
3D

Action

Professional Services Committee

Adoption of Content Specifications for the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA)

Executive Summary: This item presents the draft RICA content specifications for the Commission's approval and a proposed timeline for the implementation of a revised RICA examination.

Recommended Action: That the Commission approve the draft RICA content specifications so a revised RICA examination may be implemented

Presenter: Yvonne Novelli, Assistant Consultant,
Professional Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal: 1

Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation and performance of professional educators and for the accreditation of credential programs.
- ◆ Conduct, monitor, and evaluate the programs and systems the Commission operates to maintain quality and assure the systems align with each other and other state systems.

November 2007

Adoption of Content Specifications for the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA)

Introduction

California-trained candidates completing the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential or the Education Specialist Instructional Credential teacher education program are required to pass the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA). The RICA content specifications, which address the substance within the examination, were recently reviewed to ensure that the examination remains a valid, aligned assessment of a beginning teacher's knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the teaching of reading/language arts. With the assistance of state and national experts and practitioners through out the state, the Commission's RICA Design Team has reviewed the current RICA content specification and made significant suggested changes.

The names and affiliations of the members of the RICA Design Team, which include National Board Certified teachers; reading coaches; Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) and Literacy trainers; and published reading instruction, special education, and English learner researchers, are found in Appendix A. The Design Team was enhanced by the addition of Commissioner Leslie Peterson Schwarze, the Commission liaison to the Design Team; Commissioner Guillermo Gomez; and Ellen Jensen, who represented the California State Department of Education. Additionally, the validity work was facilitated by the RICA contractor, the Evaluation Systems of NCS Pearson, Inc., using their staff of examination and content experts.

This agenda item provides the draft RICA content specifications, included as Appendix B, as well as the suggested weighting of the five domains contained in the draft RICA content specifications, which is included as Appendix D. This item also contains a proposed implementation timeline based on the approval by the Commission of the draft RICA content specification.

Background

The current RICA content specifications, found in Appendix C, were last validated when the examination was developed in 1997. They were aligned with the 1997 K-12 *English–Language Arts Content Standards* and the then draft 1999 *K-12 Reading/Language Arts Framework*. Because validity evidence erodes with time and the *Reading/Language Arts Framework* was revised in 2006, the Commission approved the implementation of a validity study to determine if any revisions to the RICA examination were needed. The draft RICA content specifications were presented as an information item to the Commissioners at their October 2007 meeting.

Revisions to the RICA Contained in the Draft Content Specifications

The draft RICA content specifications are based on current research in reading instruction and aligned with the *Reading/Language Arts Framework*, adopted by the State Board of Education on April 17, 2006. As a result, the draft has benefited from the experiences and enhancements made since the far-reaching changes initiated with the 1999 Framework. Using this knowledge, the RICA Design Team refined the current content specifications by placing more emphasis on phonemic awareness, fluency in reading, vocabulary development, academic language usage, reading comprehension, and universal access. The draft specifications not only cover instruction in these areas but also stress the role they play in an individual student’s ability to learn to read with understanding and ease. Another difference is the increased number of examples provided to aid not only the examinee but also the teacher educator in better understanding the depth and breadth of the content assessed. It is the belief of the Design Team and the other various groups of educators involved in the draft content specifications that these changes will greatly enhance the role of the RICA examination in creating more effective educators. The following chart more fully compares the content of the current RICA content specifications with the draft RICA content specifications.

Key Differences between the Current and Draft RICA Content Specifications

Current RICA Domain Structure

- Domain I: Planning and Organizing Reading Instruction Based on Ongoing Assessment
- Domain II: Developing Phonological and Other Linguistic Processes Related to Reading
- Domain III: Developing Reading Comprehension and Promoting Independent Reading
- Domain IV: Supporting Reading Through Oral and Written Language Development

Draft RICA Domain Structure

- Domain 1: Planning, Organizing, and Managing Reading Instruction Based on Ongoing Assessment
- Domain 2: Word Analysis
- Domain 3: Fluency
- Domain 4: Vocabulary, Academic Language, and Background Knowledge
- Domain 5: Comprehension

Statements Addressed in the RICA Content Specifications

Current RICA		Draft RICA	
Domain	Current Content	Domain	Content Changes
I	Principles of assessment; assessing reading levels; using and communicating assessment results; factors involved in planning reading instruction; organizing and managing reading instruction.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased emphasis on standards-based reading instruction; planning, organizing, and managing differentiated reading instruction. • New content: use of SBE-adopted materials for reading instruction; strategies for engaging and motivating students in their reading development; promoting lifelong appreciation for reading; support systems to promote skillful teaching of reading; role of entry-level assessment, monitoring of student progress, and summative assessment. • Content moved: independent reading and support for at-home reading moved to this domain.

Current RICA		Draft RICA	
Domain	Current Content	Domain	Content Changes
II	Assessing phonemic awareness; the role of phonemic awareness; developing phonemic awareness; assessing concepts about print; concepts about print; letter recognition; assessing phonics and other word identification strategies; explicit phonics instruction; developing fluency; word identification strategies; sight words; terminology; assessing spelling; systematic spelling instruction; spelling instruction in context.	2 & 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased emphasis on integration of writing at all levels of beginning reading development; explicit, systematic phonics instruction; interrelationships between decoding and encoding; integration of spelling and phonics instruction; all aspects of fluency development. • New content: explicit connections between phonemic awareness and development of letter-sound correspondence; role of and interrelationships between phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency in reading development; addressing Universal Access with respect to instruction in phonemic awareness, concepts about print, fluency, sight words, phonics, syllabic and structural analysis; fluency assessment. • Content moved: use of contextual analysis moved from Domain 2 to vocabulary development in Domain 4 and fluency addressed in new Domain 3.
III	Assessing reading comprehension; fluency and other factors affecting comprehension; facilitating comprehension; different levels of comprehension; comprehension strategies; assessing literary response and analysis; responding to literature; literary analysis; assessing content-area literacy; different types of texts and purposes for reading; study skills; encouraging independent reading; supporting at-home reading.	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased emphasis on role of fluency, vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge in reading comprehension; role of oral language and writing in facilitating and promoting reading comprehension. • New content: Universal Access with respect to comprehension instruction. • Content moved: independent reading and support for at-home reading moved to Domain 1.
IV	Assessing oral and written language; oral language development; written language development; supporting English language learners; assessing vocabulary knowledge; increasing vocabulary knowledge; strategies for gaining and extending meanings of words; assessing English language structures; differences between written and oral English; applying knowledge of the English language to improve reading.	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased emphasis on role of oral language and writing in vocabulary development; role of academic language in reading comprehension; explicit instruction in vocabulary and academic language. • New content: concepts/issues related to development of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge; role of background knowledge in reading comprehension; development of background knowledge; Universal Access with respect to instruction in vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge.

Responses to the Field Survey

As noted in the October item, a component of the validity study was the statewide survey of both public school educators and approved-institution faculty members for their responses to the draft RICA content specifications. The public school educators surveyed were teachers with either

Multiple Subject or Education Specialist certification and California public school reading instruction within the last two years, principals or vice principals who supervise teachers providing reading instruction in California public schools, and reading curriculum specialists with either a Reading Specialist Credential or Reading Certificate who performed these duties within the last two years. The faculty members are Multiple Subject and Education Specialist teacher educators in public and private institutions with Commission-approved programs who taught, within the last two years, one or more courses preparing candidates to provide reading instruction in California public schools.

The results show that both the public school educators and faculty members surveyed are extremely supportive of the draft RICA content specifications. With a beginning teacher providing reading instruction in California public schools in mind, the individuals rated (1) the importance of the knowledge and skills addressed by each of the fifteen competencies found within the five domains, (2) the accuracy with which the descriptive statement represented the important examples of the knowledge and skills addressed by the competency, and (3) the ability with which the draft RICA content specifications, as a whole, represent important aspects of the knowledge and skills needed for effective job performance. Using a scale of one as the lowest and five as the highest rating, the scores given to each of these questions averaged between four and five: between "great importance" and "very great importance" and between "well" and "very well," as indicated below. (N = number of responders)

Mean Importance Rating of the Competency Level

Question: "How important are the knowledge and skills addressed by this competency for performing the job of a beginning teacher providing reading instruction in California public schools?"

1 = No importance 2 = Little importance 3 = Moderate importance
4 = Great importance 5 = Very great importance

Competency	College Faculty (N=124)	Public School Educators (N=371)
Domain 1: 1	4.72	4.44
2	4.62	4.25
Domain 2: 3	4.42	4.32
4	4.53	4.29
5	4.37	4.23
6	4.39	4.31
7	4.28	4.15
Domain 3: 8	4.48	4.24
9	4.52	4.25
Domain 4: 10	4.75	4.37
11	4.68	4.40
Domain 5: 12	4.71	4.28
13	4.84	4.42
14	4.60	4.32
15	4.68	4.33

Mean Importance Rating of the Descriptive Statement Level

Question: “How well does the set of descriptive statements represent important examples of the knowledge and skills addressed by the competency?”

1 = Poorly 2 = Somewhat 3 = Adequately
4 = Well 5 = Very well

Set of Descriptive Statements	College Faculty (N=123)	Public School Educators (N=368)
Domain 1: 1	4.43	4.27
2	4.32	4.19
Domain 2: 3	4.35	4.26
4	4.43	4.27
5	4.38	4.26
6	4.29	4.27
7	4.28	4.23
Domain 3: 8	4.38	4.23
9	4.32	4.22
Domain 4: 10	4.59	4.31
11	4.58	4.38
Domain 5: 12	4.57	4.25
13	4.63	4.31
14	4.45	4.32
15	4.47	4.33

Mean Composite Rating

Question: “How well do the RICA Content Specifications, as a whole, represent important aspects of the knowledge and skills that are needed for effective job performance by a beginning teacher providing reading instruction in California public schools?”

1 = Poorly 2 = Somewhat 3 = Adequately
4 = Well 5 = Very well

Composite Rating	College Faculty (N=118)	Public School Educators (N=303)
	4.26	4.13

Weighting of the Draft RICA Content Specifications

As part of this action item, the Commission is asked to consider for adoption the weighting of the draft RICA content specifications as suggested by the RICA Design Team. Of the nine members that considered this issue, all agreed with the weighting presented in Appendix D.

With the reorganization found in the draft content specifications, there is not a straight forward correlation to the current RICA weighting (Appendix E) because of the increased number of domains and the movement of content between the domains. It is interesting to note, though,

that there are some general similarities. The recommendation of the RICA Design Team places considerable emphasis, one-third percent of the total knowledge covered, on draft *Domain 2: Word Analysis*, while the weighting of the current RICA places 30% on *Domain II: Developing Phonological and Other Linguistic Processes Related to Reading*. The draft *Domain 5: Comprehension* and the current *Domain III: Developing Reading Comprehension and Promoting Independent Reading* are both also highly weighted. In the weighting analysis, the RICA Design Team continued to consider the knowledge found in draft *Domain 1: Planning, Organizing, and Managing Reading Instruction Based on Ongoing Assessment* both necessary and important, but, because assessment is also addressed in draft Domains 2 through 5, the weighting in draft Domain 1 was decreased compared to the current Domain I.

