

NBPTS Adolescence and Young Adulthood **English Language Arts** **STANDARDS**

Second Edition



for teachers of students ages 14-18+

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Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts STANDARDS

(for teachers of students ages 14–18+)

Second Edition

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The world-class schools the United States requires cannot exist without a world-class teaching force; the two go hand in hand. Many accomplished teachers already work in the nation's schools, but their knowledge and skills are often unacknowledged and underutilized. Delineating outstanding practice and recognizing those who achieve it are important first steps in shaping the kind of teaching profession the nation needs. This is the core challenge embraced by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards® (NBPTS). Founded in 1987 with a broad base of support from governors, teacher union and school board leaders, school administrators, college and university officials, business executives, foundations, and concerned citizens, NBPTS is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan, and nongovernmental organization governed by a board of directors, the majority of whom are classroom teachers. Committed to basic reform in education, NBPTS recognizes that teaching is at the heart of education and, further, that the single most important action the nation can take to improve schools is to strengthen teaching.

The National Board's mission is to advance the quality of teaching and learning by:

- maintaining high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do;
- providing a national voluntary system certifying teachers who meet these standards; and
- advocating related education reforms to integrate National Board Certification® in American education and to capitalize on the expertise of National Board Certified Teachers®.

Dedication to this mission is elevating the teaching profession, educating the public about the demands and complexity of accomplished teaching practice, and making teaching a more attractive profession for talented college graduates with many other promising career options.

National Board Certification is more than a system for recognizing and rewarding accomplished teachers. It offers an opportunity to guide the continuing growth and development of the teaching profession. Together with other reforms, National Board Certification is a catalyst for significant change in the teaching profession and in education.

The Philosophical Context

The standards presented here lay the foundation for the Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts certificate. They represent a professional consensus on the aspects of practice that distinguish accomplished teachers. Cast in terms of actions that teachers take to advance student achievement, these standards also incorporate the essential knowledge, skills, dispositions, and commitments that allow teachers to practice at a high level. Like all NBPTS Standards, this standards document is grounded philosophically in the NBPTS policy statement *What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do*. That statement identifies five core propositions.

1) Teachers are committed to students and their learning.

Accomplished teachers are dedicated to making knowledge accessible to all students. They act on the belief that all students can learn. They treat students equitably, recognizing the individual differences that distinguish their students from one another and taking account of these differences in their practice. They adjust their practice, as appropriate, on the basis of observation and knowledge of their students' interests, abilities, skills, knowledge, family circumstances, and peer relationships.

Accomplished teachers understand how students develop and learn. They incorporate the prevailing theories of cognition and intelligence in their practice. They are aware of the influence of context and culture on behavior. They develop students' cognitive capacity and respect for learning. Equally important, they foster students' self-esteem; motivation; character; sense of civic responsibility; and respect for individual, cultural, religious, and racial differences.

2) Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.

Accomplished teachers have a rich understanding of the subject(s) they teach and appreciate how knowledge in their subjects is created, organized, linked to other disciplines, and applied to real-world settings. While faithfully representing the collective wisdom of our culture and upholding the value of disciplinary knowledge, they also develop the critical and analytical capacities of their students.

Accomplished teachers command specialized knowledge of how to convey subject matter to students. They are aware of the preconceptions and background knowledge that students typically bring to each subject and of strategies and instructional resources that can be of assistance. Their instructional repertoire allows them to create multiple paths to learning the subjects they teach, and they are adept at teaching students how to pose and solve challenging problems.

3) Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.

Accomplished teachers create, enrich, maintain, and alter instructional settings to capture and sustain the interest of their students. They make the most effective use of time in their instruction. They are adept at engaging students and adults to assist their teaching and at making use of their colleagues' knowledge and expertise to complement their own.

Accomplished teachers command a range of instructional techniques and know when to employ them. They are devoted to high-quality practice and know how to offer each student the opportunity to succeed.

Accomplished teachers know how to engage groups of students to ensure a disciplined learning environment and how to organize instruction so as to meet the schools' goals for students. They are adept at setting norms of social interaction among students and between students and teachers. They understand how to motivate students to learn and how to maintain their interest even in the face of temporary setbacks.

Accomplished teachers can assess the progress of individual students as well as the progress of the class as a whole. They employ multiple methods for assessing student growth and understanding and can clearly explain student performance to students, parents, and administrators.

4) Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.

Accomplished teachers are models of educated persons, exemplifying the virtues they seek to inspire in students—curiosity, tolerance, honesty, fairness, respect for diversity, and appreciation of cultural differences. They demonstrate capacities that are prerequisites for intellectual growth—the ability to reason, take multiple perspectives, be creative and take risks, and experiment and solve problems.

Accomplished teachers draw on their knowledge of human development, subject matter, and instruction, and their understanding of their students to make principled judgments about sound practice. Their decisions are grounded not only in the literature of their fields, but also in their experience. They engage in lifelong learning, which they seek to encourage in their students.

Striving to strengthen their teaching, accomplished teachers examine their practice critically; expand their repertoire; deepen their knowledge; sharpen their judgment; and adapt their teaching to new findings, ideas, and theories.

5) Teachers are members of learning communities.

Accomplished teachers contribute to the effectiveness of the school by working collaboratively with other professionals on instructional policy, curriculum development, and staff development. They can evaluate school progress and the allocation of school resources in light of their understanding of state and local educational objectives. They are knowledgeable about specialized school and community resources that can be engaged for their students' benefit and are skilled at employing such resources as needed.

Accomplished teachers find ways to work collaboratively and creatively with parents, engaging them productively in the work of the school.

The Certification Framework

Using the Five Core Propositions as a springboard, NBPTS sets standards and offers National Board Certification in nearly 30 fields. These fields are defined by the developmental level of the students and the subject or subjects being taught. The first descriptor represents the four overlapping student developmental levels:

- Early Childhood, ages 3–8;
- Middle Childhood, ages 7–12;
- Early Adolescence, ages 11–15; and
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood, ages 14–18+.

The second descriptor indicates the substantive focus of a teacher's practice. Teachers may select either a subject-specific or a generalist certificate at a particular developmental level. Subject-specific certificates are designed for teachers who emphasize a single subject area in their teaching (e.g., Early Adolescence/English Language Arts, Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Mathematics); generalist certificates are designed for teachers who develop student skills and knowledge across the curriculum (e.g., Early

Childhood/Generalist, Middle Childhood/Generalist). For some subject-specific certificates, developmental levels are joined together to recognize the commonalities in teaching students at those developmental levels (e.g., Early and Middle Childhood/Art).

Standards and Assessment Development

Following a nationwide search for outstanding educators, a standards committee is appointed for each field. The committees are generally made up of 15 members who are broadly representative of accomplished professionals in their fields. A majority of committee members are teachers regularly engaged in teaching students in the field in question; other members are typically professors, experts in child development, teacher educators, and other professionals in the relevant discipline. The standards committees develop the specific standards for each field, which are then disseminated widely for public critique and comment and subsequently revised as necessary before adoption by the NBPTS Board of Directors. Periodically, standards are updated so that they remain dynamic documents, responsive to changes in the field.

Determining whether or not candidates meet the standards requires performance-based assessment methods that are fair, valid, and reliable and that ask teachers to demonstrate principled, professional judgments in a variety of situations. A testing contractor specializing in assessment development works with standards committee members, teacher assessment development teams, and members of the NBPTS staff to develop assessment exercises and pilot test them with teachers active in each certificate field. The assessment process involves two primary activities: (1) the compilation of a portfolio of teaching practice over a period of time and (2) the demonstration of content knowledge through assessment center exercises. Teachers prepare their portfolios by videotaping their teaching, gathering student learning products and other teaching artifacts, and providing detailed analyses of their practice. At the assessment center, teachers answer questions that relate primarily to content knowledge specific to their fields.

The portfolio is designed to capture teaching in real-time, real-life settings, thus allowing trained assessors from the field in question to examine how teachers translate knowledge and theory into practice. It also yields the most valued evidence NBPTS collects—videotapes of practice and samples of student work. The videotapes and student work are accompanied by commentaries on the goals and purposes of instruction, the effectiveness of the practice, teachers' reflections on what occurred, and their rationales for the professional judgments they made. In addition, the portfolio allows candidates to document their accomplishments in contributing to the advancement of the profession and the improvement of schooling—whether at the local, state, or national level—and to document their ability to work constructively with their students' families.

Teachers report that the portfolio is a professional development vehicle of considerable power, in part because it challenges the historic isolation of teachers from their peers. It accomplishes this by actively encouraging candidates to seek the advice and counsel of their professional colleagues—whether across the hall or across the country—as they build their portfolios. It also requires teachers to examine the underlying assumptions of their practice and the results of their efforts in critical but healthy ways. This emphasis on reflection is highly valued by teachers who go through the process of National Board Certification.

The assessment center exercises are designed to complement the portfolio. They validate that the knowledge and skills exhibited in the portfolio are, in fact, accurate reflections of what candidates know and can do, and they give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills not sampled in the portfolio because of the candidate's specific teaching assignment. For example, high school science teachers assigned to teach only physics in a given year might have difficulty demonstrating in their portfolio a broad knowledge of biology. Given that the NBPTS Standards for science teachers place a high value on such capabilities, another strategy for data collection is necessary. The assessment center exercises fill this gap and otherwise augment the portfolio. Each candidate's work is examined by trained assessors who teach in the certificate field.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards believes that a valid assessment of accomplished practice must allow for the variety of forms sound practice takes. It must also sample the range of content knowledge that teachers possess and must provide appropriate contexts for assessments of teaching knowledge and skill. Teaching is not just about knowing things; it is about the use of knowledge—knowledge of learners and of learning, of schools and of subjects—in the service of helping students grow and develop. Consequently, NBPTS believes that the most valid teacher assessment processes engage candidates in the activities of teaching—activities that require the display and use of teaching knowledge and skill and that allow teachers the opportunity to explain and justify their actions.

In its assessment development work, NBPTS uses technology for assessment when appropriate; ensures broad representation of the diversity that exists within the profession; engages pertinent disciplinary and specialty associations at key points in the process; collaborates closely with appropriate state agencies, academic institutions, and independent research and education organizations; establishes procedures to detect and eliminate instances of external and internal bias with respect to age, gender, and racial and ethnic background of teacher-candidates; and selects the method exhibiting the least adverse impact when given a choice among equally valid assessments.

Once an assessment has been thoroughly tested and found to meet NBPTS requirements for validity, reliability, and fairness, eligible teachers may apply for National Board Certification. To be eligible, a teacher must hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution; have a minimum of three years' teaching experience at the early childhood, elementary school, middle school, or high school level; and have held a valid state teaching license for those three years or, where a license is not required, have taught in schools recognized and approved to operate by the state.

Strengthening Teaching and Improving Learning

The National Board's system of standards and certification is commanding the respect of the profession and the public, thereby making a difference in how communities and policymakers view teachers, how teachers view themselves, and how teachers improve their practice throughout their careers. National Board Certification has yielded such results in part because it has forged a national consensus on the characteristics of accomplished teaching practice in each field. The traditional conversation about teacher competence has focused on beginning teachers. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has helped broaden this conversation to span the entire career of teachers.

Developing standards of accomplished practice helps to elevate the teaching profession as the standards make public the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of accomplished teachers. However, making such standards the basis for National Board Certification promises much more. Because National Board Certification identifies accomplished teachers in a fair and trustworthy manner, it can offer career paths for teachers that will make use of their knowledge, wisdom, and expertise; give accomplished practitioners the opportunity to achieve greater status, authority, and compensation; and accelerate efforts to build more successful school organizations and structures.

By holding accomplished teachers to high and rigorous standards, National Board Certification encourages change along several key fronts:

- changing what it means to have a career in teaching by recognizing and rewarding accomplished teachers and by making it possible for teachers to advance in responsibility, status, and compensation without having to leave the classroom;
- changing the culture of teaching by accelerating growth in the knowledge base of teaching, by placing real value on professional judgment and accomplished practice in all its various manifestations, and by encouraging teachers to search for new knowledge and better practice through a steady regimen of collaboration and reflection with peers and others;
- changing the way schools are organized and managed by creating a vehicle that facilitates the establishment of unique teacher positions, providing accomplished teachers with greater authority and autonomy in making instructional decisions and greater responsibility for sharing their expertise to strengthen the practice of others;
- changing the nature of teacher preparation and ongoing professional development by laying a standards-based foundation for a fully articulated career development path that begins with prospective teachers and leads to accomplished teachers; and
- changing the way school districts think about hiring and compensating teachers by encouraging administrators and school boards to reward excellence in teaching by seeking to hire accomplished teachers.

Although National Board Certification has been designed with the entire country in mind, each state and locality decides for itself how best to encourage teachers to achieve National Board Certification and how best to take advantage of the expertise of the National Board Certified Teachers in their midst. Across the country, legislation has been enacted that supports National Board Certification, including allocations of funds to pay for the certification fee for teachers, release time for candidates to work on their portfolios and prepare for the assessment center exercises, and salary supplements for teachers who achieve National Board Certification. Incentives for National Board Certification exist at the state or local level in all 50 states and in the District of Columbia.

As this support at the state and local levels suggests, National Board Certification is recognized throughout the nation as a rich professional development experience. Because National Board Certification provides states and localities with a way to structure teachers' roles and responsibilities more effectively and to allow schools to benefit from the wisdom of their strongest teachers, National Board Certification is a strong component of education reform in the United States.

“The limits of my language stand
for the limits of my world.”

—Ludwig Wittgenstein

Language gives us the power to shape and make sense of experience. Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers demonstrate and celebrate the power of language with passion and commitment. They convey in attitude and action their belief that language and its imaginative use in literature can help us to understand ourselves—to discover what we know and do not yet know, and what we understand and do not yet understand. They know that language allows us to share stories, traditions, and beliefs; persuade or be persuaded; and explore new worlds and convey them for others to explore. Accomplished teachers often are rewarded for their dedication when they discover years, or decades, later that a lyrical line, a compelling story, or a memorable performance first encountered in an English language arts class has stayed with a student, serving as inspiration and guidance.

Accomplished teachers recognize the central place of language in developing students’ abilities to use their minds well. Thinking creatively, making informed and reasoned judgments, producing and inventing, critiquing and analyzing—all are facilitated through language. Armed with the conviction that no content area of the comprehensive school curriculum shapes students’ individual growth and overall success as much as English language arts, accomplished teachers provide students with the concepts, skills, and habits of mind necessary for success in school, the workplace, and the community. This is especially important in a technologically rich society where, more than at any time in human history, intellectual capital is power.

To be literate in the twenty-first century and, therefore, to have power in today’s world involves the ability to control the language processes of reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and producing media texts. Reading opens up new worlds to students, providing them with the information necessary to succeed in school, careers, and their personal lives. The reading of literature provides a lens through which students view the breadth, diversity, and commonality of the human experience. Writing allows students to search out and unfold their thoughts and provides a means of sharing those thoughts with others. Speaking and listening prepare students to interpret the continual stream of oral messages that surround them while empowering them to develop their individual voices as they express ideas and feelings. Viewing and producing media texts enable students to meet the demands created by developments in technology and media and to expand their versatility as effective communicators. Students become more and more confident in their power to make human language serve their individual purposes when teachers provide them with abundant opportunities to encounter the thoughts of others as well as to construct their own meaning through the language processes.

In the past quarter century, changes in our understanding of the processes of learning language, the materials being studied, the context in which they are studied, and the language fluency needed by students have influenced teachers’ ways of working in the classroom. Reading is a process involving many stages, and these stages are not necessarily linear. As a result, teachers have developed new strategies for helping students read. Knowledge about how professional writers actually orchestrate a writing task, and how varied contexts and purposes for which they write influence their processes, has deepened and enhanced our understanding of how to teach writing. The growing importance of oral

communication and media to today's society requires increased student fluency in the processes of listening, speaking, viewing, and producing media texts.

The very notion of text has evolved to include both print and nonprint text. Text refers to any organized network of meaning that a reader decodes, comprehends, and interprets. The word text in this document means oral, written, and visual text, unless otherwise noted. Teachers not only look at the language of a text but also at the world and values out of which that text arose, as well as at the world and values out of which a particular interpretation of a text arises. The rewards and challenges of communicating with people from other cultures highlight the need to help students become sensitive to audience and to nonverbal and language issues as never before. Teachers must also help students achieve communicative competence with technology in order to prepare them for its increased use at school, at home, at work, and in the larger community.

