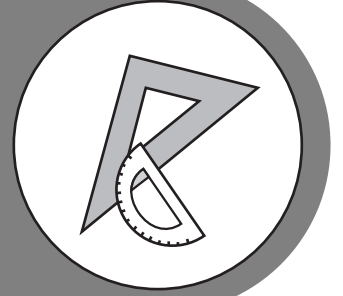


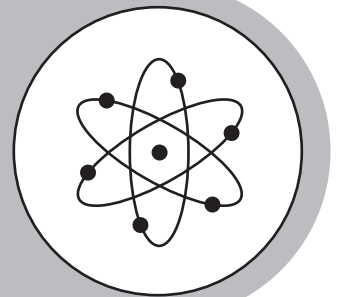
AMERICAN LITERATURE
& COMPOSITION



Study



Guide



Georgia End-Of-Course Tests

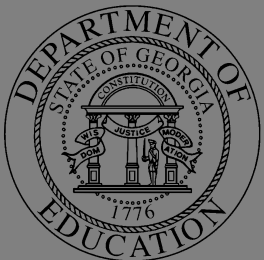


TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
HOW TO USE THE STUDY GUIDE	6
OVERVIEW OF THE EOCT	8
PREPARING FOR THE EOCT	9
Study Skills.....	9
Time Management	10
Organization.....	10
Active Participation	11
Test-taking Strategies.....	11
Suggested Strategies to Prepare for the EOCT	12
Suggested Strategies the Day before the EOCT	13
Suggested Strategies the Morning of the EOCT.....	13
Top 10 Suggested Strategies during the EOCT	14
TEST CONTENT	15
A Note on Reading Passages	16
Studying the Content Domains	17
Content Domain I: Reading (Literary and Informational).....	18
Content Domain II: Speaking and Listening	61
Content Domain III: Writing	72
Content Domain IV: Language.....	91
APPENDIX A: EOCT Sample Overall Study Plan Sheet	98
APPENDIX B: Blank Overall Study Plan Sheet	99
APPENDIX C: EOCT Sample Daily Study Plan Sheet	100
APPENDIX D: Blank Daily Study Plan Sheet	101

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INTRODUCTION

This study guide is designed to help students prepare to take the Georgia End-of-Course Test (EOCT) for *American Literature and Composition*. This study guide provides information about the EOCT, tips on how to prepare for it, and some suggested strategies students can use to perform their best.

What is the EOCT? The EOCT program was created to improve student achievement through effective instruction and assessment of the material in the state-mandated content standards. The EOCT program helps ensure that all Georgia students have access to rigorous courses that meet high academic expectations. The purpose of the EOCT is to provide diagnostic data that can be used to enhance the effectiveness of schools' instructional programs.

The Georgia End-of-Course Testing program is a result of the A+ Educational Reform Act of 2000, O.C.G.A. §20-2-281. This act requires the Georgia Department of Education to create end-of-course assessments for students in grades nine through twelve for the following core high school subjects:

Mathematics

- Mathematics II: Geometry/Algebra II/Statistics

--OR--

- GPS Geometry

--OR--

- Coordinate Algebra (beginning 2012–2013)
- Analytic Geometry (beginning 2013–2014)

Social Studies

- United States History
- Economics/Business/Free Enterprise

Science

- Biology
- Physical Science

English Language Arts

- Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
- American Literature and Composition

Getting started: The HOW TO USE THE STUDY GUIDE section on page 6 outlines the contents in each section, lists the materials you should have available as you study for the EOCT, and suggests some steps for preparing for the *American Literature and Composition EOCT*.

HOW TO USE THE STUDY GUIDE

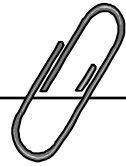
This study guide is designed to help you prepare to take the *American Literature and Composition EOCT*. It will give you valuable information about the EOCT, explain how to prepare to take the EOCT, and provide some opportunities to practice for the EOCT. The study guide is organized into three sections. Each section focuses on a different aspect of the EOCT.

The **OVERVIEW OF THE EOCT** section on page 8 gives information about the test: dates, time, question format, number of questions, and types of reading passages that will be on the *American Literature and Composition EOCT*. This information can help you better understand the testing situation and what you will be asked to do.

The **PREPARING FOR THE EOCT** section that begins on page 9 provides helpful information on study skills and general test-taking skills and strategies. It explains what you should do before the test to ensure that you are prepared and what you should do during the test to ensure the best test-taking situation possible.

The **TEST CONTENT** section that begins on page 15 explains what the *American Literature and Composition EOCT* specifically measures. When you know the test content and how you will be asked to demonstrate your knowledge, it will help you be better prepared for the EOCT. This section also contains specific test-taking strategies for successfully answering questions on the EOCT.

With some time, determination, and guided preparation, you will be better prepared to take the *American Literature and Composition EOCT*.



GET IT TOGETHER

In order to make the most of this study guide, you should have the following:

Materials

- * This study guide
- * Pen or pencil
- * Paper
- * Highlighter

Resources:

- * Dictionary
- * English textbook
- * A teacher or other adult

Study Space:

- * Comfortable (but not too comfortable)
- * Good lighting
- * Minimal distractions
- * Enough work space

Time Commitment:

- * When are you going to study?
- * How long are you going to study?

Determination:

- * Willingness to improve
- * Plan for meeting goals



SUGGESTED STEPS FOR USING THIS STUDY GUIDE

- 1** Familiarize yourself with the structure and purpose of the study guide. (You should have already read the INTRODUCTION and HOW TO USE THE STUDY GUIDE. Take a few minutes to look through the rest of the study guide to become familiar with how it is arranged.)
- 2** Learn about the test and the performance expectations. (Read OVERVIEW OF THE EOCT.)
- 3** Improve your study skills and test-taking strategies. (Read PREPARING FOR THE EOCT.)
- 4** Learn what the test will assess by studying the standards in each domain. Also, study the strategies for answering questions that assess the standards in the domain. (Read TEST CONTENT.)
- 5** Answer the sample questions at the end of each domain section. Check your answers against the annotated answers to see how well you did. (See TEST CONTENT.)

OVERVIEW OF THE EOCT

Good test takers understand the importance of knowing as much about a test as possible. This information can help you determine how to study and prepare for the EOCT and how to pace yourself during the test. The box below gives you a snapshot of the *American Literature and Composition EOCT*.



THE EOCT AT A GLANCE

Administration Dates:

The EOCT has three primary annual testing dates: once in the spring, once in the summer, and once in the winter. There are also mid-month, online tests given in August, September, October, November, February, and March, as well as retest opportunities within the year.

Administration Time:

Each EOCT is composed of two sections, and students are given 60 minutes to complete each section. There is also a short stretch break between the two sections of the test.

Question Format:

All the questions on the EOCT are multiple choice.

Number of Questions:

Each section of the *American Literature and Composition EOCT* contains 40 questions; there are a total of 80 questions on the *American Literature and Composition EOCT*.

Impact on Course Grade:

For students in grade 10 or above beginning the 2011–2012 school year, the final grade in each course is calculated by weighing the course grade 85% and the EOCT score 15%. For students in grade 9 beginning the 2011–2012 school year and later, the final grade in each course is calculated by weighing the course grade 80% and the EOCT score 20%. A student must have a final grade of at least 70 to pass the course and to earn credit toward graduation.

Reading Passages:

There will be informational and literary passages on the *American Literature and Composition EOCT*. All the passages will either be pieces of American literature or pieces about American literature. Please see page 16 for more information on reading passages.

If you have additional administrative questions regarding the EOCT, please visit the Georgia Department of Education Web site at www.doe.k12.ga.us, see your teacher, or see your school test coordinator.



PREPARING FOR THE EOCT



WARNING!

You cannot prepare for this kind of test in one night. Questions will ask you to apply your knowledge, not list specific facts. Preparing for the EOCT will take time, effort, and practice.

In order to do your best on the *American Literature and Composition EOCT*, it is important that you take the time necessary to prepare for this test and develop those skills that will help you take the EOCT.

First, you need to make the most of your classroom experiences and test-preparation time by using good **study skills**. Second, it is helpful to know general **test-taking strategies** to ensure that you will achieve your best score.

Study Skills



A LOOK AT YOUR STUDY SKILLS

Before you begin preparing for this test, you might want to consider your answers to the following questions. You may write your answers here or on a separate piece of paper.

1. How would you describe yourself as a student?
Response: _____
2. What are your study skills strengths and/or weaknesses as a student?
Response: _____
3. How do you typically prepare for an English language arts test?
Response: _____
4. Are there study methods you find particularly helpful? If so, what are they?
Response: _____
5. Describe an ideal study situation (environment).
Response: _____
6. Describe your actual study environment.
Response: _____
7. What can you change about the way you study to make your study time more productive?
Response: _____

Effective study skills for preparing for the EOCT can be divided into three categories:

- ◆ **Time Management**
- ◆ **Organization**
- ◆ **Active Participation**



Time Management

Do you have a plan for preparing for the EOCT? Students often have good intentions for studying and preparing for a test, but without a plan, many fall short of their goals. Here are some strategies to consider when developing your study plan:

- ◆ Set realistic goals for what you want to accomplish during each study session and chart your progress.
- ◆ Study during your most productive time of the day.
- ◆ Study for reasonable amounts of time. Marathon studying is not productive.
- ◆ Take frequent breaks. Breaks can help you stay focused. Doing some quick exercises (e.g., sit-ups or jumping jacks) can help you stay alert.
- ◆ Be consistent. Establish your routine and stick to it.
- ◆ Study the most challenging test content first.
- ◆ For each study session, build in time to review what you learned in your last study session.
- ◆ Evaluate your accomplishments at the end of each study session.
- ◆ Reward yourself for a job well done.

Organization

You don't want to waste your study time. Searching for materials, trying to find a place to study, and debating what and how to study can all keep you from having a productive study session. Get organized and be prepared. Here are a few organizational strategies to consider:



- ◆ Establish a study area that has minimal distractions.
- ◆ Gather your materials in advance.
- ◆ Develop and implement your study plan. (See Appendices A–D for sample study plan sheets).

Active Participation




Students who actively study will learn and retain information longer. Active studying also helps you stay more alert and be more productive while learning new information. What is active studying? It can be anything that gets you to interact with the material you are studying. Here are a few suggestions:

- ◆ Carefully read the information and then **DO** something with it. Mark the important points with a highlighter, circle them with a pen, write notes on them, or summarize the information in your own words.
- ◆ Ask questions. As you study, questions often come into your mind. Write them and actively seek the answers.
- ◆ Create sample test questions and answer them.
- ◆ Find a friend who is also planning to take the test and quiz each other.

Test-taking Strategies

There are many test-taking strategies that you can use before and during a test to help you have the most successful testing situation possible. Below are a few questions to help you take a look at your test-taking skills.




A LOOK AT YOUR TEST-TAKING SKILLS

As you prepare to take the EOCT, you might want to consider your answers to the following questions. You may write your answers here or on your own paper.

1. How would you describe your test-taking skills?
Response: _____
2. How do you feel when you are taking a test?
Response: _____
3. List the strategies that you already know and use when you are taking a test.
Response: _____
4. List test-taking behaviors you use when preparing for and taking a test that contribute to your success.
Response: _____
5. What would you like to learn about taking tests?
Response: _____

Suggested Strategies to Prepare for the EOCT

 **Learn from the past.** Think about your daily/weekly grades in your English language arts classes (past and present) to answer the following questions.

- In which specific areas of English language arts were you or are you successful?

Response: _____


- Is there anything that has kept you from achieving higher scores?


Response: _____

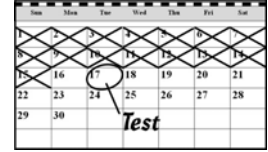
- What changes should you implement to achieve higher scores?

Response: _____

Before taking the EOCT, work toward removing or minimizing any obstacles that might stand in the way of performing your best. The test-preparation ideas and test-taking strategies in this section are designed to help you accomplish this.

 **Be prepared.** The best way to perform well on the EOCT is to be prepared. In order to do this, it is important that you know what knowledge or skills will be measured on the **American Literature and Composition EOCT** and then practice understanding and using those skills. The TEST CONTENT section of this study guide is designed to help you understand the specific standards that are on the **American Literature and Composition EOCT** and give you suggestions for how to study the standards that will be assessed. Take the time to read through this material and follow the study suggestions. You can also ask your English language arts teacher for any suggestions he or she might offer on preparing for the EOCT.

 **Start now.** Don't wait until the last minute to start preparing. Begin early and pace yourself. By preparing a little bit each day, you will retain the information longer and increase your confidence level. Find out when the EOCT will be administered so you can allocate your time appropriately.



Suggested Strategies the Day before the EOCT

- ✓ **Review what you learned from this study guide.**
 1. Review the general test-taking strategies discussed in TOP 10 SUGGESTED STRATEGIES DURING THE EOCT on page 14.
 2. Review the content domain–specific information discussed in the section TEST CONTENT, beginning on page 15.
 3. Focus your attention on the domain, or domains, that you are most in need of improving.

- ✓ **Take care of yourself.**
 1. Try to get a good night’s sleep. Most people need an average of eight hours, but everyone’s sleep needs are different.
 2. Don’t drastically alter your routine. If you go to bed too early, you might lie in bed thinking about the test. You want to get enough sleep so you can do your best.

Suggested Strategies the Morning of the EOCT



Eat a good breakfast. Eat some food that has protein in it for breakfast (and for lunch if the test is given in the afternoon). Some examples of foods high in protein are peanut butter, meat, and eggs. Protein gives you long-lasting, consistent energy that will stay with you through the test to help you concentrate better. Some people believe it is wise to eat some sugar before a test, claiming it gives them an energy boost. In reality, the energy boost is very short lived, and you actually end up with less energy than before you ate the sugar. Also, don’t eat too much. A heavy meal can make you feel tired. So think about what you eat before the test.



Dress appropriately. If you are too hot or too cold during the test, it can affect your performance. It is a good idea to dress in layers, so you can stay comfortable regardless of the room temperature and keep your mind on the EOCT.







Arrive for the test on time. Racing late into the testing room can cause you to start the test feeling anxious. You want to be on time and prepared.

TOP 10

Suggested Strategies during the EOCT

These general test-taking strategies can help you do your best during the EOCT.

- 1 Focus on the test.**  Try to block out whatever is going on around you. Take your time and think about what you are asked to do. Listen carefully to all the directions.
- 2 Budget your time.**  Be sure that you allocate an appropriate amount of time to work on each question on the test.
- 3 Take a quick break if you begin to feel tired.** To do this, put your pencil down, relax in your chair, and take a few deep breaths. Then, sit up straight, pick up your pencil, and begin to concentrate on the test again. Remember that each test section is only 60 minutes.
- 4 Use positive self-talk.** If you find yourself saying negative things to yourself such as “I can’t pass this test,” it is important to recognize that you are doing this. Stop and think positive thoughts such as “I prepared for this test, and I am going to do my best.” Letting the negative thoughts take over can affect how you take the test and can influence your test score.
- 5 Mark in your test booklet.**  Mark key ideas or things you want to come back to in your test booklet. Remember that only the answers marked on your answer sheet will be scored.
- 6 Read the entire question and the possible answer choices.** It is important to read the entire question so you know what it is asking. Read each possible answer choice. Do not mark the first one that “looks good.”
- 7 Use what you know.**  Use what you have learned in class, from this study guide, and during your study sessions to help you answer the questions.
- 8 Use content domain-specific strategies to answer the questions.** In the TEST CONTENT section, there are a number of specific strategies that you can use to help improve your test performance. Spend time learning these helpful strategies so you can use them while taking the test.
- 9 Think logically.** If you have tried your best to answer a question but you are not sure, use the process of elimination. Look at each possible answer choice. If it does not seem like a logical response, eliminate it. Do this until you’ve narrowed your choices. If this does not work, take your best educated guess. It is better to mark something than to leave it blank.
- 10 Check your answers.** When you have finished the test, go back and check your work.

A WORD ON TEST ANXIETY

It is normal to have some stress when preparing for and taking a test. It is what helps motivate us to study and try our best. Some students, however, experience anxiety that goes beyond normal test “jitters.” If you feel you are suffering from test anxiety that is keeping you from performing at your best, please speak to your school counselor, who can direct you to resources to help you address this problem.

TEST CONTENT

Up to this point in this study guide, you have been learning various strategies on how to prepare for and take the EOCT. This section focuses on what will be tested. It also includes a section of sample questions that will let you apply what you have learned in your classes and from this study guide.

The Georgia End-of-Course Test (EOCT) for *American Literature and Composition* is designed to test four major areas of knowledge, called **content domains**. The content domains are broad categories and, in some cases, include elements from more than one strand of the state-mandated content standards. Each of the content domains is broken down into smaller ideas. These smaller ideas are called **standards**. Each content domain contains standards that cover different ideas related to its content domain. Each question on the EOCT measures an individual standard within a content domain.

The four content domains for the *American Literature and Composition EOCT* are important for several reasons. Together they represent the ability to understand what you read and communicate with others. Another, more immediate reason that the content domains are important has to do with test preparation. The best way to prepare for any test is to study and know the material measured on the test. Since the *American Literature and Composition EOCT* covers the four content domains and nothing else, it is a good idea to learn as much about these domains as you can. The more you understand about these domains, the greater your opportunity to be successful on the EOCT is.

The chart below lists the four content domains for the *American Literature and Composition EOCT*.

