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N E W Y O R K S T A T E

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
ACHIEVEMENT TEST

**Test Sampler
Teacher's Manual
K-12**

MARCH 2004

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I. INTRODUCTION TO THE NYSESLAT TEST SAMPLERS

A. Content of the Test Samplers

The five test samplers mirror the grade level clusters and modalities assessed in the New York State English as A Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT).

There are five grade-level test samplers, including:

- K-1
- 2-4
- 5-6
- 7-8
- 9-12

The language modalities assessed at each grade level, include:

- Speaking
- Listening
- Reading
- Writing

New York State teachers developed the items in the samplers for limited-English-proficient/English language learners (LEP/ELLs) at the three levels of English proficiency: Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced.

B. How to use the NYSESLAT Test Samplers

The tasks in the Samplers may be administered in the classroom to help teachers plan for instruction. Teachers may use the tasks as exemplars to develop similar tasks for use in the classroom. Teachers may revise the Sampler items to better reflect the degrees of proficiency and academic interests of their students. Research indicates that language achievement depends upon the extent to which the learner is engaged in actual acts of reading, writing, listening and speaking for meaningful purposes.

The items in the samplers may be used to prepare students for the 2004 NYSESLAT. The Speaking test items in the sampler should be administered individually to students. The teacher should use the Speaking rubrics on page 14 and 15 of this Manual for scoring student responses. The Speaking rubrics may be reviewed with students before introducing the sampler items.

The Listening, Reading and Writing sampler items tests may be administered to students in class groups. Teacher prompts are included in the K-1 Listening section of the sampler. Since audiotapes are not provided with the samplers for grades 2-12, the teachers may read the Listening selection to the students or ask students to “role play” the conversations. Please refer to the NYSESLAT Features section on pages 4 and 5 for information on how the operational tests are given.

Teachers should use the Writing rubrics in this Manual to score students' writing on sampler items. The Writing rubrics can be reviewed with students to increase their awareness of the expectations of the writing tasks.

In considering implications of students' results on these tasks, teachers may want to ask the following questions:

- On which parts did students seem to be most successful? Least successful?
- To what extent did students follow the directions included with each task, without difficulty?
- With which qualities used in scoring did students seem to have the most difficulty (coherence, fluency, vocabulary resources, providing appropriate and specific details)?
- What learning experiences do students need to perform well on each task?

II. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE NYSESLAT ASSESSMENTS

A. Framework for Assessment: The New York State Learning Standards for English As a Second Language

The New York State Learning Standards for English as a Second Language (ESL standards) are meant to serve as the foundation for ESL curriculum, instruction, and assessment for all LEP/ELL students in the State. They provide the framework for interweaving teaching, learning, assessment, and student work. The ESL standards also serve as the framework for the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, (NYSESLAT).

The ESL standards are based on the premise that second language education must consist of learning English for authentic purposes in both social and academic settings. The ESL standards identify the skills and abilities LEP/ELL students must master as they become proficient in English and enter the English mainstream. The ESL standards are meant to be used for all LEP/ELL students at all levels of English proficiency. The ESL standards can be regarded as a springboard to content area standards; they provide the knowledge and skill development for high-level student achievement in the non-ESL content classroom.

The ESL standards are based on an alignment between the New York State English language arts (ELA) learning standards and the ESL standards developed by the National Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). The New York State ESL standards reflect the standards-based curriculum and assessment initiatives in New York State. With the assistance of the Center for Applied Linguistics, the ESL Standards Committee aligned the TESOL standards with the ELA standards for each grade level cluster, and developed new performance indicators for each standard as needed. Simultaneously, teams of teachers around the State identified and developed sample classroom tasks that addressed the standards and performance indicators that illustrated standards-based ESL instruction.

