



# Georgia End-Of-Course Tests

## Content Descriptions

Based on the Georgia Performance Standards

### American Literature and Composition



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**End-of-Course Tests (EOCT)**  
**Content Descriptions**  
**American Literature and Composition**

The State Board of Education is required by Georgia law (A+ Educational Reform Act of 2000, O.C.G.A. §20-2-281) to adopt End-of-Course Tests (EOCT) designed to measure student achievement in core subjects in grades nine through twelve. With educator input and State Board of Education approval, eight content areas were designated to be tested in 2001. The English/language arts Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) were adopted by the State Board of Education in July 2004. Georgia educators then began the work of developing the American Literature and Composition EOCT based on the GPS.

**Program Purpose**

The EOCT are designed to improve student achievement by assessing student performance on the curriculum standards specific to each course tested. The results of the EOCT will be used to help make instruction more effective and to ensure that all Georgia students have access to a rigorous curriculum that meets high academic standards. Student performance on the EOCT is provided for diagnostic and remedial use. The results will also be used for student accountability and for gauging the quality of education in the state. The EOCT is the final exam for an EOCT course. The student's final grade in the course will be calculated using the course grade as 85% and the EOCT score as 15% of the final grade. The student must have a final course grade of 70 or above to pass the course and to earn credit toward graduation.

**EOCT Content Descriptions**

The EOCT Content Descriptions are provided to acquaint Georgia educators with the content coverage of the EOCT. Only the knowledge, concepts, and skills ~~skills~~ addressed in the GPS will be assessed on the EOCT. Committees of Georgia educators reviewed the curriculum and provided guidance for the assessment program.

It is important to note that some curricular standards are better suited for classroom or individual assessment rather than large-scale, paper-pencil assessment. While those curricular standards designed for classroom/individual assessment are not included in the Content Descriptions, the knowledge, concepts, and skills outlined are often required for the mastery of the standards that are assessed. Therefore, the EOCT Content Descriptions are in *no way* intended to substitute for the GPS; they are provided to help educators better understand how the curriculum will be assessed. Further, the EOCT Content Descriptions, *by no means*, suggest *when* concepts and skills should be introduced in the instructional sequence; rather, its purpose is to communicate when concepts and skills will be assessed on the EOCT. Georgia law requires educators to teach the standards set forth in the state-adopted curriculum (i.e., the GPS). The GPS is located at <http://www.georgiastandards.org>.

## **American Literature and Composition Domains**

In order to provide reliable measures of student achievement, as well as to give structure to the assessment program, the content standards contained in the GPS were grouped into content domains. Each domain was created by combining standards that share similar content characteristics. Four domains were identified for American Literature and Composition:

- **Reading and American Literature**  
*Assessment in this domain focuses on reading for general understanding, identifying various genres, determining themes, distinguishing and/or sequencing main and subordinate ideas, and recognizing and analyzing literary and structural elements of American literature.*
- **Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Viewing Across the Curriculum**  
*Assessment in this domain focuses on using strategies that enhance understanding across subject areas, acquiring both content and contextual vocabulary while reading, listening, speaking and viewing material, applying proper techniques for research, and responding appropriately to written and oral communication in a variety of genres and media.*
- **Writing**  
*Assessment in this domain focuses on recognizing coherent and focused texts that convey a well-defined perspective or tightly-reasoned argument and demonstrating awareness of audience, purpose in writing, the stages of the writing process (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing successive versions), and the effective use of introductions, supporting evidence, and conclusions.*
- **Conventions**  
*Assessment in this domain focuses on using the correct conventions of Standard American English, including grammar, punctuation, and sentence construction, and demonstrating understanding of the different formats required for different forms of writing.*

