

# GSO to GO

NEWS FOR  
FEBRUARY  
2008



## General Information

### GSO Training Opportunities

[GeorgiaStandards.Org](http://GeorgiaStandards.Org) (GSO) is partnering with educators across the state in providing training opportunities to schools and educational organizations in the use of GSO's public website and online portal workspace to help teachers prepare teaching and learning activities.

#### Face-to-Face

The GSO team can provide workshops at your location:

- A 45-60 minute overview of the GSO website resources and portal workspace.

- Half-day "hands-on" workshop on using the portal technology tools to create instructional units aligned with the GPS.

#### Online Learning

GSO has just introduced an online learning space to provide access to e-learning provided by various departments within the DOE. GSO currently has these courses available:

- GSO Public Website: A Guided Tour
- GSO Portal: A Guided Tour
- Foundations for Georgia's Performance Standards

Contact the [GeorgiaStandards.Org](http://GeorgiaStandards.Org) staff to schedule training for your school by

emailing us or by calling 1-404-463-1280.

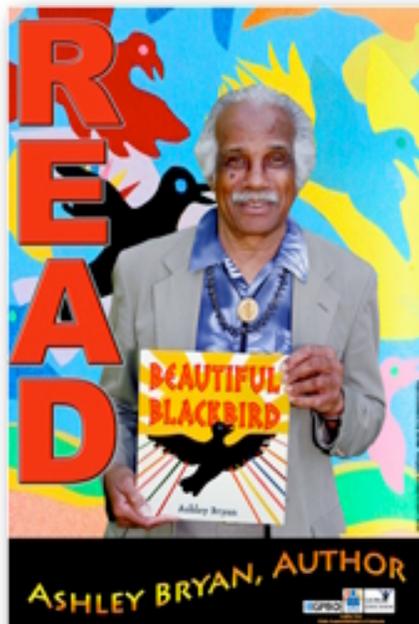
### GSO Categories

<a href="#">General Information</a>	1
<a href="#">Best Practices/Continuing Education</a>	4
<a href="#">Celebrating February</a>	5
<a href="#">New GSO Content</a>	6

February  
2008

### Young Georgia Authors' Writing Competition

Journals, rubrics and writing prompts...as a teacher you have covered it all in your ELA curriculum. That's why your students are ready for the [Young Georgia Author's Writing Competition](#). This annual contest is a great way to encourage students to produce writing that represents their best efforts. At the system level competition, students may enter an original piece from any genre. From there, winning entries go on to the state level to be judged. One winning entry per grade level for each system may be submitted to the Georgia Department of Education by April 7, 2008. Final winners will be recognized at the September State Board of Education meeting. You may download the [official rules booklet](#) or take a look at the [winners from the 2006-07 school year](#). If you have questions about the Young Georgia Authors' Competition you can contact Mary Stout at phone number 1-404-463-1933 or by [email](#).



## Ashley Bryan now Performing on Georgia Read More!

Coretta Scot King Award winner

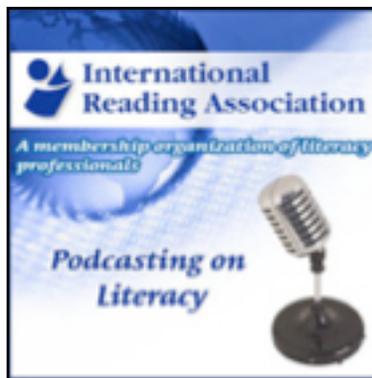
Ashley Bryan wrote and illustrated Beautiful Blackbird, a wonderful retelling of the African tale from Zambia that entertains readers with elements of drama, rhythm and onomatopoeia. However, this book is really brought to life by the very animated Mr. Bryan in this month's Georgia Read More video. Watch with your class, as students who have flocked around Ashley Bryan transform into active participants of the Beautiful Blackbird story as they listen to the engaging author read his book. By watching the Beautiful Blackbird video, teachers can also address character development by discussing self-esteem issues with students. Your literature program will soar to new heights if you show this month's installment from the Georgia Read More vault!

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, supports 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 and some of the videos are also available in Spanish. Included with most books are a Lexile score and links to author websites.

