

Transitioning to the Common Core English Regents Exam

PARENT INFORMATIONAL MEETING - MARCH 4, 2014

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PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- ✖ Background Information
- ✖ Exam Construction
- ✖ Implications on Curriculum and Instruction

Part One: Background Information

RECENT CHANGES TO THE ENGLISH REGENTS EXAM

- ✖ **Exam administered up to the conclusion of August 2010**
 - + Part One: Listening Passage with 6 multiple choice questions and a long essay (often written as a formal letter)
 - + Part Two: 2 “Paired Passages” (often text and a graphic of some sort) with 10 multiple choice questions and a long “controlling idea” essay
 - + Part Three: 2 “Paired Passages” with 10 multiple choice questions and a long “controlling idea” essay
 - + Part Four: Critical Lens Essay
- ✖ **Exam administered between January 2011 with a last administration in June (or possibly August) of 2015. Please note: We refer to this (and its predecessor) as the “2005 Exams.”**
 - + Part One: Listening Passage with 8 multiple choice questions
 - + Part Two: 2 texts with 12 multiple choice questions
 - + Part Three: 2 “Paired Passages” with 5 multiple choice questions and 2 short response questions (Controlling Idea and Use of Literary Element / Technique)
 - + Part Four: Critical Lens Essay

RATIONALE FOR CHANGE IN EXPECTATIONS

- ✖ Long-range data analysis (ELA Exams > English Regents Exams > Collegiate/Workplace Success)
- ✖ ELA exam scores have been decreasing
- ✖ The percentage of students graduating high school “college and career ready” (75 on English Regents / 80 on Math Regents) has been decreasing each year
- ✖ College remediation rates for freshmen have been steadily increasing
- ✖ The percentage of students graduating college in four years continues to decrease each year

WHICH COHORTS ARE AFFECTED BY THE TRANSITION?

✖ **Current 11th Grade Students (Class of 2015)**

- + Took the older (“2005”) Regents Exam in January
- + Will take the Common Core Regents Exam on June 3, 2014
- + If a student desires, he/she can retake older (“2005”) Regents exam again during late June
- + Students’ highest score will count towards their course average and transcript

✖ **Current 10th Grade Students (Class of 2016)**

- + Will take the older (“2005”) Regents Exam in January
- + Will take the Common Core Regents Exam in early June of 2015
- + If a student desires, he/she can retake older (“2005”) Regents exam again during late June
- + Students’ highest score will count towards their course average and transcript

✖ **Current 9th Grade Students (Class of 2017)**

- + Will only have the Common Core Regents Exam as an option in early June 3

✖ **Current 4th Grade Students (Class of 2022)**

- + First cohort to be held to higher graduation standards (As of now, they will have a passing score of 75 on the Regents exam)

Part Two: Exam Construction and Scoring

HOW ARE THE SIX SHIFTS ADDRESSED ON THE EXAM AND WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS?

- ✖ The Common Core English Regents will reflect the literacy demands necessary for students on track to attend college or enter into a career
 - + A balance of authentic literary and informational texts that reflect the complexity demands articulated by the Common Core Learning Standards
 - + Text-dependent questions that require analysis of texts
 - + Exposure to academic vocabulary
 - + Writing from sources with a focus on argumentation
- ✖ Thus, students who score in the proficient range will be deemed ready for entry-level credit-bearing ELA courses in college

EXAM CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS NY STATE PLACED ON ITSELF

- x Designed to be taken at the end of Grade 11
- x Addresses the Common Core Anchor Standards and, specifically, the 11-12 grade-level standards
- x Length of test must stay at 3 hours
- x Administered by paper and pencil
- x Use of Authentic Texts

EXAM BLUEPRINT

✖ **Part One: Reading Comprehension**

- + Suggested time: 60 minutes
- + Text description: 2 – 3 texts (approximately 2,600 words total). Each test will contain at least one literature and one informational text.
- + Student task: Students will perform a close reading of the texts and answer 24 multiple-choice questions.

✖ **Part Two: Writing from Sources**

- + Suggested time: 90 minutes
- + Text description: 2 – 5 texts (approximately 2,600 words total). Each test will contain at least two informational texts and, in addition, may contain graphics or one literature text.
- + Student task: Students will perform a close reading of the texts and write a source-based argument, as directed by the task.

✖ **Part Three: Text Analysis**

- + Suggested time: 30 minutes
- + Text description: 1 text (approximately 1,000 words). Each test will contain one literature or one informational text.
- + Student task: Students will perform a close reading of the text and write a two to three paragraph response that identifies a central idea in the text and analyzes how the author's use of one writing strategy (literary element or literary technique or rhetorical device) develops this central idea.

PART ONE: EXEMPLAR MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION PROVIDED BY NEW YORK STATE

- ✘ Sample question: Which sentence from the passage best supports the conclusion that Jason is fascinated by the story of the discovery?
 - + Sample answer A: “It was unbelievable, all this pushing and shoving.” (line 21)
 - + Sample answer B: “When there was only one left, Jason took off running with it like a dog with a prize bone.” (lines 25 and 26)
 - + Sample Answer C: “That man had left home with almost nothing to his name, Jason thought, just like I did.” (lines 55 and 56)
 - + Sample answer D: “It could have been Jason Hawthorn dragging a fortune in gold off that ship.” (line 57)
- ✘ Items of note:
 - + The item cannot be answered unless the student has read the text.
 - + The item stem **does not** reveal:
 - ✘ Textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly
 - ✘ Textual evidence to support analysis of inferences made from the text
 - + The text has sufficient details and examples to allow students to cite textual evidence to support their analysis of what the text says explicitly and inferences from the text.