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers face the challenge of providing instruction for an increasing number of struggling or reluctant users of language. In the past, attention to the teaching of beginning reading, such as word identification skills, was focused in the elementary schools. Teachers now know that many adolescents and young adults do not have basic literacy skills. For many students who are reading and writing below grade level, who have yet to meet state and local standards, or who have exceptional needs, high school will be their last best opportunity to acquire the literacy skills they will need to fulfill the American dream of a better life for themselves and their children. Well-versed in second-language learning research, accomplished teachers also recognize the unique needs of students for whom English is a new language. Teachers know that additional time may be necessary for all of these students to master the skills required for effective communication in secondary, post-secondary, workplace, and societal settings, and, therefore, are skilled in helping students learn basic literacy skills. They also advocate for support programs in their schools that ensure that the needs of all students are met.

Many English language arts teachers work in environments that pose great challenges to achieving their professional goals. Restrictions on instructional methods and materials; large class sizes that limit individual attention; and lack of technology, time, or other resources can present daily challenges that require creative solutions. In spite of these challenges, English language arts teachers create learning environments in which the unique qualities of adolescents and young adults are welcomed and students are made to feel comfortable in ways that allow them to take risks to support their own learning. Accomplished teachers keep the learning needs of their students at the forefront of their teaching so that the challenges do not become insurmountable.

Today's accomplished teachers have a sophisticated understanding of the developmental factors that affect the teaching of adolescents and young adults. Teachers recognize that these students are becoming more autonomous and are developing strong personalities that are no longer as easily affected by others, but that make them ready to examine advanced ideas. Teachers help students to develop an increasingly high level of thinking in order to synthesize, analyze, and apply learning to many aspects of life. Accomplished teachers allow students to question the ideas behind what they are learning and to seek the means to discover answers in their own way. Knowing that students have amassed a repertoire of strategies to deal with life and learning, teachers encourage students to experiment with

new applications of their knowledge, to question the importance of what they are learning as it relates to other courses and to other aspects of their lives, and to accept the importance of communication and literacy to their futures. English language arts teachers capitalize on the attributes of adolescents and young adults while recognizing that their students are at various points along the developmental continuum. Teachers accept students where they are and encourage their growth as literate individuals in a diverse world.

English language arts teachers are committed to the importance of the study of language arts skills in all of the language processes and are skilled in their ability to embed and integrate the study of skills in an overall program that is rich with ideas. They create a seamless integration of skills and content, designing classes where students understand that the mastery and effective use of the basics contributes to their capacity to achieve purposes of vital importance to their lives. Teachers help students recognize the importance of an adherence to basic rules of communication whether writing an engaging and logically sound analysis of a text, an effective college entrance essay, a successful job application, a persuasive speech, or a self-selected creative writing project.

Accomplished teachers exhibit a commitment to multiple forms of assessment that advance student learning and provide important information on student progress. They advocate for the appropriate use of assessments and accept the challenges of delivering a high-quality English language arts program for all students that appropriately integrates preparation for high-stakes, large-scale assessments. Teachers avoid focusing on formulaic approaches to any aspect of the curriculum and ensure that students learn skills at both a knowledge and an application level. In this way, teachers integrate their responsibility to the learning needs of their students and the accountability demands of all stakeholders.

English language arts teachers are educational leaders who possess a deep sense of responsibility to their profession. Because clear communication is imperative to the success of all students in all areas of the curriculum, English language arts teachers collaborate with colleagues to embed and integrate the teaching of language processes in all content areas. They also advocate for interdisciplinary connections that focus on shared ideas and concepts. They provide leadership by collaborating with colleagues on the use of technology in the teaching of communication or in other aspects of teachers' work, such as managing data or communicating with parents or other caregivers. Looking toward the future of their profession, accomplished teachers mentor new teachers, supervise intern teachers, collaborate with local universities to improve teacher preparation programs, or contribute to professional knowledge through workshops or presentations. Regardless of what form their leadership takes, accomplished English language arts teachers serve as models of professional excellence.

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers find immense personal and professional satisfaction in preparing students to join the community of literate adults, equipped to shape the future. There is a growing consensus that teachers—these well-read, articulate, accessible teachers who share their reading and writing experiences with students as models of literate behavior—are the single most important component of a comprehensive English language arts curriculum because they give students the skills they need to participate in and contribute to our democratic society.

Developing High and Rigorous Standards for Accomplished Teaching

In 1992, a committee of Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers and other educators with expertise in this field began the process of developing advanced professional standards for teachers of students ages 14 to 18+. The Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts Standards Committee was charged with translating the Five Core Propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards into a standards document that defines outstanding teaching in this field.

In 2002, a committee of educators (including National Board Certified Teachers) was convened to examine and update as necessary the published *Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts Standards*. This second edition of the standards is the result of the committee's deliberations at meetings and their input into working drafts of the standards.

This NBPTS Standards document describes in observable form what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. The standards are meant to reflect a professional consensus at this point about the essential aspects of accomplished practice. The deliberations of the Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts Standards Committee were informed by various national and state initiatives on student and teacher standards that have been operating concurrently with the development of NBPTS Standards. As the understanding of teaching and learning continues to evolve, *Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts Standards* will be updated again.

An essential tension in describing accomplished practice concerns the difference between the analysis and the practice of teaching. The former tends to fragment the profession into any number of discrete duties, such as designing learning activities, providing quality explanation, modeling, managing the classroom, and monitoring student progress. Teaching as it actually occurs, however, is a seamless activity.

Everything an accomplished teacher knows through study, research, and experience is brought to bear daily in the classroom through innumerable decisions that shape learning. This work frequently requires balancing the demands of several important educational goals. It depends on accurate observations of particular students and settings. And it is subject to revision on the basis of continuing developments in the classroom. The professional judgments that accomplished teachers make also reflect a certain improvisational artistry.

The paradox, then, is that any attempt to write standards that dissect what accomplished teachers know and are able to do will, to a certain extent, misrepresent the holistic nature of how teaching actually takes place. Nevertheless, the fact remains: Certain identifiable commonalities characterize the accomplished practice of teachers. The 16 standards that follow are designed to capture the craft, artistry, proficiencies, and understandings—both deep and broad—that contribute to the complex work that is accomplished teaching.

The Standards Format

Accomplished teaching appears in many different forms, and it should be acknowledged at the outset that these specific standards are not the only way it could have been described. No linearity, atomization, or hierarchy is implied in this vision of accomplished teaching, nor is each standard of equal weight. Rather, the standards are presented as aspects of teaching that are analytically separable for the purposes of this standards document, but that are not discrete when they appear in practice.

The report follows a two-part format for each of the 16 standards:

- I. *Standard Statement***—This is a succinct statement of one vital aspect of the practice of the accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teacher. Each standard is expressed in terms of observable teacher actions that have an impact on students.
- II. *Elaboration***—This passage provides a context for the standard, along with an explanation of what teachers need to know, value, and do if they are to fulfill the standard. The elaboration includes descriptions of teacher dispositions toward students, their distinctive roles and responsibilities, and their stances on a range of ethical and intellectual issues that regularly confront them.

The 16 standards have been organized around the nexus of education-student learning. They are divided into three categories: (1) teacher actions that prepare the way for productive student learning; (2) teacher actions that directly advance student learning in the classroom; and (3) teacher actions that indirectly support student learning through long-range initiatives conducted, for the most part, outside the classroom. Such a “road map” for reading the document should not be taken too literally, because, as previously noted, accomplished teaching is a holistic act in which the many facets of practice come together to advance student learning.

Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts STANDARDS

(for teachers of students ages 14–18+)

Second Edition

OVERVIEW

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has developed the following 16 standards of accomplished practice for Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers. The standards have been ordered as they have to facilitate

understanding, not to assign priorities. They each describe an important facet of accomplished teaching; they often occur concurrently because of the seamless quality of teaching. The standards serve as the basis for National Board Certification in this field.

Preparing the Way for Productive Student Learning

I. Knowledge of Students (p. 9)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers acquire specific knowledge about students' individual, intellectual, and social development and use that knowledge to advance students' achievement as readers, writers, speakers, listeners, and viewers in English language arts.

II. Knowledge of English Language Arts (p. 13)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers have a thorough command of the various domains of knowledge that compose the English language arts.

III. Instructional Design and Decision Making (p. 19)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers use their knowledge of students, English language arts, and pedagogy to design curricula, instruction, and assessment.

IV. Fairness, Equity, and Diversity (p. 23)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers demonstrate their commitment to fairness, equity, and diversity.

V. Learning Environment (p. 27)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers establish and manage inclusive learning environments in which they engage, challenge, and support students.

VI. Instructional Resources (p. 31)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers create, select, adapt, and use a wide range of instructional resources to support their students' learning and strengthen their own teaching.

Advancing Student Learning in the Classroom

VII. Integrated Instruction (p. 35)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers integrate reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing and producing media texts in their instruction and incorporate content from other disciplines.

VIII. Reading (p. 39)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers develop students' reading skills and their abilities to comprehend, interpret, and analyze a wide variety of texts for personal, literary, informational, and critical purposes.

IX. Writing (p. 45)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers develop and refine students' abilities to write effectively and independently different types of texts for a variety of purposes and audiences.

X. Speaking and Listening (p. 51)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers advance students' abilities to speak and listen for a variety of purposes and audiences.

XI. Viewing and Producing Media Texts (p. 57)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers enable students to critically read, evaluate, and produce messages in a variety of media.

XII. Language Study (p. 61)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers develop students' abilities to use language effectively and to appreciate the different ways readers, writers, and speakers use language.

XIII. Assessment (p. 65)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers use a range of formal and informal assessment methods to plan for instruction, to monitor and evaluate student progress, to involve students in the assessment process, and to report student achievement to various audiences.

Supporting Student Learning through Long-Range Initiatives

XIV. Self-Reflection (p. 69)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers continually observe, analyze, and seek to improve the quality and effectiveness of their teaching, and articulate reasons for instructional decisions.

XV. Professional Community (p. 73)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers participate collaboratively in the educational community to improve instruction, advance the knowledge and practice of the field, and enhance their professional identities.

XVI. Family and Community Involvement (p. 77)

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers work with families, caregivers, and community members to best serve the needs of students.

The pages that follow provide elaborations of each standard that discuss the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and habits of mind that describe accomplished practice in the field.

Preparing the Way for Productive Student Learning

The first six standards form the foundation for the instructional decisions made by Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers and are the basis for all the other standards. Only by knowing their students well can teachers consistently make instructional decisions that will further students' learning. And only by having deep and broad understandings of English language arts and pedagogy can teachers organize and deliver instruction that helps students build their own deep and broad understandings of this field.

Standard I: Knowledge of Students

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers acquire specific knowledge about students' individual, intellectual, and social development and use that knowledge to advance students' achievement as readers, writers, speakers, listeners, and viewers in English language arts.

Accomplished English language arts teachers use specific knowledge of the intellectual, social, and individual development of their students to make sound instructional decisions resulting in optimal student learning. Accomplished teachers genuinely like working with young people and believe that all students can learn, although they are keenly aware that not all students learn in the same way or at the same pace.

Because language development builds on prior achievements and experiences, English language arts teachers¹ make it a point to learn about their students early in the school year and to use this knowledge to help shape decisions in the classroom. Practically everything about adolescent and young adult learners is relevant information to the accomplished teacher, including an awareness and appreciation of each student's cultural, linguistic, and ethnic heritage; home and community setting; socioeconomic status; special needs; individual strengths and work habits; prior knowledge and learning experiences; and personal interests and goals.

Accomplished teachers systematically create opportunities at the beginning of the

term—such as surveys, inventories, or assessments—to gather vital information about their students. They gain a sense of each student's ability to read, write, speak, listen, view and produce media texts in English or other languages; this particular information is important for teachers as they design challenging and rigorous tasks that meet the needs of all students. In addition, they monitor students' work habits; contributions to discussions; participation patterns; and choices in reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and producing media assignments. They evaluate students' learning styles and multiple intelligences, such as verbal, kinesthetic, or interpersonal. Teachers use this information to note students' strengths and areas of need in terms of their abilities in reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and producing media texts, and they design instruction to meet students' individual needs while incorporating local, state, and national standards and the goals of the curriculum.

Accomplished teachers conscientiously strive to gain a sense of their students' unique literary histories and sensibilities. For

1. All references to *teachers* in this document, whether stated explicitly or not, refer to accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers.



example, they may discover students' favorite authors or favorite genres or they may allow students to share personal expressions and uses of language created both in and out of school. Teachers use the knowledge they gain of students' literary interests to help expand students' world through the study of teacher-selected fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama and film and to promote student self-discovery through personally meaningful interaction with self-selected texts.² By such means, teachers encourage the overarching goal of lifelong reading and learning—a goal that is attainable through an individual knowledge of each student.

Teachers also gain specific knowledge of students for whom English is a new language, students who have exceptionalities, students who need advanced challenges, and students who need extra support. Accomplished teachers adjust lessons in ways that promote learning within each student's optimal range of development, while advancing each student's growing independence as an adolescent or young adult learner. Accomplished teachers actively collaborate with other school professionals, such as nurses, counselors, students' previous teachers, English language development specialists, reading specialists, and special education teachers. Teachers are aware of key medical information and required accommodations for students with exceptional needs and make decisions based on sometimes sensitive information—decisions which further students' learning in the context of their individual circumstances.

This process of gathering information about students as individuals is ongoing and is connected to the student's academic progress throughout the year. It may include periodic reviews of the student's reflective writing, formal and informal assessments, and, if appropriate, conversations with parents.³ (See Standard XVI—*Family and Community Involvement*.) Many adolescents

and young adults are employed part time or are involved in other school or community activities that may affect their ability to perform academically; accomplished teachers are quick to take action, consulting parents if a student's progress appears impeded by other obligations.

In order to build relationships that promote each student's academic success, teachers make themselves available and approachable on an informal basis before and after school, at extracurricular school events, and at community activities. Although teachers remain in adult roles at such times, these roles do not prevent them from being accessible, caring, and eager to share knowledge—knowledge that will enable students to obtain success and freedom.

Knowing students, in a more global sense, also includes being sufficiently conversant with youth culture, including the television programs and movies that adolescents and young adults watch, the books and magazines they read, the music they listen to, the Internet and computer software experiences they have, and the way they communicate with one another. Knowing students means knowing the fears and dreams that inspire them, the issues that stir them, and the causes that speak to them. Accomplished teachers familiarize themselves with the topics that interest their students and make connections between explorations of language and literature and their students' personal experiences, school experiences, and cultural backgrounds.

Accomplished teachers know that students mature at different rates and that, within the same classroom, a wide variation in students' developmental stages, life experiences, and traditions is expected, accommodated, and accepted. They complement their knowledge of individual students with a broad perspective on patterns of emotional, intellectual, social, and physical development in adolescents and young adults gained

2. The word *text* in this document, whether stated explicitly or not, refers to both print and nonprint text.

3. The word *parents* is used in this document to refer to the people who are the primary caregivers and guardians of children.

Standard II: Knowledge of English Language Arts

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers have a thorough command of the various domains of knowledge that compose the English language arts.

Accomplished English language arts teachers operate with a sense of purpose in the classroom. They have an impressive command of the various domains of knowledge that comprise the English language arts, and, as lifelong learners, they deepen their content knowledge through continual study and accumulated practical experience in the classroom. In this way, their command of the theory, research, and practice in the various domains of the field are all brought to bear for the benefit of student learning.