## ELA Podcasts from the International Reading Association

The International Reading Association (IRA) is now offering two podcast series in the MP3 format. You can download each episode individually from their podcast page or subscribe in iTunes for Class Acts: Ideas for Teaching Reading and Writing or IRA Insights. You can listen on your computer or an iPod. Of the two series, K-12 teachers will favor the Class Acts series because it has teaching ideas based on research and classroom implementation. Each podcast episode includes links to articles, bibliographies, lesson plans and books. You will have to download iTunes to subscribe to either reading series.



## GPB Contest Challenges K-3 Students on Writing and Illustrating

Georgia Public Broadcasting is having its Annual Reading Rainbow Contest that started on January 1 and lasts until March 3, 2008. The fourteenth annual competition will be looking for students from kindergarten through third grade who can tap into their storytelling abilities. Students are challenged to illustrate or write their very own storybooks. First place winners will move on to the national competition where generous prizes are awarded such as a laptop computer, flat panel TV with DVD player and an MP3 player. For rules and additional information on the Reading Rainbow Contest, please visit GPB.

## GeorgiaStandards.Org

### Data Points

Year-To-Date (As of 1/2008)

Visitors to GeorgiaStandards.Org  
168,857

Unique Visitors  
91,679

Page views for all visitors  
809,094

Average Time on Site  
5 minutes 2 seconds

Number of Units that are  
Approved and Searchable in GSO  
1,067

Number of Georgia Educators  
trained on GSO  
2,660

Educators signed up to have  
access to GSO Unit Builder  
12,444

Number of GSO Teacher Groups  
741

Number of GSO Training Videos  
191

## Happy Birthday, TIE Network!

On January 1, 2007 GPB Education launched the TIE Network to educators. TIE has allowed Georgia educators another opportunity to network with each other primarily based on teaching ideas that integrate digital media into the curriculum. In only one year the TIE Network has had many accomplishments.

GeorgiaStandards.Org wishes TIE a Happy Belated Birthday and continued success.





## Best Practices

### Monroe Area High School



#### Collaborative Teacher Planning Groups

Most teachers and school systems are immersed in the challenge of implementing the new GPS. During the course of communicating with individual teachers and school officials, the staff of [GeorgiaStandards.Org](http://GeorgiaStandards.Org) has encountered some wonderful examples of the planning and creating processes involved with this implementation. We would like to share these Best Practice examples with our teachers to illustrate different ways of successfully implementing the Georgia Performance Standards within a Georgia school or classroom. If you have a "successful implementation" that you would like to share – please send us an [email](mailto:) so that we can contact you to get the details.

Teachers at [Monroe Area High School](http://Monroe Area High School) in [Walton County](http://Walton County) have made use of [GeorgiaStandards.Org](http://GeorgiaStandards.Org)'s detailed, online unit planner to collaborate on a variety of units during day-long planning sessions. Teachers in each core department are provided with substitute teachers for one day each semester to allow for in-depth collaboration. The school's Instructional Coach provides training on the use of [GeorgiaStandards.Org](http://GeorgiaStandards.Org)'s unit planner and oversees the collaborative process.

Teachers at [Monroe Area High School](http://Monroe Area High School) have found the unit planner to be of great assistance in guiding the backwards design process. The unit planner template provides detailed instruction and prompts regarding the ordered activities of unit planning and all its related aspects (assessments, rubrics, performance tasks, etc.)

By grouping the teachers into collaborative planning groups on the [GaDOE unit planner site](http://GaDOE unit planner site), teachers are also able to examine each other's units and provide ongoing modifications and feedback during separate planning periods. The result has been rich, effective units with a variety of useful resources and best practices.



**Photo:** (L-R) Monroe Area High School ELA teachers Cheryl Brazelton, Tammy Wade, and Kelley Silver use the GaDOE unit planner template to collaborate on a unit for 11 grade literature.

## Continuing Education

### ELA and Math Teachers Receive Professional Learning Online

In January 2008, there were over 150 connections through [Elluminate](http://Elluminate), software that supports a real-time online classroom environment, where teachers of all grade levels received customized Georgia Performance Standards training. This GPS training was offered multiple times during the month of January and targeted K-8 Mathematics and K-12 ELA/Writing teachers. Educators had logged in from all over Georgia. The Georgia Department of Education is excited to continue this type of training through the Spring of 2008. [K-8 Math teachers](http://K-8 Math teachers) and [K-12 ELA teachers](http://K-12 ELA teachers) can browse flexible dates, times and links to upcoming Elluminate meetings in February and March that fit their schedule.