There are five New York State ESL standards. While the first four resemble the four State ELA standards, there are significant differences in the performance indicators that distinguish the ESL standards from those in ELA. These standards are: Standard 1 — English for information and understanding; Standard 2 — English for literary response, enjoyment, and expression; Standard 3 — English for critical analysis and evaluation; and Standard 4 — English for social and classroom interaction. The fifth standard, English for cross-cultural knowledge and understanding, articulates the components of acquiring a "second culture" in both a social and academic context. Interactions and knowledge that are subsumed under Standard 5 are designed to help LEP/ELL students entering the United States to be successful in their new host culture.

The five New York State ESL standards and sample classroom tasks were reviewed and edited by other committees and researchers in the fields of bilingual education and ESL and comprise the ESL learning standards, performance indicators, and classroom tasks delineated in the document, *The Teaching of Language Arts to Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners: Learning Standards for English as a Second Language*. This document can be found on the SED Office of Bilingual Education's website at:

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/biling/resource/ESL/standards.html>

The sample classroom tasks outlined in this standards document provide educators of LEP/ELL students with suggested tasks that address one or more performance indicators within a particular standard. The tasks describe instructional practices that are designed for authentic, meaningful, and purposeful learning and student engagement.

B. State Assessment of LEP/ELL Students

The Department's Office of State Assessment, with the collaboration of the Educational Testing Services (ETS), developed the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). The NYSESLAT is administered annually for five grade clusters: K-1, 2-4, 5-6, 7-8, and 9-12. Each test assesses the four language modalities of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The NYSESLAT has been approved by the U.S. Department of Education as the instrument to measure proficiency in English as a second language. New York is one of only a few states with approval to administer this type of test instrument to meet the accountability provisions under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

The Listening, Reading and Writing sessions of the spring 2004 NYSESLAT will be administered to LEP Students on dates selected by the school or district within the period Monday, May 10 through Friday, May 21, 2004. The Speaking session will be individually administered to students during the period Monday, April 26 through Friday, May 21, 2004.

All LEP students, regardless of grade, must take the NYSESLAT. LEP students must take this assessment to evaluate English proficiency even if they take a grade 4 or 8 English language arts assessment, the Regents examination in comprehensive English, or, for certain LEP students with disabilities, a Regents competency test in reading or writing in the 2003-04 school year.

Features of the NYSESLAT for Grades K-1

Test Section	Administration	ESTIMATED	Basic Format
LISTENING	To a group of students	25 minutes	The teacher reads the assessment to the students. All the questions are multiple-choice, with pictures for the options. The students circle their answers in their test books. Tasks range from simple identification of pertinent information to understanding the elements of a brief story.
READING	To a group of students	25 minutes	The teacher reads a script to guide the students through the K-1 Reading assessment. All questions are multiple-choice, with single letters, words, and pictures for the options. Tasks range from identification of letters and sounds to choosing answers to questions about stories of a few sentences. The students circle their answers in their test books.
SPEAKING	To individual students	10 minutes	The teacher instructs the student to look at pictures in a test book and asks the student questions about those pictures. The student speaks in response to these questions.
WRITING	To a group of students	15 minutes	The teacher asks the students to write single words; short, dictated sentences; and a short description of a picture they see.

* These times include time for the teacher to give instructions to the students as well as for the students to take the test.

Features of the NYSESLAT for Grades 2-12

Test Section	Administration		Basic Format
LISTENING	To a group of students	45 minutes	Students listen to stimuli on audiotapes and answer questions printed in their test books.
READING	To a group of students	50 minutes	Students answer multiple-choice questions based on reading passages printed in their test books.
SPEAKING	To individual students	15 minutes	The student speaks in response to questions and stimuli that are read by the teacher and printed in his or her test book.
WRITING	To a group of students	50 minutes	Students write and perform writing exercises in response to questions and stimuli printed in their test books.

* These times include time for the teacher to give instructions to the students as well as for the students to take the test.

