NEW YORK STATE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE TEST (NYSESLAT)

GRADES 2-4

TEST SPECIFICATIONS

WITH LINKS TO STANDARDS

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PART I

TEST SPECIFICATIONS

for

WRITING

SPEAKING

READING

LISTENING

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WRITING

Number of Writing Tasks: 3

Task Types are:

- Prewriting for a story/essay (using a graphic organizer that is provided)
- Writing the story/essay (one writing prompt)
- Editing a piece of writing (12 errors)

SCORING THE WRITING EXERCISES

The 2-4 Writing exercises are scored holistically. For Prewriting, a 0-1-2 scale is used. For Writing a story/essay, a 0-1-2-3 scale is used. For Editing, corrected errors are counted, and the number of corrected errors is then translated to a 3-2-1-0- scale.

Scoring Task Type 1: Prewriting for a story/essay

Score	Characteristics of Students Responses
2	The student fills in the boxes with clear and relevant ideas. The responses in most of the boxes have enough detail to show thinking, imagination, or insight into the topic.
1	The student attempts to write something relevant to the topic in some of the boxes. All or most of the responses are single words or very simple phrases.
0	The boxes are blank, or only one box is filled in, or the information written in the boxes is irrelevant or incoherent.

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Scoring Task Type 2: Writing the story/essay

Score	Characteristics of Students Responses
4	The student's response: • is completely and easily comprehensible; has an appropriate main idea or theme • provides appropriate and specific details, examples and, if required, supporting evidence; and develops in a coherent and connected way • contains language that flows in well-developed sentences, with some variety in sentence structure • shows well-developed vocabulary resources (the student usually finds appropriate words to convey meaning) • displays few errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation; errors do not interfere with communication
3	The student's response: • is comprehensible, though the reader may have to make an effort to understand it; has an identifiable main idea or purpose • provides some appropriate details, examples and, if required, supporting evidence; and develops in a coherent and connected way • is written entirely, or almost entirely, in complete sentences; displays some variety in sentence structure • shows emerging vocabulary resources (the student often finds appropriate words to convey meaning) • displays some errors in grammar (for example, in the use of articles and prepositions), spelling and punctuation, but these errors do not impede communication
2	The student's response: • is somewhat comprehensible but often requires a marked effort on the part of the reader to understand it; may lack a main idea • often fails to provide appropriate details, examples, or evidence • displays little or no variety in sentence structure; the writing may be choppy or abrupt • shows basic vocabulary resources; errors in word choice sometimes interfere with communication • displays frequent errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions, and avoids more difficult structures; errors may interfere with communication
1	The student's response: • is often incomprehensible; has no main idea or clear purpose; and may not address every part of the question/prompt • provides few, if any, details, examples, or evidence • contains few, if any, complete sentences; the writing may seem inappropriate or incoherent • shows a limited range of vocabulary, which interferes with communication • shows little control of grammar and of the conventions of written English
0	The student's response is not recognizable as written English, does not address the question at all, or is completely irrelevant or incoherent.

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Scoring Task Type 3: Editing a piece of writing

SCORE	Number of Errors the Student Corrects Properly
3	10 - 12
2	6 – 9
1	3 – 5
0	0 - 2

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SPEAKING

Number of Test Questions: 5

Task Types for Students:

- Narrate a story based on a 4-picture sequence*
- Describe and interpret information in a chart or graph*
- Express an opinion or explain a personal preference*
- Ask appropriate questions in school or social situations*
- Provide information and assistance
- Explain actions, choices, and decisions
- Make an argument/speak persuasively
- Make a comparison/contrast

* Asterisked item types will appear in each form.

SCORING THE SPEAKING TASKS

The 2-4 Speaking tasks are scored holistically using two rating scales. A 0-1-2 rating scale is used for the *Express an opinion or explain a personal preference* and *Ask appropriate questions in school or school situations* item types. A 0-1-2-3 point rating scale is used for all of the other item types listed above.

The administrator of the tasks scores each task after the student has finished speaking.