As part of the reorganization, the Design Team gave more prominence to the critical role that vocabulary plays in reading comprehension. They did this by removing vocabulary from the current *Domain IV: Supporting Reading through Oral and Written Language Development*, and placing it, along with the strongly related areas of academic language and background knowledge, in its own domain, draft *Domain 4: Vocabulary, Academic Language, and Background Knowledge*. By doing so, the proposed weighting of 20% places a higher emphasis on vocabulary than it has in its role as part of the 20% weighting of the current Domain IV. This parallels the revised *Reading/Language Arts Framework*, which places more focus on vocabulary than its 2002 counterpart. Similarly, the Design Team also gave fluency more prominence, and in turn weight, than found in the current RICA content specification by giving it its own domain, *Domain 3: Fluency*. This importance was also based on the role fluency plays in promoting reading comprehension.

Possible Timeline for Implementing a Revised RICA Examination

Several events must be considered when discussing an implementation timeline for a revised RICA examination: (1) implementation of the revised *Reading/Language Arts Framework* and resulting textbooks, (2) revision and implementation of *Program Standard 7: Preparation to Teach Reading-Language Arts* in the Multiple Subject and Education Specialist programs, and (3) test development work needed to revise the current RICA examination. For the smoothest transition to a revised school reading program for both the students and a beginning teacher, the teacher candidates would complete coursework reflecting a revised *Program Standard 7* so they have the needed knowledge to pass the newly revised RICA examination. With this opportunity to experience appropriate preparatory instruction and confirm their knowledge by passing the examination, beginning teachers will be able to teach to the revised Framework represented in the new textbooks adopted by the district. The following paragraphs describe some of the high points of these events.

California public schools are required to use textbooks with content conforming to state-developed curriculum frameworks and content standards. With the adoption of the *Reading/Language Arts Framework* by the California State Board of Education in 2006, it is anticipated that new textbooks that reflect this new Framework will be available by January 2009 for schools to pilot test and purchase. It is anticipated that many schools will begin using new textbooks during the 2009-2010 school year, but, by fall 2010, all schools must be using editions aligned with the new Framework.

A revision of the current content of *Program Standard 7: Preparation to Teach Reading-Language Arts* is appropriate so candidates for Multiple Subject or Education Specialist certification will have the knowledge and skills to teach the new curriculum identified by the Framework and, in turn, pass the revised RICA that is aligned with the reading instruction components of the Framework. Commission staff will present a request to initiate the steps needed to review Program Standard 7, including a plan to implement any revisions, at the December Commission meeting. Based on the time required to revise other program standards, it is anticipated that a draft revision of Program Standard 7 will be presented at the June 2008 Commission meeting for the Commission's consideration. If a revised Program Standard 7 is adopted then, Multiple Subject and Education Specialist programs may begin the process of revising, if necessary, their coursework soon after. It is expected that all programs would be meeting the revised Program Standard 7 for the 2008-09 year.

If the Commission adopts revised RICA content specifications, both the RICA Written Examination and RICA Video Performance Assessment would need to be modified. As noted in the October item, there are sufficient similarities between the current and revised content specifications that an entirely new examination would not be required. Instead, standard examination development procedures would be implemented to review, revise, and update the current RICA examination. In general, the work will entail the following steps:

1. Clarifying the specific test format, including the scoring structure and the types and number of test items.
2. Reviewing the current RICA item bank to determine which items continue to match the revised RICA content specifications and can still be used on the examination.
3. Identifying those areas where new test items are needed.
4. Developing new test items to reflect the changes in the content specifications.
5. Conducting a standards setting study to help determine a minimum passing score.
6. Adoption by the Commission of the minimum passing score.

Once a testing contractor is engaged by the Commission to perform the work, it is anticipated that the activities noted in steps one through four, above, could be completed so the revised RICA examination would be available fall 2009. Immediately after the initial test administration, the standard setting activities noted in step five would be initiated and presented to the Commission.

A possible future plan would have the teacher education programs initiate the revised Program Standard 7 in spring 2009, the revised RICA administered in fall 2009, and the districts using the new textbooks no later than fall 2010.

Appendix A

Members of the RICA Design Team

Sharla Brechbill	Elementary Teacher and Reading Coach	Two Rock Union School District
Nancy Brynelson	Co-Director of the Center for the Advancement of Reading	California State University Office of the Chancellor
Kathleen Cooper	Reading and Language Arts Consultant	Sacramento County Office of Education;
Judith Crowe	General and English Learners Reading Instruction Faculty Member	California Lutheran University
Anne Cunningham	Literacy Researcher and Director of Joint Doctoral Program in Special Education	University of California Berkeley
Pamela Dunham	Beginning Teacher Support Assessment (BTSA) Support Provider	San Joaquin County Office of Education
Elva Duran	General and Special Education Reading Instruction Faculty Member	California State University Sacramento
Nancy Kotkosky	Literacy Content Expert	Los Angeles Unified School District
Deirdre Marsh-Girardi	Reading First Regional Technical Assistance Center Content Expert and Program Manager	San Joaquin County Office of Education
Becky Moore	Elementary Teacher and Reading Coach	Gonzales Unified School District
Anita (Kathy) Rosebrock	BTSA Coordinator and Trainer	Novato Unified School District
Shela Seaton	Language Arts Consultant and Program Manager	Regional System of District and School Support Region 6 (Delta Sierra)
John Shefelbine	Reading Specialist Faculty Member and Co-Director of the Region 3 and 6 California Reading and Literature Project	California State University Sacramento

Note: Kathleen Cooper, Pamela Dunham, Deirde Marsh-Girardi, and Anita Rosebrock are also reading instruction faculty members for university and/or district intern programs. Additionally, many members of the RICA Design Team who are not currently teaching were recently instructing in the elementary and middle schools.

Commission Representatives: Commissioner Leslie Peterson Schwarze, Commission Liaison and Commissioner Guillermo Gomez

California State Department of Education
Ellen Jensen, Department of Education Liaison

Appendix B

Draft RICA Content Specifications

DOMAIN 1—PLANNING, ORGANIZING, AND MANAGING READING INSTRUCTION BASED ON ONGOING ASSESSMENT

001 Understand how to plan, organize, and manage standards-based reading instruction.

Including:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of fundamental principles involved in planning, organizing, and managing reading instruction in a research-based, standards-based reading program. For example:
 - a. basing instruction on the standards/curriculum outlined in the English Language Arts (ELA) Content Standards through the primary use of California State Board of Education (SBE)–adopted materials for both instruction and intervention
 - b. ensuring that instruction provides a balanced, comprehensive reading program as described in the California Reading/Language Arts (RLA) Framework (2007)
 - c. making instructional decisions based on ongoing assessment results
 - d. ensuring that instruction is systematic and explicit and promotes prevention of reading difficulties before they occur
 - e. recognizing that systematic reading instruction is based on the assumption that students master particular skills and knowledge at designated points in time and that earlier skills are foundational and requisite for later, more complex higher-order skills and knowledge
 - f. ensuring that daily instruction is differentiated to address the full range of learners in the classroom and conveys high expectations to all learners
 - g. ensuring that planning includes both short- and long-term goals that lead to daily, evidence-based learning objectives
- (2) Demonstrate knowledge of key factors to consider in planning differentiated reading instruction. For example:
 - a. students' assessed knowledge and skills in the specific area(s) of reading
 - b. prerequisite knowledge and skills (i.e., the knowledge and skills required for students to be able to benefit from instruction)
 - c. pacing of instruction
 - d. complexity of the content/skills to be presented
 - e. scaffolds to ensure that all students have access to higher-level knowledge and skills
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of how to organize and manage differentiated reading instruction and interventions to meet the needs of all students. For example:
 - a. using flexible grouping, individualized instruction, and whole-class instruction as needed
 - b. using all components of core California SBE–adopted materials to make grade level content accessible to all students
 - c. recognizing that students should be grouped for interventions according to the severity of their difficulties (i.e., benchmark, strategic, and intensive groups)

- (4) Demonstrate knowledge of components of effective instructional delivery in reading as described in the California RLA Framework (2007). For example:
 - a. orientation (e.g., engagement, teacher demonstration)
 - b. presentation (e.g., explicit instruction, modeling, pacing)
 - c. structured and guided practice (e.g., reinforcement, questioning, feedback, corrections, peer-mediated instruction)
 - d. independent practice and application
- (5) Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for engaging students in reading instruction and motivating them to progress in their reading development. For example:
 - a. providing instruction that enables students to develop the skills necessary for successful reading
 - b. creating a stimulating learning environment
 - c. providing appropriate reading materials (e.g., readable and interesting)
 - d. reading aloud to students
 - e. encouraging parents/guardians to read to their children and to model the value of reading at home for pleasure and information
- (6) Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of strategies for promoting purposeful independent reading of a wide variety of narrative/literary and expository/ informational texts (e.g., teaching students how to select books at appropriate reading levels, using students' personal interests to help motivate and increase independent reading, providing structured independent-reading opportunities in class, supporting at-home reading) and methods for monitoring students' independent reading (e.g., student-maintained reading logs, book reports, formal and informal oral presentations, class discussions, book talks).
- (7) Demonstrate knowledge of factors involved in creating a literacy-rich environment and strategies for promoting students' lifelong appreciation for reading for pleasure and for information (e.g., encouraging book clubs, literature circles, author studies, and other reading discussion groups; helping students use reading to set and pursue their own research goals).
- (8) Demonstrate knowledge of support systems that can be used to promote the skillful teaching of reading (e.g., reading coach, grade-level team meetings and professional development that are focused on instruction and California SBE-adopted materials).

002 Understand the purposes of reading assessment and best practices related to standards-based entry-level assessment, monitoring of student progress, and summative assessment.

Including:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of the three primary purposes of reading assessment:
 - a. entry-level assessment (e.g., using standards/curriculum-based assessments to determine the extent to which students possess crucial prerequisite skills and knowledge expected at their grade level and to determine students' current skills and knowledge in a specific area of reading prior to planning instruction and/or intervention in that area)
 - b. monitoring of student progress—for example:
 - conducting curriculum-based assessment on an ongoing basis to determine whether students are progressing adequately toward achieving standards

- analyzing whether instruction has been effective or requires adjustment to meet the needs of students
 - as needed, using formal and informal diagnostic assessments in word analysis, fluency, vocabulary, academic language, background knowledge, and comprehension to determine students' specific instructional needs
 - c. summative assessment (e.g., using standards-based assessments to determine whether students have achieved the goals defined by the standards or a group of standards)
- (2) Recognize that students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) may require alternative assessments.
 - (3) Demonstrate knowledge of quality indicators (e.g., reliability, validity) that apply to standardized assessments.
 - (4) Demonstrate ability to interpret results of assessments and to use evidence from assessments to determine whether a student is performing below, at, or above expected levels of performance with respect to grade-level content standards and benchmarks, and demonstrate knowledge of strategies for collecting, organizing, and documenting these results to support effective instructional planning.
 - (5) Demonstrate knowledge of assessments used to determine students' independent, instructional, and frustration reading levels; how to interpret results of these assessments; and how to use this information to plan interventions for individuals and small groups.
 - (6) Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for communicating assessment results and reading progress to students, parents/guardians, and relevant school and district personnel.