Accomplished teachers ground instruction in their knowledge of the various domains of English language arts: (a) literature, including traditional and contemporary fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama; and other print and nonprint texts; (b) reading processes and how students learn to read; (c) writing processes and how students learn to write; (d) speaking and listening and the conventions of oral communication; (e) viewing and producing media texts; (f) language, its conventions, and the role it plays in shaping all forms of communication; (g) the cognitive and social development of adolescents and young adults; (h) current research on effective instruction in the English language arts; and (i) assessment in the English language arts. These domains are informed by what students are expected to know and be able to do in English language arts.⁴

Accomplished teachers themselves are well-read, and they know how to read thoughtfully and strategically. They understand literature as an expression of human creativity that has evolved over time, and they

can describe the key intellectual currents, social forces, innovations, individuals, and groups that have contributed to this evolution. They appreciate the intellectual growth that can flourish through reading literature, know the main traditions of literary criticism and theory, and know how theory and criticism enrich interactions with that text. Teachers understand the distinctive features of literary genres and how those features influence audiences. They are skilled in responding to particular literary texts, and can interpret and discuss literary texts from different critical perspectives or lenses. Teachers know how literary elements and terminology help readers construct meaning from texts, and they appreciate the artistry of how an author orchestrates these elements to create a text, and, ultimately, to deepen the enjoyment of the reading experience. Accomplished teachers know how to judge the literary merit of what they read. (See Standard VIII—*Reading*.)

Accomplished teachers know a wide range of high-quality texts. They are familiar with a large and diverse array of literary periods, works, authors, and genres from America and throughout the world. These include traditional and contemporary classics of literature, young adult literature, and multicultural literature. In addition, accomplished teachers know a wide variety of informational texts, as well as spoken and visual texts, and they know how to make connections among texts in different media. (See Standard VI—*Instructional Resources*.)

Accomplished teachers know the processes and strategies that skilled readers

4. See for example, National Council of Teachers of English & International Reading Association. *Standards for English Language Arts* (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1996); National Communication Association. *Competent Communicators: K–12 Speaking, Listening, and Media Literacy Standards and Competency Statements* (Annandale, Va.: National Communication Association, 1998); and state and local standards in English language arts.

use to decode, comprehend, analyze, and evaluate text and how to teach these processes and strategies to students. They know how readers combine resources from the text and from their prior knowledge to decode and comprehend. Teachers know how to support students in their attempts to make sense of the increasingly complex texts they will be asked to read during their high school years. They know a range of strategies, from developing vocabulary and helping students comprehend story elements and informational text structure to guiding students as they construct a critical analysis of a sophisticated text. Cognizant of the importance of promoting the pleasure of reading and recognizing the tension between the pleasure that reading a fine text evokes and the need to develop students' critical thinking skills in ways that only analyzing sophisticated texts can, accomplished teachers know how to balance the love of reading with the teaching of literary criticism.

Accomplished teachers know how to determine students' reading levels and needs. They know research-based teaching strategies and match appropriate methodologies with individual learners to further students' development as readers. Teachers also know strategies to help struggling and reluctant readers with decoding, phonemic awareness, comprehension, and motivation. They know the importance of developing each student's ability to read well and can synthesize and select best practices from sometimes conflicting views of reading instruction to shape appropriate reading experiences for their students. Accomplished teachers can participate in and contribute to professional conversations about research on the teaching of reading and how students learn to read. (See Standard VIII—*Reading*.)

Accomplished teachers possess a depth of knowledge about how writing is learned, the research on writing instruction, and the importance of writing in assisting learning in all content areas. They understand writing as

a complex, recursive thinking process with idiosyncratic elements that challenge every writer and writing task in a different way. Accomplished teachers are themselves effective writers. They know how to organize a piece of writing logically by using modes of development that are appropriate to the audience and purpose. Their writing is cogent, expressing substantive ideas and marshaling evidence in a compelling manner to affect an audience in ways that fulfill a writer's purpose. Teachers know how to construct carefully worded sentences with particular attention to a variety of sentence patterns and rhetorical devices. They are comfortable with and aware of their own writing process.

In addition to developing their own writing skills, teachers know effective strategies for teaching all aspects of a writing process, and they understand the role of explicit instruction and the place of self-selected student writing. Teachers understand that writing is a social act that grows out of the need to communicate important ideas to audiences that matter to the writer. They understand the interrelatedness of purpose, audience, and context in effective writing, and they create writing assignments and tasks that help students discover authentic purposes and write for real audiences, both in and beyond the classroom.

Teachers know the importance of employing both peer and teacher responses to writing, and they provide feedback and instruction that respect the writer's strengths, voice, and style, even as they help writers understand areas for improvement in their own writing. Teachers have a repertoire of strategies to help students craft communications that achieve their intended effect on audiences. Teachers know that students best learn the conventions of written language in the context of writing text to be read by others, and they know how to incorporate instruction on conventions, including grammar, organizational patterns, and rhetorical devices into their writing lessons. (See Standard IX—*Writing*.)

Accomplished English language arts teachers are clear and cogent oral communicators. They are skilled at one-on-one, small group, and public speaking. They are familiar with the main theories of discourse, including how speaking and listening skills typically develop, and how those theories can be used to improve reading and writing. They understand that oral communication is a complex process that involves the interaction of the speaker, the listeners, and all aspects of the context of the communication. They recognize that proficiency in speaking and listening can be taught both as process and skill in ways similar to the teaching of reading and writing. They understand that speaking and listening are rhetorical and multisensory activities, involving not only voice and diction but also nonverbal factors such as space, body language, and physical setting. They know how to teach students to listen and speak for varying purposes and audiences so that they will become fluent, purposeful, and articulate users of oral language in a variety of settings. (See Standard X—*Speaking and Listening*.)

Accomplished teachers know that students must become critical and reflective consumers and producers of visual communication because media literacy has become an integral part of being literate in contemporary society. Teachers understand how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in ways that are both subtle and profound. They understand that students need to learn the power of visual communication, from the uses typefaces and white space on a written report to the uses of graphics and video in multimedia productions. Accomplished teachers know and understand the ways in which media affect people's personal and public lives. Teachers understand the complex relationship between audience and media content and recognize that media content is produced within social and cultural contexts. They also understand that adolescents and young adults are creators and interpreters of media in their

lives beyond school. Teachers know that mass media such as radio, television, and film, and electronic media such as the Internet, influence the way meanings are created and shared in contemporary society. Teachers know the distinctive characteristics of each medium and how to integrate both instruction about and use of media to further students' learning in language arts. Accomplished teachers know how to use various media and technologies to improve instruction and support learning. (See Standard XI—*Viewing and Producing Media Texts*.)

Accomplished teachers are well versed in language history, theory, and development. They understand that language is a dynamic social construct, not a fixed, undeviating code. They are familiar with the historical relationships of languages to one another and with the cultural role of language in human society. They understand the nature and sources of language variety and the importance of developing a global perspective about English. Accomplished teachers understand the major semantic, syntactical, and auditory systems of English and provide ways to discuss language and its production, as well as the relationship between oral and written language. They are familiar with the main theories of language structure, use, and evolution and understand the instructional implications of these theories. They understand the power of language: that language can be used to influence the thoughts and actions of others; that particular language patterns privilege some groups and marginalize others; and that language is a human invention and a source of self-discovery for every student. Teachers know that if students are to discover the power of language use, they need multiple opportunities to experiment with language in all of its forms. They know the technical conventions of language, both oral and written, including the rules of grammar, spelling, and usage, as well as the consequences of not using these conventions. (See Standard XII—*Language Study*.)



Accomplished teachers understand the cognitive and social development of adolescents and young adults as a unique class of literacy learners. While realizing that these students develop cognitively at different rates, teachers also understand that adolescents and young adults are increasingly capable in such skills as abstract and analytic reasoning, making connections, and considering multiple perspectives as they respond to and compose texts. Teachers know that students at this developmental level need to be engaged as active and increasingly independent learners. Accomplished teachers understand the nature of motivation—including both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards—and that understanding allows them to engage students through deliberately and strategically crafted language experiences. (See Standard I—*Knowledge of Students* and Standard V—*Learning Environment*.)

Accomplished teachers know and can evaluate the research supporting the teaching of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing and producing media texts.⁵ They also know the national, state, and local standards that affect their curriculum. Pedagogical knowledge enables teachers to transform their knowledge of the field into curricula and teaching practices. Accomplished teachers know how to design instruction that promotes literacy development for all students. They know the strategies involved in understanding and producing texts, and they can teach a wide range of skills that help students develop those strategies. They also know how growth in one area of the language arts reinforces growth in other areas. They possess a repertoire of techniques to teach students how to think critically and to use language effectively. (See Standard III—*Instructional Design and Decision Making*.)

Accomplished teachers possess an extensive knowledge of the range of appropriate assessment methods for the English language arts. They understand the strengths and

weaknesses of specific assessment instruments and techniques and are able to select appropriate assessments for specific curricular standards. They are knowledgeable about the extensive research that correlates appropriate classroom assessment, specifically formative assessments, with improved student achievement. They understand issues of reliability and validity in assessment. Accomplished teachers employ assessments that give students the opportunity to display various intelligences or highlight a variety of learning styles, such as verbal, visual, kinesthetic, spatial, and interpersonal. They know and use varied methods for evaluating student writing, for example, holistic, analytic, and primary-trait scoring. They are also able to effectively select and critique commercially prepared assessments, revising them to match a specific curricular emphasis if necessary. They know how to interpret data from standardized measures, and they are aware that these data must be balanced with information gleaned from classroom assessment instruments to make appropriate instructional decisions. Teachers know how to communicate the reason for and results of all assessments to students, their parents, and other members of the learning community. (See Standard XIII—*Assessment*.)

Accomplished teachers are lifelong learners. They stay abreast of current research, issues, and theories, as well as classroom research, to inform their practice. They do so by reading professional literature, participating in professional organizations and learning communities, and reflecting on their teaching. In short, accomplished teachers are able to navigate through the complexities of the field to create meaningful learning experiences for their students.



5. Hereafter, *viewing and producing media texts* will be abbreviated as *viewing and producing*. The terms *viewing and producing*, like *reading and writing* for print text, and *speaking and listening* for oral text, refer to the language processes of responding to and generating visual text-skills in visual communication. However the terms *viewing and producing* in this document will also incorporate the broader concept of *media text*: responding to and generating text in different media, such as newspapers, advertisements, film, radio, and the Internet.

Standard III: Instructional Design and Decision Making

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers use their knowledge of students, English language arts, and pedagogy to design curricula, instruction, and assessment.

Accomplished English language arts teachers are aware of the complexity of the context in which decisions about goal setting, content knowledge, and pedagogy are made. They balance the demands of their students' needs with the requirements of local, state, and national standards, the course curriculum, the climate and resources of the school, and community expectations as they set goals and design instruction. They use their knowledge of students, English language arts content, and pedagogy to plan, organize, and sequence learning activities. Teachers use appropriate formative and summative assessments as integral parts of the instructional sequence that inform subsequent learning activities and goals.

Accomplished teachers are purposeful in their instructional design. Across their teaching in reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and producing, accomplished teachers keep at the forefront of their planning the cohesiveness of their instruction. Their day-to-day lessons, units, courses, and long-term goals provide a clear picture of how each class experience in the learning sequence builds upon prior learning and aligns with the curriculum and assessments. They know how to develop and use appropriate, valid, and reliable assessment tools in their classes, but they also know how to base instructional decisions and plans on data from multiple assessments and how to articulate the interrelatedness of their goal setting,

instructional decisions, and formative assessments. (See Standard XIII—*Assessment*.) Accomplished teachers achieve maximum student engagement and learning by ensuring that students clearly understand instructional goals and the recursive nature of instruction.

Teachers match aspects of language arts content to the appropriate instructional strategies in order to provide optimal learning for adolescents and young adults. Always aware of paths beyond high school—post-secondary education, the military, parenthood, the job market, and civic responsibilities—teachers structure learning activities; reading selections; and writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and producing media assignments to build upon and stretch their students' growing adult capacities as independent thinkers and doers. Teachers design lessons that challenge students to reach beyond their present abilities and situations while accommodating students' individual needs.

Teachers also take into account students' experiences as adolescents and young adults in other ways. Accomplished teachers may, for instance, use students' familiarity with a previously studied young-adult novel to discuss similar themes and literary techniques in works of greater difficulty. They may design a literature unit that helps students understand that the fear of change and the questioning of reality are universal rites of passage found in every culture.



Teachers know that effective lesson design reinforces students' prior learning while maintaining progress toward long-term curricular goals.

When designing instruction, accomplished teachers are sensitive to the diversity in their classrooms and are thus purposeful in encouraging students to find and express their own voice. They draw upon students' background experiences, where appropriate, to broaden class discussions and foster enriched learning. For example, teachers may use students' experiences living in rural, urban, or foreign settings to enhance the discussion of setting in literary texts. Teachers may design instruction that challenges students to learn more about the unique forms of language and literature that make up students' own heritage such as the oral traditions of the reservation or the calligraphic traditions of poetry in China. (See Standard I—*Knowledge of Students* and Standard IV—*Fairness, Equity, and Diversity*.)

Teachers provide connections to challenging curricula through lesson designs that appeal to a variety of learning styles and are creatively adapted to individual student needs. For example, they may create opportunities for students to demonstrate an understanding of a literary text through a combination of methods, such as literary analysis essays; artistic creations; theatre; technological explorations; or oral presentations, skits, and exhibitions. Accomplished teachers also help students demonstrate understanding of their own learning process. They encourage students to develop learning strategies for their own learning style and to acquire strategies for other learning styles. They may design lessons that ask students to make choices in activities and then to reflect on those choices in order to develop skills of metacognition.

Accomplished teachers understand that to become literate is to become empowered in a society organized around the free exchange of ideas. They recognize that language

fluency and reading ability must be developed in students by allowing them continual opportunities to engage in interactive communication with issues and texts that matter to them. (See Standard XII—*Language Study*.) Accomplished teachers help students explore a range of communicative strategies, for example, by asking students to respond to texts through such activities as discussion, debate, Socratic seminars, or literature circles.

Accomplished teachers do not allow a student to disappear, because they design tasks and goals to fulfill the curriculum requirements while addressing each student as an individual learner. They have a wide range of pedagogical strategies at their disposal, and their search for appropriate strategies to engage all students is based on the realization that the threshold for success may vary from student to student. Teachers create ample opportunities for students to experience success as they express their individuality as language users. Teachers adjust their practice, making midcourse corrections in their instructional plans when necessary, accelerating or decelerating the pace, changing direction when an activity is falling flat, or taking advantage of an unexpected opportunity that emerges during classroom discourse. In this way, they create language arts classes that are vital and meaningful and that ultimately lead to greater engagement and deeper learning by students.

Teachers also know that their own attitudes can influence student learning and therefore plan carefully the ways in which they convey their attitudes to students. They demonstrate a contagious enthusiasm for the English language arts that helps students appreciate language and literature as genuine sources of enjoyment and discovery. Although teachers are candid about their extensive knowledge and expertise in all the language arts, they do not project themselves as infallible. They exhibit an openness of mind to students' ideas, understanding that

Standard IV: Fairness, Equity, and Diversity

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers demonstrate their commitment to fairness, equity, and diversity.

Accomplished teachers demonstrate through their practices toward all students their commitment to the principles of fairness, equity, and strength through diversity. They value the learning background of each student and know that learners in a single class represent many forms of diversity in language, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, physical stature, socioeconomic status, religious affiliation, and physical and intellectual abilities, as well as literary abilities and interests. Teachers treat all students fairly and are committed to providing equal opportunities with regard to the instruction and resources students need to develop both as language learners and as informed, literate human beings.

Accomplished teachers exhibit their commitment to fairness toward all students by their welcoming attitudes and their demeanor in the classroom. They are eager to work with each student and are careful to ensure that all learners receive the attention needed, for example, in patterns of calling on students to participate in class, or through accommodations required by students with exceptional needs or those for whom English is a new language. Teachers make fairness and respect for individuals a cornerstone of their instructional practice. In grouping students for cooperative assignments, for example, they frequently bring together students of varying backgrounds and abilities to provide a forum in which background knowledge and responses to texts can be shared and mutual understanding of core similarities and differences deepened. They monitor the progress of such group work,

ensuring that each student in each group is accorded respect and that all have a fair chance to participate in appropriate ways. By such means, accomplished teachers help students prepare for the collaborative work settings they will enter as adults.