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SCORING GUIDE FOR GRADES 2-4 SPEAKING

2-1-0 SCALE

Score Point	Characteristics of Student Responses
2	The student's response: • is understandable and appropriate • is basically grammatically correct • presents appropriate word choices for the grade level • may have minor errors, but the errors are infrequent and they do not interfere with communication
1	The student's response: • is understandable • displays noticeable errors in grammar • displays noticeable errors in word choice • displays limited English proficiency
0	The student gives no response, gives a response that cannot be understood as English, or does not demonstrate an understanding of English.

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3-2-1-0 SCALE

Score	Characteristics of Student Responses
3	The student's response: • is completely and easily comprehensible • is coherent • is fluent • provides appropriate and specific details and/or examples • shows well-developed vocabulary resources (the student can usually find the right word) • may display grammatical mistakes (for example, in the use of articles or prepositions), but mistakes do not generally interfere with communication • may display an accent, but errors of pronunciation and intonation do not interfere with communication
2	The student's response: • is comprehensible, but may require effort on the part of the listener • develops in a somewhat coherent way • is somewhat fluent • provides some appropriate and specific details and/or examples • displays a basic, but not wide or extensive vocabulary (the student sometimes cannot find the right word) • grammatical errors sometimes interfere with comprehension • may display errors in pronunciation and/or intonation that interfere with communication
1	The student's response: • is somewhat comprehensible • presents limited ideas (the student has difficulty expressing a complete thought without prompting) • is spoken haltingly (the student usually does not produce no more than one or two words at a time) • provides few, if any, details or examples • shows a very limited range of vocabulary, which interferes with communication (the student often cannot find the right word) • makes numerous grammatical errors that interfere with communication • shows little control of pronunciation, intonation, or stress
0	The student gives no response, gives a response that cannot be understood as English, or does not demonstrate an understanding of English.

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READING

Number of Questions: 25

Task Types for Students:

- Reading comprehension passages with multiple-choice questions.
- Passage Types
  - Fiction/Literary (1-3 passages)
  - Graphic (1-2 passages)
  - Non-fiction (1-3 passages)
- Question Types That Must Be Represented:
  - Main Idea/Topic Summary
  - Detail/Fact
  - Vocabulary
  - Sequence of Events/Process
  - Inference/Prediction
  - Reference/Antecedent
  - Cause/Effect
  - Interpretation
  - Literary Elements such as Plot, Character, or Setting
- Question Types That Will Also Be Represented, as Appropriate:
  - Author's Purpose
  - Literary/Genre
  - Fact versus Opinion

Note on Passage Types:

Among the nonfiction, fiction, and graphic passages, writers of test questions and test assemblers are encouraged to include passages that reflect cultural patterns and norms in the United States and /or the cultures and perspectives of immigrants to the United States.

Note on Answers:

Students mark their answers on a multiple-choice answer sheet.

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LISTENING

Number of Test Questions: 24

Stimulus Types:

- Picture Description (4-8 Questions)
- Informative/Academic (2-4 Questions)
- Literary Text (3-6 Questions)
- Social Interaction (8-12 Questions)

Question Types:

- Matching Statements with Pictures (at least 4 questions)
- Listening for Main Ideas (at least 4 questions)
- Listening for Details (at least 6 questions)
- Making Inferences/Predictions (at least 3 questions)

Notes:

Stimulus material for the Listening test is presented on an audiotape. Students mark their answers on a multiple-choice answer sheet.