**English/Language Arts**  
**American Literature and Composition**  
**Domain: Reading and American Literature**

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**Overview of the Domain**

- Students recognize, comprehend, and summarize the important ideas and viewpoints in a written work.
- Students analyze various elements in American fiction, using evidence from a text as a basis for interpretation.
- Students analyze and apply knowledge of non-fictional literature, such as letters, journals, diaries, speeches, and essays.
- Students analyze and respond to the subject matter and style devices of various forms of poetry.
- Students classify poetry into specific genres (e.g., fixed and free form, lyric, ballad, sonnet, narrative poem, blank verse), based on evidence in a poem.
- Students recognize, apply knowledge, and evaluate the effects of structures and elements of dramatic literature.
- Students acquire new vocabulary by defining unfamiliar words in a text using appropriate structural analysis skills including prefixes, suffixes, root words, and resource materials.
- Students demonstrate an understanding of significant themes in American literature.
- Students relate various texts to historical and literary contexts.

**Associated GPS**

ELAALRL1    ELAALRL2    ELAALRL3    ELAALRL4    ELAALRL5

**Associated GPS Concepts and Skills**

Assessment of this domain will focus on the following:

- recognizing literary and structural elements of fictional literature
  - determining the plot or conflict of a fictional passage
  - recognizing patterns of imagery or symbolism and how these patterns can be used to enhance the meaning or theme of the passage
  - recognizing and analyzing literary elements in American fiction, such as style, point of view, irony, structures (e.g., chronological, *in medias res*, flashback, frame narrative, epistolary novel), and theme
  - analyzing how the elements of fiction are used by authors for rhetorical and aesthetic purposes, providing examples from the text
  - differentiating traits of characters and their interaction with the plot
  - recognizing characteristics of setting, including analyzing how setting affects the plot, characterization, or mood
  - recognizing the mood or tone of a passage and how the author has established it
  - determining knowledge of the history of American fiction

- determining, analyzing, and applying knowledge of non-fictional works of American literature, including letters, journals, diaries, speeches, and essays
  - determining the effects of language, style, syntax, and rhetorical strategies
  - recognizing and analyzing the characteristics of nonfiction, including structure, purpose, use of evidence and support, and point of view
  - using literal and inferential comprehension skills to evaluate the selection of details in non-fictional works of American literature
- analyzing and responding to poetry from various periods of American literature
  - recognizing and analyzing the effects of poetic elements using evidence from a poem; elements may include:
    - diction
    - tone
    - mood
    - syntax
    - sound
      - alliteration
      - end rhyme
      - slant rhyme
      - internal rhyme
      - consonance
      - assonance
    - form
      - fixed and free
      - lyric
      - ballad
      - sonnet
      - narrative poem
      - blank verse
  - relating the effects of diction and imagery (e.g., controlling images, figurative language, extended metaphor, understatement, hyperbole, irony, paradox, and tone) to the theme or underlying meaning of a poem
  - demonstrating knowledge of the historical development of American poetry
- demonstrating knowledge of the elements of dramatic literature, including:
  - classifying various types of dramatic literature (e.g., political drama, modern drama, theatre of the absurd)
  - evaluating the effects of various dramatic conventions on a particular excerpt, including stage directions, fourth wall, expressionism, minimalism, and dramatic irony
  - analyzing the interactions between the characters of a drama
  - determining the theme of a play or drama based on evidence in the text
- acquiring new vocabulary, such as:
  - determining the correct meaning of a given word or phrase in a text

