OPTION A:
Accountability is a central feature of educational reform. Both teachers and students are being held to increasingly refined standards of performance. As a consequence, teacher certification examinations as well as assessments of student competence (e.g., high stakes tests) have been developed across the country. Write an essay for the state Board of Education. Support or take issue with certification exams and standardized testing as the means for determining teacher and student proficiencies. Make sure you support your argument with facts and suggestions.

OPTION B:
The Third International Math and Science Study revealed that students in the United States perform far worse on tests of math and science than students in other countries. The hypothesized reason for this discrepancy is the difference in teaching pedagogy across cultures. Some educators suggest that the difference lies in curricula that are “a mile wide and an inch deep” in this country vs. “a mile deep and an inch wide” in other countries. Write a composition arguing which approach to teaching science and math you feel will bring the students in the U.S. to a more competitive level. Support your argument using specific examples and current information.

“Language poses multiple problems for education because it is both curriculum content and learning environment--both the object of knowledge and a principal means through which other knowledge is acquired.”

Courtney Cazden (1978)

LANGUAGE IS PART OF THE STORY
But it’s not all of the story
Executive Functions

1. Inhibiting the automatic
2. Planning (the WHAT)
3. Organizing (the HOW)
4. Holding plans in working memory
5. Regulating


Executive Functions

**Task management**
- Planning
- Working memory
- Organizing ideas, behavior, & materials in time
- Sustaining attention & work
- Self-monitoring
- Flexibility

**Self-regulation**
- Inhibiting off-task behavior
- Focusing attention
- Maintaining optimal levels of emotional & cognitive arousal
- Multiple domains: emotion, behavior, cognition, motor, language, engagement

Executive Functions don’t necessarily develop in synchrony

Diamond, A. (2013)

Executive Function Skills Build Throughout Childhood and Adolescence

Executive Functions are minimally engaged when responses are practiced, smooth, or automatic

Talking and writing are NEVER automatic

Weintraub et al., (in press)
When kids can’t write: Instructional strategies for students with language, executive function and anxiety challenges

Bonnie D Singer, Ph.D., CCC
Utah State University. June 2018

“A JUGGLING ACT”

A difficult and/or precarious situation in which several things are being attempted or must be maintained at the same time.

http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/a+juggling+act

Different kinds of writing demand varying amounts and kinds of executive and self-regulatory control

- Diary or journal entry
- What I did on my summer vacation
- Our visit to the zoo
- A comparison of the early Jamestown settlements
- F. Scott Fitzgerald and his era as reflected in The Great Gatsby

Potential Writing Strengths & Weaknesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>EF/SR</th>
<th>SPATIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentence structure</td>
<td>Invoking and understanding various text structures</td>
<td>Invoking and understanding various text structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary knowledge and choices</td>
<td>Identifying “main ideas” vs. “details”</td>
<td>Knowing how to adjust the text to reflect intended meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatics</td>
<td>Planning and organizing ideas</td>
<td>Self-regulating behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience awareness and style choices</td>
<td>Seeing the “flow” of language</td>
<td>Evaluating the draft against original goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic development</td>
<td>Re-organizing and revising</td>
<td>Knowing how to adjust the text to reflect intended meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration</td>
<td>Coordinating the full array of writing skills</td>
<td>Sustaining effort and attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for formulation</td>
<td>Invoking appropriate text structures and writing strategies</td>
<td>Organizing behavior and content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling and rules for word inflections</td>
<td>Planning/goal setting</td>
<td>Expecting and allocating time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Mechanics rules and conventions | Language and visuo-spatial representations.

- Put the spoon in the cup
- Put the coffee in the cup

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“The mailbox is in front of the tree.”


Activity
Describe what the inside of your house looks like

Scardamalia (1981)

“To pay conscious attention to handwriting, spelling, punctuation, word choice, syntax, textual conventions, purpose, organization, clarity, rhythm, euphony, and reader characteristics would seemingly overload the information processing capacity of the best intellects.”

Writing requires an expert air traffic controller

Writing
Language Cognitive Self-Regulatory Executive Memory Social Affective Motor Spatial

Emotional Regulation
Methods of influence relating to the experience and expression of emotion

Conscious & Purposeful → Unconscious & Automatic

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Best tool we have = LANGUAGE

Language and Thought

“Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them.”

(Vygotsky, 1986, p.218)

“The role of speech is as important as the role of action in attaining a goal.”

