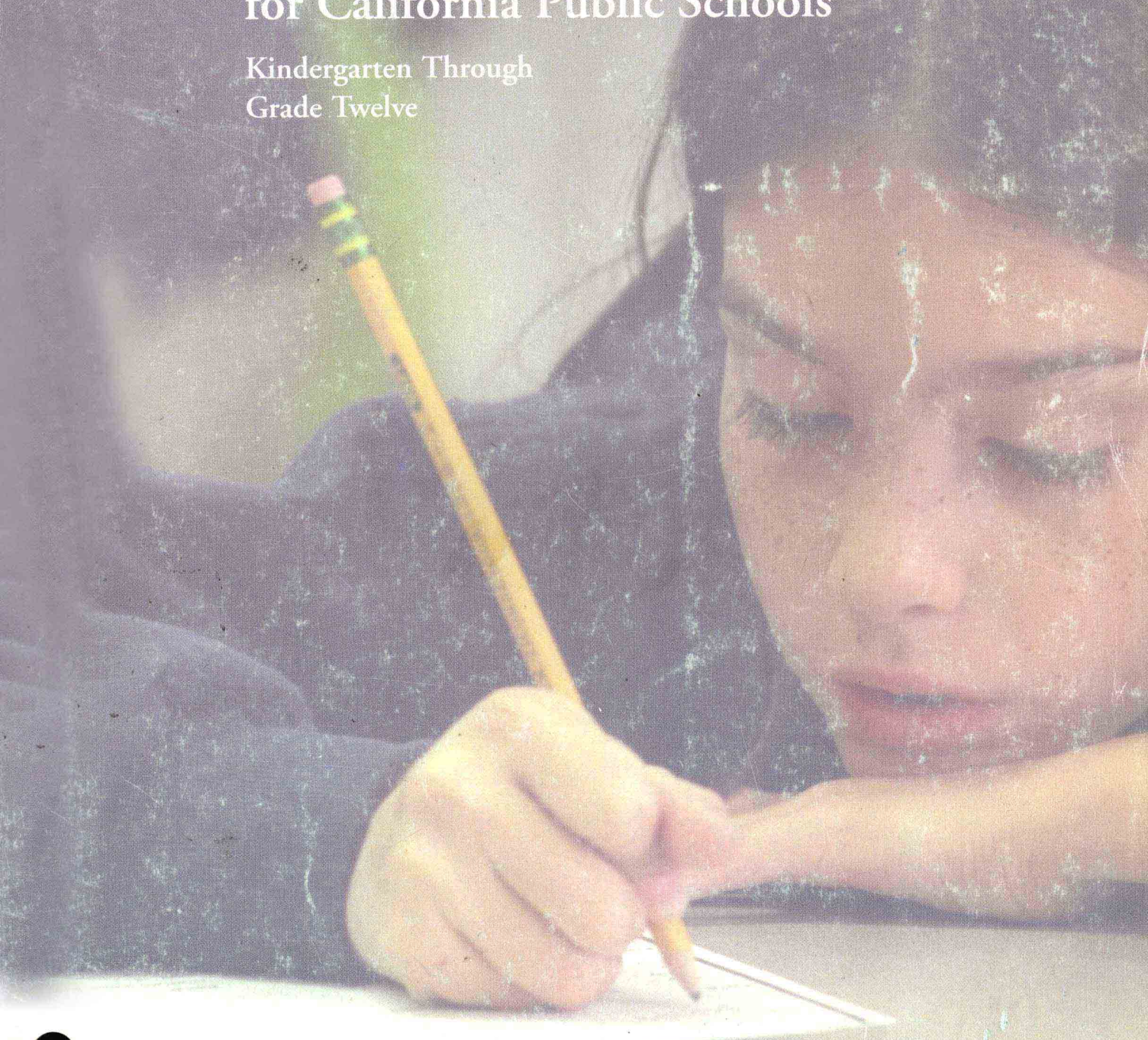




# Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools

Kindergarten Through  
Grade Twelve



*Adopted by the California State Board of Education  
Published by the California Department of Education  
Sacramento, 1999*



# Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools

Kindergarten Through  
Grade Twelve

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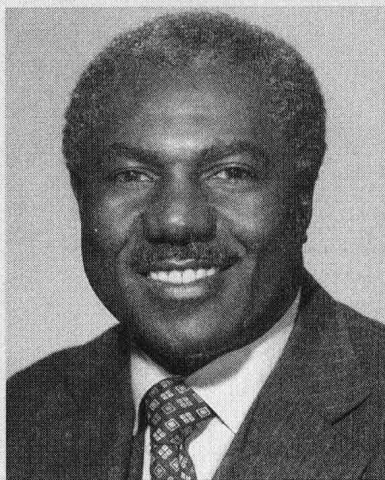
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Prepared for publication  
by CSEA members



To  
**Wilson C. Riles**

Teacher, statesman, tireless champion of children  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1971–1983

We saw the vision through his eyes.  
We felt the passion through his spirit.  
His legacy was to kindle the flame,  
and ours is to keep it burning,  
*for the children.*

# Foreword

When parents bring their children to the classroom door, they are entrusting our schools with this nation's most precious resource. No more important public service exists than to ensure that when children leave our schools as young adults, they are empowered with the language skills they need to be successful, contributing members of an information society that relies increasingly on the power and richness of language for effective communication. We take this responsibility seriously and invite you to participate with us as we implement a system that will ensure that every student will be reading at least by the third grade and will graduate with a full range of abilities in the language arts.

Reading has been described as emancipation because it allows the mind access to all previously recorded human thought. Its corollary, writing, allows us to communicate with the future. And listening and speaking, tools of the present, allow us to connect with people throughout the world. Without the ability to read, write, listen, and speak well, our students will find themselves lost in a world where even basic transactions assume facility with language. The importance of our responsibility to teach students to read with

comprehension and enthusiasm, to listen with understanding and compassion, to speak with conviction and effect, and to write with clarity and persuasion cannot be overstated.

To accomplish that ambitious task, we are providing a framework that offers a blueprint for implementation of the language arts content standards adopted by the California State Board of Education in 1997. Those world-class standards, comprehensive and balanced, may require changes in instructional programs, instructional materials, staff development, and assessment strategies. A standards-based system of curricular and instructional programs that accelerates and sustains the early and continued achievement in reading and the language arts by all students in California's public education system, kindergarten through grade twelve, is described in this framework. That system cannot and will not be implemented, however, without the participation and contributions of teachers, administrators, parents, students, and all other stakeholders in a literate society. Teaching our children to use and enjoy the power of language is a shared responsibility. We look forward to working with you to ensure that all students attain the highest possible levels of language and literacy.



DELAINE EASTIN  
*State Superintendent of Public Instruction*



YVONNE LARSEN  
*President, California State Board of Education*

# Preface

Responsibility for ensuring that all students develop proficiency in the language arts is not new. The increasing social, economic, and technological demands for students to be proficient in reading, writing, listening, and speaking are urgent and unforgiving. For high school graduates in California to proceed to institutions of higher education or to be employable and meet the unprecedented civic, economic, and technological challenges of the twenty-first century, they must be more than merely literate. They must be able to read all forms of text fluently and independently, communicate effectively and creatively in oral and written form, and comprehend and deliver complex forms of discourse. In addition to those pragmatic and economic purposes of language arts proficiency, the role of California educators is to instill in students (1) a lifelong love of reading; (2) a facility and joy of communicating through language; and (3) a deep appreciation of literary and informational text and the ways in which print expands our universe and our understanding of history and humanity.

Our students will require higher levels of literacy skills than ever before. California has put in place a system of support to respond to that reality and to achieve the goal that all students who graduate are proficient in the language arts. An integral component of that system is the *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*. Content standards, well-designed materials, skilled teachers, and a comprehensive program of assessment complete the system.

This framework is based on the rigorous English-language arts content standards adopted by the State Board in November of 1997. Those standards form the basis of curriculum development at every grade level and a statewide assessment and accountability system. *Education Code* Section 60605(f) requires that this framework be aligned with the standards.