Listening

For grades K-4, the students answer questions based on pictures and photographs. Students are also asked to choose pictorial answers in response to brief oral questions as well as short stories. This is delivered by the instructor for grades K-1 and presented in a prerecorded tape for grades 2-4. The short stories, poems, and rhymes are said twice.

For grades 5-12, the Listening assessments present four types of listening activities on a prerecorded tape. The short and extended conversations are stated twice.

- In the first, students look at photographs while they listen to four statements, only one of which accurately describes what the photograph shows. The statements are said only once.
- In the second, students listen for details in brief, everyday conversation.
- In the third, students answer questions based on what is said or implied in conversations about everyday topics.
- In the fourth, students respond to questions based on conversations about general and academic subjects.

Reading

The teacher reads a script to guide students through the K-1 reading assessment. Tasks range from identification of letters and sounds to choosing answers to questions about stories of a few sentences.

Each reading assessment (Grades 2-12) contains reading passages with multiple-choice questions.

- The passages offer a range of content that includes everyday topics and language; examples of social communication; literature texts for children; texts based on maps, charts, schedules, and calendars; and other academic subject matter.
- The multiple-choice questions assess cognitive and analytical proficiencies stressed in the standards. The questions focus on main ideas, facts, inferences, vocabulary, sequences of events, interpretation of non-fiction and literary texts, and social communication.

Speaking

Students will demonstrate their command of spoken English for everyday and academic purposes.

- In grades K-4, some descriptive tasks are based on picture stimuli.
- In grades 5-12, students are asked to perform a variety of cognitive tasks, such as: narrating a brief story based on a picture sequence, making predictions based on given stimuli, explaining a situation based on personal experience, giving directions to describe a process, expressing an opinion and/or persuading an audience, and interpreting visual material such as a graph, chart, or diagram.

Writing

The K-1 writing assessment is designed to measure how well a student writes letters, words, and simple sentences in English. The assessment presents three kinds of tasks:

- writing single dictated words
- writing short dictated sentences
- writing a short description of a picture printed in the student's test book.

Each writing assessment (Grades 2-12) presents three exercises: prewriting, writing an essay or story; and editing. The students perform and are evaluated on different parts of “The Writing Process” as indicated in the *New York State Learning Standards for English as a Second Language*.

- In the **prewriting** exercise, students plan a story or essay by writing ideas and notes in a graphic organizer. The exercise is scored on a 2-1-0 scale for grades 2-4 and as 3-2-1-0

for grades 5-12, based on how completely and thoughtfully the student develops the information in the graphic organizer.

- In the **essay or story-writing** exercise, each student composes the imaginative story or personal essay that was planned for in the prewriting exercise. The exercise is evaluated on 4-3-2-1-0 scale which includes both content and development of the response and use of language.
- In the **editing** exercise, the student corrects errors in a writing sample. The score is based on the number of correct revisions.

The NYSESLAT Test Design for 2004 is included as Appendix A.

III. SCORING OF WRITING AND SPEAKING

The constructed response items on the NYSESLAT Writing and Speaking tests are scored holistically, which means that a student's work is evaluated for its total, overall, or whole effect based on the rubric and accompanying exemplar responses.

Holistic scoring is similar to learning a new language or a new way of thinking, and it is crucial that all raters put aside their own beliefs, ideas, and theories about how to evaluate students' work. For any large scale scoring project to be successful and have meaningful results, all raters must score using the established criteria.

The secure NYSESLAT Scoring Guides for Writing and Speaking will be sent to schools with the NYSESLAT test materials. They will contain a description of the scoring process, rubrics, exemplars, and practice responses. A compact disk with exemplars of student speech will also be provided for scoring the Speaking tests.

The Scoring Guides for Writing and Speaking must be used by raters to ensure that every student's response is rated the same way throughout the state. Before beginning to score, raters need to understand and internalize the criteria as exemplified by the rubric, along with student exemplars for each score.

This section contains generic rubrics for Writing and Speaking. Each scale includes both a content and development of response and language use within the response. Please use these rubrics to score students' responses to the items in the test samplers.