DOMAIN 2—WORD ANALYSIS

003 Understand the role of phonological and phonemic awareness in reading development and how to develop students' phonological and phonemic awareness skills.

Including:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of the role of phonological and phonemic awareness in reading development.
- (2) Recognize the distinction between phonological awareness (i.e., the awareness that oral language is composed of smaller units, such as spoken words and syllables) and phonemic awareness (i.e., a specific type of phonological awareness involving the ability to distinguish the separate phonemes in a spoken word).
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of the continuum of research-based, systematic, explicit instruction in phonological awareness (e.g., detecting and identifying word boundaries, syllables, rhyming words, and onset/rime), including phonemic awareness (e.g., recognizing that words are made up of separate phonemes; distinguishing initial, medial, and final phonemes; blending, segmenting, deleting, and substituting phonemes).
- (4) Recognize the relationship between phonemic awareness and the development of phonics knowledge and skills (e.g., letter-sound correspondence, blending), and demonstrate knowledge of strategies for helping students make explicit connections between their phonemic awareness and letters (e.g., teaching phonemic awareness both preceding instruction in letter knowledge and in concert with instruction in the alphabetic principle and letter-sound correspondence).

- (5) Demonstrate knowledge of how to address the full range of learners in the classroom with respect to their development of phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness (i.e., Universal Access as described in Chapter 7 and relevant ELA Content Standards in the California RLA Framework [2007]). For example:
- a. providing differentiated instruction in phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness, to address the needs of struggling readers and students with reading difficulties or disabilities (e.g., focusing on key skills, especially blending and segmenting; reteaching skills that are lacking; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task; providing additional practice)
 - b. providing differentiated instruction in phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness, to support students with special needs (e.g., using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task, including using visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile techniques; reteaching skills that are lacking; providing additional practice)
 - c. providing differentiated instruction in phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness, to address the needs of English Learners and speakers of nonstandard English (e.g., capitalizing on transfer of relevant knowledge and skills from the primary language, explicitly teaching nontransferable phonemes and phoneme sequences)
 - d. providing differentiated instruction in phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness, to address the needs of advanced learners (e.g., increasing the pace of instruction, building on and extending current skills)
- (6) Demonstrate knowledge and ability in assessment (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment) with respect to phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness. For example:
- a. demonstrating ability to describe and use appropriate formal and informal assessments in phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness, for different assessment purposes (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment)
 - b. demonstrating ability to analyze and interpret results from these assessments
 - c. demonstrating ability to use the results of assessments to plan effective instruction and interventions in phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness; adjust instruction and interventions to meet the identified needs of students; and ultimately determine whether relevant standards have been met

004 Understand the role of concepts about print, letter recognition, and the alphabetic principle in reading development and how to develop students' knowledge and skills in these areas.

Including:

- (1) Recognize the role of print awareness in early reading development and identify explicit, research-based strategies for teaching various concepts about print (e.g., developing an awareness of the relationship between spoken and written language and an understanding that print carries meaning; recognizing letter, word, and sentence representation; recognizing the directionality of print; developing the ability to track print in connected text; developing book-handling skills).

- (2) Recognize the importance of accurate and rapid uppercase and lowercase letter recognition in reading development and demonstrate knowledge of research-based, systematic, explicit instruction in letter recognition, letter naming, and letter formation, including factors to consider when planning instruction in these areas (e.g., how to systematically introduce visually and auditorily similar letters, the importance of providing practice in writing letters and words).
- (3) Recognize the role of the alphabetic principle in reading development, in particular the interrelationships among letter-sound (i.e., grapheme-phoneme) correspondence, phonemic awareness, and beginning decoding (e.g., sounding out and blending letter sounds), and demonstrate knowledge of research-based, systematic, explicit instruction in the alphabetic principle.
- (4) Recognize the role of writing (i.e., students' use of phonetic spelling) in promoting and reinforcing students' understanding of the alphabetic principle and letter-sound correspondence.
- (5) Demonstrate knowledge of how to address the full range of learners in the classroom with respect to their development of concepts about print, letter recognition, and the alphabetic principle (i.e., Universal Access). For example:
 - a. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to address the needs of struggling readers and students with reading difficulties or disabilities (e.g., focusing on key concepts and skills; reteaching concepts, letters, and skills that are lacking; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task; providing additional practice)
 - b. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to support students with special needs (e.g., focusing on key concepts; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task; reteaching concepts, letters, and skills that are lacking using visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile techniques; providing additional practice)
 - c. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to address the needs of English Learners and speakers of nonstandard English (e.g., capitalizing on transfer of relevant knowledge and skills from the primary language; recognizing that not all languages are alphabetic and that key features of alphabets vary, including letters, directionality, and phonetic regularity)
 - d. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to address the needs of advanced learners (e.g., increasing the pace of instruction, building on and extending current knowledge and skills)
- (6) Demonstrate knowledge and ability in assessment (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment) with respect to concepts about print, letter recognition, and the alphabetic principle. For example:
 - a. demonstrating ability to describe and use appropriate formal and informal assessments in concepts about print, letter recognition, and the alphabetic principle for different assessment purposes (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment)
 - b. demonstrating ability to analyze and interpret results from these assessments
 - c. demonstrating ability to use the results of assessments to plan effective instruction and interventions in concepts about print, letter recognition, and the alphabetic principle; adjust instruction and interventions to meet the identified needs of students; and ultimately determine whether relevant standards have been met

005 Understand important terminology and concepts involved in phonics instruction and recognize the role of phonics and sight words in reading development.

Including:

- (1) Recognize the role of phonics and sight words in accurate, automatic word identification, including how word identification contributes to word recognition (i.e., the process by which a reader connects a decoded word to an existing word in his/her oral vocabulary) and how automaticity in word recognition supports development of reading fluency and comprehension.
- (2) Recognize the importance of sequencing phonics and sight-word instruction according to the increasing complexity of linguistic units and demonstrate knowledge of terminology and concepts related to these units. For example:
 - a. types of consonant sounds (e.g., continuous sounds, stop sounds)
 - b. common, regular letter combinations (e.g., consonant digraphs, consonant blends, vowel digraphs, diphthongs, r- and l-controlled vowels)
 - c. common inflected morphological units that are taught as part of phonics instruction (e.g., the suffixes -ed, -er, -est, -ing, and -s)
 - d. common word patterns of increasing difficulty (e.g., VC, CVC, CVCC, CCVC, CVVC, CVCe)
 - e. common syllable patterns and syllabication as applied to decoding multisyllabic words
 - f. why some words are phonetically irregular and never decodable (e.g., of, the, was)
 - g. how and when irregular words fit into the continuum of phonics instruction
 - h. why some decodable words must be taught as sight words until their phonetic pattern has been taught (e.g., park is decodable but is taught as a sight word until r-controlled a is introduced)
- (3) Recognize that decoding and encoding are reciprocal skills and demonstrate knowledge of the interrelationships between phonics development and stages of spelling development (i.e., precommunicative writing, semiphonetic, phonetic, transitional, and conventional). For example:
 - a. how phonics knowledge supports both reading and spelling/orthographic development
 - b. how development of spelling/orthographic knowledge supports development of decoding skills
 - c. how research-based, systematic, sequential spelling instruction reinforces phonics and vocabulary development
 - d. how writing activities provide opportunities for applying phonics knowledge in context
 - e. how a student's stage of spelling development has implications for both spelling and phonics instruction

006 Understand how to develop students' phonics knowledge and skills and recognition of sight words to promote accurate word analysis that leads to automaticity in word recognition and contributes to spelling development.

Including:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of the continuum of research-based, systematic, explicit instruction in phonics and sight words appropriate for students at the beginning reading

- stage (i.e., as students progress from sounding out letter by letter to recognizing words as units of letters). For example:
- a. teaching sounding out and blending of regular VC and CVC words
 - b. teaching whole-word reading focused on single-syllable regular words and some high-frequency irregular sight words
 - c. using decodable text to ensure that students have abundant practice with phonics elements and sight words already taught
 - d. teaching students to use phonics knowledge to spell VC and CVC words
- (2) Demonstrate knowledge of the continuum of research-based, systematic, explicit instruction in phonics and sight words appropriate for students at more advanced stages of decoding development (i.e., as students progress in word reading involving words with increasing linguistic complexity). For example:
- a. teaching CVCC, CCVC, and CVVC words containing common, regular letter combinations
 - b. teaching regular CVCe words
 - c. teaching words containing phonics elements that are less common (e.g., kn, ph)
 - d. continuing use of decodable text to ensure that students have abundant practice with phonics elements and sight words already taught
 - e. teaching words formed by adding a common inflected ending (e.g., -ed, -er, -est, -ing, -s) to a base word
 - f. teaching students to use phonics knowledge to spell more complex orthographic patterns in single-syllable words and in words formed by adding a common inflected ending to a single-syllable word
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of research-based, systematic, explicit instruction in sight words, including:
- a. identifying high-frequency words that do and do not conform to regular phonics/spelling patterns
 - b. recognizing factors that affect the sequence of instruction for specific sight words (e.g., the frequency with which a word occurs in students' reading materials, how visually similar or dissimilar a word is to other sight words)
 - c. identifying explicit strategies for helping students master the spelling of high frequency sight words
- (4) Demonstrate knowledge of how to address the full range of learners in the classroom with respect to their development of phonics skills, sight-word knowledge, and spelling of single-syllable words (i.e., Universal Access). For example:
- a. providing differentiated instruction in phonics, sight words, and spelling of single-syllable words to address the needs of struggling readers and students with reading difficulties or disabilities (e.g., focusing on key phonics skills and high-frequency sight words, reteaching phonics skills and sight words that are lacking, using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task, providing additional practice)
 - b. providing differentiated instruction in phonics, sight words, and spelling of single-syllable words to support students with special needs (e.g., using systematic and explicit synthetic phonics instruction; focusing on key concepts and skills, such as key phonics elements and sight words; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task; using visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile techniques to

- teach spelling and to promote mastery of new sight words; reteaching content and skills that are lacking; providing additional practice)
- c. providing differentiated instruction in phonics, sight words, and spelling of single-syllable words to address the needs of English Learners and speakers of nonstandard English (e.g., capitalizing on transfer of relevant knowledge and skills from the primary language; explicitly teaching sounds that do not transfer; explicitly teaching the meaning of sight words, if needed)
 - d. providing differentiated instruction in phonics, sight words, and spelling of single-syllable words to address the needs of advanced learners (e.g., increasing the pace and/or complexity of instruction, building on and extending current knowledge and skills)
- (5) Demonstrate knowledge and ability in assessment (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment) with respect to phonics, sight words, and spelling of single-syllable words. For example:
- a. demonstrating ability to describe and use appropriate formal and informal assessments in phonics, sight words, and spelling of single-syllable words for different assessment purposes (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment)
 - b. demonstrating ability to analyze and interpret results from these assessments
 - c. demonstrating ability to use the results of assessments to plan effective instruction and interventions in phonics, sight words, and spelling of single syllable words; adjust instruction and interventions to meet the identified needs of students; and ultimately determine whether relevant standards have been met

007 Understand the role of syllabic and structural analysis and orthographic knowledge in reading development and how to develop students' knowledge and skills in these areas to promote accurate word analysis that leads to automaticity in word recognition and contributes to spelling development.

