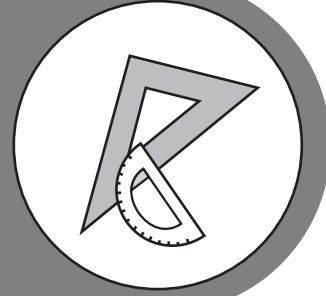


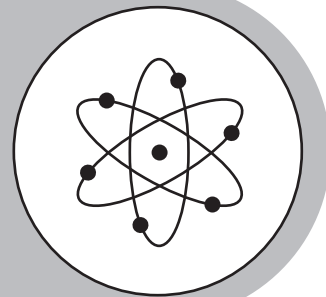
AMERICAN LITERATURE & COMPOSITION



Study



Guide



Georgia End-Of-Course Tests

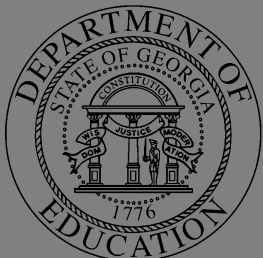


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INTRODUCTION

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

What is the EOCT? The EOCT program was created to improve student achievement through effective instruction and assessment of the standards in the Quality Core Curriculum specific to the eight EOCT core high school courses. The EOCT program also helps to ensure that all Georgia students have access to a rigorous curriculum that meets high performance standards. The purpose of the EOCT is to provide diagnostic data that can be used to enhance the effectiveness of schools' instructional programs.

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

Mathematics

- Algebra I
- Geometry

Social Studies

- United States History
- Economics/Business/Free Enterprise

Science

- Biology
- Physical Science

English Language Arts

- Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
- American Literature and Composition

Getting started: The HOW TO USE THE STUDY GUIDE section on page 2 outlines the contents in each section, lists the materials you should have available as you study for the EOCT, and suggests some steps for preparing for the *American Literature and Composition* EOCT.

HOW TO USE THE STUDY GUIDE

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

The **OVERVIEW OF THE EOCT** section on page 4 gives information about the test: dates, time, question format, number of questions, and types of reading passages that will be on the *American Literature and Composition* EOCT. This information can help you better understand the testing situation and what you will be asked to do.

The **PREPARING FOR THE EOCT** section that begins on page 5 provides helpful information on study skills and general test-taking skills and strategies. It explains what you should do before the test to ensure that you are prepared and what you should do during the test to ensure the best test-taking situation possible.

The **TEST CONTENT** section that begins on page 11 explains what the *American Literature and Composition* EOCT specifically measures. When you know the test content and how you will be asked to demonstrate your knowledge, it will help you be better prepared for the EOCT. This section also contains specific test-taking strategies for successfully answering questions on the EOCT.

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



GET IT TOGETHER

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

Materials:

- ✓ This study guide
- ✓ Pen or Pencil
- ✓ Highlighter
- ✓ Paper

Resources:

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

Study Space:

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

Time Commitment:

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

Determination:

- ✓ Willingness to improve
- ✓ Plan for meeting goals

**SUGGESTED STEPS FOR USING THIS STUDY GUIDE**

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

OVERVIEW OF THE EOCT

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



THE EOCT AT A GLANCE

Administration Dates:

The EOCT will be given three times a year: once in the spring, once in the summer, and once in the winter.

Administration Time:

Each EOCT is comprised of two sections; each section will take 45 to 60 minutes to complete. You will have 100 to 135 minutes to complete each EOCT. You will be given a 5-minute stretch break between the two sections of the test.

Question Format:

All the questions on the EOCT are multiple choice.

Number of Questions:

Each section of the EOCT contains 45 questions; there are a total of 90 questions on the EOCT.

Reading Passages:

There will be informational and literary passages on the *American Literature and Composition EOCT*. All the passages will either be pieces of American Literature or about American Literature. Please see page 12 for more information on reading passages. Sample reading passages may be found in the Appendices A-C.

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



PREPARING FOR THE EOCT



WARNING!

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

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

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

Study Skills

A LOOK AT YOUR STUDY SKILLS



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

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

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

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



Time Management

Do you have a plan for preparing for the EOCT? Often students have good intentions for studying and preparing for a test, but without a plan, many students fall short of their goals. Here are some strategies to consider when developing your study plan. (See Appendices E–H for **SAMPLE STUDY PLAN SHEETS** that you can use to help you create your study plan.)

