



**Reading
Teacher Background Questionnaire**

**2009
Grade 8**

Language Arts Questionnaire – Grade 8

Part I: Background, Education, and Training

For several questions on this survey, you are asked to fill in numbers. For these questions, please print the appropriate number in each of the boxes provided. Please print legibly with a No. 2 pencil. Keep all printing within the boxes, and erase any stray marks.

Using one number per box, fill in every box. For example, 95 students would be written as:

0 9 5

1. Are you Hispanic or Latino? Fill in **one or more ovals**.

VB331330

- A No, I am not Hispanic or Latino.
- B Yes, I am Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano.
- C Yes, I am Puerto Rican or Puerto Rican American.
- D Yes, I am Cuban or Cuban American.
- E Yes, I am from some other Hispanic or Latino background.

2. Which of the following best describes you? Fill in **one or more ovals**.

VB331331

- A White
- B Black or African American
- C Asian
- D American Indian or Alaska Native
- E Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Questions 3–4. For the next two questions, include any full-time teaching assignments, part-time teaching assignments, and long-term substitute assignments, but not student teaching.

VB337243

3. Counting this year, how many years have you worked as an elementary or secondary teacher? If less than 4 months total experience, enter “00.”

Years

VB380355

4. Counting this year, how many years have you taught reading, writing, or language arts in grades 6 through 12? If less than 4 months total experience, enter “00.”

Years

VC309863

5. Did you enter teaching through an alternative certification program?

(An alternative program is a program that was designed to expedite the transition of non-teachers to a teaching career, for example, a state, district, or university alternative certification program.)

- A Yes
 B No

VC309874

6. What type of teaching certificate do you hold in the state where you currently teach?

- A Regular or standard state certificate or advanced professional certificate → *Skip to Question 8.*
- B Certificate issued after satisfying all requirements except the completion of a probationary period → *Go to Question 7.*
- C Certificate that requires some additional coursework, student teaching or passage of a test before regular certification can be obtained → *Go to Question 7.*
- D Certificate issued to persons who must complete a certification program in order to continue teaching → *Go to Question 7.*
- E I do not hold any of the above certificates in the state where I currently teach → *Go to Question 7.*

7. Do you hold a currently valid regular or standard certification from a state other than the one in which you are currently teaching?

- A Yes
- B No

8. This school year, are you a Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) according to your state's requirements?

(Generally, to be Highly Qualified, teachers must meet requirements related to 1) a bachelor's degree, 2) full state certification, and 3) demonstrate competency in the subject area(s) taught. The HQT requirement is a provision under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.)

- A Yes
- B I meet my state's requirements for a Highly Qualified Teacher in at least one subject that I teach.
- C No

9. Are you certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in at least one content area?

(The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is a nongovernmental organization that administers National Board certification, a voluntary national assessment program that certifies teachers who meet high professional standards. In order to gain certification, the candidate must at least complete a portfolio of classroom practice and pass one or more tests of content knowledge.)

- A Yes, I am fully certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
- B I am working towards my National Board certification.
- C No

HE001012

10. What is the highest academic degree you hold?

- A High-school diploma
- B Associate's degree/vocational certification
- C Bachelor's degree
- D Master's degree
- E Education specialist's or professional diploma based on at least one year's work past master's degree
- F Doctorate
- G Professional degree (e.g., M.D., LL.B., J.D., D.D.S.)

VB333658

11. Did you have a major, minor, or special emphasis in any of the following subjects as part of your **undergraduate** coursework? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Yes, a major	Yes, a minor or special emphasis	No	
a. Reading, language arts, or literacy education	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	VB378391
b. English	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	VB378392
c. Other language arts-related subject	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	VB378394
d. Elementary or secondary education	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	VB595189

12. Did you have a major, minor, or special emphasis in any of the following subjects as part of your **graduate** coursework? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Yes, a major	Yes, a minor or special emphasis	No	
a. Reading, language arts, or literacy education	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	VB378395
b. English	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	VB378396
c. Other language arts-related subject	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	VB378398
d. Elementary or secondary education	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	VB595190

