



Georgia End-Of-Course Tests

Content Descriptions

Based on the Georgia Performance Standards

Ninth Grade Literature and Composition



Kathy Cox
State Superintendent of Schools

June 2005

**End-of-Course Tests (EOCT)
Content Descriptions
Ninth Grade 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 Ninth Grade 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 Description

The EOCT Content Descriptions are provided to acquaint Georgia educators with the content coverage of the EOCT. Only the knowledge, concepts, and 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>.

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 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 Ninth Grade Literature and Composition:

- **Reading and Literature**
Assessment in this domain focuses on reading for general understanding, identifying various genres, distinguishing and/or sequencing main and subordinate ideas, and recognizing and analyzing literary and structural elements of 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
Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
Domain: Reading and Literature

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 apply knowledge of non-fictional literature, focusing on memoirs, biographies, and autobiographies.
- Students analyze and respond to the subject matter and style devices of various forms of poetry.
- Students classify poetry by specified criteria such as fixed and free forms, rhymed and unrhymed, narrative and lyric, and/or universal themes and topics.
- 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 literary works and how those themes represent a universal view or general comment on life or society.
- Students relate various texts to historical and literary contexts.

Associated GPS

ELA9RL1

ELA9RL2

ELA9RL3

ELA9RL4

ELA9RL5

Associated GPS Concepts and Skills

Assessment of this domain will focus on the following:

- recognizing literary and structural elements of fictional literature, including:
 - determining the plot or conflict of a fictional passage
 - analyzing the use of foreshadowing, irony, point of view, symbolism, imagery, and theme
 - differentiating traits of characters and their interaction with the plot
 - recognizing characteristics of setting, including how setting affects the plot, characterization, or mood
 - determining the mood or tone of a passage and how the author has established it
- analyzing and applying knowledge of non-fictional literature, focusing on memoirs, biographies, and autobiographies, such as:
 - determining the effects of language (e.g., diction, imagery, symbolism, and figurative language) in memoirs, biographies, and autobiographies
 - demonstrating an awareness for and analyzing the characteristics of memoirs, biographies, and autobiographies, including structure and point of view

- using literal and inferential comprehension skills to evaluate the selection of details in memoirs, biographies, and autobiographies
- analyzing and responding to various forms of poetry, such as:
 - demonstrating knowledge of different types of poetry, including fixed and free forms, rhymed and unrhymed, and narrative and lyrical
 - relating ideas found in poetry to universal themes or topics characteristic of specific types of poetry
 - analyzing the use of sound devices in poetry, including alliteration, onomatopoeia, and rhyme
 - differentiating between examples of figurative language, including personification, metaphor, simile, and hyperbole, and determining how these examples contribute to the meaning of the passage
- demonstrating knowledge of the elements of dramatic literature, including:
 - classifying various types of dramatic literature based on evidence in the text
 - evaluating the effects of various dramatic conventions on a particular excerpt, including exposition, dialogue, monologue, soliloquy, and climax
 - analyzing the interactions between the characters of a drama
 - recognizing examples of dramatic irony present in a drama
 - determining the theme of a play or drama
 - evaluating the purpose and benefits of stage directions in a drama
- acquiring new vocabulary, including:
 - determining the correct meaning of a given word or phrase in a text
 - understanding the meanings of idioms, cognates, and examples of figurative language
- recognizing and analyzing significant ideas and themes in a literary text, such as:
 - understanding the plot or main idea of a passage
 - recognizing cause and effect relationships within a text
 - analyzing how the author’s language and style influences the theme
 - comparing and contrasting the presentation of a theme across genres
 - recognizing the existence of multiple themes within a text
 - evaluating the author’s choice of a genre in relation to a universal theme
 - determining important ideas and viewpoints for a text based on support (accurate and detailed references or allusions to the text)
 - 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
 - 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 contexts, such as:
 - comparing and contrasting a literary text to other texts of a specific literary period
 - comparing and contrasting texts of similar and different historical settings

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

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 and use it correctly.
- Students develop strategies for understanding the content and contextual meanings of unfamiliar words or concepts.
- Students analyze how certain vocabulary words can contain different meanings across subject areas.
- Students evaluate and form reasonable judgments about 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

ELA9RC3

ELA9RC4

ELA9LSV2

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, such as:
 - understanding the correct meaning of a given word or phrase
 - 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
 - determining what perspective the author is expressing by using specific words or phrases
 - selecting and/or using strategies for finding the meaning of unfamiliar words or concepts
- evaluating the messages and effects of mass media
 - determining how the diction in a media presentation or speech affects the mood and tone
 - comparing and contrasting the ways in which different types of media genres (documentaries, newspapers, televised news, on-line news reports, magazines, textbooks, etc.) cover the same event or topic
 - evaluating 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
 - distinguishing the differences in voice, tone, diction, and style between different types of media genre (e.g., documentaries, news broadcasts, taped interviews)
 - analyzing and evaluating the aesthetic effects of a media presentation, including layout, lighting, color, background, etc.
 - determining the best ways to prepare, improve, or assess a presentation
- gaining insight into life experiences from the study of literature
 - 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
- evaluating an argument presented by a speaker or writer
 - analyzing the type of argument used by the speaker, including argument by authority, emotion, and logic
 - determining the evidence used in support of an author's argument
 - 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
 - formulating judgments about topics and providing support from the text

English/Language Arts
Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
Domain: Writing

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 technical 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.
- 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; in Grade 9, technical writing will be emphasized.
- 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

ELA9W1

ELA9W2

ELA9W3

ELA9W4

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
 - 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
 - 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
 - choosing 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
 - 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
 - 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)
 - recognizing the purpose of a given passage
 - determining which purpose of writing best addresses the issues of a given situation
 - determining possible difficulties 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
- 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

- 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
 - 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
Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
Domain: Conventions

Overview of the Domain

- Students use the writing process to develop Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, sentence and paragraph structure, 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

ELA9C1

ELA9C2

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, 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
 - 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.
- 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/hisself, 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