CONTENT DOMAINS	
I.	Reading (Literary and Informational)
II.	Speaking and Listening
III.	Writing
IV.	Language

A Note on Reading Passages

The questions for Content Domains I and II will be based on informational and literary passages. Informational passages (nonfiction) typically share knowledge and/or convey messages, give instructions, or relate ideas by making connections between the familiar and unfamiliar. Informational writing is most commonly found in academic, personal, and/or job-related areas. Examples of informational writing include letters, biographical accounts, definitions, directions, abstracts, essays, reviews, and critiques. You can find informational passages in newspapers, magazines, and textbooks. Here is a short sample of what an *informational passage* might look like.

The Dime Novel

What were people reading in the latter half of the 19th century? One popular type of book was known as the dime novel. Dime novels were typically cheaply made paperback books that cost about a dime. Dime novels were popular from 1860 to around the turn of the century. These short novels were often historical action adventures or detective stories. The stories tended to be sensational and melodramatic. When Beadle and Adams published the first dime novel, it quickly became a huge success, selling over 300,000 copies in one year.

The information in the passage above is strictly factual. Literary passages, however, will tell a story or express an idea. Literary passages (fiction) often have characters and a plot structure. Examples of literary writing include short stories, novels, narratives, poetry, and drama. Here is a short sample of what a *literary passage* might look like. This excerpt is from Mark Twain's novel *Life on the Mississippi*, in which Twain explains what it was like to become a riverboat pilot on the Mississippi River.

When I returned to the pilothouse St. Louis was gone and I was lost. Here was a piece of river which was all down in my book, but I could make neither head nor tail of it; you understand, it was turned around. I had seen it when coming upstream, but I had never faced about to see how it looked when it was behind me. My heart broke again, for it was plain that I had got to learn this troublesome river *both* ways.

Studying the Content Domains

You should plan to study/review the standards for ALL the content domains. To learn what the EOCT will cover, work through this TEST CONTENT section. It is organized by the content domains into the following areas:

- **A Look at the Content Domain:** an overview of what will be assessed in the content domain.
- **Spotlight on the Standards:** information about the specific standards that will be assessed (NOTE: The names of the standards may not be the exact names used by the Georgia Department of Education.).
- **Sample Test Questions:** sample questions *similar* to those that appear on the EOCT, followed by in-depth explanations of the answers.

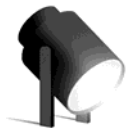
Content Domain I: Reading (Literary and Informational)

A LOOK AT CONTENT DOMAIN I



Test questions in this domain will ask you to analyze and apply knowledge of the elements of literary and informational texts. You will evaluate how language affects the meaning and tone of texts. You will also be tested on your understanding of foundational works of American literary and historical importance. Your answers to the questions will help show how well you can perform on the following standards:

- Use knowledge of literary characteristics to demonstrate understanding of a variety of texts.
- Cite strong evidence from a text to support analysis of what the text says explicitly and what can be inferred. Determine where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- Determine the theme(s) or central idea(s) of a single text or multiple texts; analyze the development of themes or ideas over the course of the text. Analyze how two or more themes or central ideas interact to make the text more complex.
- Demonstrate knowledge of important works of American literature and analyze foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance.
- Determine the author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly powerful or persuasive.
- Analyze literary text in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated from what is really meant.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language and connotative meanings; analyze how word choice affects meaning and tone.
- Understand and acquire new vocabulary and use it correctly.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ *Use knowledge of literary characteristics to demonstrate understanding of a variety of texts.* ★

This standard encompasses all forms of American literary and informational texts. You must draw upon your knowledge of fiction, drama, poetry, and nonfiction to answer questions in this domain. To review, you should refresh your knowledge of these different genres, of common literary terms, and of terms specific to certain types of literature.

The following types of passages may be used on the EOCT:

- **Fiction** (stories), including adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, and graphic novels
- **Drama**, including one-act and multi-act plays
- **Poetry**, including narrative poems, lyric poems, free verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, and epics
- **Nonfiction**, including exposition, argument, and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism, and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience

Questions for this standard will measure your knowledge of common literary elements and your ability to use them to interpret what you read. The best way to prepare for these questions is to study literary elements, be able to identify examples in a text, and analyze how specific examples interact and shape larger portions of the text. To make your review easier, this standard is divided into four sections by **genre**: fiction, drama, poetry, and nonfiction.

Genre

A **genre** (ZHAN-RA) is a category of composition. Each genre has a particular style, form, and content.

FICTION

In the fiction section of this standard, you will be asked questions about literary elements found in works of American fiction from different time periods. Questions for this standard will measure your knowledge of some common literary elements and your ability to use them to interpret what you read. The best way to prepare for these questions is to study literary elements and terms, locate examples as you read, and analyze how those examples function in the text.

Many literary elements apply to fiction as well as nonfiction. Here, we'll discuss the most common literary elements. Later in the guide for this domain, we'll focus on elements more specific to drama, poetry, and nonfiction.

Characterization. Characterization is about the choices an author makes to reveal (or not reveal) a character's **traits**, or personality. Writers may develop characters through descriptions of their appearance, actions, and thoughts. Characters can also be revealed through **dialogue** (their conversations with other characters) or through **interior monologue** (their internal, unspoken thoughts).

As you read passages and prepare to answer questions on the EOCT, take note of how authors present characters. Characterization may be direct or indirect. **Direct characterization** is when the reader is *told* what a character is like; a speaker or narrator describes what he or she thinks about a character. **Indirect characterization** occurs when a reader must *infer* what a character is like; the text provides clues through the character's words, thoughts, or actions or through other characters' words, thoughts, or actions, but there is no evaluation or explanation from a narrator.

Remember that many characters do not fit neatly into one "type" or another; complex characters will often present conflicting or shifting thoughts and actions. As you read about a character, think about the words you would use to describe him or her. If you discover you have listed words that are very different from each other (e.g., "patient" and "pushy"), you will want to investigate this difference: Does the character act differently in different situations or with different people? Does the character undergo a transformation over the course of the passage?

Here are some common questions about characterization:

- **What do Marley’s facial expressions during the party reveal about her opinion of Oscar?**
- **Which detail is the strongest evidence that Augusta has changed her mind?**
- **What is the MAIN difference between the banker’s and the painter’s ideas about success?**

Setting. In general, setting is when and where a narrative such as a story, drama, or poem takes place. The “when” can include the time of day, season, historical period, or political atmosphere. The “where” can be as focused as a room in a house, or as broad as a country. You may be asked to determine why the setting is important or how the setting affects the interpretation of a text. The setting can clarify conflict, illuminate character, affect the mood, and act as a symbol.

Structure. Literature commonly follows a specific pattern or plot structure. The most common structure of a novel or story is **chronological**. The story is arranged in order of time from the beginning to the end. The following structures are less common:

- An **epistolary novel** is a novel written in the form of letters, diary/journal entries, postcards, or e-mail. There may be several letter writers, but the author is omniscient. Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple* is an example of a contemporary epistolary novel.
- In a **frame narrative**, a story is told within a story. A narrator often relates the story. *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, by Washington Irving, is an example.
- **In medias res** is a Latin term for “in the middle of things.” The novel or story begins with a significant moment. The rest of the novel fills in the events leading up to the significant moment. Flashback is used extensively in this novel structure. *A Farewell to Arms*, by Ernest Hemingway, is written in this structure.

Conflict. Most plots have a conflict. Conflict creates instability or uncertainty. The characters’ need to find resolution and answers is what drives the story forward. Any type of contest—from a baseball game to a presidential election—is a conflict. A struggle between a character and an outside force is an **external conflict**. Conflict also occurs when there is incompatibility between ideas or beliefs, as when a character has mixed feelings or struggles with a choice between right and wrong. A struggle within a character’s mind is an **internal conflict**. Here are some common conflicts in literature:

- person vs. person
- person vs. nature
- person vs. self
- person vs. society
- person vs. machine

Point of View. The point of view is the perspective from which a story is told. The point of view depends upon who the narrator is and how much he or she knows.

<i>First Person</i>	The events are told by a character in the story using his or her own words. First-person stories have narrators who use <i>I</i> , <i>me</i> , and <i>my</i> throughout the story. This sentence is an example of first-person point of view: “I knew it was risky, but I was willing to take that chance.”
<i>Second Person</i>	The narrator addresses the reader directly using the word <i>you</i> . This perspective is not as common as either the first- or third-person points of view. This sentence is an example of second-person point of view: “You knew it was risky, but you were willing to take that chance.”
<i>Third-Person Limited</i>	A speaker outside the action narrates the events using the third-person pronouns <i>he</i> , <i>she</i> , and <i>they</i> . In the limited third-person point of view, the narrator tells the events from the perspective of one specific character, focusing on this character’s thoughts and feelings.
<i>Third-Person Omniscient</i>	A speaker outside the action narrates the events. In the omniscient third-person point of view, an all-knowing narrator not only tells what happens, but also may interpret events and describe the thoughts and feelings of any character.

Tone. Tone is the author’s attitude toward the audience or subject. Tone is established by the author through **diction** (word choice), **syntax** (the order in which words are placed), and **rhetoric** (language choices and techniques used to communicate perspective and to modify the perspectives of others).

Tone can apply to a text as a whole, or to a portion of the text. For example, the overall tone of a politician’s speech might be formal, but a section that relates to a personal experience might be warm and casual.

Mood. Sometimes called “atmosphere,” mood is the overall feeling or emotion the author establishes by the choice of words and language, the actions of the characters, and the setting. Mood is sometimes confused with tone. But whereas tone is the attitude a writer puts *into* a subject, mood is the feeling the reader experiences *from* it.

A question about the literary characteristics of fiction that are included in this standard may look like this:

Read the following passage.

from *Little Women*
by Louisa May Alcott

Laurie lay luxuriously swinging to and fro in his hammock one warm September afternoon, wondering what his neighbours were about, but too lazy to go and find out. He was in one of his moods; for the day had been both unprofitable and unsatisfactory, and he was wishing he could live it over again. The hot weather made him indolent, and he had shirked his studies, tried Mr. Brooke's patience to the utmost, displeased his grandfather by practising half the afternoon, frightened the maid-servants half out of their wits by mischievously hinting that one of his dogs was going mad, and, after high words with the stableman about some fancied neglect of his horse, he had flung himself into his hammock, to fume over the stupidity of the world in general.

[Public Domain]

Which line best illustrates the passage's anxious mood?

- A "he had shirked his studies"
- B "he had ... tried Mr. Brooke's patience to the utmost"
- C "he had ... frightened the maid-servants half out of their wits by mischievously hinting that one of his dogs was going mad"
- D "he had flung himself into his hammock, to fume over the stupidity of the world in general"

The mood of the passage is anxious, but the line that BEST illustrates this is choice **D**. Laurie's action ("flung himself") and thoughts ("fume over the stupidity") best illustrate the distress and apprehensiveness that run throughout the passage and contribute to its anxious atmosphere. Choices A, B, and C all suggest a feeling of discontent, but choice **D** is the best answer because it most thoroughly and vividly reflects the overall anxious mood.

Tone and mood are often confused with each other. One way to remember the difference is to imagine a passage being read out loud; think of tone as *the way the author's voice sounds* and mood as *how the atmosphere in the passage feels*. The following lists show examples of words that can describe tone and mood:

<p style="text-align: center;">Tone Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The author's voice sounds _____.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mood Words</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The atmosphere in the passage feels _____.</p>
<p>formal objective optimistic playful casual lively sentimental outraged sarcastic mocking critical</p>	<p>dreamy peaceful joyous comforting mellow ominous tense uncomfortable violent futile empty</p>

Theme. The theme is the deeper message of a text. It refers to a universal statement about life and/or society that can be discerned from the reading of a text. The theme of a work is not the same as its main topic, which focuses strictly on the content. The theme of a literary work is often the meaning you take away from it. Theme is covered in more detail on pages 32–34.

DRAMA

Questions about literary characteristics might focus on dramatic literature. To answer those questions you will need to understand and analyze various forms of dramatic literature. The two most common types are tragedies and comedies. A **tragedy** is a serious play that ends in disaster and sorrow. A **comedy** is a lighthearted play intended to amuse the audience. Comedies usually end happily.

As with other literary genres in this standard, you will need to analyze the characters, structures, and themes of dramatic literature. In order to answer these questions, use what you know about these elements in other genres to answer the questions related to dramatic literature.

You also need to review terms that are more specific to drama.

Dramatic conventions are rules in which the actors and audience engage during a play. Some conventions relate to how the audience and the actors interact. For example, the audience knows to become quiet when the lights dim. **Dramatic irony** refers to situations in which the audience knows more than the character onstage. A character does or says something of greater importance than he or she knows. The audience, however, is aware of the meaning and importance of the act or speech.

You may also be asked to analyze how dramatic conventions support and enhance interpretation of dramatic literature. To answer these questions, you will need to apply what you have learned about dramatic conventions, including plot, setting, dialogue, and monologue. **Dialogue** is the conversation between characters. Dialogue reveals the personalities of the characters by divulging what they are thinking and feeling as they talk to others. **Monologue** is a long speech by one character in which the character speaks about his or her thoughts and feelings.

POETRY

Test questions about poetry will have you identify and demonstrate an understanding of literary elements, devices, and structures that are particular to poetry. For example, you

What's with All the Drama?

Tragedies and comedies are not the only forms of drama. Here's a short list of the other kinds of drama you'll be expected to recognize.

A **political drama** is a drama or play with a political component, advocating a certain point of view or describing a political event.

Modern drama, like all modern literature, explores themes of alienation and disconnectedness. Modern drama, which became popular in the early 1900s, strives to let the audience feel as if it is peering in on real-life situations and experiencing real-life emotions.

The **theatre of the absurd** refers to plays written in the 1950s and 1960s with the basic belief that human existence is absurd, or without meaning. The play itself often lacks the usual conventions of plot, character, or setting. Edward Albee's *The American Dream* (1960) is considered the first American absurdist drama.

will need to know about sound devices that make poetry sound the way it does. You will also need to identify the topic of the poem (what it's about) and its theme (what statement it makes about life or society). Then you'll need to identify how the poet creates the topic and the theme, and to locate examples and evidence to support your understanding.

As poetry is read aloud or silently, you “hear” the writing. Sound devices such as rhyme, consonance, assonance, and alliteration make poetry appeal to your ear.

Rhyme. Rhyme is the repetition of terminal sounds in two or more words. Rhyming is most commonly heard at the ends of lines in poetry, as in “Twinkle, twinkle, little *star* / how I wonder what you *are*.” Rhyme can occur at every line, every other line, or wherever the poet decides. Not all poems rhyme, nor do they have to, but rhyme can emphasize ideas or images and unify thought, as well as add a musical quality to a poem. When you read a poem that has rhyme, look at the rhyming words and see how they contribute to the overall meaning of the poem. The following chart lists some different types of rhyme and other sound devices:

Type	Definition	Example
End rhyme	End rhymes occur at the ends of lines of poetry. It is the most common type of rhyme.	The first two lines from Robert Frost's poem, "The Oven Bird": "There is a singer everyone has heard, Loud, a mid-summer and a mid-wood bird,"
Internal rhyme	Internal rhymes occur within a line of poetry.	The first line from Edgar Allen Poe's poem "The Raven": "Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,"
Slant rhyme	Slant rhymes occur when words include similar but not identical sounds. They are also called a near rhyme, half rhyme, or off rhyme.	<i>bone and moon</i> <i>ill and shell</i> <i>soul and all</i>
Consonance	Words that have similar consonant sounds, but different vowel sounds.	<i>chitter and chatter</i> <i>pick and sack</i> <i>spoiled and spilled</i>
Assonance	Words that have repetition of similar vowel sounds, but are not rhyming words. May occur in the initial vowel as in alliteration.	<i>all and awful</i> <i>feed and meal</i> <i>lake and plain</i>
Alliteration	The repetition of one initial sound, usually a consonant, in more than one word.	<i>gray, geese, and grazing</i> <i>weak and weary</i>

Rhyme scheme. The rhyme scheme is the pattern of end rhymes in a poem. Each new rhyme in a stanza is represented by a different letter of the alphabet. For example, in a four-line poem in which every other line rhymes, the rhyme scheme is abab. In a six-line poem with every two lines rhyming, the rhyme scheme is aabbcc.

Form. While sound devices are important in poetry, the structure of a poem is often its most distinctive characteristic. Poems are written in stanzas, or groups of lines. These stanzas are arranged in fixed form or free form. **Fixed form** is what most people consider typical poetry: it's written in traditional verse and generally rhymes. Some fixed form poems have specific requirements on length, rhyme scheme, and number of syllables. A sonnet, for example, is a 14-line rhymed poem. **Free form**, or free verse poetry, follows no specific guidelines about rhyme, meter, or length. Free verse tries to capture the cadence of regular speech. Some stanzas may rhyme but not in a regular scheme. **Blank verse** is a poem written in unrhymed iambic pentameter, a pattern of five iambic feet per line. An iambic foot is one unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable.

The subject matter of poems is also important. Some poems are **narrative** poems. The main purpose of a narrative poem is to tell a story. A **ballad** is a narrative poem, often of folk origin, intended to be sung. It consists of simple stanzas and usually has a refrain. **Lyric** poetry expresses a person's thoughts or feelings. Elegies, odes, and sonnets are types of lyric poems.

Something about Sonnets

A sonnet is a 14-line poem with a fixed rhyme scheme. There are two main types of sonnets, each with its own distinctive rhyme scheme. A Petrarchan sonnet is divided into an octave (the first eight lines) and a sestet (the next six lines). The rhyme scheme is **abbaabba cdecde**. The rhyme scheme of an English, or Shakespearean sonnet, is **abab cdcd efef gg**. A Shakespearean sonnet is written in iambic pentameter.

