



PERFORMANCE

New York City—First Edition

STANDARDS

English Language Arts

English as a Second Language

Spanish Language Arts

NEW
STANDARDS™

William C. Thompson, Jr.
President

Irene H. Impellizzeri
Vice President

Jerry Cammarata
Carol A. Gresser
Sandra E. Lerner
Luis O. Reyes
Ninfa Segarra
Members

Jessica Radow
Leilani Roundtree
Student Advisory Members

Rudolph F. Crew
Chancellor

Judith A. Rizzo
Deputy Chancellor for Instruction

Lewis H. Spence
Deputy Chancellor for Operations

This first New York City edition of the *New Standards™ Performance Standards* for English Language Arts was developed under the leadership of Judith A. Rizzo, Ed. D., Deputy Chancellor for Instruction. The project was completed through the joint efforts of the Office of Program Development and Dissemination, William P. Casey, Chief Executive, and the Office of School Programs and Student Support Services, Margaret R. Harrington, Ed. D., Chief Executive. Judith Chin, Executive Director, Division of Instructional Support, supervised the production of this edition in collaboration with Robert Tobias, Executive Director, Division of Assessment and Accountability, Lillian Hernandez, Ed. D., Executive Director, Office of Bilingual Education, Evelyn B. Kalibala, Director, Office of Multicultural Education, and Anthony J. Viteritti, Administrator, Performance Standards Team.

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Board of Education of the City of New York
Rudolph F. Crew, Ed.D., Chancellor

Office of the Chancellor
110 LIVINGSTON STREET - BROOKLYN, NY 11201

Dear Colleague:

Over the past few months, you have been hearing and reading about the adoption of the *New Standards™ Performance Standards* by the Board of Education of the City of New York. The rationale for this decision is clear: New Standards has developed the best available national standards because teachers can use them. The *New Standards™ Performance Standards* are based on common sense as well as academic excellence, and they are ready now.

Teachers, supervisors, and administrators representing all districts and superintendencies met regularly during the past school year and this summer to customize the collection of student work samples contained in this New York City edition of the New Standards. The work samples selected for inclusion in this edition show work that meets the standards. They demonstrate that all students can meet high expectations. Selections were made as the result of an in-depth examination of the standards and much discussion among the members of the customization group.

I expect the New Standards to be used by everyone involved in teaching and learning in our school system. At the school level, teachers and administrators should use these standards to set goals, plan for effective instruction, and monitor and assess student performance. Districts and superintendencies should use the standards in all curricular initiatives and as one way of planning professional development activities. Central staff will work closely with the districts and superintendencies on behalf of their local efforts. Central will also take action to integrate the New Standards throughout the school system.

We all agree that having the highest expectations for our students is a just goal. The English Language Arts standards are clear, direct, and attainable. Your discussions must now turn to “how good is good enough” and to making the goal a reality. Together, we can and will make a positive difference in the lives of our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rudolph F. Crew".

Rudolph F. Crew, Ed. D.
Chancellor

PREFACE

This volume contains the first New York City edition of the *New Standards™ Performance Standards* for English Language Arts. The standards set out in this volume establish the same high expectations for student performance as those published by New Standards—the standards are unchanged from those published by New Standards. What distinguishes this edition is the collection of student work samples included to illustrate the meaning of standard-setting work. The collection has been revised extensively to reflect work produced by students studying in New York City’s public schools.

A further important feature of this edition of the standards is the inclusion of sections containing work samples produced by students studying in English as a Second Language programs and by Spanish-speaking students studying in bilingual general education.

This volume of the New York City edition of the standards focuses exclusively upon Language Arts. Volumes focusing upon Mathematics and Science are in preparation.

ABOUT NEW STANDARDS

New Standards was established in 1991 as a collaboration of the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh and the National Center on Education and the Economy, in partnership with states and urban school districts. The Board of Education of the City of New York was a member of the New Standards partnership from its inception. The New Standards partners set out to build an assessment system to measure student progress toward meeting national standards at levels that are internationally benchmarked. The performance standards are one of the major products of the New Standards partnership. Support for the development of the performance standards was provided by the Pew Charitable Trusts, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the William T. Grant Foundation, and the New Standards partners.

The New Standards Governing Board included chief state school officers, governors and their representatives, and others representing the diversity of the partnership, whose jurisdictions enroll nearly half of the Nation’s students. These performance standards were endorsed unanimously by the New Standards Governing Board in June 1996.

The New Standards partnership formally ended in June 1997. Continuing research and development, and technical assistance to support implementation of the products of New Standards, are managed by the National Center on Education and the Economy on behalf of the National Center and the University of Pittsburgh.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

New Standards adopted the distinction between content standards and performance standards that is articulated in *Promises to Keep: Creating High Standards for American Students* (1993), a report commissioned by the National Education Goals Panel. Content standards specify “what students should know and be able to do”; performance standards go the next step to specify “how good is good enough.”

These standards are designed to make content standards operational by answering the question: how good is good enough?

The performance standards for English Language Arts were developed in concert with the content standards produced by the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association (1996). (See “English Language Arts,” page 25.)

STANDARDS FOR STANDARDS

In recent years several reports on standards development have established “standards for standards,” that is, guidelines for developing standards and criteria for judging their quality. These include the review criteria identified in *Promises to Keep*, the American Federation of Teachers’ “Criteria for High Quality Standards,” published in *Making Standards Matter* (1995), and the “Principles for Education Standards” developed by the Business Task Force on Student Standards and published in *The Challenge of Change* (1995). New Standards drew from the criteria and principles advocated in these documents in establishing the “standards” we have tried to achieve in these performance standards.

Standards should establish high standards for all students.

The New Standards partnership resolved to abolish the practice of expecting less from poor and minority children and children whose first language is not English. These performance standards are intended to help bring all students to high levels of performance.

Much of the onus for making this goal a reality rests on the ways the standards are implemented. The New Standards partners adopted a Social Compact, which says in part, “Specifically, we pledge to do everything in our power to ensure all students a fair shot at reaching the new performance standards...This means they will be taught a curriculum that will prepare them for the assessments, that their teachers will have the preparation to enable them to teach it well, and there will be...the resources the students and their teachers need to succeed.” These performance standards are built upon the assumptions expressed in that pledge.

There are ways in which the design of the standards themselves can also contribute to the goal of bringing all students to high levels of performance, especially by being clear about what is expected. We have worked to make the expectations included in these performance standards as clear as possible. For some standards it has been possible to do this in the performance descriptions. For example, the Reading standard includes expectations for students to read widely and to read quality materials. And, instead of simply exhorting them to do this, we have given more explicit direction by specifying that students should be expected to read at least twenty-five books each year and that those books should be of the quality and complexity illustrated in the sample reading list provided for each grade level. In Mathematics, we have gone beyond simply listing problem solving among our expectations for students. We set out just what we mean by problem solving and what things we expect students to be able to do in problem solving and mathematical reasoning. In addition, by providing numerous examples we have indicated the level of difficulty of the problems students are expected to solve.

The inclusion of work samples and commentaries to illustrate the meaning of the standards is intended to help make the standards clearer. Most of the standards are hard to define precisely in words alone. In the Writing standard, for example, the work samples show the expected qualities of writing for the various kinds of writing required and the commentaries explain how these qualities are demonstrated in the work samples. The work samples and commentaries are an integral part of the performance standards. They give concrete meaning to the words in the performance descriptions and show the level of performance expected by the standards.

The work samples will help teachers, students, and parents to picture work that meets standards and to establish goals to reach for. Students need to know what work that meets standards looks like if they are to strive to produce work of the same quality. Students also need to see themselves reflected in the work samples if they are to believe that they, too, are capable of producing such work. The work samples included in this volume not only

illustrate the meaning of the standards but also reflect the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the students studying in New York City’s public schools.

Standards should be rigorous and world class.

Is what we expect of our students as rigorous and demanding as what is expected of young people in other countries—especially those countries whose young people consistently perform as well as or better than ours?

That is the question we are trying to answer when we talk about developing world class standards.

Through successive drafts of these performance standards, we compared our work with the national and local curricula of other countries, with textbooks, assessments, and examinations from other countries and, where possible, with work produced by students in other countries. Ultimately, it is the work students produce that will show us whether claims for world class standards can be supported.

