The New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, or the NYSESLAT as we know it, demonstrates the efforts of the New York State Education Department to offer an English language assessment that is consistent with the Common Core and latest research in second language acquisition.

In this issue, the NYC RBE-RN team provides insights that administrators and teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs) can implement when preparing instruction for students. We address critical questions including: what are linguistic demands, language functions, language forms, Targets of Measurements (ToMs) and, how do I incorporate these elements into my teaching plans? The issue includes articles that offer an in-depth view of the NYSESLAT modalities, and classroom centered examples to provide teachers with clear guidance.

The NYS Education Department provides teachers detailed and user-friendly planning guides to help the field embed workable linguistic strategies into daily instruction. We trust that the articles in this newsletter will clarify questions you have about the modalities, as well as content, and objectives. Engageny.org offers resources and materials that may prove useful. This website provides copies of the Targets of Measurements (ToMs), Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) for all grade levels and modalities), NYSESLAT test samples and guidance on lesson planning.

The primary objective of the NYC Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBE-RN) at Fordham University Graduate School of Education and the Center for Educational Partnerships is to assist schools across all five boroughs in creating professional learning communities centered on the education of ELLs. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need additional support in your efforts to better serve the English Language Learners in your school.

Visit our website for more information on Regional Professional Development, training and classroom resources: www.fordham.edu/rbern
Dear Colleagues,

The spring often becomes a stressful time for both teachers and students preparing for the English Language Arts and Mathematics tests. Teachers of English Language Learners are also preparing their students for the NYSESLAT. As we know, the NYSESLAT’s goal is to accurately assess what English Learners can do at each level of proficiency.

The NYC RBE-RN staff has put considerable time and thought into dedicating this issue of our newsletter to providing valuable resource information, strategies and insights that teachers of English Language Learners can immediately implement, from an overview to exactly what the NYSESLAT measures, where resources can be found, and managing stress.

It is important to keep in mind that the test provides teachers with supports that can be used as a guide for differentiated instruction to better help their English Learners. We encourage you to use these resources as you prepare for this spring test.

As always, the NYC Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBE-RN) at Fordham University’s Graduate School of Education and the Center for Educational Partnerships are here to assist you.

Warm Regards,

Anita Vazquez Batisti, Ph.D
Associate Dean
Fordham University
Graduate School of Education

Do Not Overlook the Importance of the NYSESLAT!!

Dr. Anita Vazquez Batisti

SERVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS OVER A DECADE

We are, first and foremost, a group of scholars and practitioners who are committed to applying cutting-edge research. We are dedicated to applying that research in the service of K-12 students, teachers, administrators, and parents, as well as to education and government agencies to enable all children to achieve and succeed academically.

Under the direction of Anita Vazquez-Batisti, PhD, Associate Dean for Partnerships, we have grown rapidly, forging partnerships with the New York City Department of Education and the New York State Education Department. The center has a myriad of grant projects that serve of all New York city and the greater metropolitan area.
New York State has been in the forefront of program development for English Learners. Per federal requirements, the State must annually assess English learners. Accordingly, the State developed a high stakes and fair assessment for ELLs (NYSESLAT) that is aligned with the CCLS and that effectively measures student linguistic growth and progress as students move through the five levels of language proficiency.

**What does the NYSESLAT measure?**

The NYSESLAT was expressly developed to address the four modalities of listening, speaking, reading, writing that are foundational to language development, and to the advancement of competency, fluency and literacy in English. These four modalities are connected to discrete forms of language skills that one must develop to achieve fluency. They are linked to receptive and productive language. Receptive skills are those necessary to understanding when one listens and reads. An individual receives language and decodes the meaning in order to understand a message. Productive skills are linked to speaking and writing. Language that has been acquired is used to produce a message through speech or written text. Receptive and productive language develop in tandem with one another, although research has shown that receptive language arises sooner.

