterns of information |

[Diagram of a web-like structure with "Topic" at the center, branching out to various interconnected words or phrases.]
Graphic Organizer Strategies (continued)

**CONCEPT MAPPING**

**WHAT IS IT?** A graphic organizer strategy that shows the relationships among concepts. Usually the concepts are circled and the relationships are shown by connecting lines with short explanations.

**HOW DO YOU USE IT?**

The teacher selects a main idea. Then the teacher and students identify a set of concepts associated with a main idea. Concepts are ranked in related groups from most general to most specific. Related concepts are connected and the links labeled with verbs or short phrases.

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?**

- helps students visualize how ideas are connected and how knowledge is organized
- improves comprehension and problem-solving skills
**INTERVIEWS:** A strategy for gathering information and reporting.

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<th>How do you use it?</th>
<th>What are the benefits?</th>
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| Students prepare a set of questions and a format for the interview. After conducting the interview, students present their findings to the class. | • fosters connections between ideas  
• develops the ability to interpret answers  
• develops organizational and planning skills  
• develops problem-solving skills |

**CLOZE:** An open-ended strategy in which a selected word or phrase is eliminated from a sentence or paragraph.

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<th>How do you use it?</th>
<th>What are the benefits?</th>
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| The teacher eliminates a word or phrase from the sentence. Students complete the sentence with a word that “makes sense.” The teacher may select random words or a specific part of speech. This can be expanded to the more difficult task of finding a word that makes sense when only the initial letter of the word is provided. | • provides opportunities for creativity  
• develops the use of precise vocabulary  
• focuses on the use of precise and correct grammar  
• increases comprehension skills |

**READ AND RETELL:** An all-purpose strategy that involves students retelling a passage as they remember it.

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<th>What are the benefits?</th>
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</table>
| The teacher asks the students to read a passage. Students can be working together as a class, in small groups, or in pairs, or working alone with the teacher. Then the teacher asks the students to retell the passage as they remember it, either orally or in writing. | • provides practice in a range of literacy skills including reading, writing, listening, speaking, thinking, interacting, comparing, matching, selecting, remembering, comprehending, and organizing the information  
• provides an index of growth and development in a wide range of literacy learning |
**LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH:** An approach in which students orally describe an experience in their own words as the teacher records their story. The story serves as the basis for follow-up activities.

**How do you use it?**
The teacher plans a shared experience for the class. Afterwards, the teacher or a designated student elicits language from the students that describes their experience and writes down what they say. Together they read the story aloud. Using the story as a basis, the students can then engage in various activities, both oral and written.

**What are the benefits?**
- engages students’ interest and active participation
- gives a real-world experience in using the language
- develops the ability to share ideas, thoughts, and feelings

**DIALOGUE JOURNALS:** A strategy in which students use journals as a way to hold private conversations with the teacher. Dialogue journals are a vehicle for sharing ideas and receiving feedback through writing. This dialogue can be conducted by e-mail where it is available.

**How do you use it?**
Students write on topics on a regular basis, and the teacher responds with advice, comments, and observations in a written conversation. For example, students might respond to the conflict and its resolution in a novel or biography. Younger children can begin by writing a few words and combining them with pictures.

**What are the benefits?**
- develops communication and writing skills
- creates a positive relationship between the teacher and the student
- increases student interest and participation
- allows the student to direct his or her own learning
**CONTINUUMS:** A strategy used to indicate the relationships among words or phrases.

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| Using a selected topic, students place words or phrases on the continuum to indicate a relationship of degree, for example, *wee, tiny, little, small, large, huge, enormous, and gigantic.* | • acknowledges that others have different perspectives depending on their knowledge and experience regarding the topic  
• develops the ability to use precise vocabulary  
• develops critical thinking skills |

**MINI-MUSEUMS:** A strategy for creating a focused exhibit.

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<th><strong>How do you use it?</strong></th>
<th><strong>What are the benefits?</strong></th>
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| Students work in groups to create exhibits that represent, for example, a setting of a novel. | • develops critical thinking skills  
• develops the ability to select important high points  
• encourages creativity and individuality  
• deepens knowledge of a subject |

**MODELS:** A simplified representation of a concept. It may be concrete, such as a map of Huckleberry Finn’s travels and important places he visited along the Mississippi River, or abstract like a model of the relationships between characters in a mystery story.

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<th><strong>What are the benefits?</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Students create a concrete product that represents an abstract idea or a simplified representation of an abstract idea.</td>
<td>• facilitates understanding of conceptual ideas</td>
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THE LEARNING CYCLE: A sequence of lessons designed to have students engage in exploratory investigations, construct meaning out of their findings, propose tentative explanations and solutions, and relate concepts to their own lives.

**How do you use it?**
The teacher engages the learners with an event or question to draw their interest, evoke what they know, and connect that with new ideas. The students explore the concept, behavior, or skill with hands-on experience. They explain the concept, behavior, or skill and define the terms, then use the terms to explain their exploration. Through discussion, the students expand the concept or behavior by applying it to other situations.

**What are the benefits?**
- encourages students to construct their own understanding of concepts
- provides hands-on experiences to explore concepts, behaviors, and skills
- develops the ability to share ideas, thoughts, and feelings

REFLECTIVE THINKING: A strategy in which students reflect on what was learned after a lesson is finished, usually by writing about what was learned.

**How do you use it?**
Two possible approaches to reflective thinking are (1) students can write in a journal the concept learned, comments on the learning process, questions or unclear areas, and interest in further exploration, all in the students’ own words; (2) students can fill out a questionnaire addressing such questions as Why did you study this? Can you relate it to real life?

**What are the benefits?**
- helps students assimilate what they have learned
- helps students connect concepts to make ideas more meaningful
**PROBLEM SOLVING**: A learning strategy in which students apply knowledge to solve problems.

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| The students discover a problem; problems can be constructed by the teacher or can be real-world problems suggested by the students. The students define the problem, ask a question about the problem, then define the characteristics of possible solutions, which they research. They choose a promising solution that best fits the criteria stated in the definition of solutions, then test the solution. Finally, they determine if the problem has been solved. | • allows students to discover relationships that may be completely new to them  
• adapts easily for all grade levels and special-needs students  
• develops the ability to construct new ideas and concepts from previously learned information, skills, and strategies |

**PREDICT, OBSERVE, EXPLAIN**: A strategy in which the teacher shows the class a situation and asks students to predict what will happen when a change is made.

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| The teacher shows students a situation and asks them to predict what will happen when some change is made. Students observe what happens when the change is made. The class then discusses the differences between their predictions and the results. | • encourages higher level thinking  
• develops the ability to draw conclusions and synthesize |
LITERATURE, HISTORY, AND STORYTELLING: A strategy in which history is brought to life through the eyes of a historian, storyteller, or author, revealing the social context of a particular period in history.

**How do you use it?**

The teacher locates books, brochures, and tapes relevant to a specific period in history with the help of the media specialist. People in the local community may be able to contribute some relevant information or materials. The teacher assigns students to prepare reports on the “life and times” of famous people during specific periods of history that are important to the subject being studied. Another strategy is to ask students to write about their own observations and insights after the writing lesson is over.

**What are the benefits?**

- personalizes language arts learning
- allows students to connect literature to its social and historical context
Infusing a Multicultural Perspective

Florida students appreciate their own culture and the culture of others, understand the concerns and perspectives of members of other ethnic groups, reject the stereotyping of themselves and others, and seek out and utilize the views of persons from diverse ethnic, social, and educational backgrounds.

Florida’s System of School Improvement and Accountability, Goal 3, Standard 10

Ethnic and cultural diversity enrich the American society and provide a basis for societal cohesiveness and survival. An effective program of multicultural education integrates a sensitive and thorough study of ethnic and cultural content into the curriculum. A carefully designed and continuous curriculum (preschool through 12th grade) can create the multicultural literacy so necessary for a healthy nation. Each cultural group has its own set of values and perspectives. Many of these values are shared with other cultures and form the basis of American national unity. Each cultural group has also made its own unique contribution to the American society and to the world. Because it is essential that all members of our society develop an understanding of the values and perspectives of racial, ethnic, and cultural groups, schools are restructuring their curricula to infuse multicultural perspectives into everyday instruction.

The presence of students with different cultural and family backgrounds, interests, and values in the same class encourages all students to develop a multicultural perspective. Learning settings that respect diversity encourage social competence and moral development. Students learn what they live. They learn to respect individual differences by understanding how others think and feel. Activities that promote empathy, understanding, and respect for differing points of view promote a multicultural perspective without negating one’s own point of view. Students learn to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspective of diverse ethnic and cultural groups. Because the classroom is a model community, students gain the experience of living as responsible citizens in a diverse, democratic society.

Each student brings a wealth of culture that can be recognized, appreciated, and included as part of the instructional content. Teachers can focus on fostering understanding, appreciation, and respect for people of other cultural, language, socioeconomic, religious, or ethnic backgrounds, using the strengths and backgrounds of their own students to enhance the school experience for all. Teachers
can design learning activities that prepare students to communicate and work with others, achieving common goals in a culturally diverse environment. Schools can restructure their curricula to ensure that all students, regardless of background or ethnicity, will achieve high academic standards and be able to function successfully in the workplace. The final goal will be for students to have the cultural knowledge, positive attitudes, and motivation that will allow them to participate in a global community in which every person is respected, appreciated, and honored.

**Snapshot of an Effective Language Arts Classroom**

The following vignette is offered as an example of integrated, real-world educational experiences that teachers might create for students, using a variety of instructional strategies.

Mrs. Miller’s third-grade class is studying a unit on insects. Sally is showing the class a cocoon she found in her backyard and Tyler is showing the class part of a beehive he found. The students crowd around to see and touch them. Mrs. Miller asks, “What do you think is inside the cocoon?” Sally says, “It might be a butterfly.” Mrs. Miller asks the whole class, “What do you know about butterflies?” As the students answer the question, Mrs. Miller writes what they say on the blackboard, accepting all answers without commenting on their correctness. Then Mrs. Miller asks the class, “What do you want to know about butterflies?” Maya, a new student from South America, says that she knows there is a butterfly that travels from her country to the United States, and she wants to know what kind it is. Seth says, “I want to find out exactly when and where Maya’s butterfly goes.” Sally wants to know how long butterflies stay in cocoons. Suzi looks at a poster of butterflies on the wall, she tells Mrs. Miller that she wants to find out why there are so many colors in butterfly wings. Hands fly up as the class gets more and more excited about what they want to learn about butterflies, and Mrs. Miller writes all their questions on the blackboard.

Mrs. Miller repeats this same discussion about bees, listing what the students know and want to know on the blackboard. For example, they know a hive is where a colony of bees lives, and they want to know what different shapes of hives there are, how the bees build them, and what they look like inside. Then Mrs. Miller divides the students into two groups, according to their interests; one group will research butterflies and the other group will research bees. Mrs. Miller pairs Maya with Seth so they can find out together about the South American butterfly’s migration and so that Seth can help Maya with her reading. She pairs Ben, a more advanced reader, with Tyler, who struggles with reading. The students meet with their groups, divide the
learning tasks, and excitedly begin their research, using the classroom’s ample resource material to pursue their questions. Some students choose books; others use the computer’s encyclopedia, search the Internet, or watch videos.

The next day, Mrs. Miller draws a Venn diagram on the blackboard and leads a class discussion about the similarities and differences between bees and butterflies. Then she asks the students to write a brief report on what they have learned.

In this example, the teacher uses authentic, real-world learning experiences and builds on the students’ high degree of curiosity to create a rich learning experience. Using the K-W-L strategy, she reveals the students’ prior knowledge and focuses the students’ interests to create a cooperative learning project. The teacher also pairs up students to support the learning process and uses Maya’s unique background knowledge to enrich the experience for all. The Venn diagram and the written report provide effective instructional strategies that support students in synthesizing and integrating what they have learned.

Teaching Diverse Students

Schools must accommodate a diversity of student abilities, disabilities, interests, cultural backgrounds, and other factors that affect student performance in school. It is important for all educators to be aware of the characteristics of their students and vary their teaching strategies to meet students’ individual needs. Many instructional strategies that have been developed and used by teachers for interacting with students with special needs have proven effective for other students as well.

Increasing ethnic and cultural diversity promises to continue enriching life in the United States. This has important implications for education. As diversity in the school population grows, it becomes more and more evident that all students, regardless of their race, ethnicity, culture, and class, must acquire the knowledge and competencies necessary for functioning effectively with one another. All students must develop the knowledge and competencies necessary to participate successfully in their communities, in the workplace, and in society.
Adapting Instruction for the Diverse Needs of Learners

Given the focus on creating learning-centered classrooms, the unique characteristics of individual learners must guide curriculum planning and affect both the learning environment and the teacher's role in facilitating the learning process. As curricula and learning environments are redesigned, and as teachers plan and teach, it is important to keep in mind that learners

- come to the educational setting with unique knowledge, experiences, and explanations about the world;
- come from many cultures and backgrounds;
- have diverse needs and values;
- actively participate in learning;
- have a variety of interests; and
- have a variety of opinions and ideas about school, language arts, and the world.

Creating an effective learning environment that can address these diverse needs, backgrounds, and learning styles starts with understanding those needs.

Adapting Instruction for Developmental Differences

Children learn best when material is appropriate to their developmental level and challenges their intellectual, emotional, physical, and social development. Children grow through a series of definable, though not rigid, stages. Schools should demonstrate awareness and understanding of the developmental differences among all children, including those children with special emotional, physical, or intellectual challenges as well as those with special abilities. Exploring the developmental differences of children in-depth is beyond the scope of this framework. Much research is available in this broad area.