(Vygotsky, 1978)

Self-talk

Negative  Positive

Counter-productive  Facilitating

Emotions

Arise from the interaction between

physiology  feeling  context

“hard-wired, biological functions of the nervous system that help animals survive in hostile environments and procreate”

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Feelings

• Labels for emotions
• Products of the conscious mind

Fear

An abrupt fight-or-flight response accompanied by intense arousal in response to an immediate and identifiable threat

Anxiety

Uncertainty about a possible future threat that disrupts our ability to avoid or mitigate its negative impact

Similar but not identical

Anxiety is about the FUTURE (Which hasn’t happened yet)

Feeling of apprehension, fear, or stress about what is to come
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Brains have “emotional brakes”

- **Frontal lobe**
  - *inhibits* response to a not really scary/threatening experience
  - *extinguishes* anxiety by re-appraising an event as not really scary/threatening
  - *reappraises* by using cognitive strategies and language to “spin” a new/non-scary interpretation
  - *dampens* amygdala response

**What happens when the “emotional brakes” don’t work**

- Inappropriate emotional responses
- Ineffective regulation of emotions
  - ? PTSD: failure to extinguish the emotion
  - ? Depression: failure to reappraise the emotion

**Brains are made up of parts AND circuits**

**For some, it’s chronic**

- Panic disorder
- Specific phobia
- Post Traumatic Stress disorder
- Social anxiety disorder
- Generalized anxiety disorder
  - **Fear**
  - **Anxiety**
    - Selective Mutism
    - Foreign language anxiety
    - Writing anxiety

**Role of attention in anxiety**

- Individuals diagnosed with anxiety are hypervigilant to threat cues
  - Decreases ability to regulate emotional impact
- Attentional deployment is a mode of emotional regulation

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Yerkes-Dodson Law (1908)

- A process in which the failure of one or few parts in a system of interconnected parts can trigger failure of other parts.
- One part of the system fails, so other parts compensate for the failed component. This overloads these nodes, causing them to fail also, prompting additional nodes to fail one after another.

Cascading Failure

Language and anxiety disorders

We know that some children with language disorders evidence heightened social anxiety in their adult years, but we don’t definitively know WHY

Anxious kids have trouble SOMETIMES, but not ALWAYS. Their capacity is context-dependent, so it fluctuates.

System disconnect

STRESS = Expectations - Capacity
CAPACITY = Ability + Emotional state

Doing something new can make you feel anxious

https://www.principalcenter.com/balancing-stress-equation/
What’s at the root of the problem?

- Demand action
- Insist on a spoken response
- Insist that the child has done this before and can do it again (right now)
- Show your frustration
- Expect anything back but anxiety

Some direction for intervention

- Take your foot off the gas!
- Take a slow, deep breath (It’s contagious)
- Take another one!
- Use a calm voice
- Remember that what you do and say is being encoded into the memory of that feeling
- View the child as capable but stuck
- Bring the anxiety level down, THEN ease back into the task

Take note of what’s consistent

- What are we seeing in session?
- Is that also happening at home?
- Is that also happening in the classroom?
  - Certain classes?
  - Times of the day?
  - What are the triggers?

Behavior is the result, not the cause

Anxiety

“Behavior Problem”

Caused by:

- verbal
- physical
Most common strategies

1. **Suppression**: Ignore or distract attention in an effort to avoid the emotion
   - Goal: alter the frequency or expression of anxiety
   - Result: maintains and increases anxiety!

2. **Avoidance**: Restrict or alter behavior in an attempt to avoid the emotion
   - Goal: alter the frequency or expression of anxiety
   - Result: maintains and increases anxiety!


What drives the use of suppression and avoidance strategies?

- **Relational learning**: elements of a context become related with an emotion
  - Songs, places, etc. elicit emotional pain.

- **Cognitive fusion**: process by which humans become indistinguishable from their internal experiences

Hayes, et al. (1999)

Language can help!

- "Talk yourself off the ledge"
  - Label where you are
  - Re-appraise the situation: do-able/not so scary
  - Set a path of "baby steps" (WITH VISUALS)

- **Invoke calming behaviors**
  - Breathe!
  - Strategies and habits to facilitate a sense of control

Establish a common language

- When the student is **NOT** anxious, build vocabulary about feelings
  - Strong ones
  - Weak ones
  - Extreme ones
  - Neutral ones

- **Establish a feelings rating scale**
  - 10-point, 5-point, colors, comic book characters

Another thing to do

Externalize anxiety as a way of developing the ability to recognize it and ultimately regulate it

Consider seating arrangements to promote a sense of control and safety

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Give kids an escape hatch

Where can they go if they need an out?