Including:

- (1) Recognize how phonics skills, sight-word knowledge, and knowledge and skills in syllabic and structural analysis and orthography all work in concert to support students' development of accurate word analysis, which leads to automaticity in word recognition.
- (2) Recognize the role of structural analysis (e.g., decoding multisyllabic words formed by adding a prefix and/or suffix to a base word or base morpheme) and syllabic analysis (e.g., decoding multisyllabic words composed of common syllable patterns, such as open and closed syllables) in accurate word analysis and spelling of multisyllabic words.
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of systematic, explicit instruction in structural and syllabic analysis and spelling of multisyllabic words. For example:
 - a. teaching multisyllabic words formed by adding a common prefix or suffix to a base word
 - b. teaching multisyllabic words that follow common syllable patterns
 - c. teaching students to use knowledge of structural analysis and syllable patterns to spell multisyllabic words

- (4) Recognize the strong relationship between orthographic knowledge and word analysis and demonstrate knowledge of systematic, explicit instruction in spelling/orthography. For example:
- a. teaching students to spell larger, more complex chunks of letters (phonograms), such as -ight
 - b. teaching students to apply common orthographic generalizations (rules) (e.g., changing the ending of a word from -y to -ies when forming the plural)
 - c. teaching students to accurately recognize and use common homophones (e.g., to, two, and too; hair and hare)
- (5) Recognize the importance of providing students with frequent opportunities to develop and extend their syllabic analysis skills, structural analysis skills, and orthographic knowledge in their reading and writing. For example:
- a. frequently reading texts that contain words using affixes, syllable patterns, and orthographic patterns and rules already taught
 - b. frequently engaging in writing activities that include opportunities to apply knowledge of more complex orthographic patterns and spelling of multisyllabic words
- (6) Demonstrate knowledge of how to address the full range of learners in the classroom with respect to their development of syllabic and structural analysis and orthographic knowledge to support decoding and spelling of multisyllabic words and spelling of words that follow more complex orthographic patterns or rules (i.e., Universal Access). For example:
- a. providing differentiated instruction in these areas to address the needs of struggling readers and students with reading difficulties or disabilities (e.g., focusing on key skills and knowledge, such as frequently occurring syllable patterns and affixes and related orthographic patterns; reteaching concepts and skills that are lacking; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task; providing additional practice)
 - b. providing differentiated instruction in these areas to support students with special needs (e.g., focusing on key skills and knowledge, such as frequently occurring syllable patterns and affixes and related orthographic patterns; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task; using visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile techniques; reteaching concepts and skills that are lacking; providing additional oral practice with new words)
 - c. providing differentiated instruction in these areas to address the needs of English Learners and speakers of nonstandard English (e.g., explicitly teaching common English roots and affixes)
 - d. providing differentiated instruction in these areas to address the needs of advanced learners (e.g., increasing the pace and/or complexity of instruction, building on and extending current knowledge and skills)

- (7) Demonstrate knowledge and ability in assessment (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment) with respect to development of syllabic analysis, structural analysis, orthographic knowledge, spelling of multisyllabic words, and spelling of words that follow more complex orthographic patterns or rules. For example:
- a. demonstrating ability to describe and use appropriate formal and informal assessments in these areas for different assessment purposes (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment)
 - b. demonstrating ability to analyze and interpret results from these assessments
 - c. demonstrating ability to use the results of assessments to plan effective instruction and interventions in these areas, adjust instruction and interventions to meet the identified needs of students, and ultimately determine whether relevant standards have been met

DOMAIN 3—FLUENCY

008 Understand the role of fluency in reading development and factors that affect students' development of fluency.

Including:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of the role of fluency in all stages of reading development (e.g., the progression from letter naming to word reading to connected text).
- (2) Demonstrate knowledge of key indicators of reading fluency and their interrelationships:
 - a. accuracy (i.e., accurate decoding and word recognition)
 - b. rate
 - c. prosody (i.e., reading with expression, including using appropriate stress or emphasis, variation in pitch and intonation, and pausing in a manner that reflects meaningful phrasing and knowledge of syntax and mechanics)
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of the interrelationships among word analysis skills, fluency, vocabulary, academic language, background knowledge, and comprehension. For example:
 - a. the role of fluency as a bridge between word analysis skills and comprehension (i.e., fluency includes the ability to decode automatically and thereby have the capacity to comprehend text at the same time)
 - b. why fluency supports reading comprehension (e.g., automaticity theory)
 - c. the reciprocity between prosody and comprehension
- (4) Demonstrate knowledge of factors that can disrupt fluency (e.g., weak word analysis skills, stopping frequently to decode unrecognized or unfamiliar words, lack of familiarity with content vocabulary, lack of background knowledge, texts that contain a large number of one-use and multisyllabic content words, lack of familiarity with more complex syntactic structures).
- (5) Recognize the role of decodable text in promoting fluent reading in students who are acquiring basic phonics skills and the importance of transitioning students to a broader range of appropriate texts as they progress in their word analysis skills.
- (6) Recognize the critical role of systematic, explicit instruction in promoting fluency development.

- (7) Recognize the limitations of using independent silent reading to increase automaticity (i.e., students who do not have automaticity need to practice reading out loud, primarily to themselves).
- (8) Identify factors that help make independent silent reading more effective in supporting fluency development (e.g., ensuring that students select books at appropriate reading levels and holding them accountable for comprehension).

009 Understand how to promote students' fluency development.

Including:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of essential, research-based components of effective fluency instruction (e.g., guidance, practice, feedback) and how each contributes to fluency development with respect to accuracy, rate, and prosody.
- (2) Demonstrate knowledge of research-based, systematic, explicit instruction in fluency, including when and how fluency instruction should be introduced.
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of research-based, systematic, explicit strategies for building fluency with respect to accuracy (e.g., providing systematic, explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, and sight words, as needed).
- (4) Demonstrate knowledge of research-based, systematic, explicit strategies for building fluency with respect to rate. For example:
 - a. for students whose decoding is not automatic—engaging in whisper reading (i.e., reading out loud to themselves) as the teacher monitors individual students
 - b. for students whose decoding is automatic—engaging in independent silent reading with accountability for comprehension
- (5) Demonstrate knowledge of research-based, systematic, explicit strategies for building fluency with respect to prosody. For example:
 - a. modeling and phrase-cued reading
 - b. purposeful, teacher-directed instruction across subject matter to build content knowledge and academic language
- (6) Demonstrate knowledge of how to address the full range of learners in the classroom with respect to their development of fluency (i.e., Universal Access). For example:
 - a. providing differentiated fluency instruction to address the needs of struggling readers and students with reading difficulties or disabilities (e.g., using texts written at students' independent reading levels; as needed, focusing on improving accuracy through additional word analysis instruction and/or focusing on improving rate through additional practice using either oral or silent reading depending on the student's automaticity)
 - b. providing differentiated fluency instruction to support students with special needs (e.g., using texts written at students' independent reading levels, focusing on building word analysis skills and recognition of key sight words to promote automaticity, reteaching word analysis skills and sight words that are lacking, providing additional oral reading practice with appropriate-level texts)
 - c. providing differentiated fluency instruction to address the needs of English Learners and speakers of nonstandard English (e.g., explicitly teaching English intonation patterns, phrasing, syntax, and punctuation)
 - d. providing differentiated fluency instruction to address the needs of advanced learners (e.g., using more advanced texts to enhance and broaden fluency development)

- (7) Demonstrate knowledge and ability in assessment (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment) with respect to fluency (i.e., accuracy, rate, and prosody). For example:
- a. demonstrating ability to describe and use appropriate formal and informal assessments to determine students' fluency with respect to accuracy, rate, and prosody for different assessment purposes (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment)
 - b. demonstrating ability to analyze and interpret results from these assessments
 - c. demonstrating ability to use the results of assessments to plan effective instruction and interventions in fluency with respect to accuracy, rate, and prosody; adjust instruction and interventions to meet the identified needs of students; and ultimately determine whether relevant standards have been met

DOMAIN 4—VOCABULARY, ACADEMIC LANGUAGE, AND BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

010 Understand the role of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge in reading development and factors that affect students' development of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge.

Including:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of the role of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge in reading development. For example:
 - a. the role of vocabulary knowledge in the development of word recognition and fluency
 - b. the role of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension (e.g., vocabulary knowledge as both a key indicator and a predictor of comprehension ability)
 - c. the role of academic language in reading comprehension and learning (e.g., knowledge of more complex grammatical structures supports comprehension of more advanced texts)
 - d. the role of background knowledge in reading comprehension and learning (e.g., background knowledge of content as a key indicator of how well a student will learn new information related to that content)
 - e. interrelationships among vocabulary, academic language, background knowledge, and comprehension (e.g., how a reader constructs understanding of a text through both knowledge of the meanings of explicit words in the text and meanings that the reader infers from relevant background knowledge)
- (2) Demonstrate knowledge of important issues related to the development of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge. For example:
 - a. the critical role of early vocabulary development (prekindergarten through grade 2) in students' later achievement in vocabulary and reading
 - b. the Matthew Effect and its impact on students' growth in vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge and how effective instruction and intervention can reduce its negative effects
 - c. interrelationships between vocabulary knowledge and concept learning (e.g., how vocabulary acquisition involves concept learning and concept learning supports vocabulary development, how effective vocabulary instruction contributes to the growth of background knowledge)

