



## Early and Middle Childhood

# LITERACY: READING–LANGUAGE ARTS

## Assessment at a Glance

- **Choosing the Right Certificate**
- **Reviewing the Standards**
- **Demonstrating Your Teaching Practice and Content Knowledge**
- **Understanding the National Board Scoring Process**
- **Beginning Your Journey toward National Board Certification**

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

## Choosing the Right Certificate

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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 and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts certificate is appropriate for teachers who teach students ages 3–12 and who know the range of the Literacy: Reading–Language Arts curriculum: reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing. Some Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers are assigned to teach a single student at a time while others are assigned small groups or whole classes of students. Some focus their teaching on a prescribed approach to teaching literacy while others may teach a broader, more open curriculum. However, all Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers, without regard to their assignment, practice in a manner designed to advance student learning in Literacy: Reading–Language Arts. 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](http://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 and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts Standards?
- have access to a class of at least 1 student, in which the student(s) are ages 3–12 during the 12 months prior to the submission of your portfolio entries?
- submit student work samples and video recordings in English and/or Spanish showing your interactions with your students?
- describe how you promote literacy development through writing and guide a student in constructing meaning through print, over an instructional period that ranges from three weeks to three months, by analyzing samples of a student's work?
- demonstrate how you use your knowledge of the reading process to support diverse learners in their growth as readers?
- present evidence of how you plan and facilitate interdisciplinary learning experiences using technology to foster effective speaking, listening, and viewing abilities for a specific purpose and audience?
- present evidence of how you impact student learning through your work outside of the classroom as you interact with students' families, your colleagues, and other professionals?

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

- reading comprehension?
- oral language acquisition skills for learners of English as a new language?
- emergent literacy?
- analyzing student reading?
- interpreting visual text?
- writing development?

## Reviewing the Standards

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The requirements for National Board Certification in the field of Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts (EMC/LRLA) are organized into the following Standards. The ordering of the Standards is designed to facilitate understanding, not to assign priorities.

### Preparing the Way for Student Learning

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#### **I. Knowledge of Students**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers draw on their knowledge of learning and child development theories and their relationships with students to acquire knowledge of their students as intellectual, social, emotional, cultural, and literate beings. Teachers use this information to inform teaching and learning practices.

#### **II. Knowledge of the Field of Literacy: Reading–Language Arts**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers know and understand current literature and theories about reading–language arts. They evaluate this knowledge and use it in their instructional practice.

#### **III. Equity, Fairness, and Diversity**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers practice equity and fairness; they seek and capitalize on diversity and diverse perspectives. They encourage all students to know, value, and respect themselves and others in the classroom, school, and larger community.

#### **IV. Learning Environment**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers establish with their students a caring, supportive, inclusive, challenging, democratic, and safe learning community in which individuals take intellectual, social, and emotional risks and work both independently and collaboratively.

#### **V. Instructional Resources**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers select, adapt, and create a rich and varied collection of instructional resources; regularly involve students in the process of creating and selecting such resources; and engage students, teachers, parents, and other adults from the community to enrich instruction.

#### **VI. Instructional Decision Making**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers set informed and purposeful goals for students, develop meaningful learning opportunities, and interact effectively with students while extending to them increasing responsibility for their own learning.

#### **VII. Assessment**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers use a range of formal and informal assessment strategies to shape instructional decisions, monitor student progress, encourage student self-assessment, and gather information to report to various audiences.

## Advancing Student Learning

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### **VIII. Integration**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers understand the reciprocal nature of the literacy processes of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing, and they provide developmentally appropriate learning activities that integrate among the language arts and across the curriculum.

### **IX. Reading**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers use their knowledge of reading processes, language development, texts, and ongoing assessment to advance literacy, develop strategic readers, promote an appreciation of reading as vital to lifelong learning, and create effective instruction so that readers can negotiate, inquire about, and construct meaning across the curriculum.

### **X. Writing**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers use their knowledge of writing processes, language development, writing development, and ongoing assessment to provide instruction in the components of writing, assist students in constructing meaning in their written work, and provide genuine opportunities for students to write for a variety of purposes and audiences.