Appendix B contains additional guidelines on using rubrics to score.

A. Writing Rubrics

RUBRIC — 1W for Grades K-1 Single, Dictated Words

SCORE	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE
2	The dictated word is spelled correctly.
1	The response shows phonetic awareness, but the dictated word is spelled incorrectly.
0	There is no response, or the response shows extremely limited phonetic awareness.

RUBRIC — 2W for Grades K-1 Short, Dictated Sentences

SCORE	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE
2	The response shows control of the conventions of written English (capitalization, word spacing, and punctuation) and may display a small number of spelling errors that do not interfere with communication. All of the words in the dictated sentences are present in the correct order.
1	The response shows some attempt to spell words and to use conventions (capitalization, word spacing, and punctuation) but errors may impede communication. Most or all of the words in the dictated sentences are present in the correct order.
0	There is no response, or the response is not recognizable as the dictated sentence.

**RUBRIC — 3W for Grades K-1
Picture Description**

SCORE	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE
2	<p>The student's response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describes most of the activity in the picture • may display some spelling errors or invented spellings, but these misspellings show phonetic awareness, and the words can be identified by a trained primary-level teacher • shows some control of the conventions of written English (capitalization, word spacing, punctuation) but may not be written in complete sentences
1	<p>The student's response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describes at least some of the activity in the picture • displays many spelling errors or invented spellings that may not be identifiable as words • shows some limited phonetic awareness and some attempt to use conventions (capitalization, word spacing, punctuation)
0	There is no response, or the response is not recognizable as written English.

PREWRITING RUBRIC — 4W for Grades 2-4

SCORE	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE
2	The student fills in at least four of the boxes with clear and relevant ideas. The responses in most of the boxes have enough detail to show thinking, imagination, or insight into the topic.
1	The student attempts to write something relevant to the topic in some of the boxes. All or most of the responses are single words or very simple phrases.
0	The boxes are blank, or only one box is filled in, or the information written in the boxes is irrelevant or incoherent.

PREWRITING RUBRIC — WR-1 for Grades 5-6

SCORE	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE
3	The student fills in all five boxes with clear and relevant ideas. The responses in all or most of the boxes provide specific details and show thinking, imagination, or insight into the topic.
2	The student writes a relevant response in the top box and in at least half of the other boxes. Some of these responses provide specific details and show thinking, imagination, or insight into the topic.
1	Responses are general and may lack development or insight into the topic; however, the responses show some understanding of the task.
0	The response does not address the questions at all, or the information is irrelevant or incoherent.

PREWRITING RUBRIC — WR-1 for Grades 7-8

SCORE	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE
3	The student fills in all five boxes with clear and relevant ideas. The responses in all or most of the boxes provide specific details and show thinking, imagination, or insight into the topic.
2	The student writes a relevant response in the top box and in at least half of the other boxes. Some of these responses provide specific details and show thinking, imagination, or insight into the topic.
1	The student writes in some of the boxes. The responses are general and may lack development or insight into the topic; however, the responses show some understanding of the task.
0	The response does not address the questions at all, or the information is irrelevant or incoherent.

PREWRITING RUBRIC — WR-1 for Grades 9-12

SCORE	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE
3	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completes the chart according to the instructions • writes in all three organizational boxes • provides an appropriate rationale for the way he or she filled in the organizational boxes
2	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completes the chart according to the instructions • writes in all three organizational boxes. • attempts to give an appropriate rationale for the way he or she filled in the organizational boxes, but the rationale may be incomplete or insufficiently described <p>OR, the student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completes the chart and gives an appropriate rationale for organizing the essay, but does not fill in the organizational boxes
1	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes something relevant to the topic in at least one of the boxes in the chart • writes in at least one of the organizational boxes • does not provide an appropriate rationale for writing about the changes in a particular order
0	<p>There is no response, the response does not address the questions at all, or the information is irrelevant or incoherent.</p>

