ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS NIGHT PRESENTATION (3/6/13)

Instructional shifts in the Common Core State Standards & their affect on NYS exams
What are the six shifts?

- Balancing informational and literary text
- Knowledge in the disciplines
- Staircase of complexity
- Text-based answers
- Writing from sources
- Academic vocabulary
ELA shift #1 – Balancing informational and literary text

Shift defined in standards

- Students read a true balance of informational and literary texts
- Expectation is for students to read a 50/50 mix of fiction and non-fiction material

Implications for exam

- Students will read a mix of literary (i.e. fiction) and informational (i.e. non-fiction) on the exam
- Students need to identify what genre they are reading as the genres are read and responded to differently
## ELA shift #2 – Knowledge in the disciplines

### Shift defined in standards

- Students build knowledge about the world (domains/content areas) through TEXT rather than through the teacher or activities
- i.e. Students learn about the world by reading
- Obtain knowledge in science and social studies through reading and not lecture

### Implications for test

- Students may read about a novel topic in science or social studies and be asked to understand that new information
- i.e. Students will be asked to learn new information as they take the reading test
ELA shift #3 – Staircase of complexity

Shift defined in standard

- Students read the central, grade appropriate text around which instruction is centered
- Teachers are patient, create more time and space and support in the curriculum for close reading

Implications for test

- Students will read difficult passages at or above grade level
- Students will be expected to do independently what they often count on teachers to support
## ELA shift #4 – Text-based answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shift defined in standards</th>
<th>Implications for test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Students engage in rich and rigorous evidence-based conversations about text</td>
<td>• Students may be asked to identify a segment of text that best supports the central idea</td>
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<td>• Questions beyond rote recall or identification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shift defined in standards</td>
<td>Implications for test</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Writing emphasizes evidence from sources to inform or make an argument</td>
<td>• Students will be asked to make a claim, take a position (argument), or draw a conclusion (analysis) and provide multiple pieces of text-based evidence</td>
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<td>• Write a coherent essay using textual evidence to support their ideas</td>
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## ELA shift #6 – Academic vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shift defined in standards</th>
<th>Implications for test</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Students constantly build the transferable vocabulary they need to access grade level complex texts</td>
<td>• Students will read passages (see “staircase of complexity”) with difficult and/or unfamiliar vocabulary</td>
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<td>• Students may be asked to define words based on the context in which they were used (multiple meaning words)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
PUTTING THE FOLLOWING SLIDES IN CONTEXT

The next slide is a selection of text from the “Test Sample Questions” released by NYS. This is a sample for grade 3 students. After that is a sample question based on the passage. The third slide is a text sample from the 2010 test for comparison.
A gray hare was living in the winter near the village. When night came, he pricked one ear and listened; then he pricked his second ear, moved his whiskers, sniffed, and sat down on his hind legs. Then he took a leap or two over the deep snow, and again sat down on his hind legs, and looked around him. Nothing could be seen but snow. The snow lay in waves and glistened like sugar. Over the hare’s head hovered a frost vapor, and through this vapor could be seen the large, bright stars.

The hare had to cross the highway, in order to come to a **threshing-floor** he knew of. On the highway, the **runners** could be heard squeaking, the horses snorting, and seats creaking in the sleighs.

The hare again stopped near the road. Peasants were walking beside the sleighs, and the collars of their caftans were raised. Their faces were scarcely visible. Their beards, moustaches, and eyelashes were white. Steam rose from their mouths and noses. Their horses were sweaty, and the **hoarfrost** clung to the sweat. The horses **jostled** under their arches, and dived in and out of snowdrifts. The peasants ran behind the

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**words to know:**

- **hare** = A kind of rabbit
- **vapor** = Mist
- **threshing-floor**
- **runners**
- **caftan** = An ankle-length shirt with long sleeves
- **hoarfrost**
Sample question from grade 3 exam

Read the following sentence from the first paragraph:

“The snow lay in waves and glistened like sugar.”

The author uses the word sugar to show that

A) the hare was thinking about food
B) the snow looked sparkly
C) sugar was on the snow
D) the snow tasted sweet
The Tent

One hot summer day, Turtle found a tent in the sand. “Cool!” he said. “Now I can escape from the hot sun,” and he crawled inside.

“Hey, Mouse! Come and see the tent I found,” said Turtle. “It is a great place to escape from the hot sun!”

