

# ELA REPORTER



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## Practice in Formative Assessment



In the March 2014 issue of *Educational Leadership*, author Brent Duckor offers seven practices for effective formative assessments in his article entitled, "Formative Assessments in Seven Good Moves." After looking at the work of John Hattie (2012), Dukor

realizes that "...we don't always know *which* practices are most effective, *when* to deploy them, and *why* a particular combination actually worked for a particular student in a particular classroom." He says, "formative assessment is more than a checklist of qualities or collection of activities. Rather it's made up of a sequence of *moves* that invite a positive, ongoing relationship between teachers and their students." Dukor and his colleagues watched hours of videotaped lessons and observed more live lessons in middle and high school classrooms and identified seven basic moves that are essential to rich formative assessment practices:

**Move 1: Prime students first.** Establishing norms and routines is important for students who are not familiar with assessment practices outside the normal experience of "doing school." Also, the author recommends reflecting on various moves teachers do implement.

**Move 2: Pose good questions.** The *kinds* of questions teachers ask matter. "A well-posed question creates an opportunity to meet learners at their current level of understanding. Thus, formative assessors need to know (or at least anticipate) their students' learning progressions with complex material so they can scaffold questions at key points (pit stops and bottlenecks) in the unit."

**Move 3: Pause during questioning.** The goal is to slow the process down. Teachers need time between

their questions and their students' responses. Providing students with protocols for participation, such as turn-and-talk, think-pair-share, or polling questions can provide the wait time needed to increase participation.

**Move 4: Probe student responses.** Probing suggests there is always more to know: collecting more substantial evidence to make decisions about what to teach reteach, or even preteach for a particular group of students.

**Move 5: Bounce questions throughout the classroom.** Feedback is about generating a loop. Increasing the breadth and depth of student response enables teachers the draw meaningful conclusions about student understanding.

**Move 6: Use tagging to generate a wide range of responses.** Tagging is recognizing student contributions to questions. Teachers must create a space for students to express both their understandings and their misunderstandings.

**Move 7: Build your bins.** Bins are how teachers categorize student responses. Teachers must become comfortable with answers that do not fall into their *correct answer* bin. Teachers need to know, through practical training and rich classroom experience, where kids get stuck and why.

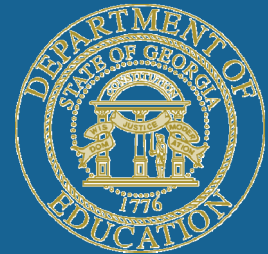
Dukor encourages teachers to practice, practice, practice on making good moves. Thus, teachers can develop the expertise to become more skilled formative assessors.

While we could only provide a snapshot of the moves Dukor outlines in his article, readers can learn more at the following link: <http://mathleadershipcorps.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Formative-Assessment-in-Seven-Good-Moves.pdf>.

For further reading: *Educational Leadership*.

Hattie, J. (2012) *Visible learning for teachers: Maximizing impact on learning*. London: Routledge.

Georgia  
Department  
of Education



Dr. John D. Barge,  
State School  
Superintendent

"Making Education  
Work for All Georgians"

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## Writing Effectively: What really matters?

*We do not have time in our classes to teach everything about the rhetoric of a sentence. I believe in island hopping, concentrating on topics where we can produce results and leaving the rest...to die on the vine.*

—Francis Christensen, *Notes Toward a New Rhetoric*

In the April issue of our *ELA Reporter*, we challenged teachers with the notion of “Classroom Expectations to Cultivate.” While the recommendation to eliminate the Daily Oral Language (DOL) and replace that practice with Jeff Anderson’s recommendation of model sentences was viewed as a challenge to the old guard, the research confirms the ineffective practice of grammar in isolation used to improve student writing. In this issue, we seek to offer some practical application for the suggestion to eliminate the old DOL practice.

Let us, for a moment, embrace the notion that model sentences can help student writing more than incorrect sentences. Your next series of questions might be, “Then how do I teach grammar in context using model sentences? What should I focus on? What does that look like?”

