Content Descriptions

Based on the state-mandated content standards

Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
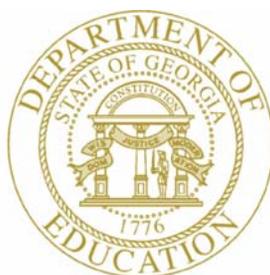
Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
"Making Education Work for All Georgians"

Introduction

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 in 2001 to be tested. The current state-mandated content standards in English language arts were adopted by the State Board of Education in July 2010, and the Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOCT was developed based on these standards.

Program Purpose

The EOCT are designed to improve student achievement by assessing student performance on the standards specific to each course tested. Student performance on each test is provided to schools for diagnostic and remedial use. These results are used to help make instruction more effective and to ensure that all Georgia students have access to rigorous courses that meet high academic expectations. These results are also used for student accountability and to gauge the quality of education in the state. The EOCT are the final exams for the courses specified. For students enrolled in grade nine for the first time before July 1, 2011, the final grade for each course is calculated by weighing the course grade 85% and the EOCT score 15%. For students enrolled in grade nine for the first time on July 1, 2011, or after, the final grade for each course is calculated by weighing the course grade 80% and the EOCT score 20% (State Board Rule 160-4-2-.13). The student must have a final grade of at least 70 to pass the course and earn credit toward graduation.

EOCT Content Descriptions

The EOCT Content Descriptions are provided to acquaint Georgia educators with the content assessed by the EOCT. Only the knowledge, concepts, and skills addressed in the state-mandated content standards are assessed on the EOCT. It is important to note that some content standards are better suited for classroom or individual assessment rather than large-scale summative assessment. While those 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 state-mandated content standards; they are provided to help educators better understand how the standards will be assessed. Further, the EOCT Content Descriptions *by no means* suggest *when* concepts and skills should be introduced in the instructional sequence; rather, they are intended only to communicate the concepts and skills that will be assessed on the EOCT, but in no particular order. Georgia law requires educators to teach the material set forth in the state-mandated content standards. The standards are located at www.georgiastandards.org.

Ninth Grade Literature and Composition Domains
In order to provide reliable measures of student achievement, as well as to give structure to the assessment program, the performance standards were grouped into content domains. In some cases, these domains include elements from more than one strand of the content standards. Four domains were identified for Ninth Grade Literature and Composition:

- **Reading (Literary and Informational)**
  Assessment in this domain focuses on reading for general understanding, recognizing and analyzing literary elements of texts, locating evidence that supports claims and inferences, evaluating author's purpose and use of evidence, analyzing the effect of word choice and figurative language, and acquiring and using new vocabulary.

- **Speaking and Listening**
  Assessment in this domain focuses on comprehension and presentation of information in a variety of media; evaluation of the credibility and accuracy of messages delivered in diverse formats; evaluation of a speaker's reasoning and use of evidence; and the ability to adapt or enhance a message for the appropriate audience, purpose, or task.

- **Writing**
  Assessment in this domain requires students to demonstrate understanding of coherence and focus in texts, including well-defined perspectives, tightly reasoned arguments, and audience awareness. The assessment addresses the stages of the writing process, the effective use of introductions, the use of supporting evidence, and the construction of a meaningful conclusion. Assessment in this domain also addresses strategies for developing and refining research subjects; using print and digital sources for research and distribution of writing; selecting, synthesizing, and evaluating the credibility of multiple sources; and following a standard format for citation.

- **Language**
  Assessment in this domain focuses on demonstrating command of the correct conventions of Standard American English grammar and usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
Domain: Reading (Literary and Informational)

Overview of the Domain
- Students recognize, comprehend, and summarize the important ideas and viewpoints in a written work.
- Students analyze various elements in fiction, using evidence from a text as a basis for interpretation.
- Students analyze and evaluate the subject matter and literary devices of various forms of drama, poetry, and nonfiction.
- Students demonstrate an understanding of significant themes in literary works and central ideas of informational works; students analyze how themes and ideas are developed over the course of a text.
- Students analyze how an author's ideas or claims are developed by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text.
- Students analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States.
- Students determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language and connotative meanings; students analyze how word choice affects meaning and tone.
- Students acquire new vocabulary by using context; structural analysis of prefixes, suffixes, and root words; and resource materials.

