

Appendix F: Introduction

NYSAA Frameworks

ADMINISTRATION MANUAL

New York State Alternate Assessment
(September 2013)

NYSAA Frameworks for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies

The New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) is a datafolio assessment that documents student achievement in the content areas of English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies. The datafolio is a collection of student performance data documented through the use of direct observation, student work products, photographs and audio/video clips. Documentation and evidence for ELA and mathematics is based on the New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Documentation and evidence for science and social studies is based on the New York State Learning Standards and Core Curriculum. The content areas assessed and their corresponding grade levels are outlined in the table below.

Content Areas Assessed	Grade(s)
ELA	3–8 and high school
Mathematics	3–8 and high school
Science	4, 8, and high school
Social Studies	High school

The NYSAA Frameworks represent the alignment of Extensions and Alternate Grade Level Indicators (AGLIs) with the content Standards established for all students by the Board of Regents. Teachers of students who have been designated for participation in the NYSAA should use the Frameworks to help plan and implement daily instruction, and assessment tasks that are based on grade-level content Standards. For a student with a severe cognitive disability, the content Standards may be modified in depth and breadth, but must parallel the curriculum, materials, and instruction that the student’s nondisabled peers are experiencing as part of their classroom instruction. For example, a teacher instructing a student about Shakespeare uses a modified text version of a Shakespearean play. This ensures that students with severe cognitive disabilities are being held to grade-level expectations, and therefore, high expectations of academic achievement.

By using the NYSAA Frameworks, teachers can assess students on tasks that are aligned to the grade-level content found in the CCLS for ELA and mathematics and the State Learning Standards and Core Curriculum for science and social studies. For each content area, the Frameworks include:

- test blueprints;
- essences of grade-level performance expectations;
- Extensions or AGLIs; and
- Assessment Tasks.

NYSAA Test Blueprints

Following this Frameworks Introduction are the NYSAA test blueprints. The Frameworks include a test blueprint for each content area. Each blueprint specifies the grade-level content on which each student taking the NYSAA must be assessed. Datafolios for all students will include ELA and mathematics and will measure each of five standards from the CCLS. Datafolios for students in specific grades will include science and social studies and will measure each of two standards from the State’s Learning Standards and Core Curriculum.

Grade	ELA	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
3	5 Standards	5 Standards		
4	5 Standards	5 Standards	2 Standards	
5	5 Standards	5 Standards		
6	5 Standards	5 Standards		
7	5 Standards	5 Standards		
8	5 Standards	5 Standards	2 Standards	
High School	5 Standards	5 Standards	2 Standards	2 Standards

Grade-Level Frameworks

The next section includes the individual grade levels of the Frameworks. Each grade contains the specific content areas that are required to be assessed, starting with ELA and followed by mathematics, science, and social studies. Each of the content Frameworks for the grade levels contains the Standard, the essence(s) of the grade-level student performance expectations, the Extensions or AGLIs, and the Assessment Tasks (ATs). There is a header at the top right of each page to indicate the section of the Frameworks, the grade, and the content area.

The Essences of Standards (Standards and Essences)

The Standards and the essences of those expectations are provided in the next section of the Frameworks. The performance expectations show the portion of the Standard that was selected by the teacher committee to be included in the Frameworks. The committee, which included curriculum experts, identified the essences or major understandings of the Standards. The page numbers indicate where these Standards are located in the CCLS or Core Curriculum Guides.

Extensions and Alternate Grade-Level Indicators (AGLIs)

The next section includes the Extensions or AGLIs that are based on the essences of the Standards. Each bulleted Extension or AGLI describes student performance expectations for students with severe cognitive disabilities. The Extensions or AGLIs vary in complexity, from less complex to more complex, and provide various entry points for the student to access the grade-level content. In most cases, this progression starts with the beginning skill(s) aligned with the Standards; the Extensions or AGLIs, then progress to a skill(s) that requires the student to demonstrate a higher level of knowledge, skills, and understanding; the Extensions or AGLIs then progress from the middle complexity to the high complexity which further increases the skill(s) that the student is asked to demonstrate. A teacher must select one Extension or AGLI from this section for each Standard. When reviewing the Extensions or AGLIs, it is recommended that teachers start with the middle complexity level to determine the Extension or AGLI that is most appropriate for the student. A baseline administration is required to confirm for the teacher that the student is being assessed on an Extension or AGLI from the most appropriate complexity level.

Each Extension and AGLI has a five-digit numeric code associated with it. This is for reporting purposes. Teachers must be sure to carefully transfer the Extension or AGLI code and corresponding text to the Data Summary Sheets.

Assessment Tasks (ATs)

Finally, the teacher selects an Assessment Task which aligns to the Extension or AGLI. The tasks are arranged from less complex to more complex and correspond to the Extensions and AGLIs. Each AT has a code to indicate the Extension or AGLI to which it aligns. For example, the task in Grade 3 ELA, AT35111C, “The student will recognize a word as a noun” is aligned to Extension code 35111 “Recognize a word, picture, symbol as a noun.” Every Extension and AGLI has at least one corresponding AT and some may have more than one AT. If there is more than one AT for an Extension or AGLI, the AT code has an A, B, or C after the five-digit number.

Teachers can use only the Assessment Tasks from the Frameworks. It is no longer allowable to develop an original task. The Assessment Tasks are designed to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and understanding of the Extension or AGLI being assessed and are already aligned with the Standard. Some tasks are very specific, and it is important to confirm that the verifying evidence demonstrates the task as written. When planning for and/or selecting verifying evidence, the alignment of the evidence to the task must be reviewed to confirm it aligns. Be sure to include vocabulary from the task in the evidence when there are written directions or other information provided on the evidence.

Most Extensions, AGLIs and their associated Assessment Tasks are presented in a singular format. It is expected that, at a minimum, the student would demonstrate the skill as written. However, best practice would be to provide as many opportunities, questions, items, problems, etc. as is appropriate for the student. Doing so provides a greater opportunity for increased success. There are some Extensions and AGLIs that include plurals and AND, OR or AND/OR statements and teachers must demonstrate these characteristics on EACH piece of verifying evidence.

Examples of how the task could be conducted or what the activity might look like are provided after many of the Assessment Tasks and are indicated as an “e.g.”. These examples are provided to demonstrate the content, but are not required. Teachers can design the activity and the verifying evidence in a manner that is best suited to the student and his or her modalities.

The remaining Frameworks for each content area are organized in the same manner. Teachers are encouraged to review the contents and make decisions that will result in an assessment that provides challenging tasks for each student.

Content-Area Glossary

The last sections of the Frameworks are the content-area glossaries. There is one glossary for each content area assessed by the NYSAA. The glossaries contain many terms from the Extensions, AGLIs and Assessment Tasks. These terms provide teachers with an indication of what the terms mean. Where possible, examples have also been provided. Referencing the content-area glossaries is very important during the planning stages and also during Collegial Review. The task and evidence must use the vocabulary from the Extension or AGLI, as appropriate. Failure to use the vocabulary from the Extension or AGLI and neglecting to reference the glossary may disqualify the student from receiving a reportable score.