We produced a *Consultation Draft*, which we shared with researchers in other countries. We asked them to review the *Consultation Draft* in terms of their own country’s standards and in light of what is considered world class in their field. Included among these countries were Australia, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, England and Wales, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Scotland, Singapore, Sweden, and Switzerland. We asked these reviewers to tell us whether each standard is at least as demanding as its counterparts abroad and whether the set of standards represents an appropriately thorough coverage of the subject areas. We also shared the *Consultation Draft* with recognized experts in the field of international comparisons of education, each of whom is familiar with the education systems of several countries.

Our reviewers provided a wealth of constructive responses to the *Consultation Draft*. Most confined their responses to the English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science standards, though several commended the inclusion of standards for Applied Learning. The reviewers supported the approach we adopted to “concretize” the performance standards through the inclusion of work samples. Similar approaches are being used in some other countries, notably England and Wales and Australia. Some of the reviewers were tentative in their response to the question of whether these performance standards are at least as demanding as their counterparts, noting the difficulty of drawing comparisons in the absence of assessment information, but did offer comparative comments in terms of the areas covered by the standards. Some reviewers provided a detailed analysis of the performance descriptions together with the work samples and commentaries in terms of the expectations of students at comparable grade levels in other countries.

The reviews confirmed the conclusion we had drawn from our earlier analyses of the curricula, textbooks, and examinations of other countries: while the structure of curricula differs from country to country, the expectations contained in these performance standards represent a thorough coverage of the subject areas. No reviewer identified a case of significant omission. In some cases, reviewers noted that the range of expectations may be greater in the New Standards performance standards than in other countries; for example, few countries expect young people to integrate their learning to the extent required by the standards for investigation in New Standards Mathematics. At the same time, a recent study prepared for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development reports that many countries are moving towards expecting students to engage in practical work of the kind required by the New Standards Science standards (Black and Atkin, 1996). The reviews also suggest that these performance standards

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contain expectations that are at least as rigorous as, and are in some cases more rigorous than, the demands made of students in other countries. None of the reviewers identified standards for which the expectations expressed in the standards were less demanding than those for students in other countries.

We will continue to monitor the rigor and coverage of the New Standards performance standards and assessments in relation to the expectations of students in other countries. In addition to the continued collection and review of materials from other countries, our efforts will include a review of the New Standards performance standards by the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, collaboration with the Council for Basic Education's plan to collect samples of student work from around the world, continued review of the American Federation of Teachers' series, *Defining World Class Standards*, and collaborative efforts with visiting scholars at the Learning Research and Development Center.

Standards should be useful, developing what is needed for citizenship, employment, and life-long learning.

We believe that the core disciplines provide the strongest foundation for learning what is needed for citizenship, employment, and life-long learning. Thus, we have established explicit standards in the core areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. But there is more. In particular, it is critical for young people to achieve high standards in Applied Learning—the fourth area we are working on.

Applied Learning focuses on the capabilities people need to be productive members of society, as individuals who apply the knowledge gained in school and elsewhere to analyze problems and propose solutions, to communicate effectively and coordinate action with others, and to use the tools of the information age workplace. These are capabilities that were highlighted in *Learning A Living*, a report of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS, 1992).

Applied Learning is not about “job skills” for students who are judged incapable of or indifferent to the challenges and opportunities of academic learning. Applied Learning refers to the abilities all young people will need, both in the workplace and in their role as citizens. They are the thinking and reasoning abilities demanded by colleges and by the growing number of high performance workplaces, those that expect people at every level of the organization to take responsibility for the quality of products and services. Some of these abilities are familiar; they have long been recognized goals of schooling, though they have not necessarily been translated clearly into expectations for student performance. Others break new ground; they are the kinds of abilities we now understand will be needed by everyone in the near future. All are skills attuned to the real world of responsible citizenship and of dignified work that values and cultivates mind and spirit.

Many reviewers of drafts of these performance standards noted the absence of standards for the core area of social studies, including history, geography, and civics. At the time we began our work, national content standards for those areas were only in the early stages of development; we resolved to focus our resources on the four areas we have worked on. As consensus builds around content standards in this additional area, we will examine the possibilities for expanding the New Standards system to include it.

Standards should be important and focused, parsimonious while including those elements that represent the most important knowledge and skills within the discipline.

As anyone who has been involved in a standards development effort knows, it is easier to add to standards than it is to limit what they cover. It is especially easier to resolve disagreements about the most important things to cover by including everything than it is to

resolve the disagreements themselves. We have tried not to take the easier route. We adopted the principle of parsimony as a goal and have tried to practice it. At the same time, we have been concerned not to confuse parsimony with brevity. The performance descriptions are intended to make explicit what it is that students should know and the ways they should demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired. For example, the standards relating to conceptual understanding in Mathematics spell out the expectations of students in some detail.

The approach we adopted distinguishes between standards as a means of organizing the knowledge and skills of a subject area and as a reference point for assessment, on the one hand, and the curriculum designed to enable students to achieve the standards, on the other. The standards are intended to focus attention on what is important but not to imply that the standards themselves should provide the organizing structure for the curriculum. In English Language Arts, for example, we have established a separate standard for conventions, grammar, and usage. This does not imply that conventions, grammar, and usage should be taught in isolation from other elements of English Language Arts. In fact, all of the work samples included in this volume to illustrate the Conventions standard also illustrate parts of the Writing standard. Our intention in defining a separate standard for conventions is to make it clear that the work students do should be designed to help them achieve the Conventions standard. Conventions, grammar, and usage should not only be among the things assessed but should also be a focus for explicit reporting of student achievement.

Standards should be manageable given the constraints of time.

This criterion follows very closely on the last one, but focuses particularly on making sure that standards are “doable.” One of the important features of our standards development effort is the high level of interaction among the people working on the different subject areas. We view the standards for the four areas as a set at each grade level. This orientation has allowed us to limit the incidence of duplication across subject areas and to recognize and use opportunities for forging stronger connections among subject areas through the work that students do. A key to ensuring the standards are manageable is making the most of opportunities for student work to do “double” and even “triple duty” in relation to the standards. Most of the work samples included in this volume demonstrate the way a single activity can generate work that allows students to demonstrate their achievement in relation to several standards within a subject area. Furthermore, several of the work samples show how a single activity can allow students to demonstrate their achievement in relation to standards in more than one subject area. (See, for example, “Counting on Frank,” page 136, “Friendship is Colorblind,” page 294, and “How Do Flowers Become Fruit,” page 353.)

Standards should be adaptable, permitting flexibility in implementation needed for local control, state and regional variation, and differing individual interests and cultural traditions.

These standards are intended for use in widely differing settings. One approach to tackling the need for flexibility to accommodate local control and differing individual interests and cultural traditions is to make the standards general and to leave the job of translating the standards into more specific statements to the people who will use them. We have not adopted that approach. Performance standards need to be specific enough to guide the assessment of students’ achievement of the expectations established by the standards; we have tried to make them specific enough to do so. We have also tried to achieve the degree of specificity necessary to do this without unduly limiting the kinds of flexibility outlined above. Most of the standards are expressed in a way that leaves plenty of room for local

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decisions about the actual tasks and activities through which the standards may be achieved.

However, the specificity needed for standards intended to guide an assessment system does place some limits on flexibility. To tackle these apparently contradictory demands on the standards, we have adopted the notion of “substitution.” This means that when users of these standards identify elements in the standards that are inconsistent with decisions made at the local level, they can substitute their own. An example of this is the Reading standard. This standard includes the requirement that students should read the equivalent of twenty-five books each year and specifies that they should read material of the quality and complexity illustrated in the sample reading lists. We have included the reading lists so as to be clear about the quality of reading material we are talking about at each grade level. And these lists have been revised for this edition to reflect the kinds of quality material that are a familiar part of reading in New York City’s public schools. But we do not claim that the titles on this list are the only ones that would be appropriate. Thus, districts and schools that have established their own reading lists and are satisfied with them can replace the lists provided with their own. There is, however, one important proviso: substitution only works when what is substituted is comparable with the material it replaces both in terms of the quality and the quantity of expectation.

Standards should be clear and usable.

Making standards sufficiently clear so that parents, teachers, and students can understand what they mean and what the standards require of them is essential to the purpose for establishing standards in the first place. It is also a challenge because, while all of these groups need to understand what the standards are, the kinds of information they need are different. The most obvious difference is between the way in which the standards need to be presented to elementary school students so that they know what they should be striving to achieve and the way in which those same standards need to be presented to teachers so that they can help their students get there. If the standards were written only in a form that elementary school students could access, we would have to leave out information teachers need to do their job.

