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# **ILLINOIS LICENSURE TESTING SYSTEM**

## **FIELD 298: GENERAL MIDDLE GRADES (5–8) TEST FRAMEWORK**

**June 2017**

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**Effective beginning September 3, 2018**

# ILLINOIS LICENSURE TESTING SYSTEM

## FIELD 298: GENERAL MIDDLE GRADES (5–8)

### TEST FRAMEWORK

June 2017

<b>Subarea</b>	<b>Range of Objectives</b>
I. The Learner and Learning	0001–0004
II. Disciplinary Literacy in the Middle Grades	0005–0008
III. The Professional Environment	0009–0010

# ILLINOIS LICENSURE TESTING SYSTEM

## FIELD 298: GENERAL MIDDLE GRADES (5–8)

### TEST FRAMEWORK

The Learner and Learning  
Disciplinary Literacy in the Middle Grades  
The Professional Environment

#### SUBAREA I—THE LEARNER AND LEARNING

##### **0001 Understand young adolescent development and behavior.**

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of theories and processes of cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and ethical development in young adolescents and strategies for promoting development across these domains.
- Apply knowledge of multiple influences (e.g., family, school culture and practices, community values, media) on young adolescents' development and strategies for using these influences to support the five developmental domains.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of cultural, linguistic, cognitive, academic, physical, social, and emotional differences on language development and disciplinary literacy.
- Apply knowledge of variation in patterns of development across domains and how development in one domain can affect performance in other domains.
- Analyze variables that affect the development and behavior of young adolescents (e.g., exceptionality, ability, experiential background, family structure and expectations, linguistic background, socioeconomic status, cultural or ethnic background).
- Apply knowledge of how young adolescent development influences learning and its implications for decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, assessment, and organizational practices.

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**0002 Understand learning processes, responsive learning environments, and diversity in the middle grades.**

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of learning theories and processes and their application in the middle grades setting.
- Apply knowledge of the unique characteristics, needs, and interests of young adolescents and the implications for teaching and learning in the middle grades.
- Analyze individual factors that affect student understanding (e.g., experiential background, linguistic variables, gender identity, preferred approaches to learning), including exceptionalities (e.g., disability, giftedness).
- Demonstrate knowledge of diversity (e.g., culture, race, ethnicity, language, religion, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, family structure); how diversity influences students' learning; and the implications of diversity for teaching, learning, and all aspects of the school environment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of bias and stereotyping in the educational environment and how middle grades teachers' own cultural perspectives and biases can affect their interactions with others.
- Apply knowledge of principles and practices related to motivation and engagement, including use of the "gradual release of responsibility approach," to design learning experiences that build students' self-direction and ownership of disciplinary literacy learning.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for creating respectful, caring, productive, and challenging learning environments that foster trusting relationships, communicate rigorous academic expectations, and support young adolescents in achieving high standards.
- Demonstrate knowledge of techniques for building classroom communities that support and engage all students in reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and visually representing and justifying their thoughts and ideas.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for establishing classroom routines that promote independence, collaboration, and responsibility for disciplinary literacy learning.

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**0003 Understand research-supported curriculum and instructional practices for students in the middle grades.**

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate middle grades curriculum and the importance of using local, state, and national curriculum standards to design, implement, and evaluate learning experiences for students in the middle grades.
- Apply knowledge of how to plan, adapt, and implement curriculum and instruction that are responsive to students' experiences, languages/dialects, and individual identities.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for designing and implementing interdisciplinary and exploratory curricula that facilitate students' recognition and understanding of relationships between content, ideas, and experiences.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the principles, techniques, advantages, and limitations of a wide range of evidence-based instructional approaches (e.g., interdisciplinary learning, project-based learning, inquiry learning, cooperative learning) and their use in the middle grades setting.
- Apply knowledge of processes and strategies for differentiating instruction (e.g., instructional strategies, materials, pace of instruction, level of text, language complexity) to make content accessible and support learning for students with diverse needs and characteristics.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for providing learning experiences that enhance critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills and for incorporating informational literacy skills and current technologies and resources into instruction to achieve learning goals and objectives.
- Demonstrate knowledge of when and how to seek appropriate assistance and support for emerging readers and how to collaborate with other professionals to deliver a consistent, sequenced, and supportive instructional program for each student.
- Apply knowledge of motivational principles and strategies for enhancing motivation for students in the middle grades, including strategies for engaging all students in active learning.