Adapting Instruction for the Individual Learning Process

Children naturally develop unique capabilities and talents. They acquire preferences for how they learn and the pace at which they learn. There are many forms of intelligence and many ways by which people know, understand, and learn about the world.
Seven types of intelligences have been identified by Howard Gardner (1985):

- verbal/linguistic,
- logical/mathematical,
- visual/spatial,
- body/kinesthetic,
- musical/rhythmic,
- interpersonal (dealing with other people), and
- intrapersonal (knowing oneself).

Each student has a dominant learning style that consists of a unique combination of these intelligences. It is important for teachers to understand the learning styles of their students so that they can structure their teaching in a way that incorporates these seven ways of knowing. The language arts program that matches teaching to learning styles allows students to process material more efficiently, thereby reaching all students and providing the opportunity for deeper and more thorough learning.

There are many other strategies for adapting instruction and the learning environment for students with different needs. One strategy might be to challenge students with open-ended problems to which they can respond on a variety of levels. By encouraging students to explore on their own and by frequently reinforcing their discoveries, teachers can enhance learning. Some students may need additional opportunities to practice previously mastered information. Instruction might take place in the form of individual activities, group activities, games, class discussions, or projects involving multiple skills. It may also be advantageous to vary class grouping to accommodate different tasks or learning styles.

However, adapting instruction for the individual needs of students does not mean lowering expectations or having different academic criteria. The teacher’s high expectations for academic success play an influential role in the way other students accept a student who has unique needs. This, in turn, can have an impact on a child’s self-image, affecting his or her eagerness and ability to learn.

**Accommodating Students with Disabilities**

Teachers who believe that all students can learn create a supportive learning environment for students with disabilities. In addition, modifications in
assignments, courses, instructional methods, instructional materials and resources, and assessment methods can help enhance the learning experience for these students. Course modifications may be made to basic or vocational education courses in the regular classroom or in the exceptional student education classroom; these modifications are described in the State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.0312, FAC. Educators may modify a course by increasing or decreasing instructional time, that is, adjusting the time allotted for completing an assignment or a course or adjusting the length of class assignments. The format of the instruction can also be adapted or changed. This might include the use of hands-on materials, audio-visual media, instructional technology (including computers), and the use of specially designed materials such as Parallel Alternative Strategies for Students (1992-1995), developed for Florida schools.

Quite often modifications that are effective for students with disabilities work well for other students in the class. Specially designed teaching strategies can be easily integrated into the classroom to enhance the content being presented, to assist with assignments, and to organize the content being learned. Testing modifications, such as flexible scheduling, recorded answers, use of mechanical aids, or revised formatting, are helpful for all students.

Accommodating the needs of students with disabilities may include many other modifications. For example, there are students who need special communication systems in order to participate in classes. Students with hearing impairments may need the assistance of an interpreter or note-taker, or both. Computerized devices can help students with disabilities perform written and oral communication. Students with visual disabilities may require access to Braille and other adaptive technology.

When the needs of learners with disabilities are accommodated by modifying instructional methods, assessment methods, and the physical environment and by providing a supportive environment, such students are able to excel. They can develop a greater capacity to take an active role in the learning process and focus on their strengths, which helps them achieve a higher level of knowledge, skills, and competencies in the language arts.
Accommodating Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students

Limited English Proficient (LEP) students are similar in most ways to students whose heritage language is English: They learn at different rates, have various interests and characteristics and different personalities, and bring vast differences in background knowledge and experiences to the learning situation. All are unique. However, language and culture add other dimensions to their uniqueness.

Problems may surface because these learners may use another language at home as they are learning English at school. Thus there may be a psychological “pull” between two worlds; these students often feel that their native language is “wrong.” Because self-concept is influenced by the attitudes of others, negative attitudes from family, friends, and school personnel may result in LEP students feeling isolated and overwhelmed with the new environment, new sounds, and the new culture. Many cultural references, idiomatic expressions, and multiple meanings of words that are known to most literate English-speaking students may be foreign to LEP students. An example might be the sign, “Fine for Loitering.” If the LEP student has learned the meaning for “fine” as “it is all right to do something,” the sign would convey an entirely different meaning than the idea of having to pay money for loitering. All of these concerns may cause barriers to learning.

From the perspective of the teacher, teaching a multilingual class requires more time and more effort because all students may not have similar background knowledge. Teachers must be flexible, willing to learn and grow, be able to adapt and accept LEP students, and value others’ languages and cultures. Many cultures have an entirely different view of education, including the role of the teacher and the student, the environment for learning, and materials used.

The following discussion of characteristics or behaviors educators may see in LEP students is not meant to be a complete list or indicate that LEP students are progressing in language development in the same way and at the same rate. Each student is unique, and educators will need to consider the needs of each student individually.
As LEP students begin to learn English, they may

- remain silent; this should be accepted as a stage of language learning;

- depend on body language, gestures, or paralanguage (words or phrases such as “huh?,” “unh-unh,” and “uh-oh” usually accompanied by a facial expression and/or a gesture);
  
  The teacher’s consistency in structure, use of gestures, paralanguage, and body language is paramount.

- be actively listening as they silently translate;

  It is essential to remember that these students are not deaf and to wait for students to take the time they need to understand and formulate what they have to say.

- misinterpret body language or gestures;

  For example, a teacher’s motioning for a student to move toward her or him by using the forefinger may be viewed as a demeaning gesture in certain cultures.

- have limited school experience; and

- exhibit extremes of behavior: frustration, nervousness, fear, and self-consciousness.

As LEP students progress to an intermediate level in their English language skills, they may

- make unsystematic and random language errors that may lead to misunderstanding;

  Teachers should correct errors within the area of instruction rather than attempting to correct all errors. The latter leads to further frustration and an interruption in the thinking process of communication.
• exhibit social language skills in English that exceed language abilities necessary for academic success;

Some young people quickly learn conversational English and mimic the actions of their peers, yet may have difficulty reading and writing appropriately. Conversely, some students are able to read and write in English, yet may have difficulty speaking.

• exhibit limited but continuing progress in vocabulary, control of sentence structure, ability to read with comprehension, and the ability to express ideas;

It is important for teachers to continually provide opportunities for expansion of vocabulary and for use of vocabulary that has different meaning in specific contexts.

• generate language to ask and answer questions without being able to expand or explain; and

Teachers should provide opportunities for LEP students to learn how to ask and answer questions that do not have a “yes” or “no” answer.

• require an extended period of time to translate information.

As LEP students move into the advanced level of language development and learning, they can begin to apply reading and writing skills to acquire information in academic areas and in real-life situations. These students may

• frequently choose to use more than one language to communicate;

Teachers should learn to rephrase what the student has said in a correct model and focus on the use of English.

• exhibit oral fluency but still lack higher level, content-specific language and writing skills; and

• make inaccurate inferences from cultural, linguistic, and intellectual experiences.

Teaching Strategies
To support teachers in choosing effective strategies to use in working with Limited English Proficient students in their classes, the following suggestions are provided. It is important to remember that strategies may be introduced, extended, and expanded at all levels according to the interests and abilities of the learners.

At the **beginning** level, teachers may

- provide opportunities for students to hear and practice language in context with others;
  
  Remember that students need to listen to other students, other teachers, and people in the community to practice the sorting out of inflection, stress, intonation, and accent.

- provide a learning buddy or mentor;
  
  Peer support builds much needed friendships and understanding beyond academic areas.

- involve parents and community members; cultural exchange builds understanding;

- categorize words and ideas, which provides “hooks” for learning;

- use visual aids; label classroom items; match words with pictures, items, colors, and symbols;
  
  This helps students become familiar with physical areas of the school, for example, restrooms, the library, and the gym.

- provide opportunities for students to learn and respond to the usual classroom directions, for example, “raise your hand,” or “put your name in the upper-right-hand corner”; and

- use repetition and consistency in instructions and gestures.

At the **intermediate** level, teachers may
• set reachable goals and expect students to be accountable;

    Teachers should demonstrate the correct model and expectations in the initial stages of an assignment or project.

• encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding;

    Making mistakes is seen as a step in the learning process, not something to be avoided.

• obtain background information about language and culture to avoid embarrassing situations;

• speak clearly and at a normal pace with normal stress and intonation;

• check for understanding, as early clarification paves the way for success;

• present key words and ideas orally, on the chalkboard, and with the use of visual aids, before introducing new concepts; and

• use diaries, journals, or picture collages.

    As learners have opportunities to express themselves in various ways, anxiety lessens.

At the advanced level, teachers may

• provide examples when making assignments for book reports, class logs, lab reports, and research assignments; a visual goal helps with understanding;

• use cooperative learning groups; and

    Collaboration within the language arts class is a particularly useful instructional approach with students. For example, written and oral language develop, build, and “fine tune” from trial and error in collaborating groups. As students listen and participate, they learn to use gestures, tone, stress, and
inflection to develop the “whole” of language, no matter what the content might be.

- ask students to explain what they have heard or read and where they have seen words, phrases, or situations; this provides opportunities for expanding ideas and oral expression.

Generally, and across all subject areas, teaching LEP students requires

- knowledge of language development and language acquisition;

- the ability to adapt content to students’ needs and levels of learning;

- a willingness to learn about cultural differences and similarities;

- flexibility and sensitivity;

- a philosophy that learning takes place in every situation and in every environment;

- a belief that everyone learns from mistakes and from one another; and

- an encouraging, nurturing attitude.

Understanding and being sensitive to the needs of students who are learning English as a second language is important. Using effective strategies to support them as they learn language arts will help ensure an environment that will provide successful experiences for LEP students.

**Accommodating At-Risk Students**

Students at risk of leaving school before graduation are a special challenge to the classroom teacher. Poor academic performance, as measured by being overage for a particular grade, in conjunction with grade retention and traditional and alternative assessments, has been cited as an accurate indicator of which students may drop out of school. Students who have difficulty meeting the required academic performance
levels and who fall behind their peers often see little possibility of catching up; they may be at a high risk of not graduating.

Teachers can raise the level of student motivation by consistently modeling interest in the subject, tasks, and class assignments. They can also create classroom activities in which at-risk students are more likely to be successful and are able to tap into their own intrinsic level of motivation.

**Teaching Strategies**

Some strategies that have been effective in targeting at-risk students are the following:

- offering limited choices when it comes to alternatives for homework or long assignments;

- using active learning situations such as games, projects, group work, discussions, experiments, board work, creative seat work, and simulations (for example, mock elections, role playing, trials, and plays);

- providing concrete rather than abstract instruction, for example, physical objects, pictures, maps, diagrams, and colors as well as stories and anecdotes, because loading instruction with many examples makes the lesson come to life;

- using puzzles, brain teasers, and games to help students learn facts and figures;

- using short tasks and assignments, which provide more opportunity for completion, giving at-risk students a sense of accomplishment;

- having students compare their current efforts to their previous work rather than to the work of other students;

- avoiding class announcements of poor performance; avoiding posting or calling out grades;

- avoiding situations in which individuals compete openly in class; using,
instead, group competitions in which teams are carefully designed so that the at-risk student is likely to meet success;

• helping students to concentrate on the task and its completion rather than on the consequences of failure;

• helping students evaluate situations in which they have been successful; helping students analyze unsuccessful situations and determine why they were unsuccessful; helping students focus on the path to success;

• teaching test-taking skills and avoiding timed tests;

• giving pretests so that students can make positive posttest comparisons, thus treating tests as opportunities for assessing learning rather than measuring ability;

• creating pretesting structures, for example, by providing study guides and outlines and teaching note-taking and outlining skills; and

• providing immediate feedback on student work by circulating around the classroom and monitoring students’ efforts on the spot, and promptly returning homework, assignments, and exams.

At-risk students, faced with a problem they have difficulty solving, often give up and simply go on to the next problem, or worse yet, do not even try to solve the problem and end up selecting answers randomly. The ability to persist can be taught. To encourage at-risk students to persist, teachers might

• carefully monitor students at work, coaxing them to continue working and to keep at it;

• help students set objectives and goals that bring immediate results;

• help students see that each new, small success brings them closer to their goals and makes them stronger;

• use contract learning, in which students have limited choices that move
them step by step toward completion of course objectives;

- offer make-up exams, credit for effort, extra credit options, and extra practice opportunities;

- offer opportunities to rewrite or correct until revisions are completed; and

- help students retrace their work to find errors, analyze problems, and reread portions they have skipped in order to answer the questions.

The Dropout Prevention Act of 1986, Section 230.2316, Florida Statutes, was enacted to authorize and encourage school boards to establish Dropout Prevention Programs. These programs are designed to meet the needs of students who are not effectively served by traditional programs in the public school system. This includes students who are unmotivated, unsuccessful, truant, pregnant and/or parenting, substance abusers, and disruptive, as well as those who are in shelters.

Strategies used in these programs that have been found to be effective could prove successful in a more traditional setting. These include

- instructional strategies and tools such as cooperative learning, computer-assisted instruction, authentic/alternative assessment, critical thinking, and graphic organizers;

- competency-based curriculum which allows students to work at their own pace;

- flexible scheduling or use of time;

  Students “declare” a schedule and attend, even though it may be beyond the traditional school day. Competency-based curriculum delivered through computer-assisted instruction is well suited to this strategy.

- career awareness and on-the-job training for employability skills;

- experiential learning and hands-on activities;

- mentoring and nurturing;
• course modifications;
  Course modifications allow at-risk students to compress or extend the period of
time it takes to master material in a given course, to respond to a variety of
assessments to demonstrate mastery, and/or to be offered interdisciplinary or
intradisciplinary units of instruction through the integration of more than one
course description. This gives the overage-for-grade students an opportunity to
catch up with their own grade peers.

• summer bridge programs;
  Summer bridge programs allow overage-for-grade students to catch up with
their own grade peers by attending a rigorous summer session and then being
promoted to the next grade level.

• collaborative teaching that combines two classes;
  In one model of collaborative teaching, the dropout prevention teacher furnishes
expertise in course content, while the specific learning disability teacher offers
expertise in course modification.

