



Early Adolescence

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Assessment at a Glance

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*National Board Certification
Promotes Better Teaching,
Better Learning, Better Schools*

Choosing the Right Certificate

The National Board Certification® process offers experienced teachers the professional development opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and practices against high and rigorous standards. Candidates pursue certification by completing two major assessment components: a portfolio of classroom teaching practice and an assessment of content knowledge administered at a computer-based testing center.

The Early Adolescence/English Language Arts certificate is appropriate for teachers who teach students ages 11–15 and who know the full range of the school language arts curriculum, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Read this document to learn the content and pedagogical knowledge you will be required to demonstrate for this certificate area and to measure your readiness to pursue National Board Certification.

Below is a set of questions to ask yourself about your teaching practice. If you answer “yes” to these questions, you are ready to apply. For eligibility requirements and application instructions, read the *Guide to National Board Certification* on the NBPTS Web site (www.nbpts.org).

If you answer “no” to one or more of these questions, you may need to discuss your teaching situation with professional colleagues, your school faculty, a National Board Certified Teacher®, your faculty support group, or a local-level administrator who is directing a National Board program.

For the portfolio, will you be able to:

- demonstrate that your teaching practice meets the Early Adolescence/English Language Arts Standards?
- have access to a class of at least 6 students, in which 51% of the students are ages 11–15 during the 12 months prior to the submission of your portfolio entries?
- submit student work samples and video recordings in English showing your interactions with your students?
- demonstrate how you help students grow as readers and writers?
- show the teaching strategies you use for whole-class discussion?
- show the teaching strategies you use for small-group instruction?
- present evidence of how you impact student learning through your work with students' families and community and through your development as a learner and as a leader/collaborator?

For the assessment center, will you be able to demonstrate content knowledge in:

- literary analysis?
- universal themes?
- teaching reading?
- language study?
- analysis of writing?
- teaching writing?

Reviewing the Standards

The requirements for National Board Certification in the field of Early Adolescence/English Language Arts (EA/ELA) are organized into the following Standards. The ordering of the Standards is designed to facilitate understanding, not to assign priorities.

Preparing the Way for Productive Student Learning

I. Knowledge of Students

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers systematically acquire specific knowledge of their students as individuals and use that knowledge to help develop students' literacy.

II. Knowledge of the Field

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers know the field of English language arts and how to teach it to their students.

III. Engagement

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers engage students in language arts learning and elicit a concerted academic effort from each of their students.

IV. Learning Environment

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers create a caring and challenging environment in which all students actively learn.

V. Equity, Fairness, and Diversity

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers are committed to the celebration of diversity, practice equity and fairness, and use a variety of texts to promote opportunities to learn acceptance and appreciation of others.

VI. Instructional Resources

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers select, adapt, and use instructional resources to develop student literacy and further curriculum goals.

VII. Instructional Decision Making

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers set attainable and worthwhile learning goals for students and develop meaningful learning opportunities, while extending to students an increasing measure of control over setting goals and choosing how those goals are pursued.

Advancing Student Learning in the Classroom

VIII. Reading

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers promote reading development by ensuring that their students read a wide variety of texts and develop strategies for comprehending, interpreting, evaluating, and appreciating those texts.

IX. Writing

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers provide instruction in the skills, processes, and knowledge needed for writing to ensure that their students write effectively across many genres and for a variety of purposes and audiences.

X. Listening, Speaking, and Viewing

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers develop students' skills in listening, speaking, and viewing in many ways and for many purposes.

XI. Language Study

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers teach students to gain proficiency in language use and strengthen student sensitivity to appropriate uses of language.

XII. Integrated Instruction

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers integrate learning and learning activities within the English language arts classroom and across the disciplines.

XIII. Assessment

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers use a range of formal and informal assessment methods to monitor and evaluate student progress, encourage student self-assessment, plan instruction, and report to various audiences.

Supporting Student Learning through Long-Range Initiatives

XIV. Self-Reflection

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers constantly analyze and strengthen the effectiveness and quality of their teaching.

XV. Professional Community

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers contribute to the improvement of instructional programs, advancement of knowledge, and practice of colleagues.

XVI. Family Outreach

Accomplished Early Adolescence/English Language Arts teachers work with families to serve the best interests of their children.

Read the Standards on the NBPTS Web site to ensure that you will be able to demonstrate your accomplishments and confidently satisfy the defined expectations for National Board Certification.

Demonstrating Your Teaching Practice and Content Knowledge

This section describes the portfolio entries and assessment center exercises for the EA/ELA certificate area.

Portfolio Entries

You will be required to submit four portfolio entries. One entry is based on student work samples, and two entries feature video recordings of student–teacher interactions in the classroom. The fourth entry relates to your accomplishments outside of the classroom—with families, the community, or colleagues—and how they impact student learning.