Test questions about poetry may also include determining the meaning of words as they are used in a poem, including figurative and connotative meanings. Figurative and connotative meanings are covered in detail on pages 44–45.

NONFICTION

The questions about literary elements may be based on any type of nonfiction material. You will be asked to understand and analyze the elements of nonfiction works that explain, persuade, describe, or relate true events.

The types of nonfiction texts you will encounter on the EOCT come from four common kinds of writing, each with its own purpose and conventions:

- **Informational Text**, or expository nonfiction, is writing that explains or informs. Informational texts include business letters and memos; how-to passages that explain a process or project; news stories; and historical, scientific, and technical

accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience. Expository writing may include vivid descriptions or include the narration of personal stories and events that actually happened.

- **Argumentation**, or argumentative or persuasive writing, uses reasoning to influence people's ideas or actions. This kind of writing includes editorials and opinion pieces, speeches, letters to the editor, job application letters, critical reviews such as movie and book reviews, and advertisements (advertising will be covered separately in Domain II).
- **Literary Nonfiction** is narrative writing, is writing that tells a story and often employs the literary devices found in stories and novels. Literary nonfiction could be an anecdote, a diary (personal record of the writer's thoughts and feelings), a journal (record of events and ideas, less private than a diary), a memoir, a biography, an autobiography, or another retelling of true events.

NOTE: Most passages contain some combination of the common kinds of writing, but will generally fit best in one category or another.

Questions related to nonfiction texts may look like these:

- **What effect does the author achieve by organizing the essay from present to past?**
- **How does the description of the revolt support the argument for giving U.S. states certain rights?**
- **How will the editor's tone in the lead sentence MOST likely affect readers?**

Because nonfiction writers use some of the same literary devices that fiction writers employ, questions related to nonfiction texts will address elements of structure, organization, language, point of view, and conflict. As with literary texts, questions about nonfiction will require close reading of specific portions of a text. You will need to not only understand key ideas and details, but also locate evidence to support your understanding.

STRATEGY BOX—Take Notes While You Read

Whenever you read an informational passage on the EOCT, stop after each paragraph and ask yourself, “What is the main idea of this paragraph?” After each paragraph, take a moment to jot some notes that summarize what that paragraph was about. Sample notes about an essay titled “Why Homework Is a Good Idea” might look something like this:

1. First Paragraph: *importance of education*
2. Second Paragraph: *advantages of giving homework*
3. Third Paragraph: *talks about how busy students feel they don’t have time for homework*
4. Fourth Paragraph: *ways students who have very little time can still get their homework done*
5. Fifth Paragraph: *stresses how homework is an important part of education*

Don’t spend too much time trying to come up with the perfect summary of each paragraph. Just use about three to ten words to quickly summarize what each paragraph covers.

**Spotlight on the Standards**

★ Cite strong evidence from a text to support analysis of what the text says explicitly and what can be inferred. Determine where the text leaves matters uncertain. ★

This standard asks you to read like a detective. Not only is it important to understand the key ideas and details in a passage, but also to point to the evidence that supports your understanding. Questions in this standard will ask you to locate support for important ideas and concepts within the text; they will ask not just *what* you know, but *how* you know it.

In order to demonstrate your understanding of ideas and concepts in a given text, you will need to support them with accurate and detailed references to the text. Questions for this standard will ask you to identify sentences that support or explain an idea. Taking notes while you read will help you prepare for these questions.

Good writers often do not tell the reader everything directly. They let the reader come to his or her own conclusions by making connections or filling in the gaps. An idea that is not stated outright is **implicit**, meaning it is *implied* or hinted at indirectly, rather than *explained* or stated directly. To understand and interpret implicit ideas, the reader must **infer** what the text is saying. To infer means to come to a reasonable conclusion based on evidence.

By contrast, an **explicit** idea or message is fully expressed or revealed by the writer. Rather than being “between” the lines, an explicit point is made right in the printed words.

Read between the Lines

“Read between the lines” is a common saying whose meaning does not correspond with the literal meaning of its words. A person cannot actually read between the lines of a text; there are no words there. The saying means to think about how the words that *are* in a text suggest ideas or messages that are *not* written in black and white.

Consider this example from a memoir:

Of *course* it rained on the day I left. The slate grey sky hung low and seemed to push down on me as I walked away. My heart was as low and grey as that sulking sky.

What message can you infer from the example? The text does not come right out and say that the speaker feels sad or melancholy, but there are plenty of details that support this idea. The rainy day, the fact that the speaker is leaving somewhere or someone, the imagery of the heavy grey sky and its comparison with the speaker’s heart all support a description of the speaker as someone burdened by sadness or regret.

An example of the same idea made explicitly might read like this:

I was not surprised that it rained on the day I left. The weather made a sad day even worse; it was as miserable and gloomy outside as I was inside.

In this example, the message is explicit. The reader can point right to the text on the page to show that the speaker is downhearted. The reference to the “sad day” and the description of “miserable and gloomy” feelings explain the speaker’s state of mind without any question.

STRATEGY BOX—Answer the Question First

As you are answering questions on the EOCT, you should always try to answer the question **BEFORE** you read the answer choices. Once you have decided what the answer is, you should look at the choices. Are there any choices close to your answer? That is probably the correct answer. Looking at the answer choices first, before you have a clear idea of the correct answer, may confuse you. Some of the answer choices will be close to the correct answer, and if you are unsure of the correct answer, you may choose the close, but wrong, answer.

To see how this strategy works, read the following question:

Read this excerpt from a passage.

I kept as still as I could. Nothing happened. I did not expect anything to happen. I was something that lay under the sun and felt it, like the pumpkins, and I did not want to be anything more. I was entirely happy.

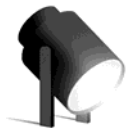
from *My Antonia* by Willa Cather

What does this excerpt suggest?

(Based on the passage, you might answer “outdoor contentment and relaxation.” Turning to the answer choices, you’ll find):

- A** The narrator enjoys fall weather.
- B** The narrator is at peace with nature.
- C** The narrator loves gardens.
- D** The narrator is tired from traveling.

Because you have already answered the question with “outdoor contentment and relaxation,” you can quickly identify choice **B** as the correct answer.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ Determine the theme(s) or central idea(s) of a single text or multiple texts; analyze the development of themes or ideas over the course of the text. Analyze how two or more themes or central ideas interact to make the text more complex.★

The questions for this standard focus on the themes of literary texts and the central ideas of informational texts. You will be asked to identify and analyze the broad meaning or message of a text and to evaluate how an author's style or word choice conveys a theme. This standard will test your ability to identify multiple themes in one passage and to compare and contrast the presentation of a theme between passages from different genres and time periods. In order to answer these questions, you should review what you know about themes.

The **theme** is the central idea or message of a text. It refers to universal views on life and society that can be discerned from reading a text. The theme is not the same as the topic, which focuses strictly on the content. The theme is also not the same as the plot. Most literary works have one or more themes that are expressed through the plot. To help you identify a work's theme or themes, you might ask yourself: Why did the author have this happen? What point do you think the author was trying to make? What greater significance might this event have?

The following example may help you understand:

Topic: Charles tells a lie to avoid trouble with his father, but his lie creates unexpected trouble with his brother.

Theme: The lies we tell to cover up an action or situation can often be more damaging than the action or situation itself.

The topic in this example tells you what happens in a particular novel. It is a brief summary of the plot. The theme, on the other hand, is a more general explanation of what the plot reveals about life.

Because themes offer universal truths about life, you may more easily notice themes that are closely related to events in your life. In the example of Charles telling a lie, you might relate his situation to a difficult decision of your own. You don't have to have a personal connection to themes in a work, but if you are having trouble identifying a theme, pay attention to the parts of the story that affect you. A part may contain a theme in hiding.

The following example demonstrates the difference between a topic and a broad message in a nonfictional passage:

Topic: In this article, the author describes her year volunteering as a health educator in Kenya.

Message: This article reveals the author's naïveté in assuming that good intentions are all that is needed to change deeply held cultural beliefs.

For both literary and informational passages, you will be asked to identify how themes and messages develop over the course of the text. You will need to study specific parts of the text, such as phrases, sentences, and paragraphs, and choose examples that connect to bigger ideas.

Questions about theme may look like these:

- **What statement about human nature does the story suggest?**
- **How would the writer of this letter MOST likely explain the concept of forgiveness?**
- **Which sentence from the article BEST supports the investigator's main argument?**

Still Confused About Themes?

Here are some points to consider:

- ◆ Does the title suggest the theme?
- ◆ Does the character undergo a transformation over the course of the passage?
- ◆ Does the transformation reflect the theme?
- ◆ Are there repeated images or strong symbols in the work? (Symbols are often clues to the theme.)



Spotlight on the Standards

★ ***Demonstrate knowledge of important works of American literature and analyze foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance.*** ★

This standard tests your knowledge of important American literary and historical texts from the eighteenth century through the beginning of the twentieth century (approximately 1700 through 1945). Questions may ask you to recognize and analyze the themes that are common to specific literary and historical periods. You may be asked to analyze and evaluate the impact of time and place on literary themes or topics. Some questions may ask you to compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics in two or more texts from the same period.

A **literary period** is an artistic attitude of shared characteristics during an era. These characteristics may include the style of writing, genre, subject matter, or theme. The work of a certain literary period may be a response to historical events, but it is not the same as the historical period.

A review of major American authors and foundational works will help you answer questions in this standard.

The information that follows provides a brief summary of the major movements and periods in American Literature:

Native American Period, pre-1620–1840. Native American literature is an oral tradition of song and stories. Any written literature is an account of these songs and stories. Much of Native American literature focuses on the natural world and the sacred world and the importance of land and place. The dates for this period refer to the period of Native American dominance in the New World.

Colonial Period, 1620–1750. During this period, the newly arrived colonists were creating villages and towns and establishing new governments, while protesting the old regime of the British. Literature of this period reflects the religious influence of the Puritans. Famous writers include William Bradford, who wrote about the establishment of the new colony; Anne Bradstreet, whose poetry focuses on daily life and family relationships; and Jonathan Edwards, a Puritan minister whose writing reflects the moral attitudes of the time.

Revolutionary Period and Nationalism, 1750–1815. During this period, American writers focused on explaining and justifying the Revolution. Political writings by Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson belong to this time period. With the Revolution behind them, Americans found time to ponder what it really meant to be American. An even greater focus on nationalism, patriotism, and American identity arose following the War of 1812, which removed the last British troops from North America.

Romanticism and Transcendentalism, 1800–1855. Romanticism was a philosophical attitude that developed in reaction to previous decades in which reason and rational thought dominated. Writers celebrated individualism, nature, imagination, creativity, and emotions. As Americans expanded westward, the rebellious spirit of Romanticism guided them, and as Eastern cities such as Boston and New York became centers of intellectual thought and culture, the romantic ideal inspired them to ask questions and pursue lively philosophical debates. The philosophy of Transcendentalism, exemplified by Ralph Waldo Emerson, eventually evolved; it stressed respect for the individual and the intuitive pursuit of a greater truth. Writers from this period include Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry David Thoreau.

Realism, 1850–1900. This period, which includes the Civil War, significant industrial invention, and extensive westward expansion, is one of the most turbulent and creative in American history. Hinting at the modern movement yet to come, writers turned to realism in an effort to articulate the tensions and complex events of the time. Authors made it their mission to convey the reality of life, harsh as it might seem. Characters reflected real people, determined yet flawed, struggling to overcome the difficulties of war, family, natural disasters, and human weaknesses. Some authors, such as Mark Twain, focused on a particular region of the country, seeking to represent accurately the culture and beliefs by presenting its **local color**. This literature emphasized accurate portrayals of the physical landscape as well as the habits and the speech of the area's people. Other writers of this period include Ambrose Bierce, Stephen Crane, Willa Cather, and Emily Dickinson.

Naturalism, 1880–1940. This period, which overlaps with Realism, was an extension of realism. Writers during this period focused on grim reality, observing characters much as scientists might observe animals. They sought to discover the natural laws that govern human lives. Unlike the Transcendentalists, Naturalists viewed nature as indifferent, not noble. The characters in these works were often helpless victims of nature, the environment, and their own heritage. Writers of this period include Frank Norris, Theodore Dreiser, Jack London, and James T. Farrell.

Modern Period, 1900–1950. Wars, economic prosperity, along with the Depression, commercialism, and increased population, marked the first half of the twentieth century in the United States. The independent, individualistic spirit that was distinctively American seemed threatened. Writers such as Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and T. S. Eliot explored themes of alienation and change and confronted people’s fears and disillusionments. During this time, African American literature flourished, inspired by writers such as Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston of the **Harlem**

Renaissance. Characteristics of modern literature include extensive use of symbolism, irony, and understatement. Writers experimented with new techniques, such as **stream of consciousness**, in which the random, seemingly unconnected thoughts of a character are revealed. Readers must often use a good deal of inference to understand character and theme, as meaning is suggested more than directly stated.

The chart on the following pages gives an overview of the important movements and periods in American literature. Study the **approximate** dates and characteristics of each so that you are able to classify a work of literature based on its style and content.

Literary Movement	Time Period	Characteristics of the Movement	Representative Authors and Their Works
Native American Period	Pre-1620–1840	Celebrates the natural and spiritual worlds	Oral tradition; original authors and works largely unknown
Colonial Period	1620–1750	Focuses on historical events, daily life, moral attitudes (Puritanism), political unrest	Jonathan Edwards (<i>Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God</i>), Benjamin Franklin (<i>Poor Richard’s Almanack</i>), Phillis Wheatley (<i>Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral</i>)
Revolutionary Period and Nationalism	1750–1815	Celebrates nationalism and patriotism and examines what it means to be “American”	Political writings by Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson
Romanticism and Transcendentalism	1800–1855	Celebrates individualism, nature, imagination, emotions	Washington Irving (“Legend of Sleepy Hollow”), Nathaniel Hawthorne (<i>The Scarlet Letter</i>), Herman Melville (<i>Moby Dick</i>), Walt Whitman (<i>Leaves of Grass</i>), Ralph Waldo Emerson (“Self-Reliance”), Henry David Thoreau (<i>Walden</i>)

Literary Movement	Time Period	Characteristics of the Movement	Representative Authors and Their Works
Realism	1850–1900	Examines realities of life, human frailty; regional culture (local color)	Stephen Crane (<i>The Red Badge of Courage</i>), Willa Cather (<i>O Pioneers</i>), Emily Dickinson (“Because I Could Not Stop for Death”), Mark Twain (<i>Huckleberry Finn</i>)
Naturalism	1880–1940	Views life as a set of natural laws to be discovered	Theodore Dreiser (<i>Sister Carrie</i>), James T. Farrell (<i>Studs Lonigan: A Trilogy</i>), Jack London (<i>The Sea-Wolf</i>), Frank Norris (<i>The Octopus</i>)
Modern Period	1915–1945	Themes of alienation, disconnectedness; experiments with new techniques; use of irony and understatement	T. S. Eliot (<i>The Waste Land</i>), F. Scott Fitzgerald (<i>The Great Gatsby</i>), Ernest Hemingway (<i>For Whom the Bell Tolls</i>), Langston Hughes (“Theme for English B”), Zora Neale Hurston (<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>)

Questions in this standard will also ask you to analyze, compare, and apply knowledge of universal themes characteristic of American literature. These include American individualism, the American dream, cultural diversity, and tolerance, as well as other themes covered in your class.

American individualism is one of the most pervasive themes in American literature. The colonists who first arrived in North America came seeking freedom to practice their individual religion. Others came looking for opportunities that they could not get in closed, class-based societies. Since those early days, Americans have celebrated individual ambition and achievement. The “self-made man” is a common theme in American literature.

American individualism is closely linked to the **American dream**, the idea that anyone in the United States can become whatever he or she wants to become. Generally, the American dream includes achieving a certain level of prosperity through hard work, determination, and perseverance.

Cultural diversity is also a universal theme in American literature. Although there are examples to the contrary, America has always welcomed individuals of diverse backgrounds to the United States. A central metaphor for the United States is that of the melting pot, where different groups of people come together to become Americans. Some

people argue that the United States is more like a salad bowl, where each element retains its separate identity while making up part of the whole. Whether you are a melting pot or a salad bowl believer, you cannot deny that American literature reflects this cultural diversity.

Tolerance is another theme found in American literature. Religious tolerance was one of the earliest principles in American life. Much of American literature discusses how well America and its citizens have done in their quest for tolerance.

Questions for this standard might look like the following:

Which quote by Henry David Thoreau BEST reflects transcendentalist ideals?

- A It is never too late to give up your prejudices.
- B Beware of all enterprises that require new clothes.
- C On tops of mountains, as everywhere to hopeful souls, it is always morning.
- D Read the best books first, or you may not have a chance to read them at all.

To answer this question, you need to remember that transcendentalists believed in the unity of all beings, the innate goodness of humans, and the divinity found in nature. Choice **C**, which mentions all three of these aspects, is the BEST answer. The other three quotes make strong statements, but none discuss the ideas of nature and connectedness as well as choice **C**.

Other questions may ask:

- **Which details in the poem inform the reader of the period in which it is set?**
- **Which fictional character from American Romanticism BEST symbolizes man's failure to see his own faults?**

Questions for this standard might include paired passages. You may be asked to compare and contrast the presentation of universal themes in the paired passages. For example, one passage might be from Ralph Ellison's novel *Invisible Man*, about an African American's struggle to regain his identity. A paired passage might be an excerpt from Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, a novel about a woman's awakening to her identity. Read the following passages.

from *Invisible Man*

by Ralph Ellison

I was looking for myself and asking everyone except myself questions which I, and only I, could answer. It took me a long time and much painful boomeranging of my expectations to achieve a realization that everyone else seems to have been born with: That I am nobody but myself.

from *The Awakening*

by Kate Chopin

[Mr. Pontellier] could see plainly that [his wife] was not herself. That is, he could see that she was becoming herself and daily casting aside that fictitious self which we assume like a garment with which to appear before the world.

