

# News for September 2007

## General Information

### What is a Performance Standard?

Starting in 2004, Georgia began replacing the QCC curriculum across grade levels and content areas through the implementation of the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). GPS represents an improvement over the QCCs because the performance standards go into greater depth and provide a rigor and relevance not available through the QCCs. A performance standard incorporates the content standard which informs the teacher with what the student is expected to know and expands upon it by providing three additional items: suggested tasks, sample student work and teacher commentary on that work.

Performance standards provide clear expectations for assessment, instruction, and student work. They define the level of work that demonstrates achievement of the standards, enabling a teacher to know “how good is good enough.” The performance standards isolate and identify the skills needed to use the knowledge and skills to problem-solve, reason, communicate, and make connections with other information. Performance standards also tell the teacher how to assess the extent to which the student knows the material or can manipulate and apply the information.

This information was extracted by the [Curriculum Frequently Asked Questions page](#) located on the [GeorgiaStandards.Org website](#). There are more answers to similar questions addressing the GPS curriculum that can be found on this very [informative page](#) that can be accessed by teachers, administrators and parents.

### GeorgiaStandards.Org adds Another Teacher Tool

Time is always of the essence for educators. That’s why the [GSO](#) team is always striving to help teachers work smarter, not harder through the many online resources available through its world-class curriculum portal. The [GSO team](#) is excited about adding [Answers.com](#) to the Teacher Tools Portlet on [GeorgiaStandards.Org](#). [Answers.com](#) provides access to information very quickly to over 4 million topics. Its database is comprised of over [180 trusted titles](#) from some of the most reliable information providers.

For example, conducting a search for the phrase “[American Revolution](#)” on [Answers.com](#) returned results from many trustworthy sources. The GSO team found the ‘Copyrights’ section at the bottom of this query very valuable, especially as educators and Library Media Specialists are teaching students sound information retrieval skills. [Answers.com](#) provides citation formats (MLA, Chicago, APA) to teachers and students that can be included in a bibliography or works cited page for a report, presentation or website project.

Also noteworthy on [Answers.com](#) is their [Educational Toolkit](#). Currently teachers can accept a challenge with their students by entering the [Creative Group Writing Contest](#) which is geared for grades 6-12 (expires October 1, 2007). Also featured on [Answers.com](#) is a [Back to School Guide](#) that addresses important student issues such as making transitions, establishing routines and homework tips. There is even an excellent [College Savings Guide](#) that can be passed on to parents and students. And last but not least, the [Educational Toolkit](#) has a [FREE Classroom Resource Center](#). Here you will find free posters to embellish your classroom walls and worksheets to help reinforce the research process and comprehension skills.

### **Georgia Read More Features Jimmy Carter**

The Georgia Department of Education has implemented a literacy program aimed at third grade students 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.

For our September Newsletter, GSO would like to showcase the book *The Little Baby Snoogle-Fleejer* which is authored and read by President Jimmy Carter. You and your students don't want to miss the 39<sup>th</sup> US President read his book to a very captivated audience. The [video](#), just shy of 11 minutes, can be [viewed](#) along with the [vocabulary list](#) from the book. For additional information on President Jimmy Carter, you can access his [biography](#) or visit the [Jimmy Carter Library & Museum](#). You can also watch other [Georgia Read More Program Videos here](#).

Why not publish your teaching or learning activity that goes along with *The Little Baby Snoogle-Fleejer* on the [GeorgiaStandards.Org portal](#)? 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.

### **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](#).

### **Georgia Nature Center Field Trips**

It appears that the heat wave in Georgia is finally over and it will be a summer for the record books. This makes it a great time to plan a field trip to Oconee County, Georgia home of the new [Georgia Nature Center](#). Indeed, fall is an ideal time to visit one of the largest educational centers in the Southeast. There are guided field trips across one hundred acres of exhibits and trails. Some of the featured exhibits include the Clean Energy Exhibition that focuses on solar and wind power, an organic farm, the Next Generation home and an endangered plant greenhouse containing thousands of rare carnivorous plants. All tours are aligned to the Georgia Performance Standards. The teacher who schedules the field trip reservation between now and December 15, 2007 will receive a free carnivorous plant terrarium for their classroom. For more information, you can [email](#), visit the [Georgia Nature Center website](#) or call 1-800-800-2Sun.

### **TransACT Multilingual Library of Forms**

A one stop shop is a place that somebody can get everything they need in one location. That is exactly what the [GeorgiaStandards.Org](#) website is, a One Stop Shop for Educators. On the right-hand side towards the middle of the GSO homepage you will find a light blue Portlet titled Helpful Links. In this box, there is a link to [TransACT](#). The [TransACT Multilingual Library](#) of forms is a collection of state approved letters with their equivalent translation to up to 21 foreign languages helpful for school management communication needs. This is a free service available to all Georgia teachers, so [click here](#) to create your TransACT account.