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

Organization

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



- ◆ Establish a study area that has minimal distractions.
- ◆ Gather your materials in advance.
- ◆ Develop and implement your study plan (See Appendices E–H for **SAMPLE STUDY PLAN SHEETS**).

Active Participation



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

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

Test-taking Strategies

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



A LOOK AT YOUR TEST-TAKING SKILLS

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

1. How would you describe your test-taking skills?

Response: _____

2. How do you feel when you are taking a test?

Response: _____

3. List the strategies that you already know and use when you are taking a test.

Response: _____


4. List test-taking behaviors you use when preparing for and taking a test that do not contribute to your success.

Response: _____

5. What would you like to learn about taking tests?

Response: _____

Suggested Strategies to Use to Prepare for the EOCT

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

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

Response: _____


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


Response: _____

- What changes should you implement to achieve higher scores?

Response: _____

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

 **Be Prepared.** The best way to perform well on the EOCT is to be prepared. In order to do this, it is important that you know what standards/skills will be measured on the **American Literature and Composition EOCT** and then practice understanding and using those standards/skills. The standards that will be measured in this EOCT are located in the **American Literature and Composition Quality Core Curriculum (QCC)**. The **OVERVIEW OF THE EOCT** and **TEST CONTENT** sections of this study guide are designed to help you understand which specific standards are on the **American Literature and Composition EOCT** and give you suggestions for how the skills for those standards will be assessed. Take the time to read through this material and follow the practice suggestions. You can also ask your English teacher for any suggestions he or she might offer on preparing for the EOCT.

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

Suggested Strategies to Use the Day Before the EOCT



✓ Review what you learned from this study guide

1. Review the general test-taking strategies discussed in the TOP 10 SUGGESTED STRATEGIES TO USE DURING THE EOCT on page 10.
2. Review the content domain-specific test-taking strategies discussed in the section, TEST CONTENT, beginning on page 11.
3. Focus your attention on the domain, or domains, that you are most in need of improving.

✓ Take care of yourself

1. Try to get a good night's sleep. Most people need an average of 8 hours, but everyone's sleep needs are different.
2. Don't drastically alter your routine. If you go to bed too early, you might lie in bed thinking about the test. You want to get enough sleep so you can do your best.

Suggested Strategies to Use the Morning of the EOCT



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



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








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

TOP 10

Suggested Strategies to Use During the EOCT

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

- 1 Focus on the test.**  Try to block out whatever is going on around you. Take your time and think about what you are asked to do. Listen carefully to all the directions.
- 2 Budget your time.**  Be sure that you allocate an appropriate amount of time to work on each question on the test.
- 3 Take a quick break if you begin to feel tired.** To do this, put your pencil down, relax in your chair, and take a few deep breaths. Then, sit up straight, pick up your pencil, and begin to concentrate on the test again. Remember that each test section is only 45 to 60 minutes.
- 4 Use positive self-talk.** If you find yourself saying negative things to yourself like, “I can’t pass this test,” it is important to recognize that you are doing this. Stop and think positive thoughts like, “I prepared for this test, and I am going to do my best.” Letting the negative thoughts take over can affect how you take the test and your test score.
- 5 Mark in your test booklet.**  Mark key ideas or things you want to come back to in your test booklet. Remember that only the answers marked on your answer sheet will be scored.
- 6 Read the entire question and the possible answer choices.** It is important to read the entire question so you know what it is asking. Read each possible answer choice. Do not mark the first one that “looks good.”
- 7 Use what you know.**  Draw on what you have learned in class, from this study guide, and during your study sessions to help you answer the questions.
- 8 Use content domain-specific strategies to answer the questions.** In the TEST CONTENT section, there are a number of specific strategies that you can use to help improve your test performance. Spend time learning these helpful strategies, so you can use them while taking the test.
- 9 Think logically.** If you have tried your best to answer a question but you just aren’t sure, use the process of elimination. Look at each possible answer choice. If it doesn’t seem like a logical response, eliminate it. Do this until you’ve narrowed down your choices. If this doesn’t work, take your best educated guess. It is better to mark something down than to leave it blank.
- 10 Check your answers.**  When you have finished the test, go back and check your work.