### **XI. Listening and Speaking**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers know, value, and teach oral language development and listening and speaking skills as essential components of literacy, and they provide opportunities for students to listen and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.

### **XII. Viewing**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers know, value, and teach viewing as an essential component of literacy. They use a wide variety of print and nonprint resources to develop students' viewing and visual-representation skills.

## Supporting Student Learning

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### **XIII. Collaboration with Families and Communities**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers develop positive and mutually supportive relationships with family and community members to achieve common goals for the literacy education of students.

### **XIV. Teacher as Learner**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers constantly seek to improve their knowledge and practice through a continuing process of professional reading, writing, dialogue, inquiry, and reflection.

### **XV. Professional Responsibility**

Accomplished Early and Middle Childhood/Literacy: Reading–Language Arts teachers actively contribute to the improvement of teaching, learning, and the advancement of knowledge and professional practice.

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

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This section describes the portfolio entries and assessment center exercises for the EMC/LRLA certificate area.

### Portfolio Entries

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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:  
Promoting Literacy  
Development  
through Writing**

In this entry, you select one student to feature as an example of your work with students in promoting literacy development through writing. You submit two work samples from the selected student and a Written Commentary. Your approach to assessment of the student's needs, analysis of that assessment in the design and implementation of instruction, and selected work samples demonstrating the student's writing development over a period of time are the focus of this entry.

**Entry 2:  
Constructing  
Meaning through  
Reading**

In this entry, you submit a 15-minute video recording, a Written Commentary, and instructional materials that demonstrate your knowledge of the reading process and your ability to nurture learners in their growth as readers through your use of assessment and instructional materials. **Entry 2 is the preselected *Take One!* portfolio entry.**

**Entry 3:  
Integration of  
Speaking, Listening,  
and Viewing**

In this entry, you submit a 15-minute video recording, a Written Commentary, and instructional materials of an interdisciplinary lesson using technology that demonstrates your knowledge and understanding of the relationship between speaking, listening, and viewing in literacy development.

**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

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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.

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|---|--|
| <b>Exercise 1:<br/>Reading<br/>Comprehension</b>  | In this exercise, you analyze a student's comprehension of an excerpt of text and suggest a strategy to use with this student to improve comprehension.  |
| <b>Exercise 2:<br/>Oral Language<br/>Acquisition Skills for<br/>Learners of English<br/>as a New Language</b> | In this exercise, you identify one strength and two weaknesses in the oral language development of a student for whom English is a new language. You describe two developmentally appropriate teaching strategies, other than teacher correction, to build upon the identified strength or address weaknesses in order to further the student's oral language development. |
| <b>Exercise 3:<br/>Emergent Literacy</b>  | In this exercise, you analyze a student's writing sample, describe the developmental characteristics of the student's writing, and propose two developmentally appropriate teaching strategies to address an identified area of weakness or build upon an identified strength.   |
| <b>Exercise 4:<br/>Analyzing Student<br/>Reading</b>  | In this exercise, you analyze a transcript of a student's oral reading, identify two significant patterns of error, and discuss an appropriate teaching strategy to address one of the identified patterns of error.   |
| <b>Exercise 5:<br/>Interpreting Visual<br/>Text</b>   | In this exercise, you interpret a piece of visual text by identifying the message and the use of graphics, text, and literary devices to convey that message. You identify the target audience for the visual text and explain how the text targets that audience.   |
| <b>Exercise 6:<br/>Writing<br/>Development</b>  | In this exercise, you identify one strength and one weakness from a student's writing sample and describe a teaching strategy to address each of them.   |

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/](http://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 2:  
Oral Language Acquisition Skills for Learners of English as a New Language**

**Exercise 2: Oral Language Acquisition Skills for  
Learners of English as a New Language -  
Candidate Name**

 **Time Remaining 29:31**

**Introduction**

In this exercise, you will identify one strength and two weaknesses in the oral language development of a student for whom English is a new language. You will describe two appropriate teaching strategies, other than teacher correction, for building upon an identified strength or for addressing an identified weakness in order to further the student’s oral language development. You will be asked to respond to two two-part prompts.