The *Reading/Language Arts Framework* replaces the 1987 *English-Language Arts Framework* and relies heavily on the converging research base in beginning reading. It responds to the charge of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education to ensure that all students can read at grade level at least by the end of the third grade. The framework observes the commitment to a balanced and comprehensive language arts program, defining balance as the differential instructional emphasis on specific skills and strategies at strategic points in a learner's instruction to ensure proficiency according to all language arts standards.

This framework addresses reading, writing, speaking, listening, and written and oral English-language conventions for the full range of learners and across the full kindergarten through grade twelve educational span. The standards and the framework give special emphasis to continuity and progression in the language arts curriculum and to the reality that standards in the earlier grades are building blocks for proficiency in the later grades. Educators must make a commitment to provide the necessary support to ensure that all students reach proficiency. The framework further recognizes and ad-

dresses the critical linkages among curriculum, instruction, and assessment to enhance student learning. Effective, well-trained teachers and quality instructional materials that select and sequence information to optimize learning and the retention of information are at the core of effective programs. The framework emphasizes the important content and instructional connections that can and should be made across domains and standards to provide a coherent, effective, and efficient program of language arts instruction.

The standards describe the content students should master by the end of each grade level. The framework elaborates on those standards and describes the curriculum and instruction necessary to help students achieve the levels of mastery. It also focuses on specific grade-level, standards-based instruction and, as such, has a purpose much different from

frameworks of the past. Most important, this framework focuses on developing the highest levels of language arts proficiency to enable students to participate fully in society and the world of work and to unlock the power and pleasure of communicating effectively in the English language.

LESLIE FAUSSET

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Educational Policy, Curriculum, and  
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# Acknowledgments

Fifteen California educators selected from 200 applicants were appointed in 1996 by the Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission (Curriculum Commission) and confirmed by the California State Board of Education to serve on the Curriculum Framework and Criteria Committee for English–Language Arts and English as a Second Language. More than half of the diverse group taught students in kindergarten through grade twelve. Other members were school principals, a coordinating field librarian, a reading specialist, county office curriculum coordinators, and university educators.

After more than a year of intensive meetings and writing focused on creating a comprehensive and balanced document, the committee produced a preliminary draft. During the summer of 1997, that draft underwent an in-depth review and evaluation by a prominent California reading researcher to ensure that it was grounded in relevant research and practice. Simultaneously, the newly developed English–language arts content standards were being finalized by the Commission for the Establishment of Academic Content and Performance Standards. In addition, new legislation was enacted that called for all frameworks to be fully aligned with the corresponding content standards. Adoption of the standards by the State Board and the new legislation

required that the preliminary draft of the framework be revised to reflect a new focus on the implementation of the standards and the instruction students must receive to meet those standards successfully.

An invitation to bid was issued to obtain assistance in reshaping the preliminary draft to meet the new criteria. The draft was submitted to new writers, who then created a draft for field review that was aligned with the English–language arts content standards and contained an instructional context for those standards. More than 2,000 copies of the draft framework were distributed to educators and other experts across the state and nation during the field review process in June and July 1998. The Curriculum Commission held two public hearings to receive feedback on the draft in July and August 1998 and directed the writers and Department of Education staff to make necessary revisions. The State Board conducted two public hearings on the framework in fall 1998 and adopted the *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* in December 1998.

The principal writers of the framework were:

**Edward J. Kame'enui**, University of Oregon, Eugene

**Deborah C. Simmons**, University of Oregon, Eugene



The following members of the Subject-Matter Committee for English–Language Arts and English as a Second Language were responsible for overseeing the development of the framework:

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**Lillian Vega Castaneda**, California State University, San Marcos

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**Susan Stickel**, Elk Grove Unified School District

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The work of the Subject-Matter Committee was greatly supported by the State Board of Education liaisons:

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**Kirk Ankeney** (Chair, 1998), San Diego City Unified School District

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**Robin Scarcella**, University of California, Irvine, for her assistance in writing sections of the framework related to English learners