WRITING THE STORY/ESSAY RUBRIC — WR-2 for Grades 2-12

SCORE	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE
4	<p>The student’s response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is completely and easily comprehensible, has an appropriate main idea or theme, and addresses all parts of the question • provides appropriate and specific details, examples and, if required, supporting evidence; and develops in a coherent and connected way • contains language that flows in well-developed sentences, with some variety in sentence structure • shows well-developed vocabulary resources (the student usually finds appropriate words to convey meaning) • displays few errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation; errors do not interfere with communication
3	<p>The student’s response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is comprehensible, though the reader may have to make an effort to understand it; has an identifiable main idea or purpose; and addresses all parts of the question • provides some appropriate details, examples, and, if required, supporting evidence and develops in a coherent and connected way • is written entirely, or almost entirely, in complete sentences; displays some variety in sentence structure • shows emerging vocabulary resources (the student often finds appropriate words to convey meaning) • displays some errors in grammar (for example, in the use of articles and prepositions), spelling, and punctuation, but these errors do not impede communication
2	<p>The student’s response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is somewhat comprehensible but often requires a marked effort on the part of the reader to understand it; may lack a main idea • often fails to provide appropriate details, examples, or evidence • displays little or no variety in sentence structure; the writing may be choppy or abrupt • shows basic vocabulary resources; errors in word choice sometimes interfere with communication • displays frequent errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions and avoids more difficult structures; errors may interfere with communication
1	<p>The student’s response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is often incomprehensible, has no main idea or clear purpose, and may not address every part of the question/prompt • provides few, if any, details, examples, or evidence • contains few, if any, complete sentences; the writing may seem inappropriate or incoherent • shows a limited range of vocabulary, which interferes with communication • shows little control of grammar and of the conventions of written English
0	<p>The student’s response is not recognizable as written English, does not address the question at all, or is completely irrelevant or incoherent.</p>

EDITING RUBRIC — WR-3 for Grades 2-12

SCORE	ITEMS INCORRECT
3	0 - 2
2	3 - 6
1	7 - 9
0	10 - 12

B. SPEAKING RUBRICS

SPEAKING RUBRIC — SP-1 for Grades K-1 and Grades 2-4 (Questions 1-3)

SCORE	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE
2	The student's response: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• is understandable and appropriate• is basically grammatically correct• presents appropriate word choices for the grade level• may have minor errors, but the errors are infrequent, and they do not interfere with communication
1	The student's response: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• is understandable• displays noticeable errors in grammar• displays noticeable errors in word choice• displays limited English proficiency
0	The student gives no response, gives a response that cannot be understood as English, or does not demonstrate an understanding of English.

SPEAKING RUBRIC — SP-2 for Grades 2-4 (Questions 4-5) and Grades 5-12

SCORE	CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE
3	<p>The student’s response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is completely and easily comprehensible • is coherent • is fluent • provides appropriate and specific details and/or examples • shows well-developed vocabulary resources (the student can usually find the right word) • may display grammatical mistakes (for example, in the use of articles or prepositions), but mistakes do not generally interfere with communication • may display errors of pronunciation and intonation, but these errors do not interfere with communication
2	<p>The student’s response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is comprehensible but may require effort on the part of the listener • develops in a somewhat coherent way • is somewhat fluent • provides some appropriate and specific details and/or examples • displays a basic but not wide or extensive vocabulary (the student sometimes cannot find the right word) • grammatical errors sometimes interfere with comprehension • may display errors in pronunciation and/or intonation that interfere with communication
1	<p>The student’s response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is somewhat comprehensible • presents limited ideas (the student has difficulty expressing a complete thought without prompting) • is spoken haltingly (the student usually produces no more than one or two words at a time) • provides few, if any, details or examples • shows a very limited range of vocabulary (the student often cannot find the right word) • shows little control of pronunciation, intonation, or stress
0	<p>The student gives no response, gives a response that cannot be understood as English, or does not demonstrate an understanding of English. (For example, the student may respond, “I don’t know.”)</p>