• thematic units in which teachers identify common themes and realign
student performance standards to reflect the theme;
  In some models, teachers work together to identify aspects of their discipline
that have commonalities; in other models, teachers work separately without
any attempt to connect with other subject areas.

• peer counseling and student conflict mediation;
  One model pairs at-risk ninth graders with twelfth graders who are selected
according to leadership skills and their potential to serve as role models, and
who are trained in peer counseling strategies including listening, questioning,
paraphrasing, and feedback. These older students also provide academic
tutoring and use a variety of peer counseling strategies designed to help the
ninth grader become successful in an academic curriculum that addresses
social, individual, school, and family concerns; topics could include drug and
alcohol abuse, family relations, academic motivation, and coping with stress.

• student support and assistance components, which serve students who
are eligible for dropout prevention programs and who are in need of academic or behavioral support;

Students are served in traditional classes through a flexible schedule of auxiliary services, including supplemental materials or alternative strategies to assist with course modification, behavior management, or alternative assessment. Instructional aides or case managers can also be used to support teachers, students, and parents.

- GED/HSCT Exit Option; and

This program allows currently enrolled, dropout-prevention students to earn a standard high school diploma by enrolling in courses for credit that lead to a standard high school diploma and work to master the individual course student performance standards. To enter the program, these students must be behind the class with whom they entered kindergarten and demonstrate probability for success on the GED through documentation of a high score on a standardized test; to complete the program, students must complete required courses and pass the HSCT and the GED tests.

- coordination with other agencies, such as social service, law enforcement, prosecutorial, and juvenile justice agencies as well as community-based organizations.

**Putting These Ideas to Work**

Current educational philosophy recommends that educators focus on developing a learning-centered curriculum, which includes a number of key ideas:

- The teacher is a facilitator (a “guide on the side” versus “the sage on the stage”).
- The student is a discoverer of knowledge within his or her learning community. This involves students listening to others and learning to filter information and draw conclusions, versus simply taking in a body of knowledge imparted by the teacher.
- The community is a rich resource.
- Real-world learning experiences help students apply knowledge and skills; this helps prepare them for daily living and future employment.

Using the curriculum frameworks as a guideline, local educators will make the final
choices regarding how to teach the essentials. These choices will include the themes and topics by which to teach academic standards, the day-to-day content of instruction, the types of materials and resources used, and the teaching strategies that are appropriate for the individual needs of the students and for the teacher's own strengths. The result of a thoughtfully designed curriculum is students who have the ability to achieve high academic standards and who can be better prepared to live as responsible, effective, and productive citizens within a global society.
Key Chapter Points

Instruction that prepares students for the 21st century should focus on

• high academic standards with expectations of high achievement for every student;
• a learning-centered curriculum with the teacher as a facilitator of learning;
• learning based on constructing meaningful concepts from facts;
• learning language arts in its real-world contexts;
• making connections within language arts and with other content areas;
• relating language arts to the students’ world;
• active, hands-on learning in the classroom;
• more student responsibility and choice;
• students inquiring, problem solving, conjecturing, inventing, producing, and finding answers;
• students working and learning cooperatively;
• accommodating individual student needs, whether cultural, developmental, or cognitive;
• infusing a multicultural perspective;
• expanding resources to include local and global communities;
• using technology to support instruction; and
• relating classroom learning to the skills students will need to function successfully in their communities, in the workplace, and in society.
Chapter 5: Curricular Connections Through Instruction

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS
• Curricular Connections
• Models for Curricular Connections in Instruction
  • Infusion
  • Parallel Instruction
  • Multidisciplinary Instruction
  • Transdisciplinary Instruction
• Planning an Interdisciplinary Unit

Why should teachers try to connect language arts to other subject areas? There are at least three compelling reasons for doing so. First, life does not occur in neat, subject-matter packets. A single incident, such as a hurricane, affects a region in many ways. It destroys homes, cultural resources, and businesses; damages the environment; upsets the economy; interrupts school and school programs; tests government emergency response policies; and demands immediate solutions to problems that will have a long-term aesthetic and economic impact upon the quality of life in a community. To address these complex issues, citizens must integrate and use knowledge and skills from a variety of subject areas. Second, making connections among subject areas creates a greater sense of meaning for students; for example, a process they learn in language arts helps them better understand social studies. Finally, today’s teachers face the challenge of an ever-expanding curriculum. Although the expansion of the curriculum results in part from important mandates from the state level, most of it results from the simple fact that information in the modern world is expanding at a phenomenal rate. This expansion of information underscores the importance of stressing connections among subject areas.
Curricular Connections and the Transfer of Learning

Connecting important concepts from different disciplines has a number of beneficial effects. One of the most important effects is that it facilitates the transfer of learning. A disappointing fact about education in America is that students frequently demonstrate that they understand something in one setting, but fail to understand that same concept in another setting. Educators refer to this occurrence as a lack of transfer of learning. For example, a student might show that he or she understands how to construct a well-organized paragraph when asked to describe it in a language arts class, but fails to see how that very concept applies to writing an essay in history class. By forging connections among subject areas in the classroom, students have a better chance of recognizing that what they learn in school has applications beyond the classroom. This transfer of learning is illustrated in the following example:

Michael's fourth-grade class views different commercials during a unit on mass media. With the help of his teacher, Mr. Varsalona, Michael and his classmates conclude that many commercials for fast food restaurants feature music that is catchy and easy to remember and sung by well-known rock stars. The class discusses how jingles are easily remembered and how endorsements help to sell products and services.

Later that week, Michael's father offers to take him out to lunch. Michael is surprised when he realizes that he wants to go to a particular restaurant because the ad features one of his favorite singers performing a jingle, which he has been humming all week long. He shares with his father what he learned in class about the impact of endorsements and music in commercials. They decide that it is a good idea to choose a place for lunch based on convenience and food that they both like, regardless of how memorable or "catchy" the jingle for the commercial is or who endorses the restaurant.

Curricular connections also encourage teachers to work in a collaborative mode. Most teachers have heard the expression, “Teaching is one of the most isolated professions in the world.” Fortunately, it doesn’t have to be. A language arts teacher who decides to use content from science creates a reason to interact with the science teacher. The interaction among teachers from different content areas can take many forms, depending on the model that is being used for making curricular connections.
Models for Curricular Connections in Instruction

Several strategies will be overviewed in this chapter; curriculum developers and teachers may want to explore these strategies in greater depth. Four effective models of curricular connections are infusion, parallel instruction, multidisciplinary instruction, and transdisciplinary instruction. After further exploration of these models, individual school staff must determine whether any or all of these models will work in their setting.

**Infusion**

In infusion, a teacher in a given subject area integrates another subject area into his or her instruction.

Students in Ms. Barton’s sophomore English class are reading *A Separate Peace*, by John Knowles. Ms. Barton has asked the students to consider how peer pressure, competition, and the need to be liked influenced Gene’s actions. During the discussion, students point out that although Gene feels the pressure to conform, another character does not; somehow, Finney does not seem to need the approval of others. Ms. Barton asks the students to think about instances in their own lives in which they gave in to peer pressure. Because Ms. Barton knows that sophomore health classes study the issue of peer pressure, she invites Mr. Gorski, the health teacher, to visit the class and lead a discussion on strategies the students can use to avoid giving in to peer pressure in school. After his visit, Ms. Barton asks the students to write about how they might use these strategies in the future.

**Parallel Instruction**

In parallel instruction, teachers from different subject areas focus on the same theme, concept, or problem. Each discipline is taught separately, but teachers must plan together to identify the common element and determine how the concept, theme, or problem will be addressed in each subject area. Homework and assignments commonly vary from subject area to subject area, but all reflect the common theme, project, problem, or concept being addressed.

High school teachers decide to explore the theme of balance as it applies to the content areas of science, social studies, language arts, health, the arts, and mathematics. Although each subject
area deals with “balance” in different ways, teachers meet prior to the unit to collaborate on ways that the concept might be presented and to ensure that the concept will be reinforced in each subject area.

In science, students explore the importance of balance in nature and the environmental consequences that result when certain aspects of nature are not in balance. Specifically, students focus on clean air standards and methods of lowering levels of air particulates to maintain a healthy balance. Groups of students visit industrial sites in the area and measure levels of particulate matter in the air at these sites, noting prevailing winds and how these might affect air quality in their neighborhoods. Students present their findings to an EPA representative who had visited their class to speak about local efforts to keep the air clean.

Social studies teachers discuss the concept of checks and balances built into American government. Students also study how checks and balances are factors in creating the federal budget. The students contact the congressperson representing their area; she speaks to the social studies classes about her budgeting experiences as a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

In language arts, students are in the midst of studying persuasive techniques and debate. Topics for debates have “balance” as their focus; these include eliminating certain federal programs as a means of balancing the budget, hunting as a means of balancing predators and prey, the pros and cons of balancing school populations through enforced busing, and balancing environmentalists’ concerns with those of pleasure boaters on environmentally delicate intracoastal waterways.

Health classes study the importance of balance in diet and exercise. Students keep track of their diets for a week and are surprised to note the differences between what they typically ate and the balanced diet recommended by the American Dietary Association. They also track whether their leisure time includes a balanced amount of exercise. A panel consisting of a physician, physical therapist, and dietitian from the local hospital speaks to health classes on food addictions and how imbalances in food-group intake can affect physical and emotional health.

The art teacher takes his students to the museum; students work in groups to identify and critique the use of balance and symmetry in a variety of artwork and sculpture they had seen during their field trip. Next, they design their own artwork to illustrate the concept of balance; these pieces are displayed throughout the building.
In mathematics, students investigate the concept of balance in a number of areas. One of these involves how balance is a critical factor that architects and engineers apply in the design of multilevel structures and bridges. Students also study how statisticians use measures of central tendency to display the balance and dispersion in sets of data. Students create drawings and graphs to demonstrate what they have learned; for example, one group gives a class presentation explaining the relationship between the size and depth of a foundation and the number of floors of a building.

Multidisciplinary Instruction

As with parallel instruction, within multidisciplinary instruction two or more subject areas address a common concept, theme, or problem. The subject areas are taught separately for the most part, but a common assignment or project links the various disciplines. Teachers must plan together to identify how the concept, theme, or problem will be addressed in each subject area, construct the common project, determine how the project will be divided among the subject areas, and determine how students will work together on the project.

Middle school foreign language, social studies, and language arts teachers who share the same students and have the same planning period design a common project for their classes. Students will demonstrate an understanding of what they have learned in each of their classes by producing a special newspaper section on Guatemala and submitting it to the local paper for publication.

While studying Spanish, students use Spanish-language sources to conduct research about the Guatemalan culture, gathering information on food, sports, games, music, art, festivals, and other elements of the Guatemalan lifestyle. They also use Spanish-language tourism publications to discover how and why Guatemala is important to Latin America.

While studying social studies, students research Guatemalan history, government, economy, and the country’s role in Latin American and world affairs.

While in language arts, students study different journalism techniques, including news writing and feature writing. Working in groups, students then use the research they had
completed in Spanish and social studies to write articles, which the students compile and submit as a complete section to the local paper’s travel section.

**Transdisciplinary Instruction**

Within transdisciplinary instruction, two or more subject areas address a common concept, theme, or problem; however, the subject areas are presented in an integrated fashion. Classes in the subject areas meet at a common time; teachers integrate planning and team-teach all lessons. Commonly, a major project is the focus of the unit.

Science, social studies, health, language arts, and vocational teachers with a common set of students develop and team-teach a three-week unit entitled *The Good Life*. Teachers meet during their common planning period to design meaningful content and experiences aimed at helping their students carefully consider and define their vision of “the good life.” The teachers conclude that students’ understanding of the material will be best assessed in two forms: as their final project, students are required to express their vision in writing and by designing a computer simulation of an ideal community.

Classes meet in four-hour blocks during the unit. To gain a historical and philosophical perspective on the topic, students read Utopian literature on various views of the good life. From their reading and class discussions, they learn what people of different cultures and historical periods defined as the good life. They learn about communities that tried but failed to create a Utopian society and consider why these communities were not successful.

Students also spend class time examining their families’ and community’s values and how these contribute to their own vision of the good life. They study healthy lifestyles that contribute to the good life and the biological principles underlying healthy diet and exercise. They explore environmental concerns and the tradeoffs between environmental degradation and the good life. A city planner visits the class to explain how planning can contribute to health, happiness, and well-being. Students visit Celebration City, Disney World’s model community.

After thoroughly reviewing what they have learned, students work in groups to design computer simulations that depict their ideal community. Each student also writes a persuasive essay defining and defending his or her vision of the good life, citing evidence gathered during the unit as support.
Planning an Interdisciplinary Unit

One of the most effective ways to plan a unit that fosters connections is to focus on creating projects that involve content from different subject areas. As we have discussed, projects are a central part of both multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary instruction. Below is a simple three-step process that can be used to develop projects that forge curricular connections.

**Step #1: Select benchmarks from two or more subject areas that will be integrated into the project.**

For example, assume that a language arts teacher sets out to construct a project that incorporates a benchmark from language arts with a benchmark from theatre. She would first consult chapter 3 of this framework and select a benchmark. For example, she might select the following benchmark, which can be found under the standard “The student responds critically to fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama”:

**Language Arts benchmark:** The student responds to a work of literature by interpreting selected phrases, sentences, or passages and applying the information to personal life.

The teacher would then consult the framework for a second content area—the arts, for example. The teacher might pick the following benchmark, which can be found under the theatre standard “The student acts by developing, communicating, and sustaining characters in improvisation and formal or informal productions”:

**Theatre benchmark:** The student develops characters, relationships, and environments from written sources (e.g., plays, stories, poems, and history).