Following is a description of each portfolio entry.

**Entry 1:
Analysis of Student
Growth in Reading
and Writing**

In this entry, you select four student work samples from two students. Two samples are responses to print and nonprint text, and two samples are responses to writing prompts. Your analysis of the submitted student responses should show how you support and analyze students' growth and development as readers/interpreters of text and as writers. Besides the student work samples and Written Commentary, you provide the assignments/prompts as well as the rubrics or scoring criteria you used to evaluate the student work.

**Entry 2:
Instructional
Analysis: Whole-
Class Discussion**

In this entry, you submit a 15-minute video recording to demonstrate teaching strategies that you use for whole-class discussion in which the students engage with you and with each other in meaningful discourse about a topic, concept, or text related to English language arts. You provide evidence of your ability to integrate English language arts strands and to describe, analyze, and reflect on your work. You also provide a Written Commentary analyzing the video recording, and instructional materials.

**Entry 3:
Instructional
Analysis: Small
Groups**

In this entry, you submit a 15-minute video recording to demonstrate the teaching strategies that you use for small-group discussion in which the students engage with you and with each other in meaningful discourse about a topic, concept, or text related to English language arts. You provide evidence of your ability to integrate English language arts strands and to describe, analyze, and reflect on your work. You also provide a Written Commentary analyzing the video recording, and instructional materials. **Entry 3 is the preselected *Take One!* portfolio entry.**

**Entry 4:
Documented
Accomplishments:
Contributions to
Student Learning**

In this entry, you illustrate your partnerships with students' families and community, and your development as a learner and collaborator with other professionals by submitting descriptions and documentation of your activities and accomplishments in those areas. Your description must make the connection between each accomplishment and its impact on student learning.

Read the *Portfolio Instructions* on the NBPTS Web site to learn more about the requirements for preparing, developing, and submitting the portfolio component of your assessment.

Assessment Center Exercises

This assessment is composed of six exercises that examine content knowledge specified in the NBPTS Standards. You are given up to 30 minutes to respond to each exercise.

Following is a description of each assessment center exercise.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Exercise 1:
Literary Analysis | In this exercise, you analyze the connection between literary devices and meaning. You are asked to read a poem, discuss theme and effect, and use details from the poem to show how identified literary devices affect the text. |
| Exercise 2:
Universal Themes | In this exercise, you demonstrate the ability to analyze and understand text. You are asked to read a prose selection, determine the theme, and relate it to the human condition. You also select a nonprint text and connect it to both the passage and the theme. |
| Exercise 3:
Teaching Reading | In this exercise, you show your knowledge of the reading process and ability to analyze student reading. You are asked to read a passage, a student prompt, and a student response, and to determine the reasons for misconceptions in the reading. You also provide strategies to correct the misconceptions. |
| Exercise 4:
Language Study | In this exercise, you demonstrate an understanding of language study and ability to determine patterns in a student's language development. You are asked to read a second language learner's oral and written response to a prompt, analyze patterns, and provide strategies to further develop that student's language. |
| Exercise 5:
Analysis of Writing | In this exercise, you demonstrate an understanding of audience and purpose in writing and an ability to analyze techniques authors employ to make a passage effective. You are asked to read a nonfiction passage, discuss audience and purpose, and analyze techniques that make the piece effective for the audience and purpose. |
| Exercise 6:
Teaching Writing | In this exercise, you show an understanding of the writing process. You are asked to read a student response, identify and discuss weaknesses, and provide strategies for correction. |

Read *Assessment Center Policy and Guidelines* on the NBPTS Web site for more information about the assessment center component of the certification process. To locate an assessment center, visit the NBPTS computer-based testing Web site (www.pearsonvue.com/nbpts/).

Selected Assessment Center Exercises

The following sections contain selected exercises administered in a previous assessment cycle. These exercises present information that candidates saw on screen at the assessment center and include instructions for using the computer, stimulus materials (if applicable), and prompts requiring responses. These exercises have been included to help you become familiar with the structure of assessment center exercises and to help you understand the scoring rubrics. The exercise prompts in this section **do not** represent actual prompts candidates will see at assessment centers in the future.

Please note that assessment center exercises cover the **entire** age range of the certificate. Be aware that you are expected to demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate content across the full range of your certificate.

Sample Exercise 4: Language Study

Exercise 4: Language Study - Candidate Name

🕒 Time Remaining 29:31

Introduction

In this exercise, you will use your knowledge of English language arts to build a profile of a student as a second-language learner and to plan ways to facilitate this student's language development. You will be asked to respond to two prompts.