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# Contents

Foreword	vii
Preface	viii
Acknowledgments	x

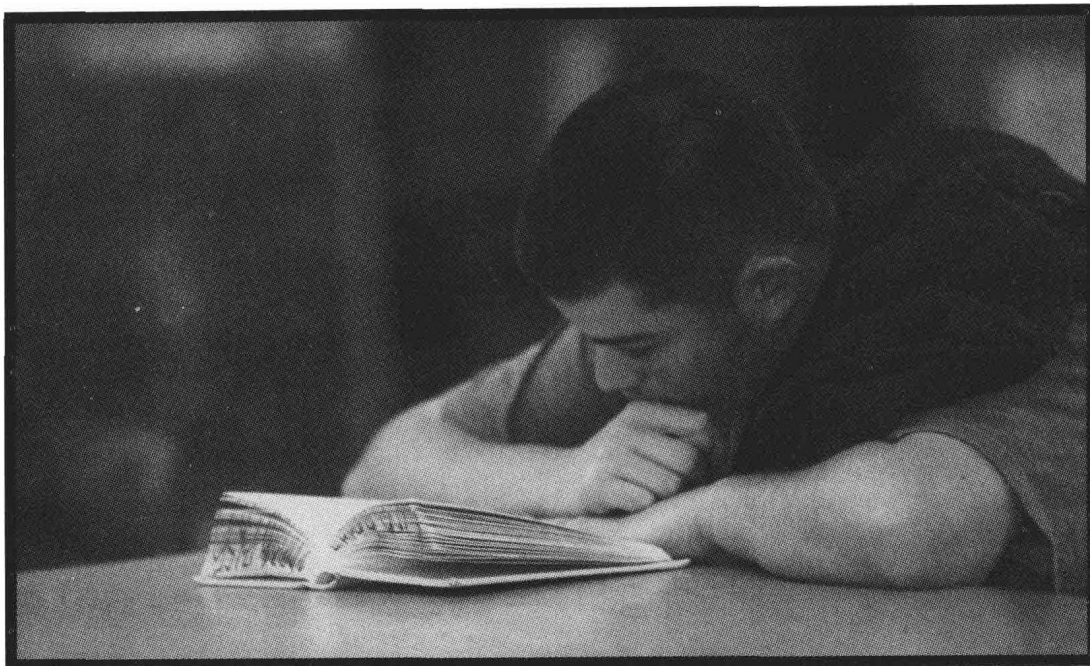
<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction to the Framework</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Goal and Key Components of Effective Language Arts Instruction</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Content Standards and Instructional Practices, Kindergarten Through Grade Three</b>	<b>22</b>
	Kindergarten	30
	First Grade	44
	Second Grade	64
	Third Grade	80
<b>4</b>	<b>Content Standards and Instructional Practices, Grades Four Through Eight</b>	<b>96</b>
	Fourth Grade	101
	Fifth Grade	118
	Sixth Grade	133
	Seventh Grade	151
	Eighth Grade	165
<b>5</b>	<b>Content Standards and Instructional Practices, Grades Nine Through Twelve</b>	<b>181</b>
	Ninth Grade and Tenth Grade	183
	Eleventh Grade and Twelfth Grade	199

<b>6</b>	<b>Assessment of Proficiency in the Language Arts</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Universal Access to the Language Arts Curriculum</b>	<b>225</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Responsibilities and Support for Proficiency in the Language Arts</b>	<b>237</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Development and Evaluation of Instructional Materials</b>	<b>248</b>

APPENDIX A	
Matrix for the English– Language Arts Content Standards, by Grade	259

APPENDIX B	
Representative Content Standards and Instructional Connections for the Language Arts	262
Glossary of Selected Terms	276
Works Cited	281
Additional References	286

*Note:* The corresponding text from the *English–Language Arts Content Standards* can be found at the end of each grade-level section.