Associated Standards

ELACC9-10RL1
ELACC9-10RL2
ELACC9-10RL3
ELACC9-10RL4
ELACC9-10RL5
ELACC9-10RL6
ELACC9-10RL9

ELACC9-10RI1
ELACC9-10RI2
ELACC9-10RI3
ELACC9-10RI5
ELACC9-10RI6
ELACC9-10L4(a–c)
ELACC9-10L5a

Associated Concepts and Skills
Assessment of this domain will focus on the following:
- analyzing various elements of fiction, using evidence from a text as a basis for interpretation, such as:
  - determining the plot or conflict of a fictional passage
  - analyzing the use of foreshadowing, irony, point of view, symbolism, imagery, and theme
  - analyzing characters' motivations and inner conflicts
  - analyzing how characters develop over the course of the text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme

- o recognizing characteristics of setting, including how setting affects the plot, characterization, or mood
  - o determining the mood or tone of a passage and analyzing how the author establishes it
- demonstrating knowledge of the elements of dramatic literature by:
  - o evaluating the effects of various conventions on a particular excerpt, including form, plot, setting, dialogue, and monologue
  - o analyzing the interactions between the characters of a drama
  - o determining the theme of a drama
- analyzing and responding to various forms of poetry by:
  - o determining a theme or central idea of a poem
  - o analyzing the development of a theme or central idea over the course of a poem
  - o analyzing how specific details shape and refine the theme or central idea of a poem
  - o analyzing the use of sound devices in poetry, including alliteration, onomatopoeia, and rhyme
  - o determining the meaning of words as they are used in a poem, including figurative and connotative meanings
  - o analyze how the cumulative impact of specific word choices contributes to the meaning and tone of a poem
- analyzing and applying knowledge of nonfiction literature by:
  - o determining an author's point of view and analyzing how the author uses rhetoric to advance a point of view or purpose
  - o determining the effects of language (e.g., diction, imagery, symbolism, and figurative language)
- recognizing and analyzing significant themes in literary texts and central ideas of informational texts by:
  - o determining the theme of a literary text
  - o understanding the central idea or argument of an informational text
  - o analyzing the development of a theme or central idea over the course of a text
  - o analyzing how the author's language and style influence the theme
  - o determining important ideas and viewpoints of a text based on accurate and detailed references or allusions to the text
- analyzing a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States by:
  - o recognizing universal life experiences within a literary text
  - o inferring how culture and life experiences affect the point of view of authors and characters
  - o making connections or discerning differences between cultures
  - o analyzing how similarities and differences in culture and experience influence the literary elements of a text
- analyzing how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work by:
  - o comparing and contrasting a specific work with an earlier work of a similar theme or topic
  - o analyzing how a character type is portrayed in earlier works
  - o analyzing how a specific work imitates, satirizes, expands upon, recasts, or reinterprets an earlier work
  - o evaluating the author's choices of what to emphasize or omit from an earlier work

- determining the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text by:
  - understanding and analyzing figurative language
  - determining connotative meanings
- analyzing how word choice affects meaning and tone
- defining unfamiliar words by using context, patterns of word changes, and resource materials:
  - using context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase
  - understanding the correct meaning of a given Latin or Greek word, root, or affix
  - selecting the correct affix to shift a given word to new meaning
  - 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
  - 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*

Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
Domain: Speaking and Listening

Overview of the Domain

- Students read and view texts in a variety of media and formats, including but not limited to essays, speeches, editorials, book reviews, television and radio transcripts, magazines, newspapers, advertisements, Web pages, charts, graphs, illustrations, and technical documents.
- Students evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.
- Students analyze the representation of a scene or subject in two different artistic mediums.
- Students integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
- Students demonstrate ability to adapt or enhance a message for the appropriate audience, purpose, or task.
- Students make strategic use of digital media to enhance presentations.
- Students determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.
- Students analyze how the cumulative impact of specific word choices affects meaning and tone.
- Students acquire and use general academic and subject-specific words and phrases.

