

Handout includes also: Higgs Organizing Principle, 10 pp of PPS standards; how to choose materials / class room checklist; work samples from 2008 assessment course

Meeting 18 • 04 March 2010 Version: 3/4/10

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Today • my deadline page

- numbers in ( ) = minutes planned for activity/ topic
- √ = topic / activity that was adequately dealt with during the class
- + = topic needs more attention & will be resumed at next / subsequent meeting(s)
- = a topic / activity that was proposed but not carried out (but will be taken up later)
- ~~Struck through text like this~~ = a topic / activity that was proposed but not included / is not going to be taken up after all
- Italic text like this* = comments after the meeting

# State tests to move to 11th grade next year

## Education | Low passing rates prompt Oregon to give students one more year to learn the skills

By **BETSY HAMMOND**  
THE OREGONIAN

Oregon is moving its 10th-grade tests in reading, writing, math and science to the 11th grade, saying many students need another year of high school to learn the skills covered on the tests.

The tests were written for sophomores, and the minimum passing scores were set based on how sophomores score on the tests. But, beginning next school year, they will be given to juniors, and the state's high schools will be judged by how many of their students pass the exams by the end of junior year.

Oregon got permission from the U.S. Department of Education to make the standard easier for schools.

When Oregon sophomores take the tests, a lot of them fail, particularly in math. Last year, 46 percent of 10th-graders flunked that test, 45 percent failed the writing test and 42 percent failed in science.

Low passing rates on the state reading and math tests are the main reason Oregon high schools get worse ratings on state and federal accountability reports than the state's elementary and middle schools.

Educators are hopeful that, with another year of instruction under their belts, more high school students will be able to pass.

The testing window now in place for sophomores runs from October through mid-May, meaning they must take the exam "when there are still at least four weeks of instruction left in their sophomore year," says

Please see **TESTING**, Page A8

	<b>Main topic(s): Rubrics; Teaching and Testing Writing</b>
(10)	assessment in the news! The Oregonian, March 4, 2010 (today!): "State tests to move to 11th grade next year"; Economist magazine: increase in reading after 1980s; both applied to "after assessment, what??" (that is: testing [or whatever] >> assessment >> ??)
(20)	Portland Public School standards (0010a [1999], 0010b [2006]); mention of Oregon Common Assessment of speaking
(20)	Assignment: create a scoring guide for a language activity, with reflection; the "BIMP" as topic for panel discussion instead of final exam
(20)	Assessing listening and reading: introduction (see below, Lisking-Gasparro and James; also Hughes, Chapters 11, 12, 13
(20)	Textbook, course, curriculum, program assessment: an introduction (Organizing Principle quick assessments of classroom & materials)

### Upcoming class meetings

09 & 11 March.: more about the BIMP; more about assessing courses, curricula, programs (including details of research); selected topics from EU standards, on-line testing, assessment of language teacher training programs, assessment of own progress in language pedagogy (see reading selections immediately below)

### Upcoming assignment(s)

This section offers a PREVIEW, not activated assignments. Assignments are made, with announcement of their deadlines, both in class and on the "schedule" page.

Reading for upcoming topics:

assessing reading & listening:

- 0161 Liskin-Gasparro, "Practical Considerations in Receptive Skills Testing" (FLA 17.4 (1984): 369-73; 0162 James, "Are You Listening: the Practical Components of Listening Comprehension" (FLA 17.2 (1984); Hughes, Chapters 11, 12, 13;

assessing instructional materials:

- 0144 "Choosing and Adapting Materials", Higgs, Organizing Principle, p. 190
- 0186 "Sometimes you need to know more than how to conjugate a verb" (ad for textbook); 0227 Walz, Joel, "Is Oral Proficiency Possible with Today's French Textbooks?" MLJ 70:i(1986): 13-20; 0704a / 0704b text book evaluation guide form U Arizona French course

assessing courses & programs

- 0699 ACTFL "Blueprint for Action on Language Education (2005); Donato, et al, "Literary

# Testing: Most schools will still test sophomores

Continued from Page One

McMinnville High principal Kris Olsen. "We want to ensure that all kids have an opportunity to be exposed to all of the 10th-grade curriculum before they have to take this test."

Most schools will continue to give the tests to sophomores, then focus on helping those who failed to learn the missing skills before retesting them as juniors, Olsen said.

Jack Jennings, president of the nonprofit Washington, D.C.-based Center on Education Policy, has tracked how states have changed their testing programs since the 2001 passage of the federal No Child Left Behind law, which increased accountability and sanctions for schools that post low test scores. Some states lowered the scores a student needs to pass the state test to help schools avoid low ratings.

Jennings could not recall another state moving its high school exams to a higher grade and said it suggests Oregon may be lowering its expectations for its schools or its students.

"It does seem unusual to move a 10th-grade proficiency set of tests to the 11th grade," he said. "If you thought 10th-graders could do something, and then you shift the measurement of that skill to 11th grade, it at least raises the question of

whether they have lowered the standard."

Schools will still be able to give the tests to sophomores, and those that pass won't have to retest as juniors, said Susanne Smith, communications manager for the Oregon Department of Education. But all students who have not passed before junior year will have to take the exams that year, and schools will be judged according to how many of their students pass by the end of junior year.

Students have always been permitted to retake state tests as juniors if they failed them as sophomores. But very few students did so, state officials say. Of roughly 20,000 sophomores who failed at least one test, fewer than 1,000 retook a test as juniors, according to Jon Wiens, accountability specialist at the state education department.

The Oregon Board of Education decided several years ago that, beginning with this year's sophomores, students will have to pass the state reading test to get a high school diploma. This year's freshmen will have to pass the state writing test, too. And today's eighth-graders will have to pass in reading, writing and math to get their diplomas.

Smith, the department spokeswoman, said the state is not lowering the standards on any of the tests, it is merely giving schools and students more time before the results count.

"The ultimate goal," she said, "is to get those kids ready to graduate."

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