

**Georgia End-of-Course Tests
American Literature and Composition
Performance Level Descriptors**

EXCEEDS STANDARD

General Performance Level Descriptors

Students who exceed the standard demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of explicit and implied aspects of various grade-appropriate American literary and informational texts, using thorough textual evidence as a basis for interpretation. Students performing at this level are consistently able to identify and evaluate structural elements and literary devices. Students display a strong ability to interpret the messages, rhetoric, and credibility of speakers, mass media, and persuasive texts. Students also display an advanced knowledge of strategies used to enhance understanding across subject areas, including domain-specific and contextual vocabulary. Students who exceed the standard show an in-depth knowledge of grade-level research techniques, an advanced knowledge of the writing process, and a full command of the usage and mechanics of Standard American English.

Specific Performance Level Descriptors

Students at this level are able to do the following:

Reading (Literary and Informational)

- Demonstrate thorough comprehension of American literary and informational texts that represent a wide range of literary periods and difficulty.
- Show a comprehensive understanding of the structural elements of various genres of American literature, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.
- Show a strong ability to analyze the literary elements of various written works, including the more subtle aspects such as irony, character development, symbolism, figurative language, connotative meaning, and tone.
- Comprehend and summarize the central ideas, viewpoints, and themes in a written work, analyzing how the themes interact in a text.
- Demonstrate a strong ability to support analysis of explicit and implicit ideas in a text, using strong and thorough evidence from the text.
- Compare and contrast themes and topics across genres and texts, using specific evidence from a text to support positions and make logical connections.
- Demonstrate a comprehensive ability to evaluate the author's use of stylistic devices and rhetoric, analyzing how they contribute to the theme or underlying meaning and how they reveal the author's point of view.

- Display advanced knowledge of important works of American literature, and thoroughly analyze foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance.
- Determine the meaning of difficult words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language and words with various meanings.
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of how word choice affects meaning and tone, and demonstrate strong ability to analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.
- Show advanced skill in determining the meaning of unfamiliar words using knowledge of context and structure, as well as resources such as dictionaries, thesauri, and other reference materials.

Speaking and Listening

- Read and view texts in a variety of media and formats that represent a comprehensive range of difficulty, including, but not limited to, the following: speeches, editorials, book reviews, television and radio transcripts, magazines, newspapers, Web pages, charts, graphs, illustrations, and technical documents.
- Integrate multiple sources of information presented in a variety of media and formats (e.g., verbal/oral, visual, or quantitative), and evaluate the credibility and accuracy of each source.
- Comprehend and evaluate a speaker's or writer's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, showing the connections among the speaker's ideas, word choice, emphasis, and tone.
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the effective presentation of knowledge and ideas.
- Demonstrate a strong ability to acquire and use academic and domain-specific words and phrases to read, write, speak, and listen at the college- and career-readiness level.

Writing

- Show a strong ability to identify a variety of writing purposes, use appropriate language, and develop argumentative and explanatory texts.
- Demonstrate advanced skill in the writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading.
- Exhibit an advanced knowledge in writing multi-paragraph compositions with clear, controlling claims, relevant evidence, quotations, examples to support the ideas presented in the text, proper sentence structure, appropriate transitions, and effective conclusions.
- Display a complete understanding of the elements of written communication, including purpose, speaker, audience, style, and tone.
- Adapt style, language, and vocabulary to be appropriate for a specific task or audience.
- Show in-depth knowledge of grade-level research techniques.

- Demonstrate a strong understanding of the appropriate conventions used for integrating information into a text to maintain the flow of ideas and avoid plagiarism.
- Show a thorough understanding of the standard style and formatting conventions used for citations.

Language

- Demonstrate a full command of the usage and mechanics of Standard American English, including, but not limited to, correct verb forms; subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreements; complete sentence construction with correctly placed clauses and phrases; resolution of word choice and contested usage via references; correct capitalization; and punctuation (including hyphenation).