**Which are its unique characteristics?**

The NYSESLAT examination focuses on linguistic demands that one must master to develop competency in English. These linguistic demands include teaching to language form and function. Language form comprises its structure, as in types of sentences used (declarative, interrogatory, imperative, and exclamatory) and the method of sharing information (e.g., conversation, letter, briefing, speech, narrative, etc.). Language function represents its purpose, its use, and what language does. These include the following: communicating information, such as facts; reporting feelings or attitudes, or evoking these feelings in the reader/listener; using language to cause or prevent actions, such as in commands or requests.

The NYSESLAT’s goal is to accurately assess what an English learner can do at each level of proficiency: entering, emerging, transitioning, expanding and commanding. The test design is theme-based in all four modalities. The test provides teachers with important supports that provide a roadmap for the instruction of English learners. Teachers of English learners can utilize them to strengthen lesson planning.

**Why do I need the Targets of Measurements (ToMs)?**

The Targets of Measurements ToMs) are one of those supports unique to the NYSESLAT designed to provide teachers with explicit guidance for instructional planning. ToMs are aligned with the CCLS and to the language progressions. In short, the Targets of Measurement help the teacher identify the language targets measured by the NYSESLAT. There is a ToM for each modality (L, R, and S, W) and each grade band level. Each Target of Measurement provides a list of the various language forms and functions of language that the child will be required to master. ToMs are especially useful as an aid in writing language objectives. Please refer to the detailed Language Purpose and Language Functions on pages 4-6 when planning with the Targets of Measurements.

**How do I plan with the Performance Level Descriptors or PLDs?**

In addition to the ToMs, the NYSESLAT provides teachers with another instrument known as Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs). The NYSESLAT Performance Level Descriptions link the Targets of Measurement to what ELLs should be able to do at each performance level and for each task. Like the ToMs, the PLDs are written for each modality (L, S and R, W) and grade band. Each PLD provides information on the corresponding Target of Measurement and provides student “can do’s” correlated to each of the five levels of language proficiency. These documents offer teachers a comprehensive guide for the development of differentiated and scaffolded lesson plans that focus on language proficiency targets, and access to grade level subject matter.

**Where can I find samples and resources?**

Find copies of the ToMs, PLDs (all grade levels, all modalities), test samples and information on lesson planning on EngageNY.org. Also for more information and updates, please check the NY State Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBE-WL) web site at http://www.nysed.gov/program-offices/office-bilingual-education-and-world-languages-obel.