Teachers are committed to the principle of equity, and they work to ensure that educational impartiality is a condition of their classes and the entire school community. Accomplished English language arts teachers advocate for a high-quality, challenging education for all students, including students for whom English is a new language, students who have exceptional needs, or students who have historically not had access to strong curriculum and materials. Accomplished teachers look for ways to meet all students' needs and to raise achievement levels. They are diligent in advocating for ways to keep all students engaged in learning and in school. They use strategies, courses of study, and instructional resources—especially texts—that prepare all students for the academic and work-world challenges that await them and for the increasingly interdependent world they will enter as adults. Accomplished teachers understand that equitable treatment of students may sometimes mean treating students differently. They differentiate instruction as needed to meet the needs of all students and to ensure that all students are challenged to achieve at levels that will advance their mastery of all areas of the language arts curriculum. (See Standard I—*Knowledge of Students*.)

Accomplished teachers are aware of the special characteristics of students with



exceptionalities, such as physical and learning disabilities; giftedness; and cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic needs. They select and use appropriate instructional resources, including assistive technologies, and they modify the physical layout of the learning environment as needed. They are aware of the special attention that they must at times give to students for whom English is a new language, and they modify their instruction or grouping decisions accordingly.

Teachers also demonstrate fairness and equity with regard to the use of technology. They provide equitable access to technology in their classes or within the school, when possible. When using computers at school, they provide extra assistance to those students who may not have access to computers at home. They assess student work fairly by, for example, not favoring a student's writing assignment because it contains sophisticated graphics available only on a home computer. Even when the technology itself is not available to the student, accomplished teachers provide information so that all students are aware of advances in technology and the role technology will play in their futures. (See Standard XI—*Viewing and Producing Media Text*.)

Accomplished teachers value diversity among students. They know that the backgrounds of students in a single classroom invariably include a tremendous wealth and variety of human experiences, which provide opportunities to create a rich environment for successful social interactions and meaningful learning. Sensitive to students as cultural beings, teachers know how culture shapes the way students learn. They recognize that students of different cultures may come to the classroom with prior learning experiences that distinguish them from their peers, and they provide strategies to help such students adjust to the norms of the class. Accomplished teachers understand that literacy, by its nature, encompasses diverse subject matter and builds on the unique

characteristics of each learner. Teachers of adolescents and young adults infuse their teaching with examples and perspectives representing a broad range of cultures and backgrounds.

English language arts teachers shoulder an extra responsibility for ensuring that the principles of diversity are enacted in their classes because they understand the role that literature plays in helping students understand the subtleties and complexities of diversity. Because the opportunity to teach about stereotypes and injustice is readily available throughout literature—both classic and contemporary—accomplished teachers understand that English language arts class is especially suited to the integration of literary study and issues of diversity. Teachers use a wide variety of literary texts to promote opportunities to learn appreciation and acceptance of others. Teachers constantly seek out new resources that allow students to “see themselves” in selected texts and to expand their awareness of the world around them. For instance, teachers might have students share folklore from various cultures, noting the common and different subjects and motifs, thereby developing an appreciation for the literary traditions of all cultures. Teachers might address issues of racial or gender stereotyping through the study of a particular character while also addressing the literary techniques for methods of characterization. Teachers might study literature with themes dealing with the rite of passage to provide a port of entry for all students. Accomplished teachers also help students understand the political, social, and cultural contexts in which works were written and develop strategies that help students evaluate the relevance of these texts today. Through such methods, teachers provide students with a new lens through which to view the host of ethical and moral issues that authors present when they attempt to portray their vision of the world.

Accomplished teachers are aware of the unique role that language plays in dealing with cultural diversity, and they capitalize on the richness of language that students bring to class and to texts in order to heighten students' sensitivities to issues of culture. They see such resources in the class as an opportunity to cultural awareness and to enrich the study of language. By sharing the etymology of words, teachers may help students see not only the uniqueness of their own culture but also the effect that their culture has had on the shared language of the classroom. (See Standard XII—*Language Study*.)

Accomplished teachers guard against the expression of bias and stereotypes within their schools and firmly believe that students are entitled to be proud of their roots and personal identities. These teachers proactively and positively challenge sexist, racist, and other biased or demeaning behaviors (e.g., teasing about physical appearance) regardless of the source. They know that stereotypical thinking and prejudicial behavior in the language and social interactions of students result, in part, from ignorance of individual differences and commonalities. Therefore, teachers appreciate and build on the diversity and commonalities they find in their classes so that those diverse and common elements become integral parts of

students' exploration of the world and human experience. Teachers view diversity as a source of dynamism for the learning community, and, even if little diversity exists within the class, they still consider it their responsibility to provide texts that depict cultures and values different from the cultures and values represented by the students in the class. In this way, they advocate for voices that are silent or are not present.

Accomplished teachers consider the effects of their own cultural backgrounds, values, and personal experiences on their teaching. They recognize and acknowledge their own cultural perspectives, personal aesthetics, and philosophical biases. They know how these factors may affect their interactions with students whose backgrounds, beliefs, values, or personalities may be significantly different from their own. Through reflective behavior, teachers make sure that fairness and respect for individuals permeate all their instructional practices. They seek to achieve mutual understanding with students, and they treat each student with honor, dignity, and respect. Accomplished teachers also advocate within their classroom and in larger contexts for the inclusion and success of all students.



Reflections on Standard IV:

Standard V: Learning Environment

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers establish and manage inclusive learning environments in which they engage, challenge, and support students.

The quality of human associations in the classroom—how students interact with one another and with the teacher—affects both the academic and the personal growth of adolescents and young adults. Accomplished teachers communicate a seriousness about English language arts learning, and they firmly believe that all students are capable of growing in their knowledge of reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and producing. Teachers also know that students must feel free to take creative risks, offer conjectures, and question the assertions proposed by others. Students must be able to have their ideas challenged or validated without fear of rancor or embarrassment. Because accomplished teachers acknowledge the personal and social components of learning, they take measures to ensure that students are physically, academically, and emotionally secure and are actively motivated to learn.

Teachers instill in students an understanding that learning can sometimes be difficult, that concepts of English language arts may be challenging, and that the reward for persistence is a sense of accomplishment and increased self-confidence. Accomplished teachers establish classroom procedures and routines that support the learning community and deliberately build trust and comfort through team-building activities. Students feel safe to take risks; they are not fearful of making mistakes because the disposition of the teacher and the class is to see “errors” as insights into thinking and as opportunities to clarify understanding. Teachers engage students at the beginning of the term to

establish norms and expectations that create a shared responsibility and collegial atmosphere for all learners. This atmosphere ensures that, during the term, new students entering the class feel welcomed and are integrated smoothly into the group. Teachers establish procedures for dealing with class work when students are absent, be it for one day or an extended period, so that absent students can remain part of the learning community and keep up with the work of the class. Accomplished teachers are cognizant of the demands that life sometimes makes on adolescent and young adult students, some of whom must shoulder adult responsibilities at a very early age. As such, teachers help students create networks of support among class members so that all students help each other meet the challenges of the curriculum.

Teachers establish classroom cultures of trust and cooperation in many ways. Perhaps most important is the personal example they set through their own demeanor. They are polite, curious, enthusiastic about literature and the uses of language, and supportive of each student’s language initiatives. Teachers are good listeners who respect each student’s contribution to discussions and encourage all students to do the same in order to build a sense of community. They relate to each student in a caring, respectful, and supportive manner, all the while motivating students to attempt in-depth, rigorous English language study. Teachers are aware that students want to achieve, and they recognize and celebrate students’ efforts and accomplishments.



Accomplished teachers are effective classroom managers who know the value of using scarce resources—including instructional time—well. Lessons are clear, purposeful, and well-managed, with smooth transitions. Such teachers recognize that, when an activity shifts away from the original plan, they must evaluate the shift and either accommodate students' enthusiasm for an alternative topic or refocus student attention on the original plan.

Because accomplished teachers understand that student conduct is largely a function of student engagement, they engage students and minimize discipline problems through classroom awareness, grouping decisions, and respectful relationships with students. They are skilled at limiting disruptions, de-escalating confrontations, and cooling down tempers, and they know where to go for help when the situation requires it. Accomplished teachers know that healthy learning climates are founded on mutual respect and concern for others, and they actively involve students in this shared responsibility.

Accomplished teachers are well versed in the elements of group dynamics and teach students the essential skills they need to operate productively. Teachers make instructional grouping decisions that are based on instructional goals and on knowledge of their students. (See Standard I—*Knowledge of Students*.) They are equally comfortable employing whole-class, one-on-one, peer group, cross-age tutoring, or other grouping approaches depending on specific instructional purposes. Knowing that the world of adult work places a high premium on teamwork and cooperation, accomplished teachers use small group activities deliberately, allowing students to assume a variety of roles in a group and to participate as members of different groups. Depending on the instructional purpose, teachers may assign groups or allow students to self-select their groups.

To support students' growing autonomy as adults, teachers also accord students

frequent opportunities to work independently, conducting in-depth analyses and creative projects of their own design. For example, students may use presentation software to share their opinions on an issue of concern in the school that they have investigated in depth. Students in such classes are willing to work hard because they perceive that the environment has been created for them to achieve success.

Accomplished teachers are purposeful in their instructional decisions, and, in conjunction with students, continually assess the effectiveness of the learning community. They reconsider norms and procedures, critique established processes and rules, and make necessary adjustments. They strive to provide an environment where the teacher is not the only source of information; rather, students actively experience and share concepts appropriate for their developmental level. For example, teachers may ask students to design overarching questions in order to enhance understanding of basic concepts. The accomplished teacher knows when to provide direct instruction and when to assume a consultative role thus ensuring that students are always moving toward increased independence as learners. (See Standard III—*Instructional Design and Decision Making*.)

Accomplished English language arts teachers place high value on the diversity of language experience, cultural background, and ethnic heritage in their classroom. They make use of this diversity as a resource to be explored and to increase their students' understanding of each other and of language's constantly evolving character. (See Standard XII—*Language Study*.) Teachers familiarize themselves with the diverse backgrounds, languages, talents, and cultures of the local community and use that knowledge to enhance all their students' learning experiences. For example, teachers might seek opportunities to extend student learning into the local community or to bring

Standard VI: Instructional Resources

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers create, select, adapt, and use a wide range of instructional resources to support their students' learning and strengthen their own teaching.

Accomplished English language arts teachers draw on a wide variety of print, electronic, and human resources to enrich their teaching. They use these resources flexibly and judiciously, not as ends in themselves, but to support student exploration of important ideas, issues, and topics and to advance student skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and producing. They combine their knowledge of resources with their knowledge of students to make sound resource decisions for the class as a whole and for individual students, including students with exceptional needs, students for whom English is a new language, gifted students, and struggling readers and writers. Teachers also make wise use of resources to inform their own professional growth.

Accomplished teachers understand that the definition of text has expanded over time to include any communication that can be interpreted, analyzed, and evaluated. Thus, teachers are able to select from traditional literary forms such as fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama, as well as magazines and newspapers; television, film, video, and CD-ROMs; speeches and other oral discourse; music and lyrics; advertisements and cartoons; Web pages, e-books, and digital curricula; practical documents such as instructional manuals; and student writing. Teachers help their students understand the features and conventions associated with each text type and provide strategies for understanding and creating such texts.

Accomplished teachers understand that the texts they ask students to read, hear, or view must warrant and reward students' close

attention. They balance numerous criteria when evaluating print and nonprint texts, and they are able to articulate the reasons for their selections. They may select literary texts on the basis of their appeal to adolescents and young adults; sensitive portrayal of human experience; imaginative use of language; development of complex, nonstereotypical characters with whom students may identify; or social, cultural, or historical value, among other factors. Accomplished teachers combine their extensive knowledge of literature with their knowledge of the literacy skills, social backgrounds, and personal interests of their students to make sound resource decisions for the class as a whole and for individual students. By including such considerations in their discussion of literature, teachers help students learn to make their own choices, as well as to understand that judgments about quality are always dependent on the criteria used for evaluation. Teachers help students articulate their criteria for their judgments; thus, students become critical evaluators of texts of all kinds.

Teachers understand that an important goal of English language arts instruction is to prepare students to live in an increasingly diverse society. Accomplished teachers know that introducing a variety of literature from many cultures and many viewpoints is an important element of student learning. Teachers have a broad knowledge of the history and development of both American and world literature and draw on that knowledge to choose high quality, literary texts for study that exemplify the range of human



experience. Teachers draw on multiple resources to enrich students' understanding of others' cultures, as well as their own. The accomplished teacher encourages students to self-select texts representing diverse views in order to become informed citizens who recognize the complexity of society. These teachers do not allow their own lack of familiarity with specific cultural contexts to keep them from exploring new works with their students; rather, they capitalize on these opportunities to expand their choices of resources by enlisting help from informed members of given cultures, and to learn from students themselves the meanings of words and customs representing the students' home cultures. (See Standard IV—*Fairness, Equity, and Diversity*.)

In addition to helping students read, interpret, and analyze a broad range of print resources, accomplished teachers employ and adapt current technologies in productive and thought-provoking ways. They integrate media and technology into the curriculum, helping students identify, retrieve, evaluate, use, and synthesize information from multiple sources. They help students plan, organize, and present their own productions, and they provide opportunities for students to display their learning to peers, parents, and the community through such products as literary anthologies, newspapers, hypertexts, databases, Web pages, and videos. Accomplished teachers may provide adaptations for students with special needs by using magnification programs for computer texts, or by showing students how to chunk texts into comfortable segments and how to cover or mask distractors such as animated visuals, illustrations that crowd printed texts, or informational graphs in the margins. (See Standard XI—*Viewing and Producing Media Texts*.)

Accomplished teachers are aware that the proliferation of new and emerging technologies as well as print sources pose important challenges, including the need to address the questions of credibility and ethics that arise when information is widely shared and easily

acquired. Accomplished teachers ensure that students understand the concepts of copyright and plagiarism. They teach students basic copyright guidelines and how to cite sources in currently accepted formats. They offer specific guidance in the use of electronic sources, which students do not always know is governed by law. Within the limits of availability, teachers help students gain experience with technology both as a tool for learning and as a presentation device.

Accomplished teachers are also prepared to respond to challenges of censorship that may arise regarding assigned texts. Because they believe that adolescents and young adults benefit from reading important and thought-provoking texts, teachers stand ready to defend students' rights to read and learn. They keep parents and other representatives of the community apprised of their text selections and work with school staff and community representatives to develop and follow policies and procedures for dealing constructively with objections to specific works. Ultimately, teachers proceed within the parameters established by local and state policies.

Accomplished teachers also call upon human resources, those individuals from their school and community whose ideas and experiences can enrich students' understandings and appreciations for literacy, literature, and language. They learn about cultural or ethnic events of importance to their students from parents and other community members. They use the libraries, bookstores, museums, theaters, and other resources in their region as sources for guest speakers, instructional materials, and public documents. They invite teachers, writers, journalists, and storytellers into their classrooms to celebrate language and to inspire students' own writing and thinking. (See Standard XVI—*Family and Community Involvement*.) They encourage students to attend theater productions, lectures, and other learning opportunities in the community and provide a forum for students to talk or write about their responses

to what they have seen and heard. In doing so, teachers broaden students' workplace horizons and encourage them to explore career paths that they might not have considered previously.

Teachers understand that all the materials necessary to promote a student's learning may not be readily available. The range of student needs, including the special requirements of students with exceptional needs and students for whom English is a new language, may require that the teacher make or adapt materials. Teachers may discover materials or strategies in the classes of teachers of different content areas or from different grade levels that they might readily adapt for use with their own students. The accomplished English language arts teacher may involve students, when appropriate, in the design of materials for their own or other students' use. Teachers might assign production of materials as part of a project for students as they work independently or in groups. Accomplished teachers are continually on the lookout for effective texts to use in their classroom and for ideas on how to adapt these texts to be more accessible and appealing to students.

Accomplished teachers not only search for materials and resources for use directly by students, but also expand their own conceptual and pedagogical knowledge through resources such as professional books and journals, colleges and universities, state departments of education, Web sites and mailing lists, classroom research, and collaboration with administrators and colleagues. They seek out magazines that publish student writing and those that publish reviews and articles about literature and authors.

