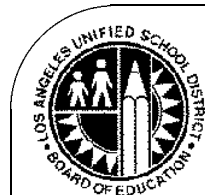


**English
Language
Arts**

GRADE

8

Performance Assignment



**Los Angeles
Unified
School District**

2001

Overview

In the Grade Eight English-Language Arts performance assignment, students demonstrate important knowledge and skills identified in the *English-Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools*(1998).

This booklet contains the following: the performance assignment task, standards assessed by the performance assignment, guidelines for administering the performance assignment, and a rubric.

The Assignment

This is the Grade Eight performance assignment task that your students will complete:

In a work of literature, a heroic character is often someone with extraordinary courage or ability who performs noble deeds or makes sacrifices. However, an ordinary person who overcomes extraordinary challenges can also be a heroic character.

Select a heroic character from a literary work you have read in class this year. Using specific details from the text, explain why you think this character is heroic. Some of the things you can write about are the character's physical and personality traits, thoughts and motivations, actions, relationships with other characters, and the character's impact on the story.

This prompt can also be found, enlarged for copying purposes, on page 6 of this booklet.

<p>Standards</p>	<p>All performance assignments are based on the <i>English-Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools</i> (1998). The specific state standards assessed by this Grade Eight performance assignment are:</p>
<p>Writing Organization and Focus</p>	<p>1.0 Writing Strategies Students write clear, coherent, and focused essays.</p> <p>1.1 Create compositions that establish a controlling impression, have a coherent thesis, and end with a clear and well-supported conclusion.</p> <p>1.2 Establish coherence within and among paragraphs through effective transitions, parallel structures, and similar writing techniques.</p> <p>2.0 Writing Applications Using the writing strategies of grade eight outlined in Writing Standard 1.0, students:</p> <p>2.2 Write responses to literature: a Exhibit careful reading and insight in their interpretations. d Support judgments through references to the text, other works, other authors, or to personal knowledge.</p>
<p>Written and Oral English Language Conventions</p>	<p>1.0 Written and Oral English Language Conventions Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions appropriate to this grade level.</p>
<p>Reading</p>	<p>2.0 Reading Comprehension Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose.</p>

Guidelines for Administering the Performance Assignment

Time Frame

You will receive directions from your school's Standards-Based Assessment Coordinator on the range of dates during the second semester when you may administer the performance assignment. This performance assignment should take approximately 2-3 hours over a one-week period.

Teacher Role

Introducing the Assignment

Prior to beginning the performance assignment, you should implement the following steps using teaching techniques you have found to be effective for your students:

- Explain the assignment (task requirements and duration).
- Distribute or display the prompt (overhead transparency, blackboard, or as a handout).
- Read the prompt aloud and explain it to your students. You can rephrase the prompt to make sure your students understand it.
- Remind your students that they **should not write a summary of the entire plot**. Instead, they should search for the best examples of character features that illustrate heroism.
- Distribute or display the rubric.
- Read the rubric aloud and explain it to your students.
- Provide your students with a full or partial list of the literary works (novels, plays, and short stories) they have studied during the school year. You should not require all students to write on the same work of literature.
- Assist your students in selecting a literary work that contains a heroic character.
- This is an open-book assignment. Make sure your students have access to either the work of literature they have selected, or their notes on that work of literature.
- If necessary, allow your students to review their notes, which should focus on how the author develops the heroic character in the literary work.
- Have your students engage in prewriting activities such as brainstorming, clustering, and outlining.

<p>Administering the Assignment</p>	<p>During the 2-3 hours of the performance assignment, your students should complete the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step A: Write a rough draft. • Step B: Revise and edit the draft. • Step C: Write a final copy of the composition. <p>The following guidelines should be observed during the administration of the performance assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should do their own writing, revising, and editing for this assignment. • All writing directly related to the performance assignment must take place in the classroom. Students should not take home drafts to work on outside of the classroom. • You may not rewrite sentences or paragraphs, or provide editorial corrections for individual students. In addition, you may not directly indicate to students any specific changes that should be made on their papers. • You should provide additional feedback and/or accommodations for students with disabilities, as determined by their IEPs.
<p>Task Requirements</p>	<p>Each student must submit all prewriting materials (for example, graphic organizers and outlines), rough draft, and final copy. Only the final copy, however, will be scored using the rubric in this booklet.</p>
<p>Scoring</p>	<p>This performance assignment will be scored using the rubric found on page 7 of this booklet. Papers from students with disabilities will be scored using the same rubric. All scores will be reported to LAUSD. For your own purposes, you may also score student papers on other qualities not emphasized in the performance assignment rubric. These additional scores can be counted in your classroom grades.</p>
<p>Further Information</p>	<p>LAUSD will provide detailed information on the role of the performance assignments in the promotion policy plan, how and when the performance assignments will be scheduled, and the overall scoring plan. LAUSD will also provide information on accommodating students with disabilities.</p>

The Assignment

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Select a heroic character from a literary work you have read in class this year. Using specific details from the text, explain why you think this character is heroic. Some of the things you can write about are the character's physical and personality traits, thoughts and motivations, actions, relationships with other characters, and the character's impact on the story.

Performance Assignment Rubric

SCORE
4**Advanced**

- The response demonstrates well-developed reading comprehension skills and ability to analyze a literary element (characterization). [W 2.2, R 2.0]¹
- Important character features are clearly and thoroughly described.
(Features may include physical and personality traits, thoughts and motivations, actions, and relationships with other characters.) [W 1.0, W 2.2a]
- Ideas are logically organized. [W 1.1, W 1.2]
- Statements about the heroic qualities of the character are well supported or explained through detailed references to the text. [W 2.2d]
- The response demonstrates a well-developed command of standard English conventions. [C 1.0]

SCORE
3**Proficient**

- The response demonstrates solid reading comprehension skills and ability to analyze a literary element (characterization).
- Character features are clearly described.
- Most ideas are logically organized.
- Most statements about the heroic qualities of the character are supported or explained through references to the text.
- The response demonstrates a solid command of standard English conventions.

SCORE
2**Partially
Proficient**

- The response demonstrates some reading comprehension skills and ability to analyze a literary element (characterization).
- There is an attempt to describe some character features.
- Some ideas are logically organized.
- Some statements about the heroic qualities of the character are supported or explained through references to the text.
- The response demonstrates some command of standard English conventions.

SCORE
1**Not Proficient**

- The response demonstrates little or no skill in reading comprehension, or little or no ability to analyze a literary element (characterization).
- Character features are not described, or the descriptions are unclear.
- Ideas are not logically organized.
- Statements about the heroic qualities of the character are not supported or explained through references to the text.
- The response demonstrates little or no command of standard English conventions.

¹ The specific state standards assessed by this Grade Eight performance assignment:
W = Writing R = Reading C = Written and Oral English Language Conventions

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