### Pioneer RESA ETTC Offers Courses in Class and Online



The [Pioneer RESA ETTC](http://Pioneer RESA ETTC) is located in Cleveland, GA and serves Pre-K through post secondary (P-16) educators in the Northeast region of Georgia. Pioneer offers both classroom and online learning opportunities to teachers. Teachers have many choices from the [Pioneer course catalog](http://Pioneer course catalog) to earn PLUs. Some of the course options include [Engaging Learners with 21st Century Curriculum](http://Engaging Learners with 21st Century Curriculum), [Blogging 101](http://Blogging 101) and [Online Let's Google](http://Online Let's Google). Teachers can also access the [Pioneer Online Registration System](http://Pioneer Online Registration System) which provides a list of courses offered with price and PLU information. The [Pioneer RESA ETTC](http://Pioneer RESA ETTC) has set-up an [informative page](http://informative page) that lists all the school districts that they serve with a description and picture of each.

The Educational Technology Training Centers (ETTCs) work collaboratively to provide professional learning, consulting, and service for Georgia educators to promote the appropriate use of technology in support of teaching, learning, and leadership. [Thirteen ETTC training centers](http://Thirteen ETTC training centers) are located throughout the state for your convenience.

### 39th Annual Children's Literature Conference

Athens, Georgia is hosting the 39th Annual Conference on Children's Literature from February 29 to March 1, 2008. K-8 teachers, library media specialists, public librarians and others interested in children's literature will enjoy this venue. The conference will take place in the [Georgia Center for Continuing Education Conference Center & Hotel](http://Georgia Center for Continuing Education Conference Center & Hotel), which is located on the historic campus of the University of Georgia in Athens. Learn more about the tentative agenda, conference events or Georgia Children's Book Awards Program by visiting the [Children's Literature conference page](http://Children's Literature conference page).

Celebrating February	communicate	collaborate	connect
	<p>9</p> <p>1824 - The House of Representatives elected John Quincy Adams president.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>President's Day</p>	<p>Downloads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <a href="#">February calendar template</a></li> <li>&gt; <a href="#">Dental Fun Activity Sheets</a></li> </ul>
	<p>12</p> <p>1809 - Abraham Lincoln, the 16th US president, was born.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>1965 Malcolm X was shot to death in New York City</p>	<p>Links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <a href="#">New GSO Content</a></li> <li>&gt; <a href="#">The Georgia Official and Statistical Register</a></li> <li>&gt; <a href="#">Auburn Avenue Research Library</a></li> </ul>
	<p>15</p> <p>1564 - Astronomer Galileo Galilei was born.</p>	<p>23</p> <p>1868 WEB Du Bois, civil rights writer, was born.</p>	<p>Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; <a href="#">African American History Month</a></li> <li>&gt; <a href="#">FREE Presidents Day Webcast</a></li> </ul>

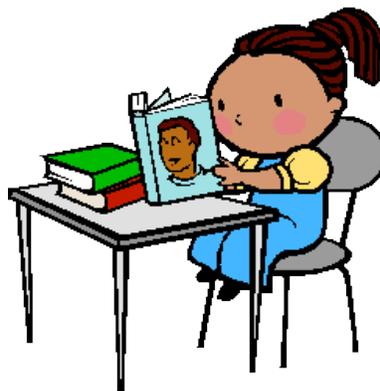
## February in Georgia History



### THE NEW GEORGIA ENCYCLOPEDIA

The [New Georgia Encyclopedia](#) (NGE) notes February 1733 as a very significant date in our state's history. Georgia became a colony through the perseverance of an individual who also carried the roles of social reformer and military leader. Do your students know the founder of Georgia? This [visionary](#) also initiated the city plans for the city of Savannah. In studying Colonial Georgia, eighth grade social studies teachers can reference [SS8H2](#) of the [Georgia Performance Standards](#). [NGE's February in Georgia History](#) also features the [Battle of Kettle](#), the completion of [Georgia's first Constitution](#) and the [South's oldest college football rivalry](#). Challenge your students to research the [New Georgia Encyclopedia](#) to find out who was the [first African American congressman](#) to speak on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. Teachers can access many more [NGE articles for February](#) that are about history, politics, entertainment and more.