These two benchmarks—one from language arts, one from theatre—would form the basis for the project. It is important to realize that all benchmarks must be selected with a great deal of attention to their relatedness. In other words, not all pairs of benchmarks make a good match. The two benchmarks depicted are a good match because they both deal with responding to and interpreting literature and relating the literature to their own life. If a teacher tries to force a connection between benchmarks from different content areas, the resulting project will be artificial and
will run the risk of confusing students or will not maintain the integrity of the chosen subject areas.

**Step #2: Identify an interesting question or questions that can be asked about the benchmarks that have been selected.**

One way to help students explore the relationship between benchmarks is to ask a question that will naturally integrate the benchmarks. The following is a list of useful questions to consider:

- What is the underlying pattern?
- How are these things similar and different?
- What groups can these things be put into? What rules or characteristics have been used to form groups?
- What conclusions can be formed about this information?
- What is the evidence for this position and how good is it?
- What specific rules are operating here? Based upon those rules, what must happen or what will probably happen?
- Are there errors in reasoning that have been made? Are there errors being performed in a process?
- Is there a hidden relationship here? What is the abstract pattern or theme that is at the heart of the relationship?
- Are there different perspectives on an issue that should be explored?
- Is there some new idea or new theory that should be described in detail?
- Is there something that happened in the past that should be studied?
- Is there a possible or hypothetical event that should be studied?
- Is there an obstacle that must be overcome?
- Is there a prediction that can be generated and then tested?
- Can this skill or process be used to accomplish something or better understand something?

**Source:** Adapted from Marzano, Pickering, & McTighe. (1993). Assessing Student Outcomes.
To illustrate how a question from this list can be used, consider the two benchmarks that have been selected:

**Language Arts benchmark:** The student responds to a work of literature by interpreting selected phrases, sentences, or passages and applying the information to personal life.

**Theatre benchmark:** The student develops characters, relationships, and environments from written sources (e.g., plays, stories, poems, and history).

A question that seems to naturally address these benchmarks is, “Is there a hidden relationship here?” It would be logical for the language arts teacher to ask students to examine the main characters in a number of stories or plays and determine if there is a relationship between how these characters are portrayed or developed and the author’s writing style in selected passages.

**Step #3: Identify a product or products that incorporate the benchmarks that have been selected.**

With the content benchmarks selected and an interesting question identified, the next step is to identify the product or products that best suit the project. It is useful to consider four types of products: (1) conclusions, (2) processes, (3) artifacts, and (4) affective responses. It is important to remember that some products may not be applicable to all subject areas.

**Conclusions** are generalizations that have been constructed as a natural consequence of studying some issue or topic. For example, in language arts, students might produce conclusions about effective writing as a result of studying the prose of various authors. When students report their conclusions, they commonly are expected to provide evidence and support. This may be done in the form of oral or written reports, videotapes, audiotapes, charts, or graphs.

**Processes** are sets of actions that are the natural consequences of solving a problem or accomplishing a goal. For example, in the language arts, students might be asked to develop a detailed process for editing their own writing or that of a peer. Processes are commonly demonstrated along with an explanation of how the process works and why it is effective. If the process cannot actually be demonstrated, it is sometimes simulated.
Artifacts are physical products that are natural outcomes of solving a problem or accomplishing a goal. For example, in the language arts, students might be asked to assemble poems written by the class into an anthology, using a desktop publishing program. The anthology must be easy-to-read and illustrated in an engaging manner.

Affective representations are illustrations of emotional responses that result from studying some issue. They take many forms including paintings, murals, dances, songs, sculptures, collages, sketches, poems, personal essays, and dramatizations. Poems, personal essays and dramatizations in particular are commonly used as products in the language arts. For example, after reading a novel about poverty in the inner city, students might be asked to construct a poem depicting their emotional responses to the novel.

Of these four types of products, a conclusion seems to be the one best suited for the sample language arts project regarding the relationship between character portrayal and an author's writing style. Specifically, the project requires students to generate conclusions about this underlying relationship and then provide evidence for their conclusions. With the benchmarks selected, an interesting question identified, and a type of product selected, the teacher would then write the project as a set of directions to the students. Those directions might read as follows:


Your assignment is to try to discover if there is a relationship between what these characters are like and how the author uses words, phrases, and sentences to paint a picture of the characters for the reader. Once you have drawn some conclusions about how the characterization in each story is developed through each author’s style of writing, you can present your conclusions in a written report, an oral report, or a videotape. Make sure that you include specific examples of the words, phrases, or passages that the author includes that help to develop his characters.

As this example illustrates, creating a project that involves benchmarks from different subject areas is a complex process. However, it is worth the effort in terms of student motivation and learning.
**Key Chapter Points**

- There are four basic ways in which curricular connections can be forged: infusion, parallel instruction, multidisciplinary instruction, and transdisciplinary instruction.

- A three-step process can be used for constructing projects that forge curricular connections.

- Curricular connections make learning more meaningful for students.
Assessment of student academic achievement is a fundamental component of Florida’s school improvement and accountability initiative. Assessment provides essential information on the effectiveness of our reform efforts and on the level of student achievement of Florida’s academic standards. Assessment processes are varied and include the use of standardized tests as well as other formal and informal methods to build a web of useful information about student achievement.

Florida schools will be held accountable for student achievement through the collection and analysis of academic assessment information from the state, district, school, and classroom levels and the public reporting of results. One highly visible part of the education accountability program will be a statewide, externally mandated assessment system measuring student progress in reading, writing, and mathematics in a context of high-level thinking and problem solving. This state test will provide an external “spot check” on the first four standards of Goal 3. This system will be criterion referenced and will include performance-oriented items. It will be administered at three levels: elementary, middle, and high school.

A statewide assessment program, however, is not adequate by itself to provide all of the information on student knowledge and skills needed at the local level. This can only be provided through the proper use of classroom assessment procedures. The focus of this chapter is classroom assessment, one of the teacher’s most complex and most important responsibilities. This chapter presents overviews of various strategies...
for classroom assessment. Curriculum and assessment developers and teachers should explore these strategies in greater depth through other more-detailed sources.

**Classroom assessment** refers to the tasks, activities, or procedures designed to obtain accurate information about student academic achievement. Assessment helps answer these questions: What do students know and what are they able to do? Are the teaching methods and strategies effective? What else can be done to help students learn?

Classroom assessment activities should be systematic, ongoing, and integrated into the process of instruction and learning. This dynamic relationship results in a continuous process of refining goals as the teacher works with the entire class and with individual students. In fact, the term *assessment* comes from the Latin *assidere*, which means “to sit beside.” This meaning creates a picture of the teacher and the student working together to continually improve the processes of teaching and learning. To assess also means to analyze critically and judge definitively. This meaning emphasizes the teacher’s responsibility to make judgments about students’ achievement based on careful consideration of obtained information.

Authenticity in classroom assessment activities is desired whenever possible. That is, assessment activities should not only examine simple recognition or recall of information, but should also determine the extent to which students have integrated and made sense of information, whether they can apply it to situations that require reasoning and creative thinking, and whether they can use their knowledge of language arts to communicate their ideas. Using authentic (i.e., realistic) assessment activities will help reveal whether or not students have learned to do these things. The strategies presented in this chapter will encourage the linkage of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
The Assessment Process

In recent years, our knowledge of how students learn has increased; for example, we have learned that students acquire knowledge and skills in widely diverse ways. Knowing this, however, only serves to increase the complexity of student assessment. Because all students do not learn in the same way and because increasing numbers of our students come to school from situations that seriously affect their prospects for success, innovative approaches to instruction and assessment are needed to meet their needs.

The process of assessment is not complete without the communication of results. Timely feedback from assessment is important to positively influence student performance and instruction. Comments about student progress may be formal or informal and should emphasize what students have done successfully and what they have achieved. The process should include opportunities for the student to comment on his or her own progress and for the student’s family to be involved in and informed about the assessments. Summary results of classroom assessments should be shared with other educators, citizens, and decision makers, where appropriate, and used by educators to improve instruction.

Different Types of Classroom Assessment

The unique nature of language arts calls for using multiple forms of assessment to clearly evaluate each student’s progress as well as the impact of instructional strategies. The task of teachers and assessment specialists is to use the most effective and valid forms of assessment for the particular educational setting, for the type of knowledge, skill, or ability being assessed, and for the individual student. Developing a variety of assessment options allows the teacher to match the assessment to the student’s ability to demonstrate knowledge to verify that learning has taken place.

Even when a variety of options is available, modifications for specific students may also be necessary. Modifications that are made in the classroom for the instruction of special needs students often can be applied to assessment procedures. For example, it may be more effective to allow a student the opportunity to give an oral presentation rather than a written report.
When written tests are used to assess student performance, test administration can be modified in a variety of ways, including flexible scheduling and flexible settings. Students may perform better if not hampered by artificial time limits or disrupted by other students in the class. Using a revised format that may allow the student to listen to test questions rather than read them can also improve performance for students with reading disabilities. Recording answers or performances via audiotape or computer programs may help a student demonstrate competency under less stressful circumstances.

Assessment techniques overlap and blend together. Using several forms of assessment provides a broader and more comprehensive picture of the learning and teaching of language arts. Educators are encouraged to select from among the many innovative assessment strategies available, a number of which are described below.

**Traditional Assessment**

Traditional assessment is a term often used to describe the means of gathering information on student learning through techniques such as multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, matching, or true/false questions, and essays. These approaches are particularly useful in assessing students’ knowledge of information, concepts, and rules.

Because factual knowledge of information is one important aspect of language arts, carefully designed multiple-choice, true/false, and matching questions can enable the teacher to quickly assess the building blocks of the language arts curriculum. Examples of such skills include the following: Can the student recognize important terms, relationships, and symbols? Does the student recognize how knowledge is organized into patterns, how generalizations are formed from evidence, how events are understood in chronological order, how frames of reference inform decision making, and how predictions can be made from data?

Effective assessment evaluates knowledge of facts as well as their connection to a broader body of knowledge. Proficiency in language arts depends on the ability to know and integrate facts into larger constructs. Students must not only know the steps of the writing process, but must also be able to write effectively for specific purposes.
Assessment Alternatives

There are many “alternatives” to traditional assessment that can be used to broaden the scope of the teacher’s classroom assessment activities. In some of these alternative assessment forms, students perform self-evaluations of their work. In others, teachers make informal observations about a student’s knowledge, skills, and performance that relate to subject-area topics.

The following list of alternative assessment techniques is by no means exhaustive. New assessment techniques are continually being developed to measure students’ progress toward achieving new academic performance standards and benchmarks.

Performance assessments require the student to create a product or construct a response that demonstrates a skill or an understanding of a process or concept. Performance assessments are commonly presented to students as projects that are done over an extended period of time and require that students locate, gather, organize, interpret, and present information. Typically, the project or product of the assessment is rated by the teacher or team of teachers using clearly delineated criteria.

During a unit on folklore, students in Mrs. Wilson’s middle school class are creating a literary journal around the theme of Folklore Around the World. After a discussion with Mrs. Wilson, Stephanie decides to write for the journal a review of a collection of folk tales from Scandinavia. Stephanie meets several times with Mrs. Wilson to share her ideas for the book review and to share drafts of her work. As Mrs. Wilson reads the latest draft of Stephanie’s review, she pays close attention to the structure and organization of the review and to how well Stephanie has developed and communicated her ideas. In her examination of Stephanie’s work, Mrs. Wilson recognizes the depth of critical and creative thought in Stephanie’s writing, but she also identifies organizational problems that sometimes impede the flow of the book review. Mrs. Wilson meets with Stephanie to discuss how she could improve her review before the publication of the literary journal.

Authentic assessments are a form of performance assessment structured around a real-life problem or situation. Although traditional multiple-choice questions can describe real-life situations, the term “authentic assessment” usually is applied to performance assessments.
Mrs. Connelly has decided that the most effective way to assess her middle school students' oral communication skills is to stage a mock debate based on a critical issue in the community. She divides her class into teams to represent the two sides of a current school board proposal to eliminate funding for certain extracurricular programs. Mrs. Connelly challenges her students to examine the issues from the points of view reflected in the records of the last school board meeting. Mrs. Connelly has also invited two school board members to attend the debate. After the debate, the board members discuss their reactions with the students and address the current status of the funding issue. To assess each student’s work, Mrs. Connelly creates criteria related to factual knowledge about the issues, articulation of the issues during the debate, and speaking ability. These criteria are shared with the class at the beginning of the instructional unit. As she observes the debate, Mrs. Connelly records in her notebook how well each student formulates an argument, articulates his or her position, responds to opposing arguments, and interacts with teammates. The ratings are summed into a total assessment of each student’s work, which is then shared individually with each student.

**Teacher observation** is a form of data collection in which the instructor observes students performing various activities without interrupting the students’ work or thoughts. Teachers use checklists, rating scales, or notebooks to record their judgment about students’ competence in specific standards or benchmarks.

To assess the oral fluency of his students’ reading, Mr. Santos gives each of his primary students a story to read aloud to the class. Mr. Santos previously has developed a checklist of important word attack and decoding skills to be used to assess each student’s proficiency in reading. As Jamil reads his story aloud, he reaches a word he does not know. Mr. Santos observes Jamil’s use of phonetic and syntactic cues to discover the meaning and the pronunciation of the word. When Jamil figures out the word, he reads the sentence over again. Mr. Santos uses his checklist to record the instances in which Jamil and the other students make particular errors and use the appropriate skills to determine the correct pronunciation of the troublesome words. Mr. Santos reviews the observational data and makes decisions about his future instructional emphases and how to assist individual students who are still experiencing difficulty.

**Interviews** require students to respond verbally to specific oral questions. The instructor asks questions, interprets answers, and records results. This form of assessment also allows a teacher to discuss student answers, to probe for more complete responses, and to identify misconceptions so they can be corrected. Correction should be postponed until the interview is completed to encourage the
free flow of ideas and to reduce student apprehension.