In Jeff Anderson’s *Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer’s Workshop*, he asks, and answers, similar questions: “In terms of writing effectively, what really matters? What should I spend my time on?” Anderson says, “If we were to island hop as Christensen suggests, we should hop on the islands that matter, that give our students the power to write effectively.” He continues,

*For example, in order for students to be able to play with or manipulate sentence parts, they have to be able to understand what makes up a sentence. They need to have a notion of subject and verb. Students need to understand patterns of punctuation and the patterns of sentences. But that’s still a large territory, and it doesn’t give a lot of guidance to teaches in trying to figure out how best to spend their time.*

Even though we might think we know what students don’t know, the first thing we must do is find out what they don’t know. Anderson recommends starting with an analysis of student writing, looking for patterns of error. Here Anderson offers a list of the 20 most common errors that were revealed in an analysis of college essays from around the United States (Connors and Lunsford, 1998):

1. No commas after introductory element
2. Vague pronoun reference
3. No comma in compound sentence
4. Wrong word
5. No comma in nonrestrictive element
6. Wrong/missing inflected endings
7. Wrong or missing prepositions
8. Comma splice
9. Possessive apostrophe error
10. Tense shift
11. Unnecessary shift in person
12. Sentence fragments

13. Wrong tense or verb form
14. Subject-verb agreement
15. Lack of comma in a series
16. Pronoun agreement error
17. Unnecessary comma with restrictive element
18. Run-on or fused sentence
19. Dangling or misplaced modifier
20. *It’s* versus *its* error

Notwithstanding these errors derive from a college study, do these errors look familiar? *Match it up with what’s tested on writing and grammar examinations. This list matches what Anderson’s kids struggle with, but at the same time it narrows the wide black void of grammar and mechanics he felt responsible for teaching.*

Anderson developed his own list of common errors, he shuffled the items into categories, then added a few common errors he saw his students make, such as double negatives, as well as included concepts he knew his writers needed to learn in order to express themselves. A note about spelling: while spelling is a common error, he did not add spelling to his list.

Next, Anderson crafted lessons used to target errors and concepts. (All 35 lessons are provided in Part II of his book.) When deciding what to teach your students, Anderson encourages teachers to “choose lessons that will stretch [students] to their growing edge. Base your teaching on errors they make. Base your teaching on the strategies they need.”

Teaching grammar in context—one thing at a time; one thing kids can easily hold in their heads and apply; one thing we can scaffold; one shared experience—Anderson incorporates this focused approach in his writer’s workshop. He didn’t throw out what he was doing; he just tweaked the process. Shifting from the mindless worksheets and test prep, Anderson uses powerful literature and student writing to teach the rules of language, which he posits that grammar and mechanics are inherently linked to craft. Having students view grammar and mechanics as the writer’s craft “alters [their] perceptions of what mechanics and grammar do.”

Sixteen years of study and experimentation in his inner-city classroom has led Jeff Anderson to write his book *Mechanically Inclined*. In his book, Anderson provides detailed resources for teachers to use in guiding students to better writing. He offers the “Owner’s Manual” - section that outlines the error, followed by “Lesson(s)” to address those common student errors in writing. This book is a must-read for any teacher who wants to add to his/her repertoire of teaching strategies.

Anderson, Jeff. (2005). *Mechanically Inclined: Building Grammar, Usage, and Style into Writer’s Workshop*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.

## A Final Note About the ELA Summer Academy

*A Special Thanks Goes Out to this Year's Teacher Presenters at the ELA Summer Academy*

This year's Summer Academy featured 113 teachers from around the state of Georgia. Once the presenters made it through the proposal phase, they wowed us (GaDOE staff and RESA staff) during the vetting process! In the end, we were able to offer a total of 84 teacher-presenter sessions to participants. The two-day Summer Academies offered many professional learning opportunities each day. The success of each Academy site is due, in large measure, to the teacher presenters who poured their hearts into each presentation to make it the best for their fellow teachers. To access the Academy materials, use this link: <http://2014elasummerinstitute.wikispaces.com/>.

We thank each teacher presenter as well as the anchor session and lunch and learn facilitators for his or her efforts to ensure that the sessions were research-based, standards-based, TKES-based, relevant, and creative.

Below is a list of each presenter and the county he/she represented for the 2014 ELA Summer Academy.