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**0004 Understand research-supported assessment practices in the middle grades.**

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the role of assessment in instruction; the characteristics, uses, purposes, and limitations of various formal and informal forms of assessment; and how to use various types of data (e.g., test results, student work samples, observations) to plan, evaluate, and adapt instruction.
- Apply knowledge of how to design, select, and adapt assessment tools and strategies for specific purposes, including the use of technology to support assessment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for assessing students' interest, engagement, and response to instruction to inform and guide teaching practices.
- Demonstrate knowledge of nondiscriminatory and developmentally appropriate assessment strategies for measuring the individualized progress and learning of all students.
- Apply knowledge of how to, individually and in collaboration with others, analyze and use assessment data to identify learning targets and measure learning outcomes, including the use of data within a multitiered system of supports.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for engaging students in self-assessment of their learning needs, preferences, and outcomes; providing appropriate feedback to support students' understanding of their progress and how to improve their performance; and promoting students' ability to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of techniques for preparing students for various types of assessments and how to implement assessment accommodations for students with exceptionalities and language learning needs.
- Demonstrate knowledge of how to maintain and use accurate records of students' performance and progress in meeting disciplinary literacy standards as well as how to communicate assessment results accurately and appropriately.

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**SUBAREA II—DISCIPLINARY LITERACY IN THE MIDDLE GRADES**

**0005 Understand disciplinary literacy foundations, curriculum, and materials.**

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of research-based instruction to plan, evaluate, and modify instruction; and the role of systematic and explicit teaching of disciplinary literacy skills.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Illinois Learning Standards as well as their organization, progressions, and interconnections among the skills.
- Apply knowledge of the developmental sequence of language and literacy skills across the middle school years, based on theory and research, as well as age-level and grade-level benchmarks for young adolescent learners.
- Apply knowledge of the nature and communicative role of various features of language (i.e., semantics, syntax, morphology, and pragmatics); the role of academic language in developing students' understanding of concepts, content, skills, and processes; and conventions of standard English grammar and usage (e.g., past tense of irregular verbs, subject-verb agreement, prepositions).
- Demonstrate knowledge of theories and stages of first- and second-language acquisition, the role of native language in learning to read and write in a second language, and the influence of students' literacy skills on their performance on discipline-specific assessments.
- Demonstrate knowledge of quantitative, qualitative, and individual factors that affect text complexity; how to estimate readability using readability measures and qualitative factors; and strategies for making texts accessible to students.
- Demonstrate knowledge of features commonly used in literary and informational texts (e.g., organizational structures, literary devices, rhetorical features, text features, graphics); characteristics of various genres and forms of literary and informational texts; and the role, perspective, and purpose of texts in specific disciplines.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for selecting literary and informational texts that address the interests, backgrounds, and learning needs of students; using culturally responsive texts to help students understand their lives and society; and incorporating student choices in determining reading and writing materials and activities.
- Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of technologies that support disciplinary literacy instruction (e.g., computers, cameras, blogs, online research) and techniques for helping students navigate and use appropriate criteria (e.g., source, audience, purpose) to critically evaluate information from online sources.

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**0006 Understand research-based instructional approaches for promoting disciplinary reading comprehension skills in the middle grades.**

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of how to select high-quality texts that match students' needs and educational goals and recognize text features that may impede comprehension (e.g., complexity of sentences, use of unusual vocabulary, assumption of prior knowledge).
- Apply knowledge of strategies for scaffolding reading to enable students to understand and learn from challenging text and for introducing texts by providing a clear purpose for reading without revealing information that students can learn from reading the text.
- Apply knowledge of high-level, text-dependent questioning techniques and strategies for helping students clarify and solidify comprehension (e.g., note-taking, previewing, identifying main ideas and details).
- Apply knowledge of how to promote students' recognition of text features common to individual disciplines as well as how to guide close reading discussions that require students to identify the key ideas and details of a text, analyze the text's craft and structure, and critically evaluate the text.
- Apply knowledge of methods for teaching students how to interpret graphic features in a text (e.g., tables, charts, headings); analyze the organizational structure of a text (e.g., sequential, causal, comparative); and consider how graphic features, specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of a text relate to the text as a whole.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for promoting students' ability to trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text; distinguish claims in a text that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not supported; and identify and analyze content in a text that indicates point of view, perspective, purpose, fact, opinion, speculation, and audience.
- Apply knowledge of techniques for supporting students in comparatively analyzing and evaluating information in multiple texts and synthesizing information from multiple texts into a coherent understanding of a topic.
- Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for improving students' comprehension (e.g., predicting, purpose-setting, sequencing, monitoring, questioning, summarizing) and how to model and encourage the use of comprehension strategies.