- d. vocabulary learning as an incremental process (e.g., more examples in context result in greater depth of understanding)
 - e. the open-ended nature of vocabulary and background knowledge and the implications of this for instruction (e.g., the importance of using approaches in vocabulary instruction that promote knowledge of a larger set of words than the target words)
- (3) Recognize that text tends to use a larger and more sophisticated vocabulary and more complex language structures than speech and plays a critical role in the development of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge.
- (4) Recognize the critical role of independent reading in developing students' vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge (e.g., the correlation between the amount one reads daily and one's academic achievement) and the importance of encouraging independent reading at appropriate levels to promote development of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge.
- (5) Demonstrate knowledge of factors to consider in developing students' vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge. For example:
- a. recognizing that not all words should be given equal emphasis (e.g., the importance of evaluating the usefulness of a word and the frequency with which students will have opportunities to read it and apply it)
 - b. recognizing different tiers of general academic vocabulary
 - c. identifying academic vocabulary that has a high level of usefulness and frequency within a given content area
 - d. recognizing how understanding of specialized vocabulary (e.g., justify, analyze, determine) is necessary for performing comprehension tasks
 - e. recognizing the value of promoting students' word consciousness, including their genuine interest in and enthusiasm for words
 - f. recognizing the value of developing students' listening comprehension to support their vocabulary, academic language, and concept development
 - g. recognizing the importance of reinforcing vocabulary, academic language, and content knowledge through oral language, reading, and writing activities
 - h. understanding why learning vocabulary from context is a powerful strategy only when combined with wide reading by and to students
- (6) Demonstrate knowledge of the components of an effective, explicit vocabulary program, including:
- a. direct teaching of specific words (e.g., combining word-meaning instruction with concept development, using both definitional and contextual approaches, promoting integration ["deep processing"] of word meanings)
 - b. promoting development of word-learning strategies (e.g., teaching transferable, generalizable strategies; developing morphological knowledge; developing contextual strategies)
 - c. promoting development of word consciousness
 - d. promoting wide reading and providing meaningful exposure (e.g., providing multiple, meaningful exposures to new vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge; providing opportunities to use new vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge in a variety of topical contexts and in multiple subject areas)

011 Understand how to promote students' development of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge.

Including:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of research-based, systematic, explicit instruction in vocabulary (i.e., words and their meanings). For example:
 - a. providing student-friendly definitions
 - b. providing meaningful and contextualized examples, especially for new concepts
- (2) Identify explicit oral and written strategies that promote integration of word knowledge and provide repeated, meaningful exposure to and opportunities to use new academic and content-area vocabulary. For example:
 - a. conducting guided discussions of academic content and concepts
 - b. conducting guided discussions of new words and their meanings, including identifying synonyms and antonyms
 - c. discussing words' origins, roots, and/or affixes
 - d. creating semantic and morphological maps
 - e. developing word banks and word logs
 - f. comparing and classifying words orally and in writing
 - g. generating metaphors and analogies with words orally and in writing
 - h. incorporating new vocabulary in subject-matter discussions and written assignments
 - i. using more precise words in speaking and writing
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of research-based, systematic, explicit instruction in independent strategies for building vocabulary and for determining and verifying the meanings and pronunciations of unfamiliar words or words with multiple meanings. For example:
 - a. use of contextual strategies (e.g., using semantic and syntactic context cues, including apposition, to verify the meaning of a word and/or resolve ambiguity)
 - b. use of morphological strategies (e.g., developing knowledge of common roots and affixes, developing knowledge of the processes of word formation, applying structural analysis skills)
 - c. use of reference materials (e.g., using a dictionary, thesaurus, or other text-based or technology-based reference tool)
- (4) Identify explicit strategies for developing students' word consciousness and fostering a love of words (e.g., engaging students in word games, discussing the etymology and morphology of words and supporting students' investigations in etymology and morphology, drawing attention to the use of figurative language in both speech and print, encouraging students to share new and interesting words encountered in speech and print).
- (5) Identify explicit listening-comprehension activities that promote the development of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge (e.g., providing word explanations, reading both literary and informational texts aloud to students and conducting guided discussions of text content and vocabulary).
- (6) Recognize the role of wide reading in building vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge and identify explicit strategies for promoting students' purposeful independent reading of a broad range of literary and informational texts at increasingly challenging levels.

- (7) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit strategies for developing students' knowledge of language and language structures (e.g., knowledge of syntax and grammar, knowledge of elements that promote cohesion and coherence in oral and written discourse) to support their comprehension of texts at the word, sentence, paragraph, and text levels.
- (8) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit strategies for helping students understand similarities and differences between language structures used in spoken and written language, transfer relevant skills from oral language to written language (e.g., helping students make connections between their existing oral vocabulary and new written vocabulary, engaging students in oral rehearsal in preparation for writing), and develop their knowledge of written language structures and conventions (e.g., analyzing how punctuation affects a text's meaning).
- (9) Demonstrate knowledge of how to address the full range of learners in the classroom with respect to their development of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge (i.e., Universal Access). For example:
 - a. providing differentiated instruction in vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge to address the needs of struggling readers and students with reading difficulties or disabilities (e.g., focusing on key vocabulary, academic language structures, and background knowledge; reteaching vocabulary, language structures, and concepts; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a word or concept; providing additional meaningful practice using new words and concepts)
 - b. providing differentiated instruction in vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge to support students with special needs (e.g., focusing on key concepts; preteaching/reteaching vocabulary and concepts; providing additional exposures to new words and concepts; using concrete examples to explain a word or concept; presenting vocabulary and concepts using visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile techniques; providing additional meaningful oral and written practice using new words and concepts)
 - c. providing differentiated instruction in vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge to address the needs of English Learners and speakers of nonstandard English (e.g., activating students' prior knowledge by making explicit connections between their current knowledge and new vocabulary/ concepts; capitalizing on transfer of cognates; building on students' current language skills and reinforcing their knowledge of basic, functional grammar to facilitate their reading comprehension; emphasizing reading instruction that promotes development of academic language, including explicitly teaching more complex language structures and key vocabulary used in a text; contextualizing new vocabulary and concepts using visual aids, such as pictures, charts, word organizers, and graphic organizers; using "preteachreteach- practice-review"; building students' morphological knowledge, including knowledge of the meanings of common word roots used in academic language)
 - d. providing differentiated instruction in vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge to address the needs of advanced learners (e.g., increasing the pace and/or complexity of instruction, building on and extending current knowledge, extending the depth and breath of assignments)

- (10) Recognize that vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge are indirectly assessed in reading comprehension assessments and recognize the implications of this in interpreting the results of those assessments.
- (11) Demonstrate knowledge and ability in assessment (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment) with respect to vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge. For example:
 - a. demonstrating ability to describe and use appropriate formal and informal assessments to determine students' level of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge for different assessment purposes (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment)
 - b. demonstrating ability to analyze and interpret results from these assessments
 - c. demonstrating ability to use the results of assessments to plan effective instruction and interventions in vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge; adjust instruction and interventions to meet the identified needs of students; and determine whether students have made progress in learning the content

DOMAIN 5—COMPREHENSION

012 Understand literal, inferential, and evaluative comprehension and factors affecting reading comprehension.

Including:

- (1) Recognize how a reader's knowledge and skills in word analysis, fluency, vocabulary, and academic language and the reader's background knowledge affect comprehension (e.g., why automaticity in word recognition facilitates comprehension, how comprehension breaks down when relevant vocabulary or background knowledge is lacking).
- (2) Demonstrate knowledge of literal reading comprehension (e.g., identifying explicitly stated main ideas, details, sequences, cause-and-effect relationships, patterns, and elements of story grammar).
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of inferential reading comprehension (e.g., inferring main ideas, comparisons, and cause-and-effect relationships not explicitly stated in the text; drawing conclusions or generalizations from a text; using textual evidence to predict outcomes; inferring themes).
- (4) Demonstrate knowledge of evaluative reading comprehension (e.g., recognizing instances of bias, unsupported assumptions, propaganda, and faulty reasoning in texts; distinguishing facts and opinions in texts; reacting to a text's content, characters, and use of language; analyzing themes).
- (5) Recognize the role of syntax in facilitating or impeding reading comprehension and the importance of promoting students' understanding of complex grammatical structures.
- (6) Recognize the role of text structures in facilitating or impeding reading comprehension and the importance of promoting students' understanding of how different types of texts are organized.
- (7) Demonstrate knowledge of the relationship between students' oral language and their ability to comprehend at the word, sentence, paragraph, and text levels.

- (8) Recognize the role of listening comprehension as a foundation for the development of reading comprehension and the importance of using oral language activities (e.g., strategic, purposeful read-alouds) to promote development of comprehension skills.
- (9) Recognize the role that text-based discussions (e.g., instructional conversations, questioning the author, think-pair-share) play in enhancing comprehension.
- (10) Recognize how writing activities (e.g., summarizing, outlining, responding) help support and reinforce students' understanding of a text and their development of reading comprehension skills.
- (11) Recognize the role of independent reading in reinforcing reading comprehension skills and strategies and the importance of promoting purposeful independent reading.

013 Understand how to facilitate reading comprehension by providing instruction that prepares students for the reading task, scaffolds them as needed through the reading process, and prepares them to respond to what they have read.

Including:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for orienting students to new texts (e.g., teacher modeling, previewing, using textual evidence to predict outcomes, using graphic features, activating and discussing prior knowledge related to the topic, developing background knowledge, setting a purpose for reading, generating questions prior to reading).
- (2) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instruction in skills that support comprehension and strategies that help students monitor their own comprehension as they read (e.g., using graphic features, visualizing, self-questioning, paraphrasing, clarifying, predicting, summarizing, rereading, adjusting reading rate based on text difficulty, note taking).
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for supporting students' comprehension after reading (e.g., discussing; summarizing; retelling; sharing reactions; making text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections; creating pictures, semantic maps, Venn diagrams, and other visual/graphic representations of text meanings).
- (4) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for promoting students' development of listening comprehension skills and helping students transfer comprehension strategies from oral language to written language (e.g., through the use of teacher think-alouds and modeling).
- (5) Demonstrate knowledge of how to address the full range of learners in the classroom with respect to facilitating their reading comprehension, including developing their use of comprehension strategies (i.e., Universal Access). For example:
 - a. providing differentiated comprehension instruction to address the needs of struggling readers and students with reading difficulties or disabilities (e.g., as needed, focusing on building word analysis skills, fluency, vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge to support comprehension; reteaching comprehension strategies and skills that are lacking; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task; providing additional practice applying comprehension strategies and skills; as needed, providing access to grade-level texts through oral presentation, such as reading a text aloud to students and then discussing it with them)
 - b. providing differentiated comprehension instruction to support students with special needs (e.g., focusing on building foundational knowledge and skills in word analysis,

- fluency, vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge; providing practice with questions at different levels of comprehension; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task; reteaching comprehension skills and strategies that are lacking; providing additional practice with a variety of texts; as needed, providing access to grade level texts through oral presentation, such as reading a text aloud to students and then discussing it with them)
- c. providing differentiated comprehension instruction to address the needs of English Learners and speakers of nonstandard English (e.g., capitalizing on transfer of comprehension strategies from the primary language; explicitly teaching comprehension strategies that are lacking)
 - d. providing differentiated comprehension instruction to address the needs of advanced learners (e.g., increasing the pace and/or complexity of instruction, using more advanced and/or multiple texts, building on and extending current skills and strategies, extending the depth and breadth of assignments)
- (6) Demonstrate knowledge and ability in assessment (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment) with respect to reading comprehension, including students' use of comprehension strategies. For example:
- a. demonstrating ability to describe and use appropriate formal and informal assessments to determine students' comprehension and use of comprehension strategies for different assessment purposes (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment)
 - b. demonstrating ability to analyze and interpret results from these assessments
 - c. demonstrating ability to use the results of assessments to plan effective comprehension instruction and interventions, adjust instruction and interventions to meet the identified needs of students, and ultimately determine whether relevant standards have been met

014 Understand how to promote students' comprehension and analysis of narrative/literary texts and their development of literary response skills.