# Introduction to the Framework

*The framework uses the English—language arts content standards as its curricular platform and aligns curriculum, assessment, instruction, and organization to provide a comprehensive, coherent structure for language arts teaching and learning.*

**T**he purpose of the California Reading/Language Arts Framework is to provide a blueprint for organizing instruction so that every child meets or exceeds the language arts content standards. It will guide the implementation of the standards by specifying the design of instructional materials, curriculum, instruction, and professional development. The standards designate what to teach at specific grade levels, and this framework provides guidelines and selected research-based approaches for implementing instruction to ensure optimal benefits for all students, including those with special learning needs (e.g., English learners, students with learning disabilities and reading difficulties, and advanced learners).



Teachers should not be expected to be the composers of the music as well as the conductors of the orchestra.

Kathi Cooper,  
Sacramento City  
Unified School District

## Audiences for the Framework

The framework has two primary audiences: (1) teachers and other educators involved in English–language arts instruction; and (2) developers and publishers of language arts programs and materials. Parents, members of the community, and policymakers can be guided by the framework as they review language arts programs at the local and state levels. Educators will use this framework and the content standards as a road map for curriculum and instruction. Publishers must attend to the content and pedagogical requirements specified in the content standards and the framework to ensure that all California students have access to research-based instructional and practice materials. Carefully articulated curricular sequences and quality instructional materials enable teachers to invest more energy in delivering instruction and assessing the effectiveness of instruction for the full range of learners in their classrooms.

## The Context of the Language Arts

In a suburban elementary school, seven-year-old Joshua enters the second grade reading two correct words in a minute and scoring at the ninth percentile on a standardized measure of receptive vocabulary. He cannot read the words *mom* or *can* or identify pictures that represent the meanings of *group* or *pair*. In the same second-grade classroom, seven-year-old Ricardo reads third-grade material fluently and provides a detailed and vivid recall of the story depicting the race between a tortoise and a hare. Judith, an eleven-year-old student with a reading disability, is repeating the fourth grade in

an urban school in another part of the state. She labors over each of the words in a history passage on the California Gold Rush and has extreme difficulty in writing basic sentences to summarize the major points in the text.

Michael, an eighth-grade student in a rural school, reads and comprehends Guy de Maupassant's short story "The Necklace" with ease, carefully comparing and contrasting the theme with that of other short stories and communicating his ideas fluently and eloquently in writing. In a suburban high school on the coast, the instructional diversity of an eleventh-grade classroom poses particular challenges as students with reading abilities that span more than six grade levels read *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck and orally support their viewpoints and positions with details from the text.

The individual differences of the students just mentioned are as varied as their educational performances. Many plausible factors can explain why Michael excels and Judith struggles. Previous instructional experiences, prior knowledge of concepts and content, the socioeconomic level of the family, and motivation are all part of the complex equation of factors that can determine children's literacy success. The common denominator of the students is the need to develop competence in the language arts to ensure that they will be able to access information with ease, apply language skills at levels demanded in the twenty-first century, appreciate literature, and obtain the liberty society offers to those who can use the English language with facility. The mission of all public schools must be to ensure that students acquire that proficiency to enhance their civic participation and their academic, social, personal, and economic success in today's society and tomorrow's world.

## The Challenge in the Language Arts

Facility in the language arts is the enabling skill that traverses academic disciplines and translates into meaningful personal, social, and economic outcomes for individuals. Literacy is the key to becoming an independent learner in all the other disciplines. Society has long recognized the importance of successful reading. But only recently have we begun to understand the profound, enduring consequences of not learning to read well and the newly found evidence of the critical abbreviated period in which to alter patterns of reading failure (California Department of Education 1995; Juel 1988; Lyon and Chhabra 1996). Most important, we recognize the convergence of evidence to guide instruction in the language arts (National Research Council 1998).

One need not look beyond school dropout data, prison rosters, or public assistance rolls to find that the problem of illiteracy is pervasive and is especially common to many who are not succeeding in a society whose literacy demands continue to exacerbate the divisions between the haves and the have-nots. Studies of individuals who are resilient in facing personal and social adversity indicate that the ability to read and write well renders powerful, far-reaching positive effects. Literacy levels are positively associated with both higher annual income and lower unemployment. On the other hand, the absence of proficient reading and writing skills is associated not only with academic failure and dropping out of school but also with unemployment and involvement with the judicial system (Cornwall and Bawden 1992; Werner 1993).