Associated Standards

ELACC9-10RL7
ELACC9-10RI4
ELACC9-10SL2
ELACC9-10SL3
ELACC9-10SL4
ELACC9-10SL5
ELACC9-10L6

Associated Concepts and Skills

Assessment of this domain will focus on the following:

- evaluating the messages and effects of a variety of media and formats, including but not limited to essays, speeches, editorials, book reviews, television and radio transcripts, magazines, newspapers, advertisements, Web pages, charts, graphs, illustrations, and technical documents
- evaluating an argument presented by a speaker or writer by:
  o determining a speaker's point of view
  o evaluating the speaker's or writer's rhetoric; analyzing the use of a given word, phrase, or sentence
  o identifying fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence
  o determining and evaluating the evidence used in support of an argument

- o determining assumptions made by the author when elaborating an argument
- o recognizing an author's purpose for writing the entire passage or a particular section of the passage (e.g., the introduction)
- analyzing the representation of a scene or subject in two different artistic mediums by:
  - o comparing the key ideas and details included in each medium
  - o evaluating the choices of what is included and what is left out of each medium
  - o evaluating how different mediums are effective (or not) at conveying information, ideas, and messages
- integrating multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source by:
  - o evaluating print and electronic sources of information, understanding which types of texts and websites are likely to contain inaccuracies, agendas, and bias
  - o analyzing syntax and tone, identifying language that suggests manipulation or distortion for the purpose of promoting a particular point of view
  - o selecting reliable, relevant information from two or more sources and integrating source information into one's own text or presentation
- demonstrating understanding of how to adapt or enhance a message for the appropriate audience, purpose, or task by:
  - o determining if elements such as length, organization, and format are appropriate for the subject, purpose, and audience
  - o demonstrating ability to revise elements of a text or presentation to be appropriate for the subject, purpose, or audience
- making strategic use of digital media to enhance presentations
- determining the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings, by:
  - o using context to understand the connotation of a given word or phrase
  - o determining the implied comparison in a metaphor
  - o distinguishing the meaning of a metaphor in the context of the passage
- analyzing how the cumulative impact of specific word choices affects meaning and tone by:
  - o determining what perspective the author or speaker is expressing by using specific words or phrases
- acquiring and using accurately general academic and domain-specific words or phrases by:
  - o using context to understand the meaning of a domain-specific word or phrase
  - o selecting and/or using strategies for finding the meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts

Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
Domain: Writing

Overview of the Domain

- Students use the writing process to develop argumentative and explanatory texts.
- Students introduce a claim or topic and create an organization that makes clear connections and distinctions between points and ideas.
- Students develop a claim or topic by using relevant evidence, examples, quotations, and explanations.
- Students use appropriate transitions—words, phrases, and clauses—to link major sections of the text and clarify relationships among ideas.
- Students use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate to the audience and its knowledge of the topic.
- Students establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
- Students provide a concluding statement or section that supports the information or explanation presented.
- Students use the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- Students use knowledge of research techniques to support writing.
- Students follow appropriate conventions for citation to avoid plagiarism, following the guidelines of an appropriate style manual.