Including:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for helping students recognize the organizational structure and key characteristics of major literary genres, including poetry (e.g., ballad, lyric, couplet, epic, sonnet), drama, and prose (e.g., short story, novel, myth, legend, biography, autobiography, historical fiction, fantasy).
- (2) Demonstrate knowledge of the elements of story grammar (e.g., character, plot, setting, theme) and other key elements of narrative/literary texts (e.g., mood, tone, point of view, voice) and systematic, explicit instruction in these elements.
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of research-based, systematic, explicit instruction in narrative analysis and literary criticism, including explicit instructional strategies for helping students analyze and respond to narrative/literary texts. For example:
 - a. identifying the structural elements of a plot and evaluating their logic and credibility
 - b. comparing and contrasting the motivations and reactions of characters
 - c. evaluating the relevance of the setting
 - d. identifying recurring themes

- e. identifying elements of a writer's style, including the function and effect of an author's use of figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification) and other literary devices (e.g., imagery, symbolism, irony, foreshadowing)
- (4) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit oral language activities (e.g., literature circles, questioning the author, think-pair-share) that develop and reinforce students' comprehension of narrative/literary texts and their skills in narrative analysis and literary criticism.
- (5) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit writing activities (e.g., literary response journals, summaries, character analyses) that develop and reinforce students' comprehension of narrative/literary texts and their skills in narrative analysis and literary criticism.
- (6) Demonstrate knowledge of how to address the full range of learners in the classroom with respect to their comprehension and analysis of narrative/literary texts and their development of literary response skills (i.e., Universal Access). For example:
- a. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to address the needs of struggling readers and students with reading difficulties or disabilities (e.g., focusing on key elements of story grammar; creating and using story maps; focusing on key comprehension strategies and skills; reteaching strategies and skills that are lacking; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task; providing additional practice; as needed, providing access to grade-level texts through oral presentation, such as reading a text aloud to students and then discussing it with them)
 - b. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to support students with special needs (e.g., focusing on key elements of story grammar; creating and using story maps; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task; focusing on key skills and strategies; reteaching skills and strategies that are lacking; providing additional practice with narrative/literary texts; as needed, providing access to grade-level texts through oral presentation, such as reading a text aloud to students and then discussing it with them)
 - c. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to address the needs of English Learners and speakers of nonstandard English (e.g., clarifying the cultural context of a text, as needed; preteaching key vocabulary)
 - d. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to address the needs of advanced learners (e.g., using more advanced and/or multiple texts; building on and extending current knowledge, skills, and strategies; extending the depth and breadth of assignments)
- (7) Demonstrate knowledge and ability in assessment (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment) with respect to comprehension and analysis of narrative/literary texts and development of literary response skills. For example:
- a. demonstrating ability to describe and use appropriate formal and informal assessments in these areas of reading for different assessment purposes (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment)
 - b. demonstrating ability to analyze and interpret results from these assessments
 - c. demonstrating ability to use the results of assessments to plan effective instruction and interventions with respect to comprehension and analysis of narrative/literary texts and development of literary response skills, adjust instruction and interventions

to meet the identified needs of students, and ultimately determine whether relevant standards have been met

015 Understand how to promote students' comprehension of expository/informational texts and their development of study skills and research skills.

Including:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for helping students recognize key characteristics of various expository/informational materials (e.g., textbook, news article, consumer manual, research report, Web site).
- (2) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for promoting students' comprehension of expository/informational texts at the word, sentence, paragraph, and text levels by helping them understand common text structures used in these texts (e.g., chronological, cause/effect, comparison/contrast, problem/solution) and helping them recognize and attend to common transition words and other features (e.g., topic sentence, concluding sentence) associated with different text structures.
- (3) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for helping students recognize and use a variety of text features that help support comprehension of expository/informational texts. For example:
 - a. organizational/explanatory features (e.g., table of contents, index, glossary)
 - b. typographic features (e.g., italics, boldfacing, underlining, color coding)
 - c. graphic features (e.g., charts, maps, diagrams, illustrations)
- (4) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for promoting students' comprehension of expository/informational texts. For example:
 - a. evaluating the unity, logic, internal consistency, and structural patterns of a text
 - b. analyzing the development of an author's argument, point of view, or perspective
 - c. generalizing the knowledge learned from texts to other areas of learning
 - d. identifying similarities and differences between texts
- (5) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit oral language activities that develop and reinforce comprehension of expository/informational texts and related vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge (e.g., introducing and explaining key vocabulary prior to reading, conducting oral preview-review of text content, engaging students in oral paraphrasing and summarizing of texts).
- (6) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit writing activities that develop and reinforce comprehension of expository/informational texts (e.g., summarizing, paraphrasing, developing graphic organizers).
- (7) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for promoting students' development of study skills (e.g., outlining, note taking) and ability to locate, retrieve, and retain information from reference materials and expository/informational texts.
- (8) Demonstrate knowledge of explicit instructional strategies for promoting students' development of research skills (e.g., identifying research topics, asking and evaluating questions, developing an academic argument, using multiple sources when conducting research, using technology to manage information, paraphrasing information).
- (9) Demonstrate knowledge of how to address the full range of learners in the classroom with respect to their comprehension of expository/informational texts and their development of study skills and research skills (i.e., Universal Access). For example:

- a. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to address the needs of struggling readers and students with reading difficulties or disabilities (e.g., focusing on key content, skills, and strategies; reteaching content-area vocabulary, language structures, and background knowledge that are lacking; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a concept or task; providing additional practice; as needed, providing access to grade-level texts through oral presentation, such as reading a text aloud to students and then discussing it with them)
 - b. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to support students with special needs (e.g., building background knowledge; focusing on key content-area vocabulary; focusing on the key ideas in a text; using a variety of concrete examples to explain a new concept or task; presenting new concepts and vocabulary using visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile techniques; reteaching skills and concepts that are lacking; providing additional practice with appropriate-level expository/informational texts; as needed, providing access to grade-level texts through oral presentation, such as reading a text aloud to students and then discussing it with them)
 - c. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to address the needs of English Learners and speakers of nonstandard English (e.g., using explicit modeling and scaffolding strategies)
 - d. providing differentiated instruction in these areas of reading to address the needs of advanced learners (e.g., increasing the pace and/or complexity of instruction; using more advanced and/or multiple texts; building on and extending current knowledge, skills, and abilities; extending the depth and breadth of assignments)
- (10) Demonstrate knowledge and ability in assessment (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment) with respect to comprehension of expository/informational texts and development of study skills and research skills. For example:
- a. demonstrating ability to describe and use appropriate formal and informal assessments in these areas of reading for different assessment purposes (i.e., entry-level assessment, monitoring of progress, and summative assessment)
 - b. demonstrating ability to analyze and interpret results from these assessments
 - c. demonstrating ability to use the results of assessments to plan effective instruction and interventions with respect to comprehension of expository/ informational texts and development of study skills and research skills, adjust instruction and interventions to meet the identified needs of students, and ultimately determine whether relevant standards have been met

Appendix C

Current RICA Content Specifications

DOMAIN I:

PLANNING AND ORGANIZING READING INSTRUCTION BASED ON ONGOING ASSESSMENT

CONTENT AREA 1: Conducting Ongoing Assessment of Reading Development

Ongoing assessment of reading development refers to the use of multiple measures and the ongoing analysis of individual, small-group, and class progress in order to plan effective instruction and, when necessary, classroom interventions. All instruction should be based on information acquired through valid assessment procedures. Students must be able to recognize their own reading strengths and needs and be able to apply strategies for increasing their own reading competence. Teachers must be able to use and interpret a variety of informal and formal assessment tools and communicate assessment data effectively to students, parents, guardians, school personnel, and others.

1.1 **Principles of assessment.** The beginning teacher knows how to collect and use assessment data from multiple measures on an ongoing basis to inform instructional decisions. The teacher is able to select and administer informal reading assessments in all areas of reading and to analyze the results of both informal and formal reading assessments to plan reading instruction.

1.2 **Assessing reading levels.** The beginning teacher is able to use a variety of informal measures to determine students' independent, instructional, and frustration levels of reading. The teacher conducts these assessments throughout the school year and uses the results to select materials and plan and implement effective instruction for individuals and small and large groups in all areas of reading.

1.3 **Using and communicating assessment results.** The beginning teacher knows what evidence demonstrates that a student is performing below, at, or above expected levels of performance based on content standards and applies this information when interpreting and using assessment results. The teacher is able to recognize when a student needs additional help in one or more areas of reading, plans and implements timely interventions to address identified needs, and recognizes when a student may need additional help beyond the classroom. The teacher is able to communicate assessment results and reading progress to students, parents, guardians, school personnel, and others.

CONTENT AREA 2: Planning, Organizing, and Managing Reading Instruction

Planning, organizing, and managing reading instruction refer to teacher practices necessary for delivering an effective, balanced, comprehensive reading program. Students' reading development is supported by a well-planned and organized program that is based on content and performance standards in reading and responsive to the needs of individual students. Students must develop as proficient readers in order to become effective learners and take advantage of the many lifelong benefits of reading. Teachers need to understand how to plan, organize, manage, and differentiate instruction to support all students' reading development.

2.1 **Factors involved in planning reading instruction.** The beginning teacher is able to plan instruction based on state and local content and performance standards in reading. The teacher knows the

components of a balanced, comprehensive reading program (see Content Areas 1 and 3 through 13) and the interrelationships among these components. The teacher is able to do short- and long-term planning in reading and develop reading lessons that reflect knowledge of the standards and understanding of a balanced, comprehensive reading program. The teacher reflects on his or her reading instruction and uses this and other professional development resources and activities to plan effective reading instruction.

2.2 Organizing and managing reading instruction. The beginning teacher understands that the goal of reading instruction is to develop reading competence in all students, including English language learners, speakers of non-mainstream English, and students with special needs, and the teacher knows how to manage, organize, and differentiate instruction in all areas of reading to accomplish this goal (e.g., by using flexible grouping, individualizing reading instruction, planning and implementing timely interventions, and providing differentiated and/or individualized instruction). The teacher knows how to select and use instructional materials and create a learning environment that promotes student reading (e.g., by organizing independent and instructional reading materials and effectively managing their use, by taking advantage of resources and equipment within the school and the larger educational community).