**Criteria for Scoring**

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

- an accurate identification of one strength and two weaknesses in a student’s oral language development;
- tightly connected examples of the strengths and weaknesses from the conversational transcript to support your identification;
- an in-depth description of two developmentally appropriate teaching strategies, other than teacher correction, connected to the identified strength or weakness(es) in the student’s oral language development; and
- an appropriate rationale for using these strategies.

**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.

[? Help](#)

[⊙ Navigator](#)

[Next →](#)

**Stimulus**

Elena is an 8-year-old second-grade student. She has been in the United States for two years. This is her second year of formal education. Elena’s family speaks a little English but uses their native language at home.

**Transcript of Conversation:**

**T = Teacher**

**S = Student**

**“Birthday”**

**T** – Elena, next week is your birthday. How do you celebrate your birthday?

**S** – Celebrate?

**T** – What do you plan to do to celebrate this special day?

**S** – Family happy. Hang big circle of flowers on door. I wear pretty long clothes, pretty color. Wear over dress.

**T** – Do you mean an apron?

**S** – No—long it goes here. (Points to her waist)

**T** – Oh, around your waist! What will your family do?

**S** – Big party! Grandmother, aunt, uncle, cousins all come.

**T** – What will you do at the party?

**S** – Mother, grandmother make for me all foods I like to eat. They make cabbage with meat inside potatoes inside.

**T** – What will you do after you eat all of that good food?

**S** – I sit on special chair—all pretty with colors and flowers—cousins lift chair up in air.

**T** – It sounds like fun. Elena, how do you say “Happy Birthday” in Lithuanian?

**S** – *Sveikinų su gimtadieniu!*

**T** – I don’t think I can say that Elena!

**Retired Prompt 1**

- a) *Identify one strength and two weaknesses in this student’s oral language development.*
- b) *Support your identification with specific examples of the strengths and weaknesses identified from the transcript.*

**Retired Prompt 2**

- a) *Provide two appropriate and specific teaching strategies to further this student’s oral language development, other than teacher correction. Explain how the strategies are connected to the identified strength or weakness(es).*
- b) *Provide a rationale for using each of these strategies.*

### Sample Exercise 3: Emergent Literacy

Exercise 3: Emergent Literacy - Candidate Name

🕒 Time Remaining 29:31

#### Introduction

In this exercise, you will analyze a student's writing sample, describe the developmental characteristics of a student's writing, and propose two developmentally appropriate teaching strategies to address an identified weakness or build upon an identified strength. You will be asked to respond to three prompts, the third of which has two parts.

#### Criteria for Scoring

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

- a thorough and accurate analysis of one area of strength and one area of weakness in a student writing sample, including examples to support your analysis;
- a detailed description of the developmental characteristics of a writing sample;
- an insightful explanation of two developmentally appropriate and effective teaching strategies to further the student's skills in writing; and
- an appropriate rationale for strategies connected to the stated strength or weakness.

#### 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

Examine the student prompt, student writing sample, and teacher transcript of student writing below.

#### Student Prompt:

A student was asked to write about the following.

*What can the boy in the story do in the fall?*

#### Student Writing Sample:

He c I FLIACit.



#### Teacher Transcript of Student Writing:

*He can fly a kite.*

**Retired Prompt 1**

Analyze one area of strength and one area of weakness. Provide examples from the student writing sample to support your analysis.

**Retired Prompt 2**

Describe in detail the developmental characteristics of this writing sample.

**Retired Prompt 3**

- a) Explain two developmentally appropriate and effective instructional strategies to further the student's skill in writing development.
- b) Provide a rationale for how each of the two strategies is connected to the stated strength or weakness.

## Understanding the National Board Scoring Process

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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

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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 EMC/LRLA 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

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

Produced for the



by

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The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Inc. has been funded, in part, with grants from the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. Through September 2008, NBPTS has been appropriated federal funds of \$177.3 million, of which \$159.5 million was expended. Such amount represents approximately 31 percent of the National Board's total cumulative costs. Approximately \$360.8 million (69 percent) of the National Board's costs were financed by non-federal sources.

The contents of this publication were developed in whole or in part under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

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