PART TWO: ARGUMENT ESSAY (“WRITING FROM SOURCES”) EXEMPLAR PROVIDED BY NY STATE

- ✘ **Directions:** Closely read each of the five texts provided on pages 24 through 34 and write an evidence-based argument on the topic below. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and the next page to plan your response. Write your response in the space provided.
- ✘ **Topic:** Was the Federal Theatre Project successful?
- ✘ **Your Task:** Carefully read each of the five texts provided. Then, using evidence from at least four of the texts, write a well-developed argument regarding the success of the Federal Theatre Project. Clearly establish your claim, distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims, and use specific and relevant evidence from at least four of the texts to develop your argument. Do *not* simply summarize each text.

PART TWO: ARGUMENT ESSAY (“WRITING FROM SOURCES”) EXEMPLAR PROVIDED BY NY STATE

✘ Guidelines:

✘ Be sure to:

- + Establish your claim regarding the success of the Federal Theatre Project
- + Distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims
- + Use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least four of the texts to develop your argument
- + Identify the source that you reference by text number and line number(s) or graphic (for example: Text 1, line 4 or Text 2, graphic)
- + Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- + Maintain a formal style of writing
- + Follow the conventions of standard written English

✘ Texts:

- + Text 1 – From Crash to a New Identity: The Formation of the Works Progress Administration’s Federal Art Project
- + Text 2 – Federal Theatre: Melodrama, Social Protest, and Genius
- + Text 3 – Federal Theatre Project (FTP)
- + Text 4 – New Deal Cultural Programs: Experiments in Cultural Democracy
- + Text 5 – Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the United States

PART THREE: “TEXT ANALYSIS” EXEMPLAR **PROVIDED BY NY STATE**

- ✖ **Your Task:** Closely read the text provided on pages 39 through 41 and write a well-developed, text-based response of two to three paragraphs. In your response, identify one effect intended by the author and analyze how the author’s use of one literary element or technique advances this effect. Use strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis. Do *not simply* summarize the text. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and the next page to plan your response. Write your response in the spaces provided.
- ✖ **Guidelines:**
- ✖ **Be sure to:**
 - + Identify one effect intended by the author
 - + Analyze how the author’s use of one literary element or technique (for example: structure, theme, characterization, setting, point of view, tone, imagery, irony, figurative language, etc.) advances this effect
 - + Use strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis
 - + Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
 - + Maintain a formal style of writing
 - + Follow the conventions of standard written English

SETTING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR COMMON CORE ASSESSMENTS

- ✖ Common Core Learning Standards +
- ✖ Research-Based Methodology +
- ✖ NY educators' judgment > Recommended Cut Scores >
- ✖ Standard setting determination

Part Three: Implications on Curriculum and Instruction

THE SIX COMMON CORE SHIFTS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- ✖ Balancing Informational and Literary Text
- ✖ Building Knowledge in the Disciplines
- ✖ Staircase of Complexity
- ✖ Text-based Answers
- ✖ Writing from Sources
- ✖ Academic Vocabulary

IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION

- ✘ Reading and Writing
 - + Efficiency of time
 - + Deliberate skills-based instruction
- ✘ Reading
 - + Revisiting text complexity
 - + Less major texts read but read more “closely”
 - + Frequent exposure to complementary texts connected to primary materials
 - + Exposure to varied, spiraled, and sophisticated vocabulary through a tiered approach
 - + Opportunities for students to independently develop background knowledge
- ✘ Writing
 - + Far greater emphasis on writing from sources / Primacy of text based evidence
 - + Reduction in narrative writing
 - + Less products produced with a deeper focus on the writing process
 - + Scored using Common Core-aligned Rubrics
- ✘ Oral Discussion
 - + “Untested” yet incredibly important

DEVELOPING MORE RIGOROUS MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

- ✖ One of the incorrect answers should be seen as a truly viable **distracter** ("plausible yet incorrect")
 - + The more viable an option an incorrect answer is, the more rigorous the selection process will be for students
- ✖ The question should be phrased in an appropriately complex fashion
- ✖ The questions should assess a specific skill set, not just a student's ability to answer a comprehension-based or inference-based question.
- ✖ The text being analyzed needs to be of an appropriate complexity

DEVELOPING MORE RIGOROUS MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

✗ “Whole-to-Part” and “Part-to-Whole” Questions

+ Samples:

- ✗ Determine a **theme** or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective **summary** of the text.
- ✗ Analyze how complex **characters** develop over the course of a text, interact with others, and advance the **plot** or develop the **theme**.
- ✗ Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g. parallel **plots**) and manipulate time (e.g. pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as **mystery, tension, and surprise**.

CURRICULUM WRITING PROJECTS / ALIGNMENT TO THE COMMON CORE LEARNING STANDARDS

- ✕ Curriculum has been and will continue to be written to address the higher expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards and their associated formal assessments
 - + Summer 2011:
 - ✕ English 10H Interdisciplinary
 - ✕ College Writing I & II
 - ✕ Literature of the Supernatural
 - ✕ Contemporary Literature
 - + Summer 2013:
 - ✕ English 9R / English 9R+Lab
 - + *Tentatively planned for Summer 2014:*
 - ✕ English 10R / English 10R+Lab
 - ✕ English 11R / English 10R+Lab
 - ✕ Creative Writing
 - ✕ Reality Readings
 - ✕ Vocabulary Approach for Grades 9 > 11

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ✕ For those of you interested in following up:
 - + *This PowerPoint presentation will be posted in its entirety on both the high school English webpage as well as on a district-level Curriculum and Instruction webpage*
 - + *Visit the New York State Education Department's webpage specifically addressing high school English Regents exams:*
 - ✕ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/hsgen/home.html>
 - + *Visit the Engage New York webpage specifically addressing high school English Regents exams:*
 - ✕ <http://www.engageny.org/resource/regents-exams>