

News for August 2007

Welcome Back Teachers!

The GeorgiaStandards.org (GSO) Team would like to welcome all Georgia teachers back to school. In the coming weeks, Georgia teachers will eagerly organize their classrooms for the 2007-2008 school year. Throughout this school year **GSO** is looking forward to supporting you with all your instructional needs. **GSO** can help you align your curriculum to the [Georgia Performance Standards](#) using the scores of educational resources available from the GeorgiaStandards.org portal.

The [GSO Team](#) would also like to encourage you to sign-up for a free [MyGADOE account](#). A MyGADOE account provides a number of technology tools to help you find and create resources and instructional plans aligned to the [Georgia Performance Standards](#). There are currently over 600 reviewed units aligned to the Georgia Performance Standards that have been created by Georgia educators. The number of searchable instructional units grows daily, as does the number of MyGADOE users with GSO Unit Builder privileges. A [MyGADOE account](#) also features a Group setting that allows teachers to collaborate on instructional units by school, district and/or state level. Working together with [State Superintendent Kathy Cox](#) Georgia will, "...lead the nation in improving student achievement."

General Information

Are You a New Georgia Teacher?

Are you a new teacher in Georgia? As a first year teacher or a seasoned veteran, you probably have been attending orientation and pre-planning workshops about Georgia's curriculum, the [Georgia Performance Standards](#) (GPS). Teachers and parents may re-acquaint themselves at any time with the GPS by watching this [Introductory Video](#) (also available in the [wmv format](#)).

Teachers should also bookmark the GeorgiaStandards.org (GSO) website. This One Stop Shop is the ultimate destination for teachers who seek to utilize the best educational resources to teach the GeorgiaStandards.org (GPS).

Back to School Checklist

The Georgia Department of Education has developed a back to school [checklist](#) that addresses items for arranging the physical setting of your classroom, student preparation, important procedures and a first day of school list.

>> [Download Back to School Checklist](#)

Back to School PowerPoint Presentation

Looking for a PowerPoint presentation that you can use for the first day of school? Look no further, the Department of Education offers yet another template with this back to school PowerPoint presentation that is sure to keep your new students paying attention and focused on you. The template can also be used for your Open House.

>> [Download Back to School PowerPoint Template](#)

Handouts for your Open House

Soon, grade level open house dates will be announced by your school's administrators and you are already contemplating an open house agenda. Why not print GPS informational brochures for parents? GPS brochures are readily available on the GeorgiaStandards.org website under the Parent Information heading (scroll down just past the middle of the page). In the Parent Information section, brochures can be downloaded for grades K – 8 and Significant Cognitive Disabilities.

Graphic Organizers Galore just a click away!

The use of graphic organizers in classrooms has been **documented** to have a positive impact on student learning. Using a graphic organizer to support the delivery of a performance standard can be invaluable to learning. We prominently display a link on GSO titled **Graphic Organizers** located in the Teacher Tools Portlet (on left side). When clicked, the Graphic Organizer link reveals an impressive collection of graphic organizers. Many of the graphic organizers are offered in both English and Spanish versions, and in PDF and Word formats as well. In our reviews, we were impressed by the **Graphs and Grids** organizer. The Graphs and Grids organizer is an adaptable template for math or science. The Graphs and Grids organizer includes templates ranging from time graphs and pie charts to charting the rate of plant growth. There are dozens more templates available on the [Region 15 Graphic Organizers site](#).

Academic Templates for 2007 – 2008

Attention teachers! You may save a tremendous amount of time with the following websites that offer templates that can be downloaded to your computer and then modified for your needs. Need a calendar in Microsoft Word? [Microsoft Office Online](#) provides dozens of [academic year calendars](#) for the school year. [Education World](#) offers a remarkable [list of templates for educators](#). Some of the categories that stand out are [assessments](#), [award certificates](#), [back to school](#), [bulletin board resources](#) and [ice breakers](#).