- understanding the meanings of idioms, cognates, and examples of figurative language
- using knowledge of other literary works often alluded to in American literature to understand the meaning of new words
- recognizing and analyzing significant ideas and themes, such as:
  - understanding the plot or main idea of a passage
  - recognizing cause and effect relationships
  - analyzing how the author’s language and style influence the theme
  - comparing and contrasting texts that express universal themes characteristic of American literature from various time periods and genres (e.g., American individualism, the American dream, cultural diversity, tolerance)
  - recognizing the existence of a universal theme within multiple texts
  - evaluating the author’s choice of a genre in relation to a universal theme
  - determining important ideas and viewpoints for a text based on evidence in the passage
  - recognizing the contributions of a specific bibliographic source to the text
- defining unfamiliar words by using appropriate structural analysis skills including prefixes, suffixes, root words, and resource materials, including:
  - prefixes that may be tested include, but are not limited to, the following: *anti, bi, dis, mis, non, pre, re, semi, sub, and un.*
  - suffixes that may be tested include, but are not limited to, the following: *able, dom, en, ful, hood, ish, less, ly, ment, ness, and ous.*
  - roots that may be tested include, but are not limited to, the following: *biblio, logy, magni, micro, ped, and phon.*
  - understanding the correct meaning of a given Latin or Greek word, root, or affix
  - selecting the affix that will create a given meaning when given a word
  - determining how the affix in a given word affects its meaning
  - inferring the meaning of a root word based on one or more words containing the same root
  - using excerpts from dictionaries, thesauruses, or related references to understand vocabulary
- relating literary works to other historical or literary contexts, such as:
  - comparing and contrasting a literary text to other texts of a specific literary period, including:
    - Romanticism/Transcendentalism
    - Realism
    - Naturalism
    - Modernism (including Harlem Renaissance)
    - Postmodernism
  - comparing and contrasting texts of similar and different historical settings, including:
    - Native American literature
    - Colonial/Revolutionary/National literature

**English/Language Arts**  
**American Literature and Composition**  
**Domain: Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Viewing Across the Curriculum**

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**Overview of the Domain**

- Students read poems, short stories, essays, novels, speeches, book reviews, television and radio transcripts, magazines, newspapers, advertisements, web pages, charts, graphs, and technical documents for pleasure, analysis, and self-improvement.
- Students read critically, ask pertinent questions, recognize assumptions and implications, and evaluate ideas.
- Students learn that words gather meaning from their context and carry connotation and denotation.
- Students acquire new vocabulary for different subject areas.
- Students develop strategies for finding content and contextual meaning for unfamiliar words or concepts.
- Students analyze how certain vocabulary words can contain different meanings across subject areas.
- Students evaluate the messages and effects of mass media, including presentation, style, content, diction, tone, voice, and aesthetic devices.
- Students gain insight into life experiences from the study of literature.
- Students recognize and analyze methods of argument used by a speaker or writer.

**Associated GPS**

ELAALRC3

ELAALRC4

ELA11LSV2

**Associated GPS Concepts and Skills**

Assessment of this domain will focus on the following:

- reading for general understanding; literary, functional, or informational passages may be used, including:
  - poems
  - short stories
  - essays
  - novels
  - magazines
  - newspapers
  - charts
  - advertisements
  - web pages
  - speeches
  - book reviews
  - television and radio transcripts
  - graphs
  - technical documents
- reading critically, including:
  - drawing inferences from the text using support
  - determining assumptions made by the author when elaborating an argument
  - recognizing implications and effects of the author’s argument that may or may not be explicitly stated in the text

- determining the meaning of new vocabulary words by using context, including:
  - understanding the correct meaning of a given word or phrase in a text
  - determining the implied comparison in a metaphor
  - distinguishing the meaning of the metaphor in the context of the passage
  - determining the correct definition of a multi-meaning word, based on context
  - recognizing the perspective of the author by examining specific words or phrases from a text
  - selecting and/or using strategies for finding the meaning of unfamiliar words or concepts
- evaluating the messages and effects of mass media, such as:
  - recognizing the methods used by mass media to inform, persuade, and entertain, including advertisements, the use of visual representations, special effects, and language
  - assessing the effectiveness of a presentation, commercial, advertisement, speech, report, web page, news report, or other type of media presentation in communicating a specific message
  - recognizing the purpose and intended audience of a particular media presentation
  - determining and evaluating the aesthetic effects of a media presentation, including layout, lighting, color, background, etc.
  - selecting the best ways to prepare, improve, or assess a presentation
  - recognizing an author’s purpose for writing the entire passage, for a particular section of the passage (e.g., the introduction), or for the use of a given word, phrase, or sentence
- exploring life experiences from the study of literature, such as:
  - recognizing universal life experiences occurring within a literary text
  - inferring the way in which one or more characters’ actions are influenced by the author’s life experiences
  - determining how an author’s life experiences contribute to the creation of a literary work

