

Keeping you up to date!

Engaging English

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Integrated Strands and Non-Fiction

Middle School

The HAT direct writing scores given to teachers will not be sent to specialty centers (as the papers were scored on a new rubric). Instead, the student essays (without any type of score) will be sent to the specialty centers to be scored using the old rubric—thus improving students' scores on the center applications.

Also, because of the discrepancies in scores, your 8th grade teachers are allowed to use just the NWEA and SOL growth reports as their teacher evaluation measures this year. We are working hard on creating a concrete procedure for giving and scoring the HAT Direct Writing for next year.

High School

- All pre-assessments (oral and lesson) should be scored by December 7
- The intervention activities for the oral reading will be the one lesson on the blog plus any oral reading you do in class (any time you have kids read aloud a passage)
- Likewise, your intervention activities for the lesson will be any annotation activities you do in class
- We will administer a post-assessment during the second semester with a new passage (also on technology

The state specialist and I have said over and over again that anyone who has not changed their style to integrate the strands and incorporate non-fiction is setting students up to fail. So how do you change your style? It's simple. Let's use a unit on horror as an example.

You had students read "The Landlady," "Monkey's Paw," and "Pit and Pendulum." Great! You integrated the strands by having students (1)annotate texts for imagery by locating active verbs and adjectives, then annotate for foreshadowing by locating clue



words; (2)find words in context to define while identifying roots; and, (3) identify, pull out and compare sentence structures and styles of each author. Literature, Vocabulary, Common Roots, Grammar—All done! Now it's time for the non-fiction piece.

Easy! You just pull from the themes and elements of the fictional text. First, you have students read about taxidermy ("The Landlady"). Then you have students read about customs associated with superstitions

or the dead in different cultures ("Monkey's Paw"). Finally, you have students read an instruction manual on how to create a simple pendulum ("Pit and Pendulum").

Wrap it all up with a journal entry, essay or written project where students have to focus on how fiction and non-fiction work together. Yeah! You have successfully attacked both traditional and functional non-fiction, read great stories the students will love and done activities that students will not claim they never learned come next year.

Non-Fiction Sites to Investigate this Nine-Weeks

- ◆ <http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/>
- ◆ <http://newseum.org/digital-classroom/default.aspx>
- ◆ <http://nbclearn.com/portal/site/learn/resources>
- ◆ <http://www.pbs.org/teachers>
- ◆ <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/>
- ◆ <http://kellygallagher.org/>
- ◆ <http://nie.washingtonpost.com/curriculum-guides>

Engaging English

“Teachers must become facilitators in their classrooms because when students ask questions and find the answers for themselves, they get involved in their own learning.”

State SOL Updates: Instructional Reminders

- * Review Vertical Alignment (Pacing)
- * **Teach Nonfiction**
- * Pair Passages
- * **Teach Roots and Affixes**
- * Offer Students Choices (reading & writing)
- * **Teach Composing Online**
- * Punctuate the text
- * **Integrate All Strands**
- * Pull passages from content texts
- * Ask reading comprehension questions
- * Include vocabulary
- * Include short essay/constructed response questions
- * Approximately 40 prompts will be released —**Teaching only to the prompts is not good writing instruction.**
- * Use **TeacherDirect**—a tool designed for classroom teachers in order to provide a more direct line of communication.
- * Use the **Enhanced Scope and Sequence Sample Lesson Plans**.



State SOL Updates: Testing Must Knows

The new Reading and Writing tests will begin this spring.

- * Stand-alone items may appear as a block of items anywhere in the reading or writing assessments.
- * The technology-enhanced items will make up 15% of the new reading and writing tests.

Fill-in-the-blank (FIB) Items

For all fill-in-the-blank items, when a student enters any character into the response box, the item will show as answered on the Section Review screen. If a student enters an answer, and then completely erases that answer from the fill-in-the-blank box, the item will show as unanswered on the Section Review screen.

Hot Spot Items

When the number of correct responses is indicated in the directions or in the item itself, the item will show as answered on the Section Review screen only when the student selects that number of hot spots. For example, if the student is directed to select three answers, then the Section Review screen will show unanswered if the student selects one or two answers and will only show as answered once the student has selected three answers. If the number of correct responses is not indicated in the directions or in the question itself, then the item will show as answered on the Section Review screen once the student selects one answer. For example, if the student is required to “Select all correct answers,” the item will show as answered once the student selects one answer option. In this case, it is assumed that the student thought there was only one correct answer. This practice avoids providing information as to how many correct answers there are in the “select all” hot spot items.

Drag and Drop Items

Drag and drop items contain answer receptacles called “bays” and “draggers” that the student moves into the bays to answer the question. There are many types of drag and drop items, and each item is evaluated individually so that the student is given the most detailed information possible on the Section Review screen, without providing hints as to the correct answer. For items with a specified number of bays, the item will show as answered on the Section Review screen once the student uses that number of draggers. For example, if there are three bays and it is intended for a dragger to be placed into each bay, then the Section Review screen will show the item as answered once three draggers have been input by the student. Or, in another example, if the directions or question indicate that all draggers need to be used to answer the item, then the item will show as answered on the Section Review only when all draggers have been used. If the number of draggers necessary to answer the question is not indicated, such as an item that requires the use of a dragger to complete a model or pictograph, then the Section Review Screen will show the item as answered once the student places one dragger in a bay.

- * Emphasis words such as *most*, *main*, and *best* will not be italicized on any of the assessments.
- * The words NOT and EXCEPT will continue to be capitalized on all reading/writing tests except grade 3.
- * The grade 8 writing prompt is expository or persuasive.
- * The End-of-Course writing prompt is persuasive; the EOC writing rubric specifies persuasive writing traits.
- * Approved prompts will be released before the test; the grades 5, 8, and EOC Direct Writing will come from the list of released prompts.
- * Anchor papers will also be released. These papers are comprised of the SOL Writing Field test papers. Eventually they will be uploaded into Understanding Scoring.
- * A set of practice items including both TEI and multiple choice items for all reading and writing tests has been posted to the VDOE Web site. The sets of SOL practice items and their guides can be found at: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/practice_items/index.shtml
- * The Online Writing Practice Tool and guide is available on the [Online Writing Resource Web page](#).