13. Consider all of the professional development activities you participated in during the last **two years**. To what extent did you learn about each of the following topics? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Not at all	Small extent	Moderate extent	Large extent	
a. How students learn English/ language arts	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC310661
b. Content standards in English/ language arts	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC310705
c. Curricular materials available in English/language arts (units, texts)	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC310706
d. Instructional methods for teaching English/language arts	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC310707
e. Methods for assessing students in English/language arts	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC310708
f. Preparation of students for district and state assessments	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC310710
g. Strategies for teaching English/ language arts to students from diverse backgrounds (including English language learners)	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC310711

VB482598

14. During the last **two years**, did you participate in or lead any of the following professional development activities **related to the teaching of reading, writing, or literature**? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Yes	No	
a. College course taken after your first certification	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482599
b. Workshop or training session	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482600
c. Conference or professional association meeting	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482601
d. Observational visit to another school	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482642
e. Mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching as part of a formal arrangement	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482643
f. Committee or task force focusing on curriculum, instruction, or student assessment	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482644
g. Regularly scheduled discussion or study group	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482645
h. Teacher collaborative or network (such as one organized by an outside agency or over the Internet)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482646
i. Individual or collaborative research	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482647
j. Independent reading on a regular basis (for example, educational journals, books, or the Internet)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482648
k. Co-teaching/team teaching	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482649
l. Consultation with language arts specialist	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	VB482650

VC191232

15. During the last **two years**, have you received training from any source in any of the following areas? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	No, I am already proficient	No, I have not	Yes	
a. Basic computer training	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	VC191233
b. Software applications	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	VC191234
c. Use of the Internet	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	VC191235
d. Use of other technology (for example, satellite access, wireless Web, interactive video, closed-circuit TV, videoconferencing)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	VC191237
e. Integration of computers and other technology into classroom instruction	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	VC191238

VB595191

16. Do you have special leadership responsibilities for reading or language arts education at your school (for example, responsibilities as a mentor teacher, lead teacher, resource specialist, departmental chair, or master teacher)?

- A Yes
- B No

VC304724

17. During the last **two years** have you participated in activities associated with school improvement efforts directed at issues such as adequate yearly progress and state accountability standards?

- A Yes
- B No



Part II: Classroom Organization and Instruction – Reading/Language Arts

The following questions ask about the organization of your classroom for reading or language arts instruction. Please think about the reading or language arts class that you teach when questioned about “reading,” “language arts,” or “reading/language arts.” If you teach more than one fourth-grade class, please choose a single class to use as the basis for answering the questions about classroom organization.

If you do not teach reading, English, or language arts, please skip to Part III (mathematics).

VC976461

1. Which best describes your role in teaching reading/language arts to this class? Language arts refers to reading, writing, literature, and related topics. Fill in **one** oval.

- Ⓐ I do not teach reading/language arts to this class.
- Ⓑ I teach all or most subjects, including reading/language arts.
- Ⓒ The only subject I teach is reading/language arts.
- Ⓓ We team teach, and I have primary responsibility for teaching reading/language arts.

VB473856

2. How many students are in this class?

- Ⓐ 15 or fewer
- Ⓑ 16–18
- Ⓒ 19–20
- Ⓓ 21–25
- Ⓔ 26 or more

3. About how much time in total do you spend with this class on language arts instruction in a typical week? Language arts refers to reading, writing, literature, and related topics.

- Ⓐ Less than 3 hours
- Ⓑ 3–4.9 hours
- Ⓒ 5–6.9 hours
- Ⓓ 7–9.9 hours
- Ⓔ 10 or more hours

4. Which best describes how language arts instruction is organized? Language arts refers to reading, writing, literature, and related topics. Fill in **one** oval.

- Ⓐ Language arts is taught primarily as a discrete subject with little or no integration with instruction in other subjects.
- Ⓑ Some language arts instruction is integrated with other subjects, and some language arts instruction is presented as a discrete subject.
- Ⓒ Language arts lessons are primarily integrated with instruction in other subjects.