**English/Language Arts**  
**American Literature and Composition**  
**Domain: Writing**

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**Overview of the Domain**

- Students use the writing process to develop paragraphs with clear, controlling ideas, a coherent thesis, and a consistent tone and focus.
- Students use language and structure appropriate to the situation and audience.
- Students participate in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing, focusing on expository writing.
- Students use the writing process for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, applications) writing.
- Students recognize and analyze narrative, persuasive, and expository modes of writing, with an emphasis on expository writing.
- Students apply writing techniques to a variety of genres including, but not limited to, technical (process, explanation), business (letters of order, resumes, memorandums, requests, applications, complaints), personal (journals, diaries, stories), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), and academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), while following appropriate style conventions for the type of writing used.
- Students use knowledge of research techniques to support writing.
- Students follow appropriate conventions and style guidelines for the bibliographies of texts according to the *Modern Language Association Handbook (MLA)*.

**Associated GPS**

ELA11W1

ELA11W2

ELA11W3

ELA11W4

**Associated GPS Concepts and Skills**

Assessment of this domain will focus on the following:

- developing writing paragraphs with clear, controlling ideas, including:
  - determining the best topic sentence in a paragraph
  - recognizing extraneous or off-topic sentences
  - determining the proper structure to use for conveying information, including: chronological order, cause and effect, similarity and difference, and posing and answering a question
  - distinguishing the best supporting sentences, facts, examples, or descriptions to use in a paragraph
  - recognizing the best transitions to use between given sentences of a paragraph
  - using the most precise language, action verbs, sensory details, and appropriate modifiers in relation to the purpose, audience, and structural formats of a passage

- using language appropriate to situation and audience, including:
  - distinguishing slang or colloquial language as inappropriate for formal writing (e.g., classroom writing assignments) and stilted phraseology or awkward syntax as inappropriate for everyday writing (e.g., thank-you letters)
- using the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing, including:
  - determining the best revision of a phrase or sentence in a given sentence or short passage for clarity of expression (e.g., awkwardly worded sentences, misplaced modifiers, lack of parallel structure), not for the conventions of standard written English, which will be covered in the following domain
  - applying rhetorical devices, including the use of parallelism, repetition, and analogy
  - choosing the sentence that best uses language, point of view, characterization, and style for specific rhetorical and aesthetic purposes
  - using an appropriate introductory sentence that engages the interest of the reader
  - choosing the best sentence to effectively conclude a passage
  - using appropriate vocabulary, tone, and style necessary for an intended audience
  - determining that a given stimulus material does not require revision
- applying techniques of writing for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business (letters, memos, applications) writing, with an emphasis on expository writing
  - revising writing to improve the logic and coherence, sharpen the precision of word choice, and achieve the desired tone and formality in relation to the intended audience
- analyzing narrative, persuasive, and expository modes of writing; expository writing will be the main focus
  - recognizing the mode of writing in a given passage, single sentence, or other appropriate information
- using the writing process in a variety of genres including, but not limited to, technical (process, explanation), business (letters of order, request, application, complaint), personal (journal, diaries, stories), social (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), and academic (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques); in grade 11, the emphasis is on expository writing
  - recognizing the purpose of a given passage
  - determining which purpose of writing best addresses the issues of a given situation
- applying research techniques to support and improve writing, including:
  - selecting research questions that are appropriate for a particular scope or task
  - choosing the most effective venues (e.g., library, electronic media, personal interview, survey) to use for researching a specific topic
  - determining the best supporting evidence or information from a secondary source to further develop the main idea of a passage