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PART II

ALIGNMENT OF STANDARDS AND TASK & QUESTION TYPES

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Alignment of Learning Standards and Specifications
Grades 2-4

New York ESL Learning Standards	Task/Item Types
Standard 1: English for information and understanding.	*Writing* – Prewriting, writing the story/essay, editing *Speaking* – Narrate a story based on a picture sequence, describe and interpret information in a chart or graph, give directions based on a map, make a comparison/contrast *Reading* – Nonfiction passages in everyday or academic language, passages presenting information in a graphically organized form (including charts, graphs, maps, and calendars), inference, sequence of events or stages in a process, compare, contrast, categorize information, vocabulary *Listening* –Informative/academic, matching statements with pictures, listening selectively for a specific purpose, listening for main ideas, listening for details, making inferences/predictions
Standard 2: English for literary response, enjoyment, and expression.	*Reading* – Stories or excerpts from fiction and/or poems, literary elements, such as plot, character, setting, or theme, predictions or inferences based on literary works, interpretation of literary meaning, literary genres *Listening* – Literary text, listening for main ideas, listening for details, making inferences/predictions
Standard 3: English for critical analysis and evaluation.	*Writing* – Writing the story/essay *Speaking* – Make an argument/speak persuasively *Reading* – Main idea, facts or details, author's purpose, understand syntax, referents, and antecedents *Listening* – Making inferences/predictions based on in spoken text
Standard 4: English for classroom and social interaction.	*Speaking* – Ask appropriate questions in school or social situations, provide information and assistance, explain actions, choices, and decisions, express an opinion or explain a personal preference *Listening* – Social interaction
Standard 5: English for cross-cultural knowledge and understanding.	*Reading* – Passages that reflect cultural patterns and norms in the United States and/or of the cultures and perspectives of immigrants to the United States *Listening* – Social interaction

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WRITING

ALIGNMENT OF TASK TYPES WITH THE *NEW YORK STATE ESL LEARNING STANDARDS*

Task Types	NYS Learning Standards for English as a Second Language
Prewriting	*Standard 1, Performance Indicators 8, 11* • "Select a focus, organization, and point of view for oral and written presentations, and justify this selection." • "Use the process of prewriting, drafting,…to produce well-constructed informational texts."
Writing the story/essay	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 12* • "Convey information and ideas through…written language, using conventions and features of American English appropriate to audience and purpose. …Such written language features include appropriate grammar, vocabulary, correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, paragraphing, and a wide variety of sentence structures." *Standard 3, Performance Indicator 1* • "Develop and present clear interpretations, analyses, and evaluations of issues, ideas, texts, and experiences; justify and explain the rationale for positions, using persuasive language, tone, evidence, and well-developed arguments…"
Editing	*Standard 1, Performance Indicators 11, 12* • "Use the process of…revising, peer editing, and proofreading…to produce well-constructed informational texts." • "Convey information and ideas through…written language, using conventions and features of American English appropriate to audience and purpose. …Such written language features include appropriate grammar, vocabulary, correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, paragraphing, and a wide variety of sentence structures."

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SPEAKING

ALIGNMENT OF TASK TYPES WITH THE *NEW YORK STATE ESL LEARNING STANDARDS*

Task Types	NYS Learning Standards for English as a Second Language
ALL	*Standard 1, Performance Indicators, 5, 12, 15* • "Formulate, ask, and respond to questions to obtain, clarify, and extend information and meaning." • "Convey information and ideas through spoken…language, using conventions and features of American English. Such spoken language features include appropriate grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and intonation…" • "Apply self-monitoring and self-correcting strategies for accurate language production…" *Standard 4, Performance Indicators 3, 6, 8, 12* • "Request and provide information… for personal, social, and academic purposes." • "Understand and use a variety of oral communication strategies …Such strategies include indicating lack of understanding, clarifying or requesting clarification, restatement..." • "Negotiate and manage interactions to accomplish social and classroom tasks." • "Apply self-monitoring and self-correcting strategies in social and classroom interactions. Such strategies include asking questions, starting over, rephrasing, and exploring alternative ways of saying things."
Narrate a story based on picture sequence	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 9* • "Convey information, using a variety of organizational patterns and structures. Such patterns and structures include chronological order, cause and effect, similarities and differences, and general-to-specific presentation."
Ask appropriate questions in school or social situations	*Standard 4, Performance Indicator 9* • "Use appropriate vocabulary, expressions, language, routines, and interaction styles for various audiences and formal and informal social or school situations. Such expressions and routines include asking permission, making and responding to requests,…"
Describe and interpret information in a chart or graph	*Standard 1, Performance Indicators 2, 4, 7* • "… [I]nterpret information related to academic content areas from various sources. Such sources include …charts, graphs, maps, and diagrams." • "Compare, contrast, and categorize to gain a deeper understanding of information …" • "Present information clearly in oral forms… Such forms include paraphrases, summaries, and stories…"
Express an opinion or explain a personal preference	*Standard 4, Performance Indicators 2, 5* • "Describe, … or recommend a favorite activity, book, song, or other interest…" • "Explain actions, choices, and decisions in social and academic situations."
Provide information and	*Standard 4, Performance Indicator 3* • "[P]rovide information and assistance…for personal, social, and academic