This version of the standards is written primarily for teachers. It includes technical language about the subject matter of the standards and terms that educators use to describe differences in the quality of work students produce. It could be described as a technical document. That does not mean that parents and students should not have access to it. We have tried to make the standards clear and to avoid jargon, but they do include language that may be difficult for students to comprehend and more detail than some parents may want to deal with. Efforts to make the standards more accessible to audiences other than teachers need to take these differences into account.

Standards should be reflective of broad consensus, resulting from an iterative process of comment, feedback, and revision including educators and the general public.

These performance standards were the result of progressive revisions to drafts over a period of eighteen months. Early drafts were revised in response to comment and feedback from reviewers nominated by the New Standards partners and the New Standards advisory committees for each of the subject areas, as well as other educators.

The *Consultation Draft*, published in November 1995, was circulated widely for comment. Some 1,500 individuals and organizations were invited to review the draft. The reviewers included nominees of professional associations representing a wide range of interests in education, subject experts in the relevant fields, experienced teachers, business and industry groups, and community organizations. In addition, we held a series of face-to-face consultations to obtain responses and suggestions. These included detailed discussions

with members of key groups and organizations and a series of meetings at which we invited people with relevant experience and expertise to provide detailed critique of the *Consultation Draft*. We also received numerous responses from people who purchased the *Consultation Draft* and who took the trouble to complete and return the response form that was included with each copy.

The revision of the performance standards was further informed by a series of independently-conducted focus group meetings with parents and other members of the community in several regions of the country, and with teachers who were using the *Consultation Draft*.

The reviewers provided very supportive and constructive commentary on the *Consultation Draft*, both at the broad level of presentation and formatting of the performance standards, and at the detailed level of suggestions for refinements to the performance descriptions for some of the standards. These comments significantly influenced the revisions made to the standards in the preparation of the publication in finished form.

CREATING THE NEW YORK CITY EDITION

Work on “customizing” the performance standards for use in New York City’s public schools began in March 1997 and continued through to the end of the summer.

The work samples and commentaries form an essential element of the performance standards because they give concrete meaning to the words in the performance descriptions and show the level of performance expected by the standards. The principal goal of the customization process was to replace and supplement the collection of student work samples used to illustrate standard-setting performances in the *New Standards™ Performance Standards* with work produced by students in New York City’s public schools. To achieve this goal, all districts and high school superintendencies nominated representatives to join a “customization” working group to collect work samples and meet regularly throughout the process to select the work to be included in this New York City edition.

Deciding what constitutes a standard-setting performance.

The work samples published in this volume were selected from a much wider range of samples, numbering thousands of pieces of work.

The benchmarks against which these work samples were judged are the work samples that were selected for publication in the *New Standards™ Performance Standards* to illustrate standard-setting performances in relation to various parts of the standards. Those work samples were selected through a variety of strategies designed to tap the judgment of teachers and subject experts around the country about the “level of performance” at which the standards should be set at each of the grade levels: elementary, middle, and high.

We define the elementary school level as being the expectations for student performance at approximately the end of fourth grade; middle school level as the expectations at approximately the end of eighth grade; and high school level as the expectations at approximately the end of tenth grade. We used the concept grade level as our reference point because it is in common use and most people understand it. However, “at approximately the end of fourth grade,” for example, begs some questions. Do we mean the level at which our fourth graders currently perform? Or, do we mean the level at which our fourth graders might perform if expectations for their performance were higher and the programs through which they learn were designed to help them meet those higher expectations? And, do we mean the level at which the highest-achieving fourth graders perform or the level at which most fourth graders should perform?

We set the expectations for level of performance in terms of what we should expect of students who work hard in a good program; that is, our expectations assume that students will have tried hard to achieve the standards and they will have studied in a program designed to help them to do so. These performance standards are founded on a firm belief that the great majority of students can achieve them, providing they work hard, they study a curriculum designed to help them achieve the standards that is taught by teachers who are prepared to teach it well, and they have access to the resources they need to succeed. These conditions form an essential part of the New Standards Social Compact which underpins our belief that all students can and should be expected to meet high standards.

Some of the work samples included in the *New Standards™ Performance Standards* were also included in the *Consultation Draft*; some appeared in earlier drafts as well. The appropriateness of these work samples as illustrating standard-setting performances was the subject of extensive review, through discussions among the New Standards advisory committee for English Language Arts and through round-table discussions among experienced teachers and experts in English Language Arts. Some of the work samples

included in earlier drafts did not pass the scrutiny of these reviews and were not included in the eventual publication. Many additional work samples were identified in the process of consultation and then subjected to the iterative process of review that was used to establish the level at which the standards should be set and the selection of work samples to be used to illustrate the meaning of the standards.

Inevitably, agreement about level of performance was easiest to achieve for those parts of the standards that relate to familiar kinds of expectations for student work. The parts of the Writing standard that refer to familiar and often-practiced kinds of writing, such as narrative account, are good examples of this. Not only did we have access to a wide range of samples from which to choose, but teachers and experts in the field have a long tradition of discussion and assessment of the features of writing that exemplify the essential characteristics of a narrative account. In other cases, where experience was less developed and there were fewer samples of student work available for review, it was necessary to build agreement about the features that should be evident in work produced at the different benchmark grade levels. The narrative procedure part of the Writing standard and the Public Documents and Functional Documents standards are examples of this.

Selecting the work samples included in this New York City edition

The customization group for the New York City edition of the performance standards followed a similar iterative process of review of collections of work samples to arrive at the selection that is included in this volume. Our goal was to identify ten candidate work samples for each part of the performance standards, to provide the basis for selecting samples that would reflect the diversity of the communities that make up New York City, to demonstrate different approaches to producing standard-setting work (for example, more formal kinds of reports of information as well as reports that adopt a journalistic style), and to provide examples of work produced in subjects from across the curriculum—not only in classes called English or Language Arts.

Districts supported the process by encouraging schools to provide samples of student work for review through their representatives on the group. We organized ourselves according to our expertise and experience at each of the grade spans and divided responsibility across the various parts of the standards. In this way, sub-groups developed expertise in relation to specific parts of the standards through extensive practice in reviewing work samples with reference to the relevant performance descriptions and to the work samples and commentaries published in the *New Standards™ Performance Standards*.

When the customization working group met, initially once each month and then more frequently, we monitored our progress towards achieving the goal of ten candidate work samples for each part of the standards and discussed the characteristics of the work samples reviewed to date. In some cases work that was judged as nearly meeting the expectations for standard-setting work was returned to the students who had produced it with an invitation for revision and suggestions about the aspects of the work that would benefit from revision. Many students responded to that invitation and returned revised work for further review.

At each stage of the process, review of the work collected to date helped sharpen our focus on the characteristics we needed to look for in the work we collected. Among the by-products of this process was our growing appreciation of the significance of the tasks or assignments that generate student work in influencing the quality of the product. Put simply, the work students produce generally reflects the assignment they have been given and the instruction on which the assignment is based. Well-crafted student work reflects instruction that focuses students' attention explicitly on the central purposes of the kinds of reading and writing they need to do and the characteristics they need to develop in the

CREATING THE NEW YORK CITY EDITION

work they produce. We are resolved to make this direct connection between standards and instruction the focus of our continuing efforts to assist all students to meet the expectations illustrated in the work samples in this volume.

Throughout the process, we had to remind ourselves continually that work that illustrates standard-setting performances is not the same as “best” work or “most exceptional” work. Many of the work samples we reviewed exceeded the expectations of the standards. Those work samples do not appear in this collection. We also had to remind ourselves that we were not trying to put together an anthology to celebrate the work students produce, valuable as such anthologies can be. Rather, our purpose was to identify samples of work that would help to give concrete meaning to the qualities described in the performance descriptions and establish the level of performance we should expect of work that is “good enough” to meet the standards. This meant that we chose some work samples over others because they provided clearer exemplification of the “bullet points” in the performance descriptions, even though some of the work we passed over was engaging and unquestionably counted as “good” work.

We also learned that practice in making judgments about work in relation to the standards pays off. As the number of pieces of student work we had read and reviewed closely grew larger, we became clearer about the meaning of the bullet points in the performance descriptions and more confident of our judgment about the features that need to be demonstrated in work if it is to be considered standard setting. Some pieces of work that we judged to be candidates for inclusion in the collection early in the process did not rate among our judgments later on. Equally, there were some pieces of work that we rejected early in the process and brought back for further consideration later on.

In the end, we surpassed our goal of identifying ten candidate pieces of student work to illustrate some parts of the standards and struggled to meet the goal for other parts of the standards. This is not surprising since the standards encompass a more comprehensive range of expectations for performance in language arts than has typically been part of school curriculums.

Work produced by a diverse range of students.