A WORD ON TEST ANXIETY

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

TEST CONTENT



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

The Georgia End-of-Course Test (EOCT) for *American Literature and Composition* is designed to test five major areas of knowledge, called **content domains**. The content domains are broad categories. Each of the content domains is broken down into smaller ideas. These smaller ideas are called **content standards**, or just standards. Each content domain contains standards that cover different ideas related to its content domain. Each question on the EOCT measures an individual standard within a content domain.

UNDERSTANDING THE STANDARDS

One way to think about **content domains** and **standards** is to think about a supermarket. Supermarkets often group similar foods in the same aisles or areas of the store. For example, the section of the store marked “Fresh Fruits” will be a section filled with apples, oranges, and bananas, to name just a few. So the part of the store called “Fresh Fruits” is like the domain name, and all the various items—apples, oranges, bananas—are the standards that fall under that domain.

The five content domains for the *American Literature and Composition EOCT* are important for several reasons. Together they represent the ability to understand what you read and communicate with others. Another more immediate reason that the content domains are important has to do with test preparation. The best way to prepare for any test is to study and know the material measured on the test. Since the *American Literature and Composition EOCT* covers the five content domains and nothing else, isn’t it a good idea to learn as much about these domains as you can? The more you understand about these domains, the greater your opportunity to be successful on the EOCT.

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

CONTENT DOMAINS

- I. Reading for Comprehension
- II. Reading for Critical Analysis
- III. Information Gathering and Research Skills
- IV. Content, Organization, and Style
- V. Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics

A Note on Reading Passages

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

The Dime Novel

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

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

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

Studying the Content Domains

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

- **A Look at the Content Domain:** an overview of what will be assessed in the content domain
- **Spotlight on the Standards:** information about the specific standards that will be assessed (Note: The names of the standards may not be the exact names used by the Georgia Department of Education. Some of the names in this guide may have been modified to reflect the fact that this book is designed for students and not for professional educators.)
- **Study Ideas:** additional preparation ideas for the standards in the content domain
- **Sample Questions:** sample questions *similar* to those that appear on the EOCT
- **Answers to the Sample Questions:** in-depth explanations of the answers to the sample questions

Content Domain I: Reading for Comprehension



A LOOK AT CONTENT DOMAIN I

Test questions in this content domain will measure your ability to understand what you read. Your answers to the questions will help show how well you can perform on the following standards:

- ★ Recognize main ideas and subordinate ideas
- ★ Distinguish between fact and opinion
- ★ Learn new vocabulary words
- ★ Recognize relationships in a passage
- ★ Use structural analysis to determine the meaning of unknown words



Spotlight on the Standards

★ *Recognize Main Ideas and Subordinate Ideas* ★

Most people write because they have something to say. Journalists write newspaper articles to inform readers about a particular event. Fiction writers create stories that entertain readers and stimulate their imagination. Even a simple poem about roses is written for a reason.

The primary message of a piece of writing is often called the *main idea*. Sometimes authors state the main idea very clearly. For example, suppose you are reading an essay titled “Why Homework Is a Good Idea.” Chances are that the main idea of this essay is that homework is a good idea. This does not mean that the author expects you to simply accept this idea without question. Instead, the author tries to prove to the reader that the idea has merit. The author will use supporting ideas and examples to support the point.

Understanding the main idea is crucial to understanding the passage. It would be hard to understand the essay about homework without realizing that the main idea of the essay is that homework is a good idea. (You don’t have to *agree* with the main idea, but you do have to *understand* it.) You would be missing the point of the essay if you did not pick up on the main idea correctly.

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

1. What is the author's main idea?
2. Which of these would BEST replace the title of this passage?
3. Which statement BEST supports the main idea?

Tips for Finding the Main Idea and Subordinate Ideas

The questions for this standard will be based on either an informational or literary passage. (See the short samples on page 12 or look in the Appendices A–C for longer examples.)

Informational Passage. Authors of informational text often use a traditional outline approach: first stating the main idea, then addressing all the supporting ideas, and ending by restating the main idea. See the example outline in the box.

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

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

- The title
- The thesis statement
- The conclusion

OUTLINE

Title: Researching for Results

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

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

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

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

- The topic sentence of each paragraph
- The body paragraphs

STRATEGY BOX – Take Notes While You Read

Whenever you read an informational passage on the EOCT, stop after each paragraph and ask yourself, “What is the main idea of this paragraph?” After each paragraph, take a moment to jot down some notes that summarize what that paragraph was about. Sample notes about the homework essay mentioned on page 13 might look something like this:

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

Don’t spend five minutes coming up with the perfect summary of each paragraph. Just use about three to ten words to quickly summarize what each paragraph covers.