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### 0007 Understand research-based instructional approaches for promoting disciplinary writing skills in the middle grades.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of how to provide support and opportunities for students to write routinely for authentic purposes; use writing to develop understanding of content-area concepts and skills; and recognize the importance of writing throughout their lives.
- Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for supporting students' ability to produce coherent and clear writing with organization, development, substance, and style appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for facilitating students' use of the conventions of standard English grammar (e.g., irregular plural nouns, past tense of irregular verbs, subject-verb agreement, conjunctions, prepositions) as well as strategies for providing feedback on students' written work to guide the revision process.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for facilitating students' use of the process for writing arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Apply knowledge of techniques for instructing students in creating text that introduces a claim on a topic, supports the claim with evidence and reasons based on facts and details, uses appropriate transitional devices, and concludes with a statement supporting the claim.
- Apply knowledge of techniques for instructing students in creating a narrative text based on real or imagined experiences or events that incorporates features of narrative texts (i.e., introduction of a narrator and/or characters; use of dialogue, description, and pacing to develop and organize sequence of events; use of concrete words, phrases, sensory details, and transitional devices; and use of a conclusion that follows the experiences or events).
- Apply knowledge of techniques for instructing students in selecting, organizing, and analyzing content to write informative and explanatory texts that examine and convey complex information clearly and accurately.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for developing students' ability to use search terms effectively, assess the credibility and accuracy of sources, avoid plagiarism, and follow a standard format for citing sources of information.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for promoting students' acquisition of research skills (e.g., selecting a topic, gathering information from multiple credible sources, synthesizing information, paraphrasing, using evidence) and for engaging students in using technology to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

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**0008 Understand research-based instructional approaches for promoting speaking, listening, and disciplinary vocabulary skills in the middle grades.**

For example:

- Apply knowledge of strategies for engaging students in a variety of oral or expressive language activities (e.g., participating in whole- and small-group collaborative discussions, asking questions, reporting on a topic, recounting experiences).
- Apply knowledge of strategies for promoting students' ability to present ideas and information, including using facts and relevant details to support main ideas, and their ability to utilize presentation software, media, and visual displays appropriate to the purpose and audience.
- Demonstrate knowledge of methods for supporting students' use of conventions in formal presentations.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for promoting students' acquisition of active- and critical-listening skills to understand, evaluate, and respond to a speaker's message.
- Demonstrate knowledge of how to identify appropriate words central to the meaning of a text, academic vocabulary, and word relationships for a given instructional purpose.
- Apply knowledge of word-solving strategies for clarifying the meaning of unfamiliar words in authentic texts (e.g., contextual analysis, structural analysis, use of reference materials).
- Apply knowledge of methods for supporting students' expressive language development and their use of a wide variety of strategies for developing and expanding vocabulary.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the forms and functions of academic language to help students develop and express content understandings as well as techniques for helping students use newly acquired vocabulary across disciplines.

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**SUBAREA III—THE PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

**0009 Understand middle grades education philosophy and organization.**

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the philosophical and historical foundations of developmentally responsive middle grades programs and schools.
- Demonstrate knowledge of organizational settings and components of effective middle grades programs and schools.
- Apply knowledge of how to foster equitable educational practices that enhance learning and well-being for all students, including students with diverse characteristics and needs.
- Demonstrate knowledge of how to promote research-based middle grades practices in various educational contexts.
- Apply knowledge of the advocacy process and how to advocate for implementation of developmentally responsive educational programs and practices for students in the middle grades.

**0010 Understand the professional roles and responsibilities of the middle grades teacher.**

For example:

- Apply knowledge of the professional roles of middle grades teachers (e.g., member of educational teams, advisor to young adolescents, leadership in the school community), including how to participate effectively in various middle grades education contexts.
- Apply knowledge of techniques for building positive collaborative relationships with all families, including families from diverse cultures and backgrounds and strategies for promoting families' involvement in their children's education.
- Apply knowledge of strategies for communicating and collaborating with families, educational professionals, and community partners to enhance learning for students in the middle grades and techniques for disseminating information that supports the health, education, and well-being of young adolescents.
- Demonstrate knowledge of ethical practices and their application in various educational contexts, including the responsibility to model ethical behaviors.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the importance of ongoing professional development and strategies for reflecting on professional practices to achieve professional growth and improve outcomes for students in the middle grades.