The work samples in this book reflect the diversity of backgrounds and experiences of the students studying in New York City’s public schools and the communities of which they are a part. The student work illustrating standard-setting performances in English Language Arts comes from schools throughout the city. There is also work from District 75. The work comes from students with a wide range of cultural backgrounds, some of whom have a first language other than English but who have acquired the proficiency in English they need to produce work that illustrates standard-setting performances in the English Language Arts. There is also work produced by students studying in ESL programs and students studying in bilingual education programs.

In some cases, the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the students are evident in the work samples, through the experiences that the students chose to share through their writing. In other cases, the students’ writing reveals little about who they are. While we worked to ensure that the collection reflected the diversity of our students, we have not made specific reference to these characteristics in the commentaries that accompany the work samples—not even where the work was produced by students studying in special education settings. Work that illustrates a standard-setting performance is standard setting no matter who produced it. What unites the work samples is that they all help to illustrate the performance standards by demonstrating standard-setting performances for parts of one or more of the standards and demonstrate that all students can produce work that meets high expectations.

The comprehensiveness of the work samples.

This volume contains nearly eighty samples of student work. We sought to include work samples that illustrate standard-setting performances for as many of the parts of the standards as possible. The great majority of the work samples were selected from work produced by New York City students. However, we also selected some of the work samples from the collection previously published in the *New Standards™ Performance Standards*.

This collection is restricted to work samples that illustrate standard-setting performances at the benchmark grade levels. However, during the process of collecting and reviewing the work we set aside many further work samples for publication. These include work samples that illustrate performances that exceed the expectations for the standards, work samples that illustrate progress toward meeting the standards, and work samples that illustrate common characteristics of work that does not meet standards but, nevertheless, help to highlight instructional directions that might be taken to help students progress towards the standards. We also set aside some of the work samples that were not selected for inclusion but were instructive for us in the process of arriving at judgments about which work to include in this collection—instructive because they yielded the liveliest discussions about what constitutes standard-setting work. These work samples will be made available to schools to assist in the process of translating the standards into instruction that will help all students work towards meeting high expectations.

Genuine student work.

In all cases, the work samples are genuine student work. While they illustrate standard-setting performances for parts of the standards, many samples are not “perfect” in every respect. Some, for example, include spelling errors or clumsy grammatical constructions. We think it is important that the standards are illustrated by means of authentic work samples and accordingly have made no attempt to “doctor” the work in order to correct these imperfections: the work has been included “warts and all.” Where errors occur, we have included a note drawing attention to the nature of the mistakes and commenting on their significance in the context of the work. In some cases, for example, the work was produced as a first draft only (in which case it would be expected that the errors would be corrected in work presented as finished work), or there is evidence in the rest of the work to suggest that an error was a slip rather than evidence of misunderstanding.

In other words, we tried to adopt reasonable expectations for correctness but not to overlook errors where they arose. We also resolved to apply those expectations consistently to all the work samples. We reviewed all work samples for accuracy in relation to subject content as well as paying attention to spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

ASSESSMENT BASED ON STANDARDS

Performance standards define a student’s academic responsibilities and, by implication, the teaching responsibilities of the school. How do we determine whether students have lived up to their academic responsibilities? We assess their work—is it “good enough” by comparison with the standards.

Assessment is an integral component of the educational process. If properly designed and administered, assessments can provide important information to help guide and inform instruction. In order to perform these functions, there must be a strict alignment among standards, educational strategies and resources, and assessments. That is, what we assess must be what we teach, and both must focus on what we want students to know and be able to do—the performance standards.

Assessment takes place in a variety of formats and situations, but a convenient distinction separates informal, ongoing classroom assessment from formal, standardized assessment. The former consists of the evidence teachers collect in class on a continuous basis to track the progress of their students in mastering the skills and material that are taught. The latter are the tests and on-demand assessments administered to all students in specific grades as part of the city- and state-wide assessment programs. Both types of assessment are essential to effective instruction. Ongoing classroom assessment provides continuous feedback on student progress to students, teachers, and parents; standardized assessment measures the mastery of critical skills and concepts at key developmental milestones. Regardless of their differing perspectives, both classroom and standardized assessment must be fully aligned with the performance standards.

The state and city have begun a collaborative process to redesign their standardized assessment programs in English Language Arts based on the performance standards. (See the figure below.) Beginning with students who entered ninth grade in 1996, all students will be required to take the Comprehensive Regents Examination in English to meet graduation requirements. The Regents Examination itself will be revised to better align with the new performance standards. To ensure that all students are prepared for the state’s new commencement standards, the city and state are restructuring the standardized assessment systems in the elementary and middle school grades. The new assessment systems include a variety of components that are designed to measure attainment of the new standards at the key milestone grades 4 and 8, as well as to track student progress toward the attainment of the standards in previous and intervening grades. To complete the assessment system, the city is instituting an Early Childhood Literacy Assessment System (ECLAS) which will guide and provide feedback on instruction in grades K - 3 to support the system’s goal of literacy for all students by grade 3.



Beyond standardized assessment, it is equally important to ensure that the performance standards provide the focus for ongoing classroom assessment. In the absence of standards, teachers are left without a common frame of reference to determine whether the work of their students is good enough. Standards could vary widely from classroom to classroom resulting in wide variation in instruction and achievement. The work samples that form an essential part of the performance standards provide graphic guidance to all teachers in assessing the level and quality of their students' work.

How the assessments are connected to the performance standards

The performance standards define a domain of expected student performances. Take the Reading standard at the elementary school level as an example (see page 34). This standard begins with a definition of reading that describes what we expect students to be able to do at approximately the end of fourth grade. The performance descriptions go on to spell out expectations for what students will accomplish in terms of the quantity, quality, range, and concentration of their reading. Furthermore, students are expected to put their reading to work and the standards say so; students have to produce work based on their reading of specific types of text.

We assess the different elements of the domain defined by a standard by using assessment methods appropriate to the expected performances. Although the assessment system that will fully align with the performance standards is currently under development, several of the components are already in place. The assessment methods comprise a variety of on-demand standardized and ongoing classroom assessments.

The standardized assessments are of two types that differ in format, method of scoring, and the information they provide. One type of assessment serves the purpose of telling us how well students are performing in comparison with standards (standards-referenced assessment); the other compares student performance to that of representative samples of other students (norm-referenced assessment). Typically, the former are performance-based assessments that require students to produce work that is rated by teachers or other professionals using a rubric, or scoring criteria, based on the standards. The latter are usually multiple-choice in format and are machine scored.

In the new city- and state- assessment system, these two different types of assessment are used to complement one another. Performance-based assessments are combined with multiple-choice tests in ways that measure both the depth and breadth of student achievement. Moreover, beginning in 1999, the state will eliminate its Pupil Evaluation Program (PEP) tests in reading and writing and replace them with assessments that align with the performance standards and articulate with the city assessments. This will allow for the elimination of duplicative testing.

The components of the new standardized assessment system in reading and their relationship to the reading performance standard are described below.

The CTB reading test

Students' understanding of content and form, as well as their ability to identify an author's purpose and to apply their background knowledge, are major components of reading comprehension in today's classroom. Students must be able to integrate these skills and processes with more traditional skill components such as vocabulary and usage. The performance standard in reading describes these higher-order skills that define the quality and level of performance expected of students.

CTB Reading assesses all these skills and processes at the same time as it measures students' ability to understand continuous prose. Test items focus on constructing, evaluating, and extending meaning skills defined by the performance standards.

ASSESSMENT BASED ON STANDARDS

Also consistent with the Reading standard, the test reading passages represent a broad cross-section of writing styles and types. Variety allows us to assess students' strategies for acquiring meaning from various kinds of texts. The passages capture student interest and reflect today's literature-based curriculum. Non-fiction selections include newspaper articles and biographical sketches. Informational essays on a wide variety of subjects are balanced with fictional passages from classic, traditional, and contemporary writers.

The non-fiction selections develop ideas clearly. The fictional passages represent our multicultural population with excerpts from folktales, myths, poetry, plays, and historical fiction. Authors include classic and modern writers such as: Maya Angelou, Isaac Asimov, Jane Austen, Lewis Carroll, Sandra Cisneros, Elizabeth Coatsworth, Arthur Conan Doyle, Robert Frost, Lois Lenski, Carl Sandburg, and Amy Tan.