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assistance	purposes."
Explain actions, choices, and decisions	*Standard 4, Performance Indicator 5* • "Explain actions, choices, and decisions in social and academic situations."
Make an argument/speak persuasively	*Standard 3, Performance Indicator 6* • "Speak…to effectively influence an audience (e.g., to persuade, negotiate, argue)…"
Make a comparison/ contrast	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 4* • "Compare, contrast, and categorize to gain a deeper understanding of information and objects."

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READING

ALIGNMENT OF PASSAGE & QUESTION TYPES WITH THE *NEW YORK STATE ESL LEARNING STANDARDS*

Passage Types	NYS Learning Standards for English as a Second Language
Nonfiction passages in everyday or academic language	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 2* • "Read...organize, discuss, interpret, and analyze information related to academic content from various sources. Such sources include reference books, magazines, textbooks, the Internet..."
Stories or excerpts from fiction and/or poems	*Standard 2, Performance Indicator 1* • "Read...and discuss a variety of literature of different genres. Such genres include picture books, poems,...stories from children's magazines, fables, myths and legends...and works of fiction intended for young readers, including works of popular American culture."
Passages presenting information in a graphically organized form (including charts, graphs, maps, and calendars)	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 2* • "Read...organize, discuss, interpret and analyze information related to academic content areas...Such sources include...charts, graphs, maps, and diagrams."
Passages that reflect cultural patterns and norms in the United States and/or the cultures and perspectives of immigrants to the United States	*Standard 5, Performance Indicators 2 and 3* • "Demonstrate familiarity with a broad range of U.S. cultural and political referents...Such cultural and political referents include holidays, symbols, traditions, customs, governance systems, and schooling." • "Recognize and share cross-cultural experiences and ideas, and connect with those of others."

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Question Types	NYS Learning Standards for English as a Second Language
Main Idea	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 1* • "…[Reading] for main ideas and details …" *Standard 2, Performance Indicator 2* • "[reading] for main ideas and details."
Facts or Details	*Standard 3, Performance Indicator 1* • "Form and express responses to a variety of literary, informational, and persuasive material...use details and evidence as support."
Author's Purpose	*Standard 3, Performance Indicators 3 and 5* • "Recognize personal point of view in self and others in discussing, interpreting, and evaluating information." • "Recognize, explain, evaluate, and analyze how structural features affect readers'...understanding and appreciation of text."
Inference	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 6* • "Support inferences about information and ideas with reference to features in...written text. Such features include vocabulary, format, facts, sequence, register, and relevance of details."
Sequence of Events or Stages in a Process	*Standard I, Performance Indicator 6* • "Support inferences about information and ideas with reference to features in...written text. Such features include...sequence..."
Compare, Contrast, Categorize Information	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 4* • "Compare, contrast, categorize, to gain a deeper understanding of information and objects."
Vocabulary	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 1* • "Identify and use reading strategies...to make text comprehensible and meaningful. Such strategies include...using structural and context clues, cognates... to decode difficult words."
Understand Syntax, Referents, and Antecedents	*Standard 3, Performance Indicator 5* • "Recognize...and analyze how structural features affect readers' understanding and appreciation of text. Such features include organization, syntax, [and] repetition of words or ideas..."
Literary Elements, such as Plot, Character, Setting, or Theme	*Standard 2, Performance Indicator 4* • "Locate and identify key literary elements in texts... Such elements include setting, character, plot, theme, repetition, and point of view."
Predictions or Inferences based on Literary Works	*Standard 2, Performance Indicator 5* • "Make predictions, inferences, and deductions, and discuss the meaning of literary works with some attention to meaning beyond the literal level..."
Interpretation of Literary Meaning	*Standard 2, Performance Indicators 5 and 12* • "[D]iscuss the meaning of literary works with some attention to meaning beyond the literal level..." • "Apply learning strategies to comprehend and make inferences about literature...Such strategies include asking questions, using prior knowledge, graphic organizers, and context cues..."
Literary Genres	*Standard 2, Performance Indicator 3* • "Recognize some features that distinguish some genres and use those features to aid comprehension."