Mrs. Fazel regularly interviews each of her students after they complete their book reports. Mrs. Fazel structures the interviews so that she can determine the extent to which each student can summarize and respond to a text. She writes the questions she will ask on note cards for her students so that they can carefully develop their answers. Rebecca is eager to discuss her observations and analysis of the book she has read this week. In the interview, Mrs. Fazel is impressed with Rebecca's ability to explain various cause-and-effect relationships in the text and to relate certain sections of the book to her own life. After the interview, Mrs. Fazel makes detailed notes on Rebecca's proficiency in reading comprehension and response. She decides to send a copy of her assessment to Rebecca's parents to report Rebecca's progress.

**Conferencing** involves a two-way dialogue between a teacher and students or among students for the purpose of evaluating progress on a specific standard or benchmark or on a project.

Manuela and Patrick are partners on the high school debate team. After a regional tournament, they ask to have a conference with their coach, Mrs. Sedgewick, to review their opening speeches. Mrs. Sedgewick shares the notes she took at the debate, and Manuela and Patrick share the comments they gave each other during the debate. Manuela begins by saying that she thought the debate went well but she sometimes felt hurried as she spoke. Mrs. Sedgewick agrees that both of their speeches demonstrated the depth of their research on the topic and suggests some techniques that will help Manuela in her delivery. Patrick feels that both he and Manuela should practice maintaining eye contact with their audience so that they can create a more interactive relationship with their listeners.

**Self-assessment** enables students to examine their own work and reflect upon their accomplishments, progress, and development. The teacher may supply the student with assessment criteria or assist students in developing their own. This form of assessment assists students in developing the critical thinking and evaluative skills that lead to effective problem solving and independent learning.

“I don’t understand the Canterbury Tales, so I can’t respond to them,” Leilani tells her teacher, Mr. Cullen. After listening to Leilani's frustrations, Mr. Cullen asks her to try to pinpoint her difficulties in reading Chaucer. What is it about Middle English that she finds difficult
to understand? Can she follow the sentence structure? Can she understand the meaning of key words? Léilani keeps Mr. Cullen’s questions in mind as she reflects on her reading of the Canterbury Tales. Léilani realizes that she is comfortable with Chaucer’s sentence structure, but she does not have a grasp of the key words. Léilani decides that she will start a Middle English vocabulary list to aid her understanding of the Canterbury Tales. The next day, Léilani discusses her self-assessment with Mr. Cullen, who gives her suggestions on how to organize her vocabulary list.

**Peer assessment** involves students evaluating each other’s work using objective criteria. It requires students to reflect on the accomplishments of their classmates. By assessing other’s work, students often see alternative reasoning patterns and develop an appreciation for diverse ways of approaching and solving problems.

Ms. Alcott’s journalism class is producing a new issue of the Central Middle School newspaper. Each student in the class submits an article for the publication. Emily and Jean-Pierre are the editors of the News section. They meet with Ms. Alcott to establish criteria for evaluating the news articles. The criteria incorporate the concepts of journalistic writing that they are learning in class. As Emily and Jean-Pierre read each article, they use a checklist to record the extent to which each article meets the established criteria. Does the article have a strong lead paragraph? Is the language clear and easy to follow? Is the article free from bias? Is more than one point of view presented? Emily and Jean-Pierre make constructive suggestions on each article before returning them to their classmates for revision.

**Portfolio assessment** is a purposeful collection of a student’s work that provides a long-term record of the student’s best efforts, progress, and achievement in a given area. Materials included may be decided on by the student, the teacher, or both. Depending on the intent, portfolios can serve as the basis for assessing individual student growth over time on given standards and benchmarks, or for assessing learning specific to the objectives addressed in a theme or unit. It is important to note that, although a portfolio can be used as an effective instructional tool, its use as an assessment tool demands a clear understanding of purpose, specification of the desired portfolio contents, and a definition of the methods of rating the individual components of the portfolio.

Before the end-of-the-year parent-teacher conferences, Mrs. Raintree asks her students to collect their writing pieces in a portfolio so they can demonstrate their progress to their parents. This year, Julie developed a strong interest in creative writing, but she is not sure how to structure
her portfolio. Mrs. Raintree asks Julie, “Which of your stories and poems do you like best? Which do you not like as much?” Julie discovers that she likes the work she wrote near the end of the year better than the work she had written earlier. Julie assembles her portfolio to demonstrate her progress from when she was “shy” about writing stories to when she was eager to read her stories aloud to the class. With each story, Julie writes a paragraph describing what she particularly likes about this story and how this story demonstrates her progress in writing. Mrs. Raintree writes a review of Julie’s portfolio in which she provides her own assessment of how Julie’s writing has progressed this year.
What could go into a language arts portfolio?

A portfolio should capture the richness, depth, and breadth of a student’s learning within the context of the instruction and the learning that takes place in the classroom. Elements of a portfolio can be stored in a variety of ways; for example, they can be photographed, scanned into a computer, or videotaped. The possible elements of a portfolio include the following selected student products:

**Written Presentations**
- expressive (diaries, journals, writing logs)
- transactional (letters, surveys, reports, essays)
- poetic (poems, myths, legends, stories, plays)

**Performances**
- role playing, drama
- dance/movement
- reader’s theater
- mime
- choral readings
- music (choral and instrumental)

**Representations**
- maps
- graphs
- dioramas
- models
- mock-ups
- displays
- bulletin boards
- charts
- replicas

**Visual and Graphic Arts**
- murals
- paintings
- storyboards
- drawings
- posters
- sculpture
- cartoons
- mobiles

**Media Presentations**
- films
- slides
- photo essays
- print media
- computer programs
- videotapes and/or audiotapes

**Oral Presentations**
- debates
- addresses
- discussions
- mock trials
- monologues
- interviews
- speeches
- storytelling
- oral histories
- poetry readings
- broadcasts
**Journals** are a form of record keeping in which students respond in writing to specific probes or questions from the teacher. The probes focus student responses on knowledge or skill specific to a standard or benchmark. Journals of accomplishments can also be used informally to assess the development of writing skills. As with portfolios, whether a journal becomes an assessment tool depends upon how it is organized and evaluated.

Mr. Starkey's class is studying the ways in which commercials communicate their messages to television audiences. Mr. Starkey asks his students to keep journals in which they will log the commercials they see on television. He also asks his students to record their personal responses to the commercials, along with any observations about the symbolism, visual images, language, and stereotypes that commercials use to “hook” audiences. Mr. Starkey checks his students' journals periodically to determine how students are understanding and applying the concepts they are learning in class. Mr. Starkey rates their journals according to a predetermined set of categories that reflect whether the student is completing the assignment, collecting the required observations, and critiquing what was observed. The journal entries also are graded for students' writing skills.

**The Use of Assessment Rubrics**

An assessment rubric is a set of rules used to rate a student's proficiency on performance tasks (for example, essays, short-answer exercises, projects, and portfolios). Rubrics can be thought of as scoring guides that permit consistency in assessment activities. A rubric often consists of a fixed scale describing levels of performance and a list of characteristics describing performance for each of the points on the scale. Rubrics provide important information to teachers, parents, and others interested in what students know and can do. Most often, scoring rubrics are developed by a teacher or team of teachers, but it may be desirable in some instances to involve students in the creation of the rubrics. Different scoring rubrics are usually developed for each assessment activity, although if the activities are similar enough, a single rubric can be applied.

For an example of a carefully developed six-point scoring rubric for use in a writing performance assessment, see the Florida Writes rubrics at the end of this chapter and see publications describing the Florida Writes statewide assessment program. A less formal rubric that might be used with an elementary school classroom assignment is shown in the following example:
Sixth-grade students in Ms. Smith’s classroom are studying food and nutrition. The instructional unit will stress healthy diets, vitamins, and the impact of natural and artificial sweeteners, salts, preservatives, and fats. Ms. Smith will use traditional tests to measure students’ factual knowledge. However, she also wants students to demonstrate their ability to prepare a healthy snack food, to speak effectively to classmates, and to prepare a written report of the project. With the students’ involvement, agreement is reached that the class assignment will be to prepare, at home, a healthy snack food and bring it to class for demonstration, tasting, and student evaluation. Each student must provide a sufficient quantity of the snack for all students and must make a verbal presentation describing the recipe and what makes the snack “healthy.” A final written report is completed after all foods have been tasted and evaluated by the students.

Ms. Smith creates a five-category checklist to be used to monitor whether each student performs all required dimensions of the assignment. She also creates five-point scoring rubrics to evaluate the proficiency of each student’s class presentation and written report.

The simple checklist might look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name &amp; Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Snack presented on schedule? ( ) Yes ( ) No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipe completed and shared? ( ) Yes ( ) No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient quantity of snack? ( ) Yes ( ) No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech delivered to class? ( ) Yes ( ) No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper completed on time? ( ) Yes ( ) No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teacher Rubrics

Three simple five-point scoring rubrics are presented here as examples of how teachers might evaluate three important elements of the classroom verbal presentation. These rubrics have specific descriptions only at the extremes and mid-point. A “4” and a “2” can be used to indicate performances that fall between these extremes.

Element 1, Speech Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well organized; logical; maintained audience interest; important facts included</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some disorganization of content or some content omitted; audience generally interested in flow of ideas; most important facts present</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little relevant content; disorganized; difficult to understand; audience not interested</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Element 2, Speech Presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent presentation; little use of notes; excellent eye contact and speaking volume; articulation correct at all times.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few distracting hand/body movements; usually maintained eye contact and adequate speaking volume; articulation generally correct.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor eye contact; distracting hand/body movements; volume poor; articulation inadequate.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Element 3, Material Content of Speech

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates a thorough understanding of concepts and facts related to nutrition and health; provides insights into the importance of proper nutrition; connects health and nutritional information to other subject areas.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displays a complete and accurate understanding of the concepts and facts related to nutrition and health.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates severe misconceptions about the concepts and facts related to nutrition and health.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar scoring rubrics would be necessary to evaluate the written report required of each student.
Student Rubrics

Students may also be asked to evaluate their own presentations. The rubrics created by the teacher can be rewritten as self-assessment rubrics for students so that students have the opportunity to evaluate their own performances on a scale similar to their teacher’s. The three student self-assessment rubrics presented below and on the following page have been modified from the above rubrics.

Element 1, Speech Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My speech was well organized and logical; I kept the interest of the audience; I included the important facts.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My speech was sometimes disorganized; sometimes I forgot to mention some important facts; the audience was generally interested in my speech; I included the most important facts.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My speech wasn’t very organized and I didn’t mention the important facts. The audience didn’t seem to be interested.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Element 2, Speech Presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I felt really good about my presentation; I rarely used notes; I kept eye contact with the audience; everyone was able to hear and understand me as I spoke.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt good about my presentation; I usually made eye contact with the audience; most of the time the audience could hear and understand me.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I didn’t look at the audience as I spoke; the audience couldn’t really hear me or understand me.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Element 3, Material Content of Speech

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand the concepts and facts related to nutrition and health; I understand the importance of proper nutrition; I know how health and nutritional information can be used in my other classes.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the concepts and facts related to nutrition and health.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t really understand the concepts and facts related to nutrition and health.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Florida Writes Rubrics