DOMAIN II:

DEVELOPING PHONOLOGICAL AND OTHER LINGUISTIC PROCESSES RELATED TO READING

CONTENT AREA 3: Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness is the conscious awareness that words are made up of individual speech sounds (phonemes), and it is strongly related to reading achievement. To become effective readers, students must be able to perceive and produce the specific sounds of the English language and understand how the sound system works. Therefore, teachers must understand how and why phonemic awareness skills develop both before students are reading and as they are learning to read. Teachers need to know how to plan implicit and systematic, explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and how to choose a variety of materials and activities that provide clear examples for the identification, comparison, blending, substitution, deletion, and segmentation of sounds. Teachers need to analyze students' spoken language development in order to match instruction with the students' needs.

3.1 Assessing phonemic awareness. The beginning teacher knows how to assess students' auditory awareness, discrimination of sounds, and spoken language for the purpose of planning instruction in phonemic awareness that meets students' needs.

3.2 The role of phonemic awareness. The beginning teacher knows ways in which phonemic awareness is related to reading achievement both before students are reading and as they are learning to read. The teacher understands the instructional progression for helping students acquire phonemic awareness skills (i.e., words, syllables, onsets and rimes, and phonemes).

3.3 Developing phonemic awareness. The beginning teacher is able to promote students' understanding that words are made up of sounds. The teacher knows how to achieve this goal by delivering appropriate, motivating instruction, both implicitly and explicitly, in auditory awareness and discrimination of sounds, phoneme awareness (e.g., teaching students how to rhyme, blend, substitute, segment, and delete sounds in words), and word awareness (i.e., recognition of word boundaries). The teacher is able to select materials and activities for teaching phonemic awareness skills that are appropriate for students at different stages of reading development.

CONTENT AREA 4: Concepts About Print

Concepts about print refer to an understanding of how letters, words, and sentences are represented in written language, and these concepts play a critical role in students' learning to read. Students need to understand that ideas can be represented in print forms and that print forms may have unique characteristics that differ from oral representations of those same ideas. Teachers need to know that if a student does not demonstrate understanding of concepts about print and the written language system, then these concepts must be explicitly taught.

4.1 **Assessing concepts about print.** The beginning teacher is able to assess students' understanding of concepts about print and knows how to use assessment results to plan appropriate instruction in this area.

4.2 **Concepts about print.** The beginning teacher knows the instructional progression of concepts about print (e.g., sentence, word, and letter representation; directionality; tracking of print; understanding that print carries meaning). The teacher is able to select appropriate materials and activities and to provide effective instruction in these concepts.

4.3 **Letter recognition.** The beginning teacher knows the importance of teaching upper- and lower-case letter recognition and is able to select, design, and use engaging materials and activities, including multisensory techniques (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile), to help students recognize letter shapes and learn the names of letters.

CONTENT AREA 5: Systematic, Explicit Phonics and Other Word Identification Strategies

Systematic, explicit phonics and other word identification strategies refer to an organized program in which letter-sound correspondences for letters and letter clusters are taught directly in a manner that gradually builds from basic elements to more complex patterns. Word identification strategies build on phoneme awareness and concepts about print. Skillful and strategic word identification plays a critical role in rapid, accurate decoding; reading fluency; and comprehension. Students must understand the alphabetic principle and conventions of written language so that they are able to apply these skills automatically when reading. Teachers must provide systematic, explicit instruction in phonics and other word identification strategies.

5.1 **Assessing phonics and other word identification strategies.** The beginning teacher is able to select and use a variety of appropriate informal and formal assessments to determine students' knowledge of and skills in applying phonics and other word identification strategies, including decoding tests, fluency checks (rate and accuracy), and sight word checks. The teacher is able to use this information to plan appropriate instruction.

5.2 **Explicit phonics instruction.** The beginning teacher knows that rapid, automatic decoding contributes to reading fluency and comprehension. The teacher is able to plan and implement systematic, explicit phonics instruction that is sequenced according to the increasing complexity of linguistic units. These units include phonemes, onsets and rimes, letters, letter combinations, syllables, and morphemes. The teacher is able to select published and teacher-developed instructional programs, materials, and activities that will be effective in the systematic, explicit teaching of phonics.

5.3 **Developing fluency.** The beginning teacher knows how to help students develop fluency and consolidate their word identification strategies through frequent opportunities to read and reread decodable texts and other texts written at their independent reading levels. The teacher is able to select appropriate texts for supporting students' development of reading fluency.

5.4 **Word identification strategies.** The beginning teacher is able to model and explicitly teach students to use word identification strategies in reading for meaning, including graphophonic cues, syllable division, and morphology (e.g., use of affixes and roots), and to use context cues (semantic and syntactic) to resolve ambiguity. The teacher is able to select materials for teaching decoding and word identification strategies and knows how to model self-correction strategies and provide positive, explicit, corrective feedback for word identification errors.

5.5 **Sight words.** The beginning teacher is able to provide opportunities for mastery of common, irregular sight words through multiple and varied reading and writing experiences. The teacher is able to select materials and activities to develop and reinforce students' knowledge of sight words.

5.6 **Terminology.** The beginning teacher knows the terminology and concepts of decoding and other word identification strategies (e.g., consonant blends, consonant digraphs, vowel patterns, syllable patterns, orthography, morphology), and knows how phonemes, onsets and rimes, syllables, and morphemes are represented in print.

CONTENT AREA 6: Spelling Instruction

Spelling maps sounds to print. Spelling knowledge and word identification skills are strongly related. Students' knowledge of orthographic (spelling) patterns contributes to their word recognition, vocabulary development, and written expression. Teachers need to know the stages of spelling and be able to provide meaningful spelling instruction that includes systematic, explicit teaching of orthographic patterns (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, syllable patterns), morphology, etymology, and high-frequency words.

6.1 **Assessing spelling.** The beginning teacher is able to analyze and interpret students' spelling to assess their stages of spelling development (pre-phonetic, phonetic, transitional, conventional) and to use that information to plan appropriate spelling instruction.

6.2 **Systematic spelling instruction.** The beginning teacher is able to use a systematic plan for spelling instruction that relates to students' stages of spelling development. The teacher knows how to select spelling words and use deliberate, multisensory techniques to teach and reinforce spelling patterns. The teacher knows how the etymology and morphology of words relate to orthographic patterns in English, knows high-frequency words that do and do not conform to regular spelling patterns, and is able to utilize this knowledge in planning and implementing systematic spelling instruction.

6.3 **Spelling instruction in context.** The beginning teacher knows how to teach spelling in context and provides students with opportunities to apply and assess their spelling skills across the curriculum. The teacher knows how to plan spelling instruction that supports students' reading development (e.g., phonics skills, knowledge of morphology, vocabulary development) and writing development (e.g., use of decoding skills as a strategy for proofreading their spelling). The teacher is able to identify spelling words that support and reinforce instruction in these areas.

**DOMAIN III:
DEVELOPING READING COMPREHENSION AND PROMOTING INDEPENDENT READING**

CONTENT AREA 7: Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension refers to reading with understanding. Reading fluency and reading comprehension are necessary for learning in all content areas, sustaining interest in what is read, and deriving pleasure from reading. The end goal of reading instruction is to enable students to read with understanding and apply comprehension strategies to different types of texts for a variety of lifetime reading purposes. Effective readers produce evidence of comprehension by clarifying the ideas presented in text and connecting them to other sources, including their own background knowledge. Teachers need to be able to facilitate students' comprehension and provide them with explicit instruction and guided practice in comprehension strategies.

7.1 **Assessing reading comprehension.** The beginning teacher is able to use informal and formal procedures to assess students' comprehension of narrative and expository texts and their use of comprehension strategies. The teacher knows how to use this information to provide effective instruction in reading comprehension.

7.2 **Fluency and other factors affecting comprehension.** The beginning teacher understands factors affecting reading comprehension (e.g., reading rate and fluency, word recognition, prior knowledge and experiences, vocabulary) and knows how proficient readers read. The teacher is able to use this knowledge to plan and deliver effective instruction in reading comprehension.

7.3 **Facilitating comprehension.** The beginning teacher is able to facilitate comprehension at various stages of students' reading development (e.g., before students learn to read, as they are learning to read, and as they become proficient readers). The teacher is able to select and use a range of activities and strategies before, during, and after reading to enhance students' comprehension (e.g., developing background knowledge, encouraging predictions, questioning, conducting discussions).

7.4 **Different levels of comprehension.** The beginning teacher knows the levels of comprehension and is able to model and explicitly teach comprehension skills. These include (a) literal comprehension skills (e.g., identifying explicitly stated main ideas, details, sequence, cause-effect relationships, and patterns); (b) inferential comprehension skills (e.g., inferring main ideas, details, comparisons, cause-effect relationships not explicitly stated; drawing conclusions or generalizations from a text; predicting outcomes); and (c) evaluative comprehension skills (e.g., recognizing instances of bias and unsupported inferences in texts; detecting propaganda and faulty reasoning; distinguishing between facts and opinions; reacting to a text's content, characters, and use of language). The teacher is able to select materials (both narrative and expository texts) to support effective instruction in these areas.

7.5 **Comprehension strategies.** The beginning teacher is able to model and explicitly teach a range of strategies students can use to clarify the meaning of text (e.g., self-monitoring, rereading, note taking, outlining, summarizing, mapping, using learning logs). The teacher knows how to select materials and create opportunities for guided and independent practice using comprehension strategies.

CONTENT AREA 8: Literary Response and Analysis

Literary response and analysis refer to a process in which students extend their understanding and appreciation of significant literary works representing a wide range of genres, perspectives, eras, and cultures. Literature provides readers with unique opportunities to reflect on their own experiences, investigate further ranges of human experience, gain access to unfamiliar worlds, and develop their own imaginative capacities. Students who are fully engaged in literature find a rich medium in which to explore language. Teachers need to provide explicit instruction and guided practice in responding to literature and analyzing literary text structures and elements.

8.1 Assessing literary response and analysis. The beginning teacher is able to assess students' responses to literature (e.g., making personal connections, analyzing text, providing evidence from text to support their responses) and use that information to plan appropriate instruction in these areas.

8.2 Responding to literature. The beginning teacher is able to select literature from a range of eras, perspectives, and cultures and provides students with frequent opportunities to listen to and read high-quality literature for different purposes. The teacher knows how to use a range of instructional approaches and activities for helping students apply comprehension strategies when reading literature and for developing students' responses to literature (e.g., using guided reading, reading logs, and discussions about literature; encouraging students to connect elements in a text to other sources, including other texts, their experiences, and their background knowledge).

8.3 Literary analysis. The beginning teacher knows and can teach elements of literary analysis and criticism (e.g., describing and analyzing story elements, recognizing features of different literary genres, determining mood and theme, analyzing the use of figurative language, analyzing ways in which a literary work reflects the traditions and perspectives of a particular people or time period). The teacher is able to select literature that provides clear examples of these elements and that matches students' instructional needs and reading interests.