A question related to both passages might look like this:

Which theme of American literature is MOST apparent in both excerpts?

- A individualism
- B American dream
- C cultural diversity
- D equality

Both passages discuss the main characters' search for meaning and identity in their lives. They want to create their own lives outside of society's norms. Choice A is correct because both passages focus on the character's quest for individualism. Choice B is incorrect because neither character is particularly focused on the economic prosperity often associated with the American dream. Both works certainly reflect the cultural diversity of America, but that diversity is not what motivates the characters. Therefore, choice C is incorrect. Choice D is incorrect for similar reasons. Remember that you must always choose the BEST answer, not just a good one.

Other questions about paired passages might look like these:

- **Which characteristics of the Modern Period are found in both the story and the poem?**
- **Which statement reveals the strongest contrast in how the main characters come to terms with their defeat?**
- **How do the settings of the essay and the story reflect the Colonies' emerging sense of unity?**
- **Which sentence from the Thirteenth Amendment BEST reflects how its tone differs from that of the Emancipation Proclamation?**



Spotlight on the Standards

★ ***Determine the author’s point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly powerful or persuasive.*** ★

Questions for this standard will ask you to determine an author’s purpose or point of view in texts that are especially well-crafted or well-argued.

When text or speech is notable, powerful, beautiful, or persuasive, we can say that its **rhetoric** is effective. Rhetoric consists of language choices and techniques that writers use to communicate perspective and to modify the perspectives of others. You might have heard the expression “it’s not *what* you say, it’s *how* you say it.” Rhetoric is about *how* ideas are presented and *how* messages are delivered.

Rhetoric is developed through many of the elements of literature and language already mentioned in this study guide, such as sound devices (e.g., alliteration, repetition, rhyme), structure (e.g., foreshadowing, climax, resolution), figurative language (e.g., hyperbole, idioms, metaphor), and tone (e.g., humble, arrogant, hesitant, demanding) among others.

As you locate and analyze evidence of effective rhetoric, you need to remember the difference between fact and opinion. Nonfiction works such as speeches and essays often combine fact and opinion, particularly if they are meant to be persuasive.

Distinguishing between Fact and Opinion

A fact is a statement that can be proven. An opinion is a statement that cannot be proven because it states a writer's belief or judgment about something.

Read the two sentences below. Which states a fact, and which states an opinion?

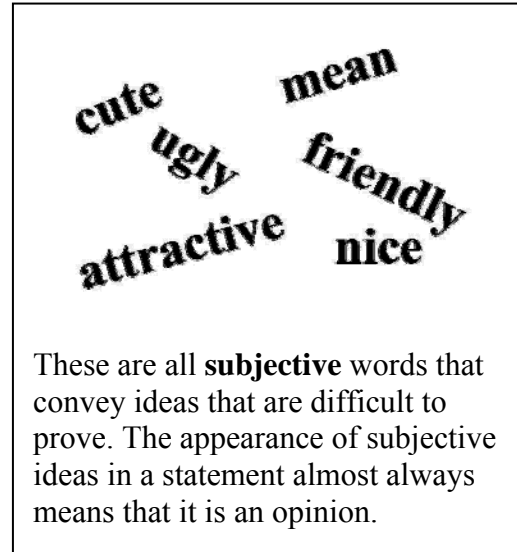
1. For dinner, we had meatloaf, carrots, and green beans.
2. For dinner, we had the most mouth-watering, delicious meal ever.

Sentence 1 is straightforward. The facts could be checked and verified. Sentence 2 is a judgment. It expresses the author's opinion about the meal. Another dinner guest may not have liked the meal or may have thought it was only average.

Deciding whether or not a statement is a fact or opinion often comes down to a single question: "Can you prove it?" If you can prove a statement somehow, then it is a fact. If not, it's an opinion. Take a look at the statements below and notice the difference between them.

FACT: Many critics gave the movie a poor review.
OPINION: It was a bad movie.

The opinion in this example uses the word *bad*. How can you prove something is *bad*? Hook it up to a "Bad-o-Meter"? *Bad* is a **subjective** idea, meaning that every person has his or her own definition of what it means. Subjective ideas cannot be proven.



Consider the following example:

Read the sample passage below.

**Excerpt from THE MASSACRE OF FORT DEARBORN AT CHICAGO
as spoken by Chief Tecumseh (Shawnee) c. 1800**

Retold by Simon Pokagon

Chief of the Pokagon Band of Pottawatomie Nation c. 1899

- 1 Then they will destroy these forests, whose branches wave in the winds above the graves your fathers, chanting their praises.
- 2 If you doubt it, come, go with me eastward or southward a few days' journey along your ancient mi-kan-og (trails), and I will show you a land you once occupied made desolate.
- 3 There the forests of untold years have been hewn down and cast into the fire!
- 4 There be-sheck-kee and waw-mawsh-ka-she (the buffalo and deer) pe-nay-shen and ke-gon (the fowl and fish), are all gone.
- 5 There the woodland birds, whose sweet songs once pleased your ears, have forsaken the land, never to return.
- 6 And waw-bi-gon-ag (the wild flowers), which your maidens once loved to wear, have all withered and died.
- 7 You must bear in mind these strangers are not as you — they are devoid of natural affection, loving gold or gain better than one another, or ki-tchi-tchag (their own souls).

In paragraphs 3 through 6, what is Chief Tecumseh's MOST likely purpose in describing the plants and animals that once lived in the area?

- A** to inform listeners about the diversity found in nature
- B** to inspire listeners into action by emphasizing their losses
- C** to make listeners feel sorry by reminding them of the past
- D** to encourage listeners to stay calm and accept their fate

To answer this question, first go back to the passage and look closely at paragraphs 3 through 6, where Tecumseh mentions the forests, animals, and flowers. The lines have a pattern of repetition: paragraphs 3 through 5 all begin with the word *there*. Look back to paragraph 2 to find out where “there” is, and you will see that the speaker describes it as the land “you once occupied made desolate.” This reveals that his audience is other members of his tribe. Now look at the content of paragraphs 3 through 6. The lists of

creatures by name (the buffalo, the deer, the fowl, the fish) add to the rhythm and repetition of the speech. Tecumseh is making an emotional appeal to his listeners by describing what they had and what they have lost. Now look at the ending phrase of each paragraph:

...cast into the fire!
...all are gone.
...never to return.
...withered and died.

All four phrases are powerful statements of permanent loss.

A closer look at paragraphs 3 through 6 has revealed rhythm in the lines, specific details the speaker wants listeners to envision, and the repetition of phrases indicating permanent loss—all pointing to choice **B** as the best answer. Tecumseh uses rhetorical techniques to communicate his perspective and to modify the perspectives of others. He wants his audience to think about what they have lost and to do something more than simply understand it, feel sad about it, or accept it.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ *Analyze literary text in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated from what is really meant.* ★

Questions for this standard will ask you to determine an author's purpose or point of view by distinguishing what is directly stated from what is really meant. Literary devices such as sarcasm, irony, understatement, and satire are used by authors to convey points of view that are very different from the actual meaning of the words or language.

Irony. Irony is a form of speech intended to convey the opposite of the actual meaning of the words. There are several different types of irony, including dramatic, situational, and verbal. You are probably most familiar with verbal irony, or **sarcasm**. The speaker's intended central idea is far different from the usual meaning of the words. For example, a teenager may tell his mother, "I just *love* cleaning up my room," when in fact, the teenager means that he *hates* to clean his room. **Situational irony** refers to developments that are far from what is expected or believed to be deserved. One example of situational irony would be famed composer Ludwig van Beethoven's loss of hearing.

Satire is a form of writing that ridicules or scorns people, practices, or institutions in order to expose their failings. Satire is often used to make people think critically about a subject, although satires can be written for amusement.

Understatement is a figure of speech in which a writer or speaker deliberately makes a situation seem less important or serious than it really is. For example, a writer might say that hurricane Katrina left some damage in New Orleans. The writer is downplaying the seriousness of the effects of one of the worst hurricanes in history.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ **Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language and connotative meanings; analyze how word choice affects meaning and tone.** ★

Authors employ a variety of techniques to convey meaning, engage readers, and express familiar ideas in new ways. Some may use **figurative language**, or figures of speech, to convey meaning that goes beyond the literal meaning of the words.

Figurative language is understood by not simply defining the words in the phrase. You will need to distinguish between literal and figurative meanings of words and phrases. (Literal refers to the “primary meaning of a word or phrase.”) For example, if someone tells you to open the door, you can be fairly confident that you are, in fact, to open a physical portal. If someone tells you to “open the door to your heart,” you are not expected to find a door in your chest. Instead, you are to open up your feelings and emotions.

Literal Language: The words mean exactly what they say.	Figurative Language: The words are comparisons to different, often unexpected, ideas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have a <i>headache</i>. • Please <i>watch</i> my suitcase. • He went to <i>eat lunch</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My head is <i>killing me</i>. • Please <i>keep an eye on</i> my suitcase. • He went to <i>grab a bite</i>.

Whenever you describe an object or an idea by comparing it with something else, you are using figurative language. The two figures of speech with which you are probably most familiar are similes and metaphors. Both are comparisons. A **simile** makes a comparison

using a linking word such as *like*, *as*, or *than*. If a graduation speaker describes her first job as being “about as exciting as watching grass grow,” she is using a simile; she compares the pace of her job with the pace of grass growing. A **metaphor** makes a comparison without a linking word; instead of one thing being *like* another, one thing *is* another. If that same graduation speaker warns students about the stress of the business world by saying, “It’s a jungle out there,” she is using a metaphor; she emphasizes her point by equating the wild chaos of the business world with an actual jungle.

Other examples of figurative language to recognize are personification (giving human characteristics to nonhuman things), hyperbole (exaggeration beyond belief), and idioms (quirky sayings and expressions specific to a language). The chart below summarizes the types of figurative language that you should be able to identify and interpret.

Term	Definition	Example
Simile	A direct comparison between two unlike things, often connected by <i>like</i> , <i>as</i> , or <i>than</i>	Life is like a box of chocolates.
Metaphor	An implied comparison between two unrelated things	My summer plans had become a box of chocolates melting in the sun.
Personification	A figure of speech giving human characteristics to an animal, thing, idea, or other inanimate object	The box of chocolates called to me from the kitchen.
Hyperbole	An extravagant or excessive exaggeration	It will take me ten years to eat that huge box of chocolates.
Idiom	A saying or expression specific to speakers of a particular language	That gadget is about as useful as a chocolate teapot.

Another technique authors use to present precise ideas and set a certain tone is to choose words based on their connotations. The dictionary definition of a word is its **denotation**. The **connotation** of a word is a specific meaning or idea that the word brings to mind.

For example, both *laugh* and *giggle* have a similar denotation. These words refer to sounds you make when you find something funny. However, the word *giggle* has youthful connotations associated with it. You often think of children giggling, but rarely think of grandfathers giggling. The word *laugh* has no such connotations associated with it. Therefore, while the denotation of both words is the same, the connotations are different. If a writer decides to describe a grandfather giggling, she probably means to hint that he has a youthful spirit or is feeling particularly young at heart.

Once you are familiar with figurative and connotative uses of language, you will need to analyze how those uses impact the meaning and tone of a passage. Every writer makes choices when it comes to which word(s) to use in a given situation. Those word choices can lead readers to imagine a particular time or place. Word choice can set a formal or informal tone, depending on whether the author wants to persuade, entertain, or impress readers.

Here are two versions of the same scene. The words and details used establish a completely different mood in each version.

The woman trudged through the heavy snow, struggling against the wind, her face shielded by a thick gray scarf. She kept her face down, her eyelids nearly closed, dark slits in a pale white face. Her shoulders sagged as if laden with a heavy burden, yet her arms were empty.

The woman danced across the snow, her feet barely leaving prints, her arms lifted upward, embracing the wind. She flung back her head and tossed her red hat into the air, lifting her face into the driving snow and allowing the snowflakes to caress her skin.

What is the feeling in the first scene? Look at the words the author uses and the details he chooses to include. Words like *trudged*, *sagged*, and *laden* suggest heaviness; the colors—gray scarf, pale white face—are monochromatic and drab.

Therefore, you might describe the mood of the first scene as somber or hopeless. In the second scene, the woman dances across the snow so lightly that her feet do not seem to leave any marks in it. She welcomes both the wind and the snow. A splash of color—the red hat—brightens the scene. The choice of words in the second scene creates a sense of joy and hope.

Read the sample passage below.

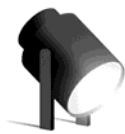
from *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

The sun was up so high when I waked, that I judged it was after eight o'clock. I laid there in the grass and the cool shade, thinking about things and feeling rested and ruther comfortable and satisfied. I could see the sun out at one or two holes, but mostly it was big trees all about, and gloomy in there amongst them. There was freckled places on the ground where the light sifted down through the leaves, and the freckled places swapped about a little, showing there was a little breeze up there.

What does the imagery in the passage BEST suggest?

- A Huck understands the world by observing nature.
- B Huck is more comfortable indoors than in the woods.
- C Huck's future is bright and hopeful.
- D Huck's night has been long and restless.

In the passage, Huck knows what time it is by the location of the sun, and he knows there is a breeze in the treetops because the “freckled places” move on the ground. He is a good observer of nature, and the fact that he is lying in the grass “thinking about things” suggests he is trying to understand larger issues. The correct answer choice, **A**, best describes the function of the imagery in the passage. The other answer choices are all inaccurate: he is clearly comfortable in the woods; in spite of the distant sunlight the overall scene is cool and gloomy; and he has obviously slept well because he is “rested and ruther comfortable.”



Spotlight on the Standards

★ *Understand and acquire new vocabulary and use it correctly.* ★

Questions for this standard will ask you to understand and acquire new vocabulary words that are appropriate for high school students. You will be asked to use your knowledge of various works of American literature to determine the meanings of new words. Questions will measure your ability to use context clues from various types of texts to determine the meaning of unknown words. You will identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech. Questions will also test your ability to use appropriate reference materials to clarify meaning, pronunciation, parts of speech, and word origins.

For unfamiliar vocabulary words, you will be asked to use **context**—the language surrounding the word—to find clues to the word’s meaning. By reading the sentence or paragraph that contains the unfamiliar word, you should get a sense of the overall meaning of that portion of the text. Also, the word’s position or function in the sentence is often a clue to its meaning.

Consider this example. Read the following excerpt from an article describing the field of ergonomics and the invention of the computer mouse. Then read the question that follows.

- 5 Sometimes ergonomics are used to improve the designs of products that we already have, and sometimes the study of ergonomics leads to the development of completely new products. One such product is the computer mouse. Doug Engelbart came up with the idea for the first mouse in the early 1960s when he was a research scientist at Stanford Research Institute in Menlo Park, California.
- 6 Engelbart was assigned to a major project whose broadly stated purpose was to “augment human intellect.” Basically, scientists were asked to develop as many ideas as possible to enable human beings to solve complex problems more efficiently and more creatively. At the time computers were just becoming essential technological tools in government and industry. One of Engelbart’s tasks was to improve the interaction between the computer and the user so that science could take full advantage of a computer’s capabilities.

In paragraph 6, what does the word *augment* mean?

- A** condense
- B** increase
- C** energize
- D** improve

To clarify the meaning of the word *augment*, look for context clues. First, read the sentence that contains the vocabulary word. What were the scientists asked to do? Their “purpose was to ‘augment human intellect.’” Now read the next sentence. It begins with “Basically,” which suggests a clarification will follow. So what were the scientists asked to do? They were asked to find ways to “enable human beings to solve complex problems more efficiently and more creatively.”

Now look at the key parts of both sentences:

“augment human intellect” = “enable human beings to solve complex problems more efficiently and more creatively”

We know *intellect* is knowledge or understanding. How do humans solve complex problems? With their intellect. So if the scientists help humans solve problems **more** efficiently and **more** creatively, then knowledge and understanding are being **increased**. The option that gives the best definition of *augment* is choice **B: increase**.

Choice A is a contrasted word. Choices C and D are close in meaning to *augment*, but neither is the best choice.

STRATEGY BOX—Use the Words Around It

When you are faced with an unknown word, go back to the passage. Start reading two sentences before the word appears, and continue reading for two sentences afterward. If that doesn't give you enough clues, look elsewhere in the passage. By reading the context in which the word appears, you may be able to make an educated guess.

How a word is used in a sentence can also determine its meaning. If the context of the word changes, then the meaning of the word can also change. This change can be very basic, such as a word being used as a noun in one sentence and a verb in the next.

Set as a noun: That is a lovely *set* of dinner plates.

Set as a verb: Please *set* the books down on the table.

However, a change in meaning can be subtler. Look at the word *shrieked* in the next two sentences, and notice how the meaning of the word changes slightly.

Sentence 1: "There's a monster in the house!" the woman *shrieked*.

Sentence 2: "I just won 65 million dollars!" the woman *shrieked*.

In the first sentence, the woman shrieks out of fear. In the second sentence, the shriek is one of extreme excitement and happiness. The context of the sentence has determined whether the *shriek* is good or bad.

Another consideration when trying to identify word meanings is the pattern of word changes that indicate different meanings or functions. For example, adding an *-er* to many verbs makes them nouns. *Dance* becomes *dancer*; *listen* becomes *listener*. Adding *-ly* to some adjectives can make them adverbs. Some adjectives become new nouns when *-ness* is added to the end. *Happy* becomes *happiness*, for example. Knowing words in one form will help you determine their meaning when they appear in other forms.