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MEETS STANDARD

General Performance Level Descriptors

Students who meet the standard demonstrate a competent understanding of explicit and implied aspects of various grade-appropriate American literary and informational texts, using some textual evidence as a basis for interpretation. Students performing at this level are generally able to identify and evaluate structural elements and literary devices. Students display a general ability to interpret the messages, rhetoric, and credibility of speakers, mass media, and persuasive texts. Students also display a general knowledge of strategies used to enhance understanding across subject areas, including domain-specific and contextual vocabulary. Students who meet the standard show an adequate knowledge of grade-level research techniques, a general understanding of the writing process, and an adequate understanding of the usage and mechanics of Standard American English.

Specific Performance Level Descriptors

Students at this level are able to do the following:

Reading (Literary and Informational)

- Demonstrate adequate comprehension of American literary and informational texts that represent a moderate range of literary periods and difficulty.
- Show adequate understanding of the structural elements of various genres of American literature, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.
- Show adequate ability to analyze the literary elements of various written works, including the more subtle aspects such as irony, character development, symbolism, figurative language, connotative meaning, and tone.
- Comprehend and summarize the central ideas, viewpoints, and themes in a written work, but with difficulty distinguishing between the finer details of the text and how ideas develop and interact.
- Demonstrate adequate ability to support analysis of explicit and implicit ideas in a text, using sufficient evidence from the text.
- Compare and contrast themes and topics across genres and texts, with some minor gaps in logic when using specific evidence from a text to support positions and make logical connections.
- Demonstrate adequate ability to evaluate the author's use of stylistic devices and rhetoric, with some analysis of how they contribute to the theme or underlying meaning and how they reveal the author's point of view.

- Display an adequate understanding of important works of American literature, and analyze foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance.
- Determine the meaning of moderately difficult words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language and words with various meanings.
- Demonstrate an adequate understanding of how word choice affects meaning and tone, and demonstrate adequate ability to analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.
- Show adequate skill in determining the meaning of unfamiliar words using knowledge of context and structure, as well as resources such as dictionaries, thesauri, and other reference materials.

Speaking and Listening

- Read and view texts in a variety of media and formats that represent a moderate range of difficulty, including, but not limited to, the following: speeches, editorials, book reviews, television and radio transcripts, magazines, newspapers, Web pages, charts, graphs, illustrations, and technical documents.
- Integrate multiple sources of information presented in a variety of media and formats (e.g., verbal/oral, visual, or quantitative), but with some limitations in evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
- Show adequate comprehension of a speaker's or writer's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, but with trouble making connections between the speaker's ideas, word choice, emphasis, and tone and with trouble showing how these rhetorical devices support the speaker's point of view.
- Demonstrate an adequate understanding of the effective presentation of knowledge and ideas.
- Demonstrate adequate ability to acquire and use academic and domain-specific words and phrases to read, write, speak, and listen at the college- and career-readiness level.

Writing

- Show adequate ability to identify a variety of writing purposes, use appropriate language, and develop argumentative and explanatory texts.
- Demonstrate an adequate skill in the writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading.
- Exhibit adequate knowledge in writing multi-paragraph compositions with controlling claims, relevant evidence, quotations, examples to support the ideas presented in the text, proper sentence structure, appropriate transitions, and effective conclusions.
- Display a functional understanding of the elements of written communication, including purpose, speaker, audience, style, and tone.
- Adapt style, language, and vocabulary to be appropriate for a specific task or audience, with some errors in judgment.
- Show adequate knowledge of grade-level research techniques.

- Demonstrate an adequate understanding of the appropriate conventions used for integrating information into a text to maintain the flow of ideas and avoid plagiarism.
- Show a general understanding of the standard style and formatting conventions used for citations, but with limited knowledge of specific rules of convention.

Language

- Demonstrate adequate skill in the usage and mechanics of Standard American English, including, but not limited to, correct verb forms; subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreements; and correct capitalization and punctuation (including hyphenation); but revealing difficulty with more complex conventions such as using complete sentence construction with correctly placed clauses and phrases, and resolving issues of word choice and contested usage via references.