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# NYSESLAT PLANNING with ToMS: Language Purpose & Function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In Kindergarten, Children:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to identify / refer to:</td>
<td>Speak using grade-appropriate:</td>
<td>Read and recognize / distinguish:</td>
<td>Write:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a character or an individual</td>
<td>• phrases and words;</td>
<td>• the letters of the alphabet</td>
<td>• letters of the alphabet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the setting</td>
<td>• short/simple sentences;</td>
<td>• initial sounds in a three phoneme or CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) word</td>
<td>• high-frequency, grade-level words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• an event or an action</td>
<td>• question words (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how);</td>
<td>• final sounds in a three-phoneme or CVC word</td>
<td>• simple (s + v) sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a feeling</td>
<td>• frequently occurring nouns (including regular plural nouns) and verbs (including regular verbs); pronouns; and/or prepositions (e.g., to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with)</td>
<td>• the primary sound, or most frequent sound—including those particularly challenging for ELLs (e.g., “h”)</td>
<td><strong>Write and provide / describe:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a narrator</td>
<td></td>
<td>Read and can use context clues to:</td>
<td>• an individual, an event, a place, or an object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a main idea</td>
<td></td>
<td>• determine the meaning of new words</td>
<td>• a feeling or a reaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listen and can signal or describe:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Interpret visuals for meaning</td>
<td>one or more events (in order) an opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a key detail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>information on a topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a sequence of events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Write and produce:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a comparison or contrast of information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• a brief introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a cause or an effect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• a complete thought or idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listen and can provide:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Write and provide / describe:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a context clue to find meaning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• an individual, an event, a place, or an object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listen and determine the development of:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• a feeling or a reaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>relevant details for description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a character</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Write and produce / develop:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• details for a description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a sequence of events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• two or more events in order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Express their ideas by:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• an opinion about a topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• describing people, places, things, events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• a reason for an opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• naming a book and identifying details</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>facts or information about a topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• retelling a story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Continues on the next page</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **In Grades 1 and 2, Children:** | | | |
| Listen to identify/refer to: | Speak using grade-appropriate: | Read and identify or refer to: | Write: |
| • a character or an individual | • words, common articles and pronouns, simple and compound sentences; | • characters, setting, or place | • a brief introduction |
| • the setting or place | • question words and conjunctions, adjectives and prepositions | • an event, a subject/topic | • a complete thought or idea |
| • an event or an action | • frequently occurring nouns and verbs (including irregular nouns and reflexive verbs) | • compare and contrast, cause and effect | **Write and provide / describe:** |
| • a feeling or a narrator | • conjunctions such as and, but, or, so, because | Read and can provide: | • an individual, an event, a place, or an object |
| • a topic, or a main idea | | | • a feeling or a reaction |
| **Listen and can provide:** | | | relevant details for description |
| • key details | | | **Write and produce / develop:** |
| • a sequence of events | | | • details for a description |
| • a comparison or contrast of information | | | • two or more events in order |
| • a cause or an effect | | | • an opinion about a topic |
| • a reason given by an author | | | • a reason for an opinion |
| **Listen and determine the development of:** | | | facts or information about a topic |
| • a story or a topic, or character | | | **Continues on the next page** |
| • a sequence of events or actions | | | |
| • a comparison and contrast relationship, cause and effect, and/or comparisons between characters or ideas. | | | |

