

Scranton School District

Language Arts

Fourth Grade

Planned Course

Fourth Grade Language Arts Appendix

Web Sites for Curriculum

www.lightspan.com

www.abcteach.com

www.nationalgeographic.com

www.pbs.com

www.enchantedlearning.com

Fourth Grade Suggested Computer Software

First Connections Golden Book Encyclopedia

Hyperstudio

Microsoft Word

Easy Book Deluxe

Accelerated Reader Program

CONSTRUCTING A PERFORMANCE TASK

Teachers should be using performance tasks in their classroom on a regular basis.

Use the State Reading Assessment as the model for classroom assessment. You will need to use all four construction steps when developing performance tasks for your classroom.

SELECT THE READING PASSAGE

The literature selection can be narrative or informational. As you are constructing a classroom assessment, you can go beyond the traditional to comic strips, film, etc.

CREATE A PERFORMANCE TASK

Requirements for the task:

- Should be written before purpose and reminder statements;
- Should be passage dependent;
- Should provide students with the opportunity to respond at proficient level;
- Cannot be answered yes or no;
- Must be grade appropriate;
- Are clear and concise.

USE STUDENT REMINDERS

These are statements, not questions, and provide the students with a checklist of what is important to include in their response. They redefine the target. There should be no new information here; the statements align with the performance task, but can go beyond to address other things that “count”, such as writing neatly and using only the space provided. **The task, the purpose statement and the student reminders should be circular and connected.**

USE A PURPOSE STATEMENT

As the passages you choose are likely to be lengthy, (they will be stand-alone pieces that have a beginning, a middle and an end), it is important for students to know that they will be responding to text by writing and to be familiar with the nature of that written response. This should also be a “**hook**”, creating some interest in reading the passage and conveying what the student’s responsibility will be.

A training session is recommended for all teachers involved in using the **Pennsylvania Assessment Reading Rubric**.

These training sessions can be found on the PA website, or by contacting Mary Emminger, Supervisor of Educational Measurement and Evaluations, for PSSA Reading. In the Division of Evaluation and Reports, Fax: 717-783-6642 or e-mail memminger@state.pa.us.

PENNSYLVANIA READING ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

This rubric was designed by the Reading Assessment Advisory Committee (RAAC) used in the Pennsylvania Reading Assessment. The elements of reading being assessed through this rubric are limited to those that can be addressed through written responses in the on-demand performance portion of the assessment. Specifically, **understanding, comprehension and connections**. Risk-taking is also an important element, developing throughout life's learning process. However, given the constraints of this assessment, **risk taking** was not included. The RAAC advises that assessments developed at the classroom, school and district levels include this element.

LEVEL 4

Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the complexity of the text through detailed elaboration and extensions of text with sophisticated ideas, insights and reflections. There are no errors in text-based facts.
Exhibits a level of comprehension that extends beyond the literal, to the personal, critical and/or evaluative responses.
Cites evidence, makes a variety of strong connections to other experiences, texts, concepts, issues and/or cultural settings.

LEVEL 3

Demonstrates confident, coherent and adequate understanding and interpretation of the text through some elaboration and extension.
There are no major errors in text-based facts.
Exhibits a level of comprehension that reflects extensions that are more literal or personal.
Makes connections to personal experiences, other texts and/or background knowledge.

LEVEL 2

Demonstrates a limited understanding and/or interpretation of the text. There may be errors in text-based facts.
Exhibits a level of comprehension that consists primarily of literal responses to the text.
Makes connections between other experiences and text that are disjointed, fragmented, limited and not integral to the text.

LEVEL 1

Demonstrates an attempt to respond with very limited evidence of understanding of the text.
There may be errors in text-based facts.
Exhibits a level of comprehension that consists of disjointed, incomplete or irrelevant responses.
Might use relevant copied text.
Makes only distant connections to the text, using sketchy details.

LEVEL 0-consists of 3 types of responses:

Non Storable (NS) – papers are blank.
Off Task (OT) – papers show no relationship to task and text, are illegible, irrelevant copied text, or written in a language other than English.
Intentionally Off Task – (IO) – papers are ones that have unrelenting profanity, are a refusal to perform, state a baseless charge of too personal or are drawings, scribbles, etc.

ASSESSING WRITING

The Domain Scoring Guide

The Pennsylvania Writing Assessment Domain Scoring Guide addresses the five characteristics of effective writing. The interplay of these characteristics and the scoring criteria is graphically represented in the domain scoring guide. The five characteristics – focus, content, organization, style, and conventions – have been deemed significant to any piece of writing; and they formed the foundation of the Pennsylvania Holistic Scoring Guide that was used for assessing student writing.

