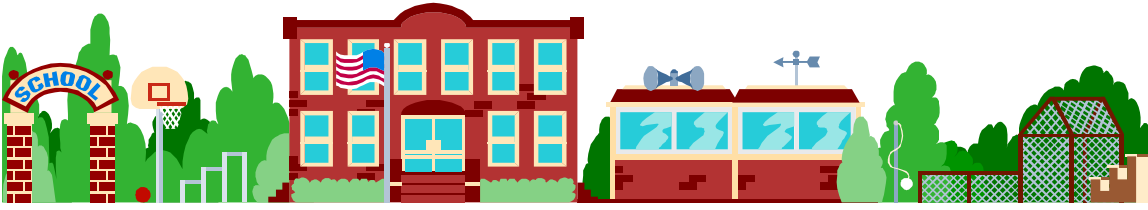


# Standards-based Practices



School districts across the country are undertaking standards-based educational reforms to ensure that *all* students receive a high quality education necessary to succeed in the twenty-first century.

## ***What are Content Standards?***

Content standards state what students should *know* and *be able to do* in a specified subject area. In a standards-based system, students strive to learn or *know* a great deal of knowledge, ideas, concepts, issues, and dilemmas. Throughout the learning process they will *be able to* think, work, communicate, reason, and investigate in specific subject areas. The goal for adopting content standards is to improve the level of achievement and to ensure equal opportunity for *all* standards. The purpose is to provide educators with direction about the skills and abilities that should be the focus of classroom instruction and assessment.

## ***What are Performance Standards?***

In reference to the product or process that demonstrates a student's level of competency, performance standards describe *how good is good enough*. Each performance standard refers to the level of performance on a particular task(s) that is considered to be competent. Student performance on content standards are generally measured at the following levels:

- ***Merit:*** This indicates superior performance, beyond the standard.
- ***Proficient:*** This indicates solid academic performance, the level required to meet the standard for the grade level. This level is the goal for all students.
- ***Nearly Proficient:*** This indicates performance that is close to meeting the standard, but that falls short in some respect. Students who perform at the Nearly Proficient level can reach the standard with some additional work.
- ***Below Standard:*** This indicates work that demonstrates partial mastery of the knowledge and skills required to meet the standard at the grade level, but that is clearly deficient in a significant way. Students who perform at the Below Standard level may be able to reach the standard with additional work.
- ***Well Below Standard:*** This indicates a performance that is substantially short of standards level quality and that demonstrates significant gaps in knowledge and skills. Students who perform at the Well Below Standard level require a considerable amount of additional instruction before they can approach the standard.

### ***Adopting/Aligning Local and State Standards***

Federal legislation, the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA), mandates the local adoption of standards of academic achievement in at least the areas of reading and mathematics that are "at least as rigorous as" the standards adopted by each state.

If districts choose to adopt the state standards as their own, then the alignment of local and state content standards is complete; the state standards are their local standards. If districts choose to adapt or revise their local standards to be in alignment with the state standards, then an alignment process will have to be designed to assure all district stakeholders and the state that the local standards are "at least as rigorous as" the state standards. Key questions to determine and affirm the rigor of district standards may include:

- *Is the breadth of content in our district's standards "at least as rigorous as" in the state standards?*
- *Is the depth of content in our district's standards "at least as rigorous as" in the state standards?*
- *Is the pace of learning in our district's standards "at least as rigorous as" in the state standards, grade level by grade level?*
- *Are the levels of performance in our district's standards aligned with the levels required for statewide reporting?*

After the adoption or alignment of content standards, alignment of the curriculum, instruction, and assessments to district standards and alignment to the state's performance standards remains. The adoption/alignment process is extensive and usually requires local consensus on academic goals for students, with the support of teachers, parents, administrators, school board members, business leaders, representatives of higher education, and the general public.

## *Implementing Standards-Based Practices*



The implementation of standards-based practices is designed to "raise the academic bar" for *all* students, K-12, in all subject areas. Simply establishing or adopting standards does not necessarily result in "better teaching" or increased academic achievement. It requires educators to reexamine their instructional practices and work collaboratively with parents, administrators, and community members to design learning and instructional opportunities that will enable students to meet the benchmarks identified in the standards. Hence, standards are not seen as *check lists of items to be learned* but levels of achievement that can be met by all students through innovative practices designed with the "end in mind".

The Western Assessment Collaborative at WestEd compares the process of instructional planning from a traditional and standards-based practices approach.