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### In Grades 3 and 4, Students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listen to identify / refer to:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Use grade-appropriate words and grammatical expressions to:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Read and identify or refer to:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Write and produce:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a character, an individual, a setting, or a place</td>
<td>contribute to a conversation, ask questions about relevant information</td>
<td>a character, an individual the setting, or place</td>
<td>an introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a point of view or feeling</td>
<td>describe characters, settings and situations, convey details, and/or retell a story in sequence</td>
<td>a point of view or a feeling</td>
<td>a complete thought or idea linking words to develop ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an event, action or steps in a process</td>
<td>frequently occurring nouns and verbs (including irregular nouns and reflexive verbs)</td>
<td>an event, action or steps in a process</td>
<td>relevant details for description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an idea, a concept or a topic</td>
<td>report on a topic with descriptive details</td>
<td>an idea, a concept or a topic</td>
<td>relevant details and facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a main idea, or a message</td>
<td>express an opinion or a claim and support it</td>
<td>a main idea, or a message</td>
<td>grade-level Tier 2 words to explain ideas or facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listen and can signal or describe:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Read and determine:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Read and signal and /or describe:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Write and provide/describe:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a key detail, the motivation of a character or an individual</td>
<td>the development of story, and/or a sequence of events</td>
<td>a key detail, the motivation of a character or an individual</td>
<td>an individual, an event, a place or an idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a sequence of events or a chronology, and a connection between characters or ideas</td>
<td>the relationship between problem and solution, or</td>
<td>a sequence of events or a chronology, and a connection between characters or ideas</td>
<td>relevant details for description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a cause and effect relationship, and/or the relationship between a problem-solution</td>
<td>a character or an individual</td>
<td>a cause and effect relationship, and/or the relationship between a problem-solution</td>
<td>relevant details and facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listen and determine:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Read and provide:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Read and can provide:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the development of story, and/or a sequence of events</td>
<td>the development of story, and/or a sequence of events</td>
<td>context clues or textual information to find meaning</td>
<td><strong>an individual, an event, a place or an idea</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the relationship between problem and solution, or</td>
<td>the relationship between problem and solution, or</td>
<td><strong>an event:</strong></td>
<td>relevant information or facts that support a topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how a character contributes to events</td>
<td>how a character contributes to events</td>
<td><strong>a character:</strong></td>
<td>reasons linked to an opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### In Grades 5 and 6, Students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listen to identify/refer to:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Use grade-appropriate words and grammatical expressions to:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Read to identify/refer to:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Write and produce:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a character, an individual the setting, or place</td>
<td>contribute to a conversation, ask questions about relevant information and/or to clarify it</td>
<td>a character, an individual the setting, or place</td>
<td>a clear introduction or logical orientation of ideas, with linking words or phrases to connect and develop ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a point of view of or a feeling</td>
<td>describe characters, settings and situations, convey details, and/or retell a story in sequence</td>
<td>a point of view or a feeling</td>
<td>Concluding words or phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an event, action or steps in a process</td>
<td>frequently occurring nouns and verbs (including irregular nouns and reflexive verbs)</td>
<td>an event, action or steps in a process</td>
<td>using grade-level Tier 2 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an idea, a concept or a topic</td>
<td>report on a topic with descriptive details</td>
<td>an idea, a concept or a topic</td>
<td>narrative elements (narrators, characters, settings, situations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listen and can provide:</strong></td>
<td>express an opinion or a claim and support it</td>
<td>a main idea, or a message</td>
<td>details about a description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a key detail, the motivation of a character or an individual</td>
<td><strong>Read to signal and /or describe:</strong></td>
<td>a cause and effect relationship, and/or the relationship between a problem-solution</td>
<td>Two or more events sequentially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a sequence of events or a chronology, and a connection between characters or ideas</td>
<td>a character or an individual</td>
<td>a character and events sequentially</td>
<td>a relevant information or facts that support a topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a cause and effect relationship, and/or the relationship between a problem-solution</td>
<td>a sequence of events or a chronology, and a connection between characters or ideas</td>
<td>a character or an individual</td>
<td>reasons linked to an opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listen and determine:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Read and determine and establish:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Read and can provide:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Write to establish/develop:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the development of story, and/or a sequence of events</td>
<td>the development of story, and/or a sequence of events</td>
<td>context clues or textual information to find meaning</td>
<td>narrative elements (narrators, settings, characters, events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the relationship between problem and solution, or</td>
<td>the relationship between problem and solution, or</td>
<td><strong>an event:</strong></td>
<td>descriptive details to create precise images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how a character contributes to events</td>
<td>significant connections between topics, characters, ideas, and relationships</td>
<td><strong>a character:</strong></td>
<td>transitions between sequential events and the conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Listening

**In Grades 7 and 8, Students:**

- to identify / refer to:
  - a character, an individual, a setting, or a topic
  - multiple points of view, feelings, evidence, and ideas
  - a literary device, or genre

**Listen and provide:**

- key details, opinions or results; a sequence of events or a chronology, and a connection between characters or ideas
- a cause and effect relationship, and/or the relation between a problem-solution, a conclusion

**Listen and determine:**

- the development of story, and/or a sequence of events
- the relationship between problem and solution, or
- the development of an argument, or the development of a message

- contributing to conversations
- asking questions about relevant information
- clarifying relevant information
- reflecting and paraphrasing

**Express what they think or feel by:**

- describing characters, settings, people, places, things, events
- conveying relevant details
- retelling a story in sequence
- providing additional details, examples, or facts
- report on a topic with descriptive details
- giving an opinion and provide a reason for it
- interpreting facts and evidence
- using transitions when presenting their points
- conveying reliability or information, or evidence presented

- a character, an individual, a setting, or a topic
- multiple points of view, feelings, evidence, and ideas
- a literary device, or genre

**Read and signal or describe:**

- key details, opinions or results; a sequence of events or a chronology, and a connection between characters or ideas
- a cause and effect relationship, and/or the relation between a problem-solution, a conclusion

**Read to provide:**

- context clues or textual information to find meaning
- language imagery to find meaning, or the impact of words in a text