Using the note-taking strategy explained in the box above can help in three ways:

1. It will give you a clearer picture of the main idea. Suppose the homework essay did not give its main idea away in the title, “Why Homework Is a Good Idea.” You could read the paragraph summaries and come up with the main idea yourself. Since the word “homework” appears in almost every paragraph summary, you can assume that the main idea has something to do with homework. From this, it is a small step to realize that paragraphs 2 and 5 talk about the importance and advantages of homework. Paragraph 4 discusses how even busy students should do homework. Therefore, the author’s main idea is that homework is a good idea.

2. It will help you answer questions about subordinate ideas. A subordinate idea is an idea that is smaller than the main idea. The subordinate idea is often the main idea of a single *paragraph*, not the entire selection. You should have the answer to these subordinate idea questions already, since you have summarized the main point of each paragraph already. By summarizing each paragraph, you anticipate subordinate idea questions. This makes it easier for you to answer them if you come across them.

A subordinate idea question might look something like this:

What is the main idea of Paragraph 4?

- A** Education is very important for everyone.
- B** Soccer practice can take two hours or more.
- C** Even busy students can still get homework done.
- D** Homework is critical for academic success.

Choice A is a good summary of paragraph 1, not 4, so it can be crossed out as an answer. Choice B looks like an actual sentence from paragraph 4. It talks about one of the ways students are busy, but it does not cover the subordinate idea that even busy students can find time to do homework. Choice C is the correct answer. It is most similar to “*ways students who have very little time can still get their homework done.*” Choice D is just a general statement about homework.

3. Summarizing each paragraph could help you find the answers to other questions.

Your notes become an outline from your reading and can work like a map. Suppose you come to the question, “What is one reason the author gives to prove that education is important?” Look over the notes taken about each paragraph. These notes should point you towards paragraph 1, since this paragraph discusses the importance of education. Knowing where to look for a correct answer can help you find the right answer in a shorter amount of time.

Literary Passage. Literary passages are organized differently than informational passages. Often the main idea and supporting ideas are revealed through the actions of the characters and the events of the story (plot).

- What lesson can be learned from the story? (main idea)
- What did the main character(s) learn? (main idea)
- What were the important events in the story? (supporting ideas)

The answers to these questions will help you identify the main idea and supporting ideas in a literary passage. (Please see page 79 for more information on plot structure.)

☒ **SELF-CHECK**

When you think you have located the main idea and subordinate ideas, put them to the test.

☒ **Test for the main idea:**

Do all of the major ideas and details in the passage support the main idea?

☒ **Test for a subordinate idea:**

Does the idea (or detail) relate back to the main idea of the passage?

★ Distinguish Between Fact and Opinion ★

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

cute mean
ugly friendly
attractive nice

These are all **subjective** words that convey ideas that are difficult to prove. The appearance of subjective ideas in a statement almost always means that it is an opinion.

★ Learn New Vocabulary Words and Use Structural Analysis to Determine the Meaning of Unknown Words ★

Questions from the standard *Learn New Vocabulary Words* are measuring whether or not you are familiar with words appropriate for high school students. Often there are no clues in the passage to help you determine the meaning of this word. You could have learned the meaning of the word from material you have read in the past or from hearing people use the word.

STRATEGY BOX – Plug It In

To answer questions for this standard, look at the answer choices. Does one seem the most likely? Try "plugging" it in the sentence to replace the word in the question. Does the word from the answer choice make sense in the sentence? If so, it is probably the correct answer. If not, try plugging in another answer choice.

While questions for the standard *Learn New Vocabulary Words* are assessing words you may be familiar with, questions for the standard *Use Structural Analysis to Determine the Meaning of Unknown Words* are measuring your ability to use structural analysis looking at the parts of a word to determine the meaning of unknown words. A question may look something like this:

In Paragraph 7, the word *antiestablishment* MOST nearly means

- A** acting against accepted values
- B** acting for accepted values
- C** being against establishing a just society
- D** being for establishing a just society

Antiestablishment is a difficult word. If you already know the meaning, good for you! Don't feel bad if you do not know the meaning of this word. It was chosen because it would require many students to use some strategies for determining its meaning. Remember the standard is *Use Structural Analysis to Determine the Meaning of Unknown Words*.

