

# GSO to GO

NEWS FOR  
AUGUST  
2009



## The Monthly Educator Resource Newsletter from GeorgiaStandards.Org

GeorgiaStandards.Org  
GATEWAY TO EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

### General Information

#### Welcome Back!

The [GeorgiaStandards.Org](http://GeorgiaStandards.Org) (GSO) program office wants to welcome Georgia's educators back to school. Thousands of Georgia teachers are preplanning and aligning curriculum to the Georgia Performance Standards for the 2009-2010 school year. We hope that all teachers incorporate [GeorgiaStandards.Org](http://GeorgiaStandards.Org) into the planning of units, performance tasks, teaching & learning activities and assessment methods throughout the year. As you ramp up for another school year, GSO is looking forward to supporting you for all of your curriculum needs.

#### New GSO Website

The [GeorgiaStandards.Org](http://GeorgiaStandards.Org) website had a major redesign in Spring 2009. Some of you may be visiting GSO for the first time since last school year. And for that reason, we have setup overview pages on how to interact and navigate the new GSO for all of our stakeholders. Access these customized GSO stakeholder pages by [Teacher](#), [Administrator](#) or [Parent](#).

Many improvements were implemented to GeorgiaStandards.Org. One of the first things that you will notice is a new color scheme and a navigation system that is more streamlined

to allow users to better find information. The search feature was improved to allow for additional functionality in searching through all the resources that are aligned to the Georgia Performance Standards. You will also notice that finding standards and frameworks is that much easier.

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#### GSO Feedback

The GeorgiaStandards.Org Team welcomes your feedback regarding the new site by contacting us through the following:

Telephone: (404) 463-1280  
Fax: (404) 657-5183  
Email: [GSOwebmaster@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:GSOwebmaster@doe.k12.ga.us)

## Survey Results of the New GSO

An educator focus group was conducted in May 2009 at the Georgia Department of Education. Educators expressed valuable feedback to the GaDOE and took a survey about the new GSO. The survey results revealed the following about the new GeorgiaStandards.Org website:



- 100% of the focus group participants agreed that the new GSO looked professional.
- 94% of the focus group participants were satisfied overall with the new GSO design.
- 88% of focus group participants agreed that the overall look of the new GSO is what they expected.
- 82% of the focus group participants agreed that the new design of GSO kept them interested.
- 71% of focus group participants agreed that the information on the new GSO was easy to understand.

## GSO on Twitter

GeorgiaStandards.Org has been utilizing Twitter to keep educators, administrators, parents and students updated with news and information about the official site of the Georgia Performance Standards. The micro-blogging site allows the GSO team to post status updates, called "tweets," on their Twitter homepage. Subscribers can be informed about new tweets through text messages, RSS feeds and third-party applications. This provides GeorgiaStandards.Org yet another method to convey information directly to stakeholders. Follow GSO on Twitter:

follow us on  
**twitter**

<http://twitter.com/GaStandardsOrg>

## Are You a New Georgia Teacher?

Is this your first year teaching in Georgia? As a first year teacher or a seasoned veteran, you probably have been attending orientation and preplanning workshops about Georgia's curriculum, the [Georgia Performance Standards](#) (GPS). Teachers and parents may reacquaint themselves at any time with the GPS by watching this [GPS Introductory Video](#) (also available for the [Real Player](#)).



## GPS Glossary

### Anchor Paper

A sample of student work that exemplifies a specific level of performance. Raters use anchors to score student work, usually comparing the student performance to the anchor. For example, if student work was being scored on a scale of 1-5, there would typically be anchors (previously scored student work) exemplifying each point on the scale.



## 5 Important Things About The New GSO

The following are some important things for our stakeholders to keep in mind with the transition from the old GSO website to the new.

1. The new site will continue using the following web address:

<http://www.GeorgiaStandards.Org>

2. All content from the old site has been migrated to the new site.
3. Migration of some GSO best practice videos will be migrated to the new GSO by Winter 2009.
4. Old GSO bookmarks/favorites in your browser or on social bookmarking sites will not work. If you try to access an old GSO page, you will experience a 404 error page. If you do encounter a "page not found error", the main tabs at the top of the error page will allow you to navigate the new GSO.
5. No change will occur in your GSO Builder account. All GSO Builder account information can be accessed from the new GSO site. You will not experience any data loss with your GSO Builder account.

## Back to School Essentials

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 checklist.