The availability of instructional resources is limited only by the imagination and creativity of the accomplished teacher. When instructional materials are accessible, they must be carefully assessed and selected for appropriateness and relevance to student learning. When materials are not available, the accomplished teacher pursues grant money, sources for free or used books, consumer publications, community donations, or ideas from colleagues, parents, and community members.



Reflections on Standard VI:

Advancing Student Learning in the Classroom

The flexibility, appropriateness, and creativity with which Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers make decisions and implement their curricula provide the most visible and, arguably, the most important demonstrations of excellence in teaching. The next seven standards describe the ways in which teachers advance student knowledge and understanding in all aspects of the language arts curriculum and the important goals and purposes that guide teachers in their planning and instructional decision making.

Standard VII: Integrated Instruction

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers integrate reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing and producing media texts in their instruction and incorporate content from other disciplines.

Integrated instruction is a hallmark of accomplished English language arts teachers that encompasses two related concepts. The first concept is that the processes of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing and producing are mutually reinforcing. The second concept is that English language arts directly involves students in pursuing investigations of broadly significant themes and issues across disciplines.

Accomplished teachers know that nurturing growth in any language process promotes growth in all the others. Consequently, they intentionally design learning activities that take advantage of this mutually reinforcing tendency. For example, they regularly ask students to respond to intellectual challenges that require students to compose and interpret text using several or all language processes. Student proficiency in writing increases when students read good models of writing, confer with one another in small groups concerning what they intend to write about, or listen carefully to conversations before trying to write. Students committed to becoming good writers also become more attentive, capable readers, interested not only in what a favorite

author says but also in how he or she achieves a desired effect. Teachers help students integrate the use of all forms of communication effectively to achieve their goals. The use of technology can facilitate this integration and underscore the interdependence of language arts processes as well as assist students as they explore other content areas. For example, students learn to read and view critically as they use technology to research evidence that supports their written or oral arguments.

Accomplished teachers help students develop a more sophisticated understanding of the differences among various forms of communication. Students learn to understand the importance of the visual aspects of a written work (type face and size, format, and neatness, as well as graphs, charts, and illustrations) and of an oral presentation (gestures, facial expressions, visual aids), and to read or view assigned materials (books, videos, CD-ROMs) thoughtfully in order to be effective speakers and listeners in a class discussion. Accomplished teachers help students comprehend the differences among oral, visual, and written modes of communication, including the essential differences among



reading, listening, and viewing and the implications of presenting an idea in visual form alone or in visual and verbal form. Students are then able to move to a higher level of communicative competence and sophistication. (See Standard XI—*Viewing and Producing Media Texts*.)

The practice of accomplished teachers involves teaching students to work with large, compelling themes and ideas. As adolescents and young adults take on more complicated projects, they learn how to channel their curiosity around a single organizing question; gather relevant information about a topic of interest; discriminate between reliable and frivolous or biased sources; evaluate the strength of competing arguments; synthesize ideas into a convincing whole; and express their opinions in a coherent, compelling, and well-reasoned fashion. Students improve the clarity of their thinking and communicating by using English language arts skills across other content areas.

Accomplished teachers know that the themes and issues common to the English language arts curriculum are reflected in and intertwined with other subject areas. To deepen students' knowledge of other disciplines while strengthening their critical thinking skills, teachers guide their students in making cross-disciplinary connections. For example, teachers might enhance a study of a literary work by having students locate historical primary-source artifacts from a Web site and then create a literary newspaper of factual and fictional stories. Teachers may contextualize a study of Civil War literature by having students compare the descriptions of war in history books with the descriptions of war in

the narratives of families who were left to carry on in the absence of fathers or husbands. Teachers may also have students enhance their understanding of a literary style such as Impressionism or Realism by comparing the literature with paintings and music depicting the same style or by creating their own artistic or musical interpretations of the style. Teachers help students make connections between English language arts knowledge and business-world applications, so that students develop abilities to solve problems and to work effectively in teams. For example, students interested in a similar career goal may work as a team to conduct interviews, complete research, and present their findings to the entire class. These types of strategies benefit all students and promote many learning styles. All students, especially students with exceptional needs, may enhance their understanding of concepts when they have the opportunity to interact with and apply concepts in multiple ways.

Accomplished teachers know that adolescents and young adults do not learn language in the abstract; they learn through concrete applications in authentic contexts, which may be created through interdisciplinary study. Teachers know that students develop and expand their knowledge of the world and acquire language skills to express their new understandings both within the English language arts class and across disciplines.



Standard VIII: Reading

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers develop students' reading skills and their abilities to comprehend, interpret, and analyze a wide variety of texts for personal, literary, informational, and critical purposes.

Accomplished English language arts teachers know that helping students read the complex and varied texts used in high school requires providing them with experiences with a wide range of literary texts, motivating students to find personal meaning in those texts through rich discussion and writing, offering explicit instruction and practice in the thinking processes and strategies used by skilled readers, and introducing students to the richness of literary traditions within and across cultures. Accomplished English language arts teachers implement current research and best practices in reading instruction.

Accomplished teachers help students understand that reading is a process of constructing meaning from text. They guide students through a recursive reading process that includes some or all of the following stages: preparing students to read the text (in which readers use a variety of techniques to preview, gain background knowledge, and become motivated to read); reading the text (in which readers develop a basic understanding of the selection); and re-reading the text (in which readers extend their understanding of the text as they continue to interpret, analyze, and critique the effectiveness of the selection). Teachers show students that, like revising in writing, they must revisit the text as they develop clearer understandings of the work's message. Teachers also demonstrate that every stage of the reading process is influenced by the purpose for reading; the knowledge, interest, and skills the reader brings to the task; and the nature of the text. Teachers help students recognize that this process changes as students read

more, acquire new strategies, and learn more about the world. Accomplished teachers have the knowledge and pedagogical skills necessary to help all readers improve the way they navigate through the reading process, including readers who are struggling or reluctant and students for whom English is a new language.

As teachers attend to the personal, social, and cognitive dimensions of reading instruction, they instill in all students an awareness of the importance of literature and other texts. They further realize their obligation to present challenging, high-quality, literary experiences to all students, as they provide the strategies necessary for students to improve their skill in reading the multiple texts required for literacy in today's society.

Dimensions of Reading Instruction

Accomplished teachers promote the personal dimension of reading through such means as sharing their love of literature, inviting other adults to talk about the importance of reading in their lives, or arranging for authors and poets to describe their ways of working. Teachers understand that a large part of what is engaging about literature is that it operates in the realm of ideas. Novelists, playwrights, and poets ask the big questions: What is right behavior and what is wrong? What drives the choices we make? What gives meaning and dignity to our lives? Literature provides a shared reference point from which questions of values, attitudes, and beliefs are explored. Adolescents and young adults can empathize



with the complexity and ambiguity of the human condition reflected in literature. In addition to having students read common texts, accomplished teachers encourage independent reading, helping students select texts that coincide with their interests, reading levels, and need to expand their personal and social horizons. Teachers know that students who explore texts of their own choosing are likely to become lifelong readers; therefore, accomplished teachers have a thorough knowledge of a wide range of literature that is engaging and of high literary value. They offer a mix of classical and contemporary as well as fictional and nonfictional choices that speak to students' backgrounds and expand their knowledge of the world. (See Standard VI—*Instructional Resources*.)

Accomplished teachers capitalize on the social dimensions of reading by making discussion an important part of their instruction, allowing students to learn from the diverse backgrounds and experiences of other readers. Although these teachers bring extensive knowledge and experience to the classroom, they also learn from their students' discussions of literature by asking open-ended questions about the literary text and building on students' ideas and questions to move students to deeper thinking. They encourage a range of textual interpretations, helping students learn from differing responses to the same literary text. At the same time, while respecting the role of personal response, teachers ask that students justify their opinions in terms of the evidence available from students' knowledge of other sources and the selection itself. They help students see how individual and group beliefs influence their perspective. Thus, where interpretations disagree, the discussion inevitably leads back to a closer examination of text.

Accomplished teachers are aware that the ability to engage thoughtfully with texts requires a wide array of cognitive skills. They include the skills needed to understand

text-embedded topics and content, vocabulary and concepts, word identification and construction, interpretive and evaluative strategies, and text and language structures and conventions, among others. Teachers know that, although some of these skills fall naturally into before-, during-, and after-reading activities, the process of reading is nonlinear, and skilled readers learn to manage this process by continually choosing the skills needed to gain knowledge from their readings. Accomplished teachers teach students to manage this process in a variety of ways, sometimes providing information or strategies and sometimes setting up the conditions for learning so that students can acquire this knowledge for themselves.

Reading of Literature and Other Texts

Accomplished English language arts teachers are particularly aware of the importance of literature and of the demands made on students by different kinds of literary texts and their purposes. For example, they teach students that fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry differ in their forms and conventions and that authors employ different genres for a variety of purposes—nonfiction can be read for its aesthetic as well as informational value or drama for its elements of persuasion. Accomplished teachers also model the use of a common vocabulary—the “language of the discipline of literary study”—when discussing literature and other types of text. Thus, students learn appropriate literary terms in context, so they not only can participate in classroom activities but also deepen their interpretative and critical abilities and prepare for the demands of adult-world reading. Teachers might ask students to evaluate the universal and timeless appeal of a work of literature through an examination of style, organization, and theme or explain how a particular literary work fits into a major

literary time period or movement, such as Romanticism or magical realism.

English language arts teachers guide students as they make meaning of their literary experiences. Accomplished teachers enable students to interpret literature through a variety of lenses or perspectives. They may examine the complexity of the human condition from a psychological perspective; the evolution of literary style from a chronological perspective; the contextual sources of ideas from a historical, cultural, gender, or authorial perspective; the universal themes and symbolic language from an archetypal perspective; or the structures of genre and language from a formalist perspective.

Adolescents have background knowledge and experiences that help them make critical comparisons within and across texts; however, many students need teachers to help them make connections between their personal experiences and the written text. An accomplished English language arts teacher might, for example, help students convert personal experiences that are grounded in rural communities or urban settings into the prior knowledge required to understand a setting or tradition in a selection from another culture or perspective. Such readings can help students appreciate their own personal or cultural “filters” and learn from those whose experiences of the world differ from their own.

Accomplished English language arts teachers introduce students to the wide variety of informational and nonfiction texts, such as newspapers, magazines, manuals, employment forms, documents, essays, biographies, and research materials. They help students examine the conventions of each type and the strategies necessary to interpret them. For example, they teach students to use headings to understand the organization of the reading, footnotes to aid in understanding, and visuals to reinforce or expand content. They teach students how to adjust the pace of their reading to match purpose

and content as well as how presentation and layout affect the reading of the message. They show students how to synthesize information from multiple sources and how to evaluate the credibility of those sources. They also show students how to interpret the effect of literary elements on the meaning of informational text, for example, by determining the tone of the selection and how tone can be used to determine the author’s purpose.

Accomplished teachers understand that, by helping students strengthen reading processes in the context of exploring important content, students are equipped to succeed in other classes and situations. Teachers know that successful reading across the curriculum content areas is another avenue for students to gain experience reading informational texts. To help students further gain experience with informational text, teachers may expose students to selections that they would not naturally read such as medical updates or weather trend analyses on the process of soil erosion. In addition to helping students read informative texts in English language arts classes, accomplished teachers are able to help students be successful in their academic work in other classes by collaborating with their colleagues in other disciplines to consider strategies that support reading in all content areas.

Process of Reading

Accomplished teachers teach the processes and strategies used by skilled readers. Recognizing that process and content knowledge support and reinforce each other and that skills are more easily learned when content matters to students, teachers use a variety of appropriate pre-reading activities to help students plan, engage with, and respond to the ideas and topics under study. They design activities and products, such as brainstorming and anticipation guides, to

elicit and build on the knowledge and experience students bring to class. They assist students in determining clear goals for their reading and evaluating whether the text and their reading of it are meeting their short- and long-term goals. Teachers also show students how to monitor their own understanding as they make decisions about how to adjust their reading and ask themselves questions to determine what to read carefully, what to read quickly, what not to read, and what to re-read.

Accomplished teachers integrate the study of language with all stages of reading, focusing on vocabulary, word choice, and sentence structure as they relate to style, voice, and rhetorical effect. Teachers know that reading widely is the single greatest way to develop students' vocabularies and overall language fluencies, but they also realize that intentional vocabulary instruction before and during reading is an important component of reading assignments. Students study how words are conceptually related to one another through such activities as etymology study, semantic mapping, classification, or the study of word structures. Students also learn a range of strategies they can apply to unfamiliar words, such as consulting the dictionary, analyzing word structure, transferring their foreign language study, and making inferences based on contextual clues.

Through such strategies as think-alouds, teachers demonstrate what happens during and after the reading process by showing how experienced readers make their way through difficult text. As they read with the class, teachers verbalize what problems they encounter and how they solve them. By sharing their own note taking while reading, teachers further demonstrate the mental behaviors that proficient readers use to understand and appreciate text. Accomplished teachers ask students to engage with text content by asking critical questions, predicting, visualizing, summarizing, paraphrasing, comparing, synthesizing, or reformulating ideas and themes that they encounter.

Teachers may ask students to evaluate the author's effectiveness with organization, rhetorical devices, style, and purpose. In addition, teachers may design and use a range of response activities to aid and demonstrate comprehension, interpretation, and appreciation of texts. These tasks include writing activities such as double-entry journals (where students respond to each other in writing), graphic organizers, and formal analytical essays; oral activities such as question posing, literature circles, and Socratic seminars; and dramatic performances such as role playing, readers theatre, dance, and visual representation.

Accomplished teachers realize that some students struggle more than others, especially those with learning difficulties or those learning English as a new language. Teachers know that the strategies used to foster personal, social, and cognitive reading skills and abilities are important for all students, but that readers who are struggling will need extra support in their efforts. Teachers are especially aware that many students exhibit instructional needs that resemble those of younger readers; they know how to address these reading difficulties in strategic ways that demonstrate sensitivity to the social and emotional needs of adolescents and young adults. For example, an adolescent or young adult who needs more experience with decoding or comprehension would be offered developmentally appropriate materials that would respect the student's chronological age and interest. Accomplished teachers know strategies for developing reading fluency, such as Readers' Theatre, echo reading, and choral reading. Accomplished teachers also recognize that at one time or another the texts they use will challenge all students; thus even competent and advanced readers, as they encounter complex poetic forms or texts from another historical period, will need information and strategies that will help them read such texts.

Standard IX: Writing

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers develop and refine students' abilities to write effectively and independently different types of texts for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Accomplished teachers help students understand writing as a thinking process that is applied continuously and systematically throughout the development of a work and that draws upon a complex web of social and cognitive skills that take time and effort to acquire. These teachers are themselves able, fluent writers who understand the challenges and gratifications of the composition process because they practice it regularly. They know that students derive enormous satisfaction and an increased sense of personal effectiveness as they become more capable in many genres and modes of writing. Teachers know that when the purpose and audience for writing is clear and meaningful to students, they can better exert the considerable effort that improvement in writing requires; that with improvement comes immense gratification and confidence; and that this gratification and confidence promote both students' autonomy as writers and their flexibility in fulfilling required writing tasks.

Accomplished teachers know that writers vary widely in how they orchestrate their thinking and writing processes and in the kinds of support they need during composing. In general, however, teachers understand that these nonlinear processes include some or all of the following: pre-writing (in which a cluster of ideas and pertinent information is generated around the central point of interest); organizing (in which the purpose for the text and its potential audience help determine its form); drafting (in which the written text takes its initial form); revising (in which the writer's evaluation of the text, frequently mediated by the responses of others, guides the drafting of successive versions); editing

(in which the manuscript is fine-tuned for the conventions of grammar, syntax, usage, punctuation, and spelling); post-writing (in which the writer reflects on the effect of the writing on the audience); and publication (in which the results of the writer's efforts are shared with others).

Teachers select from among many approaches to demonstrate the techniques used to achieve high-quality writing. They choose learning activities that highlight various aspects of writing as a process, scaffolding assignments by simplifying the process into a series of relatively achievable mental tasks when necessary. Teachers may, for instance, allow students for whom English is a new language to submit a graphic organizer or an audiotape of their first draft, provide support for sentence-level improvements in compositions through such focused practice as sentence-combining exercises, or use outlining to demonstrate paragraph organization.