**Read to determine and establish:**

- the development of story, and/or a sequence of events
- the relationship between problem and solution, or
- significant connections between topics, characters, ideas,

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### Speaking

**In Grades 7 and 8, Students:**

- what they think or feel by:
  - a character, an individual, a setting, or a topic
  - multiple points of view, feelings, evidence, and ideas
  - a literary device, or genre

**Listen and provide:**

- key details, opinions or results; a sequence of events or a chronology, and a connection between characters or ideas
- a cause and effect relationship, and/or the relation between a problem-solution, a conclusion

**Listen and determine:**

- the development of story, and/or a sequence of events
- the relationship between problem and solution, or
- the development of an argument, or the development of a message

**Express what they think or feel by:**

- describing characters, settings, people, places, things, events
- conveying relevant details
- retelling a story in sequence
- providing additional details, examples, or facts
- report on a topic with descriptive details
- giving an opinion and provide a reason for it
- interpreting facts and evidence
- using transitions when presenting their points
- conveying reliability or information, or evidence presented

**Write to establish/develop:**

- narrative elements (narrators, settings, characters, events)
- descriptive details to create precise images
- transitions between sequential events and the conclusion

**Write to produce/develop:**

- relevant information, facts, or examples about a topic
- supportive ideas from a text
- logical transitions between ideas; a logical sequences of information to close a topic or narrative

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### Writing

**In Grades 9—12 Students:**

- an aspect of an individual, an event, a place or an idea precisely with details
- using grade-level Tier 2 words

**Write and produce:**

- a clear introduction or logical orientation of ideas, with linking words or phrases to connect and develop ideas
- concluding words or phrases

**Write and provide/describe:**

- an individual, an event, a place or an idea precisely with details
- using grade-level Tier 2 words

**Write to establish/develop:**

- narrative elements (narrators, settings, characters, events)
- descriptive details to create precise images
- transitions between sequential events and the conclusion

**Write to produce/develop:**

- relevant information, facts, or examples about a topic
- supportive ideas from a text
- logical transitions between ideas; a logical sequences of information to close a topic or narrative

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Source: 2016 NYSESLAT—OBEWL, NYS Department of Education
Informing Our Instructional Journey
By Abby Baruch and Sara Martinez

Step by Step Navigation for Guided Practice
When one travels, plans a trip, or arranges a meeting, a road map is used. We travel from point A to point B to point C, and so on. Currently, most of us engage a GPS; hence, we are thinking of the ToMs as our navigator. The ToMs offer instructional guidance to teachers as they plan for ELLs who will be taking the NYSESLAT. Included on the chart are goals that are grade-level and that simultaneously target each language modality: listening, speaking, reading and writing. To complete the descriptions, these modalities are arranged as productive: speaking and writing, and receptive: listening and reading.

The ToMs also provide guidance about forms of language, for example: kinds of sentences, conversation, letters, and discourse. At the same time, ToMs convey information about language function: purpose, communicating information, reporting feelings and attitudes, using language to drive actions; commands or requests, comparing and contrasting, etc. We must remember that the root of our language teaching is supported automatically by the content or the foundation on which all lessons are anchored. Each ToM includes a general claim or claims, an anchor description of what the child can do at that grade level, a target of measure for each claim and anchor, the language purpose or function that students should meet and the ELA construct: “I can….” With all this information ask, “What am I missing to develop a differentiated lesson to meet the needs of the ELLs in my class?”