Criteria for Scoring

To satisfy the highest level of the scoring rubric, your response must provide clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of the following:

- an in-depth analysis of discourse; and
- a thorough description of teaching strategies used to facilitate the acquisition of English by second-language learners.

Directions

You may preview all of the prompts by clicking the "Next" button. The "Previous" button will enable you to return to any of the prompts in order to compose or revise your response in the space provided.

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Stimulus

Carefully read the following scenario, prompt, and student responses. Your seventh-grade class was asked to respond to the topic, "A Special Adventure." Both the transcript of the oral discourse and the written response are from the same seventh-grade student for whom English is a second language. Please refer to the student's responses when answering the questions. Do not assess the student's reading comprehension.

The Student's Oral Transcript

One time . . . (3-second pause) my special adventure is . . . (2-second pause) my family we come to America. Umh . . . I was very scared. I think I can not never . . . live (4-second pause) in this place. My father . . . (2-second pause) he tell me not never to be scared . . . (3-second pause) he help me. It very . . . (3-second pause) different here . . . but I like it now . . . (3-second pause). I do good here and I have friend.

The Student's Written Response (unedited first draft)

My special adventure is my family come to America. I did not want to leve my friends at home. I like to be with them and I did not want to go to new place. My brother he tell me I like new place. I am scared to go. We move here and I did not like it. Bit I mak fren and I am happy now here.

Retired Prompt 1

What is one significant feature of the student's oral discourse? What is one significant feature of the student's written discourse? What do these features tell you about the student's second-language development?

Retired Prompt 2

What are two instructional strategies that you would use to address the significant features of this student's second-language development? Provide a rationale for each strategy.

Sample Exercise 6: Teaching Writing

Exercise 6: Teaching Writing - Candidate Name

🕒 Time Remaining 29:31

Introduction

In this exercise, you will use your knowledge of English language arts to analyze student writing and discuss strategies to improve writing skills. You will be asked to respond to three prompts.

Criteria for Scoring

To satisfy the highest level of the scoring rubric, your response must provide clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of the following:

- an in-depth description of patterns of writing and written conventions; and
- a thorough understanding of the recursive nature of the writing process.

Directions

You may preview all of the prompts by clicking the "Next" button. The "Previous" button will enable you to return to any of the prompts in order to compose or revise your response in the space provided.

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Stimulus

Carefully read the following scenario, student prompt, and student response. A seventh-grade class was asked to write an essay on heroes.

Student Prompt

Define what it means to be a hero. Based on your definition, decide if Odysseus is a hero. Use specific examples from "The Odyssey" to support your opinion.

What follows is an actual student response to the prompt. It is a final draft.

When Odysseus started out in the book. He never wanted to help Menelaus to get his wife back. When Odysseus pledged to take care of Helen. Whatever happened to her. He had to think about it before he left.

- 5 What makes a good hero it is someone muscular, dauntless, and powerful. A hero will put himself or herself in peril to save others. I think a hero needs to have all of these characteristics. A true hero will stop to help other people. Odysseus is not a true hero he thinks about saving himself first then he thinks about others. When he and his men
- 10 got out of the cave. He had to go back. And talk to the Cyclops. He put his men in danger. When the Cyclops threw something big at the boat. A hero will not put other people in danger. Just to get a little revenge. I think Odysseus is not a good hero.

Retired Prompt 1

Identify two significant areas of weakness in the conventions.

Retired Prompt 2

Identify and analyze one significant weakness in organization or content. Provide support from the student's response.

Retired Prompt 3

When this student writes a similar piece, what are two strategies you would use to address the weakness identified in organization or content? At what stage in the writing process would you apply each strategy? Provide a rationale for each of your choices.

Understanding the National Board Scoring Process

All portfolio entries and assessment center exercises are scored by teachers practicing in the same content area as the assessment they are scoring. The National Board's carefully trained assessors use scoring rubrics to evaluate candidate responses. The rubrics clearly articulate the criteria that are to be applied in the evaluation of your responses. These criteria reflect the Standards that the entry is designed to measure.

Assessors use a four-level rubric to score each candidate's response as shown below.

Rubric Level	Score Range	Quality of Evidence
Level 4	3.75–4.25	Clear, consistent, and convincing
Level 3	2.75–3.74	Clear
Level 2	1.75–2.74	Limited
Level 1	0.75–1.74	Little or no

The Level 4 and Level 3 score ranges represent accomplished teaching practice. You do not have to receive Level 4 or Level 3 scores for every entry and exercise. A high score on one may compensate for a lower score elsewhere. Read the *Scoring Guide for Candidates* on the NBPTS Web site for your assessment.

Your Total Weighted Scaled Score

When your portfolio entries and assessment center exercises are completed and scored, your Total Weighted Scaled Score is computed. This is done by applying a set of weights to each of your entry and exercise scores.