## **Continuing Education**

### **GALILEO – How it can Work for You**

There will be a GALILEO (Georgia Library Learning Online) workshop on September 27, 2007 in Atlanta. The workshop will cover topics such as reviewing GALILEO, discovering what it can offer students, listing of project activities and navigating through the database effectively. It will be held in room 131 at 250 14th Street NW (formerly the Georgia Center for Advanced Telecommunications Technology (GCATT) building.) The workshop is from 4:30 to 6:30 PM. Sandwiches and beverages will be served. Please RSVP to make sure that space is available. Contact Margie Brown at 404-407-6069 or send an email to [margie.brown@gtri.gatech.edu](mailto:margie.brown@gtri.gatech.edu).

### **GaETC Celebrates 20 Years!**

The Georgia Educational Technology Conference (GaETC) will be held on November 14 - 16, 2007 at the Georgia International Convention Center. Join the thousands of educators who will travel to Atlanta to celebrate GaETC's 20<sup>th</sup> year of supporting the integration of technology into the classroom. Over 200 presentations and 200 vendors will be in attendance to showcase the latest trends and products in educational technology. Here is the most current information regarding [lodging and shuttles](#) and the [conference schedule](#) that can be accessed from the GaETC website. A helpful list with

[directions](#), [maps](#) and [Atlanta links](#) are also provided on the website. PLU credit may apply, refer to this [page](#) or contact your school district for more information.

## **GATE 2007 Fall Conference**

The [Georgia Association of Teacher Educators](#) is having their annual conference in Savannah, Georgia. The location will be at the Hilton Savannah DeSoto on October 10 - 12, 2007. The theme for 2007 is *Preserving Our Democracy: A Makeover for Education*. Visit the [website](#) or call for information on the GATE 2007 Fall Conference. PLU credit may apply. Refer to this [Word document](#) or contact your school district for more information.

## **Workshops at the Atlanta History Center**

The [Atlanta History Center](#) offers a [series of workshops](#) on different topics. There are some exciting creative writing classes scheduled for the fall. Fiction Shop, Writing Memoir and Poems on Family will be offered in October and November. For more information about the course or the instructors, please visit the [Center for Southern Literature](#).

## **2007 Georgia Literary Festival**

Avid readers and writers should mark September 28 - 30, 2007 on their calendars as an event they should not miss. This year the annual 2007 Georgia Literary Festival will be hosted in the quaint town of Blue Ridge, Georgia. Book lovers should enjoy the venue that is being described as, "a unique three day literary adventure". Find out more about the main honoree, presenting sponsors, keynote speaker, additional program personalities and presentations at the [Georgia Literary Festival website](#). Accommodations and other activities available in the area can be located at the [Fannin County Chamber of Commerce website](#). PLU credit may apply. Please contact your school district for more information.

## **Celebrating September**

### **GSO Unit "Falls" Right into Second Grade**

The dog days of summer are finally behind us and thus we look forward to a successful and productive 2007-08 school year. Celebrate this month by reminding your students that September 22 is the [autumn equinox](#). This is when night and day are practically the same length in the northern hemisphere. Here is an [animation](#) to share with your class that illustrates the Earth's tilt in relation to the Sun, hence the reason why we have seasons.

Second grade teachers can reference science standard [S2E2](#), which has students investigating the positions of the sun, moon and the Earth. [GeorgiaStandards.Org](#) has a [three week science unit framework](#) titled [Night Sky Organizer: Changing Moon/Moving](#)

[Sun](#) for second grade that expands on S2E2 through performance tasks and teacher commentary. The unit even supports other curriculum standards along with enduring understandings, essential questions and many relevant websites and books to support the teaching of standard S2E2.

## **September in Georgia History**

Did you know that [The New Georgia Encyclopedia](#) (NGE) website contains close to 2,000 articles and more than 5,000 multimedia items on the history, culture and life of Georgia? Teachers can discuss the many events that made history in Georgia during the [month of September](#). Students can learn that the biggest battle ever fought in this state, the Battle of Chickamauga, took place between September 18th and 20<sup>th</sup> of 1863. Booker T. Washington delivered his famous Atlanta Compromise speech in 1895 on the opening of the Cotton States and International Exposition. It was also in the September of 1990 that the International Olympic Committee awarded Atlanta to host the 1996 Olympics. Do you want more Georgia facts? Then visit the [September in Georgia History](#) page or [The New Georgia Encyclopedia](#) home page. The NGE link is also available on the [GeorgiaStandards.org](#) portal on the right side of the page under Top Picks.

## **September EDSITEment Calendar of Holidays and Special Events**

The [September calendar](#) on [EDSITEment](#) is up and offers another month of comprehensive activities based on subject areas that include Art & Culture, Literature & Language Arts, Foreign Language and History & Social Studies. The calendar references every day of [September](#) and many of the days list multiple entries.

[EDSITEment](#) also has many outstanding September entries. For example, on [September 3](#), the American War for Independence ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783. High school social studies teachers can also link to standards [SSUSH3](#) and [SSUSH4](#) from [GeorgiaStandards.Org](#) that covers many aspects of the American Revolution, including the Treaty of Paris. [September 5<sup>th</sup>, 1774](#) marks when the first Continental Congress met in the city of brotherly love. [EDSITEment](#) offers excellent [social studies activities](#) to support discussion and group-based projects for middle school as well. Last but not least, let's not forget other notable September dates on the EDSITEment calendar such as Patriot Day and [Constitution Day](#).