CONTENT AREA 9: Content-Area Literacy

Content-area literacy refers to the ability to learn through reading. Learning in all content areas is supported by strong reading comprehension strategies and study skills. Students need to know how to apply a variety of reading comprehension strategies to different types of texts, analyze the structures and features of expository (informational) texts, and select and vary their reading strategies for different texts and purposes. Teachers need to model and provide explicit instruction in these skills and strategies and provide students with frequent opportunities for guided and independent practice using them.

9.1 Assessing content-area literacy. The beginning teacher is able to assess students' comprehension in content-area reading and use that information to provide effective instruction.

9.2 Different types of texts and purposes for reading. The beginning teacher knows and is able to teach students about different types and functions of text and the skills and strategies required for reading and comprehending different types of texts. The teacher is able to select texts that provide clear examples of common text structures (i.e., cause/effect, comparison/contrast, problem/solution) and knows how to model and explicitly teach students to use text structures to improve their comprehension and memory of expository texts. The teacher is able to model and teach reading strategies for different reading purposes (e.g., skimming, scanning, in-depth reading).

9.3 **Study skills.** The beginning teacher is able to model and explicitly teach study skills for locating and retrieving information from reference materials and content-area texts, for retaining and using information, and for test taking.

CONTENT AREA 10: Student Independent Reading

Independent reading plays a critical role in promoting students' familiarity with language patterns, increasing fluency and vocabulary, broadening knowledge in content areas, and motivating further reading for information and pleasure. Independent reading improves reading performance. To become effective readers, students should be encouraged to read as frequently, broadly, and thoughtfully as possible. Teachers need to understand the importance of independent reading and know how to encourage and guide students in their independent reading.

10.1 **Encouraging independent reading.** The beginning teacher is able to determine each student's reading interests and preferences, survey the quantity and quality of students' reading, consider each student's independent reading level, and use that information to promote extensive independent reading. The teacher promotes student reading that extends beyond the core curriculum by providing daily opportunities for self-selected reading and frequent opportunities for sharing what is read. The teacher knows how to guide students in selecting independent reading materials and how to motivate students to read independently by regularly reading aloud to students from high-quality texts, providing access to a variety of reading materials, and suggesting texts that match student interests.

10.2 **Supporting at-home reading.** The beginning teacher is able to use a variety of strategies to motivate students to read at home. The teacher encourages and provides support for parents or guardians to read to their children, in English and/or in the primary languages of English language learners, and/or to use additional strategies to promote literacy in the home. The teacher is able to select and organize, for various purposes, a range of reading materials at different levels in English and, when available, in the primary language(s) of the students in the classroom.

DOMAIN IV: SUPPORTING READING THROUGH ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

CONTENT AREA 11: Relationships Among Reading, Writing, and Oral Language

An effective, comprehensive language arts program increases students' language facility through relevant daily opportunities to relate listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Reading is supported by effective writing, listening, and speaking instruction, and the goal of language arts instruction is to fully develop students' communication skills. Students must be able to connect reading, writing, listening, and speaking tasks to their experiences, intentions, and purposes. Teachers need to be aware of the interdependent nature of reading, writing, listening, and speaking and be able to use interrelated instruction in the four areas to promote reading proficiency.

11.1 **Assessing oral and written language.** The beginning teacher is able to informally assess students' oral and written language and use that information when planning reading instruction.

11.2 **Oral language development.** The beginning teacher knows how to provide formal and informal oral language opportunities across the curriculum that enhance students' development as readers (e.g., through language play, group discussions, questioning, and sharing information). The teacher helps students make connections between their oral language and reading and writing.

11.3 **Written language development.** The beginning teacher is able to provide purposeful writing opportunities across the curriculum to enhance students' reading development. The teacher explicitly teaches the transfer of skills from oral language to written language. The teacher provides instruction in which reading, writing, and oral language are interrelated.

11.4 **Supporting English language learners.** The beginning teacher is able to interrelate the elements of language arts instruction to support the reading development of English language learners (e.g., using preview-review, visual aids, charts, real objects, word organizers, graphic organizers, and outlining). The teacher knows general ways in which the writing systems of other languages may differ from English (e.g., that not all writing systems are alphabetic, that English is less regular phonetically than some other alphabetic languages). The teacher understands factors and processes involved in transferring literacy competencies from one language to another (e.g., positive and negative transfer) and uses knowledge of language similarities and differences to promote transfer of language skills (e.g., through scaffolding strategies, modeling, and explicit instruction).

CONTENT AREA 12: Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary constitutes the building blocks of language. Vocabulary knowledge plays a critical role in reading comprehension, and readers learn most vocabulary through wide reading. Students need to know how to use a range of strategies, including those involving word analysis, context, and syntax, that promote reading fluency and enable independent comprehension, interpretation, and application of words contained in narrative and expository text. Upon entering school, students have a listening and speaking vocabulary that forms the foundation for vocabulary and comprehension instruction. Teachers need to build upon this foundation by providing explicit instruction in vocabulary development and in determining the meaning and accurate use of unfamiliar words encountered through listening and reading.

12.1 **Assessing vocabulary knowledge.** The beginning teacher is able to informally assess students' vocabulary knowledge in relation to specific reading needs and texts and is able to use that information to plan appropriate vocabulary instruction.

12.2 **Increasing vocabulary knowledge.** The beginning teacher knows how to provide opportunities for students to increase their vocabulary by listening to and reading a variety of texts and encourages students to apply their vocabulary knowledge in new contexts. The teacher is able to select vocabulary words on the basis of appropriate criteria (e.g., words that are related to each other, words needed to comprehend a reading selection). The teacher knows how to select appropriate instructional materials (e.g., read-aloud materials that promote vocabulary development and lay the foundation for complex language structures) and is able to teach vocabulary using a range of instructional activities (e.g., word sorts, word banks, classification, semantic mapping).

12.3 **Strategies for gaining and extending meanings of words.** The beginning teacher is able to model and explicitly teach students a variety of strategies for gaining meaning from unfamiliar words, such as using word analysis (e.g., decoding, prefixes and suffixes, base words, roots), context, and syntax. The teacher knows how to select and use materials and activities that help students extend their understanding of words, including words with multiple meanings. The teacher is able to provide instruction in the use of reference materials that can help clarify the meaning of words (e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, glossary, technological sources).

CONTENT AREA 13: Structure of the English Language

Structure of the English language refers to established rules for the use of the language. Students' knowledge of the structure of English promotes their reading fluency, listening and reading comprehension, and oral and written expression. Students must be able to recognize, when listening or reading, and apply, when speaking or writing, English language conventions and structures. Teachers need a basic knowledge of English conventions and the structure of the English language (sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, syntax, and semantics) and must be able to provide instruction in these areas to enhance students' literacy skills.

13.1 **Assessing English language structures.** The beginning teacher is able to analyze students' oral and written language to determine their understanding and use of English language structures and conventions and knows how to use this information to plan appropriate instruction.

13.2 **Differences between written and oral English.** The beginning teacher is able to help students understand similarities and differences between language structures used in spoken and written English. The teacher knows how to use explicit instruction and guided practice to teach written-language structures to all students. The teacher uses a range of approaches and activities to develop students' facility in comprehending and using academic language (e.g., oral language development activities to build knowledge of academic language and familiarize students with grammatical structures they will encounter in written text).

13.3 **Applying knowledge of the English language to improve reading.** The beginning teacher has a basic knowledge of English syntax and semantics and is able to use this knowledge to improve students' reading competence (e.g., by teaching students to group words into meaningful phrases to increase reading fluency and comprehension, by teaching students to analyze how punctuation affects a text's meaning). The beginning teacher knows how to help students interpret and apply English grammar and language conventions in authentic reading, writing, listening, and speaking contexts. The teacher is able to help students consolidate their knowledge of English grammar and improve their reading fluency and comprehension by providing frequent opportunities to listen to, read, and reread materials that provide clear examples of specific English grammatical structures and conventions.

Appendix D

Proposed Weighting of the Draft RICA Content Specifications

Domain	Competencies in the Sub-Domains	Weighting
Domain 1: Planning, Organizing, and Managing Reading Instruction Based on Ongoing Assessment	1: Understand how to plan, organize, and manage standards-based reading instruction.	10%
	2: Understand the purposes of reading assessment and best practices related to standards-based entry-level assessment, monitoring or student progress, and summative assessment.	
Domain 2: Word Analysis	3: Understand the role of phonological and phonemic awareness in reading development and how to develop students' phonological and phonemic awareness skills.	33%
	4: Understand the role of concepts about print, letter recognition, and the alphabetic principle in reading development and how to develop students' knowledge and skills in these areas.	
	5: Understand important terminology and concepts involved in phonics instruction and recognize the role of phonics and sight words in reading development.	
	6: Understand how to develop students' phonics knowledge and skills and recognition of sight words to promote accurate word analysis that leads to automaticity in word recognition and contributes to spelling development.	
	7: Understand the role of syllabic and structural analysis and orthographic knowledge in reading development and how to develop students' knowledge and skills in these areas to promote accurate word analysis that leads to automaticity in word recognition and contributes to spelling development.	
Domain 3: Fluency	8: Understand the role of fluency in reading development and factors that affect students' development of fluency.	13%
	9: Understand how to promote students' fluency development.	
Domain 4: Vocabulary, Academic Language, and Background Knowledge	10: Understand the role of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge in reading development and factors that affect students' development of vocabulary, academic language and background knowledge.	20%
	11: Understand how to promote students' development of vocabulary, academic language, and background knowledge.	
Domain 5: Comprehension	12: Understand literal, inferential, and evaluative comprehension and factors affecting reading comprehension.	23%
	13: Understand how to facilitate reading comprehension by providing instruction that prepares students for the reading task, scaffolds them as needed through the reading process, and prepares them to respond to what they have read.	
	14: Understand how to promote students' comprehension and analysis of narrative/literary texts and their development of literary response skills.	
	15: Understand how to promote students' comprehension of expository/informational texts and their development of study skills and research skills.	

Appendix E

Weighting of Current RICA Content Specifications

Domain	Competencies in the Sub-Domains	Weighting
Domain I: Planning and Organizing Reading Instruction Based on Ongoing Assessment	1. Conducting Ongoing Assessment Of Reading Development	20%
	2. Planning, Organizing, and Managing Reading Instruction	
Domain II: Developing Phonological and Other Linguistic Processes Related to Reading	3. Phonemic Awareness	30%
	4. Concepts About Print	
	5. Systematic, Explicit Phonics and Other Word Identification Strategies	
	6. Spelling Instruction	
Domain III: Developing Reading Comprehension and Promoting Independent Reading	7. Reading Comprehension	30%
	8. Literary Response and Analysis	
	9. Content-Area Literacy	
	10. Student Independent Reading	
Domain IV: Supporting Reading through Oral and Written Language Development	11. Relationships Among Reading, Writing, and Oral Language	20%
	12. Vocabulary Development	
	13. Structure of the English Language	