Stanovich (1986) observes that students who read early and successfully not only

reap the advantages of early literacy but also accumulate experiences with print that continue to differentiate good readers from poor readers throughout their academic careers. Unfortunately, the rich-get-richer phenomenon known as the Matthew Effect (see glossary) has been verified in both the academic and the economic domains. Individuals who test at the least-proficient levels of literacy are often unemployable because even low-skill jobs today demand adequate ability in reading (Whitman and Gest 1995).

In 1993 Peter Drucker described the advent of the knowledge society in which knowledge workers will replace blue-collar workers as the dominant class in the twenty-first century. According to Drucker society will demand more sophisticated print-oriented skills than are currently required of the American workforce. America will be greatly challenged in general to develop competitive knowledge workers. In 1996 Simmons and Kame'enui remarked that those referred to as vulnerable learners would be especially challenged; that is, students who, because of their instructional, socioeconomic, experiential, physiological, and neurological characteristics, bring different and often additional requirements to instruction and curriculum.

## The Charge to Educators

Reading/language arts and related disciplines are the beneficiaries of an abundance of converging research that produces a professional knowledge base related to fostering and sustaining competence in the language arts, particularly beginning reading. Noteworthy advances have identified the features of curricular and instructional interventions to offset negative factors that can accompany

Chapter 1  
Introduction  
to the  
Framework

Students who read early and successfully not only reap the advantages of early literacy but also accumulate experiences with print that continue to differentiate good readers from poor readers throughout their academic careers.

children when they enter school (Hanson and Farrell 1995; Lipson and Wixson 1986). As educational leaders it is our charge to use that knowledge base responsibly and strategically to ensure that all children educated in California public schools will graduate with the knowledge and skills that allow them to access and employ the power of the printed word. Toward that end this framework is designed to provide a blueprint for curriculum and instruction to enhance all students' potential as producers and users of language.

## Guiding Principles

In an effort to accelerate and sustain all learners' proficiency in the language arts, ten principles are used to guide this framework and address the complexity of the content and context of language arts instruction. The principles direct the purpose, design, delivery, and evaluation of instruction. Accordingly, the framework:

- *Uses the English-language arts content standards as its curricular platform and aligns curriculum, assessment, instruction, and organization* to provide a comprehensive, coherent structure for language arts teaching and learning. The standards serve as curricular guideposts for teachers and provide clear-cut curricular goals for all learners. Genuine alignment of curriculum, assessment, instruction, and organization rests at the school level. There the components must be identified, implemented, and adjusted to fit the conditions and contexts of the school and the needs of the learners.
- *Stresses the importance of a balanced, comprehensive program.* *Balanced* is defined as the strategic selection and scheduling of instruction to ensure

that students meet or exceed those standards, and *comprehensive* is defined as the inclusion of all content standards. Although more or less emphasis is placed on particular strands, depending on students' needs at a given time, all strands are to be developed simultaneously.

—*Balanced* does not mean that all skills and standards receive equal emphasis at a given point in time. Rather, it implies that the overall emphasis accorded to a skill or standard is determined by its priority or importance relative to students' language and literacy levels and needs. For example, in kindergarten and the first grade, students first learn to apply and practice decoding and word-attack skills in carefully controlled, decodable texts. Later in the first grade and in subsequent grades the emphasis on decodable texts shifts to less-controlled passages and literature as students develop proficiency in the skills needed for reading in an alphabetic writing system.

—A *comprehensive* program ensures that students learn to read and write, comprehend and compose, appreciate and analyze, and perform and enjoy the language arts. They should spend time immersed in high-quality literature and work with expository text, learn foundational skills in the alphabetic writing system, and study real books. A comprehensive program ensures that students master foundational skills as a gateway to using all forms of language as tools for thinking, learning, and communicating (Bay Area Reading Task Force 1997).