Another kind of rubric is used by the Florida Writes writing assessment program to assess the quality of student writing. Teachers can use this rubric to assess writing in the language arts classroom and to prepare students for success on the state writing assessment. These rubrics are presented on the following pages.
## Florida Writes Rubric: Grade 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 Points</strong></td>
<td>The writing is focused on the topic, has a logical organizational pattern (including a beginning, middle, conclusion, and transitional devices), and has ample supporting ideas or examples. The paper demonstrates a sense of completeness or wholeness. The writing demonstrates a mature command of language, including precision in word choice. Subject/verb agreement and verb and noun forms are generally correct. With few exceptions, the sentences are complete, except when fragments are used purposefully. Various kinds of sentence structures are used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 Points</strong></td>
<td>The writing is focused on the topic with adequate development of supporting ideas. There is an organizational pattern, although a few lapses may occur. The paper demonstrates a sense of completeness or wholeness. Word choice is adequate but may lack precision. Most sentences are complete, although a few fragments may occur. There may be occasional errors in subject/verb agreement and in standard forms of verbs and nouns, but not enough to impede communication. The conventions of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are generally followed. Various kinds of sentence structures are used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Points</strong></td>
<td>The writing is generally focused on the topic, although it may contain some extraneous or loosely related information. An organizational pattern is evident, although lapses may occur. The paper demonstrates a sense of completeness or wholeness. In some areas of the response, the supporting ideas may contain specifics and details, while in other areas, the supporting ideas may not be developed. Word choice is generally adequate. Knowledge of the conventions of punctuation and capitalization is demonstrated, and commonly used words are usually spelled correctly. There has been an attempt to use a variety of sentence structures, although most are simple constructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Points</strong></td>
<td>The writing is generally focused on the topic, although it may contain some extraneous or loosely related information. Although an organizational pattern has been attempted and some transitional devices have been used, lapses may occur. The paper may lack a sense of completeness or wholeness. Some supporting ideas or examples may not be developed with specifics and details. Word choice is adequate but limited, predictable, and occasionally vague. Knowledge of the conventions of punctuation and capitalization is demonstrated, and commonly used words are usually spelled correctly. There has been an attempt to use a variety of sentence structures, although most are simple constructions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Florida Writes Rubric: Grade 4 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Points</td>
<td>The writing may be slightly related to the topic or may offer little relevant information and few supporting ideas or examples. The writing that is relevant to the topic exhibits little evidence of an organizational pattern or use of transitional devices. Development of supporting ideas may be inadequate or illogical. Word choice may be limited or immature. Frequent errors may occur in basic punctuation and capitalization, and commonly used words may be frequently misspelled. The sentence structure may be limited to simple constructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Point</td>
<td>The writing may only minimally address the topic because there is little, if any, development of supporting ideas, and unrelated information may be included. The writing that is relevant to the topic does not exhibit an organizational pattern; few, if any, transitional devices are used to signal movement in the test. Supporting ideas may be sparse, and they are usually provided through lists, clichés, and limited or immature word choice. Frequent errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and sentence structure may impede communication. The sentence structure may be limited to simple constructions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Unscorable | The paper is UNSCORABLE because  
  - the response is not related to what the prompt requested the student to do.  
  - the response is simply a rewording of the prompt.  
  - the response is a copy of a published work.  
  - the student refused to write.  
  - the response is illegible.  
  - the response is incomprehensible (words arranged in such a way that no meaning is conveyed).  
  - the response contains an insufficient amount of writing to determine if the student was attempting to address the prompt.  
  - the writing folder is blank. |
Florida Writes Rubric: Grade 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6 Points</th>
<th>The writing is focused, purposeful, and reflects insight into the writing situation. The paper conveys a sense of completeness and wholeness with adherence to the main ideas, and its organizational pattern provides for a logical progression of ideas. The support is substantial, specific, relevant, concrete, and/or illustrative. The paper demonstrates a commitment to and an involvement with the subject, clarity in presentation of ideas, and may use creative writing strategies appropriate to the purpose of the paper. The writing demonstrates a mature command of language (word choice) with freshness of expression. Sentence structure is varied, and sentences are complete except when fragments are used purposefully. Few, if any, convention errors occur in mechanics, usage, and punctuation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Points</td>
<td>The writing focuses on the topic, and its organizational pattern provides for a progression of ideas, although some lapses may occur. The paper conveys a sense of completeness or wholeness. The development of the support is ample. The writing demonstrates a mature command of language, including precision in word choice. There is variation in sentence structure, and, with rare exceptions, sentences are complete except when fragments are used purposefully. The paper generally follows the conventions of mechanics, usage, and spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Points</td>
<td>The writing is generally focused on the topic but may include extraneous or loosely related material. An organizational pattern is apparent, although some lapses may occur. The paper exhibits some sense of completeness or wholeness. The support, including word choice, is adequate, although development may be uneven. There is little variation in sentence structure, and most sentences are complete. The paper generally follows the conventions of mechanics, usage, and spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Points</td>
<td>The writing is generally focused on the topic but may include extraneous or loosely related material. An organizational pattern has been attempted, but the paper may lack a sense of completeness or wholeness. Some support is included, but development is erratic. Word choice is adequate but may be limited, predictable, or occasionally vague. There is little, if any, variation in sentence structure. Knowledge of the conventions of mechanics and usage is usually demonstrated, and commonly used words are usually spelled correctly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Florida Writes Rubric: Grade 8 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 Points</th>
<th>The writing is related to the topic but includes extraneous or loosely related material. Little evidence of an organizational pattern may be demonstrated, and the paper may lack a sense of completeness or wholeness. Development of support is inadequate or illogical. Word choice is limited, inappropriate, or vague. There is little, if any, variation in sentence structure, and gross errors in sentence structure may occur. Errors in basic conventions of mechanics and usage may occur, and commonly used words may be misspelled.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Point</td>
<td>The writing may only minimally address the topic. The paper is a fragmentary or incoherent listing of related ideas or sentences or both. Little, if any, development of support or an organizational pattern or both is apparent. Limited or inappropriate word choice may obscure meaning. Gross errors in sentence structure and usage may impede communication. Frequent and blatant errors may occur in the basic conventions of mechanics and usage, and commonly used words may be misspelled.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Unscorable | The paper is UNSCORABLE because  
  • the response is not related to what the prompt requested the student to do.  
  • the response is simply a rewording of the prompt.  
  • the response is a copy of a published work.  
  • the student refused to write.  
  • the response is illegible.  
  • the response is incomprehensible (words are arranged in such a way that no meaning is conveyed).  
  • the response contains an insufficient amount of writing to determine if the student was attempting to address the prompt.  
  • the writing folder is blank. |
Florida Writes Rubric: Grade 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 Points</td>
<td>The writing is focused and purposeful, and it reflects insight into the writing situation. The organizational pattern provides for a logical progression of ideas. Effective use of transitional devices contributes to a sense of completeness. The support is substantial, specific, relevant, and concrete. The writer shows commitment to and involvement with the subject and may use creative writing strategies. The writing demonstrates a mature command of language with freshness of expression. Sentence structure is varied, and few, if any, convention errors occur in mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Points</td>
<td>The writing is focused on the topic, and its organizational pattern provides for a logical progression of ideas. Effective use of transitional devices contributes to a sense of completeness. The support is developed through ample use of specific details and examples. The writing demonstrates a mature command of language, and there is variation in sentence structure. The response generally follows the conventions of mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Points</td>
<td>The writing is focused on the topic and includes few, if any, loosely related ideas. An organizational pattern is apparent, and it is strengthened by the use of transitional devices. The support is consistently developed, but it may lack specificity. Word choice is adequate, and variation in sentence structure is demonstrated. The response generally follows the conventions of mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Points</td>
<td>The writing is focused but may contain ideas that are loosely connected to the topic. An organizational pattern is demonstrated, but the response may lack a logical progression of ideas. Development of support may be uneven. Word choice is adequate, and some variation in sentence structure is demonstrated. The response generally follows the conventions of mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Points</td>
<td>The writing addresses the topic but may lose focus by including extraneous or loosely related ideas. The organizational pattern usually includes a beginning, middle, and ending, but these elements may be brief. The development of the support may be erratic and nonspecific, and ideas may be repeated. Word choice may be limited, predictable, or vague. Errors may occur in the basic conventions of sentence structure, mechanics, usage, and punctuation, but commonly used words are usually spelled correctly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Point</td>
<td>The writing addresses the topic but may lose focus by including extraneous or loosely related ideas. The response may have an organizational pattern, but it may lack a sense of completeness or closure. There is little, if any, development of the support, and the support may consist of generalizations or fragmentary lists. Limited or inappropriate word choice may obscure meaning. Frequent and blatant errors may occur in the basic conventions of sentence structure, mechanics, usage, and punctuation, and commonly used words may be misspelled.</td>
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| Unscorable | The paper is UNSCORABLE because  
- the response is not related to what the prompt requested the student to do.  
- the response is simply a rewording of the prompt.  
- the response is a copy of a published work.  
- the student refused to write.  
- the response is illegible.  
- the response is incomprehensible (words are arranged in such a way that no meaning is conveyed).  
- the response contains an insufficient amount of writing to determine if the student was attempting to address the prompt.  
- the writing folder is blank. |
**Key Chapter Points**

- Assessment processes seek to measure students’ acquisition and application of skills and all aspects of knowledge and its connections.

- Assessment activities in the classroom should be integral, ongoing parts of the instruction and learning process.

- Teachers should use a variety of assessment methods and modifications to address different learning styles and student needs.

- Teachers have a wide variety of options for collecting information on the degree to which students have acquired and can apply knowledge and skills specific to language arts.

- Assessment activities will produce useful information to the degree that they are carefully planned, well organized, and consistently applied.

- Accurate assessment of student achievement provides a sound basis for classroom instructional decisions.
Chapter 7: The Learning Environment

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Design of Facilities
- Safety
- Scheduling
- Learning Resources
- Selection of Materials
- Using Technology
- Snapshot of an Effective Language Arts Classroom

Goal 4: School boards provide a learning environment conducive to teaching and learning.

Florida’s System of School Improvement and Accountability

Twenty-first-century classrooms envisioned by Florida’s education reform initiative allow students to experience learning in its real-world context. These active learning environments extend beyond the four walls of the classroom into the home, the local community, and even the larger global community. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate more community projects and more interaction with their local communities. For example, teachers may provide opportunities for students to participate in job-shadowing programs with community leaders and members of the business community. Local citizens may be invited into classrooms to share knowledge, skills, or ideas, or to participate in classroom projects. Students may also have direct access to the global community via computers, satellite transmissions, teleconferencing, and other technology, enabling them to work with other students and experts across the state, in other states, or in other countries.
Design of Facilities

There are many factors to consider in designing a physical environment that facilitates the most effective learning. The ideal language arts classroom is inviting. It has enough space for the free and flexible movement needed for a wide variety of learning approaches, such as cooperative learning, project work, and learning centers. Classroom furnishings may consist simply of tables and chairs, or desks and work areas that can be arranged and rearranged. The acoustics need to facilitate both classroom interaction and quiet time for reflection. Classrooms should have adequate storage and security for equipment and supplies; special consideration should be given to the proper storage of computers and other special equipment. In addition, classrooms should have appropriate technology support facilities, such as network access ports and electrical power outlets with ground fault circuit interruption protection. Teachers also need a carefully designed space for research, planning, collaboration with other teachers, and reflection. The elements considered in the physical design of classrooms can apply in designing the teacher’s space as well.

Educators should become familiar with the legal requirements concerning students with disabilities (I.D.E.A. and Rehabilitation Act, Section 504), which state that classrooms must accommodate disabled students. The Americans with Disabilities Act describes people as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more activities. There are many possible adaptations to the classroom, hallway, cafeteria, vocational workshop, or other areas of the school that can meet the needs of students with disabilities. These might include ramps, elevators, and raised work spaces for students who use wheelchairs; sound-absorbing materials to reduce reverberation for hearing-impaired students; and sufficient lighting for students with visual impairment.

Local school districts have many factors to consider when evaluating what is needed for the design or redesign of facilities. These factors might include local needs and goals, budgets, instructional methods, adaptations to meet the needs of individual students, potential changes in student enrollment, and flexibility to allow for changes to meet new conditions in the future.
Safety

Goal 5: Communities provide an environment that is drug-free and protects students' health, safety, and civil rights.

Florida’s System of School Improvement and Accountability

Schools should incorporate safety and health practices into the school environment. A safe, secure, learning environment for all students is an essential responsibility of the whole school community. Manuals specifying safety policies and regulations and incorporating state and federal policies are available for local schools. One aspect of school safety involves the physical environment, which should provide safe, clean facilities that meet all legal requirements. The environment should be free of odors, allergens, and harmful chemicals such as asbestos. To provide safety in the physical environment for students with disabilities, adaptations may be necessary, such as flashing fire alarms and special procedures for evacuation. A second aspect of school safety involves the supervision of students. Teachers must be aware of and understand safety procedures inside the school building, on school grounds, on field trips, and at special school events. Class activities conducted away from the classroom need to be carefully planned and examined for possible hazards. A third aspect of safety involves providing an environment in which everyone is safe from verbal, physical, and psychological harm. Teachers should also be prepared to use strategies for crisis intervention and conflict resolution.

Scheduling

Adequate time is essential for quality instruction and learning in order for students to achieve high academic standards. Students need sufficient time for concentrated involvement in learning experiences or projects. They may need time for extended discussions, experimentation, comprehension, and reflection.

Florida’s education reform initiative envisions that a strong element of the school improvement process will be provided by the local school community. This will have a significant effect on teachers’ work schedules and on the time teachers spend in preplanning, instruction, assessment, and evaluation of classroom activities. For example, professional educators will need time to research new instructional approaches and to further develop integrated, meaningful lesson plans. Teachers may
need additional time for selecting teaching materials, designing student assessment strategies, and structuring specific learning experiences. Time must also be available for conferencing with other teachers, counselors, psychologists, and administrators, and for communicating with parents.

Another aspect of scheduling involves the range of teacher responsibilities and class size, both of which can have a significant impact on the classroom environment. No single formula is adequate to determine the appropriate work load for teachers or the appropriate class size for all schools and districts. Generally, an acceptable range is established at the district level, taking into consideration the characteristics of the unique student population, the composition of individual classes, funding levels, current and planned education reforms, extra duties and activities teachers undertake, and the organization and administration of the school.

To increase the effectiveness of the way time is used for teaching and learning, local school districts and schools are investigating ways to amend their present time structures. For example, educators are using block scheduling, year-round calendars, combined courses, and other strategies.

Learning Resources

Classrooms today are alive with activity and use a broad range of resources: from simple construction paper and crayons, baby food jars, buttons and other manipulatives, newspapers, films, and textbooks to electronic encyclopedias, equipment and software for teleconferencing and satellite transmissions, and sophisticated laboratory devices. There may be colorful displays on the walls, maps to pull down, globes to touch, a variety of primary and secondary source materials, including art prints and music, and a generous supply of literature. Computer stations with multimedia capabilities, software, and up-to-date instructional materials are used to encourage active and authentic learning and assist in research and in the production of learning projects.

Instructional materials, assistive technology, and equipment are available for students with a variety of special needs. For example, for students with visual impairment, Braille and large-print books can be obtained through the Florida Instructional Materials Center. Adaptive computers, low-vision optical aids, and print-enlarging equipment are also available for vision-impaired students. Close-
captioned videos for students with hearing impairments are developed at the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind. As with instructional modifications, these specialized materials can often benefit students with learning difficulties who do not qualify for exceptional-student education programs.

**Selection of Materials**

The careful selection of instructional materials that support the development of conceptual understanding and encourage active learning is critical to a successful language arts program. Teachers play a central role in the selection of instructional materials both for the overall school and for their classrooms. Whenever possible, teachers should collaborate to consider books, resources, and other major purchases for the school or district.

In developing their instructional plans, teachers consider a wide range of materials for use in their classrooms. In addition to textbooks, useful materials include supplementary trade books, reference materials, posters, supplies, audiovisual materials, computer software, and multimedia materials and supplies. Teachers should base their selection of classroom materials on the instructional plan and the specific needs of the students. They might examine the content and presentation of the materials from many different perspectives, including the vision and goals of the local school, the goals of their specific instructional plan, and the school budget. Educators should refer to state guidelines and district policies as possible resources for evaluating and selecting specific materials.