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 [Welcome Back to School PowerPoint presentation](#) that is sure to keep your new students paying attention and focused on you. [This template](#) can also be used for your Open House to parents.

Soon, grade level open house dates will be announced by your school's administrators and you are already contemplating your open house agenda. Why not print grade-level GPS informational brochures for parents? GPS brochures are readily available on the GeorgiaStandards.Org website through the [Parent Information page](#) (scroll down to the bottom of the page). On the [Parent Information page](#), GPS brochures can be downloaded for grades K-8 and Significant Cognitive Disabilities.

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

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## Get Your Graphic Organizers!

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 teaching of a performance standard can be invaluable to student learning. GSO provides a link to some great graphic organizers. Head on over to the Resources and Videos tab and once there, click on Browse Resources and then you will see the graphic organizer link on the [Teacher Tools for Integrating Technology page](#). The [Graphic Organizers site](#) has a long list 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 reviewing some of the graphic organizers, we were impressed by the [Graphs and Grids organizer](#). The [Graphs and Grids organizer](#) is an adaptable template for math or science. This organizer includes templates ranging from time graphs and pie charts to charting the rate of plant growth. There are many more templates available on the [Region 15 Graphic Organizers site](#).

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## Free Academic Templates

Attention teachers! You may save some time this school year with the following websites that offer templates that can be downloaded to your computer and then modified to meet 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 template categories that stand out are assessments, award certificates, back to school, bulletin board resources and ice breakers.

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## Georgia Read More

The Georgia Department of Education has implemented a literacy program aimed at third grade called the "[Georgia Read More](#)" program. Through the concentrated efforts of the [Library Media Services Department](#) this program has resulted in an [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 of the books that are in the Georgia Read More program are a Lexile score and links to author websites.



## Meet the GSO Staff

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## GSO Quick Links

- > [Georgia Performance Standards](#)
- > [Frameworks](#)
- > [AP, ACT, SAT and PSAT](#)
- > [English to Speakers of Other Languages \(ESOL\)](#)
- > [Gifted Education](#)
- > [Library Media](#)
- > [The Lexile Framework for Reading](#)
- > [Special Education Services & Support](#)
- > [Teacher Tools for Integrating Technology](#)
- > [Testing Resources](#)

# Celebrating August

## communicate

### Aug. 1

**1936** - [Benjamin Mays](#) became president of Morehouse College in Atlanta on his forty-first birthday.

### Aug. 6

**1972** - Playing for the Atlanta Braves, [Hank Aaron](#) set the major league record for home runs hit by a player for a single franchise: 661.

### Aug. 9

**1999** - In ceremonies at the Carter Center, U.S. president [Jimmy Carter](#) and his wife, [Rosalynn Carter](#), each received a Presidential Medal of Freedom.

## collaborate

For more Georgia facts, visit [The New Georgia Encyclopedia](#).

[GeorgiaStandards.Org](#) is the Thinkfinity State Education Partner in Georgia. GSO provides [Thinkfinity professional development](#) for educators and trainers.

## connect

### Downloads

- > [August calendar template](#)
- > [Back to School Checklist](#)
- > [Back to School PowerPoint](#)

### Links

- > [GSO Contact Information](#)
- > [Connect with GSO on Twitter](#)
- > [GPS by Grade Level, K-8](#)

### Writing Prompt

Ask students if they could travel to anywhere, where would they go? Then have them write a description of their ideal place to visit. [Eduplace offers these writing activities.](#)

## Ideas for Back to School Activities

Need 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. In [Getting To Know You](#), teachers in grades 1-6 can utilize this by pairing students with partners and having them interview each other about their summer. Teachers can also 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 [Eduplace's Back to School activities page](#).



THE NEW GEORGIA  
ENCYCLOPEDIA

## 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." Your students can brush up on Georgia facts and more on the [August in Georgia History](#) page on [The New Georgia Encyclopedia](#). The NGE link is also available on [GeorgiaStandards.Org](#) on the [Teacher Tools for Integrating Technology](#) page.

## Thinkfinity Calendars

# Thinkfinity

Supported by the Verizon Foundation

GeorgiaStandards.Org's partner [Thinkfinity](#) offers a [Today in History calendar](#) of historical events. There's also a [comprehensive calendar](#) for August of subject areas that includes Art & Culture, Literature & Language Arts, Foreign Language and History & Social Studies for that is available on Thinkfinity's content partner [EDSITEment](#). [EDSITEment](#) 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.