The final construct of this trip planner is discoverable with the use of the Performance Level Descriptors, otherwise known as PLDs. Think of our travel or ticketing agent as Mr. ToM and the passport as the PLD. Without both our voyage will not be successful. Performance Level Descriptors are the critical lens the teacher uses as he or she determines the most essential strategies for the student in order to leverage that student’s achievement in planning. Depending on the student’s language level a lesson can include different types of scaffolding. Once a task is selected that task will provide differentiation for instruction at specific levels. The PLDs are aligned to the Common Core and integrate the skills that the student “can do”. These PLDs are designated here by a chart that follows the grade bands in the same way they are arranged on the NYSESLAT: K, 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6, 7 and 8, and 9 to 12. The Performance Level Descriptors describe what a student can do at each level of language proficiency and anchors instruction to the destination – the ocean liner NYSESLAT success. Have a successful journey!
At this time of year, teachers may be asking themselves, “Will my students be able to demonstrate all they have learned on this year’s standardized tests?” Furthermore, teachers of ELLs begin to feel a significant level of stress because, in addition to a school-wide emphasis on preparing students for English Language Arts and Math tests, they must also prepare ELLs for the NYSESLAT, an assessment that measures the level of English language proficiency. No doubt, the students, particularly English language learners, are also being affected by this level of anxiety. How can teachers ensure that stress does not derail the progress their students have already made?

In this article, we present a scenario of a teacher who is thinking aloud his process for planning and designing instruction with the NYSESLAT in mind. The driving question is, “How do I improve ELL’s writing along with preparing them to successfully perform on the writing section of the NYSESLAT?”

Mr. Morgan is a fifth grade classroom teacher. In his class of 30 students, there are six ELLs at the transitioning level. He wants to prepare his students to show improved outcomes. First, he examines the NYSESLAT test sampler to understand what is expected of the students on the writing portion of the NYSESLAT and highlights what the prompts are and how the tasks are framed for the ELLs. Looking at the short constructed response, students are expected to listen to a non-fiction passage read aloud to them. They are provided with a prompt which reads: “Write one paragraph to tell about an invention and how it helps people. Use information from the passage and your own ideas to support your answer.” Students are also provided with a checklist to guide their work. Students need to be able to read the checklist and understand the commands.

Next, Mr. Morgan makes a note of the linguistic demands of the passage that will be read aloud to students, as well as the types of support that are provided (pictures, illustrations, word boxes, glossaries). To further understand what the test item is measuring, he refers to the NYSESLAT ToMs for writing. Following his analysis of the test items, Mr. Morgan focuses on analyzing the student writing samples, as well as reviewing the writing performance descriptors aligned to the ToMs at the transitioning level to confirm that indeed students are at the transitioning level. Keeping in mind what his students can do, Mr. Morgan looks at the expanding performance descriptors and plans lessons, targeting those writing skills that will enable transitioning students to move to the expanding level. (See insert from Nancy Cloud’s NYC RBE-RN Regional PD, Session on December 15, 2016).

Below is a recommended writing cycle for teachers to be able to support ELL students with the writing section of the NYSESLAT. There are four stages:

- **Building the Field or Building Background Knowledge** gives the children time to gather information about what they will be writing. Activities include listening to read-alouds, taking field trips, viewing video clips, providing speaking opportunities to process information they have gathered, reading books at their independent level, and note taking. This stage ties in perfectly with thematic Units of Inquiry. The students are already familiar with the unit, the concepts, and the vocabulary.

- **Modeling the Text Type** makes the students familiar with the purpose, overall structure, and linguistic features of the text type they are going to write. Begin by using an exemplar that you will cut apart by separating paragraphs. Model and think aloud your noticing about the structure and language features of the text. (Keep in mind, that for the NYSESLAT students will be expected to write a one or two paragraph descriptive essay.)

- **Joint Construction** of an essay provides both the teacher and students an opportunity to write a text together, considering both the content and the language of the topic. Keep in mind that the NYSESLAT requires students to use information from the passage and their own ideas to support their answer. Be purposeful about using the same wording of the writing prompt as used on the NYSESLAT. Afterwards, provide students with many guided practice opportunities.
• **Independent Writing** requires that students write on their own. To support this process Mr. Morgan provides students with the exact directions, prompts and checklist that students will encounter on the NYSESLAT.

Finally, he designs assessments that mimic the prompts and tasks of the NYSESLAT. He will use these and the NYSESLAT short constructed response writing rubric to gauge students’ performance level on writing tasks throughout the year.