Accomplished teachers model good writing as they share with students their own strategies, frustrations, and insights in solving a broad array of composition problems. They may use their own drafting processes as one among many models to help students make progress in their development as writers. They can demonstrate to their students how to craft effective essays, paragraphs, and sentences. For example, they may model such key elements of writing as organization, sentence structure, and sentence variety. Accomplished English language arts teachers demonstrate for all students a variety of composing strategies that meet each student's needs.

Teachers recognize that writing is a social act and that, through the process of sharing



with peers, students can clarify their thinking about both the content and the process of a particular writing task. Through collaborative groups, students can hone their craft as writers. Teachers also help students understand that writing serves a variety of social purposes—to impress, inform, persuade, entertain, clarify opinions, or otherwise relate ideas—and teachers are intentional in their instruction to help students identify purposes and audiences and tailor their writing accordingly. They help students understand the relationship between audience and such aspects of writing as voice, word choice, and conventions. Accomplished teachers regularly have students share their formal and informal writings with one another by guiding them in the use of rubrics to provide constructive comments that shape successive drafts. They show students many models of excellent writing, by professionals and peers alike, to help guide and stimulate students' efforts. Because teachers know the powerful effect of an audience for all writers, they help students identify opportunities for the publication of their writing both in and out of school. They may encourage students to take part in writing contests, compose letters to the editor of a local newspaper, submit pieces to school publications, or script and air radio and television interviews. Teachers know that these social components of writing provide students with the support and encouragement they need to grow as writers.

The demands of today's worlds of business and high-stakes testing have placed a greater emphasis on students' abilities to respond to on-demand timed writing prompts. Teachers are held to new standards of accountability for on-demand writing instruction as they prepare students to respond to e-mail and send memos and faxes and to prepare students to take such tests as high school exit exams and college entrance exams. Accomplished teachers meet this challenge with students by demonstrating how to understand a prompt, how to organize

their response to best use the allotted time, and how to develop rubrics, allowing students to measure their own efforts or sample essays against the external rubric. While providing this type of instruction, teachers remain aware that these skills are developed over time and with consistent practice. They also understand that standardized writing tests may give a limited perspective on students' writing abilities, and they are careful to evaluate all such instruments for validity. (See Standard XIII—*Assessment*.) Teachers provide students with practice in these on-demand writing tasks while connecting the processes of longer, more complex assignments to the tasks students will encounter on high-stakes tests. Teachers also nurture students' enthusiasm for writing by sponsoring other writing activities both formal (e.g., critical essays, reports, creative works) and informal (e.g., reader's journals, free-writes, note taking, question generating).

The accomplished teacher responds to student writings as an adult interested in understanding what the student-author has to say and how he or she has said it. The teacher's oral and written comments about individual student work help students see the effect their words have on the reader and, thus, help them think about how the composition might be changed to communicate their meaning more effectively. The teacher models a constructive response to student texts, that presents both strengths and areas for improvement.

Accomplished teachers take advantage of the texts that students produce to teach the conventions of language. Students in high school are about to enter the workforce or apply for college admission. As they become aware that the text they create represents who they are as literate beings in the eyes of the audience, they become strongly motivated to master the essential skills of correct written communication including grammar, usage, and mechanics. Teachers help students realize the importance of such matters as writing

in complete sentences and avoiding run-ons and fragments so that students come to appreciate the utility of mastering conventions and become motivated to do so.

Accomplished teachers understand the role of writing in strengthening student reading and promoting learning. They encourage students to write as a way to learn across the curriculum, and they advocate among their colleagues for writing across the curriculum. The accomplished English language arts teacher may work with colleagues to encourage the use of learning logs, journals, written responses, lab reports, or essays in content areas such as math or science in order to provide an opportunity for content-area teachers to see firsthand the benefits of writing to learn. They also encourage other teachers to provide feedback to students about their communication skills. These writings may be included in the students' collections of writing to demonstrate growth over time both as students of other content areas and as writers. (See Standard XIII—*Assessment* and Standard XV—*Professional Community*.)

Teachers use various means of assessment to determine students' levels of proficiency and their needs; they use the information garnered from these assessments as they design their instruction both to promote students' growth as writers and to enable them to succeed on external writing tests. A baseline writing assessment, writing inventories, surveys, and other means of determining students' levels of competency may provide the beginning of each student's working portfolio for the term. (See Standard I—*Knowledge of Students*.) Feedback on particular writing assignments from both the teacher and peers is used to support student growth over the course of a term and to compose a record of the student's progress. Teachers regularly ask students to reflect on these portfolios to critique their own progress and set new goals. (See Standard XIII—*Assessment*.)

Accomplished teachers provide assignments with clear criteria and rubrics to help students improve their writing. They tailor assignments to meet the level of challenge appropriate for individual students. They may include students in the process of developing scoring rubrics; for example, students might help develop trait analyses that focus on discrete characteristics such as ideas and content, organization, word choice, or sentence fluency. Through these strategies, teachers promote students' independence as writers.

Teachers recognize that the nature and the presentation of writing have changed with the development of technology. The ability to manipulate text easily can blur the distinctions among composing, revising, and editing. The ability to publish text easily also has opened up new possibilities for production in the classroom. Accomplished teachers use a range of writing tasks that may include graphics and can result in brochures, multimedia presentations, Web pages, and works in other formats. Teachers realize the importance of learning and teaching about emerging writing conventions that are unique to technology, such as e-mail protocol. They use available technology in ways that suit the curriculum and the developmental levels of students and that help students develop as effective communicators.

Accomplished teachers understand that there is no single "best" style of writing and that the mark of a mature writer is the possession of a distinct, readily identifiable voice. High school teachers encourage students to move beyond the use of standard writing formulas in their composing as they discover their own expressive identity. At the same time, teachers know the predictable patterns that inexperienced writers often exhibit when attempting new composition tasks. For example, when writing a critical evaluation of an author or literary text, students frequently rely on plot summary or the undigested paraphrasing of an authority rather

Standard X: Speaking and Listening

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers advance students' abilities to speak and listen for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Accomplished teachers know the importance of oral language in the development of literacy skills. They recognize its role in maintaining human relationships, conveying and understanding information and ideas, creating and appreciating imaginative texts, and analyzing and presenting opinions and judgments of texts and issues. These teachers understand that adolescents and young adults have varying levels of comfort when asked to share their thoughts, work with other individuals or groups, or speak in front of an audience. Yet they also know that if their students are to be able to speak and listen in all the ways that school and society require of them, then teachers need to provide an abundance of formal and informal opportunities for students to engage in these activities in a variety of contexts: one-on-one, in small and large groups, and in public settings.

Teachers structure classroom activities to encourage students to listen critically, aesthetically, and empathically. They help students set purposes for listening. Students learn how to comprehend and evaluate information, follow oral directions, respond appropriately to verbal and nonverbal cues and feedback, pick out main ideas and significant details, and respect and appreciate the expression of others. An accomplished teacher's goal is to develop active listeners who have a purpose for listening; process what they hear; and are attentive, open-minded, and respectful.

Accomplished teachers design assignments that hold students accountable for using listening skills throughout their coursework. Such teachers might, for example, ask students to synthesize major themes after journal responses have been read aloud or to write about what they learned from hearing students' oral projects. Teachers may require listeners to apply what they have heard to a new setting or adapt it for a different audience. They might ask students to submit articles to the school paper after hearing a guest speaker. These listening activities provide opportunities for students to develop the skills required for honing in on key ideas and supporting details or recognizing repetition, parallelism, and words that signal order, transition, and summary.

Accomplished teachers support the development of students' speaking and listening skills and abilities in a variety of ways. They model desired behaviors in the day-to-day leadership of the class, for example, by listening closely to students' ideas and building on them to raise the level of discussion, by using and appreciating the apt word or rich metaphor, by conveying directions and information clearly and cogently, by sharing stories and accounts with a style and vividness that students might want to emulate, and by reading aloud in ways that capture the dynamics of a text.

Accomplished teachers use small groups of students flexibly and judiciously, ensuring that grouping configurations allow



students to learn from, and with, each other. Such conversations serve as instructional techniques to improve understanding. Accomplished teachers develop students' academic vocabulary so they can participate in these discussions. They show students how to work in groups, how to respond in respectful ways, and how to ensure that each member has a voice in the discussion. Teachers provide help so that students learn to stay on task, work with others, negotiate conflict, appreciate divergent ideas, and acquire other skills important to communicating in academic and workplace settings. They also provide the necessary support and conditions to ensure that all students, including students for whom English is a new language, can contribute to the discussion.

Accomplished teachers facilitate classroom conversations. They ask open-ended questions that genuinely seek information and place value on eliciting student opinions, instead of simple yes-or-no or one-word answers. In effective class discussion, teachers include all students in the conversation and listen carefully to what students have to say. Because discussion is a hallmark of the English language arts class for adolescents and young adults, teachers systematically provide instruction on speaking and listening skills—demonstrating, coaching, and gradually allowing increasingly independent student interactions. Teachers require students to use metacognitive skills to assess classroom discussions, such as analyzing the skills displayed in a Socratic seminar.

Accomplished English language arts teachers understand that speaking and listening involve complex language processes that require students to construct meaning in ways analogous to the ways they construct meaning through reading and writing, or viewing and producing texts. Therefore, teachers use speaking and listening to scaffold students' understandings of these processes. These teachers provide multiple

opportunities for students to talk about texts, and they use class discussions to capitalize on students' prior experiences and diverse backgrounds, to elicit students' own ideas and questions as a way into deeper discussion, to get students to ask insightful questions of their own, and to follow up on responses that push students to new levels of thinking. Teachers encourage students to apply their analysis and evaluation skills to the contributions of other group members. As students learn to listen to one another's comments, challenge one another, and defend their opinions, they grow in their ability to interpret published texts as well as to create texts of their own.

Accomplished teachers are aware that for some students oral language can provide a bridge to developing written language skills. They are aware of the need to convey complex ideas or instructions orally before students begin to write. They may allow students to discuss as a whole class or in small groups before they begin independent writing, to supplement written text with a taped version, or to compose orally before writing. These teachers also know that even fluent readers and writers may not excel in their ability to articulate their ideas orally to others or to listen critically or sympathetically. The accomplished teacher recognizes that all students will benefit from a carefully planned speaking and listening component in the overall English language arts curriculum.

Accomplished teachers know that speech varies in different social and cultural contexts; thus, they help students explore, use, and understand the different forms of language found in various home and school settings. They are aware that in informal situations students speak for purposes different from those in class, often moving between Standard American English and their own varieties of language, and that colloquialisms and idiomatic expressions may take the place of more formal conventions of Standard American English. They

make clear the importance of considering the audience, whether one person or many, in terms of word choice, helping students to recognize how word choices will affect listeners and the accomplishment of the speaker's goal.

Teachers also help students understand the interpersonal power of language. For example, they may directly address the effect of labels and name calling. These teachers go beyond a lesson on the potential hurtfulness of language to a class where students use this knowledge to create an environment in which language is used in ways that show respect for others. (See Standard XII—*Language Study* and Standard IV—*Fairness, Equity, and Diversity*.)

Accomplished teachers use ideas generated during small group and class discussions as scaffolding for more formal public speaking and listening assignments. Those assignments require students to develop ideas by integrating strands of the language arts as they plan, research, and deliver individual or group presentations to their peers, students of other ages, visitors, or other adults. Teachers expect students to draw upon previously learned experiences as they improve their strategies for selecting and narrowing a topic, finding a focus, and framing the presentation for the intended audience, using such tools as audience analyses, surveys, interviews, electronic databases, or archived materials. Such presentations provide opportunities for student listeners to generate criteria for an effective presentation, to take notes, to summarize key points, or to express opinions about the issues presented.

Accomplished teachers also use formal public speaking and listening assignments to help students appreciate how visual features such as facial expression, gestures, and graphic aids can enhance or detract from a message. In these formal situations, teachers model and make students aware of the need to follow conventions. Teachers encourage

students to attend carefully to such elements as clarity, relevance, and organization; types of arguments used; word choice and order of words; and manner of presentation, avoiding in their delivery vocalized pauses, slang, colloquialisms, and mistakes in usage. Accomplished teachers teach students to use visual aids that enhance the effectiveness of their presentations. Students learn that well-designed and appropriate use of visuals such as overhead transparencies, models, objects, and presentation media, helps the audience understand the message and enhances the speaker's credibility.

To reinforce the influence of audience and context on language, as well as to foster appreciation for the language of literature, teachers may also ask students to transform texts from one medium to another. For example, students might interpret a poem or a photograph as a dialogue or creative drama, present an essay as a dramatic monologue, render a historical document as a choral reading, or reinterpret a related collection of texts as an oral montage. Such tasks provide occasions for encouraging students to think about the differences between oral, written, and visual forms of language, as well as such presentational skills as articulation, pacing, emphasis, and vocal control.

Whether interacting in formal or informal situations, accomplished teachers also strive to teach their students to be critical listeners and speakers—that is, to recognize that judgments and opinions about quality, effectiveness, or usefulness are always a reflection of the assumptions and criteria that lie beneath them. Thus, teachers incorporate in their instruction opportunities for students to question their own assumptions and perspectives; take a stand on issues and defend their stance with appropriate argument and evidence; anticipate the arguments of others; reexamine their original opinions in light of others' views; and clearly explain their rubric for evaluating quality.

Standard XI: Viewing and Producing Media Texts

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers enable students to critically read, evaluate, and produce messages in a variety of media.

Accomplished teachers understand that the concept of text has expanded beyond written texts to include many forms of print and nonprint materials. They also recognize that each media form has its own set of visual, verbal, and production conventions and constraints. Thus teachers select appropriate types of media texts to complement the teaching of reading, writing, listening, and speaking while developing student skills in media literacy.

Accomplished teachers understand that what students read is no longer limited to words on the page; today's students must be intelligent readers of texts in different media, including illustrations, graphics, photographs, television programs and newscasts, advertisements, magazines, newspapers, films, songs, speeches, debates, Web sites, multimedia resources, and works of art. Likewise, today's students must develop abilities to communicate ideas using oral, written, and visual media, sometimes combining media; they may vary layout and typeface for effect in a report, represent complex information graphically, create a multimedia presentation, or develop a video. The ability to view and produce texts in different media is crucial to students' successes in today's media-saturated world. Accomplished teachers also understand the persuasive and seductive nature of media that students encounter on a daily basis, and they realize that students need to learn a repertoire of skills and strategies to recognize media's overt and covert influences.

Such media literacy has three main elements: (1) the basic skills needed to access

and make sense of print and nonprint sources; (2) the critical literacies required to interpret, critique, and evaluate such texts; and (3) the skills needed to construct such texts in a variety of media for a range of purposes. These three components of media literacy mark the newest direction for English language arts. They represent an evolving set of communication skills, many of which already exist as people write not only for paper but also for computer screen, or produce visual representations in addition to using words to convey their ideas. Increasingly, students need to be fluent interpreters and users of different media tools and texts. Accomplished teachers provide media-rich environments and varied learning experiences by using available resources to help students comprehend, interpret, and produce many forms of text.

Accomplished teachers provide media-rich environments and varied learning experience to help students comprehend, interpret, and produce many forms of text. They model the processes they use in responding to texts in various media while helping students develop their own range of strategies to analyze what they see, hear, read, and write. Accomplished teachers are comfortable with leading students in rich discussions about viewing media messages and welcome the varied experiences with media that students bring to the classroom. Teachers also share their personal ventures in the use of various technologies to produce oral, written, and visual texts; integrate into their classrooms the special technical skills some of their students may have developed outside of



school; and model an openness to new and emerging technologies that develop communication competencies.

In the classrooms of accomplished teachers, students learn how to use basic technology tools and resources, such as the Internet and presentation software, where possible, to gather and present information. Accomplished teachers integrate these basic media skills into projects that teach students to access resources; find and evaluate information they find; and tailor presentation choices for the audience and purpose. Students learn to conduct online searches and organize information into documents that they may later present in a multimedia format. Teachers may also help students publish work through desktop publishing programs. In schools where technology resources are limited or unavailable, accomplished teachers ensure that their students are aware of the potential uses of such technologies and the ways they may independently access such technologies; for example, they provide locations of libraries or universities, or addresses of free Web sites for home use.