Structural analysis is using prefixes, suffixes, and common word roots to help you determine the meaning of a word. The English language was not created from scratch. It consists of borrowed words and word parts from many different languages. Some of these word parts appear in more than one word. For instance, the word root *geo-* is Greek for “earth.” The English words *geology* (“study of the earth”) and *geometry* (“to measure land”) both contain this word root. Once you learn the meaning of *geo-*, you can take an educated guess at what a word like *geophone* means, even if you have never seen the word before.

Geophone

As its name suggests, a *geophone* is an electronic device used to listen to vibrations in the earth. Geophones can help determine whether or not an earthquake will occur in a certain area. Although the word contains *-phone*, most geophones do not have call waiting.

Take a look at the question above. It asks for the meaning of the word *antiestablishment*. You can break the word down into three distinct parts.

Distinct Word Part	Sample Word	Meaning
Prefix	anti-	opposite; against
Root	establish	to set up; found; make secure
Suffix	-ment	action; the act of

Looking at each part of the word will help you eliminate some answer choices. The prefix *anti-* means *against*, so choices B and D can be eliminated because both contain the word *for*, not *against*. This leaves only A and C. The suffix *-ment* refers to *the act of*, which makes A the better response. Using word parts, you can now conclude that *antiestablishment* means “acting against accepted, or established, values.”

STRATEGY BOX – Analyze the Word by Its Parts

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

★ Recognize Relationships in a Passage ★

The “relationships” mentioned in this standard do not mean the emotional kind. Instead, the term covers such ideas as:

Relationships	Sample Questions
Sequence of events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which event happened first in the story? • What happens immediately after the mayor loses the election?
Compare and contrast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the two brothers alike? • How are Lana and Malcolm different from each other?
Cause and effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What caused the avalanche? • How did Maria win the trip to Europe?

Questions for *Recognize Relationships in a Passage* are measuring your ability to recognize important relationships and stated information within the passage.

Questions in this category require a fairly straightforward approach. Most of these questions will ask for information that you can find directly in the passage. All you need to do is find the proper place in the passage where the information is located. If you have written quick notes about each paragraph (see page 15), it can be very easy to find the correct place in the passage to answer questions like:

What did Amelia do immediately after finding the old tin box?

- A** She placed the box back into the wall.
- B** She placed it for sale at an online auction site.
- C** She returned it to the rightful owner.
- D** She kept the box for herself.

If you took notes on the passage, you might have a paragraph note that says something like, “Amelia finds box.” That is where you should start looking in order to find the correct answer.

STRATEGY BOX – Look It Up

If possible, always refer back to the passage to find the answer to a question. Do not trust your memory. Although looking back at the passage may take some time, it is worth it to get the answer correct. The goal is to answer questions correctly, not to finish the test quickly.

On the previous sample question, all four answer choices probably appear somewhere in the passage itself. Students who are in a hurry might choose the answer choice they think is correct and not bother to make sure it is what happened *immediately* after she found the old tin box. These students would get this question incorrect simply because they did not bother to take the time to review the passage.

Study Ideas for Content Domain I

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

First, find a reading passage. Here is a list of possible sources for appropriate reading passages:

- Anthologies of American literature
- Short story collections
- Poetry collections
- Works by prominent American authors (your English teacher or librarian can give you suggestions)
- Biographies on American authors
- Informational articles about the literary movements or important literary works

After you read the passage, ask yourself these questions:

- What is this passage about?
- Does the author state any facts? Opinions? How can you tell the difference?
- Does the author compare and contrast information? If so, what is being compared and why?
- Does the author show any cause and effect relationships? If so, what was the cause and the resulting effect for each?
- In what order did things occur in the passage? What happened first?
- Are there any words I don't know? If so, can I use the way the words are constructed (structural analysis) to determine the meanings? How does the dictionary define the words?
- (For a literary passage) What important events make up the plot? What is the conflict in the passage? Who are the characters? Why are they important? What is the tone? The mood? Where does the story take place?

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

Sample Questions for Content Domain I

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

STRATEGIES FOR ANSWERING READING QUESTIONS

1. Read the test questions before reading the passage.

Reading the test questions (just the questions, not the answer choices) before reading the passage can help you focus on what you are trying to find in the passage to answer the questions. Next, read the passage. You can make notes in the test booklet as you read. When you think you have found some information that will help answer a question, make a note. Do not stop reading the passage to answer a question. After you have read the entire passage, you can go back and look at your notes and answer the questions.