Each passage begins with an introduction that establishes a context for reading, provides a smooth transition, and encourages students to apply their background knowledge. Test items for each passage appear in a logical order designed to help students construct meaning. The items target theme, purpose, central meaning, or application of skills in a different context, requiring students to infer, analyze, interpret, predict, and transfer knowledge. Tasks take many forms, from selecting the best title for a passage at the lower levels to extracting and applying major concepts at the upper levels. They require students to think about what they've read—not merely to recall facts and details.

Performance Assessment in Language Arts (PAL)

The performance standards stress the importance of reading and writing as integral parts of Language Arts. The Performance Assessment in Language Arts (PAL) measures both. PAL uses the unique abilities of performance assessment to measure student behaviors involved in constructing meaning from written text. Many of the activities in PAL also assess student performance in writing content and writing mechanics.

The PAL performance assessment tasks in reading are based on the interactive theory of reading. They are structured to reflect a hierarchy of skills. First, students demonstrate their initial and global understanding of a text. Going back to the text, they develop an interpretation and more detailed knowledge. They are asked to reflect on the text and show how it might link to their own experiences or those of other people they know. Finally, they are asked to evaluate and critique the text.

In the PAL assessment, students read two thematically linked passages. They may be two stories with differing styles, a story and a poem, or a story and a non-fiction magazine article, or another combination. Each passage has a brief introduction that gives students a context for their reading and focuses their thinking on the theme of the passage. The students read the first passage and respond to several items based upon it. They then read the second passage and respond, first to items based just on that passage, and then to items that require them to link the two passages. This structure allows students to demonstrate both comprehension and critical thinking skills at a level consistent with the performance standards.

All items in PAL require students to generate individual responses, rather than select a response from a list of choices. Students may be asked, for example, to write a letter to one of the characters, create an entry in a journal, or write one or two paragraphs to the teacher. Other items consist of a variety of graphic organizers that students fill in to demonstrate their understanding of the passage. The items are scored by New York City teachers, who are given extensive training in scoring. For all items, the scorers use clear, explicit rubrics that have been provided by CTB/ McGraw-Hill in collaboration with the New York City Board of Education.

ASSESSMENT BASED ON STANDARDS

Most items in PAL require students to write extended responses that are scored for writing content and writing mechanics as well as for reading comprehension. Scores in writing content are based on evidence of students' ability to focus on the topic or task, to address the specified audience, and to present complete ideas in logical order. Scores in writing mechanics are based upon students' competence in capitalization and punctuation, spelling, grammar, and word usage. Sample student responses (known as anchor papers) are provided to assist staff development, giving teachers experience in objective scoring of performance assessments as well as deeper insight into the goals of the performance standards. Thus, teachers are given examples of student work for scoring PAL in the same way that student work is used to exemplify the performance standards.

Classroom assessment

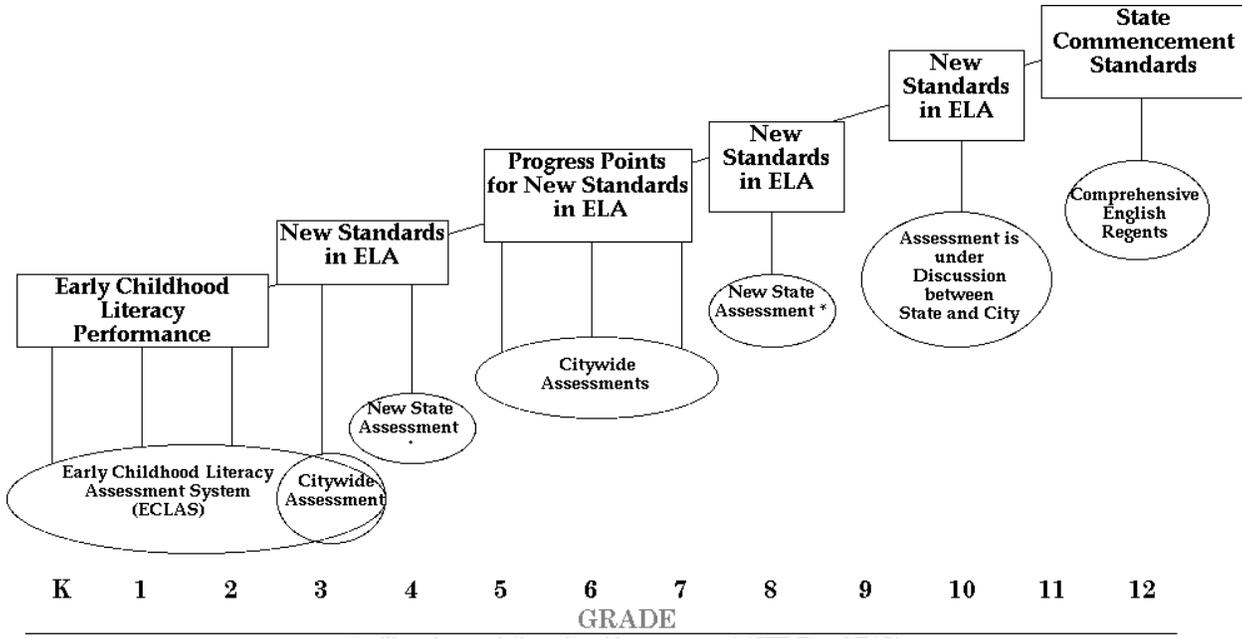
The first part of the Reading standard (E1a) requires that students read at least twenty-five books or book equivalents each year. The reading must include a range of literary forms and works from several writers. Students are also required to read in depth (E1b). The appropriate assessor for these requirements is the teacher or another adult close to the student who can verify the student's claims for meeting this requirement. This component of the system for assessing achievement of the Reading standard is designed to work like a merit badge in the style of the awards developed by the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. and the Boy Scouts of America.

Raising standards for all students has important implications for the quality of curriculum and instruction. Indeed, one of the most important reasons for setting high standards is to challenge the system to perform for the students. Appropriate assessments based on these high standards can give the system feedback on how well it is doing and what it has to do next.

Aligning assessments with the performance standards

In order to ensure that New York City's assessments are aligned with the performance standards, we will engage in an ongoing process of mapping our assessments against the standards in terms of content and level of student achievement required to meet the expectations set out in the standards. The assessment system will be modified and updated until full alignment is achieved. It is expected that this process will take place over several years resulting in successive annual improvements in the match between assessments and the performance standards.

ASSESSMENT BASED ON STANDARDS



**Alignment of State and City Standards and Assessments
in English Language Arts (ELA)**

The performance standards for English Language Arts define high standards of literacy for American students. The standards focus on what is central to the domain; they are built around reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing; and they acknowledge the importance of conventions, literature, public discourse, and functional documents. The standards were developed with the help of classroom teachers and content experts in concert with both the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association.

The performance standards represent a balanced view of what students should know and the ways they should demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired in this domain. Students are expected to read both literature and informational texts. They are required to produce writing that is traditionally associated with the classroom, including narratives and reports, and they are also expected to exhibit increasing expertise in producing and critiquing public and functional documents. In addition, students are expected to become proficient speakers, to hone their listening skills, and to develop a critical awareness of viewing patterns and the influence of media on their lives. The work that students produce in both written and spoken formats is expected to be of high quality in terms of rhetorical structures as well as the conventions of the English language.

The five standards for English Language Arts are as follows:

- E1 Reading;**
- E2 Writing;**
- E3 Speaking, Listening, and Viewing;**
- E4 Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language;**
- E5 Literature.**

At the high school level, two additional standards are added:

- E6 Public Documents;**
- E7 Functional Documents.**

The expansion of literacy at the high school level reflects the growing need for students to understand the range of materials they must deal with throughout their lives. Both public documents and functional documents are introduced in the Reading standard at the middle school level, where students are required to demonstrate a familiarity with these kinds of texts. It is important that the middle school standard anticipates the advanced degree of understanding expected at the high school level where students are expected both to critique and produce materials of these kinds.

Reading

The first part of the Reading standard, **E1a**, requires students to read a wide range of materials by a range of authors on different subjects. The requirement here is fairly simple: read twenty-five books of the quality illustrated in the sample reading list. Too often students are not given the opportunity to read full length books because of curricular restraints, a lack of resources, or a lack of access to books. The missed opportunity results in a tremendous loss of potential literacy skills that can only be developed when students become habitual readers. The requirement to read twenty-five books each year provides all students the opportunity to become habitual readers and represents a realistic and worthwhile goal that can be reached if students simply invest the effort. The sample reading lists are included to provide an indication of the quality and complexity of the materials students are expected to read at each of the benchmark grade levels. Any or all of the specific works on the list may be substituted with other works providing the works that are substituted are of comparable quality and complexity to those that are replaced.