The English language was not created from scratch. It consists of borrowed words and word parts from many different languages. In particular, many words are formed from combinations of Greek or Latin prefixes, suffixes, and word roots. You can use your knowledge of these word parts to help you determine the meaning of a word.

You can also use your knowledge of the meanings of prefixes and suffixes to select the correct one to give a word new meaning. Knowing that the prefix *un-* means "not," or "the opposite of," allows you to add this prefix to a word to give it a new meaning. For example, *unarm* means the opposite of "*to arm*." Knowing that the suffix *-ish* means "having the characteristics of" allows you to add this suffix to a word to give it a new meaning. For example, *boyish* means "having the characteristics of a boy."

STRATEGY BOX—Analyze the Word by Its Parts

Look for familiar prefixes, suffixes, and word roots when faced with an unknown word. Knowing the meaning of these word parts will help you determine the meaning of the unknown word.

Cognates are words that have the same origin or are related in some way to words in other languages. You can use your knowledge of other languages to help you understand the meanings of certain words. Examples of cognates are *night* (English), *noche* (Spanish), *notte* (Italian), and *nuit* (French). All are derived from an Indo-European language.

Questions for this standard will also test your ability to use reference materials to find the pronunciation of a word, clarify its precise meaning, determine its part of speech, and find its origins. Which reference book would you consult to find a definition for the above vocabulary terms? As you know, a **dictionary** is your best source for the definition and spelling of words. You can also discover a word's origin or etymology in a dictionary.

If you need help with choosing the most precise word or you want to add variety to your writing, you should turn to a **thesaurus** to find synonyms and related words.

Study Ideas for Content Domain I

The best way for you to prepare for questions assessing Content Domain I is to read a passage thoroughly, think about what you have read, ask yourself the kinds of questions described in this guide for Content Domain I, and then answer them.

First, find a reading passage. Many important texts published before 1923 are in the “public domain” and are available online. Two Web sites that provide many well-known texts are Bartleby (<http://www.bartleby.com>) and Project Gutenberg (<http://www.gutenberg.org>). Here is a list of possible sources for appropriate reading passages:

Literary Texts

- Anthologies of American literature, focusing on texts from approximately 1700 through World War II)
- Short story collections
- Poetry collections
- Drama collections
- Works by prominent American authors (your English teacher or librarian can give you suggestions)

Informational Texts

- Informational articles about important American artistic and literary works
- Biographies and autobiographies of American authors
- Editorials and opinion pieces (search the “Op-ed” sections of newspapers in print and online)
- Journals and memoirs
- Speeches
- Foundational documents of U.S. historical and literary significance (e.g., The Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, The Bill of Rights, Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address)
- Scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience
- Documentaries and investigative journalism

After you read the passage, ask yourself these questions:

- What is this passage about?
- What are its themes, and how do they compare to the themes of works from the same literary period?
- How does the author use imagery or symbolism to suggest themes and ideas?
- How does the author use language to achieve a desired effect?
- Are there any words I do not know? If so, can I use the words' structure to determine their meanings? How does the dictionary define the words?
- (For fictional literary passages) What is the setting and what role does it play in creating a mood or backdrop for the action? Who are the important characters and how are they developed? What is the structure? What is the main conflict and how is it resolved?
- (For drama) What type of dramatic literature is the passage? What are the play's themes? How are the characters' personalities revealed? What types of dramatic conventions does the playwright use?
- (For poetry) What is this poem about? What types of sound devices does the poet use? How is the poem structured? Are the meaning of words used in the poem figurative or connotative?
- (For nonfiction) What is the purpose of this work? How is the passage structured? What is the author's purpose? What details reveal the author's point of view, assumptions, and biases? What evidence does the author use to support the viewpoint of the passage?

Find more passages and repeat this process as many times as possible. Be sure to find both literary and informational passages. The more you practice reading passages, asking questions and answering them, the better you should do on the EOCT.

Sample Questions for Content Domain I

This section has some sample questions for you to try. Before you answer them, take a few minutes to learn about some strategies that you can use to help you do your best on a reading test.

STRATEGIES FOR ANSWERING READING QUESTIONS

- 1. Review the test questions before reading the passage.** Reading the test questions (just the questions, not the answer choices) before reading the passage can help you focus on what you are trying to find in the passage to answer the questions. Next, read the passage. You can make notes in the test booklet as you read. When you think you have found some information that will help answer a question, make a note. Do not stop reading the passage to answer a question. After you have read the entire passage, you can go back to look at your notes and answer the questions.
- 2. Summarize the passage.** Next to each paragraph, write a brief note indicating what the paragraph is about. Use your notes like a road map to help you find the information you need to answer the questions.

Be sure to keep an eye on the time. Do not spend so much time taking notes on a passage that you do not have time to answer the questions.

- 3. Read ALL of the answer choices.** Look at each answer choice carefully. Before marking an answer, think to yourself: Is it the BEST choice? Where can I find this in the passage? What in the passage makes me think this is correct? Do not just mark the first answer choice that looks good.

Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow.

From the Shore

By Carl Sandburg

A lone gray bird,
Dim-dipping, far-flying,
Alone in the shadows and grandeurs and tumults
Of night and the sea
5 And the stars and storms.

Out over the darkness it wavers and hovers,
Out into the gloom it swings and batters,
Out into the wind and the rain and the vast,
Out into the pit of a great black world,
10 Where fogs are at battle, sky-driven, sea-blown,
Love of mist and rapture of flight,
Glories of chance and hazards of death
On its eager and palpitant wings.

Out into the deep of the great dark world,
15 Beyond the long borders where foam and drift
Of the sundering waves are lost and gone
On the tides that plunge and rear and crumble.

[Public Domain]

1 The poem establishes and maintains a mood that can BEST be described as

- A peaceful
- B joyous
- C futile
- D ominous

Answer: **D**

Standard: *Use knowledge of literary characteristics to demonstrate understanding of a variety of texts.*

Choice A can be eliminated by looking at language in the poem such as “tumults,” “storms,” and “hazards of death.” These details do not create a peaceful feeling. While choice B, “joyous,” touches on some descriptions of the bird (e.g., “rapture of flight” and “glories of chance”), it is not the best answer. To answer questions about mood, you must take into account the *entire* poem. Choice C should also prompt you to look closely at the entire poem. There is a mix of thrill and danger, but there is enough positive language (such as that in lines 11–13) to eliminate “futile” as the best description of the overall feeling. The abundance of threatening images and the setting of the bird’s flight in “the deep of the great dark world” support choice **D** as the best answer.

2 The line “Dim-dipping, far-flying” uses what literary technique?

- A irony
- B symbolism
- C alliteration
- D personification

Answer: C

Standard: *Analyze how word choice affects meaning and tone.*

You must know literary terms to choose the correct answer to this question. Irony, symbolism, and personification are all incorrect answers. Since alliteration is the repetition of initial consonant sounds, choice C is correct.

3 Read this claim from a student essay about the poem.

Sandburg’s poem “From the Shore” portrays Nature as a violent, all-powerful force indifferent to the struggles of vulnerable creatures.

Which lines from the poem would provide the strongest evidence to support the student’s claim?

- A “A lone gray bird, / Dim-dipping, far-flying,”
- B “Alone in the shadows and grandeurs and tumults / Of night and the sea”
- C “Out into the pit of a great black world, / Where fogs are at battle, sky-driven, sea-blown,”
- D “Glories of chance and hazards of death / On its eager and palpitant wings.”

Answer: C

Standard: *Cite strong evidence from a text to support analysis of what the text says explicitly and what can be inferred.*

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

To Build a Fire

By Jack London

- 1 For land travel or seafaring, the world over, a companion is usually considered desirable. In the Klondike, as Tom Vincent found out, such a companion is absolutely essential. But he found it out, not by precept, but through bitter experience.
- 2 “Never travel alone,” is a precept of the north. He had heard it many times and laughed; for he was a strapping young fellow, big-boned and big-muscled, with faith in himself and in the strength of his head and hands.
- 3 It was on a bleak January day when the experience came that taught him respect for the frost, and for the wisdom of the men who had battled with it.
- 4 He had left Calumet Camp on the Yukon with a light pack on his back, to go up Paul Creek to the divide between it and Cherry Creek, where his party was prospecting and hunting moose.
- 5 The frost was sixty degrees below zero, and he had thirty miles of lonely trail to cover, but he did not mind. In fact, he enjoyed it, swinging along through the silence, his blood pounding warmly through his veins, and his mind carefree and happy. For he and his comrades were certain they had struck “pay” up there on the Cherry Creek Divide; and, further, he was returning to them from Dawson with cheery home letters from the States.
- 6 At seven o’clock, when he turned the heels of his moccasins toward Calumet Camp, it was still black night. And when day broke at half past nine he had made the four-mile cut-off across the flats and was six miles up Paul Creek. The trail, which had seen little travel, followed the bed of the creek, and there was no possibility of his getting lost. He had gone to Dawson by way of Cherry Creek and Indian River, so Paul Creek was new and strange. By half past eleven he was at the forks, which had been described to him, and he knew he had covered fifteen miles, half the distance.
- 7 He knew that in the nature of things the trail was bound to grow worse from there on, and thought that, considering the good time he had made, he merited lunch. Casting off his pack and taking a seat on a fallen tree, he unmittened his right hand, reached inside his shirt next to the skin, and fished out a couple of biscuits sandwiched with sliced bacon and wrapped in a handkerchief—the only way they could be carried without freezing solid.
- 8 He had barely chewed the first mouthful when his numbing fingers warned him to put his mitten on again. This he did, not without surprise at the bitter swiftness with which the frost bit in. Undoubtedly it was the coldest snap he had ever experienced, he thought.
- 9 He spat upon the snow—a favorite northland trick—and the sharp crackle of the instantly congealed spittle startled him. The spirit thermometer at Calumet had registered sixty below when he left, but he was certain it had grown much colder, how much colder he could not imagine.

- 10 Half of the first biscuit was yet untouched, but he could feel himself beginning to chill—a thing most unusual for him. This would never do, he decided, and slipping the pack-straps across his shoulders, he leaped to his feet and ran briskly up the trail.
- 11 A few minutes of this made him warm again, and he settled down to a steady stride, munching the biscuits as he went along. The moisture that exhaled with his breath crusted his lips and mustache with pendent ice and formed a miniature glacier on his chin. Now and again sensations forsook his nose and checks, and he rubbed them till they burned with the returning blood.
- 12 Most men wore nose-straps; his partners did, but he had scorned such “feminine contraptions,” and till now had never felt the need of them. Now he did feel the need, for he was rubbing constantly.
- 13 Nevertheless he was aware of a thrill of joy, of exultation. He was doing something, achieving something, mastering the elements. Once he laughed aloud in sheer strength of life, and with his clenched fist defied the frost. He was its master. What he did he did in spite of it. It could not stop him. He was going on to the Cherry Creek Divide.
- 14 Strong as were the elements, he was stronger. At such times animals crawled away into their holes and remained in hiding. But he did not hide. He was out in it, facing it, fighting it. He was a man, a master of things.

[Public Domain]

4 Based on paragraphs 1 and 2, a *precept* is a

- A plan to carry out an action
- B common saying that gives advice
- C popular belief that is not based on fact
- D mistake through which a lesson is learned

Answer: **B**

Standard: *Understand and acquire new vocabulary and use it correctly.*

5 How does paragraph 3 function in the overall structure of the story?

- A It provides foreshadowing, which creates suspense.
- B It includes a flashback, which explains the conflict.
- C It establishes the chronological order of events.
- D It poses the question that the story will answer.

Answer: **A**

Standard: *Use knowledge of literary characteristics to demonstrate understanding of a variety of texts.*

6 What attitude toward nature is shared in the poem “From the Shore” and the story “To Build a Fire”?

- A** Nature is a safe haven from the stress of society.
- B** Nature threatens living things and must be conquered.
- C** Nature is an indifferent force that acts upon living things.
- D** Nature provides an ideal setting for intellectual growth.

Answer: **C**

Standard: *Determine the theme(s) or central idea(s) of a single text or multiple texts.*

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

Edith Wharton

- 1 Young writers are often advised to “write what they know,” or, in other words, to allow their writing to mirror their own lives. Well-known literary figure Edith Wharton may have followed this convention when she authored *The House of Mirth*, a novel that many consider to be her first masterpiece. The book, published in 1905, is set in the affluent New York society in which Edith herself had been raised.
- 2 Wharton was born Edith Newbold Jones on January 24, 1862, in New York. The only daughter of Lucretia Stevens Rhineland and George Frederic Jones, she had two older brothers who were considerably older. Wharton’s grandfather, William Rhineland, was a multi-millionaire with interests in banking, shipping, and real estate; thus, Wharton and her family were able to live a luxurious life in her early years. But when she was four, economic setbacks caused the family to move to Europe where they could live on less money. For the next six years, they traveled through Germany, France, and Italy.
- 3 While abroad, Wharton learned to read. Through the efforts of her father and several tutors she became multilingual, learning the language of every country in which they lived. It was while they were living in Paris that she began to create stories and her talent began to flourish. By age ten, she had already read all of Shakespeare’s plays and many of the poetry of Keats and Shelley. At eleven she started to write her first novel, and when she was only fifteen, she wrote a novella titled *Fast and Loose*. When she was eighteen, Wharton moved to Italy with her parents, but returned to New York after the death of her father.
- 4 In 1885 when the blossoming writer was 23, she married 35-year-old Edward (“Teddy”) Wharton, a man who was accustomed to a life of leisure. Though Edward was wealthy and enjoyed traveling the world, he was not interested in art or literature. Their marriage was not a solid one. After a time Wharton felt lonely, and she began to write again, perhaps to escape her own reality. She sought to have her work published in the highly regarded magazines of her day and was successful. Her poems and short stories appeared in a number of influential publications, including *Harper’s* and *Scribner’s*.
- 5 Wharton also collaborated with a young architect named Ogden Codman, Jr., on a book called *The Decoration of Houses*, one of the first books about home design to be published in the United States. The book was a rapid success, and Wharton was encouraged to continue writing. She went on to publish *The Greater Inclination*, her first collection of short stories, which received rave reviews and truly established Wharton as an author. Her career as a writer spanned over forty years and included the publication of more than forty books, although she is remembered not only for her respected literature; she was also a compassionate woman who sincerely cared for others. She established hostels and schools and housed more than 700 World War I orphans at her own expense.
- 6 After the war ended in 1920, Wharton published *The Age of Innocence*. The novel was both a popular and a critical success, and in 1921, Edith Wharton was the first female to receive the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Decades later, in 1993, Martin Scorsese directed a film version of *The Age of Innocence*, allowing modern audiences to appreciate Wharton’s work in a new way.

7 Read this sentence from paragraph 5.

Wharton also collaborated with a young architect named Ogden Codman, Jr., on a book called *The Decoration of Houses*, one of the first books about home design to be published in the United States.

What is the meaning of the word *collaborated* as used in the sentence?

- A** composed a work of art
- B** worked jointly
- C** hired an assistant to help
- D** accumulated valuable objects

Answer: **B**

Standard: *Understand and acquire new vocabulary and use it correctly.*

You can best answer this question by knowing word parts. The prefix *col-* usually means “with” or “together” (as in *collect* or *collate*). The root word *labor* means “work.” This tells you that the word probably means “work together.” Only choice **B** has a definition with this meaning.

8 Which statement from the passage is an opinion?

- A** “After a time Wharton felt lonely, and she began to write again, perhaps to escape her own reality.”
- B** “Her poems and short stories appeared in a number of influential publications, including *Harper’s* and *Scribner’s*.”
- C** “The book was a rapid success, and Wharton was encouraged to continue writing.”
- D** “After the war ended in 1920, Wharton published *The Age of Innocence*.”

Answer: **A**

Standard: *Identify important ideas and locate support for those ideas within the text.*

Choices B, C, and D all give facts about Edith Wharton’s life. Only choice **A** states an opinion, keyed by the word “perhaps.” The author is suggesting an opinion as to why Edith Wharton began writing again.

Content Domain II: Speaking and Listening

A LOOK AT CONTENT DOMAIN II



The test questions in this domain will measure your comprehension as you read, listen, speak, and view messages in a variety of media and formats. Your ability to evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and purpose of various messages will also be tested. Your answers to the questions will help show how well you can perform on the following standards:

- Evaluate a speaker's or writer's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
- Evaluate the credibility and accuracy of information sources.
- Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media and formats. Make strategic use of digital media to enhance presentations.
- Demonstrate the ability to present a clear and distinct perspective and a logical line of reasoning.
- Acquire and use academic and subject-specific words and phrases.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ Evaluate a speaker's or writer's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric. ★

Whether you realize it or not, you receive countless messages every day. A message can contain words, images, or both; it can be written, drawn, digitized, spoken, or sung. Whether it is a short text message from a friend, a famous painting in a museum, or a teacher's course description, many of the messages you "read" every day are meant to modify your thinking or influence your decisions.

When you see an advertisement for a product on television, it is clear that the purpose is to persuade you to buy the product. You might even notice specific methods and techniques that the advertisement uses to “hook you in.” Do you feel extra hungry when the camera zooms in on a juicy burger just as the happy customer is about to take a bite? Do you imagine a new product making your hair look just as perfect as it does on the model that has just used it? Do you crave the admiration and compliments you would receive if you could drive around in the same car being praised by the famous sports star?