“Thank you,” said Mouse, and he crawled into the tent.

“Hey, Frog!” called Turtle and Mouse. “Come and see our tent. It is nice and shady in here.”

“Thanks,” said Frog as he crawled inside.

“Hey, Rabbit!” they called. “Come into our tent and cool off!” “Thank you,” said Rabbit, crawling inside.

“Hello, Elephant!” said Turtle, Mouse, Frog, and Rabbit. “We would ask you to join us inside our tent, but there is no more room. We are very sorry.”

“I am the one who is sorry,” said Elephant. “You see, this is not a tent. It is my hat.”

“Oh,” said Turtle. “We will look for shade somewhere else.”

“That’s OK, friends,” said Elephant. “We can share it!”
PUTTING THE FOLLOWING SLIDES IN CONTEXT

The following slide is a sample question for grade 5 released by NYS. Students would answer this question after reading 2 full-length passages. The next 2 slides show a text sample that might be comparably challenging for an adult and a common core inspired question.
Both stories are told from the perspective of an animal. How does this perspective affect how the stories are told? Compare and contrast how Black Beauty and the robin view their surroundings. Using details from both passages, describe how the animals’ perspectives influence how events are described.

In your response, be sure to:

- describe the perspective of Black Beauty from “Black Beauty”
- describe the perspective of the robin from “The Secret Garden”
- explain how each author uses these perspectives to help the reader understand the events as they unfold
- use details from both stories
But the loneliness in those two rooms had not gone away. When the winter sun hit the peeling green paint of the kitchen chairs, when the smoked hocks were boiling in the pot, when all she could hear was the truck delivering furniture downstairs, she thought about back home, about how she had been all alone most of the time then too, but that this lonesomeness was different. Then she stopped staring at the green chairs, at the delivery truck; she went to the movies instead. There in the dark her memory was refreshed, and she succumbed to her earlier dreams. Along with the idea of romantic love, she was introduced to another—physical beauty. Probably the most destructive ideas in the history of human thought. Both originated in envy, thrived in insecurity, and ended in disillusion. In equating physical beauty with virtue, she stripped her mind, bound it, and collected self-contempt by the heap. She forgot lust and simple caring for. She regarded love as possessive mating, and romance as the goal of the spirit. It would be for her a well-spring from which she would draw the most destructive emotions, deceiving the lover and seeking to imprison the beloved, curtailing freedom in every way.
Sample question for preceding passage

In the passage, how does the narrator describe Pauline’s altered concept of love and beauty following her trip to the movies?

Use two details from the text to support your answer.
PUTTING THE FOLLOWING SLIDE IN CONTEXT

The next slide shows changes to the format of the test. The parenthetic notations break the test down into each of the three days. The length of test in parentheses shows the recommended completion time, though the maximum allowable time is longer.
## Test format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Component</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length of test each day</td>
<td>Up to 70 minutes (50, 50, 50)</td>
<td>Up to 70 minutes (50, 50, 50)</td>
<td>Up to 90 minutes (70, 70, 50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of passages to read</td>
<td>Eleven (5, 3, 3)</td>
<td>Eleven (5, 3, 3)</td>
<td>Fourteen (6, 5, 3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approximate passage length</td>
<td>500-600 words</td>
<td>600-700 words</td>
<td>700-800 words</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple choice questions</td>
<td>Thirty-seven (30, 7, 0)</td>
<td>Thirty-seven (30, 7, 0)</td>
<td>Sixty-three (42, 21, 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short response questions (sentence length answers)</td>
<td>Eight (0, 3, 5)</td>
<td>Eight (0, 3, 5)</td>
<td>Eight (0, 3, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended response questions (essay)</td>
<td>Two (0, 1, 1)</td>
<td>Two (0, 1, 1)</td>
<td>Two (0, 1, 1)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Other test design changes/features

• No longer a listening passage (all questions based on texts read)
• All authentic text passages (no selections written for test)
• Text passages will be longer and more rigorous (difficult) than past tests
• Four test booklets given over three days
• Shorter testing time for 3rd and 4th grade tests
• New Common Core aligned rubrics will be used to score short- and extended-response questions
• “Field test” items will continue to be integrated into exams
Resources

• EngageNY web site (all things Common Core): www.engageny.org
• NYS test sample questions: http://engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-common-core-sample-questions
Questions…