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The second part of the Reading standard, **E1b**, requires students to “go deep” in at least one area of interest. We know that students who read regularly tend to read what interests them; note the trends in the work sample, “Reading Log,” page 162. This part of the Reading standard is intended to encourage all students to do what good readers do and pursue themes, authors, and genres that are of interest to them.

The third part of the Reading standard, **E1c**, requires students to work with informational materials in order to develop understanding and expertise about the topics they investigate. This area of informational materials is of great importance, and for too long it has been neglected in the school curriculum. Its inclusion as a separate part of the Reading standard indicates our desire that more attention be given to reading a broad range of materials written for a variety of audiences and purposes.

The fourth part of the Reading standard, **E1d**, at the elementary school level requires students to read aloud proficiently. This requirement is an expectation for elementary school level only.

At the middle school level (see page 188), there are two further parts of the Reading standard. These require students to demonstrate a familiarity with both public and functional documents. The category of public documents includes speeches, editorials, political advertisements, and other materials that engage a current issue. The category of functional documents consists of what is written or spoken in an attempt to get something done, whether that be a memorandum making a request of someone else, a computer reference manual, or a set of instructions that tell someone how to assemble something or how to carry out a procedure. Familiarity with these kinds of documents in middle school prepares students for a more sophisticated treatment of them in high school where they are identified as standards in their own right (see below).

Writing

The Writing standard, **E2**, requires students to demonstrate accomplishment in four types of writing at the elementary school level: report, response to literature, narrative account, and narrative procedure. At the middle school level, students are required to demonstrate accomplishment in an additional type of writing—persuasive essay. At the high school level there is a further, additional requirement—a reflective essay. Thus, expectations for the range of types of writing students will produce increase from elementary school through to high school. This increase in expectations is also evident in the demands established by the criteria for each type of writing at each grade level. Each of the writing types is defined by a distinct set of criteria, though there is clearly some overlap. The use of criteria specific to the writing types is meant to ensure that students become familiar with the strategies that characterize specific writing forms and to encourage students to use these criteria when they review and revise their work. All of the commentaries on the work samples related to the Writing standard use the language of these criteria and make explicit how the student work sample illustrates an accomplished example. The types of writing included in this standard are all forms of writing commonly produced both in and out of school.

Speaking, Listening, and Viewing

The speaking and listening parts of the Speaking, Listening, and Viewing standard, **E3**, are organized around a variety of social situations: one-to-one interaction, group discussion, and oral presentation. The viewing part of this standard asks for evidence of an awareness of media influences. The attention to viewing represents a growing awareness that the media play an integral part in most students’ lives and that students require increasingly sophisticated tools for dealing with media influences.

Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language

The Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language standard, E4, is listed as a separate standard even though the parts of the standard are always assessed in either a written or spoken context. The first part of the standard indicates the expectation that students should be able to represent themselves appropriately using standard English. The second part of the standard reflects the understanding that high quality work most often comes about as a result of a sustained effort represented by numerous drafts of a particular piece of work. In classrooms where high quality work is consistently produced, the revision process is most often an integral part of the curriculum.

Literature

The Literature standard, E5, like the Conventions standard, is listed separately even though it could easily be broken into two pieces and placed respectively within the Reading and Writing standards. However, for many people who go through school, the study of literature is the only situation in which they have the chance to explore the big ideas and the themes that emerge from social and political conflict, both in their own writing and in the writing of others. An understanding of these ideas and themes is integral for students who will one day be responsible for the negotiation of meaning important to a democracy. The first part of the Literature standard asks students to explore and critique the writing of others with these kinds of critical skills in mind. The second part of the standard asks students to produce literature with the hope that doing this will help students better understand the world that shapes both their literature and the literature of professional writers.

The final two standards, Public Documents and Functional Documents, are identified as distinct standards at the high school level only.

Public Documents

The Public Documents standard, E6, addresses the increasing need to prepare students to deal with the complexities involved in being a citizen in a democracy by focusing on those texts that address issues in the public sphere. Integral to active citizenship is an understanding of both the issues being addressed and the methods by which these issues are presented. Students need to be able to examine critically the evidence presented to them, determine the types of evidence that are acceptable in formulating various arguments, and to make informed judgments about issues that impact them. To do so, students must learn to read with a critical eye the arguments made by other people. The first part of the Public Documents standard asks students to offer a critique of a document that addresses a current issue; the second part asks students to write responsibly about an issue currently being debated in the public sphere.

Functional Documents

The Functional Documents standard, E7, recognizes the increasing need people have to communicate with one another. In the emerging literacy of a technological world, documents such as the instructions for programming a VCR, computer manuals, and corporate memoranda each serve the purpose of helping someone get something done. Students who will be asked to function efficiently in such a world need to be adept with the literacy such a world brings, which means they need to become skilled at “reading” materials such as charts and graphs, reference materials for large, complex procedures, and memoranda and other correspondence that contain the information they need to do their jobs successfully. Students must also understand how to participate in such a world as contributors, whether that means producing a set of instructions or communicating a body of data graphically. The first part of the Functional Documents standard asks

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students to critique a functional document in terms of its effectiveness in accomplishing its purpose; the second part asks students to successfully prepare a document that has as its primary purpose the goal of getting something done.

There are different kinds of performance standards in English Language Arts.

As you read these performance standards, you will notice that the standards are not all the same. The most obvious difference is in the way in which the performance descriptions for the standards are written. We did not impose a single style on the way in which the standards were written although we probably intended to do so when we began work. The reason we abandoned the idea of a single style is that, during the course of the development process, it became increasingly apparent that the various standards are different in nature and have different purposes that lend themselves to different kinds of presentation. But the style we have adopted for each standard is not entirely idiosyncratic. There are some patterns that help make sense of the different styles and of the nature and purposes of the standards for which those styles have been used.

We have identified four categories or kinds of standards, distinguished by their relationship to products of student learning and by the range of evidence required to demonstrate achievement of the standards. The distinctions are broad rather than neat, and we have sought only to define them generally rather than precisely. These differences among the standards have consequences for what it means to “meet a standard” and, therefore, for the ways in which we can use samples of student work to illustrate standard-setting performances.

Standards that describe a piece of work or a performance

One kind of standard is characterized by **E2, Writing**. Each part of this standard literally describes a piece of work that students are expected to produce and the knowledge and skills that should be evident in that work. For this kind of standard there is a one to one relationship between each part of the standard and a piece of work. Standards that fit this category are parts of **E1b, E1c, E1d** (at the elementary school level), **E2, E3, E5b, E6b, and E7b**.

Standards of this kind have several features:

- A single piece of work can meet the standard. In fact all of the requirements of the standard usually must be evident in a single piece of work for it to be judged as meeting the standard.
- The qualities that must be evident in a piece of work for it to meet the standard can be stated explicitly and are listed in bullet points as part of the bold-typed performance description. These qualities can be thought of as assessment criteria or as a rubric for work that meets the standard.

Work samples and commentaries to illustrate standard-setting performances for standards of this kind include: “Hamsters,” page 49, “My Brother,” page 244, and “Voices From the Hall,” page 397.

Standards that describe conceptual understanding

A second kind of standard is characterized by **E5a, Respond to non-fiction, fiction, poetry, and drama using interpretive, critical, and evaluative processes**. This standard describes conceptual understanding. Other standards that fit this category are **E6a and E7a** at the high school level, and **E1d and E1e** at the middle school level.

These standards have several features:

- The standard is made up of a number of distinct parts. It is most unlikely that any single piece of work will demonstrate all parts of the standard. In fact, it is common for a single piece of work to relate only to some aspects of one part of the standard. Thus, the standard can usually only be met by multiple pieces of work.
- Conceptual understanding is developmental. Any one piece of work may contain elements of conceptual understanding that are below what is expected for the benchmark grade level and elements that either meet or exceed what is expected for the benchmark grade level. Judging whether the work is “good enough” often means making an on-balance judgment.

Work samples and commentaries to illustrate standard-setting performances for standards of this kind include: “I Discover Columbus,” page 158 and “Dreams: Can Money Make Them Come True?” page 404.

Standards that describe skills and tools

The third kind of standard is made up of the standards that describe skills and tools. It is characterized by **E4**, Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language.