While it might be the most obvious example, advertising is not the only medium that uses messages to persuade. Book and movie reviews, letters of recommendation, newspaper editorials, concert posters, political blogs, town and city websites, statistical charts, scientific articles, speeches, and even bumper stickers all contain a degree of persuasive intent. Questions for this standard will ask you to determine the intent or point of view of a message, to analyze how language and word choice affects the message, to evaluate the validity of evidence used to support the message, and to determine assumptions made by the author when elaborating an argument.

The first part of this standard asks you to determine a writer’s or speaker’s point of view. In literary texts, point of view is a literary element with grammatical clues; for example, a text narrated by a speaker who uses the pronoun “I” is written in the first-person point of view. In this domain, point of view refers to the ideas, purpose, and beliefs of a writer or speaker. Sometimes called “position” or “perspective,” you can think of point of view as “where the writer is coming from.”

Questions for this part of the standard might look like the following:

- **Which statement BEST summarizes the scientist’s position regarding recent cutbacks in space exploration?**
- **What assumption about the audience is revealed in the advertisement?**
- **How does the speaker’s point of view change toward the end of the address?**

The second part of this standard tests your skill in locating and evaluating evidence to support claims and statements made in a variety of texts. To find evidence, you must “read like a detective.”

STRATEGY BOX—Become a Detective

Take a close look at the passage. What kind of support does the author offer? Does the author use personal examples, descriptive details, endorsements (testimonials), statistics, relevant research, facts, opinions, or hearsay as support? The kind of support tells a lot about how strong the argument is. For example, if the author uses a personal example to make a point about how well a medical procedure works, it is not as convincing as scientific research to support the claim.

Assessing Rhetoric

The last part of this standard asks you to closely examine how words are chosen and language is crafted in a variety of messages.

When text or speech is notably powerful, beautiful, or persuasive, we can say that its **rhetoric** is effective. Rhetoric consists of language choices and techniques that writers use to communicate perspective and to modify the perspectives of others. You might have heard the expression “it’s not *what* you say; it’s *how* you say it.” Rhetoric is about *how* ideas are presented and messages are delivered.

Rhetoric is developed through many of the elements of literature and language covered in Domain I, such as sound devices (e.g., alliteration, repetition, or rhyme), structure (e.g., foreshadowing, climax, or resolution), figurative language (e.g., hyperbole, idioms, or metaphor), and tone (e.g., humble, arrogant, hesitant, or demanding).

Questions for this part of the standard may ask you to explain the effect of certain word choices, and to locate and analyze evidence of effective rhetoric.

Read the following excerpt from a television advertisement.

Did you know there’s a place you can go to see million-year-old popcorn, bacon, and soda straws? How about a giant version of Babe Ruth’s baseball bat? Or a miniature version of the Empire State Building? It’s not a museum or movie set—it’s Lewis and Clark Caverns, a natural limestone cave in southwestern Montana.

How does the language used in this advertisement contribute to the overall tone?

- A Unusual questions suggest playfulness.
- B Formal sentences suggest authority.
- C Scientific terms suggest believability.
- D Lighthearted joking suggests secretiveness.

In the excerpt, the unexpected and unusual images suggest a sense of playfulness intended to make viewers curious about the place being advertised, so the correct answer is choice **A**. Choices **B** and **C** are incorrect because the language is not formal and the terms are not scientific. The language is casual and humorous, but does not suggest a secret, so choice **D** is also incorrect.

Propaganda and Persuasion

Propaganda is a specific type of persuasion used to promote a political, commercial, or civil cause. Propaganda is used to manipulate the readers' or viewers' reason and emotions and to persuade them to believe in something or someone, buy an item, or vote a certain way.

Just as you evaluated written passages in Domain I, you are asked here to assess the effectiveness of persuasive messages, especially in the mass media. But how do you evaluate these sources? In much the same way you evaluated literary passages. You will look for evidence that a movie, website, or advertisement made its point.

You should also pay attention to how an advertisement, film, flyer, or website looks. Part of its effectiveness depends on how the visual aspects appeal to you. You are told not to judge a book by its cover, but it is okay to judge a website by the layout of its home page. It's okay to judge a print advertisement for a new CD on how the image's background increases your desire to buy it.

Because the EOCT is a written test, you will not be asked to watch or listen to media broadcasts. You will be given written passages or pairs of passages such as advertisements, newspaper articles, and pages from websites.

To prepare for questions in this standard, you should also review certain techniques of argument and persuasion.

Types of Argument

We're not talking about the type of argument where you disagree with someone over who took the last cookie or the last parking space. We're talking about how ads try to persuade you to buy something. Their arguments are facts or assertions offered as proof that something is true. Here are some common types of arguments:

Argument by authority—relies on statements from authority figures, experts, or professionals to convince you of something. For example, an advertisement claiming that “three out of four dentists agree that this toothpaste is the best” is an argument by authority.

Argument by emotion—appeals to your feelings. Relief organizations often show pictures of people in very unfortunate situations to move you to donate money.

Argument by logic—appeals to reason and evidence to convince you of something. For example, “People who have used our product have lost weight. You want to lose weight. If you buy this product, you will lose weight.” Beware of false logic, however. Just because some people buy a product and lose weight does not mean the product was responsible. That's why weight loss ads often warn people that the results of their models are not typical.

Types of Persuasive Techniques

- Appeal to people’s desire to fit in and be part of the group. The basic premise is “you’re either with us or against us.”
- Present only information that supports an idea. Negative or contradictory information is not presented.
- Create a simplified picture of a complex situation, individual, or group through generalization or stereotyping. Most advertisers and writers today use stereotyping sparingly because of the negatives associated with it.
- Ask rhetorical questions, or questions asked merely for effect with no answer expected, to persuade readers to agree with them.

Questions for this part of the standard may look like this:

Read the following description of an advertising campaign.

Arguably the most famous of Dr Pepper’s advertising campaigns was their “Be a Pepper” series. These commercials referred to fans of Dr Pepper as “Peppers” and often featured crowd dance scenes with elaborate, over-the-top choreography. One popular ad jingle was:

*I’m a Pepper, he’s a Pepper,
She’s a Pepper, we’re a Pepper,
Wouldn’t you like to be a Pepper, too?
Be a Pepper ~ Drink Dr Pepper*

What persuasive technique is used in this advertising campaign?

- A** It encourages people to become part of an “in” crowd.
- B** It asks a question that has no certain answer.
- C** It includes a catchy song.
- D** It appeals to the senses.

The correct answer is choice **A**. This ad campaign is appealing to the need of people to fit in and be part of the crowd. The ad suggests that by drinking Dr Pepper, you will become part of a special group; you will “be a Pepper.”



Spotlight on the Standards

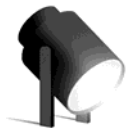
★ **Evaluate the credibility and accuracy of information sources.** ★

Questions for this standard might ask you which source would provide the most accurate and reliable information. You should be prepared to judge the authority of *providers* of information (especially online sources), and you should be prepared to evaluate the authenticity and accuracy of the information they provide. You should be able to use the information to make informed decisions and solve problems.

A **credible** source is one you can trust to present accurate, unbiased information. Having studied the previous standard, you will be able to assess the point of view and purpose of different types of sources. You will be skeptical of sources that might manipulate facts and language for the purpose of promoting their own point of view. Note any discrepancies in information among sources.

One way to review for this standard is to select a significant current event or issue over which there is debate or disagreement. Read or watch everything you can about the issue. How does the coverage differ among sources? What facts and details are included, or not included, depending on the point of view of the source? How accurate is the information delivered in a daily, deadline-driven newspaper compared with the information in a monthly magazine that allows more time for research and fact checking?

One way to evaluate the credibility of a source is to do some investigation of your own. For example, you might read a scientific report that claims to have found a link between a new energy drink and improved athletic endurance. By reading “the fine print” (footnotes, end notes, citations, and acknowledgements) of the article, you just might discover that funding for the research was provided by the company that produces the very energy drink used in the study. Your discovery reveals a potential bias in the source and should lead you to question the fairness and completeness of the information presented. Another example of questionable credibility would be a website that publishes that same “scientific report” but also includes advertisements for the energy drink or links to online retailers selling the product.



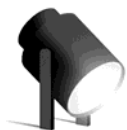
Spotlight on the Standards

★ Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media and formats. Make strategic use of digital media to enhance presentations. ★

Depending on the topic, a presentation might have pictures, interviews, videos, charts, and graphs, in addition to written text. A message meant to encourage an audience to be more active will be weak if it consists only of the speaker's opinions. Such a message will be more persuasive if it includes proven facts and figures about the benefits of exercise; it will be more powerful if it includes personal examples, stories, videos, and pictures.

To answer questions in this standard, you will need to consider how to **integrate** (combine or bring together) information presented by different sources and in different formats, including the use of digital media, such as textual, graphic, audio, video, and interactive elements. You will need to choose what information to keep, what to leave out, and which formats work best for your purpose.

Some questions may present an example of information that has been gathered for a presentation and then ask which additional information would support it. Other questions may ask which digital media could be used to enhance the understanding of the findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest to the presentation. You may be asked to identify where two sources present similar information and to choose which information would best serve a speaker's purpose.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ Demonstrate the ability to present a clear and distinct perspective and a logical line of reasoning. ★

This standard tests how well you can recognize a logical, concise, well-organized presentation that conveys a clear and distinct perspective. Because the EOCT is a written test, you won't be delivering your own presentation; rather, you'll be reading and analyzing text from sample presentations. You will also answer questions that address the general features of effective presentations.

Whether you are explaining how to use a software program or arguing for a change in school policy, your presentation will be more effective if you have considered the questions in the following presentation checklist before you are in front of an audience.

Presentation Checklist

- ✓ Do I know my audience? Have I considered their knowledge, interests, values, biases, and concerns?
- ✓ Do I have a clear purpose, point of view, or perspective?
- ✓ Is my diction and rhetoric appropriate to the topic and purpose?
- ✓ Will listeners be able to follow my line of reasoning? Are my main points logically organized to lead to a conclusion?
- ✓ Have I chosen effective examples and evidence to support my message?
- ✓ Have I addressed and responded to alternative or opposing perspectives?

Questions in this standard will focus on the features of an effective presentation. Some questions may ask you to choose the best examples of supporting evidence for a certain idea, or to choose a sentence or phrase that helps to make a logical connection between two points. You may be asked how a portion of a presentation could be made more concise, or how information should be presented to a particular audience. You may be asked which example most effectively acknowledges an alternative position or disproves and opposing idea. Questions in this standard will also test your ability to discern the level of formality that is appropriate for a particular topic or purpose.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ Acquire and use general academic and subject-specific words and phrases. ★

Items written for this standard will test your understanding that certain words and concepts can be used in many different mediums and subject areas. Some questions will test strategies you have developed to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts.

Context is helpful in identifying the meaning of words that are being used in different subjects. For example, in science class, the word *revolution* refers to a planet’s complete turn around the Sun. In social studies class, the word *revolution* refers to a complete upheaval in government or society. The context of the passage will help you decide which meaning is appropriate in the passage. What other words do you know whose meanings differ significantly based on the context? Making a list will help you review for this standard.

Study Ideas for Content Domain II

The best way to prepare for questions for this content domain is to read a wide variety of informative and persuasive texts, watch television, and surf the Internet. Can you think of a better way to study for a test? This is not just fun and games, though. Remember that you need to read, watch, and surf with a critical eye.

As you read anything—magazines, cereal boxes, greeting cards, textbooks, or bumper stickers—make a mental note of any unfamiliar word. Can you figure out its meaning by the context? Have you encountered this word in a different context? As you watch commercials and read ads, try to determine the intended audience (e.g., children, teenagers, adults, women, or men) and what approach is used (e.g., “If you use this product you will be popular” or “A famous athlete likes this product, so you will too”). As you watch television news, listen to the tone and style of the presenters. Do the anchors adjust their speech to fit the topic? Is digital media used to enhance the presentation? As you read websites or news magazines, try to figure out the author’s purpose for writing the material. Why did the author use that particular format? Paying attention as you do things that you enjoy might help you do well on the EOCT.

Sample Questions for Content Domain II

This section has some sample questions for you to answer. After you have answered each question, the correct answer will be provided.

Read this advertisement and answer the questions that follow.

*You're a busy person, always on the go.
This means that you're carrying everything you need to get you through a long day.
But carrying a heavy bag day after day can become painful.*

The Ergo Bag is designed for people like you!

Its ergonomic design features a wide, padded strap that distributes the weight of your belongings across your back and shoulders so it will not cause physical strain as ordinary bags do.

But that's not all: The **Ergo Bag** is both stylish and practical. It has a sleek, modern look that appeals to both men and women. Its multiple compartments make it easy to keep your things organized and accessible. Each bag has two front zip pockets, an insulated beverage pocket on each side, and two inside pockets for cell phones and MP3 players. A separate, padded sleeve in back can accommodate and protect a laptop computer. The roomy main compartment is perfect for textbooks and notebooks.

You work hard. Let the Ergo Bag pick up some of the slack!

See p. 97 to locate a store near you that sells the Ergo Bag.

1 What is the purpose in repeating the name “Ergo Bag” many times throughout the advertisement?

- A** It is a literary device meant to set a scene.
- B** It is figurative language meant to make a comparison.
- C** It is a rhetorical strategy to make the reader remember a product.
- D** It is a persuasive technique to make the reader agree with an idea.

Answer: **C**

Standard: Evaluate a speaker's or writer's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

2 Read this sentence from the advertisement.

Its ergonomic design features a wide, padded strap that distributes the weight of your belongings across your back and shoulders so it will not cause physical strain as ordinary bags do.

Based on the sentence, the word *ergonomic* describes a design that is

- A adapted for comfort
- B designed for fashion
- C lightweight
- D built for strength

Answer: **A**

Standard: *Acquire and use academic and subject-specific words and phrases.*

3 What audience does this advertiser MOST likely intend to reach?

- A shoppers with many groceries
- B athletes and team coaches
- C travelers with bulky luggage
- D students and young professionals

Answer: **D**

Standard: *Demonstrate the ability to present a clear and distinct perspective and a logical line of reasoning.*

4 In a presentation intended to prove that the Ergo Bag really does reduce physical strain, which source would provide the strongest evidence?

- A an illustration of a person struggling with an ordinary bag
- B a video of Ergo Bag users describing their improved comfort
- C a diagram showing the Ergo Bag's diagonal strap design
- D an article explaining the progress made by the field of ergonomics

Answer: **B**

Standard: *Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media and formats. Make strategic use of digital media to enhance presentations.*

Content Domain III: Writing

A LOOK AT CONTENT DOMAIN III



The test questions in this domain will measure your ability to evaluate and revise texts. Your answers to the questions will help show how well you can perform on the following standards:

- Write and support a thesis or controlling idea.
- Develop and strengthen argumentative and informative/explanatory texts as needed by planning, revising, and editing to focus on a specific purpose and audience.
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources and integrate the information into the text.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that supports the information or explanation presented.
- Use the writing process to develop, revise, and evaluate argumentative and informative/explanatory texts.

People write to convey information. Journalists write newspaper articles to inform readers about a particular event. Fiction writers create stories to entertain readers and stimulate their imagination. In Content Domain III, you will develop, revise, and evaluate argumentative and informative/explanatory texts. You will be tested on a variety of passages such as letters, reports, essays, arguments, journals, and newspaper articles.

Writing is a complex process that involves many different elements. When creating arguments, writers use a variety of persuasive writing strategies to defend a claim. When creating informative/explanatory texts, writers explain a topic to convey information and ideas. You must apply what you know about grammar, usage, and style to create an organized writing sample that engages the reader, formulates and develops a thesis or controlling idea, and provides a concluding statement. Using appropriate and precise language and establishing a formal style and tone are also important. You may also use research and knowledge of citations.

Since the *American Literature and Composition EOCT* is a multiple-choice test, you will not have to do any actual writing. Instead, many of the questions in this domain will provide you with samples of writing, and your task will be to distinguish effective writing from faulty writing. Some of the questions will present a single sentence for you to evaluate, while others will present a short passage. The key to answering these questions is to distinguish the good writing traits from the poor writing traits. Overall, you want to make sure the writing in the passage is precise, well organized, and easy to understand.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ *Write and support a thesis or controlling idea.* ★

The primary message of a piece of writing is often called the **thesis** or controlling idea. Sometimes authors state the thesis very clearly while others imply it. Understanding the thesis is crucial to understanding the passage. It is difficult to understand an essay without realizing what the controlling idea of the essay is. You will miss the point of the essay if you did not pick up on the thesis correctly. Authors use supporting ideas, such as relevant details and evidence, to support the thesis or controlling idea.

Tips for Finding the Thesis or Controlling Idea and Subordinate Ideas

The questions for this standard will be based on informational passages. Authors of informational text often use a traditional outline approach: first stating the main idea, then addressing all the supporting ideas, and ending by restating the main idea. See the example outline in the box.

From this outline, it is clear the controlling idea is that writers should consider the different resources available to them. The controlling idea for this paper will most likely be in the thesis sentence of the introductory paragraph. Each paragraph will support the controlling idea of considering different resources by identifying a category of resources (e.g., the Internet) and then giving specific information about it.

The **controlling** idea can often be found in one or more of these places:

- The title
- The thesis statement
- The conclusion

The **subordinate**, or supporting, ideas of a passage can often be found in one or more of these places:

- The topic sentence of each paragraph
- The body paragraphs

In a well-written passage, you'll find evidence to support main and subordinate ideas in the body paragraphs. This evidence might include the following:

- Facts
- Expert opinions
- Quotations
- Statistics
- Expressions of commonly accepted beliefs
- Extended definitions

OUTLINE

Title: Researching for Results

Thesis: There are many different resources you can use when researching a writing topic.