Georgia Read More

The Georgia Department of Education has implemented a literacy program aimed at third grade called the "[Georgia Read More](#)" program. The concentrated efforts of the [Library Media Services Department](#) have resulted in this award winning [series](#). This program encourages children to read, parent - child interaction, and promotes literacy

and libraries. Simply select from the many videos of dignitaries and celebrities reading a children's book aloud to a group of students. Each video supplies a link to a vocabulary list that accompanies the story. Also included with most books are a Lexile score and links to author websites. This month GSO would like to highlight the book *Princess Penelope* which is read by Kathy Cox, State Superintendent of Georgia Schools. Just under five minutes, the *Princess Penelope* video can be [viewed](#) along with the accompanying [vocabulary list](#). Watch additional [Georgia Read More Program Videos](#). If you are using the Georgia Read More books in your classroom, why not publish your teaching or learning activity on GSO? The Teaching and Learning templates, available with a GSO login to MyGADOE, are quick and easy to use, and offer an excellent way to share your best practices with other Georgia teachers.

Fernbank Museum Field Trips

Field trips are already on the minds of many teachers and students for the new school year. The [Fernbank Museum of Natural History](#) in Atlanta has plenty to offer. Make plans now to visit a special exhibition entitled, [Frogs: A Chorus of Colors](#), on view September 19, 2007 through January 2, 2008. This attraction will make your students jump for joy as it will feature more than 100 live frogs from all over the globe!

On the big screen running August 4, 2007 through January 4, 2008, the IMAX Theatre will be showing [The Alps: Giants of Nature](#). Also, opening October 6, 2007 will be the National Geographic short feature entitled, [Sea Monsters: A Prehistoric Adventure](#) which allows viewers to join a team of paleontologists to solve an 82 million year old mystery (view the [short feature](#) and [trailer](#)).

If that isn't enough, Prehistoric Animal Adventure is a new school program developed for pre-K through grades 2. Youngsters get a peek of what the earth looked like during the dinosaur days. Grades 3 through 8 can discover Georgia's Natural Regions through discussion, demonstration and live animal presentations. For more information send an email to justforeducators@fernbank.edu or call 404-929-6306.

GPB Programming in August 2007

[Georgia Public Broadcasting](#) (GPB) has many series that it showcases each month. K-5 teachers and art special teachers are in for a treat this month. [Arts in Every Classroom: A Workshop for Elementary School Teachers](#) will air throughout the month. This video workshop includes eight one-hour programs that present fresh ideas about working with the arts for elementary school classroom and art classes. These programs provide a glimpse of educators working together on curriculum and students interacting with the same content. For air dates and times for Arts in Every Classroom, check the [GPB Education Schedule](#).

Plains, Peanuts and President Postcard Contest

The [Jimmy Carter NHS Education Program](#) and [The Peanut Institute](#) are excited to announce their annual postcard contest. Students in grades K-12 are invited to compete in this year's theme of [Plains, Peanuts and a President](#). It's really simple, students work on a white 3 X 5 or 4 X 6 sheet of paper or index card. Directions, judging criteria, rewards and where to mail entries are included in this [PDF](#). Entries must be postmarked by September 10, 2007 and teachers of winning entries will be contacted on September 17. You can view all the winners from the last couple of years on the [Jimmy Carter In the Spotlight webpage](#).

Continuing Education

Online GALILEO Courses being Offered

Many new EBSCO resources were added to GALILEO menus recently. To help library staff in K-12 get acclimated, an online training series is scheduled. Overview sessions cover the new resources as well as providing a look at new features in the EBSCOhost interface. The K-12 session will concentrate on those resources specifically geared to students and may be of interest to public library staff and K-12 media specialists. The training is free and open to staff in all GALILEO libraries. Registration and more information on each of the sessions is available at <http://www.usg.edu/oit/training/>. If you have any questions or need more information, please use GALILEO's Contact Us feature or contact OIIT Customer Services at <mailto:helpdesk@usg.edu>.