### Teacher Presenters

David Abbott—Lanier County  
 Dawn Allison-Ruiz—Cobb County  
 Deborah Aughey—Cobb County  
 Leila Barber—Cobb County  
 Cyndi Barr—Houston County  
 Carlos Barrera—Cobb County  
 Heather Barton—Cherokee County  
 Dawn Bennett—West Georgia RESA  
 Sean Bennett—Fayette County  
 Barbara Bishop—West Georgia RESA  
 Amy Booms—Fulton County  
 Lindsay Bowley—Cherokee County  
 Shoney Brice—Carroll County  
 Susan Bray—Houston County  
 Lynne Bruschetti—Fayette County  
 Emily Bryant—Bleckley County  
 Sheree Bryant—Griffin RESA  
 Ronette Burnett—Harris County  
 Anna Byrnes—Coweta County  
 Amy Cardwell—Cobb County  
 Cindy Clark—Habersham County  
 Jennifer Claxton—Jones County  
 Michael Clyne—Gwinnett County  
 Jennifer Corbett—Coweta County  
 Jemelleh Coes—Bulloch County  
 Karen Correia—Franklin County  
 Veronica Dap—Gwinnett County  
 Robert Davis—Lee County  
 Dianna Denton—Cobb County  
 Amia Dixon—Newton County  
 Alice Ensley—Whitfield County  
 Trathenia Evans—Peach County  
 Leslie Fagin—Spalding County  
 Haley Ferguson—Floyd County  
 Crystal Flowers—Bibb County  
 Laura French—Coweta County

Angela Fry—Cobb County  
 Tiffany Fuller—Floyd County  
 Amanda Gaither—Lanier County  
 Leslie Giraldo—Ware County  
 Michelle Grant—Cherokee County  
 Ashlee Gruno—Brooks County  
 Donna Hall—Valdosta City  
 Susie Hall—Houston County  
 Angela Herring—Coweta County  
 LaMonika Hill—Gainesville City  
 LaToyia Jackson—Dougherty County  
 Kim Jackson-Alten—Chatham County  
 Stacy James—Rockdale County  
 Dianne Johnson—Peach County  
 Roban Johnson—Jones County  
 Gwin Jordan—Fayette County  
 Zackory Kirk—Henry County  
 Holly Kirkpatrick—Cobb County  
 Monica Landis—Floyd County  
 Beth Lee—Brooks County  
 Cheralyn Lee—Fulton County  
 Priscilla Lee—Coweta County  
 Maura Lewis—Valdosta City  
 Melanie Lockett—Monroe County  
 Dan Lollis—Gwinnett County  
 Wanda Mangum—Gwinnett County  
 Jamie Manning—Atlanta Public  
 Teresa Martin—Houston County  
 Audrey Mazzotta—Lanier County  
 Patti McWhorter—Northeast RESA  
 Val Mickish—Gwinnett County  
 Luz Montanez—Cobb County  
 Andrea Moon—Cobb County  
 Ashley Morris—Cobb County  
 Kayse Morris—Coffee County  
 Tina Mullinax—Floyd County  
 Tim O'Neill—Cobb County  
 Vicki Owens—Cobb County

Gilberte Pascal—Henry County  
 Matthew Patterson—Fulton County  
 Gina Pearson—Bleckley County  
 Latrina Pennamon-Nash—Bibb  
 Rebekah Phillips—Carroll County  
 Patty Poltzer—Douglas County  
 Michael Richie—Gwinnett County  
 Deborah Ricks—Southwest GA RESA  
 Valerie Roberson—Jefferson County  
 Kaneisha Robinson—Gwinnett County  
 Tabitha Roper—Cherokee County  
 Lyssa Sahadevan—Cobb County  
 Kim Sheppard—Henry County  
 April Smith—Lee County  
 Robin Smith—Middle Georgia RESA  
 Kelli Sowerbrower—Coweta County  
 Sylvia Spruill—Cobb County  
 Angelann Stephens—Fulton County  
 Melissa Stern—Valdosta City  
 Tiffany Taylor—Spalding County  
 Marilyn Thomas—Cobb County  
 Tameka Thomas—Henry County  
 Valerie Thomas—Clayton County  
 Amy Thompson—Jones County  
 Joy Thompson—Spalding County  
 Jennifer Uldrick—Floyd County  
 Laura Walley—Floyd County  
 Crystal Ware—Valdosta City  
 Franchesca Warren—Atlanta Public  
 Jennifer Weninger—Murray County  
 Delina Wester—Franklin County  
 Vic Marie White—Peach County  
 Erin Whitlow—Madison County  
 Nakoa Wiley—Atlanta Public Schools  
 Nadia Williams—Cobb County  
 Reginald Williams—DeKalb County  
 ShaWanda Williams—Peach County  
 Hannah Zey—Fulton County