- I. The library contains more than just books
 - a. Magazines
 - b. Reference materials
 - c. AV materials
 - d. Internet access
- II. What's on the Web
 - a. Academic sites
 - b. News sites
 - c. Company sites
 - d. Personal sites
- III. Interview experts
 - a. Scholars in the field
 - b. Professionals

Concluding statement: When researching a writing topic, don't limit yourself when there are so many resources available.

The questions on the EOCT that address the main idea or subordinate ideas in a passage may look like this:

- Which sentence **BEST** fits with the controlling idea of the report?
- Which sentence is the **BEST** thesis for this essay?

Read the sample essay below:

Writing Around People

Each writer has his or her own composing process. Some writers produce formal outlines before they begin writing a story or novel. Other writers do not even know how a story will end until they actually write the conclusion. Similarly, *where* authors choose to write also varies. While the image we have of a writer is frequently that of a solitary, isolated individual, poring over sheets of paper, that is rarely the case. In fact, writing tends to be a social endeavor. Many writers wrote some of their best work with other people nearby.

Mark Twain, for example, wrote the novels *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* while sitting in a small octagonal building with windows on all sides so he could write while his children played in the yard around him. Twain's children have the last name Clemens, because Mark Twain's real name was Samuel Clemens. Ernest Hemingway, too, wrote many of his stories and novels sitting at a table in a busy café in Paris. Kate Chopin wrote on a special "lap desk" that she could carry with her. As her children played and moved from place to place, she could place her things in the small desk, pack it up, and follow them. Wherever her children stopped, she stopped too; while they played, she worked.

1 Which statement is the BEST thesis for this essay?

- A** Some writers do their best work when surrounded by people.
- B** Each writer has his or her own organizational style.
- C** A lap desk freed writer Kate Chopin from the limitations of working indoors at a regular desk.
- D** Mark Twain was unable to write unless he could see his children playing outside.

For this question, understanding the main idea of these paragraphs will lead you to the right answer. Are the paragraphs mostly about Kate Chopin or Mark Twain? They are not, so choices C and D are too specific to act as a good thesis for the passage. This leaves choices A and B. Choice B is certainly part of the passage, but choice **A** is more closely related to all of the content. Choice **A** is the BEST, and correct, answer.

2 Which sentence would be the BEST topic sentence for paragraph 2?

- A “Similarly, *where* authors choose to write also varies.”
- B “Many writers wrote some of their best work with other people nearby.”
- C “Mark Twain, for example, wrote the novels *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court* while sitting in a small octagonal building with windows on all sides so he could write while his children played in the yard around him.”
- D “Wherever her children stopped, she stopped too; while they played, she worked.”

For this question, your goal is to find the sentence in the two paragraphs that can serve as the topic sentence for the second paragraph. That paragraph is a series of examples without a topic sentence. Since well-developed paragraphs group ideas together in an intelligent and logical manner, moving the last sentence of the first paragraph to the start of the second paragraph makes the most sense. Choice **B** is the correct answer.

3 Which sentence does NOT belong in the essay?

- A “Each writer has his or her own composing process.”
- B “Other writers do not even know how a story will end until they actually write the conclusion.”
- C “Twain’s children have the last name Clemens, because Mark Twain’s real name was Samuel Clemens.”
- D “Ernest Hemingway, too, wrote many of his stories and novels sitting at a table in a busy café in Paris.”

For this question, knowing the thesis will help you to identify inappropriate information. The essay is about the writing process. Choices A and B elaborate on the writing process. Choice D gives a specific example of how one writer—Mark Twain—worked. The information about Twain’s pen name and his children’s names is not necessary. The correct answer is choice **C**.

STRATEGY BOX—Choose the BEST Answer

As you take the EOCT, you will often come across answers that are close to the one you had in mind. Keep reading! You need to find the BEST answer, and it may be the last one. You can note which answer choice you think is correct as you read the choices, but don’t mark your final answer until you’ve read through all the choices. There may be more than one answer that looks good, but there is only one correct answer.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ *Develop and strengthen argumentative and informative/explanatory texts as needed by planning, revising, and editing to focus on a specific purpose and audience.* ★

This standard elaborates on the previous standard. You will be asked to choose the best sentences to use to engage an audience, use precise language appropriate to the audience and purpose, organize ideas, or provide evidence in a style and tone that is appropriate for the intended audience and purpose. The passages will be informational, such as reports, articles, arguments, or essays.

STRATEGY BOX—Become a Detective

Take a close look at the passage. What kind of support does the author offer? Does the author use personal examples, descriptive details, endorsements (testimonials), statistics, relevant research, facts, opinions, or hearsay as support? The kind of support tells a lot about how well the author has chosen information and how well he or she can incorporate primary and secondary sources into his or her writing. For example, if the author uses a personal example to make a point about how well a medical procedure works, it is not as effective as providing scientific research to support the claim.

Questions for this standard will focus on your ability to recognize the best revisions to poor writing to improve clarity. You will use techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy, and rhetorical devices such as parallelism and repetition. **Parallelism** is the repetition of similar parts of a sentence or of several sentences to show that the phrases or sentences are of equal importance. In order to be parallel, the phrases or sentences must share the same grammatical structure. Parallelism also provides a certain rhythm to the work. The sentence “I came, I saw, I conquered” would not make quite the same impact if it were rewritten “I came, saw, and conquered.”

Repetition is part of parallelism. Good writers may repeat words or phrases throughout their writing to emphasize a point. Be careful not to overdo this rhetorical strategy. If you repeat the same words and phrases too much, your writing becomes dull, not emphatic.

Analogy is another important rhetorical device. Like a simile, an analogy compares two items. An analogy, however, can be more extensive than a simile. A good writer may use an analogy to help convey difficult ideas by comparing them to things or ideas most people know. For example, an expository piece on maintaining your health might compare your body to a car. Most people know that cars need fuel, just as the body needs food. A car needs to have its oil checked regularly, just as humans need to have their blood pressure checked. This analogy might continue throughout the article.

This standard also tests your ability to revise writing for specific audiences and purposes. Much of the writing you do today is probably academic or school-related. However, you may find yourself called upon to write for other purposes. These include writing thank-you notes, cover letters for business résumés, and arguments. These different activities require using a variety of formats, as well as different levels of formal and informal language.

Try to imagine the intended audience for a particular piece of writing. Is it written for business associates or a group of close friends? Is a teacher going to read it, or does it contain thoughts that the author did not intend to share with anyone? Understanding who the intended audience is will help you understand the purpose of the writing.

Don't Always Believe Everything You Read

Be careful when doing research online. We often accept the accuracy of what we read in books because we know that publishers and the editors who work for them would not stay in business long if they printed books full of factual errors. But people who “publish” material online do not have the same pressure to be accurate. Practically anyone with a computer and Internet access can publish material online. It is important that you consider the source of any material you find on the Internet. When you find a Web resource, try to find out what person or organization is publishing it, and then ask yourself if that person or organization is a respectable, trustworthy source for information on the topic you are researching.

Understanding your audience also helps you use appropriate language. Depending on your situation and the people to whom you are talking, you will choose different words. Let's say you would like an apple. If you are talking to a friend, you might just say, "Hey, give me an apple" or "Let me have that apple, dude." But what if you asked your school's principal? The principal is an important person in your school, so you should use language that is more formal. "Excuse me, Principal Edwards, may I please have an apple?" is a more appropriate way to make this request.

Generally speaking, you will have to choose the most precise and appropriate language. You may have to decide between formal language and informal language depending on the audience and purpose. Typically, formal language is more grammatically precise and contains longer sentences and more elaborate wording. In contrast, informal language is not always grammatically accurate and it may involve slang words and phrases.

The following chart provides some examples of formal and informal language.

Informal	Formal
Howdy, y'all!	Greetings, ladies and gentlemen.
What's up?	How are you?
Let's hit the beach.	We should choose a seaside location for our vacation.
Those are some crazy threads!	Your outfit is very unique.

STRATEGY BOX—Who Is Your Audience?

Using appropriate language often comes down to selecting precise vocabulary and deciding on formal versus informal language. Therefore, consider the situation and audience. If the situation is relaxed and between friends or family, informal language is suitable. If the situation is more official and there are strangers or important people involved, use formal language. The goal is to match the formality of the situation and audience with the formality of the writing.

Good writers adjust their vocabulary, style, and tone to fit their intended audiences. Questions for this standard will ask you to determine the appropriate language and most precise language for a particular audience. Read the excerpt that follows to answer the following question.

This excerpt is from a book report written for a high school English class.

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince is the latest novel in J. K. Rowling’s Harry Potter series. It is the next-to-last installment in a planned seven-book series. Readers have had to wait two years for this book. This new book begins where *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* ends. It pulls together plot lines and story twists from all the previous Harry Potter books. Dark and twisting, this novel rocks.

Which sentence is too informal for the report?

- A “Readers have had to wait two years for this book.”
- B “This new book begins where *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* ends.”
- C “It pulls together plot lines and story twists from all the previous Harry Potter books.”
- D “Dark and twisting, this novel rocks.”

Remember the audience for this report: a high school English teacher. A book report is a formal document requiring formal language. Choice **D** is the correct answer. (You might use this type of informal language when reviewing the book on your blog.)

Organization in writing helps us to convey complex ideas and information more clearly. Writers use transitions to organize information. Also, an entire piece of writing has an organizational structure to it. Writers structure their texts depending on their purpose or audience. For example, if you were writing an argumentative text in which you wanted to show the negative effects of something, you might choose cause and effect as an organizational structure.

Questions about organization may ask you to select a sentence that helps or hurts the organization of a passage.

STRATEGY BOX—The Secrets of Organization

A gifted writer knows that there are many ways to organize information. Different topics require different structures. Some of the more common ways to organize a passage include:

- Chronological order
- Cause and effect
- Compare and contrast
- Asking and answering questions

A writer’s choice of structure depends on the point he or she wants to make. A persuasive essay, for example, may start with “Why should you recycle?” and then be followed by the answer in a series of well-supported paragraphs.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ **Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources and integrate the information into the text.**★

Questions for this standard will test your ability to gather relevant information from both print and digital sources and integrate research on a particular topic into a text. You will use research and technology to formulate research questions, use supporting evidence, and synthesize information from sources. You will also be asked how to add quotations and documented citations into a text using appropriate conventions. You will be asked questions about conventions for citation to avoid plagiarism, following the format and style guidelines of guides such as the *Modern Language Associate Handbook (MLA)*; the *Chicago Manual of Style*; the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)*; and Turabian's *Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*.

The research process refers to many different steps related to finding information. Roughly speaking, it means using appropriate resources (e.g., the library or the World Wide Web) with a question and finding a way to answer it. Since the *American Literature and Composition EOCT* is an English test, the focus is on the kind of research you would do for an English assignment. This research can be broken into the various steps that follow.

Some Steps in the Research Process

1. Deciding on a Topic. When determining a topic for a paper, be sure to keep the scope in the proper range. Most students pick topics that are too broad to cover in the number of pages they have been assigned. For instance, they might decide to write a three-page paper on “American authors of the past hundred years.” This topic is just too broad for a three-page paper (or even a three-volume series). It would be better to pick a single author, like Eudora Welty, for your paper. Three pages are enough for a very brief introduction to Welty’s life and works.

Students can also experience the opposite problem—a topic that is too narrow in scope. For example, it would probably be a stretch to write three pages about Eudora Welty’s favorite animal. The EOCT might ask you to select the best

Read All About It

Here is a list of some common reference materials:

- ✓ Dictionary
- ✓ Thesaurus
- ✓ Atlas
- ✓ Almanac
- ✓ Encyclopedia
- ✓ Library catalog

Here is a list of some less common reference materials:

- ✓ Microfiche
- ✓ Speeches
- ✓ Journals
- ✓ Technical documents

research topic among several choices. You would need to consider which choices are too broad or too narrow and eliminate those.

2. Locating Primary and Secondary Sources. Once you have decided on a topic, you need to locate sources. **Primary sources** are records of events by people who participated in or witnessed the events. For an English paper, an author's work, like Welty's *Delta Wedding*, is a primary source. Personal interviews and newspaper accounts are also primary sources. **Secondary sources** are records of events by people who did not participate. A textbook is a secondary source, as are literary reviews and criticism. The growing popularity of computers and the Internet has changed the way research is conducted. One of the best ways to begin to gather information on a topic is to go to an Internet search engine and type in some key words. You can find primary and secondary sources online. For instance, simply typing in *Eudora Welty* will bring you a number of links to different Web sites.

Using additional key words, however, will help you refine your search. If you are interested in writing about Welty's life, entering the key words *Eudora Welty* and *biography* or *early childhood* should lead you to sites that discuss her life. However, if you are interested in one of her works in particular, you would be better off typing in *Eudora Welty*, *The Optimist's Daughter* (one of her novellas) and then perhaps *review* or *criticism*. Using these key words should give you links to sites where people discuss or review *The Optimist's Daughter*.

The Internet should not be your only research tool. A question on the EOCT may ask you to choose the best source for a given topic. These sources may include books, journals, microfiches, almanacs, documentaries, or CD-ROMs.

3. Paraphrasing Information. Research papers would be a lot easier if you were simply allowed to copy down, word for word, exactly what your source material said. This is **plagiarism**, and it is illegal. Instead, you need to take the information you read and rewrite it in your own words. This process is known as paraphrasing. Questions on this aspect of the research process might ask you to select the correct way to quote material from sources.

What Is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is taking someone else's words or ideas and presenting them as your own. You may only use another person's words (either the exact wording or a paraphrase) if you cite the source (give credit to where you found the information). If you use the exact same wording as the original, you need to put these words in quotation marks.

STRATEGY BOX—Organizing and Recording Information

Recording information on note cards remains one of the most effective ways to keep track of information. Note cards also provide a great way to organize your information. You can shuffle and reshuffle the cards until you get them in an order that will allow you to write an outline.

But using note cards is not the only way to organize information. Depending on what information you need and how you need to use it, you may find other systems of organization more effective. These might include **anecdotal scripting**, a term for recording the events in a literary work. As you read a novel, particularly a long one, you might find yourself forgetting the order in which events occurred. Keeping a list or timeline of events will help you remember what happened. A simple way to do this is to summarize an event and write down the page number(s) on which it occurred. You may want to record dates, if given. If an author uses flashback regularly, you should also develop a method for noting if the event described on page 145 actually occurred before an event on page 35. If you are reading nonfiction, a timeline might be more beneficial. Be sure to include page numbers for the events. An index can help you locate these events, but your own record is better. When you begin writing your research paper on a novel, for example, anecdotal scripting will make it easier for you to locate important events that you want to discuss in your paper.

Another system for organizing and recording information is an **annotated bibliography**. As you compile the list of resources you've consulted, add more information about each book. The annotation should contain the following:

- Brief summary of the work—Your summary should include the thesis and main supporting evidence.
- Evaluation of the author—Does this author have the background to support the work? For example, is a book providing medical information written by a doctor or someone without medical training?
- Intended audience—For whom was this book written? A story about Pocahontas written for elementary school students might not be the best source for your biography of Pocahontas.
- Evaluation of usefulness—How will this book or article help you with your research topic? Is this book a good source for anecdotes or statistics? You should put this kind of information in this last category.

Other systems for organizing information include outlines, mind maps, charts, and graphs. You should try a few methods and see which one works best for you.

Identifying and Analyzing Sources

Questions on the EOCT will ask about appropriate sources for research. You will also need to synthesize information from multiple sources. You may be asked what an appropriate research question is or how to solve a problem with research. **Reference materials** refer to informative, nonfiction resources, like a dictionary or an electronic source such as the Galileo virtual library. For the EOCT, it will be helpful to be familiar with the purpose of these materials and how to use them.

In addition to being knowledgeable about reference materials, it is also helpful to know the parts of a book and the function of each part. This information can help you locate information quickly.

Once you've assembled your sources, you need to determine which source provides you with the type of information you need. One aspect of this standard tests your ability to choose the best written or electronic source to use in researching a topic. A question might look like this:

Which is the BEST source to consult for an overview of American poets of the nineteenth century?

- A** an unabridged dictionary
- B** a textbook of American history
- C** a collection of experimental poetry
- D** an encyclopedia of American literature

The correct choice is **D**. An encyclopedia of American literature will give an overview of literary movements and time periods; it will also list and describe writers of each time period. An unabridged dictionary, choice A, might include some poets in the biographical section, but will not categorize them by century and nationality. A dictionary will give only brief information. The history textbook in choice B might also mention some poets, but the focus will be on history and not on the details of literature. The poetry collection in choice C might contain brief background information, but will include poems from other time periods and will also not go into much detail about individual poets.

You will need to resolve any discrepancies among sources to determine which statistics to use. This will involve checking the accuracy and validity of facts.

You should also carefully analyze the different perspectives and viewpoints you find in your sources. Depending on a writer's perspective, you may find different information. A logger writing about saving his job may not mention the threats that logging poses to some animals. An environmentalist writing about saving the spotted owl may not mention the loggers who will lose their jobs if logging is restricted. For a research paper on logging and the environment, you would need to include both viewpoints.

Documenting Your Sources

When you use information from another source, you need to give credit where credit is due, or **cite** where you found the information (see *What Is Plagiarism* on page 82). Do you create a bibliography or a works cited list? Both look similar, but a works cited list only documents the works you have specifically referenced in your paper. A bibliography contains all the works you consulted during your research. It may include works you did not cite.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ ***Provide a concluding statement or section that supports the information or explanation presented.*** ★

Conclusions are a writer's last chance to make a point or impression on the reader. Conclusions can be used to briefly summarize the main points and give the reader something to consider about the topic.