Language Arts Annenberg Online Video Series - Grades 6-12

On GeorgiaStandards.org there is a commonly used Portlet by GSO visitors titled Top Picks. The first link goes to the [Annenberg website](#), which is known for coordinating materials and video resources for the professional development of K-12 teachers. Currently there is an outstanding video workshop series that is available to middle and high school Language Arts teachers. The workshop, [In Search of the Novel](#), covers [10 popular books](#) that include commentary on how to make the most of novels in the classroom. Worth mentioning are some of the authors that are covered in this workshop, which are Orson Scott Card, Horton Foote, Ernest Gaines, Arthur Golden, Daniel Keyes, Katherine Paterson, J. K. Rowling, and Leslie Marmon Silko. The web videos require that you [sign-up](#) for a free Media account and by doing so you can view Video on Demand (VOD) and download support materials for Annenberg courses. During your visit to the Annenberg site, you probably want to [browse the other programs](#) that are available to you through VOD. PLU credit may apply, contact your school district for more information.

Michael C. Carlos Museum's Workshops are Aligned with GPS

The [Michael C. Carlos Museum of Emory University](#) has [workshops](#) for teachers that are aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards. For more information or to register for a teacher workshop contact Julie Green through [email](#) or by phone at 404-

727-2363. The 2007-2008 workshops series begin in early October 2007 and go to April 2008.

Celebrating August

Ideas for Back to School Activities

Ringling bells, shuffling feet in hallways and the pecking noises of computer keyboards are all sounds indicating that school is back in full-swing. As a teacher, you may be in need of some ice breakers or ideas for back to school activities. Here is a [mural activity](#) that will get kindergartners learning names and faces of their fellow classmates. This [name game](#) can be introduced to K-2 students. In another [“getting to know you” activity](#), teachers in grades 1-6 can utilize this by pairing students with partners and having them interview each other about their summer. Print and distribute these photographs ([photo 1](#), [photo 2](#), [photo 3](#)) of old schoolhouses to students and have them write a narrative describing the first day of school in that time period. For more ideas, teachers can visit the [Back to School activities page](#) on [eduplace.com](#).

August in Georgia History

Georgia, the fourth state, is a state full of history and diversity in an ongoing story. A great way to share Georgia’s rich legacy with your students is by using [The New Georgia Encyclopedia](#) (NGE). According to NGE’s [about page](#), “on this site you will find articles and images on every aspect of Georgia as well as convenient links to a multitude of other Web sites related to the history, culture, and life of the state.” Teachers can discuss many events that occurred in [Georgia during the month of August](#). For instance, did you know gold was discovered in north Georgia in the month of August in 1829? This month also marks the time when the Trust Company of Georgia bought controlling interests in Coca-Cola for \$25 million. Also in August at age 18 baseball legend Ty Cobb swung the bat in the big leagues for the first time over a century ago. Last but not least, on August 6, 1972 baseball hall-of-famer, Hank “The Hammer” Aaron entered the record books for most home runs by a player for a single franchise (661). Brush up on all these Georgia facts and more on the [August in Georgia History](#) page on [The New Georgia Encyclopedia](#). The NGE link is also available on the [GeorgiaStandards.org](#) portal on the right side of the page under Top Picks.

August Calendar of Holidays and Special Events

A [comprehensive calendar](#) of subject areas that includes Art & Culture, Literature & Language Arts, Foreign Language and History & Social Studies for August has been assembled by [EDSITEment](#). This website is based on a partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities, Verizon Foundation and the National Trust for the Humanities. The calendar references every day in [August](#) and many of the days list multiple entries.

[EDSITEment](#) also has an excellent August feature titled “[Lady Liberty](#)”. You can pay a visit to Ellis Island by taking a scroll through an inspection station with this [interactive tour](#) or even [read the journey](#) of an eight year old boy who came to Ellis Island on a boat from Poland. On the [Lady Liberty page](#), teachers along with students can view photographs of Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty. There are also worthwhile suggested activities to teachers that are offered for grade levels K–12.