

## TEACHING FOR UNDERSTANDING: “ROADMAPPING” DCPS STANDARDS

In order to teach content standards, teachers and others involved in implementing standards in DCPS classrooms need strategies for identifying just what the standards mean and how to impart them effectively to students. Among other strategies, DCPS has adopted a process to create classroom “roadmaps” for its standards, adapted from the work of Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, authors of *Understanding by Design*.

While teachers throughout the district will be involved in this methodology, curriculum writing teams have developed the following exemplar roadmaps in reading/English language arts and mathematics for each grade. A blank template also is available for teacher use (and can be downloaded from the DCPS Web site).

Here is a brief explanation of the roadmapping process:

The first step is to “unwrap” the standards for the purpose of determining the critical concepts and skills contained within them. The second step is to identify the “Big Ideas,” or enduring understandings, from the identified concepts and skills. The Big Ideas offer a broad perspective, purpose, and rationale. They explain what students are doing and why or how their work today relates to larger ideas. The Big Ideas are what we want students to discover and remember long after instruction ends.

With these Big Ideas clearly in mind, we formulate “Essential Questions” to share with students at the inception of an instructional unit. Essential Questions are provocative and important to discuss and debate; they engage inquiry, run to the heart of the subject, and raise important conceptual or philosophical issues. These questions are meant to probe and stimulate student reflection and rethinking. They also guide educators in the selection of lessons and activities that will advance student understanding of the unwrapped concepts and skills. The goal is for students to be able to reflect on the Essential Questions and to state the Big Ideas *in their own words* by the conclusion of an instructional unit.

Each roadmap includes a learning context that embeds the learning of practical skills and concepts within “Engaging Scenarios” that draw learners in and make them think, reflect, and decide. Engaging Scenarios bring the outside world into the classroom and provide the context for applying the standard. The purpose of including Engaging Scenarios is to demonstrate that learning can be made much more interesting than just flipping pages, viewing static graphics, and responding to multiple choice questions at the end of an advisory. They should motivate the student to get involved and answer the question “Why are we doing this?”

"Performance Tasks" are meaningful activities that require a range of behaviors, employing both lower and higher order thinking skills, and enable students to demonstrate their knowledge of the standard. In identifying Performance Tasks, we look for authentic activities, exercises, or problems that require students to create a response to a problem and then explain or defend it rather than simply select an answer from a ready-made list.

"Performance Assessments" are guides that make it clear to students exactly what they are expected to know and do. They fit hand in glove with the performance tasks and should cause students to demonstrate the degree to which they have mastered the standard that drives each roadmap.

Roadmapping standards is a powerful practice that is central to the work of teachers, the students, classroom activities, and the norms and cultures of classrooms across the district. For further information on each component of the roadmap, see "Making StandardsWork," by the Center for Performance Assessment.

# “STANDARDS IN ACTION” ROADMAPS – READING/ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

STANDARD:

SUPPORTING/CONNECTING STANDARDS:

GRADE:

UNIT NAME & ADVISORY PERIOD:

Concepts:

Skills:

Suggested Big Ideas (3):

Suggested Essential Questions (4-6):

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Suggested Performance Tasks:

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Suggested Engaging Scenarios:

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Suggested Performance Assessment(s):

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Suggested Resources:

Textbook Materials:

Supplementary Materials:

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# “STANDARDS IN ACTION” ROADMAPS – READING/ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

## STANDARD:

**4.EL.4.** Identify and employ correct usage for regular and irregular verbs, adverbs, prepositions, and coordinating conjunctions, and comparative and superlative adjectives.

## SUPPORTING/CONNECTING STANDARDS:

**4.EL.1.** Identify the four basic parts of speech (adjective, noun, verb, and adverb).

**4.LD-V.14.** Determine meanings and other features of words (e.g., pronunciation, syllabication, parts of speech) using intermediate-level dictionaries and thesauri.

## GRADE:

4

## UNIT NAME & ADVISORY PERIOD:

Unit 4: Problem Solvers — Third Advisory

## Concepts:

Verbs, adverbs, prepositions, coordinating conjunctions, comparative adjectives, superlative adjectives

## Skills:

Identify, employ, use

## Suggested Big Ideas:

- Parts of speech are the building blocks of our language.
- Effectively identifying the roles words play in sentences helps us to understand and apply grammar rules properly.
- Understanding a word’s purpose helps to construct, analyze, and understand sentences and their meaning.