The questions on the EOCT about conclusions and concluding statements may look like this:

- **Which sentence is the BEST concluding statement for the report?**
- **Which sentence MOST effectively emphasizes the need for regulations in school lunch programs?**



Spotlight on the Standards

★ Use the writing process to develop, revise, and evaluate argumentative and informative/ explanatory texts.★

Great works of literature do not flow effortlessly from the pens (or keyboards) of their authors. Most stories, essays, poems, and articles require hard work and revision before they can be considered excellent, or even very good. Even professional writers and famous authors struggle with their words. Drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading your writing are all elements of the writing process. Performing these tasks well is an important part of being a good writer, which is why this standard is tested on the EOCT.

The questions for this standard will focus on your ability to recognize the best revisions to poor writing to make the writing clear. You will be asked to consider the best way to rewrite awkwardly worded sentences, misplaced modifiers, and other errors in sentence structure.

Steps in the Writing Process

- Step 1. Prewriting:** Gathering ideas, organizing your thoughts
- Step 2. Drafting:** Creating a rough version of the paper, often more than one
- Step 3. Revising and Editing:** Looking at your draft with a critical eye and making improvements
- Step 4. Proofreading:** Polishing your paper to make sure it is free of errors
- Step 5. Publishing:** Sharing your finished paper with others

Questions for this standard will be based on a passage. For this example, only the first sentence of the passage is included.

“Arriving late at the movie someone else was in our seats.”

Which, if any, would be the BEST way to revise this sentence?

- A At the movie, we found someone else was in our seats arriving late.
- B We found someone else was in our seats arriving late at the movie.
- C Arriving late at the movie, we found someone else was in our seats.
- D Someone else was in our seats, after arriving late at the movie.

The correct choice is **C** because it rewrites the sentence most clearly.

STRATEGY BOX—Trust Yourself

If you can't determine the exact problem with a sentence, don't be afraid to trust your ear and make an educated guess. You can often “hear” a problem even if you can't explain exactly what is wrong with the sentence.

Study Ideas for Content Domain III

To do well on the questions for the writing domain, you must be able to recognize good writing and understand the importance of audience and purpose. As you look at passages for the other content domains, consider how the writers' word choice and sentence structure give clues to their audience and purpose. Basically, to practice for the writing questions on this domain, you should analyze the writing you see around you.

You should also go to the library and practice researching a topic. It does not have to be a topic for class. It should be a topic in which you are interested and would like to learn more about. Do not limit yourself to the encyclopedias. You want to get experience using a variety of research resources.

You may also want to find a variety of reference materials (e.g., almanac, dictionary, thesaurus, or atlas). Review them and compare their contents. How could each be helpful to someone doing research?

If you have questions about resource materials or the research process, ask your English teacher or a media specialist to help you.

Take a Tour

One of the best ways to become a better researcher and better student is to take a guided tour of your library. Ask about a tour at the main desk. Even if you plan to do all your research at the school library, you can usually arrange for a librarian to show you around. You will learn a lot of valuable information that will save you hours of frustration later—like how to use the library's catalog system, where to find microfilm materials and how to use them, where to find reference books, where to find magazines, and more.

Sample Questions for Content Domain III

This section has some sample questions for you to answer. After you have answered each question, the correct answer will be provided as well as an explanation as to why the other answer choices are incorrect.

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

A Review of *Our Town*

Written by American playwright Thornton Wilder, *Our Town* tells the story of Emily Gibbs, a young woman living in the town of Grover's Corners. Since it was first produced in 1938, *Our Town* has been inspiring audiences across the country and around the world. Wilder received his second Pulitzer Prize for this drama. The play is notable for its innovative staging. While many plays feature extensive stage props and scenery, *Our Town* features little more than chairs for the actors to sit on. Even when Emily and her friends sip sodas at a local store, the actors pretend to hold beverages. Wilder wanted to place the focus directly on the characters themselves, rather than on irrelevant elements. *Our Town*, written as events in Europe were building toward World War II, was Wilder's attempt to draw Americans' focus to the small things in life that make it worthwhile.

1 What is the main purpose of the passage?

- A to describe the life of Thornton Wilder
- B to promote a local production of *Our Town*
- C to provide a brief overview of *Our Town*
- D to offer a traveler's guide to Grover's Corners

Answer: C

Standard: *Develop and strengthen informational writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing to focus on a specific purpose and audience.*

In order to determine purpose, you need to look at what kind of information the passage contains. While the passage contains some information relevant to choice A, it is not a biography of Wilder. This information could be used to promote a production of the play, but choice B is incorrect because the passage contains no details on when or where the play will be staged. Choice D is incorrect because Grover's Corners is a fictional place. Choice C, therefore, is the correct answer. The purpose of the passage is to provide an overview of the play.

2 Which sentence, if included, would disrupt the formal tone of the passage?

- A “Thornton Wilder won lots of prizes for other things he wrote.”
- B “The staging of the play shocked the first people to see it.”
- C “The early reviews of *Our Town* were quite enthusiastic.”
- D “Over the years, *Our Town* has become increasingly popular.”

Answer: **A**

Standard: *Develop and strengthen informational writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing to focus on a specific purpose and audience.*

The question asks you to consider the context of the passage, which includes the purpose and the audience as well as the content. When you read the answer choices to this question, one clearly uses more informal language—choice **A**. The phrases “lots of prizes” and “other things he wrote” are too informal for something that will be read by the general public. Each of the other choices would be appropriate in content and style if added to the passage.

3 Which is the BEST way to write the first sentence?

- A “Written by American playwright Thornton Wilder, *Our Town* is telling the story of Emily Gibbs, a young woman living in the town of Grover’s Corners.”
- B “*Our Town*, written by American playwright Thornton Wilder, the story of Emily Gibbs, a young woman living in the town of Grover’s Corners.”
- C “The story of Emily Gibbs, telling about a young woman living in the town of Grover’s Corners, written by American playwright Thornton Wilder, and is called *Our Town*.”
- D Leave as is.

Answer: **D**

Standard: *Use the writing process to develop, revise, and evaluate argumentative and informative/explanatory texts.*

When you are asked to choose the best way to write a sentence, you must read every answer choice as well as the original sentence in the passage. In this case, the original sentence was correct, so the correct answer is choice **D**, “Leave as is.” Choices **A** and **C** are written unclearly, and choice **B** is a fragment and grammatically incorrect.

Content Domain IV: Language

A LOOK AT CONTENT DOMAIN IV



Test questions in this domain will measure your ability to apply the conventions of Standard American English. Your answers to these questions will help show how well you can perform on the following standards:

- Demonstrate command of Standard American English grammar and usage, consulting references as needed.
- Demonstrate command of Standard American English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Content Domain IV focuses on your ability to apply the conventions of Standard American English correctly. Questions for this content domain will ask you to revise texts for precise word choice and correct grammar and usage. You may also be asked to identify and correct errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ Demonstrate command of Standard American English grammar and usage, consulting references as needed.★

To test your knowledge of Standard American English, you will be asked to identify and correct the grammatical errors in a passage.

The following list identifies some of the topics you can expect to see on the EOCT.

- ensuring subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement
- recognizing and correcting inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person
- recognizing and correcting vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents)
- recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons
- correctly using frequently confused words (e.g. *accept/except; there/their*)


- recognizing and correcting inappropriate shifts in verb tense
- recognizing and correcting inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood
- placing phrases and clauses within a sentence and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers
- using parallel structure
- using phrases and clauses to convey meaning and add variety and interest to writing or presentations
- resolving issues of complex or contested usage by consulting references as needed

If any of these terms are unfamiliar to you, please talk to your teacher or research them in a grammar handbook. Each of these topics has a number of subtopics and rules associated with it, so it is important that you use resource materials that will give you this information.

You may be asked questions about complex or contested usage. For some questions, you will need to consult references such as *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of English Usage*, *Garner's Modern American English*, and online references.

Some questions, like the one that follows, will ask you to apply what you learn by reading a sample entry from a dictionary, thesaurus, or grammar guide.

Read this online dictionary entry to answer the question.

im.pute  *verb* \im-'pyüt\

im.put.ed **im.put.ing**

transitive verb

1 : to lay the responsibility or blame for falsely or unjustly

2 : to credit to a person or a cause

Based on the online dictionary, which sentence uses the word *impute* correctly?

- A** Carlos felt the internship interview went well; he imputed his correct answers to studying with his journalist uncle.
- B** James imputed the fact with evidence from his research; he convinced his classmates of his point of view.
- C** The teacher imputed the students when she handed out the assignment before spring break.
- D** My sister was nervous before acting in her first play; she imputed her lines from memory.

Answer: **A**

Standard: *Demonstrate command of Standard American English grammar and usage, consulting references as needed.*

Choices B, C, and D use *impute* incorrectly. Choice **A** is the correct answer because “impute” means to attribute or explain something being the result of something else.



Spotlight on the Standards

★ ***Demonstrate command of Standard American English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.*** ★

Questions for this standard will again test your knowledge of Standard American English. You will be asked questions about the following conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling:

- spelling correctly, follows the rules of Standard American English
- using correct punctuation (end punctuation, commas, semicolons, quotation marks, colons, ellipses, or apostrophes)
- observing hyphenation conventions
- following correct conventions of capitalization

Capital letters signal something special about a word. They mean that the word is a formal title. Capitals are used when referring to the name of a person or place, a holiday, a nation or nationality, a formal event, or a book or title. Sentences and direct quotations begin with capitals.

Spelling is a skill you can help yourself with. No matter how many words you misspell, you are probably only violating a small number of rules. Keep a list of the words you miss, and look for patterns. Are you having problems with suffixes, or figuring out when to use *ei* or *ie*, or when to use double consonants? Set one goal at a time, and things will work out.

Punctuation tells the reader how to group the information in a sentence. Commas group words into thoughts. Semicolons and end punctuation become complete thoughts. Quotation marks add a precision and source to thoughts. **Hyphens** are punctuation marks used to join words or word parts to create a new word that has a single meaning. Hyphens are also used to divide a word at the end of a line. Hyphenation conventions include:

Conventions	Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a compound adjective preceding a noun 	fine-dining restaurant; record-keeping journal; twenty-year drought
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prefix joined to a proper noun or proper adjective 	mid-September; un-American; pre-Victorian
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> after certain prefixes (i.e. <i>all-</i>, <i>ex-</i>, <i>self-</i>) when joined with a noun or adjective 	all-conference; ex-teacher; self-reliant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to avoid confusion between words that begin with a prefix and look like another word 	re-side the house <i>vs.</i> reside in the house re-sign the check <i>vs.</i> resign from a job
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> before prefixes and after suffixes to avoid doubling a vowel or tripling a consonant 	anti-inflation; bell-like
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> double numbers 	thirty-five; ninety-nine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to divide a word at the end of a line between syllables 	heri-tage; charac-terize

Questions in this standard will look something like this:

What is the correct way to write the first sentence of paragraph 2?

- A** Teresa studied for an hour outlining her paper; and then she took the afternoon off from work.
- B** Teresa studied for an hour outlining her paper: and then she took the afternoon off from work.
- C** Teresa studied for an hour outlining her paper and then she took the afternoon off from work.
- D** Teresa studied for an hour outlining her paper, and then she took the afternoon off from work.

For this question, think about where you want a brief pause in the sentence. Choice **A** is incorrect because the word “and” is not needed after a semicolon. Choice **B** is incorrect because colons are often used before a list, definition, or quotation. Choice **C** is incorrect because there needs to be a pause in between two independent clauses. Choice **D** is the correct answer.

Which is the correct use of a hyphen in the second sentence of paragraph 3?

- A** As opposed to many other meal-options, a vegetable pizza on a whole wheat crust is a reasonable choice for anyone committed to good nutrition.
- B** As opposed to many other meal options, a vegetable-pizza on a whole wheat crust is a reasonable choice for anyone committed to good nutrition.
- C** As opposed to many other meal options, a vegetable pizza on a whole-wheat crust is a reasonable choice for anyone committed to good nutrition.
- D** As opposed to many other meal options, a vegetable pizza on a whole wheat crust is a reasonable-choice for anyone committed to good nutrition.

For this question, think about the hyphen conventions. Choice **C** is the correct answer because *whole-wheat* is a compound adjective describing *crust*.

Study Ideas for Content Domain IV

To study for this domain, you may want to concentrate on the kinds of errors you typically make in your own writing. (Your teacher may be able to help you with this.) If you know what these errors are, look them up in your grammar book and study the samples. Or, you may want to work through a grammar workbook that will allow you to practice in the areas that need improvement. If you are not sure of your weak areas, you may want to take a look at common errors in capitalization, spelling, and punctuation—especially hyphens. If any topics are not clear to you, work through some practice items in a grammar workbook for those topics.

Sample Questions for Content Domain IV

This section has some sample questions for you to answer. After you have answered each question, the correct answer will be provided as well as an explanation as to why the other answer choices are incorrect.

1 Read this sentence from the passage.

Moreover, Wheatley studied History, geography, Latin, and many other difficult subjects.

Which word in the sentence contains an error in capitalization?

- A Wheatley
- B History
- C geography
- D Latin

Answer: **B**

Standard: *Demonstrate command of Standard American English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.*

Proper nouns, as in Choices A and D, are capitalized. *Geography* and *history* are not proper nouns. Choice C is not capitalized. Choice **B** has incorrect capitalization, so it is the correct answer.

2 Read this sentence and answer the question that follows.

According to Beth, tickets to the poetry reading have gone on sale therefore, you can buy them anywhere.

How should the sentence be correctly punctuated?

- A** change the comma after Beth to a semicolon
- B** add a comma after reading
- C** add a semicolon after sale
- D** add a colon after them

Answer: **C**

Standard: *Demonstrate command of Standard American English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.*

Choices A, B, and D show common errors in punctuation. Choice **C** is the correct answer because the semi-colon joins two complete sentences.

Appendix A

EOCT Sample Overall Study Plan Sheet

Here is a sample of what an OVERALL study plan might look like. You can use the Blank Overall Study Sheet in Appendix B or create your own.

Materials/Resources I May Need When I Study:

(You can look back at page 6 for ideas.)

1. *This study guide*
2. *Pens*
3. *Highlighter*
4. *Notebook*
5. *Dictionary*
6. *English textbook*

Possible Study Locations:

- First Choice: *The library*
- Second Choice: *My room*
- Third Choice: *My mom's office*

Overall Study Goals:

1. *Read and work through the entire study guide.*
2. *Answer the sample questions and study the answers.*
3. *Do additional reading in an English textbook.*

Number of Weeks I Will Study: *6 weeks*

Number of Days a Week I Will Study: *5 days a week*

Best Study Times for Me:

- Weekdays: *7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.*
- Saturday: *9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.*
- Sunday: *2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.*

Appendix B

Blank Overall Study Plan Sheet

Materials/Resources I May Need When I Study:
(You can look back at page 6 for ideas.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Possible Study Locations:

- First Choice: _____
- Second Choice: _____
- Third Choice: _____

Overall Study Goals:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Number of Weeks I Will Study: _____

Number of Days a Week I Will Study: _____

Best Study Times for Me: _____

- Weekdays: _____
- Saturday: _____
- Sunday: _____

Appendix C

EOCT Sample Daily Study Plan Sheet

Here is a sample of what a DAILY study plan might look like. You can use the Blank Daily Study Plan Sheet in Appendix D or create your own.

Materials I May Need Today:

1. *Study Guide*
2. *Pen*
3. *Notebook*

Today's Study Location: *The desk in my room*

Study Time Today: *From 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. with a short break at 7:30 p.m.*

(Be sure to consider how long you can actively study in one sitting. Can you sit for 20 minutes? 30 minutes? An hour? If you say you will study for three hours, but get restless after 40 minutes, anything beyond 40 minutes may not be productive—you will most likely fidget and daydream your time away. “Doing time” at your desk doesn’t count for real studying.)

If I start to get tired or lose focus today, I will *do some sit-ups.*

Today's Study Goals and Accomplishments: (Be specific. Include things like number of pages, sections, or standards. The more specific you are, the better able you will be to tell if you reached your goals. Keep it REALISTIC. You will retain more if you study small “chunks” or blocks of material at a time.)

<i>Study Task</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>Needs more work</i>	<i>Needs more information</i>
<i>1. Review what I learned last time</i>	X		
<i>2. Study the first standard in Content Domain I</i>	X		
<i>3. Study the second standard in Content Domain I</i>		X	

What I learned today:

1. *The different structures of fiction writing*
2. *How to distinguish between fact and opinion*
3. *The definition of common modes of rhetoric*

Today's reward for meeting my study goals: *Eating some popcorn*

Appendix D

Blank Daily Study Plan Sheet

Materials I May Need Today:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Today's Study Location: _____

Study Time Today: _____

(Be sure to consider how long you can actively study in one sitting. Can you sit for 20 minutes? 30 minutes? An hour? If you say you will study for three hours, but get restless after 40 minutes, anything beyond 40 minutes may not be productive—you will most likely fidget and daydream your time away. “Doing time” at your desk doesn’t count for real studying.)

If I start to get tired or lose focus today, I will _____

Today's Study Goals and Accomplishments: (Be specific. Include things like number of pages, sections, or standards. The more specific you are, the better able you will be to tell if you reached your goals. Keep it REALISTIC. You will retain more if you study small “chunks” or blocks of material at a time.)

<i>Study Task</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>Needs more work</i>	<i>Needs more information</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

What I learned today:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Today's reward for meeting my study goals: _____