These standards have several features:

- As with the standards that describe conceptual understanding it is most unlikely that any single piece of work will demonstrate all parts of the standard. In fact, it is common for a single piece of work to relate only to some aspects of one part of the standard. Thus, the standard can only be met by multiple pieces of evidence.
- Also, like conceptual understanding, use of skills and tools is developmental. Any one piece of work may contain evidence of use of skills and tools that are below what is expected for the benchmark grade level and evidence of use that either meet or exceed what is expected for the benchmark grade level. Judging whether the work is “good enough” often means making an on-balance judgment.
- What distinguishes these standards from the other kinds is the body of evidence needed to demonstrate that the standard has been met. Here, sufficiency refers not only to the idea of coverage but also to a notion of consistency of application. We want to be confident that the work in question is representative of a body of work.

Ideally, work that provides evidence for these standards also provides evidence for other standards. This is the case for all of the work samples in this book that illustrate parts of **E4**.

Work samples and commentaries to illustrate standard-setting performances for standards of this kind include, “The Game,” page 96, “Friendship is Colorblind,” page 302, and “The Power Game,” page 420.

Standards that describe an accomplishment based on effort

The fourth category is closely related to the first, standards that describe a piece of work or a performance; it could be regarded as a sub-category of those standards. It is characterized by **E1a**, Read at least twenty-five books or book equivalents each year.

This part of the Reading standard is designed to encourage and reward effort. It is designed on the principles similar to those that apply to the merit badges that have long formed a part of the system of encouragement and rewards for young people in community youth organizations like the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. The twenty-five book requirement is designed to encourage students to develop a habit of reading by

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requiring that they read a lot. The requirement is challenging, especially since the reading is expected to be of the quality of the materials included in the sample reading list, but it is also confined. This part of the standard is not made more complex by requirements for evidence of depth of reading and comprehension. The message is: if you invest the effort, you will meet the requirement.

Examples of work samples and commentaries to illustrate standard-setting performances for this part of the Reading standard are “Reading Log,” page 162, “Annotated Book List,” page 316, and “My Thoughts on Literature,” page 349.

Students whose native language is other than English enter New York City’s public schools at every grade level throughout the school year. They come from all over the world and have a range of social, cultural, and academic experiences, assumptions, and expectations that may be substantially different from those of other students in New York City and the United States. These new students face many challenges and must overcome numerous barriers in order to succeed in their present and future endeavors.

The inclusion of perspectives on bilingual/ESL learners was an important part of the development of the New York City edition of the New Standards performance standards. English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual programs offer students the opportunity to acquire second language proficiency and to become educated bilingual/bicultural adults. Students, educators, parents, and the community are partners in the process.

In accord with the current national movement toward school reform and the adoption of rigorous, challenging standards for all students and the entire school community, ESL programs must aim for high standards that are developmentally appropriate and empower students to become productive, informed adults and life-long learners.

The ESL Curriculum Frameworks, published as a chapter of *the New York City Curriculum Frameworks*, are in alignment with the *New Standards™ Performance Standards*. The frameworks demonstrate that the expectations of English language learners, particularly at the advanced and transitional levels of ESL instruction, begin to parallel and eventually merge with English Language Arts.

What is English as a Second Language?

ESL is an academic discipline designed to allow students to acquire English language proficiencies across the major skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and critical thinking in a systematic and spiraling fashion. ESL services necessarily encompass academic areas other than language arts, such as science, mathematics, and social studies.

In addition, ESL instruction serves as a focal point for the introduction and reinforcement of the concepts of cross-cultural/multicultural understanding and social responsibility. Thus, ESL instruction plays a major role in affording bilingual/ESL students the opportunity to acquire the English proficiency and academic, cognitive, and cultural knowledge they need to become active participants in the larger society.

Teachers at all grade levels should use appropriate ESL methodologies including the integration of the visual and performing arts and technology. In this way, teachers will make their instruction more comprehensible while contributing to the English language acquisition of their students.

Because students enter the school system at all grades with varying levels of English language proficiency, the ESL Curriculum Frameworks are organized by grade cluster: Pre-K - 2, 3 - 5, 6 - 8, 9 - 12, and by level of instruction: beginning, intermediate, advanced, and transitional. The transitional level refers to the stage of English language development that forms the bridge to Language Arts in English.

GRADE CLUSTERS

	Pre-K—2	3—5	6—8	9—12
ESL LEVELS	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
	Transitional	Transitional	Transitional	Transitional

What are social language and academic language?

Students in the early stages of language acquisition begin to acquire social language that enables them to function conversationally and negotiate everyday situations. As students are increasingly exposed to content-based materials and literature, they begin to develop academic language. This expanded range of language skills enables them to succeed in the cognitively and academically demanding situations critical for school success.

Educators must remember that social and academic language are not separate aspects of language functioning. They are, rather, a continuum of applications along which students progress as they move through the various stages of second language acquisition. Research studies have indicated that the average English language learner may need between five and seven years of instruction to acquire academic language proficiency on a par with native speakers of English of the same age. Research has also shown that if students are already literate in their native language, these skills will form a base for English literacy.

What is the programmatic structure of ESL?

Students who are recent arrivals in the United States with little or no prior study of English are placed in the beginning level of ESL. They generally move to the intermediate level after one year of instruction. They then move on to the advanced and transitional levels as they acquire greater academic language proficiency. Students in bilingual programs receive instruction in their native language parallel to that of their English proficient peers while they are in the process of achieving English language proficiency.

It must be noted that there is a group of students with little, interrupted, or no formal schooling in their countries of origin whose needs and progress have to be considered separately. With proper support and time, these students will be able to reach the same standards as all other students.

In elementary and middle schools, it is quite common to have a wide variety of English language proficiencies in bilingual and ESL classes. In the high schools, ESL classes are usually organized by levels of instruction: beginning, intermediate, advanced, and transitional. The majority of high schools follow this model although variations exist.

Regardless of class organization models, there is a recognition at all grade levels that second language acquisition is a process and that students progress through various acquisition stages at their own pace. Teachers of ESL select specific methods and use specialized instructional materials to meet their students' needs.

ESL work samples

The work samples published in this book were produced by ESL students throughout the New York City’s public schools. The ESL work samples are similar to the other work samples in this collection because they represent student work that illustrates levels of ESL proficiency in relation to the standards for E1, Reading, and E2, Writing at the appropriate grade levels.

The ESL work samples illustrate that students at the advanced and transitional levels of instruction are well on their way to meeting the standard E4, Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language. The ESL student demonstrates a basic command of the rules of the English language within the context of second language acquisition at the level indicated. The errors in the samples are typical of those made by second language learners, and reflect the progressive and incremental nature of second language acquisition. The Conventions standard is not treated as a standard illustrated by the work sample, but is discussed as an important ESL area. Therefore, there will be differences between the ESL commentary and the English Language Arts commentary.

The margin notes list several ESL curriculum frameworks expectations that the ESL work sample has met. These ESL Frameworks are in alignment with the *New Standards™ Performance Standards*, and are intended for use across the disciplines by educators of English language learners.

SPANISH LANGUAGE ARTS

A second important feature of this New York City edition of the New Standards is the inclusion of work in native language arts. The New York City Board of Education has resolved that the performance standards expected of students who receive instruction in their native language should be the same as the performance standards expected of English-proficient students. Native language arts teachers, with expertise in Spanish, Chinese, Haitian, Korean, and Russian, met and reviewed this edition of the standards.

The samples of student work in native language arts illustrate the expectations for performance by students in Spanish Language Arts. Development of a collection of student work in other languages will follow the work on Spanish Language Arts. We decided to begin with Spanish, since 86% of students in bilingual education programs in New York City are Spanish-speaking. Our experience will be used as a basis for the work that lies ahead.

The Spanish language work samples represent the work of students in bilingual general education who receive parallel instruction to that of their English-proficient peers. It must be noted, however, that there is a group of students with little schooling, interrupted schooling, or no formal schooling whose needs and progress will have to be considered separately. With proper support and time, these students will be able to reach the same standards as all other students.

HOW TO READ THESE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

This volume is organized into three main sections: Elementary School (beginning on page 33), Middle School (beginning on page 187), and High School (beginning on page 331). Each section follows the same format.

Each standard is identified by a symbol.

Turn to the performance descriptions for the standards for elementary school on pages 34-43. There are five standards for English Language Arts at the elementary school level, each identified by a symbol. The symbol for the Reading standard is E1. This symbol appears wherever there is a reference to this standard.

1 Most standards are made up of several parts.

Most of the standards are made up of several parts, for example, the Reading standard has four parts at the elementary school level. Each part is identified by a lower case letter; for example, the part of the Reading standard that refers to reading informational materials is E1c. These symbols are used wherever there is a reference to the relevant part of a standard.