<b>Traditional Practice</b>	<b>Standards-based Practice</b>
<b>Select a topic from the curriculum</b> ↓	<b>Select standards from among those students need to know</b> ↓
<b>Design instructional activities</b> ↓	<b>Design an assessment through which students will have an opportunity to demonstrate those things</b> ↓
<b>Design and give an assessment</b> ↓	<b>Decide what learning opportunities students will need to learn those things</b> ↓
<b>Give grade or feedback</b> ↓	<b>Plan instructional opportunities to assure that each student has adequate opportunities to learn</b> ↓
<b>Move onto a new topic</b>	<b>Use data from assessment to give feedback, re-teach or move to next level</b>

## **Traditional Practice**

Traditionally, teachers begin the instructional planning process by selecting a topic of study, usually from a curriculum guide or textbook. Instructional activities and strategies are developed or selected to teach the identified topic to students. Teachers design and utilize an assessment tool to measure learning and usually give feedback to students. Often there is little time or few resources to re-teach lessons to students who have not learned the material and teachers move onto the next topic of study.

## **Standards-based Practice**

Through a standards-based practices approach, the entire instructional planning process is designed with the “end in mind,” the “end” being the standard(s) which describe what students *need to know* and *be able to do*. Assessment measures are designed before instructional strategies to help teachers have a clear understanding of not only *what* students will need to know but also *how* they will be expected to demonstrate their learning.

Learning opportunities and instructional strategies are specifically designed to help every student reach the identified standard(s) and be able to demonstrate their learning on an assessment measure. Learning opportunities define what *students* will do (view a video, read a book, conduct an experiment, etc.) to achieve the knowledge and skills identified in the standard(s). The instructional strategies define what *teachers* will do (scaffold key ideas, provide glossary of terms, offer manipulatives and hands-on resources, etc.) to enable the learning to occur.

When assessment is conducted, teachers engaged in a standards-based practices approach use the information or data from assessment measures to give feedback to students about their achievement and re-teach concepts as needed to ensure that *every* student reaches the identified standard(s). A description of a standards-based practices approach is detailed below:

### **I. The Standard**

Select the academic content standard and identify what it is students need to know and be able to do. Come to an agreement on the “big idea(s)” in the standard by addressing the following critical filters:

- What is the content knowledge, skills or dispositions required by this standard?
- What are the core ideas?
- Do I (the teacher) understand all concepts and skills that are key to achievement of the standard?
- Should the standard be addressed as a whole or in parts?
- Does this standard contribute to a larger cross-disciplinary outcome?

## II. Assessment Task

**Design the Assessment:** Decide what students will need to do to demonstrate achievement of the standard.

- What is the level of the achievement target required? (e.g., recall of information? understanding of content? ability to carry out a task? ability to create an original product?)
- What form of assessment is the best match with this achievement target(s)?
- Does the task provide good evidence of those achievement targets detailed in the standard?
- Is the task efficient? Could I get the same level of information in a less time consuming or labor intensive way?
- Is the task developmentally appropriate?
- Can the assessment provide students various options for showing what they know?

**Articulate Criteria for Success:** Determine what will be expected of students.

- What are the specific characteristics you'd expect to see in a high quality response to this assessment?
- What "enabling skills" or prerequisites are required to do this assessment?
- Would others agree with the criteria you have suggested?
- Which key criteria will be shared with students when they are given the assessment?
- Does the assessment provide an opportunity to collect data on the achievement of other important standards?

**Develop a Rubric or Other Form of Scoring Guide:**

- How many levels of performance will be included beyond "to standard" and "not yet to standard"?
- What level of performance is "good enough"?
- Will all criteria be equally weighted?
- Are there criteria that "won't count" on this assessment? Why might that be true?

## III. Learning Opportunities

What will the individual student *need* to achieve the knowledge and skills identified in the standard?

Describe the instructional activity or activities that will engage students (e.g., analyze primary source documents, view a video, visit a museum)

- Do the learning opportunities address multiple learning styles?
- Are they culturally sensitive?
- Are there opportunities for students to engage in chronological and spatial thinking? research, evidence and point of view? historical interpretation?

#### **IV. Instructional Strategies**

What instructional strategies will the teacher provide to enable students to achieve the knowledge and skills identified in the standard? Plan instruction to assure that every student has adequate access to opportunities to learn and practice what is expected. Identify specific strategies that will describe *how* students will be engaged in learning activities.

- What motivational strategies will be used to begin the lesson?
- Identify specific resources (materials, textbooks, primary sources, supplies, etc.) to be used by students.
- What support systems or accommodations will be provided so that every student has the opportunity to learn? (e.g., use of target vocabulary, glossary of terms, visuals, integrated language, scaffolding strategies, extended activities, independent work)
- Do you have a repertoire of strategies for teaching and reteaching as necessary?