## February EDSITEment Calendar of Special Events



The February calendar from [EDSITEment](#) is a collection of peer-reviewed websites and lesson plans covering this month's holidays and special events. February is [African American History Month](#) and [EDSITEment](#) highlights many activities and lessons focused around this celebration. Some of the EDSITEment's African American History lesson plans include [The Poet's Voice: Langston Hughes and You](#), [Attitudes Toward Emancipation](#), [Dr. King's Dream](#), [From Courage to Freedom: Frederick Douglass' 1845 Autobiography](#), [Perspectives on the Slave Narrative](#), [Harlem 1900-1940](#) and [African-American Soldiers in World War I: The 92nd and 93rd Divisions](#).

## FREE Presidents Day Webcast for High School Students

Does your high school want a great way to celebrate Presidents Day this year? Well, you are in luck because [Thinkfinity](#) (a GSO Top Pick) is currently featuring a free webcast for high school students. This must-see online event will be taught by Pulitzer Prize-Winning Author David McCullough. The webcast will highlight the first president of the United States, George Washington. This live event aptly titled "[George Washington: From Commander in Chief to Chief Executive](#)" will provide an opportunity for teachers and students to learn and ask questions about our first president. [ConSource](#) is sponsoring this event along with partner [Verizion](#). [ConSource](#) also boasts the only free fully-indexed online library of constitutional sources. For technical requirements on viewing this event in addition to lesson plan materials that instructor David McCullough will be referencing can be accessed on this [ConSource page](#).



# Celebrating February

## Auburn Avenue Research Library



Celebrate African studies all year long with the exceptional programs and events at the [Auburn Avenue Research Library](#) (AARL). This special library is located in Atlanta ([directions](#)) and is part of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System. This is the first library in the Southeast to house specialized reference and archival collections for the study and research of African cultures. [Tours](#) of the AARL facility are available by appointment. You can also check out [upcoming events](#) and the [Auburn Avenue Research Library calendar](#) for important venues and activities. The AARL also allows you to log-on to some excellent [online databases](#) to research African-American culture and history.

## National Children's Dental Health Month

Every February [Dental Health Month](#) celebrates the awareness for the proper care of teeth and gums. The [American Dental Association](#) (ADA) wants children to start healthy habits of brushing, flossing and regular dental visits as soon as possible. The ADA has some great [classroom ideas](#) for teachers and [fun printable activity sheets for students](#). [Education World](#) provides teachers with a [lesson ideas and links](#) for Dental Health Month, too.



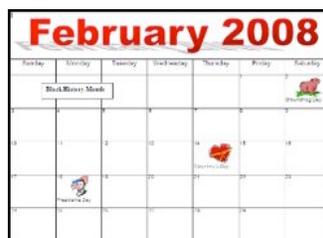
## Fly into February with more Fun Links

Education World has some [Groundhog Day holiday links](#) that you can use with your class. They also have some links straight from the heart for [Valentine's Day](#). ELA teachers in grades K-8 can have students assemble [Candy Heart Stories](#) as a great writing activity. And what [a great opportunity to learn](#) about veins, arteries, capillaries and what else...the heart! Go with the flow and point your browser to PBS where you can visualize [a six step animation](#) breakdown of what the heart does day in and day out. Paging students...paging all students, in 19 steps they can perform a [virtual heart transplant operation](#). Education World also has plenty to do with your students for [Presidents' Day](#).



## Calendar Templates are Back!

Many teachers have been requesting Word-formatted calendar templates to customize for their classroom planning and student handouts. GSO is excited to announce the return of the calendar template! Download the [February calendar template](#) now!



## Other GaDOE News

### New GSO Content

[Click here](#) to view the new content that was added to GeorgiaStandards.Org.

### February Media Matters

A [newsletter](#) for people who love Library Media Centers. You can also access the [Media Matters archives](#).

### GaDOE Press Releases

[Click here](#) to access media information for encouraging K-12 education in Georgia.

### GSO Press Releases

Read all the [latest news](#) regarding Georgia Standards.

### Subscribe to GaDOE Newsletter or Updates

If you would like to receive the e-newsletter or updates from GaDOE, [click here](#).

GeorgiaStandards.Org is a program under the office of Instructional Technology within the Georgia Department of Education

1952 Twin Towers East  
205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE  
Atlanta, GA 30334

Tel. (404) 463-1280  
Fax (404) 657-518



Kathy Cox  
State Superintendent  
of Schools