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Elementary School English Language Arts

Performance Descriptions English Language Arts

Performance Description Page →

6

E1 **Reading**

Reading is a process which includes demonstrating comprehension and showing evidence of a warranted and responsible interpretation of the text. "Comprehension" means getting the gist of a text. It is most frequently illustrated by demonstrating an understanding of the text as a whole; identifying complexities presented in the structure of the text; and extracting salient information from the text. In providing evidence of a responsible interpretation, students may make connections between parts of a text, among several texts, and between texts and other experiences; make extensions and applications of a text; and examine texts critically and evaluatively.

E1a The student reads at least twenty-five books or book equivalents each year. The quality and complexity of the materials to be read are illustrated in the sample reading list. The materials should include traditional and contemporary literature (both fiction and non-fiction) as well as magazines, newspapers, textbooks, and on-line materials. Such reading should represent a diverse collection of material from at least three different literary forms and from at least five different writers.

Examples of activities through which students might produce evidence of reading twenty-five books include:

- Maintain an annotated list of works read. **1b**
- Generate a reading log or journal. **1b**
- Participate in formal and informal book talks. **1b, 3a, 3b**

E1b The student reads and comprehends at least four books (or book equivalents) about one issue or subject, or four books by a single writer, or four books in one genre, and produces evidence of reading that:

- makes and supports warranted and responsible assertions about the texts;
- supports assertions with elaborated and convincing evidence;
- draws the texts together to compare and contrast themes, characters, and ideas;
- makes perceptive and well developed connections;
- evaluates writing strategies and elements of the author's craft.

Examples of activities through which students might produce evidence of reading comprehension include:

- Make connections between literary works according to a common theme. **2b, 5a**
- Produce a literary response paper. **2b, 4a, 4b, 5a**
- Produce an informative report. **1c, 2a, 4a, 4b, M7b, M7a, 57a, 57b**
- Participate in formal or informal book talks. **1a, 1c, 3a, 3b, 5a**
- Create an annotated book list organized according to author, theme, or genre. **1a**

1

E1c The student reads and comprehends informational materials to develop understanding and expertise and produces written or oral work that:

- restates or summarizes information;
- relates new information to prior knowledge and experience;
- extends ideas;
- makes connections to related topics or information.

Examples of activities through which students might produce evidence of reading informational materials include:

- Contribute to an attribute book. **2a, 4a, 4b**
- Present information to an audience of peers. **3c, 4a, 4b**
- Produce a chapter book on a factual topic. **2a, 4a, 4b**
- Rewrite video game instructions for a younger reader. **1b, 2d, 4a, 4b**

2

E1d The student reads aloud, accurately (in the range of 85-90%), familiar material of the quality and complexity illustrated in the sample reading list, and in a way that makes meaning clear to listeners by:

- self correcting when subsequent reading indicates an earlier miscue;
- using a range of cueing systems, e.g., phonics and context clues, to determine pronunciation and meanings;
- reading with a rhythm, flow, and meter that sounds like everyday speech.

Examples of activities through which students might produce evidence of reading aloud accurately include:

- Read aloud to peers or younger children.
- Participate in a Readers' Theater production.
- Record on an audiotape or videotape an example of reading aloud.

3

5

HOW TO READ THESE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

48 Elementary School English Language Arts

7 →

7

Work Sample & Commentary: Moneyville

6

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The task
Students were asked to produce a written response to the book, *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs*, by Judi Barrett.

Circumstances of performance
This sample of student work was produced under the following conditions:

✓ alone	in a group
✓ in class	✓ as homework
✓ with teacher feedback	with peer feedback
timed	✓ opportunity for revision

What the work shows

W.1 Writing: The student produces a narrative account (fictional or autobiographical) that:

- engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a point of view, and otherwise developing reader interest;
- establishes a situation, plot, point of view, setting, and conflict (and for autobiography, the significance of events);
- creates an organizing structure;
- includes sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character;
- excludes extraneous details and inconsistencies;
- develops complex characters;
- uses a range of appropriate strategies, such as dialogue and tension or suspense;
- provides a sense of closure to the writing.

A.1 The work establishes a context and develops reader interest in the first paragraph by supplying the background for the unusual setting of the story. The straightforward, journalistic style in an omniscient voice creates an illusion of credibility which instantly captures the reader's attention.

A.2 The choice of language for the first sentence, "Once there was..." is a traditional fairy tale/fable opening. This also engages the reader while establishing the genre and mood.

8

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This work sample illustrates a standard-setting performance for the following part of the standards:

W.1 Writing: Produce a narrative account.

9

←

Commentary Page

10

←

10

9

←

10

Performance descriptions tell what students are expected to know and be able to do. Each part of a standard has a performance description. The performance description is a narrative description of what students are expected to know and be able to do. It is shown in bold type.

2 Examples are the kinds of work students might do to demonstrate their achievement of the standards.

Immediately following the bold-typed performance descriptions for the standard are examples of the kinds of work students might do to demonstrate their achievement. The examples also indicate the nature and complexity of activities that are appropriate to expect of students at the grade level. However, we use the word “example” deliberately. The examples are intended only to show the kinds of work that students might do and to stimulate ideas for further kinds of work. None of the activities shown in the examples is necessarily required to meet the standard.

HOW TO READ THESE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

3 Cross-references highlight the links between the examples and the performance descriptions.

The symbols that follow each example show the part or parts of the standard to which the example relates.

4 Cross-references also highlight links among the standards.

Often the examples that go with the performance descriptions include cross-references to other parts of the standard and parts of other standards.

5 Cross-references also highlight opportunities for connecting activities across subject matters.

Some cross-references shown following the examples identify parts of standards in other subject matters. The cross-references highlight examples for which the same activity may enable students to demonstrate their achievement in more than one subject matter.

6 Margin notes draw attention to particular aspects of the standards.

The notes in the margin draw attention to particular aspects of the standards, such as the resources to which students need access in order to meet the requirements of the standards.

Comparing the grade levels.

Each page showing performance descriptions for the standards has a note in the margin that directs attention to Appendix 1 (see page 466) which shows the performance descriptions at each of the three grade levels: Elementary, Middle, and High School.

Work samples and commentaries.

Work samples and commentaries appear on the pages immediately following the performance descriptions.

7 Standards are highlighted in the bar at the side of the page.

The bar along the side of the pages showing student work highlights the standards that are illustrated by each work sample.

8 The box at the bottom of the page shows what is illustrated in the work sample.

The shaded box at the bottom of the page lists the parts of the standards that are illustrated in the work sample.

9 Work samples illustrate standard-setting performances.

Each work sample is a genuine piece of student work. We have selected it because it illustrates a standard-setting performance for one or more parts of the standards. (See “There are different kinds of performance standards in English Language Arts,” page 22.)

10 The commentary explains why the work illustrates a standard-setting performance.

The commentary that goes with each work sample identifies the features of the work sample that illustrate the relevant parts of the standards. The commentary explains the task on which the student worked and the circumstances under which the work was completed. It draws attention to the qualities of the work with direct reference to the performance descriptions for the relevant standards.

HOW TO READ THESE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The commentary also notes our reservations about the work.

The commentary also draws attention to any reservations we have about the student work. (See “Genuine student work,” page 13.)

Performance Standards = performance descriptions + work samples + commentaries on the work samples.

Performance standards are, thus, made up of a combination of performance descriptions, work samples, and commentaries on the work samples:

- The performance descriptions tell what students should know and the ways they should demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired.
- The work samples show work that illustrates standard-setting performances in relation to parts of the standards.
- The commentaries explain why the work is standard-setting with reference to the relevant performance description or descriptions.

Each of these is an essential component of a performance standard.

Most work samples illustrate a standard-setting performance for parts of more than one standard.

Most work samples illustrate the quality of work expected for parts of more than one standard. For example, some of the work samples selected to illustrate parts of E2, Writing, also illustrate a standard-setting performance for one or both parts of E4, Conventions, Grammar, and Usage of the English Language, or for part of E5, Literature, or, possibly, all of these.

“Survival” (see page 44) is an example of a work sample that illustrates parts of more than one standard.

11 Pages headed English as a Second Language include samples of work produced by ESL students.

The level of English proficiency is highlighted in the bar at the side of the page. The continuum ranges from beginning through intermediate, advanced, and transitional levels, and then merges with English Language Arts. (See English as a Second Language, page 25.)

Pages headed Spanish Language Arts include samples of work produced by students studying in bilingual education programs.

The work shown in these samples has been judged as illustrating standard-setting performances in terms of the same standards as those expected for students in English Language Arts. (See Spanish Language Arts, page 28.)