2. Summarize the passage. Next to each paragraph, write a note indicating what the paragraph is about. Use your notes like a road map to help you find the information you need to answer the questions.

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

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

Directions for the Sample Questions:

1. The questions are based on passages found in the Appendices A–C. For each set of items, find the indicated passage.
2. Answer the questions that go with the passage.
3. Repeat this process for the different sets of questions.
4. After you have answered all of the questions, check your answers in the “Answers to the Content Domain I Sample Questions” section that follows. This section will give you the correct answer to each question, and it will explain why the other answer choices are incorrect.

Based on Passage #1 – “From the Shore”

1 According to the poem, what motivates a bird to fly in the night skies over the sea?

- A** to escape from its enemies
- B** to experience the challenge of the flight
- C** to look for unsuspecting prey
- D** to seek safety from the shore’s waves

2 As used in line 11, *rapture* means

- A** bliss
- B** complexity
- C** danger
- D** progress

Based on Passage #2 – “To Build a Fire”

3 Which event from the passage happens FIRST?

- A** Tom spits upon the snow.
- B** Tom reaches the forks in the trail.
- C** Tom rubs his face for circulation.
- D** Tom decides to eat his lunch.

4 What could be another appropriate title for this passage?

- A** Setting up Camp
- B** Dangers of Paul Creek
- C** Alone in the Wilderness
- D** Travel in the Klondike

Based on Passage #3 – “Edith Wharton”

- 5 What is the meaning of the word *collaborated* in the sentence, “Wharton also collaborated with a young architect....”?**
- A** composed a work of art
 - B** worked jointly with another
 - C** hired an assistant to help with a project
 - D** accumulated objects for their monetary value
- 6 Which statement from the passage is an opinion?**
- A** After a time Wharton felt lonely, and she began to write again, perhaps to escape her own reality.
 - B** Her poems and short stories appeared in a number of influential publications, including *Harper’s* and *Scribner’s*.
 - C** After the war ended in 1920, Wharton published *The Age of Innocence*.
 - D** The book was a rapid success, and Wharton was encouraged to continue writing.

Answers to the Content Domain I Sample Questions

1. Answer: **B** Standard: *Recognize relationships in a passage*

Although this is a cause and effect question—*why* does the bird fly over the sea?—you can get the correct answer, **B**, only if you read the entire poem, which emphasizes the bird’s determination to overcome the obstacles of flight and the enjoyment he gets from it. This is evident in lines 11-13. **A** can be ruled out since enemies are not mentioned in the poem. The bird may be a bird of prey, but that is not the purpose of this flight, so **C** is incorrect. **D** is also incorrect since the bird forges into the wind and rain; he does not seek refuge.

2. Answer: **A** Standard: *Learn new vocabulary words*

The word rapture means “exhilaration” or “great pleasure.” Although the bird’s flight does seem to be complex, the complexity of flight is not being described in this line so **B** is incorrect. Neither **C**, “danger,” nor **D**, “progress,” come close to conveying the meaning of the word, leaving **A** as the only accurate choice.

3. Answer: **B** Standard: *Recognize relationships in a passage*

This question is asking about sequence, the order in which events happened. For this question, you need to return to the story or check your notes. The answer is **B**. Tom pauses when he reaches the forks in the trail; all the other events happen while he is stopped there.

4. Answer: **C** Standard: *Recognize main ideas and subordinate ideas*

Another title for this passage should clearly suggest its main idea. **A** is incorrect because Tom has not set up camp yet. Although there are dangers mentioned, the dangers are not related to Paul's Creek so **B** is not correct. **D** is too broad. Only **C** gets at the content of the story, a young man setting off alone in the wilderness.