**Using Technology**

The use of technology is already changing the world of business and industry and is transforming our schools as well. Because technology is such a powerful tool for teachers and students, opportunities for training in its use and applications should be a part of all education programs. Achieving high levels of skill in the use of technology will help students reach Florida’s high academic standards and contribute to their success in the workplace.
Technology can transform the classroom/laboratory into a multimedia learning center, giving teachers and students access to word processing, presentation tools, graphics, media integration, desktop publishing, and telecommunications resources. The application of technology in a language arts classroom can benefit students in a multitude of ways. For example, it can

- give students more control and involvement in their own learning process;
- promote investigative skills;
- serve as an access to almost unlimited sources of information;
- provide students with skills to measure, monitor, and improve their own performance and develop competencies for the workplace;
- make learning more interesting for students;
- enable students to communicate with people from many parts of the world, bringing the sights, sounds, and thoughts of another language and culture into the classroom;
- provide opportunities to apply knowledge to simulated or real-life projects; and
- prepare students for a high-tech world of work.

Distance learning uses communications technology to bring teaching and learning together through the transmission of information or expertise from one location to another. The use of this technology allows students to interact directly with teachers, experts, and students outside of their community.

Distance learning technologies are a valuable resource for language arts education; they can enrich and enhance the learning experience for all students. Using the same technology that distributes most broadcast and cable TV signals, satellite-based distance learning services can reach hundreds or thousands of receiving sites located all over the United States. Some cable companies have developed services targeted specifically to educators and students. Through microwave systems and fiberoptic cables, distance learning programming can be more readily distributed to remote areas. Educators with computers and modems have access to an increasingly large selection of on-line data resources and dial-up bulletin boards. These services typically offer electronic mail, research databases, forums, and discussion groups for a variety of special interests.
Using telecommunications, students in Clearwater can exchange ideas with students in other communities across Florida, in other states, and in other countries. Students can write stories together on-line or contribute news items to a jointly published on-line newspaper. Students can read and then discuss books with students in England, Russia, and Sweden. These examples are not futuristic visions. They are typical experiences happening right now in schools across the country.

One technological tool that promises to have innovative applications in future classrooms is the use of live interactive video over an electronic on-line network. This technology can provide opportunities for students to take electronic “field trips” to the bottom of the ocean, to the rain forests, to the Arctic, or to outer space.

As technology evolves, it will be essential to evaluate which new tools will be most useful in the educational setting, given program goals, ever-expanding student needs, and existing equipment. Educators will need to keep up with the variety of technologies and their applications. New equipment and software programs become available at a rapid rate; the best choice for today may be quickly outmoded. Therefore, any recommendations for specific hardware or software programs should be flexible, forward thinking, and based on extensive research so that money will be well spent. In addition, teachers must make a commitment to become personally adept in using educational technology. They will need to add to and refine their skills on a regular basis by keeping up with new technological developments and exploring additional capabilities of current technology. Appropriate training and support opportunities should be established by administrators for that purpose.

The age of technology affords educators a wealth of choices. As the use of technology expands into education, educators will have more opportunities to discover new ways to explore ideas and meet the diverse individual needs of students. The availability and appropriate use of technology is indispensable in developing programs that will prepare the students of today to face continuing advancements in the workplace and to meet the technological changes that will occur in the 21st century.

**Snapshot of an Effective Language Arts Classroom**

There is a mix of excited conversation and intense concentration as students work in Mr. Finley’s sixth-grade English class. Some students sit at computers composing letters to send to
Amanda is helping Jason edit his letter. Jason refuses to send his letter until it's perfect!

One group is interviewing, via computer, Maurice Sendak, the author of *Where the Wild Things Are*, in his home in New England. They are asking him questions such as “How did you develop your career?” “How do you approach illustrating a children’s book?” “How do you come up with ideas?” “What kind of research do you do?” “Do you use people you know to develop your characters?”

John and Ashley are sitting at the computer, working together on the graphics and layout for a class newsletter, using a publishing software program. The entire scene of this language arts classroom is one of high interest and pleasurable learning while students are thinking, talking, reading, and writing.
Key Chapter Points

• Community resources and the latest technology should be tapped to bring the world into the classroom, allowing students to encounter learning in real-world contexts.

• Effective facilities are carefully planned, taking into account changes in student enrollments, student abilities, budgets, instructional needs, and the goals of the language arts program.

• A safe, secure, learning environment is a priority for all students.

• Time can be used creatively, as a flexible resource.

• Classrooms should be rich with learning resources that afford opportunities for observation, manipulation of objects, exploration, experimentation, and discussion.

• The careful selection of instructional materials that effectively support the development of conceptual understanding and encourage active learning is critical to a successful language arts program.

• As technology expands into education, language arts educators can discover new ways to explore language arts ideas and meet the diverse, individual needs of students.
The Importance of Professional Development

Professional development is a continuous improvement process lasting from the time an individual decides to enter the education profession until retirement. It encompasses the processes that educators engage in to initially prepare themselves, continuously update themselves, and review and reflect on their own performance. If educators are to successfully prepare students for the future, they must be prepared for the future themselves. Schools and districts must be committed to offering the highest quality professional development opportunities for their teachers.

Rethinking Professional Development

Just as knowledge and skill requirements are changing for Florida students, so, too, are those for Florida educators. The globalization of commerce and industry, the explosive growth of technology, and the expansion of language arts knowledge demand that teachers continually acquire new knowledge and skills. The challenge for every avenue of professional development is to provide learning opportunities in which preservice teachers, as well as more experienced teachers, can develop or acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with change and pursue lifelong learning.
Preservice Education

Preservice education encompasses the training, preparation, and courses that future teachers undertake before certification. Research in schools across the nation shows that a crucial component of restructuring education is the teacher preparation program. Preservice education must develop the capacity to facilitate student learning and to be responsive to student and community needs, interests, and concerns (Darling-Hammond, 1993). To that end, teacher education programs at the college or university level are encouraged to incorporate the following:

- courses that develop a broad base of competencies, content area knowledge, and experiences for graduates to bring to the teaching profession;
- courses that include both theory and practice in teaching a diversity of students, including students with special needs;
- courses that present practical, proven, up-to-date approaches to curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
- training in the ability to understand and nurture the academic, emotional, and physical development of students;
- experiences that develop effective communication, team-building, and conferencing skills;
- extensive and ongoing student-teaching experiences that are supervised by qualified teachers and college or university personnel; and
- recognition that effective teachers must continue to grow professionally throughout their careers and must be proactive in seeking resources, assistance, and opportunities for growth.

By reexamining beliefs about teaching and learning, education faculties can design and implement improved teacher education programs. The goals of any such program are to produce creative, motivated, knowledgeable, confident, and technologically literate beginning teachers committed to lifelong growth.

Effective Professional Development

The term “professional development” is defined in this framework as those processes that improve and enhance the job-related knowledge and skills of practicing classroom teachers. Professional development provides the continuous, on-the-job
training and education needed to improve teaching and, ultimately, student learning. Florida’s school improvement initiative encourages local districts and schools to assume greater responsibility for professional development programs tailored to serve local school improvement efforts. Those educators charged with the design of these programs are urged to reflect upon the following characteristics of useful professional development:

**An effective professional development program actively engages educators in the improvement process.**

One facet of Florida’s school improvement and accountability initiative is to encourage local teams of educators to identify needs and clarify goals, solve problems, plan programs, monitor them reflectively, and make necessary adjustments. Professional development programs are an ideal way for districts to empower teachers to share in the decision-making processes within their schools and districts. Planners of professional development programs should encourage teachers to actively analyze their work, identify any needs and gaps in knowledge and skill, and provide suggestions about which resources might best close these gaps. Once educators have identified strategies to make school and classroom improvements, administrators and planners should use teacher expertise, wherever possible, in the preparation and delivery of professional development programs to support these strategies.

**An effective professional development program continually updates the teacher’s knowledge base and awareness.**

Systemic reform requires that teachers incorporate new teaching methods and content to help students achieve Florida’s new rigorous academic standards. Consequently, professional development programs must provide teachers with opportunities to acquire a broad base of new subject-area knowledge and instructional strategies so that Florida educators are better equipped to implement strategies to improve schools and raise achievement.
Educators will also need ongoing training in the use of educational technology. Equally important, professional development program planners are encouraged to work with teachers in identifying changes in student diversity, needs, and problems. If teachers are to successfully engage students in the learning process, they must understand students’ cultural and linguistic backgrounds and life circumstances. In addition, professional development programs will need to address the issue of change: how to incorporate and embrace change in the classroom and how systemic reform impacts teaching methods and curriculum planning.

**An effective professional development program establishes a collaborative environment based on professional inquiry.**

Effective professional development encourages knowledge sharing and other opportunities for teachers to share ideas and experiences. Professional development strategies are most likely to be successful when teachers are encouraged to reflect on their own practices, identify problems and possible solutions, share ideas about instruction, engage in scholarly reading and research, and try out new strategies in their classrooms. Thus, staff networking, clinical education partnerships with universities in peer coaching, and mentoring are important tools to incorporate into long-range professional development planning. Peer coaching offers a nonthreatening environment in which teachers can implement new techniques and ideas and receive feedback from colleagues. Mentoring can be especially beneficial to new teachers; this mutually rewarding relationship with an experienced educator might include an exchange of teaching materials and information, observation and assistance with classroom skills, or field-testing of new teaching methods.

**An effective professional development program is continuously improved by follow-up.**

Professional development is an ongoing process; it does not simply consist of isolated presentations given by an expert or consultant. Effective inservice includes introductory training as well as a plan for ongoing monitoring, enhancement, and follow-up of learning. Research corroborates the need for follow-up that continues long enough for new behaviors learned during introductory training to be incorporated into teachers’ ongoing practice (Sparks
and Loucks-Horsley, 1989). Planners can build this kind of reinforcement into professional development programs in a number of ways, including providing opportunities to practice new methods in coaching situations, arranging for ongoing assistance and support, and systematically collecting feedback from teachers.

**An effective professional development program is actively and continuously supported by administrators.**

Numerous studies (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978; Stallings and Mohlman, 1981; Loucks and Zacchic, 1983; Fielding and Schalock, 1985; Loucks-Horsley et al, 1987) reveal that active support by principals and district administrators is crucial to the success of any improvement effort. This supportive role begins with leadership that places a high priority on professional development, promotes communication, and fosters a spirit of collegiality. It extends to the thoughtful allocation of resources, including time. Up-to-date materials, classroom equipment, and time for educators to pursue opportunities for professional development and to practice and implement new teaching strategies are essential to ongoing staff improvement efforts. As Judy-Arin Krupp (1991) suggests, schools should develop a norm for growth...that says staff development is not here to correct defects but to offer opportunities for everyone in the system to grow. Next, we need to recognize that everyone grows differently. We ask, “How can I help you grow as an educator so that we can provide the best possible education for students in this school?” (p. 3)

**The Commitment to Lifelong Learning**

Effective language arts educators do not rely solely on inservice programs provided by their schools or districts. They take personal responsibility for planning and pursuing other development activities.

As self-directed learners, quality language arts educators strive to gain new insights, improve their skills, and broaden their perspectives. They work at the school and district levels to create professional development experiences for themselves and their colleagues. They form alliances with supervisors, professional development specialists, principals, and other educators across all grade levels. They seek out...
quality workshops and courses. They take advantage of courses offered through technologies, such as on-line learning, interactive videoconferences, satellite teleconferences, and other innovative approaches to their own education. They also engage in experiential learning opportunities, such as “job shadowing” in their discipline or other practical, real-world experience in the community.

A particularly useful tool for professional development in language arts can be membership in professional organizations. Professional organizations specific to the language arts include the following:

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
1111 W. Kenyon Road
Urbana, IL 61801-1096
Phone: (800) 369-6283 or (217) 328-3870

International Reading Association (IRA)
P.O. Box 8139
800 Barksdale Road
Newark, DE 19714-8139
Phone: (800) 336-7323 or (302) 731-1600

Florida Reading Association
Cece Esposito, Executive Consultant
913 Drepsen Hook Drive
Orlando, FL 32825

Reading Supervisors of Florida
Jackie Mathews, President
445 W. Amelia Street
Orlando, FL 32801

Florida Council of Teachers of English
Joan Kaywell, President
College of Education, 208-B
University of South Florida
4202 East Fowler Avenue
Tampa, FL 33620
In addition to providing invaluable opportunities for idea sharing and networking with other teachers, many professional organizations also publish journals that feature the latest developments in the field, assess new strategies and methodologies, and highlight new career and training opportunities. NCTE offers *Language Arts* and *English Journal*, both of which are published eight times a year, and *Primary Voices K-6* and *Voices from the Middle*, which are published quarterly. IRA offers *Reading Teacher* and *The Journal of Adolescence and Adult Literacy*, which are published eight times a year, and *Reading Research Quarterly*.

The following are only a few of the many excellent professional books available to PreK-12 teachers:


This book presents a convincing account of Atwell’s experiences in an eighth-grade classroom. She shares her discovery of what is wrong with traditional methods of teaching reading and writing to middle school students and explains how to establish a classroom workshop for young readers and writers.


This is a book for teachers who are ready to put writing to work across the curriculum; it recommends that teachers abandon the encyclopedia-based approach to writing and ask their students to write as literary critics, scientists, historians, and mathematicians.


In this book the author describes her involvement with her students and young daughter and makes revisions to the workshop model depicted in her book *In the Middle*. 

This group of essays emphasizes the importance of writing in both professional and personal settings.


This is an extended discussion of Cambourne’s conditions of learning and the theory behind whole language.


This book is valuable for teachers interested in multi-age classrooms, integrated teaching, and coteaching.


This is a detailed book that traces how children learn to read and write.


The authors discuss thematic integration, its constraints, and the importance of collaboration through the modeling of two different units: “Making Discoveries” and “Trying on Someone Else’s Skin.”


Hansen brings reading and writing together by demonstrating how recent approaches in teaching writing can be used in teaching reading. Her approach encourages students to be responsible for their own learning.