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LISTENING

ALIGNMENT OF TASK TYPES WITH THE *NEW YORK STATE ESL LEARNING STANDARDS*

Stimulus Types	NYS Learning Standards for English as a Second Language
Picture Description	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 4* • "Compare, contrast, … to gain a deeper understanding of information and objects."
Informative / Academic	*Standard 1, Performance Indicators 1, 3, 10* • "Identify and use … listening strategies to make text comprehensible and meaningful. Such strategies include …listening selectively; listening for a specific purpose..." • "Select information appropriate to the purpose of the investigation, and relate ideas from one written or spoken source to another." • "Distinguish between fact and opinion, and relevant and irrelevant information."
Literary Text	*Standard 2, Performance Indicator 1* • "Read, listen to, view, and discuss a variety of literature of different genres. Such genres include picture books, poems, articles and stories from children's magazines, fables, myths and legends, songs, plays and media productions, and works of fiction and nonfiction intended for young readers, including works of American popular culture."
Social Interaction	*Standard 4, Performance Indicator 9* • "Use appropriate vocabulary, expressions, language, routines, and interaction styles for various audiences and formal and informal social or school situations. Such expressions and routines include asking permission, making and responding to requests,…" *Standard 5, Performance Indicator 1* • "Demonstrate familiarity with cultural and language patterns and norms in American English. Such patterns and norms include levels of formality, slang, humor, idioms, and rhetorical patterns."

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Task Types	NYS Learning Standards for English as a Second Language
Matching Statements with Pictures	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 4* • "Compare, contrast, … to gain a deeper understanding of information and objects."
Listening Selectively for a Specific Purpose	*Standard 1, Performance Indicators 1, 3, 10* • "Identify and use … listening strategies to make text comprehensible and meaningful. Such strategies include …listening selectively; listening for a specific purpose..." • "Select information appropriate to the purpose of the investigation, and relate ideas from one written or spoken source to another." • "Distinguish between fact and opinion, and relevant and irrelevant information."
Listening for Main Ideas in a Spoken Text	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 1* • "Identify and use … listening strategies to make text comprehensible and meaningful. Such strategies include … listening for main ideas ..." *Standard 2, Performance Indicator 2* • "Identify and use reading and listening strategies to make literary text comprehensible and meaningful. Such strategies include skimming, scanning, previewing, reviewing, listening selectively or for a specific purpose, and listening for main ideas and details."
Listening for Details in a Spoken Text	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 3* • "Select information appropriate to the purpose of the investigation, and relate ideas from one written or spoken source to another." *Standard 2, Performance Indicator 2* • "Identify and use reading and listening strategies to make literary text comprehensible and meaningful. Such strategies include skimming, scanning, previewing, reviewing, listening selectively or for a specific purpose, and listening for main ideas and details."
Making Inferences / Predictions Based on in Spoken Text	*Standard 1, Performance Indicator 6* • "Support inferences about information and ideas with reference to features in oral … text. Such features include … facts, sequence, and details." *Standard 2, Performance Indicator 5* • "Make predictions, inferences, and deductions, and discuss the meaning of literary works with some attention to meaning beyond the literal level, to understand and interpret text presented orally and in written form." *Standard 3, Performance Indicator 3* • "Recognize personal point of view in self and others in discussing, interpreting, and evaluating information."

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