Associated Standards

ELACC9-10W1 (a-e)
ELACC9-10W2 (a-f)
ELACC9-10W5
ELACC9-10W7
ELACC9-10W8
ELACC9-10L3a

Associated Concepts and Skills

Assessment of this domain will focus on the following:

- writing **arguments** to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence
  - introducing precise claim(s), distinguishing the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and creating an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence
  - developing claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns

- o using words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text; create cohesion; and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims
  - o establishing and maintaining a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing
  - o distinguishing slang or colloquial language as inappropriate for formal writing
  - o providing a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented
- writing **informative/explanatory** texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content
  - o introducing a topic; organizing complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; including formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension
    - ▪ determining the proper structure to use for conveying information, including: chronological order, cause and effect, similarity and difference, and posing and answering a question
    - ▪ determining the best topic sentence in a paragraph
    - ▪ recognizing extraneous or off-topic sentences
  - o developing the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts; extended definitions; concrete details; quotations; or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic
    - ▪ distinguishing the best supporting sentences, facts, examples, or descriptions to use in a paragraph
    - ▪ anticipating difficulties that might be experienced by the audience in understanding information in a technical document
    - ▪ demonstrating knowledge of style conventions used in specific types of technical documents, such as resumes, memorandums, letters, e-mails, and user manuals
  - o using appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts
    - ▪ recognizing the best transitions to use between given sentences of a paragraph
  - o using precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic
    - ▪ using the most precise language, action verbs, sensory details, and appropriate modifiers in relation to the purpose, audience, and structural formats of a passage
  - o establishing and maintaining a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing
  - o providing a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic)
- developing and strengthening writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience

- o 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
- o determining the best revision of a phrase in a given sentence, or sentence in a given short passage, for clarity of expression (e.g., awkwardly worded sentences), *not for revisions addressing the conventions of standard written English, which are covered in the Language domain*
- o choosing an appropriate introductory sentence that engages the interest of the reader
- o choosing the best sentence to effectively conclude a passage
- o using appropriate vocabulary, tone, and style necessary for an intended audience
- o determining that a given stimulus material does not require revision
- applying research techniques to answer a question or solve a problem
  - o selecting or generating research questions that are appropriate for a particular scope or task
  - o narrowing or broadening a topic when appropriate
  - o using advanced searches effectively
  - o gathering relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources
  - o assessing the usefulness of sources in answering a research question
  - o determining the best supporting evidence or information from a secondary source to develop the main idea of a text
  - o integrating information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas
  - o demonstrating the proper way to integrate quotations and citations from secondary sources into a text while maintaining the focus and flow of ideas
- demonstrating knowledge of when citation is needed to avoid plagiarism
- demonstrating a knowledge of conventions and style guidelines used in documenting information from secondary sources
  - o determining the proper guidelines for documentation when compiling bibliographies and works-cited lists, according to a guide 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*
  - o selecting the correct way to list items in a citation (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)

Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
Domain: Language

Overview of the Domain
- Students demonstrate command of the correct conventions of Standard American English grammar and usage.
- Students demonstrate command of Standard American English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

Associated Standards
ELACC9-10L1
ELACC9-10L2

Associated Concepts and Skills
Assessment of this domain will focus on the following grammar and usage conventions that appear in **grades 1 through 8** of the "Language Progressive Skills" chart on page 56 of the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts*:
- 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, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers

Assessment of this domain will focus on the following grammar and usage conventions that appear in the **9-10 grade band of standard L1**:
- using parallel structure
- using phrases and clauses to convey meaning and add variety and interest to writing or presentations

Phrase	Clauses
noun phrase	independent clause
verb phrase	dependent clause
adjectival phrase	noun clause
adverbial phrase	relative clause
participial phrase	adverbial clause
prepositional phrase	
absolute phrase	

Assessment of this domain will focus on the capitalization, punctuation, and spelling conventions that appear in **grades 1 through 8 of standard L2**. In addition, assessment of this domain will focus on the following punctuation conventions that appear in the **9-10 grade band of standard L2**:

- using a semicolon to link two or more closely related independent clauses
- using a colon to introduce a list or quotation