This alternative way of thinking and planning takes the place of teaching to the test, and reduces the level of stress. Therefore, become familiar with the text structure and prompts of the NYSESLAT to provide similar experiences for students within the CCLS curriculum, making isolated test prep unnecessary.

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**Engaging Young Bilingual Learners in Listening Activities**

By Deirdre Danaher

Listening is the gateway to understanding and speaking in any language. Young bilingual learners learn primarily by listening to language in use around them (New or Home), while using context to figure out what the spoken words mean (Education Alliance, Brown University, 2017). When looking at the NYS Bilingual Common Core Progressions (BCCI), in both the Home Language and the New Language, speaking and listening can be paired together. Speaking and listening lay the foundation for young bilingual learners to develop their listening engagement, and more importantly, build their listening stamina in the New Language (English).

When planning listening activities aligned to the NYSESLAT keep in mind what young bilingual learners will be expected to do. The BCCI provides appropriate academic and linguistic demands for each specific standard, and the NYSESLAT assesses the progress that students make acquiring English based on these standards. Speaking and Listening Anchor Standards should be used in integrating lessons.

**Speaking and Listening Anchor Standard 1:** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on other’s ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. This requires active participation in using academic language as students engage in conversations related to a topic, and listening to others speak.

**Acknowledging others’ ideas:** “My idea is like Maria’s in that….”; “My idea is the same as Maria’s because she…”

**Citing other people’s ideas:** “John said that…”; “Carlos told me that when…”

**Main Academic Demand:** Prepare and participate in conversations, expressing their point of view clearly and persuasively. The linguistic demands in the New Language Progressions for Anchor Standard 1 (grades K-2) encourage students to listen for and use words and phrases in conversations, responding to and asking questions, and using words and phrases to express an opinion or point of view.

**Using question forms to elicit exchanges after introducing or reading about a topic:** “Do you agree or disagree?: “I don’t agree with you on that because…”; “I got another answer….”; “I see it another way…”

In addressing the Speaking and Listening Standards so, too, does the ToMs whereby students are asked to listen for story features such as character, setting, feelings, main idea, or sequence of events (see page 4). The ToMs and the linguistic demands spiral, building upon and increasing listening skills that develop into speaking opportunities when learning new vocabulary, words or phrases. The Grade Level Academic Demands should be used.

**Grade Level Academic Demands (GLAD)** This Anchor Standard asks students to participate in classroom conversations, following the rules of taking turns and engaging with other partners. All three overlap measurably with each other in the development of listening and speaking skills for young bilingual learners.

**Example: Rhythm and Music** will allow students to listen and move to beats in gross motor activities; hand tapping on one’s legs doubles as a kinesthetic listening to varied beats. Have the students sing with you and leave out some of the words and then let them complete the song. For example: An activity such as making butter will allow all students to listen and participate using simple chants as they make butter: “We’re making butter, we’re making butter, we’re making butter out of milk and cream.” Substitutions can also be added, ‘we’re’ for he’s making butter, she’s making butter, X’s making butter.

Young children who are learning English are generally visual and kinesthetic learners who learn best when a hands-on product is involved (Nemeth, K., 2014).
Highlights on the NYC RBE-RN Regional Professional Development
Alejandro Caycedo

Lissette Colón-Collins, Associate Commissioner, Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL), NY State Education Department addressing the audience at one of the many Teacher Institutes at Fordham University.

Eva Garcia, Executive Director of the NYC RBE-RN—Fordham University, introduces Dr. Nancy Cloud who presented “Pairing Fiction and Non-fiction Texts to promote Language and Literacy while Teaching Science to ELLs in Grades 1-8” on December 15, 2016.

Professional Development for Teachers of Foreign Language. A Collaboration between the NYC RBE-RN at the DELLs Office of the New York City Department of Education. The session was facilitated by Aileen Colón and Dr. Roser Salavert, on December 16, 2016.

Dr. Linda Espinoza led a full-day session that focused on the young English Language Learner. The session, “Unleashing the Potential of Young Bilingual Learners: Using Science to Promote Both Language and Academic Achievement” took place on December 19, 2016.