In addition to the teacher presenters, we offered participants Anchor sessions that were available to all grade levels, and we offered lunch and learn segments to provide information that teachers need to impact their teaching. Below is a list of those who conducted Anchor Sessions or Lunch and Learn segments.

### Anchor Session Presenters

Mary Lynn Huie, LDC  
 Ami Polcaro, DBQ Project  
 Jan Reyes, GaDOE Assessment  
 Dawn Souter, GaDOE Assessment  
 Kelli Wright, GaDOE Assessment

### Lunch & Learn Presenters

Hubert Bennett, GaDOE  
 Digital Resources  
 Mary Frieson, GaDOE TKES  
 Stefany Howard, GaDOE TKES  
 Lois Landry, GaDOE TKES  
 Cindy Lee, GaDOE TKES  
 Kathy Reese, GaDOE TKES





# Keep an Eye out for the I<sup>3</sup> Triathlon!

## ELA I<sup>3</sup> Triathlon



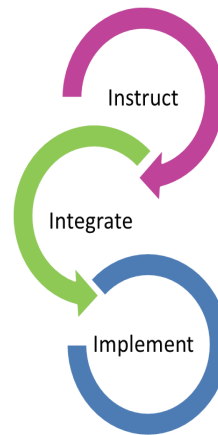
**Professional learning designed to promote and build sustainability for rigorous academic writing across the state of Georgia.**

**Phase I:** DBQ/LBQ Professional Collaborative

**Phase II:** Learning Progressions (Home Grown Institute)

**Phase III:** UBD Teacher Collaborative for the creation of Assessments that prepare students for academic success.

This ambitious three-year, three-part plan begins with Phase I in August, 2014, and includes I<sup>3</sup> (Instruct, Integrate, and Implement—the heart, mind, and soul part of our ELA Triathlon!



### Planning Ahead

Starting this school year, the ELA team will host a series of talks entitled “Talking with Teachers.” These talks will be conducted every six weeks starting in mid-September and will engage teachers in discussions on topics such as,

- ♦ writing to support testing,
- ♦ close reading, and
- ♦ research as a performance-based assessment.

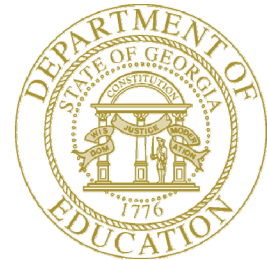
We invite you to join us on this journey as we chart the course for ELA instruction in Georgia. If you have suggestions for additional topics that are germane to ELA instruction, please share your ideas via email (use email address in box at the right). *“Talk to you later.”*

## English Language Arts and Literacy

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### How Can We Help?

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**DOE ELA Home Page:**

[http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/  
ci\\_services.aspx?  
PageReq=CI\\_Serv\\_English](http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/ci_services.aspx?PageReq=CI_Serv_English)

**GeorgiaStandards.Org ELA Page:**

[https://www.georgiastandards.org/  
Common-Core/Pages/ELA.aspx](https://www.georgiastandards.org/Common-Core/Pages/ELA.aspx)

## Explore! Wiki, ListServ, GSD

High School Wiki: <http://elaccgps9-12.wikispaces.com/>

Middle School Wiki: <http://georgiaelaccgps6-8.wikispaces.com/>

Elementary School Wiki: <http://georgiaelaccgpsk-5.wikispaces.com/>

To Join the ListServ:

[Join-ela-k-2@list.doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:Join-ela-k-2@list.doe.k12.ga.us)

[Join-ela-3-5@list.doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:Join-ela-3-5@list.doe.k12.ga.us)

[Join-ela-6-8@list.doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:Join-ela-6-8@list.doe.k12.ga.us)

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