## Suggested Essential Questions:

- Why study the parts of speech?
- Why should we identify and use different types of words in sentences?
- What is the relationship between a word’s purpose and a sentence?

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**Suggested Performance Tasks:**

- Students will identify each term and learn how it is used in a sentence.
- Students will write and diagram sentences using the parts of speech.
- Students will identify parts of speech in a short passage or text.
- Students will discuss the task and perform a self- and peer-assessment using a teacher generated scoring guide.

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**Suggested Engaging Scenarios:**

- Students are word detectives and they are unraveling sentences to identify and employ the correct usage of the parts of speech.
- Students will choose a card with a word on it and use it to construct a sentence forming a human sentence diagram.
- Students will read the sentence, define the word and its concepts and explain how it is used in the human sentence diagram.
- Students will write a brief reflection on the activity.

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**Suggested Performance Assessment(s):**

Students will create a handbook of the parts of speech which will include definitions, sample sentences, clue words used to identify each term, and reference cites for additional assistance.

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**Suggested Resources:**

Textbook Materials: Houghton Mifflin Reading 2005

Supplementary Materials: Classroom Libraries

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# “STANDARDS IN ACTION” ROADMAPS – READING/ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

## STANDARD:

**4.W-E.6.** Write personal and formal letters that:

- Use appropriate language for different audiences (other students, parents) and purposes (letter to a friend, thank you note, invitation) and
- Include the date, salutation, body, closing, and signature.

## SUPPORTING/CONNECTING STANDARDS:

**4.W-R.7.** Revise writing to improve word choice (using dictionaries, thesauri) and level of detail after determining what could be added or deleted.

**4.EL.2.** Identify and use correct punctuation, including dates, locations, and addresses; apostrophes in possessives and contractions; and underlining, quotations, or italics to identify titles.

GRADE:	UNIT NAME & ADVISORY PERIOD:
4	Unit 4: Problem Solvers — Third Advisory

### Concepts:

Personal letters, formal, letters, language, audiences, purposes, date, salutation, body, closing, signature

### Skills:

Write, use, include

### Suggested Big Ideas:

- Letter writing is an effective form of communication.
- There are specific formats for formal and personal letters.
- Writing helps one to become a critical thinker and creative communicator, and it helps one to understand how language works.

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**Suggested Essential Questions:**

- Why write?
- Why write letters?
- How do we write letters?

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**Suggested Performance Tasks:**

- Students develop a list of reasons why recycling is a good school/community project.
- Students review elements of a personal and business letter.
- Students select three to four reasons why a recycling project is needed in the school/community.
- Students compose first drafts of letters to neighbors, city and public officials, and the school.
- Students share letters with peers and perform a self- and peer assessment using a teacher-generated scoring guide.
- Use feedback from peers and scoring guide to identify areas that need improvement and redraft letters.
- Students write a reflection on the letter writing activity.

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**Suggested Engaging Scenarios:**

- Students brainstorm reasons why recycling is a good school/community project.
- Students collect data, survey the community, and organize information to include in letters.
- Students choose to either be a community activist or a public official writing or responding to a letter.
- Students read and respond to a letter from a neighbor regarding the recycling efforts.
- Students use peer feedback and a teacher generated scoring guide to identify areas that need improvement.

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**Suggested Performance Assessment:**

Students will take on the role of a public official or community activist and write letters to respective parties concerning recycling in the school/community.

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**Suggested Resources:**

Textbook Materials: Houghton Mifflin Reading 2005

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# “STANDARDS IN ACTION” ROADMAPS – READING/ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

## STANDARD:

**4.BR-F.1.** Read aloud from familiar literary and informational text fluently, accurately, and with comprehension, using appropriate timing, change in voice, and expression.

## SUPPORTING/CONNECTING STANDARDS:

**4.LT-G.3.** Apply knowledge of different forms of literature as a strategy for reading and writing.

**4.LD-O.8.** Use teacher- and student-generated assessment criteria to assess presentation.

**4.LD-O.2.** Summarize major ideas and supporting evidence presented in spoken messages and formal presentation.

## GRADE:

4

## UNIT NAME & ADVISORY PERIOD:

Unit 4: Problem Solvers — Third Advisory

## Concepts:

Literary Text, informational text, comprehension, timing, expression, voice

## Skills:

Read (aloud), change

## Suggested Big Ideas:

- Reading aloud helps to develop oral language and literacy.
- When we read orally, we can practice applying word attack and word recognition strategies.
- Effective oral reading requires an individual to use appropriate timing, change in voice, expression, fluency and comprehension.