For the EA/ELA certificate, these are the weights:

- 16% for each of the three classroom-based portfolio entries
- 12% for the Documented Accomplishments portfolio entry
- 6.67% for each of the six assessment center exercises

Your weighted scaled score for each entry or exercise is calculated by multiplying the raw score by the appropriate weight, shown above. Your Total Weighted Scaled Score is the sum of the weighted scaled scores for all entries and exercises plus a 12-point uniform constant. For example, if your weighted scaled score is 263, you would receive a 12-point uniform constant score, and your Total Weighted Scaled Score would be 275. This number is then compared to 275, the performance standard established by the NBPTS Board of Directors.

A candidate whose Total Weighted Scaled Score is 275 or greater is recognized as an accomplished teacher and is awarded National Board Certification. A candidate whose Total Weighted Scaled Score does not meet 275 is not yet certified and for the following two years has the opportunity to retake certain portfolio entries or assessment center exercises in order to meet the performance standard of 275.

Things to Keep in Mind

The National Board Standards for the EA/ELA certificate area are addressed within the portfolio and assessment center process. Therefore, you should keep the following in mind:

- Although the portfolio entries address many of the Standards, they may not address all of them. Standards the portfolio does not address may be included in the assessment center portion of the certification process.
- Each entry is scored independently of the others. When an entry asks for background or contextual information, be complete, since an assessor for one entry will not see your other entries.
- At each of the four levels of the scoring rubric, the same Standards-related criteria are applied. However, each level of the scoring rubric represents a difference in the quality of evidence demonstrated by the entry or exercise. For example, if “Knowledge of Students” is a Standard measured by an entry, the Level 4 rubric will refer to “clear, consistent, and convincing” evidence of that Standard while the Level 2 rubric will refer to “limited” evidence of the same Standard.
- One of the fundamental principles underlying the evaluation is that responses are scored only on what candidates are specifically asked to do. For example, if the directions specifically ask you to demonstrate how to use assessment in the featured instructional sequence, evidence supporting your use of assessment will be evaluated based on the scoring rubric. Conversely, if an entry does not require you to demonstrate how to use assessment, it will not be evaluated.

Beginning Your Journey toward National Board Certification

The first step on this journey is to make a commitment, but what does this commitment involve? First-time candidates apply and complete their assessments in an initial candidacy period as shown in the timeline below. For candidates who are not successful in their first try, there is a 24-month window, following the receipt of scores, in which to retake assessments and/or resubmit portfolio entries in order to achieve certification.

You may wish to start with the *Take One!* program that requires submission of a single portfolio entry for scoring. The preselected portfolio entry required for *Take One!* is identified as part of the portfolio entry descriptions on page 4. You can choose to transfer your *Take One!* score to National Board Certification within three years of completing the *Take One!* process. Read *Becoming a Take One! Participant* on the NBPTS Web site to learn more about the requirements.

If you choose to pursue National Board Certification, there is also a financial commitment for which support is available. Visit the NBPTS Web site to learn about federal, state, and/or local funds available to support National Board Certification and *Take One!* fees. Be sure to check with your local, district, or state educational officials for incentives (such as salary increases and bonuses) that may be offered for achieving National Board Certification.

The following timeline provides a snapshot of your schedule of commitments. Read the *Guide to National Board Certification* on the NBPTS Web site for complete information.

Certification Planner

Step	To Do	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
1	Send forms and fees to NBPTS:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> application nonrefundable initial fee (\$500) all eligibility forms balance of full fee (totaling \$2,500) 	Jan. 1 — Dec. 31			
2	Develop portfolio entries and submit them to NBPTS:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive portfolio box after submitting initial fees. Submit all four portfolio entries at once after submitting all fees and eligibility forms. 	Jan. 1 — Mar. 31			
3	Schedule your assessment center exercises:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> after submitting all fees and eligibility forms at least 30 days before the test date 		Jan. 1 — Jun. 15		
4	Obtain your scores online:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access <i>My Profile</i> to learn about your scores and certification status. 		Dec. 31	Dec. 31	Dec. 31
5	Continue the journey:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you did not achieve certification, decide whether to retake assessment center exercises and/or portfolio entries. Submit retake application and fees. 			Jan. 31	Jan. 31
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retake selected assessment center exercises. 			Jan. 1 — Jun. 15	Jan. 1 — Jun. 15
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit selected portfolio entries. 			Jan. 1 — Apr. 15	Jan. 1 — Apr. 15

Having made the commitment, many teachers who pursue National Board Certification become role models and leaders in their schools and districts, earning a greater voice in what happens and having a very positive effect on their students' experiences. On your journey, you will benefit directly from your candidacy, taking part in what many have described as the best professional development experience of their lives.

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