5. On what basis do you create instructional groups for reading in this class?

- Ⓐ I don't create groups for reading in this class.
- Ⓑ Ability
- Ⓒ Interest
- Ⓓ Diversity
- Ⓔ Other

VC976462

6. To what extent have you provided instruction in the following in reading/language arts class so far this year? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Not at all	Small extent	Moderate extent	Large extent	
a. Fiction	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976465
b. Literary nonfiction	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976466
c. Poetry	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976468
d. Exposition	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976469
e. Argumentation and persuasion	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976470
f. Procedural texts and documents	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976471

VC976477

7. When reading a story with your students, how often do you ask your students to do the following? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never or hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	
a. Summarize the passage	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976480
b. Interpret the meaning of the passage	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976481
c. Question the motives or feelings of the characters	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976482
d. Identify the main themes of the passage	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976484
e. Relate the passage, its characters, and/or its themes to their own lives	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976485



VB429595

8. How often do you ask your students to do the following when you ask them to write about something? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	
a. Plan their writing	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VB429596
b. Define their purpose and audience	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VB429597
c. Make a formal outline before they write	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VB429598
d. Write more than one draft of a paper	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VB429599
e. Check for proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation themselves	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VB429600

VB608499

9. How often do you do the following things as part of reading instruction with this class? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never or hardly ever	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Almost every day	
a. Ask students to read aloud	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VB608500
b. Ask students to write about something they have read	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VB608582
c. Give students time to read books they have chosen themselves	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VB608585
d. Ask students to do a group activity or project about what they have read	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VB608586
e. Ask students to explain or support their understanding of what they have read	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VB608588
f. Watch movies, videos; or listen to tapes, compact discs	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC764960
g. Ask students to make predictions about what they read as they are reading it	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VB608592



10. To what extent have you emphasized the following cognitive processes when reading informational and literary texts in class? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

VC310622

	Not at all	Small extent	Moderate extent	Large extent	
a. Locate/Recall	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC310623
b. Integrate/Interpret	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC310625
c. Critique/Evaluate	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC310627

11. Are computers available for use by you or your students for reading/language arts instruction?

VC976514

- A Yes, computers are available to my students and to me.
- B Yes, I have access to computers, but my students do not.
- C No, neither my students nor I have access to computers at school.

12. In your fourth-grade reading/language arts class this year, how often do your students use a computer or other technological resources to do each of the following? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never or hardly ever	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Every day or almost every day	
a. Build and practice vocabulary	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976534
b. Increase reading fluency and comprehension	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976535
c. Practice spelling and grammar	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976536
d. Write reports	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976537
e. Read books using the computer	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976538
f. Access reading-related websites (for example, websites with lists of recommended books)	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976539
g. Conduct research for reading projects	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976540
h. Correspond with other students using e-mail, blogs, or chat rooms	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC976541

13. Which of the following statements best describes how well your school system provides you with the materials and other resources you need for reading/language arts instruction?

- Ⓐ I do not have the resources I need.
- Ⓑ I have some of the resources I need.
- Ⓒ I have most of the resources I need.
- Ⓓ I have all of the resources I need.

VC976544

14. When you teach reading/language arts to your fourth-grade class, do you do any of the following? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Not at all	Small extent	Moderate extent	Large extent	
a. Use a different set of methods in teaching some students	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC976545
b. Supplement the regular course curriculum with additional material for some students	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC976546
c. Pace my teaching differently for some students	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC976547
d. Have some students engage in different classroom activities	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC976548
e. Set different achievement standards for some students	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VC976549

VC976550

15. How often do you meet with students one-on-one to review their work and evaluate their progress in reading/language arts?

- A Never or hardly ever
- B A few times a year
- C Once or twice a month
- D Once or twice a week
- E Every day or almost every day

16. How often do you do each of the following with individual students to evaluate their progress in reading/language arts? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never or hardly ever	A few times a year	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Every day or almost every day	
a. Discuss the student's current level of performance	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	VC976552
b. Set goals for specific progress the student would like to make	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	VC976553
c. Discuss progress the student has made toward goals previously set	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	VC976554
d. Determine how to adjust your teaching strategies to meet the student's current learning needs and to reflect the student's future goals	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	VC976555