Accomplished teachers help students understand the unique characteristics of a variety of media, as well as the commercial, social, and political messages embedded in these texts, and they prepare students to become more competent and sophisticated consumers and producers of communication in different media. When responding to or creating a report, newsletter, or pamphlet, for example, students learn about layout, typography, color, and space; when viewing or making videos and films, they learn about camera angles and about sound, blocking, and editing techniques; and when researching or designing a Web site they learn about the relationships between screen design and writing, bulleting, and hot linking. Such knowledge about how different media messages and productions are constructed and about the various conventions of each improves the

student's ability to view and evaluate these materials. Similar to the teaching of literary elements, accomplished teachers also teach students the vocabulary—such as instant messaging or high-angle shot—that help students conceptualize and understand the attributes of the medium. Students also learn about the purposes, audiences, and economic costs of various media texts. In addition to helping students master these basic media skills, accomplished teachers provide lessons that guide students in using critical literacy processes in responding to media texts. These higher-order thinking skills require students to interpret, critique, and evaluate a range of media products and then draw conclusions about them in order to make decisions about the meaning and quality of texts and the credibility of sources. In the classroom of the accomplished teacher, students become adept at identifying elements of bias, determining assumptions of the text, and interpreting the message. Students might, for example, view a range of magazine advertisements and television commercials for stereotypes about ethnicity or gender. During the study of such texts, accomplished teachers ask students to reflect on and analyze the media's impact on their personal attitudes and social behavior, as well as on the ways media products, more broadly, shape and are shaped by society. These teachers are also knowledgeable about students' media consumption—the television programs, video games, movies, or Web sites that students view—so that they can help students become analytical consumers of both familiar and more challenging media texts. (See Standard I—*Knowledge of Students* and Standard VI—*Instructional Resources*.)

The accomplished teacher requires students to use these critical literacies to view a variety of media. With films, teachers may, for example, have students compare a piece of literature with one or more film renditions of the literature, or compare a novel with a film on the same theme or one that was

produced during the same period. When using films, an accomplished teacher will design viewing activities to help students go beyond the analysis of the narrative properties of character, plot, and theme that film shares with literature (and costumes, lighting, and sets that film shares with drama), and examine the effects of the cinematic tools that the director uses to create a visual text including camerawork, editing, and location shootings. Students learn to examine the interaction of all these elements as they interpret and evaluate. As with literature, students also learn to respond to films through many critical lenses. (See Standard VIII—*Reading*.)

For persuasive forms of media such as advertising, accomplished teachers may examine the presentation of a selling proposition, the targeting of a particular demographic, and the effectiveness of rational and emotional appeals in both verbal and visual components of the advertisement. In studying newspaper and television reporting, students develop understanding of the presence of bias in the presentation of information as well as sensitivity to the effect of photographs or television footage on how the basic facts are perceived. A teacher might also have students view a speech and then analyze the printed text of that same speech. Students thus develop analytical frameworks to help them collect, compare, and choose appropriate information from a variety of media sources to suit their particular needs and interests.

Accomplished teachers know that a vital component of any media literacy program is a production component. Teachers help students analyze the advantages and limitations of various media so students can purposefully select the medium—written, oral, visual, or some combination—that best suits the message to be communicated. Within the constraints of time and the availability of technology, students extend their understanding and mastery of media literacy concepts and skills by producing their own

media messages. Teachers might extend a unit on persuasive writing by having their students create an advertisement or commercial. Teachers might extend the reading of a novel by having students select a pivotal scene and create a storyboard, video, or multimedia presentation to represent their interpretation, or might have students select and sequence a series of photographs to accompany a poem or short story selection, justifying their choices. Accomplished teachers move students toward an awareness of technology as a tool for organizing and demonstrating their understanding of important concepts.

To assist learners of English as a new language or students with special needs, the accomplished teacher would construct the assignment in layers to provide a scaffold that students could use to reach the goal. For example, students with special needs could create an advertisement for their favorite food. The lesson could be broken into the selection of materials, pictures of the food, words from a word bank, and use of the Internet to research nutritional value. Then the student could design the advertisement in collaboration with another student. Teachers could include a written assignment in which students would compare their advertisement with one from other print or visual media. Accomplished teachers understand that the production component of any media literacy lesson or unit should build on the language and technology skills that students have acquired in other contexts as well as help them refine and extend those skills in a variety of ways.



Standard XII: Language Study

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers develop students' abilities to use language effectively and to appreciate the different ways readers, writers, and speakers use language.

Accomplished teachers understand the power of language and its ability to shape perceptions and identities. They know that language is a constantly evolving medium. They encourage students to explore, experiment with, and enjoy the flexibility and the range of language as they increase their linguistic abilities.

Accomplished teachers recognize that each person communicates what is, in effect, a unique voice reflective of a particular regional upbringing, ethnicity, occupation, age, socioeconomic class, and personality. They make this knowledge part of the content of their instruction, so that students can enjoy the range of dialectal, lexical, inflectional, and syntactic differences within literature and culture. Accomplished teachers continually affirm their students' entitlement to and pride in the variations of English that they enjoy within their community. Teachers have students study their own language choices when speaking to a variety of audiences such as figures of authority, sales personnel, family members, and close friends. Teachers strive to meet two goals: first, to help students recognize that appropriate oral and written language varies according to the social and cultural setting; and second, to provide access to Standard American English for every student. They do not try to eradicate variations in dialect from their classrooms; rather, they seek to add to their students' range of communicative competencies. (See Standard X—*Speaking and Listening*.)

The accomplished teacher is cognizant that the use of grammatically correct English is important as a tool to gain access to wider avenues of schooling, employment, and society, and thus embeds grammar usage in the curriculum of the language arts class. Teachers know the accepted rules of grammar, syntax, and usage for Standard American English and apply them in their daily classroom conversations. Although corrections of conventions are made more routinely in response to written communication, accomplished teachers also find opportunities to teach standard forms of speech. Teachers embed these lessons in meaningful and useful ways into the study of all the language processes.

The study of literature can present a natural opportunity to survey the range of language use and its historical and regional permutations. Through novels and plays, students have opportunities to notice how language has shifted over time and across locations as well as how speech characterizes individuals. In the study of texts that reflect contemporary culture and media, the same opportunities exist for tracking a variety of styles and patterns of speech. Whether it is a regional difference or that of a particular character, students see how language places the speaker. Teachers can also explore the language particular to different disciplines and different genres; they help students see that common terms such as “range” take on different meanings in English, mathematics, and music. Teachers show how a memo



differs from a lab report, a political speech differs from a sonnet, and an advertising brochure differs from a research paper in word choice, tone, style, syntactic construction, and a host of other defining features.

Accomplished teachers carefully observe students' language use and construct opportunities for the study of variant forms, so that students can choose appropriate diction for appropriate circumstances. They might facilitate small-group or paired conversations, large-group discussions, debates, literature circles, jigsaw groups, and role-playing experiences in which students experiment with a variety of dialects and usage. For example, students might assume the roles of reporters on television news broadcasts, figures in a political discussion, or characters from a text under discussion.

One of the pleasures of language study is wordplay, and accomplished teachers appreciate the enjoyment that puns, rhymes, oxymorons, malapropisms, and forms of figurative language provide to adolescents and young adults. Accomplished teachers also understand that these forms may present particular difficulties for students for whom English is a new language or for whom American English is a new dialect. Idioms such as "surfing the 'net" and "What's the bottom line?" might need explanation for these students. Teachers might have students compile their own illustrated dictionary or have students create dramatic performances of idioms to deepen their understandings of the language. Teachers might develop students' responsiveness and attentiveness to language use by providing opportunities for students to produce poems, speeches, songs, videos, and other presentations that explore language as a vehicle for humor. Teachers understand that such language exercises not only enliven language but also reinforce the understanding of literary devices.

Accomplished teachers help students develop attention to vocabulary in order to enrich their linguistic competencies.

Accomplished teachers present a range of vocabulary strategies to help students access challenging texts and to develop precision in using English. Teachers might have students preview words before a reading assignment and study word origins and structure to help orient them toward an author's thoughtful language use. Word games and other opportunities for inventive use of new vocabulary promote the integration of newly acquired words. (See Standard VIII—*Reading*.) Teachers acquaint students with the history of English by studying words, key events, and the development of the language through the Anglo-Saxon period in early Britain, the Norman-French era after 1066, and the beginning of the movement to standardize the conventions of English with the invention of the printing press in 1485. In addition, accomplished teachers guide students to discover the infusions of vocabulary into English from other sources such as the Tribal American words absorbed into English by settlers and colonists in the New World or the Arabic words absorbed into English through traveling the trade routes between England and the Middle East during medieval times. These teachers do not overlook the variations of English spoken in the world and how vocabulary varies from country to country among speakers of English. They also make sure that students are aware of how language is affected by the translation of foreign literature into English.

Accomplished teachers understand that concepts of denotation and connotation help students appreciate the power of language to influence perception. They may, for example, point out the capacity of language to elevate or demote the thing it names by demonstrating the inequity toward female students in the use of the terms "men" and "girls" in the classroom. Teachers use such resources as newspaper reports, song lyrics, commercials, and political speeches to study the power of language. For example, accomplished teachers help students uncover examples of denotation

and connotation that enhanced national propaganda in times of war and peace, shaped nations' perceptions of distant peoples and lands, and defined occupations and types of workers in capitalist societies. Teachers and students may examine the longevity of those examples and pose essential questions as to their depth and staying power.

Accomplished teachers give students opportunities to explore language as an ever-growing, ever-changing discipline. These teachers show students how historical events have influenced the growth of language, for instance, as a result of advancements in the field of technology, or as a word or phrase from a specialized field becomes part of everyday usage. Teachers might have students identify words that have changed in meaning over time, such as when mouse gained a technological meaning. Furthermore, accomplished teachers show students how English came to have abundant synonyms and how some words became taboo words while others were accepted as formal and proper. Students may also predict which of their own slang terms or casual expressions will eventually find their way into the mainstream language and perhaps into the dictionary.

With existing technology and its rapid advances, teachers make sure language is accessible to all students. Drawing upon videos, CDs, audiotapes, and synthesizers, teachers create adaptations for students needing increased volume, repetition, or review of certain language concepts. Teachers may use computer software, including magnification programs, to boost the size, contrast, and

brightness for students who require visual adaptations to access language in print. In addition, teachers may create printed texts or transcripts of oral language for students who are hearing impaired. (See Standard IV—*Fairness, Equity, and Diversity*.)

Teachers understand that students for whom English is a new language benefit from the reinforcement of visuals, verbal cues, clear enunciation, and body language to attach meaning to new words and language constructions. Teachers might offer access to challenging texts to these students by referring to multicultural literature and cultural connections. They might help students make progress toward a standard by providing one-on-one work with a student who is proficient in English, or small-group experiences in which conversations build a student's confidence to speak to the whole class. Teachers give these students additional support to become effective users of Standard American English, especially as required for performance in on-demand writing assessments.

Accomplished teachers put the instructional emphasis on building comprehension among all students and on supporting their increasingly sophisticated efforts to manipulate abstract language. They encourage their students to approach the study of English with objectivity, open-mindedness, curiosity, and an alertness to the many nuances of meaning embodied in the language and its rich variations in dialect.



Standard XIII: Assessment

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers use a range of formal and informal assessment methods to plan for instruction, to monitor and evaluate student progress, to involve students in the assessment process, and to report student achievement to various audiences.

Assessment—the process of taking stock of the breadth and depth of students’ skills and knowledge—is an ongoing component of the accomplished teacher’s repertoire. Good assessment practices have the power to promote in-depth student learning just as ill-designed assessments may undermine instruction. Accomplished teachers have a command of a wide range of assessment methods and strategies that align with the central goals of the language arts curriculum. Accomplished teachers use assessments to discover the strengths, weaknesses, and performances of individual students as well as the overall range of abilities and background knowledge of students in a class. Accomplished teachers also understand the connections between curricula and teacher-designed formal and informal assessments; student self-assessments; and mandated, external assessment.

Accomplished teachers understand the role of both informal assessments, those checks given during a learning sequence to determine student understanding of important information and processes, and formal assessments, those given to demonstrate student mastery of the content, processes, and objectives being taught. They use a range of formal and informal assessments at the beginning of a course in order to determine where students are as individual learners. They might, for instance, have students complete reading or writing surveys or questionnaires, or administer tests as ways of gauging the range of student ability within a particular class. Accomplished teachers also

may consult previous assessment data collected in a school cumulative folder as an aid in determining instruction appropriate for individual students as well as for the whole class. They analyze these data to make important pedagogical decisions, including, for example, making appropriate modifications to their lesson design to ensure the success of students with exceptional needs or students for whom English is a new language. Teachers understand the relationship between the results of all of these assessments and the implications for instruction, and they select assessments that match their instructional goals.

Accomplished teachers are assessment literate and know which among a variety of assessment techniques are appropriate for formative use throughout a unit of study and for summative evaluations. Throughout a course, teachers are deliberate in their planning of when formal and informal assessments will be used. They ensure that all of the activities and instructional strategies in a unit lead to the desired goals reflected in the final assessment. They develop and use assessments that monitor students’ individual work. These assessments might include essays, projects, objective tests, interviews, or learning logs. Teachers may use records of their own observations during class discussion and individual conferences with students. They also compile anecdotal notes on student performances such as oral or dramatic presentations, group reports, and audio- or videotaped presentations. Teachers work to ensure that assessments—both



teacher-designed and external—are appropriate for all students. For example, they accommodate students with special needs by extending time or adapting prompts. They evaluate tests and assessments for possible bias and advocate for bias-free tests that are fair to all groups. Teachers select and design assessments, such as portfolios, that monitor student progress toward challenging language arts goals and advance student learning. Teachers recognize that the collection of work samples in a portfolio provide insight into students' skills, approaches to assignments, preparedness, organization, development, and comprehension. This showcase of work may take different forms, including electronic formats, depending on the audience and the purpose for the portfolio.

In the assessment process, accomplished teachers provide students with constructive and timely feedback regarding both the process and the products of their learning. Accomplished teachers are cognizant of the importance of the types of comments made on student-generated work and craft those comments to guide learning and stimulate further thought and reflection. Through assessments, accomplished teachers provide students with a positive and supportive environment in which students come to recognize their strengths and weaknesses and are motivated to improve. (See Standard V—*Learning Environment*.)

Because students, teachers, and schools are often accountable for student performance on districtwide or statewide tests, accomplished teachers meet this responsibility in creative and innovative ways. They understand the genre of standardized tests and help students succeed by making sure that preparations for these external assessments provide opportunities for significant learning for students. They analyze tests for the skills that are being assessed and ensure that those skills are addressed in a variety of learning contexts. They integrate test

preparation with their regular instruction and learning goals by teaching important content along with testing strategies. For instance, teachers may have students work in pairs or groups to analyze a test prompt for an on-demand writing assessment, thus incorporating listening, speaking, and critical thinking skills with writing skills. Such teachers may also incorporate technology, for example, by having students visit a Web site that features benchmarks of score points. Students might read and discuss model essays and compare their own scores with the scored benchmark. Students might then compare their own drafts with the rubric. Accomplished teachers interpret and use a variety of assessment results, from classroom projects to norm-referenced tests, for placement in courses and targeting of instruction. They use the results from district and state assessments as only one indicator of student language development and know how to combine data from multiple measures to make judgments on student learning.

Accomplished teachers also use assessment to gauge the success of their own instruction on student progress. After thoughtful reflection, teachers make mid-course adjustments and refinements both to their instruction and the types of assessments used in order to enhance student learning. They may recognize, for example, when content needs to be taught again or when the pace is too fast or too slow for students. Teachers' thorough understanding of the importance of assessment to student learning informs their decisions. (See Standard XIV—*Self-Reflection*.)

Accomplished teachers make their assessments clear to students so that there are no secrets about an assessment's purpose or use. They discuss assessment tools in advance to help their students understand the evaluative criteria being used on the assessment by explaining rubrics and other scales. They inform students about the effects of various

assessments on their achievement. They help students view assessments as important and useful indicators of student learning.