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DOES NOT MEET STANDARD

General Performance Level Descriptors

Students who do not meet the standard demonstrate a limited understanding of explicit aspects of various grade-appropriate American literary and informational texts. Students may struggle to understand the implied aspects of texts and have a limited ability to use textual evidence as a basis for interpretation. Students performing at this level struggle to identify and evaluate structural elements and literary devices. Students have a limited ability to interpret the messages, rhetoric, and credibility of speakers, mass media, and persuasive texts. Students also display a limited knowledge of strategies used to enhance understanding across subject areas, including domain-specific and contextual vocabulary. Students who do not meet the standard show a minimal knowledge of grade-level research techniques, a limited understanding of the writing process, and a limited understanding of the usage and mechanics of Standard American English.

Specific Performance Level Descriptors

Students at this level are able to do the following:

Reading (Literary and Informational)

- Demonstrate limited comprehension of American literary and informational texts that represent an incomplete range of literary periods and difficulty.
- Show a minimal understanding of the structural elements of various genres of American literature, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.
- Show limited ability in analyzing the literary elements of various written works, with no clear understanding of the more subtle aspects such as irony, character development, symbolism, figurative language, connotative meaning, and tone.
- Comprehend and summarize the central ideas, viewpoints, and themes in a written work, but with major misconceptions or inability to make clear connections to the text.
- Demonstrate limited ability to support analysis of explicit and implicit ideas in a text, using weak or minimal evidence from the text.
- Compare and contrast themes and topics across genres and texts, often revealing major gaps in logic when using specific evidence from a text to support positions and make logical connections.

- Demonstrate a limited ability to evaluate the author’s use of stylistic devices and rhetoric, with minimal understanding of how they contribute to the theme or underlying meaning or how they reveal the author’s point of view.
- Display limited knowledge of important works of American literature, and limited ability to analyze foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance.
- Determine the meaning of easy words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language and words with various meanings.
- Demonstrate limited understanding of how word choice affects meaning and tone, and demonstrate limited ability to analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.
- Show limited skill in determining the meaning of unfamiliar words using knowledge of context and structure, suffixes, as well as other resources such as dictionaries, thesauri, and other reference materials.

Speaking and Listening

- Read and view texts in a variety of media and formats that represent a limited range of difficulty, including, but not limited to, the following: speeches, editorials, book reviews, television and radio transcripts, magazines, newspapers, Web pages, charts, graphs, illustrations, and technical documents.
- Show limited ability to integrate multiple sources of information presented in a variety of media and formats (e.g., verbal/oral, visual, or quantitative) and to evaluate the credibility and accuracy of sources.
- Show limited or incomplete comprehension of a speaker’s or writer’s point of view, reasoning, and use of rhetoric and evidence, with an inability to show how these rhetorical devices develop the speaker’s point of view or ideas.
- Demonstrate limited understanding of the effective presentation of knowledge and ideas.
- Demonstrate limited ability to acquire and use academic and domain-specific words and phrases to read, write, speak, and listen at the college- and career-readiness level.

Writing

- Show an inadequate ability to identify a variety of writing purposes, use appropriate language, and develop argumentative and explanatory texts.
- Demonstrate minimal skill in the writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading.
- Exhibit limited knowledge in writing multi-paragraph compositions with clear, controlling claims, relevant evidence, quotations, examples to support the ideas presented in the text, proper sentence structure, appropriate transitions, and effective conclusions.
- Display a minimal knowledge of the elements of written communication, including purpose, speaker, audience, style, and tone.
- Show some ability to adapt style, language, and vocabulary to be appropriate for a specific task or audience, but with frequent errors in judgment.

- Show limited knowledge of grade-level research techniques.
- Demonstrate an incomplete understanding of the appropriate conventions used for integrating information into a text to maintain the flow of ideas and avoid plagiarism.
- Show an incomplete understanding of the standard style and formatting conventions used for citations.

Language

- Demonstrate minimal skill in the usage and mechanics of Standard American English, with inconsistent use of correct verb forms, incomplete understanding of subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreements, and inconsistent use of correct capitalization and punctuation (including hyphenation). Seldom can handle more complex conventions such as using complete sentence construction with correctly placed clauses and phrases, and resolving issues of word choice and contested usage via references.