Be mindful of what’s visible

Don’t trigger the students’ anxiety before you even start the writing task

More suggestions

• The first goal is just to get something on the page
  – Then rate your experience (e.g., 1-10)
  – May be at this stage for awhile
• Write with your student
  – “We Do” is essential, and often an extended stage
• Start with narrative/creative writing/poetry
  – Use visuals and augment with print
• Break things down
  – Set micro goals and check them off in a visible way
  – Make schedules for micro deadlines
• Don’t expect a quick fix!

Use language to label your experience

• Internal experience
  – How I’m feeling

• External experience
  – What’s going on?

The most important stuff of writing happens before you put a pen to paper.

KEEP CALM AND DON’T FEED THE TROLL
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Instructional Routine

Evaluate

• What do I have to do?

Evaluate: I do it

Imagine a friend asked you, “What was it like for black South Africans living under apartheid?” Write an essay to answer that question. Organize your essay around your description of two aspects of living under apartheid. Save your most important point for last.

Evaluate: We do it

The weather is very cold at this time of the year in New England. The weather is not as cold on the other side of the Earth. In one paragraph, explain how this is possible.

Evaluate: WE do it

Some of your parents’ taxes are given to our public schools. This money supports special programs, like art, music, and sports. Some adults feel that they can’t support their families because their taxes are too high. They want to cut back the money that is spent on special school programs so that they have lower taxes and more money for themselves. Write an essay for the governor. Tell your opinion about whether special school programs should be cut in order to lower taxes. Support your argument with facts and details.

Translate

Psiou tαται τε τρανσλατε την ρεςοτν εντο α σεντενέχε ρηςε τελλα ψω το ΔΟ σομετηηη.

State what you need to DO in your response.

Question

Statement
Translate: I DO

• How are a penguin and a puffin different?

• Many great figures throughout history were forced to overcome great obstacles. In Up From Slavery, by Booker T. Washington, what economic, political, and social obstacles must the characters overcome? How do these ultimately change the quality of their lives?

EVALUATE: Y’All Do..

Analyze and evaluate the disagreement between Martin Luther King (“Letter From a Birmingham Jail”) and Lewis Van Dusen (“Civil Disobedience: Destroyer of Democracy”) over the ethics of civil disobedience. What does each argument, in essence, say? What fundamental disagreements account for their differences of opinion? Who makes the better argument? With whom do you agree?

SOME ACTION WORDS FOR TRANSLATING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>What</th>
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<th>Could</th>
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<td>Why</td>
<td>Where</td>
<td>Should</td>
<td>Can</td>
<td>Would</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluate

• What do I have to do?

• How many parts will my paper need?

What’s a part?

Until about 8th grade:
• Part = Paragraph

After 8th grade:
• Part = Section
Evaluate...

Explain why General Howe made the decision to order the British Army to march to Concord to seize munitions. Tell what other choices General Howe could have made.

Evaluate...

In Great Expectations, Pip’s foster father, Joe, comes to visit Pip in the city. They are distant and Pip is embarrassed by Joe, even though he realizes all that he has done for him. Analyze a time in your own life when you were embarrassed by a family member. How did it make you feel before, during, and after the incident? Do you think Pip was justified in feeling this way?

How many parts?

Some of your parents’ taxes are given to our public schools. This money supports special programs, like art, music, and sports. Some adults feel that they can’t support their families because their taxes are too high. They want to cut back the money that is spent on special school programs so that they have lower taxes and more money for themselves. Write an essay. Tell your opinion about whether special school programs should be cut in order to lower taxes. Support your argument with facts and details.

Evaluate: what’s the point?

The WHAT
Assignment analysis
Task requirements

The GOALS
Text structure
Envision product

1. Self-talk plays a central role in executive control and (by extension) intentional action
2. Expressive language is highly influenced by executive and self-regulatory control as well one’s emotional state
3. When tasks demand more from an individual than they have the capacity to manage, they need direct instruction in the specific strategies, systems, and habits that support doing those tasks
4. SLPs have a rightful role in supporting not only spoken but also written language