5. Answer: **B** Standard: *Use structural analysis skills to determine meaning of unknown words*

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

6. Answer: **A** Standard: *Distinguish between fact and opinion*

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

Content Domain II: Reading for Critical Analysis



A LOOK AT CONTENT DOMAIN II

Test questions in this content domain will measure your ability to read critically. Your answers to the questions will help show how well you can perform on the following standards:

- * Read and recognize different types of writing
- * Read critically, recognize assumptions, and evaluate ideas
- * Understand how words gain meaning depending on context
- * Understand, develop, and use specifics and generalizations
- * Make inferences based on the passage
- * Draw reasonable conclusions from various sources
- * Understand human behavior through literature
- * Create hypotheses and predict outcomes
- * Defend conclusions rationally
- * Solve problems using analogies and metaphors
- * Analyze logical relationships in arguments and detect fallacies
- * Recognize purposes and methods of writing and identify the writer's tone and point of view
- * Analyze American literature representing diversity
- * Apply knowledge of literary terms to works of literature
- * Understand literary movements and periods
- * Understand major influences on literature

In general, Content Domain II addresses critical thinking skills. **Critical thinking** occurs when a reader takes a piece of text and then makes observations, guesses, assumptions, and/or interpretations from it. This means that when you read, you attempt to answer questions like:

- What will happen next in the story?
- Is Character Y telling the truth? If he is lying, why is he lying? What does he hope to gain?
- Why does Character B believe her brother will help her?
- What did Character H really mean when he said, “Rosebud”?
- How will this story probably end?

The answers to these questions cannot be found directly in the passage. You need to think about what you have read and piece together the information to come up with a logical answer. Some students feel uncomfortable using their critical thinking skills to answer

the questions, so they continue to look for the answer in the passage, when the answer is not there. Do not let this happen to you. Realize that the clues you need to answer the questions are in the passage, but they are not directly stated.



Spotlight on the Standards

*** Read and Recognize Different Types of Writing ***

There are many different types of writing, and each form of writing often serves a specific purpose. Think about the difference between a poem and a newspaper article. A newspaper article is usually written to inform readers of a current event, like a political election. Articles are supposed to be factual. In contrast, a poem is often written to convey an emotional state or feeling the author wishes to share. Poems are often filled with colorful imagery and vivid use of words.

Imagine reading a newspaper article and thinking it was a poem. You would probably say, “This is the most boring poem I have ever read!” The reverse is also true. If you read a poem believing it to be a newspaper article, you would not end up very informed.

This example is a little extreme, but it does show the importance of recognizing different types of writing and their purposes. Questions for this standard may ask you to identify a genre for a passage or where the passage would most likely appear. A question might look something like this:

Where would you MOST likely find the following text?

LOST—one Shropshire terrier. A tag around the neck shows dog’s name, Mr. Wurbles. Last seen around Vannin Road Park on Saturday morning. Fifty dollar reward.

- A in a pet supply catalog
- B in an essay about dogs
- C in the local newspaper
- D in a magazine about dogs

Look at each answer choice and ask yourself, “What is the purpose of this type of writing?” Starting with choice A, what is the purpose of a catalog? A catalog is used by a company to show off items they hope you will buy. There’s no reason a message about a lost dog would appear there, even if it is a pet supply catalog. For choice B, what is the purpose of an essay about dogs? An essay would give general information about dogs, and a message about a specific lost dog would be out of place.

The two best choices are C and D. While a note about a lost Shropshire terrier might appear in a terrier magazine, it is not that likely, and the question asks for the most likely

source. Magazines are usually distributed nationally, and the dog, Mr. Wurbles, has probably not crossed any state lines since his disappearance. He is probably still somewhere in the area of Vannin Road Park. This is why most local newspapers carry a “Lost and Found” section. The answer is C.

*** Read Critically, Recognize Assumptions, and Evaluate Ideas ***

The questions for this standard will measure your ability to make assumptions. An **assumption** is something believed to be true without proof that it is true. Assumptions are often not written out, and it is up to the reader to understand what they are. This is not an impossible chore, as we all make many assumptions each day. All human conversations contain assumptions. Consider this small exchange between two football fans watching an Atlanta Falcons-Chicago Bears football game:

Fan 1: Are you a Falcons fan?

Fan 2: No, I’m from Chicago.

This brief exchange should make sense to everyone who reads it. Here is the same exchange, only this time some assumptions have been written out.

Fan 1: Are you a Falcons fan?

Assumptions:

- *People at an Atlanta Falcons-Chicago Bears football game are fans of football.*
- *These football fans are also fans of one team or the other.*
- *People from Atlanta are probably fans of the Falcons.*
- *People tend to root for the football team based in their city.*
- *Rooting for a team means they go to the games hoping to see their team win.*

Fan 2: No, I’m from Chicago.