Significant advances in literacy teaching and learning form a backdrop for an emerging discussion of what middle-level educators need to know to design a successful reading program.
This is a widely used teacher text about helping junior and senior high students learn to write; this book dispels long-held myths and offers fresh insight.

This interesting yet informal book challenges teachers to be thinkers in order to develop thinking students.

This book of essays, focusing on how a response-based classroom might look, will be useful to upper-elementary through high-school teachers.

This book shows the student how to create a discovery draft and takes the student through the processes and decisions involved in revision; for example, focus, audience, form, information, structure, and language.

Rico explains the practical applications of brain research to the teaching of writing. She shows how to use clustering to find a topic and then how to explore topics in more depth. She emphasizes the importance of pictures, designs, color, and other visuals as aides in drafting and organizing writing.

Rief discusses the mechanics of writing and reading workshops in a traditional middle school setting and her solutions to the difficulties of teaching process writing and reading to 125 students a day, five days a week.

A ninth-grade English teacher for many years, Romano discusses process theory and practice, grading, respect for students’ writing, and many other useful topics in a very enthusiastic and readable style.

This book provides in-depth information and step-by-step lessons on such topics as becoming a K-12 whole-language teacher, shared reading and writing, and journal writing. It also provides extended pages of annotated book lists for K-12 students.


This book demonstrates that links can and should exist between the instruction and assessment of writing.


Teachers and researchers confront such issues as labeling, testing, programming, and skills for “special” and “at-risk” students in the elementary and middle schools. They describe positive environments and holistic approaches for reading and writing.


This book provides answers to questions about portfolio assessment and provides assistance for teaching students to use portfolios for self-assessment.


This book offers detailed guidance for all aspects of teaching and using writing, from prewriting and revising to issues of grammar and evaluation.

**Attributes of the Professional Educator**

The goal underlying any Florida professional development program is to prepare educators in the competencies needed to successfully implement Florida’s long-term education improvement initiative. Shortly after the creation of Florida’s school improvement and accountability initiative, the Education Standards Commission began a project to identify and validate those teacher competencies necessary to successfully implement this initiative. The Commission’s efforts focused on the
preparation and proficiency of teachers in helping students achieve higher and more rigorously standards. The Commission identified twelve broad principles and key indicators that reflect the high performance standards required of Florida’s teachers. These “accomplished practices” are summarized below.

**Diversity**
The professional educator uses teaching and learning strategies that reflect each student’s culture, learning styles, special needs, and socioeconomic background.

**Assessment**
The professional educator uses assessment strategies (traditional and alternative) to assist the continuous development of the learner.

**Planning**
The professional educator plans, implements, and evaluates effective instruction in a variety of learning environments.

**Human Development and Learning**
The professional educator uses an understanding of learning and human development to provide a positive learning environment that supports the intellectual, personal, and social development of all students.

**Learning Environments**
The professional educator creates and maintains positive learning environments in which students are actively engaged in learning, social interaction, cooperative learning, and self-motivation.

**Communication**
The professional educator uses effective communication techniques with students and all other stakeholders.

**Critical Thinking**
The professional educator uses appropriate techniques and strategies that promote and enhance the critical, creative, and evaluative thinking capabilities of students.
Technology
The professional educator uses appropriate technology in teaching and learning processes.

Role of the Teacher
The professional educator works with various education professionals, parents, and other stakeholders in the continuous improvement of the educational experiences of students.

Continuous Improvement
The professional educator engages in continuous professional quality improvement for self and school.

Knowledge and Understanding
The professional educator demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.

Ethics and Principles
The professional educator adheres to the Code of Ethics and Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida.
**Key Chapter Points**

- Florida's school improvement initiative calls on schools to assume greater responsibility for professional development programs.

- If educators are to successfully prepare students for the future, they must be prepared for the future themselves.

- Preservice education should provide education graduates with a broad base of knowledge and skills to facilitate student learning and to be responsive to student and community needs, interests, and concerns.

- Inservice education should continue these efforts in an environment that supports and sustains teachers as individuals and collaborators in the process of systemic reform.

- Professional development programs should be designed to encourage every member of the learning community—teachers, support staff, and administrators—in their pursuit of lifelong learning.

- The role of professional development is to assist educators in developing the accomplished practices necessary to successfully implement Florida's education reform initiative.
Students in the fictitious community of Sunrise Bay study reading and writing beginning in kindergarten and continuing through twelfth grade. However, the School Advisory Council at Sunrise Bay High School has learned that local businesses find many graduates do not have adequate reading and writing skills to succeed in the work force. Sunrise Bay’s High School Advisory Council recommends a Language Arts Improvement Team be established to review the curriculum and methods of instruction in light of the needs of the business community. The team includes representatives from the business community in addition to language arts teachers, personnel from middle and elementary schools, the principal, teachers from a variety of disciplines, district program supervisors, university faculty, students, parents, and other community citizens.

The Nature of School Improvement

The primary goal of Florida’s improvement and accountability legislation is to raise student achievement by returning the problem-solving processes in education to the people closest to the students. This vision of local control can become a reality when individual schools and districts embrace the responsibility of becoming well-informed about the school improvement process, which may be both schoolwide and specifically targeted toward a single program.

In Florida, School Advisory Councils are charged with leading the overall school improvement process by drafting annual plans for raising student achievement and
meeting the state education goals and standards in all subject areas. These councils are composed of educators, parents, and community members who are representative of the diverse population served by the school.

The components of the improvement process make up a continuous cycle that entails a thoughtful study of the school program. The improvement process includes the following components: evaluating the results of the existing program in terms of student achievement and identifying areas of concern or areas that need improvement; determining the desired reforms to be undertaken; and implementing and evaluating these reforms. These components of the school improvement process can be applied to subject-area programs as well, both at the district and school levels. This chapter highlights the steps of the improvement process and offers guidelines to local educators as they improve their language arts programs.

**The Evaluation Process**

The Language Arts Improvement Team meets to discuss the ways in which local businesses can assist in helping Sunrise Bay high school students achieve the literacy skills necessary for success in the local work force. For guidance in this process, committee members review the locally developed vision statement for Sunrise Bay language arts programs, which highlights student understanding of the relevance of school activities beyond the classroom. As the team members study language arts curricula at different grade levels, teaching methods, and results of student assessments, they discover that Sunrise Bay students have not been given the opportunity to apply their skills to authentic business experiences. The Improvement Team considers various ways in which businesses can form partnerships with schools so that students can gain exposure to the forms of communication used in business environments.

Regular program evaluation ensures that the school implements language arts programs that raise the achievement of all students, identify and meet the needs of the local community, and focus on content that aligns with state standards. Program evaluation should include, not just inform, all people involved in and affected by the
program. To help facilitate this process, districts and schools are encouraged to create Language Arts Improvement Teams.

With the overriding goal of student achievement as a backdrop, one of the Language Arts Improvement Team’s first tasks should be to develop a list of questions or concerns about the language arts program. These might be organized around the components of this framework, for example, the program’s vision, its reflection of Florida’s Goal 3 standards, its use of innovative instructional strategies, or its connection to other disciplines. The questions might address program purposes, goals, content, context, instructional strategies, assessment methods and results, resources, attitudes of staff and students toward language arts, and connections to other disciplines. Questions or concerns might also focus on the unique needs of the school or the local community.

During the evaluation process, it is useful to gather data about a variety of dimensions of the language arts program from as many sources as appropriate and as possible. Some evaluation methods may be informal, part of the day-to-day activity of teaching and learning; others may be more formal, yielding information gathered from a variety of sources, such as

- surveys, questionnaires, and interviews;
- school statistics (for example, enrollment in specific subjects and electives);
- student assessments;
- reports from external evaluators; and
- self-evaluations.

Once information has been collected, the Language Arts Improvement Team should interpret it within the context of the identified questions or concerns and make recommendations for changing the program in order to bring about improvement in identified areas. Team members can also use the data to identify additional questions and concerns.

The process of generating questions and concerns to guide the review of the language arts program, analyzing existing data, reaching conclusions on which parts need changing, and thinking up and testing solutions encourages ownership and shared responsibility for ongoing program improvement. Districts and schools are
encouraged to promote and integrate, where appropriate, innovative ideas suggested by those people specifically affected by and involved in the improvements.

**Planning Changes for Improvement**

The Language Arts Improvement Team polls local businesses to determine how the schools and the community can work together to improve student performance in language arts skills. Many local businesses demonstrate an interest in becoming involved with language arts classrooms through mentoring and job-shadowing programs. The managing editor of the local newspaper suggests beginning an internship program for high school students interested in journalism. Several company leaders agree to assist teachers in setting up authentic activities related to their fields and offer to provide feedback to students during the assessment process. A teacher on the improvement team suggests pairing interested businessmen and women with students for job-shadowing, tutoring, and mentoring activities. Another member suggests that this job shadowing include teachers. The Language Arts Improvement Team writes a comprehensive improvement plan incorporating these ideas, including information on available resources and schedules for implementation.

Once areas needing improvement have been identified, the Language Arts Improvement Team can investigate various solutions and then develop a plan to make and implement the changes that will bring about improvement. A clear vision of the desired results is vital. In general, the plan should include a time line and a division of responsibilities to help assure its completion. It should be flexible and include continuous internal monitoring to determine the effectiveness of the changes to be implemented. The plan should also identify the general elements that will be needed to implement improvements, when each might occur, who will be responsible for what, and what resources are needed. Finally, the plan should align with schoolwide improvement.

It is important to keep in mind that all the additional resources needed may not be readily available. It may take some reallocation, some creative acquisition, some modification of existing resources to “get the job done.” An important part of the plan is monitoring the results of any changes. If changes are not producing intended improvements or if obstacles develop, other approaches can be tried.

Developers of school and district language arts improvement plans may wish to consider the following questions as they create the plan for improvement:
Are all the stakeholders involved in the process?
Is there a consensus about what needs improvement as well as potential strategies to be undertaken?
Have periodic checks been established to monitor implementation?
Has a reasonable time line been set?
Have measures of adequate progress been clearly defined?
Are the necessary human and financial resources available to implement the plan?

An important component of the improvement process is gaining the support and endorsement of those administrators who have overall responsibility for providing the resources and services to promote and facilitate the necessary changes. Staff development, different forms of evaluation, and/or different ways of operating in school buildings and classrooms may be required. Thus, administrative support for any improvement plan is critically important.

Once finalized, the improvement plan may be shared with those essential support systems that operate outside of the professional education community. Parents and guardians, elected officials, business and industry leaders, and members of media organizations all have a stake in the school improvement process. By communicating planned program improvements to the public, schools and districts encourage the involvement of all educational stakeholders in the processes and operations of education, which in turn fosters the development of a greater sense of community.

The Implementation Process

The Language Arts Improvement Team is impressed with the level of involvement by the Sunrise Bay school community. Several internship programs are in place with various companies, giving students the opportunity to participate in the daily operations of business. Representatives from a local employment agency visit high school students to give workshops on writing resumes and cover letters. A middle school class is getting practice writing business proposals as a classroom activity in conjunction with a local sports franchise. Students in an elementary class work with representatives from a local advertising agency to create, write, and videotape commercials for upcoming student council elections. Through the improvements planned by the Improvement Team and implemented by local educators, the Sunrise Bay community witnesses its vision for language arts programs in action.
Implementation is the stage when the vision for improvement becomes a reality. After the Language Arts Improvement Team has gained approval for its plan, it should begin to orchestrate and coordinate activities, strategies, and tactics at the school level. Implementation gives teachers and administrators opportunities to put into practice what they have learned during the improvement process and to work toward achieving the goals set forth in the language arts program vision statement.

Program improvement necessitates change, which progresses through several stages. People may initially oppose a change until they get enough information to become comfortable. With time, the innovation may even be improved by the very people who were opposed to its implementation.

**Taking the Next Step**

The community of Sunrise Bay is proud of its schools. Students, teachers, parents, and businesses have worked together to improve reading and writing. Performance has improved on a variety of authentic measures in classrooms, and standardized test scores have improved. Communications scores continue to be strong in the statewide assessments: Florida Writes; and High School Competency Test (H SCT), Grade 11. Through the partnerships developed between schools and businesses, students have demonstrated their understanding of the importance and the applicability of language arts skills to the business environment. Local businesses have noticed an improvement in the skills of the students who choose to work in the community after high school graduation.

In addition, students regularly participate in activities that show their proficiency and interest in reading and writing: reading programs such as Sunshine Reading sponsored by the Florida Reading Association (FRA), Children’s Choices sponsored by the International Reading Association (IRA), and Reading Is Fundamental (RIF); writing award programs sponsored by the Florida Council of Teachers of English (FCTE) and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE); a variety of programs sponsored by the local schools and the community.

As schools improve, so does the community. As the community changes, so does the district’s PreK-12 language arts program. The process is cyclical, continuous, and mutually beneficial.

The cyclical process of evaluation, planning for improvement, implementing changes for improvement, and monitoring the results of those changes has a number
of benefits. It involves a broad representation of the local community. It allows for continual improvements that incorporate advances in technology and gains in knowledge associated with the instruction of the language arts. It provides the opportunity to create programs that meet the unique needs of students, address specific local issues and concerns, and align with state standards. Ultimately, an ongoing improvement process helps ensure success for each and every Florida student in meeting high academic standards.

**Key Chapter Points**

- In both business and industry and in public sector organizations, a collaborative process of sound and systematic program evaluation, planning for improvement, implementation of innovative strategies, and monitoring of results leads to success.

- The overall improvement process being implemented through each School Advisory Council can also be applied to the language arts program at either the district or school level.

- Change happens slowly and only in an environment that encourages innovative and proactive thinking.

- To be systemic and successful, school and district programs should be designed with care, include all those concerned about success in education, and provide time for creativity, implementation, practice, reflection, revision, and renewal.