Writers should be able to demonstrate their ability to respond appropriately to a prompt, which specifies the purpose for their writing and the audience. Writers are expected to concentrate their writing skills on the mode that is indicated by the prompt. However, any one composition may integrate more than one mode of writing. This idea touches on one of the goals of the writing assessment: the assessment should illicit authentic writing. For example, it is rare to find a piece of pure narration without some informational passages. Even the best persuasive pieces incorporate some informational writing, often interspersed with imaginative and narrative passages. This integration occurs very naturally; however, the writer should develop one controlling mode of writing specific to the task.

Definition of Domain Scoring

Domain scoring, a valid method for scoring individual writing, is used to evaluate students' writing. Each of the five characteristics of effective writing is a "domain". Each domain is scored separately on a four-point scale to indicate the writer's level of competence. Scores of 3 and 4 characterize acceptable writing, while scores of 1 and 2 characterize unacceptable writing. Any given paper may be acceptable in some domains while unacceptable in other domains.

Description of the Domains

The domain of focus, the single controlling point made with an awareness of task (mode) about a specific topic, involves three essential features of a response. One, the writer should make an assertion about that topic. Usually, the assertion takes the form of a thesis statement; however, the assertion may also be strongly implied. Two, the writer should write about the task using the mode of writing stated in the prompt. Three, the writer should clearly address the topic.

The domain of content presents ideas developed through facts, examples, anecdotes, details, opinions, statistics, reasons, and/or explanations. The writer should support and explain or elaborate on any assertions. Any points should be clearly developed and made relevant to the assertions. In this domain, the writer should “show” the reader, not “tell”.

The domain of organization, the order developed and sustained within and across paragraphs using transitional devices and including introduction and conclusion, concerns the arrangement of the content into an order appropriate for the purpose of the response. The arrangement may be marked by transitional devices within and between paragraphs and should support an underlying functional pattern, e.g., logical, spatial, chronological.

The domain of style reflects the choice, use, and arrangement of words and sentence structures that create tone and voice. The writer should use specific language and sentence structure to develop a voice (a writer’s personality) and tone (reflection of a writer’s feelings and attitudes) consistent with, and supportive of, the assertions. The writer should demonstrate an awareness of audience.

The domain of conventions includes grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage, and sentence formation. The writer should demonstrate evident control of these conventions.

Applications: All Content Areas

Concept: Sequencing, Summarizing

READING ACROSS CONTENT AREAS
Textbook Activity Guide (TAG) Strategy

PSSA Connection:

- Requires students to work, to sequence, to organize and to show relationships;
- Improves comprehension, summarizing and communication skills;
- Adapts to any textbook or content area;
- Self-monitoring with activity guide.

Definition:

Textbook activity guide is a strategy in which students work in pairs to complete text reading and activities.

Procedure:

- Teacher begins by clarifying the lesson objective for the chapter.
- Teacher selects the headings portion of chapter or diagrams that relate to objectives;
- Teacher creates study guide to use with text;
- Teacher matches the reading/study task to the objective;
- Teacher introduces activity to whole class, explaining tasks before allowing partners to make predictions. Teacher can also demonstrate how to use Activity Guide.

TEXTBOOK ACTIVITY GUIDE (EXAMPLE)

Code	Strategy
RR	Read and retell in own words
DP	Read and discuss with partner
PP	Predict with partner
WR	Write a response
Skim	Read quickly for purpose and discuss with partner
MOC	Organize info. with map, outline, or chart

Self-monitoring Codes:

- _____ I understand this information.
- _____ I'm not sure that I understand the information.
- _____ I do not understand and I need to restudy the information.

Special Education and ESL Students

The special education and ESL students will progress through the regular education curriculum with accommodations and learning support services. The curriculum will need to be modified in terms of the amount of material than can be covered.

Accelerated Reader

Computer Reading Management System

The Accelerated Reader program is an innovative computerized reading management program which combines children's literature and computer-assisted instruction and record keeping. It is an individual reading program that motivates students to read more and better books. As a result, it is expected that students who participate in this program will (a.) develop a more positive attitude towards reading, (b.) improve their reading ability, comprehension, vocabulary and critical thinking skills, and (c.) become independent readers.

Students choose books to read from the Accelerated Reader Test Booklist that is available in the library. This program is utilized throughout the district in grades through 5. When the student finishes reading, he/she takes a computer-generated test. Upon completing each test, the students get immediate feedback. The program awards points based on the reading level of the book and the number of questions answered correctly, which provides immediate reinforcement. In the third grade, students are expected to achieve 5 points in the first quarter of the school year, 6 points in the second quarter, 7 points in the third quarter, and 8 points in the fourth quarter. In grades 4 and 5, each student is required to attain 10 points per quarter. The program keeps track of each students' individual performance, which can be reported in both cumulative as well as other time segments, i.e. monthly or quarterly. Students learn and increase their critical thinking skills through this program.