- using systematic strategies to organize and record information, including anecdotal scripting and annotated bibliographies
- comparing the types of information found in different sources (e.g., almanacs, microfiche, news sources, in-depth field studies, speeches, journals, or technical documents)
- demonstrating the proper way to integrate quotations and citations from secondary sources into a passage while maintaining the focus and flow of ideas
- demonstrating a knowledge of conventions and style guidelines used in documenting information from secondary sources, including:
  - determining the proper guidelines for documentation when compiling bibliographies and works-cited lists, according to the *Modern Language Association Handbook*
  - selecting the correct way to list items in a bibliographic list (e.g., authors' last names listed first, authors arranged in alphabetical order, titles of magazine articles placed within quotation marks, titles of books in italics or underlined)

**English/Language Arts**  
**American Literature and Composition**  
**Domain: Conventions**

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**Overview of the Domain**

- Students use the writing process to develop Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, sentence and paragraph structure, phrases (e.g., gerund, infinitive, participial), mechanics of punctuation (e.g., end stops, commas, semicolons, quotation marks), clauses (e.g., main and subordinate), possessives, plural forms, and word choice.
- Students use precise punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and other elements of manuscript form.

**Associated GPS**

ELA11C1            ELA11C2

**Associated GPS Concepts and Skills**

Assessment of this domain will focus on the following:

- using the writing process to develop Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, sentence and paragraph structure, phrases, mechanics of punctuation, clauses, possessives, plural forms, and word choice, including, but not limited to:
  - subject-verb agreement
    - with compound subject
    - with intervening phrases
    - inverted subject and verb
    - verbs
    - tense consistency
    - formation of perfect tense
    - irregular verbs
  - sentence and paragraph structure
    - subordination
    - proper placements of modifiers
    - appropriate paragraphing and separation
  - phrases
    - gerund
    - infinitive
    - participial
  - punctuation
    - end punctuation
    - commas
      - comma in a series (with 4 items – optional comma before conjunction not tested)
      - commas to separate city and state
      - commas in dates

- commas after dependent clauses at the beginning of sentences
- commas with appositions
- commas in compound sentences joined with a conjunction
- commas with direct address
- commas with salutations and closings of letters
- semicolon
  - semicolon between two independent clauses
- quotation marks
  - quotation marks with direct quotations
  - quotation marks with titles of short stories, etc.
- colons
  - colons with greeting in business letters
  - colons before a list
- ellipses
- hyphens
- apostrophe
  - apostrophes with singular and plural possessions (excluding singular nouns ending in –s)
- plural forms
  - irregular plurals
  - constant singular plurals
- word choice
  - replace generic words (e.g., neat; things) with more specific, meaningful words (i.e., specific language)
  - homonyms
  - misused words (e.g., it’s/its; should of/should have)
  - double negatives (e.g., couldn’t hardly see; aren’t no more)
  - double comparisons (e.g., most ugliest)
  - pronouns (especially with nominative and objective cases)
  - commonly confused words (e.g., bring/take, good/well, himself/hissself, rise/raise, their/there/they’re, it’s/its)
- locating the incorrect word or phrase in a sentence or short passage
- selecting the most appropriate word or phrase for a given sentence
- recognizing the correctly punctuated word or sentence given a sentence or set of sentences
- using precise punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and other elements of manuscript form, including paragraph indentation, page numbering, spacing, margins, title pages, and the integration of source material with proper citations (e.g., paraphrasing, summarizing, quoting, using in-text citations, etc.)
  - punctuation

- capitalization
  - proper adjectives
  - proper nouns
  - names of high school courses
  - seasons of the year
- spelling
  - doubling consonant in –ing form (e.g., stoping-*stopping*)
  - commonly misspelled words (will include rules-based spelling)
- including a formal works-cited list or bibliography, using the appropriate format according to the guidelines in the Modern Language Association Handbook