Accomplished teachers understand that student involvement in the assessment process is an important element in student growth, progress, and advancement in learning. Therefore, they develop ways for students to reflect periodically upon their own work through a variety of strategies. Accomplished teachers provide models, criteria, benchmarks, rubrics, and feedback. They may guide students to develop their own assessment tasks in order to better understand acceptable performance levels. Accomplished teachers also involve students in setting their own goals and devising ways to measure their own progress. When students assess their own performance, teachers may use these evaluations as sources of information to construct complete pictures of students' progress.

In the classroom of an accomplished teacher, students learn to see that there is a world of assessors (authentic audiences) in the workplace. Teachers know when to bring in those audiences to provide feedback to students. These audiences may include parents, other teachers, and community members such as personnel managers, college faculty, or local business people. Students see the importance of clear, precise communication that demonstrates language proficiency to audiences outside the language arts class.

Accomplished English language arts teachers prepare reports of their evaluations that clearly communicate to students, parents, other teachers, and administrators the kind and quality of progress that students are making. Teachers use communications technologies, such as computer-generated progress reports or e-mail notes, if available, to provide parents with meaningful feedback about students' language development. This feedback includes comparisons of student performance with clearly defined performance standards. Teachers can interpret and clearly articulate what standardized test scores actually report. They are comfortable discussing the nuances of test summaries, reliability and validity ratings, and student placement along a continuum of percentages. In all of these ways, accomplished teachers help build family support for the language arts program. (See Standard XVI—*Family and Community Involvement*.) While maintaining confidentiality, teachers also discuss student assessment results with their colleagues to provide a composite picture of student academic performance and promote student success. Accomplished teachers strive to ensure that students, families, and the entire school benefit from sound assessment practices.



Reflections on Standard XII:

Supporting Student Learning through Long-Range Initiatives

The last three standards describe important decisions, actions, activities, and frames of mind that support and contribute to the practice of accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers. These include the ways these teachers reflect on their own practice as well as the way they work with parents, colleagues, and other stakeholders to create intellectually lively classrooms that support their learning goals.

Standard XIV: Self-Reflection

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers continually observe, analyze, and seek to improve the quality and effectiveness of their teaching, and articulate reasons for instructional decisions.

Accomplished teaching is derived from a concern for students, a deep knowledge of content and pedagogy, and a passion for teaching and learning. Accomplished English language arts teachers regularly reflect on the quality and effect of their teaching and the depth of their knowledge. This process of deliberately observing, analyzing, and improving practice forces the accomplished teacher to question the consequences of instructional decisions and consider alternate actions. Accomplished teachers can explain the reasons for their decisions and connect outcomes of student learning to their deliberate instructional decision making. Their teaching is driven by a diligent pursuit of understanding the circumstances under which learning occurs, and they strive to create the intellectual conditions to ensure significant learning for all students. When this level of achievement does not occur, accomplished teachers turn first to themselves to examine their role in the success or failure of their students.

Accomplished teachers purposefully observe their own teaching and the timbre of their classes; they plumb their own experience, regularly reflecting on their daily successes and setbacks in the classroom and

how they might repeat their successes and address their setbacks. Accomplished teachers are able to reflect effectively and efficiently in the midst of a lesson. They are alert to the teachable moment. They are quick on their feet, consistently able to take maximum advantage of the unpredictable opportunities that present themselves in the course of the school day. However, they are deliberate in their approach to analyzing their teaching. They systematically collect data to see if their teaching strategies are effective. This collection of data may be done through videotaping, peer observation, teacher or student learning logs, or records of student behavior. Teachers review the data to analyze how well a lesson worked, looking for patterns in their teaching in order to become more effective and efficient. For example, a teacher may assume that, because of a lively discussion concerning a basic concept of language, all of the students in the class understand the concept. After analyzing written responses and a videotape, the teacher realizes that the students in one section of the room were not paying attention to the discussion. Such analysis can lead to reteaching material, restructuring groups, or reconsidering the formats for student response.



Accomplished teachers know their personal strengths and weaknesses. They identify areas for self-improvement and actively seek strategies to improve where needed. They work constantly to broaden their perspective and are aware of how their particular cultural background, values, biases, learning styles, and experiences might play a part in limiting or promoting their teaching effectiveness with specific groups of students. (See Standard IV—*Fairness, Equity, and Diversity*.)

Teachers recognize that the demands of their craft will change over time and indeed perhaps change with each class and each student. Accomplished teachers are attentive to the rapid changes they see around them—in their students, in their discipline, and in educational research literature. They know the exhilarating, uneven ride all teachers experience on the way to becoming experts, and they maintain open, questioning minds. They do not blindly adopt each new pedagogical method that becomes popular. Accomplished teachers know that new methodologies must be filtered through the lens of research evidence, their own experience, and the particular needs of their students. They incorporate new teaching methods after studying them, experimenting with them, and determining that they are appropriate for students.

Accomplished teachers avail themselves of many resources, such as seeking and using feedback from students, parents, colleagues, and administrators, to improve the quality and effectiveness of their teaching. (See Standard XV—*Professional Community* and Standard XVI—*Family and Community*

Involvement.) Teachers keep abreast of significant research findings in the field, read professional publications, and, when possible, pursue professional development through local and district workshops, national and state professional organizations and their Web sites, teacher centers, university and college courses, and conferences. They may participate in study groups, conduct informal research in their classes, invite colleagues to observe their teaching and critique their work, or otherwise collaborate to gather multiple perspectives on their practice.

Accomplished teachers move beyond intuition by being able to talk persuasively about why they make the pedagogical decisions they do. They articulate their successes and failures and regularly reflect on their daily practice to provide a rich, varied, and engaging class where learning is challenging yet meets the needs of each student. Through this habit of introspection, teachers weave together class experiences, knowledge of theory, contemporary research, and feedback from students to solve problems and reinvigorate their practice. More important, they engage in discussions about their practice with other professionals, sharing and incorporating the ideas and strategies of others. Accomplished teachers have a vision for their school and students, the dynamics of their class, their own teaching role, and the future of the profession which emerges from their ongoing reflection.



Standard XV: Professional Community

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers participate collaboratively in the educational community to improve instruction, advance the knowledge and practice of the field, and enhance their professional identities.

Accomplished English language arts teachers take a leadership role within the profession, sharing their accumulated knowledge and advocating for high-quality practice for all teachers. They exercise numerous options for involvement in professional and learning communities, working with teachers, administrators, community members, policymakers, college and university colleagues, union representatives, corporate partners, or professional education organization members. Through their interactions with these stakeholders, accomplished educators see opportunities to contribute to the improved overall instructional program in their classrooms and in their schools while gaining personal and professional benefits for themselves.

Accomplished teachers realize that collaboration with colleagues is a necessary means of professional growth. Hearing other voices and perspectives allows teachers to broaden their own understandings and, thus, develop as educators. Sharing their sound knowledge of current theories and pedagogical issues allows teachers to participate constructively in a professional community. Accomplished teachers use technology when possible to learn with and from colleagues. For example, they may belong to professional e-mailing lists or participate in online conversations with colleagues across the nation. The accomplished teacher converses with colleagues, both near and far, regarding strategies to improve the achievement of

English students and, when necessary, to join together to search for new strategies and materials. They collaborate with knowledgeable colleagues to increase their understanding of other cultures and heritages, as well as of student learning styles and exceptional needs.

Accomplished teachers strengthen the instruction within their school through collaborative endeavors. As team players, they participate in professional development tasks, such as working with colleagues on instructional units, both within their own departments and across disciplines. They may collaborate with other professionals to provide specialized services and tailored programs for students with special needs. When they participate in schoolwide efforts to promote reading and writing across the curriculum, they may develop rubrics, collaborate in planning integrated curricula, score writing assessments, or serve as resources for colleagues in other disciplines or those new to the profession; they do so knowing that such activities influence instructional decision making and ultimately improve classroom practice. Accomplished teachers may also implement action-based research projects to study issues at their site and work collaboratively with others to solve problems and increase school effectiveness.

When accomplished teachers mentor new teachers, publish articles, or provide workshops and classes in local, state, or national venues, they demonstrate their skill as



professional development leaders advancing the knowledge and practice of the field. By serving on local, state, and national education task forces, they share their accumulated knowledge to strengthen the quality of professional practice. As they share their expertise, accomplished teachers serve as advocates for their students and for the profession.

Accomplished teachers may provide feedback and offer suggestions to colleagues struggling with professional dilemmas. This interaction is conducted with the highest levels of professionalism, focusing on the problem rather than on personalities or personal issues. The same applies when accomplished teachers demonstrate their skill as coaches for student teachers, ensuring that these aspiring educators gain support in their entrance into both the classroom and the professional community. Teachers may also be participants in the formal preparation

of student teachers by working as undergraduate and graduate instructors. Accomplished teachers find ways to participate in and add value to the larger learning community—at the school site and beyond—even though their school situation may present some constraints.

The accomplished teacher knows that the field of education is constantly in flux. The issues that teachers address change rapidly, and accomplished teachers know that they cannot continue to rely on knowledge gained when they received their degree. They know that as educators they have chosen a profession that is hallmarked by the joy that life-long learning will bring, so they willingly seek opportunities to continue their education as teachers and as subject-matter experts in order to enhance their contributions to their profession.



Reflections on Standard XII:

Standard XVI: Family and Community Involvement

Accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers work with families, caregivers, and community members to best serve the needs of students.

Accomplished English language arts teachers value and respect the roles of families, caregivers, and communities as critical influences on students. Even though increased autonomy for important life decisions marks this time in students' lives, teachers know that the expectations of parents and other adult caregivers continue to have a direct impact on the learning success of students. Teachers realize that students come from diverse home and community settings and traditional and untraditional family structures. They recognize that schools can benefit from the varied cultural, linguistic, social, and educational experiences that shape students' lives and responses to schooling, so they work with families, caregivers, and communities to take advantage of these sources of knowledge.

Accomplished teachers know that the involvement of parents, caregivers, and other adult agents in the schooling of adolescents and young adults has a positive impact on student achievement, as well as on student perceptions of schooling. They also know that parents may have different perspectives on their role in their children's education due to lack of information, varied experiences with schools, and different expectations. For example, some parents may insist that instruction should mirror the way they remember being taught. Adults who had mainly negative educational experiences may be reluctant to become involved in the student's education. Nevertheless, teachers acknowledge the high aspirations that most families hold for the education of their

children, and teachers take steps to welcome parents and caregivers into conversations regarding the importance of education and appropriate educational opportunities. They may develop a Web site or homework hotline describing course objectives or listing assignments and helpful homework links. They establish ongoing, two-way systems of communication, which may include personal telephone calls, written messages in the home language, home visits, or e-mails. Teachers use these communication systems to gather background knowledge regarding students' home and out-of-school lives. (See Standard I—*Knowledge of Students*.)

Accomplished teachers are prompt in responding to parent-generated questions or contacts. Because accomplished teachers recognize the right of students to be involved in their learning as they gain an increasing measure of control on their path to independence, accomplished teachers include students when interacting with parents or caregivers, when appropriate. In addition, they invite parents and caregivers to provide their own assessment of the student's progress. Teachers use school and community resources to ensure that all parents and caregivers have equitable and ample access to teachers, information, and support.

Many social, medical, and legal organizations provide support to adolescents and young adults by offering services to students who have responsibilities beyond academics, including students who care for family members, contribute to family support, or are themselves parents. Accomplished teachers



inform students about resources within the community and help students access them when needed. They also recognize their responsibility as reporting agents in situations where students must be protected from harm. In these cases, teachers engage in appropriate interventions, often acting as student advocates.

Accomplished teachers know that a school is not isolated from the larger community, and they recognize the pervasive influence the community can have in shaping and enhancing a student's education. Their awareness of the importance of community relations leads these teachers to inform the community about school goals, projects, and successes. Accomplished teachers also seek opportunities within the community to expand students' experiences, especially when thinking about future careers. Teachers may partner with businesses, industries, and community agencies to secure internships, funding, or resources that provide students with firsthand knowledge of the English language arts in the world of work.

English language arts teachers assist students in communicating effectively with

people of all ages and backgrounds. Community members may act as guest speakers, participate in mock job interviews or college interviews, or become reviewers for student portfolios or for presentations. Students may be matched with senior citizens for purposes such as reading library books, filling out forms, and maintaining checking account balances when the senior citizen can no longer do so independently. These activities may result in students writing biographies of the senior citizen that are then distributed to family members, giving the students a real-life application for the skills learned in their English language arts class.

All in all, accomplished teachers help families, caregivers, and the community understand how to help students become knowledgeable, responsible, literate, and articulate adults who can make important contributions to our democratic society.



Reflections on Standard XII:

The 16 standards in this report represent a professional consensus on the characteristics of accomplished practice and provide a profile of the accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teacher. Although the standards are challenging, they are upheld every day by teachers like the ones described in these pages, who inspire and instruct the nation's youth and lead their profession. By publishing this document and offering National Board Certification to English language arts educators, NBPTS aims to affirm the practice of the many teachers who meet these standards and challenge others to strive to meet them. Moreover, NBPTS hopes to bring increased attention to the professionalism and expertise of accomplished English language arts educators and, in so doing, pave the way for greater professional respect and opportunity for these essential members of the teaching community.

In addition to being a stimulus for self-reflection on the part of teachers at all levels of performance, *Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts Standards* is intended to be a catalyst for discussion among administrators, staff developers, and others in the education community about accomplished practice in this field. If these standards can advance the conversation about accomplished teaching, they will provide an important step toward the NBPTS goal of improving student learning in our nation's schools.

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The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards' *Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts Standards* reflects more than a decade of dialogue about accomplished teaching in English language arts. These standards derive their power from an amazing degree of collaboration and consensus. Through the expertise and input of two standards committees, convened ten years apart; numerous reviews by a board of directors; and two periods of public comment by educators, policymakers, parents, and the like; as well as through the intense study of candidates for National Board Certification who have immersed themselves in the first edition; these second-edition standards emerge as a living testament to what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. *Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts Standards* represents the best thinking by teachers and for teachers about advanced teaching practice in the field.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is deeply grateful to all of those who contributed their time, wisdom, and professional vision to *Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts Standards*. Any thank-you must begin with the pioneers in 1992 who spent five years debating, reflecting, and articulating the multiple facets of accomplished teaching, so that they could help advance the field and also provide a rigorous and sound basis for national certification of teachers. In particular, the National Board would like to show its appreciation to Chair Brooke Workman and Vice Chair Doris Dillon who so skillfully led the effort to weave the National Board's five core propositions into field-specific standards of teaching excellence.

Any field grows, shifts, and evolves over time. Standards, too, must remain dynamic and therefore are subject to revision. In 2002 the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards convened a second Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts Standards Committee. This committee was charged with achieving both continuity and change, using the first edition of the standards as the foundation for its work, but modifying the standards to reflect best practice of the early twenty-first century. The Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts Standards Committee exemplified the collegiality, expertise, and dedication to the improvement of student learning that are hallmarks of accomplished teachers. Special thanks go to Chair Jacqueline Marino, Vice Chair Kathy Gonzalez, NBCT, and Facilitator Sandra Robertson for their invaluable leadership in making the second edition a reality.

The work of the Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts Standards Committee was guided by the NBPTS Board of Directors. The National Board Certification Working Group deserves special thanks, as it reviewed this second-edition standards document at various points in its development, made suggestions about how the standards could be strengthened, and recommended adoption of the standards to the full board of directors. Representing the board of directors as liaison to the standards committee was Beverly Ann Chin, whose knowledge and enthusiasm made her a valuable advisor and friend to the standards committee. She contributed significantly to the work of the committee and helped represent its views at NBPTS board meetings.

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In presenting these standards for accomplished Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts teachers NBPTS recognizes that this publication would not have evolved without the considerable contributions of many unnamed individuals and institutions. On behalf of NBPTS, I extend my thanks to all of them.

Katherine S. Woodward
Director, Certification Standards
2003



The core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

- 1) *Teachers are committed to students and their learning.*
- 2) *Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.*
- 3) *Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.*
- 4) *Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.*
- 5) *Teachers are members of learning communities.*