## Suggested Essential Questions:

- Why do we read aloud?
- How does oral reading enhance the reading process?
- How does effective reading sound?

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**Suggested Performance Tasks:**

- Students participate in a poetry reading contest.
- Students select a poem designed to entertain or to inform the audience.
- Students discuss the meaning of the poem with classmates.
- Students practice reading the poem focusing on fluency, expression, change in voice, and timing.
- Students recite poem before an audience of their peers.
- Peer-assessment of the presentation using teacher- and student-generated scoring guides.

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**Suggested Engaging Scenarios:**

- Students partner with a local retirement home to read previously selected poems or short excerpts from text.
- Students practice reading their selection focusing on timing, expression, change in voice, and fluency.
- Students read to residents of local retirement home.
- Students discuss activity and write a brief reflection on the experience.

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**Suggested Performance Assessment(s):**

- Students will choose a poem to read orally to an audience of their peers.
- Students will use change in voice, expression, timing, and fluency.
- Students will explain how oral reading enhanced or produced a better understanding of the text.
- Students will perform a peer assessment of the presentation using teacher- and student-generated scoring guide.

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**Suggested Resources:**

Textbook Materials: Selections from Houghton Mifflin Reading 2005: Theme 3, Problem Solvers and Focus on Genre: Poetry

Supplementary Materials: *The Black Poets*, Dudley Randell; *Mississippi Bridge*, Mildred D. Taylor; *Life Doesn't Frighten Me*, Maya Angelou; *Ego Tripping and Other Poems for Young People*, Nikki Giovanni

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# “STANDARDS IN ACTION” ROADMAPS – READING/ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

## STANDARD:

**4.EL.5.** Combine short, related sentences with appositives, participial phrases, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases.

## SUPPORTING/CONNECTING STANDARDS:

**4.EL.4.** Identify and employ correct usage for

- regular and irregular verbs,
- adverbs,
- prepositions and coordinating conjunctions, and
- comparative and superlative adjectives.

**4.LD-O.8.** Use teacher- and student-generated assessment criteria to assess presentations.

**4.W-E.3.** Create paragraphs that:

- establish and support a central idea in a topic sentence at or near the beginning of the paragraph;
- include supporting sentences with simple facts, details, and explanations;
- include a concluding statement that summarizes the points; and
- are indented properly.

GRADE:	UNIT NAME & ADVISORY PERIOD:
4	Unit 5: Heroes— Third Advisory

### Concepts:

Sentences, appositives, participial phrases, adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases

### Skills:

Combine (short, related sentences)

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**Suggested Big Ideas:**

- Short, related sentences can be combined to communicate clearly in writing.
- The correct use of English conventions is essential to both written and spoken language.
- Words and phrases connect ideas.
- Combining words and phrases enhances sentence expression, comprehension, and the written word.

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**Suggested Essential Questions:**

- Why do we combine short, related sentences?
- What is the relationship between words and phrases in a sentence?
- Why is combining short, related sentences effective?

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**Suggested Performance Tasks:**

- Student will draft an opinion paragraph that has a topic sentence, supported by at least four reasons and details.
- Student will create interesting sentences by using words that describe, explain, or provide additional details and connections, such as adjectives, adverbs, appositives, prepositional phrases, and participial phrases.
- Students will discuss and review why it is important to combine sentences using appositives, participial phrases, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases.
- Students will create a graphic organizer showing these words/phrases, complete with definitions, illustrations, and clue words to help student remember these forms.
- Student will perform self- and peer-assessments of the first draft.
- Student will use feedback to rewrite the opinion paragraph.

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**Suggested Engaging Scenarios:**

- Students brainstorm a list of opinion-based topics.
- Student will choose a topic about which he/she has a strong opinion.
- Student will brainstorm reasons why this topic is important and formulate ideas and supporting details for drafting an opinion paragraph.

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**Suggested Performance Assessment(s):**

- Compose an opinion paragraph with at least four to five reasons and details. Students will create interesting and convincing sentences by using words to describe, explain, or provide additional details and connections, such as appositives, adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases, and participial phrases. Students revise paragraphs by combining short, related sentences.
  - Use a teacher- and student-generated scoring guide to assess writing piece.
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Suggested Resources:

Textbook Materials: Holton Mifflin Reading 2005, Theme 4: Problem Solvers, pp. 411K Opinion Paragraph

Supplementary Materials: Great Source (Writer's Express), Making Big Words, [www.eduplace.com](http://www.eduplace.com)

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