APPENDIX A

NYSESLAT OPERATIONAL TEST DESIGN

GRADE LEVEL	MODALITY	QUESTIONS	TYPE	SCORING
K-1	Speaking	5	open-ended	2-1-0 Scoring
K-1	Writing	8	open-ended	3 scales 2-1-0 Scoring
K-1	Reading	25	Multiple choice.	Multiple choice
K-1	Listening	24	Multiple choice	Multiple choice
2-4	Speaking	5	open-ended	1 scale for questions 1-3: 2-1-0; 1 scale for questions 4-5: 3-2-1-0
2-4	Writing	3	Open ended (Prewriting, Writing) and Constructed Response (Editing)	1 scale for prewriting 2-1-0; 1 scale for writing 4-3-2-1-0, and 1 scale for editing 3-2-1-0
2-4	Reading	25	Multiple choice	Multiple choice
2-4	Listening	24	Multiple choice	Multiple choice
5-6	Speaking	5	open-ended	3-2-1-0 scoring
5-6	Writing	3	Open ended (Prewriting, Writing) and Constructed Response (Editing)	1 scale for prewriting 3-2-1-0; 1 scale for writing 4-3-2-1-0, and 1 scale for editing 3-2-1-0
5-6	Reading	25	Multiple choice	Multiple choice
5-6	Listening	24	Multiple choice	Multiple choice

GRADE LEVEL	MODALITY	QUESTIONS	TYPE	SCORING
7-8	Speaking	5	open-ended	3-2-1-0 Scoring
7-8	Writing	3	Open ended (Prewriting, Writing) and Constructed Response (Editing)	1 scale for prewriting 3-2-1-0; 1 scale for writing 4-3-2-1-0, and 1 scale for editing 3-2-1-0
7-8	Reading	25	Multiple choice	Multiple choice
7-8	Listening	24	Multiple choice	Multiple choice
9-12	Speaking	5	open-ended	3-2-1-0 Scoring
9-12	Writing	3	Open ended (Prewriting, Writing) and Constructed Response (Editing)	1 scale for prewriting 3-2-1-0; 1 scale for writing 4-3-2-1-0, and 1 scale for editing 3-2-1-0
9-12	Reading	25	Multiple choice	Multiple choice
9-12	Listening	24	Multiple choice	Multiple choice

APPENDIX B

USING RUBRICS TO SCORE

1. The criteria in a rubric must be clearly described. The criteria consist of a fixed scale and a list of characteristics. A rubric acquires meaning in relation to student work.
2. The two most frequently used rubric types are
 - a) Holistic which considers a performance as a whole
 - b) Analytic which examines a performance by breaking it into component partsNYSESLAT will be scored with holistic rubrics.
3. Scores are determined by matching evidence from the response to the language of the rubric.
4. Rubric scoring is the introduction of objectivity into what might be a largely subjective process.
5. Training to score is not the time to critique the test questions, the rubric, or the scoring decisions. The purpose of the training is to learn to apply the scoring criteria, not to give opinions of how to alter the test or the criteria.
6. Use rubrics as an asset model rather than a deficit model. That is what's there, rather than what's missing.
7. As you read a response, think in the rubric language, not in percentile language.
8. Don't be fooled by context. A good response may appear great if read or heard after weak responses.
9. The highest point on a rubric scale does not measure a perfect response. Each point on a rubric scale measures a body of evidence, not a single response. Thus, responses at a certain rubric point, as a whole, show the characteristics described.
10. Be aware of what rubric language is used to indicate the differences between adjacent score points.
11. Responses can be high, middle or low in a score point (a high 4, a low 3, etc).
12. On the written tests, handwriting does not count.
13. Rubrics are powerful tools to improve performance and instruction.