Teachers listen attentively to Sonia Soltero, the consultant and author who facilitated the session, “Dual Language Programs: Research, Scaffolds and Best Practices in Spanish”, on February 17, 2017.
# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**NOTE:** NYS/NYC RBERN at Fordham University is recognized by NYS Education Department’s Office of Teaching Initiatives as an approved sponsor of CTLE for Professional Classroom Teacher, School Leaders and Level III Teaching Assistants.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SESSION</th>
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| **Co-Teaching & Collaboration**  
*Problem-Solving in the Co-Teaching ENL Classroom*  
Deirdre Danaher, NYC RBE-RN @ Fordham | March 2, 2017 (8:30 am – 3:00 pm)  
Bilingual Special Education Teachers  
Fordham University—Lincoln Center Campus |
| **NYSABE Parent Advocacy Committee Sessions**  
Eva Garcia, Director NYC RBE-RN @ Fordham  
Carlos Sanchez, LHV RBE—RN | March 2 and 3, 2017 (Full–day sessions)  
Parents of English Language Learners  
| **Oral Language Development**  
*Fostering Oral Language Fluency in the Early Grades*  
Sara Martinez & Aileen Colon, NYC RBE-RN @ Fordham | March 2, 2017 (Break–out session)  
K-2 Bilingual and ENL Teachers and Parents of ELLs  
| **RTI Intervention for ELLs**  
*Establishing Effective RTI Instruction for ELLs*  
Roser Salavert, Ed.D., NYC RBE–RN @ Fordham | March 4, 2017 (Morning Session)  
Assistant Principals and School Administrators  
62nd MSAP Leadership Conference – Brooklyn Marriott |
| **Long Term ELL Institute**  
*Catching and Stopping Long-Term ELLs*  
Dr. Nancy Cloud, Consultant | March 10, 2017 (8:30 – 3:00 pm)  
ENL and Content Area Teachers of ELLs, grades 3-9  
Fordham University—Lincoln Center Campus |
| **Oral Language Development**  
*Inclusive Teaching Strategies for Diverse Learners, K–2*  
Sara Martinez & Deirdre Danaher, NYC RBE-RN @ Fordham | March 11, 2017 (am & pm Sessions)  
Bilingual Educators of Early Grades  
UFT Headquarters at 52 Broadway |
| **Supporting Teachers of ELLs**  
*Tackling Complex Text for ENL Students*  
Liz Locatelli, LCI Consultant | March 14, 2017 (Grades 9–12)  
March 22, 2017 (Grades 3–8)  
ENL and Content Teachers  
Fordham University—Lincoln Center Campus |
| **French Heritage Language**  
*The Road to Graduating with the NYS Seal of Biliteracy*  
Roser Salavert, Ed.D., NYC RBE–RN @ Fordham | March 21, 2017 (Evening Session)  
Alumni and Parents  
‘Oui Work’ Festival—French Embassy, NYC |
| **Literacy Institute**  
*Going Deeper with Academic Discourse: The Power of Conversational Skills to Support Language*  
Keynote: Dr. Ivannia Soto, Consultant | March 23, 2017 (8:30 am – 3:00 pm)  
Bilingual, ENL and Content Area Teachers of ELLs  
Fordham University—Lincoln Center Campus |
| **Home Language Development**  
*Unpacking Home Language Arts Progressions for Home Language Instruction*  
Sara Martinez & Elsie Cardona, NYC RBE–RN @ Fordham  
with Bronx Office Field Support Center, NYC DOE | March 24, 2017  
Grades K–2, 8:30—11:30 Session  
Grades 3–5, 12:30—3:30 Session  
Bilingual and Dual Language Teachers  
1230 Zerega Avenue, Bronx |

For information & registration:  
Please contact Sarai Salazar at 718-817-0606; email: nycrbern@fordham.edu  
For resources and copies of institute presentations: go to: www.fordham.edu/rbern