**V. Using Data:** How will the teacher use data from the assessment measure(s) to ensure that *all* students will achieve the knowledge and skills in the standard?

**Administer the Assessment:** Have students complete the assessment.

- Are instructions clear? Will students know what is expected of them?
- What type of assistance shall students have access to from the teacher? From other students?
- Are the constraints of administration appropriate and fair?
- What resources should students have access to?
- Do all students have access to the same resources?
- Should all students be required to do the same task in the same amount of time?
- If being used by other teachers, is the assessment being administered similarly in other classrooms?

**Analyze the Data from the Assessment:**

- Begin by considering the adequacy of the evidence. Does the assessment provide adequate information about whether the student has achieved the standard (for example, could this performance have been a fluke?) or do we need additional evidence of the students ability to achieve this standard?
- Use the data to guide revision or reteaching.
- Describe instructional strategies that may be needed for purposes of reteaching students who did not achieve the knowledge and skills identified in the standard.
- Ask colleagues at the same grade level to give your assessment and collaborate on scoring student responses. Be prepared to revise as necessary.

#### **Designing History/Social Science Standards-based Assessment and Instruction**

Below is a lesson plan format and design for implementing standards-based practices in a history/social science classroom

**Designing History/Social Science  
Standards-Based Assessment and Instruction**

Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Time Frame \_\_\_\_\_

**LESSON TITLE:**

**THE ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARD(S)** *Select the content standard(s) in each academic content area that identifies what it is students need to know and be able to do.*

- **History/Social Science Academic Content Standard(s):**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Other Academic Content Standard(s):**

**HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ANALYSIS SKILLS:** *What are the student learning outcomes in each area listed below:*

- **Chronological and Spatial Thinking:**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Research, Evidence and Point of View:**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Historical Interpretation:**



**GUIDED INSTRUCTION, cont.,**

- **Instructional Strategies:** What instructional strategies will the teacher provide to enable *all* students to successfully participate in the identified learning opportunities described above and achieve the knowledge and skills identified in the standard(s) and learning outcomes? Describe specific strategies that will describe *how* students will be engaged in learning opportunities.

*Motivational Strategies: How will you start the lesson?*

*Accommodations: What support systems or accommodations will be provided so that every student has the opportunity to learn?*

**Resources:**

*Visuals* (e.g., pictures, realia, charts, maps)

*Primary Sources* (e.g., diaries, documents, journals):

*Other Resources:*

**USING DATA:** *How will the teacher use data from the assessment measure(s) to ensure that all students will achieve the knowledge and skills identified in the standard(s) and learning outcomes? (See “Using Data to Redesign Instruction” for examples.)*

## Designing Guided Instruction

### Learning Opportunities

What will students *need to do* to achieve the knowledge and skills identified in the standard(s) and learning outcomes of the lesson?

- analyze primary source documents
- view a video
- visit a museum
- research for information
- examine visuals (pictures, realia, charts, maps)
- role play a situation
- reenact a scene
- listen for information
- play a game
- make a game
- watch a performance
- participate in a debate
- create a historic newspaper
- write a poem
- write an essay
- write a story
- conduct an interview
- make an oral presentation
- sing a song
- write a song
- teach a lesson
- create a political cartoon
- construct a diorama
- develop a storyboard
- critique a piece of artwork
- create a piece of artwork
- make entries in a journal
- participate in a service learning activity
- draw a map
- make a collage
- create a time line
- complete a crossword puzzle
- create a crossword puzzle
- 

### Instructional Strategies

What instructional strategies will the teacher provide to enable *all* students to successfully participate in the identified *learning opportunities*?

#### **Motivational Strategies:** *Before you begin...*

- bingo
- realia
- picture books
- role play
- dress in “character”
- technology

**Accommodations:** *What support systems or accommodations will be provided so that every student has the opportunity to learn?*

- target vocabulary
- glossary of terms
- visuals
- integrated language
- extended activities
- independent work
- graphic organizers
- study guides
- technology
- cloze activities
- context clues
- audio visuals
- cooperative learning
- role play
- Reader’s Theatre
- oral presentations that are modified (speak slowly, repeat, limit vocabulary and sentence length)
- readings that are modified
- demonstrations
- opportunities to practice
- interactive learning
- hands-on projects
- use of students’ background knowledge
- T charts/Venn diagrams

## Designing Assessment Tasks

What student product(s) and/or performance(s) will provide evidence of student learning?

