



English Language Arts

Resource Guide

PART III

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NOTE: This document is a work in progress. Parts II and III, in particular, are in need of further development, and we invite the submission of additional learning experiences and local performance tasks for these sections. Inquiries regarding submission of materials should be directed to: English Language Arts Resource Guide, Room 681 EBA, New York State Education Department, Albany, NY 12234 (tel. 518-474-5922).

Proposed State Assessments for English Language Arts

Although the new State assessments for elementary, middle, and high school English Language Arts are in various stages of development, that development will be guided by some common understandings:

- they will be mapped directly to the English language arts standards at the level for which the test is intended
- they will assess a broader range of language functions than is assessed by the present State tests
- they will require that students construct their own written responses in addition to responding to objective questions
- they will each include both an on-demand test (administered to all students during a common time period) and an extended task (a standardized task or set of tasks completed over a longer period of time in the classroom)
- they will be scored by New York State teachers using scoring guides that describe student work at different levels of performance.

The following tentative descriptions of the new assessments are based on the results of the pilot tests, feedback from students and teachers, and the recommendations of several advisory panels. They represent the thinking to this point and suggest the direction of the assessments, **but it is anticipated that the exact specifications for each test will continue to evolve as teachers and test developers contribute to further refinement.**

Proposed Elementary Literacy Profile

The materials comprising the proposed Elementary Literacy Profile would be assembled in grade three, beginning with the 1998-99 school year, for the purposes of helping schools assess students' progress toward the *Learning Standards*, predicting success on the State assessment in grade four, and identifying students in need of extra support. Completion of the Profile would be required, but the results would be for local use only.

Schools could also choose to use the Profile in early grades to assess students' language abilities. The components, like those of many schools already compiling profiles of their students' literacy learning, would include evidence of the use of reading strategies, the level and range of reading, and writing and encoding skills. Discussion in the next few months will focus on developing a configuration that balances the need for information about progress toward the *Standards* with the need to recognize the time constraints of the classroom teacher.

Proposed Elementary English Language Arts Assessment

The teacher consultants involved in the development of the elementary ELA assessment propose that this assessment be given in January of the fourth grade, both to allow optimum opportunity for students to develop independence as readers and writers and to enable teachers to use the diagnostic information revealed by the assessment. The first administration is projected for January 1999.

The on-demand component will assess students' use of language for informational, literary, and critical purposes at the elementary level of the *Standards*. It is anticipated that this assessment will be similar in direction to the pilot tasks; that is, students would be asked to write an extended response and respond to basic comprehension questions (including vocabulary knowledge), about a listening passage, as well as poetry and/or fiction. The Extended Task component of this assessment would be completed over several days, allowing for drafting and editing, and would require students to read informational text and write a response for a given purpose and audience. Responses would be scored using task-specific scoring guides.

The proposed Elementary Literacy Profile and English Language Arts Assessment would replace the grade three PEP test in Reading and the grade five Writing Test for New York State Elementary Students.

Proposed Middle Level English Language Arts Assessment

Tasks designed to assess the intermediate level of the *English Language Arts Standards* will be piloted during the 1997-98 school year, with the first administration scheduled for Spring 2000. It is anticipated that this assessment will include language tasks similar to those on the elementary and high school English language arts assessments. Test developers and teacher consultants are exploring the possibility of integrating assessment of language arts skills and social studies content at this level.

The proposed middle level assessment would replace the grade six PEP Test in Reading and the Preliminary Competency Tests in Reading and Writing.

Proposed Regents High School Comprehensive Examination in English

The tentative blueprint for the new English Regents examination calls for a four-part on-demand assessment to be completed in two separate sittings. The four sections are:

- Part I:** Listening and writing for information and understanding, as assessed by a) an extended response to a speech, and b) multiple choice questions on key ideas
- Part II:** Reading and writing for information and understanding, as assessed by a) an extended response to technical sources (text and graphic), and b) multiple choice questions on basic comprehension (salient information, vocabulary, and interpretation)

Part III: Reading and writing for literary response and analysis as assessed by a) an extended response to one or more literary texts, and b) multiple choice questions on key ideas, details, and vocabulary

Part IV: Reading and writing for critical analysis and evaluation, as assessed by a) an extended response to one or more works of literature read in class.

An Extended Task component requiring students to complete a multi-task literary project is under development.

The full range of tasks, scoring guides, and anchor papers from The Spring 1996 pilots appears in the Goals 2000 *Testing Manual* and *Scoring Manual* distributed in January to school superintendents, BOCES, and Teacher Centers.