<u>Written</u>	<u>Oral</u>	<u>Visual</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advertisement</li> <li>• autobiography</li> <li>• biography</li> <li>• biographical sketch</li> <li>• book report/review</li> <li>• character portrait</li> <li>• crossword puzzle</li> <li>• description</li> <li>• dialogue</li> <li>• diary</li> <li>• editorial</li> <li>• essay</li> <li>• game</li> <li>• instructions</li> <li>• invitations</li> <li>• journal/log</li> <li>• labels and captions</li> <li>• letter: business, personal, to the editor, etc.</li> <li>• magazine article</li> <li>• memo</li> <li>• notetaking/notemaking</li> <li>• newspaper article</li> <li>• persuasive writing</li> <li>• poem</li> <li>• postcard</li> <li>• proposal</li> <li>• questionnaire/survey</li> <li>• reader's Theatre</li> <li>• research report</li> <li>• rules</li> <li>• resume</li> <li>• script</li> <li>• story</li> <li>• test</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• audiotape</li> <li>• commercials</li> <li>• debate</li> <li>• dialogues</li> <li>• dictate sentences, simple stories, story endings</li> <li>• discussion</li> <li>• dramatization</li> <li>• first person narrative</li> <li>• interview</li> <li>• newscast</li> <li>• oral presentation</li> <li>• oral report</li> <li>• play</li> <li>• poetry reading</li> <li>• rap</li> <li>• role play</li> <li>• skit</li> <li>• song</li> <li>• speech</li> <li>• teach a lesson</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advertisements</li> <li>• banner</li> <li>• cartoon</li> <li>• chart</li> <li>• collage</li> <li>• collection</li> <li>• computer graphic</li> <li>• construction</li> <li>• data table</li> <li>• design</li> <li>• diagram</li> <li>• display</li> <li>• diorama</li> <li>• drawing</li> <li>• filmstrip</li> <li>• graph</li> <li>• graphic organizer</li> <li>• grid/matrices</li> <li>• KWL chart</li> <li>• map</li> <li>• model</li> <li>• outline</li> <li>• painting</li> <li>• photograph</li> <li>• poster</li> <li>• scrapbook</li> <li>• sculpture</li> <li>• slide show</li> <li>• storyboard</li> <li>• T chart</li> <li>• tableau</li> <li>• time line</li> <li>• Venn diagram</li> <li>• webbing/mind map</li> </ul>

## Using Data to Redesign Instruction

Data from assessment measures can provide teachers with valuable information about the learning needs of students. By critically examining data, teachers can determine which students have achieved the identified knowledge, skills, and learning outcomes and what is needed by other students to reach the same learning objectives. Below are examples of strategies for redesigning instruction for students who have not yet reached the identified standard(s):

- **Collaborative Teaming:** By working in grade level teams, teachers using like lessons and assessment measures may regroup students according to learning needs across different classroom settings. For example, “Teacher A” may reteach specific concepts for all students in three classrooms who scored “well below standard” on the assessment measure. “Teacher B” may reteach other concepts for students who scored “just below” standard on the assessment measure. “Teacher C” may provide an extended activity for students who scored “above standard” on the assessment measure.
- **Personal Agendas:** Create a personalized list of tasks *with* the student that identifies specific learnings and/or concepts that must be mastered. Provide appropriate, accessible resources that will meet each child’s learning needs.
- **Accommodations:** Reexamine support systems or accommodations that may be provided to students who find learning to be inaccessible. See “Designing Guided Instruction” for sample instructional strategies not previously explored.
- **Tutoring Assistance:** Explore the use of peer, cross-age, or adult tutors to assist students reach the identified learning objectives. Provide the tutor with specific information about the learning needs of the student(s) and strategies and resources that will assist them in reaching the identified standard(s).
- **Multiple Entry Points for Instruction:** Provide opportunities for students to access knowledge through a variety of learning modalities. Developed from Howard Gardner, this strategy proposes student exploration of a given topic through as many as five avenues: *narrational* (presenting a story), *logical-quantitative* (using numbers or deduction), *foundational* (examining philosophy and vocabulary), *aesthetic* (focusing on sensory features), and *experiential* (hands-on).
- **Multiple Entry Points for Assessment:** Similarly, students may require various options for demonstrating the knowledge, skills, and learning outcomes identified in the standard(s). Reexamine the assessment measures used and decide if the assessment task reflects the specific learning modalities of each student. Can the assessment be redesigned to provide students with various options for showing what they know?