Assumptions;

- *Location usually determines the team a fan roots for.*
- *Stating “I’m from Chicago” means that I am a football fan of the Chicago Bears.*
- *I have come to this game to root for my team, and I hope it wins.*
- *This means that I am not an Atlanta Falcons fan, since only one team can win a football game.*

All of the assumptions stated are true, but did you need them written out to understand the exchange? Probably not. Your mind made all the connections for you, and you used the assumptions to understand the exchange without even realizing it.

As you might expect, making the wrong assumptions will affect your ability to read a story and understand it correctly. Questions for this standard are designed to measure your ability to make or recognize correct assumptions. If you make the same assumptions as the author, then the chances are very high that you understand what the author is trying to say.

STRATEGY BOX – What’s the Connection?

Assumptions are like unseen threads that knit conversations together. To find them, look at what is written and ask yourself, “What must be true in order for these statements to be true?” The answer to this question will be the assumptions underlying an argument or piece of writing.

* Understand How Words Gain Meaning Depending on Context *

The questions for this standard measure your ability to use context clues to determine the meaning of an unknown word and to understand that words can have different meanings depending on how they are used. A question may look something like this:

In Paragraph 4, the word *truncated* most nearly means

- A modified
- B added
- C shortened
- D replaced

Truncated is a difficult word. But, you can use context clues to help determine its meaning. The **context** of a word is simply the words that appear before and after an unknown word. Understanding the words around an unknown word should help give you clues to its meaning. Look at the words around *truncated* in the sample below:

Everyone could tell it had once been a huge tree. The roots at its base were as large as a grown person. When the tree died, someone had used a chainsaw to cut away most of the tree. All that was left was a ***truncated*** stump of wood. The stump made a picnic table that could seat eight people around it comfortably.

The words around *truncated* should give you a good idea about what it means. There was once a large tree; what happened to it? Most of it was cut down, leaving only a “truncated” stump of wood. What remained could best be described as a shortened, or truncated, piece of wood. Therefore, answer choice C is the right answer for the first question.

STRATEGY BOX – Use the Words Around It

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Context is a useful term to know when discussing the meaning of a word. Two other useful terms are denotation and connotation. The dictionary definition of a word is its **denotation**. The **connotation** of a word is a meaning or idea associated with a word.

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

*** Understand, Develop, and Use Specifics and Generalizations ***

Generalizations are broad statements that are mostly (or generally) true. In contrast, a **specific** statement talks about a single, unique occurrence. One way to think about the difference between generalizations and specific examples is to compare them to some common grammar rules. Many of these rules, like "*i* before *e* except after *c*," are generalizations that are true most of the time. However, there are some specific words—

like *weigh* and *neighbor*—that do not match the generalization. These words are specific exceptions to the general rule.

Using generalizations and specific examples are two ways authors support an argument. Some of the passages you will read will be written to prove a certain point. Therefore, you can expect to see some generalizations and specific examples used in these essays to support the author’s viewpoint. Here is an example of a generalization and a specific statement that you might find in a passage on pollution.

Generalization: Pollution is bad for the environment.

Specific Statement: Animals can get caught in plastic rings from soda cans.

✱ **Make Inferences Based on the Passage** ✱

This standard requires you to make inferences. An **inference** is making a logical conclusion based on known information. For example, you are reading a story about a boy walking home from school. He is wearing a jacket, and dead leaves are crunching beneath his feet. What time of year is it? While the author doesn’t tell you it is fall, you can use the clues to infer that it is fall.

When you **infer** something to be true, you believe it to be true based on some fact or evidence. After reading a passage talking about water, you might infer that the main idea of the passage is that “Conserving water is an important step every country should take.” You might conclude that this is the main idea even though the text never specifically states that this is the main idea. Instead, you use clues and facts within the passage to infer its true meaning.

Many questions under this standard will be similar to questions found under Content Domain I, especially those found in the “Recognize Relationships” standard that begins on page 19. The difference will be that the answer to these Content Domain II questions will not be stated directly in the passage; you will have to make an inference about it. The difference can be seen in these two sample questions:

CONTENT DOMAIN I

What did Amelia do immediately after finding the old tin box?

- A She placed the box back into the wall.
- B She placed it for sale at an online auction site.
- C She returned it to the rightful owner.
- D She kept the box for herself.

Soft Words

Phrases such as *most likely* and *probably* are often associated with inference questions. Since inferred conclusions are based on clues in the passage and not direct statements, it is impossible to know exactly what happened. However, an inference based on clues and sound reasoning can provide a good answer about what *most likely* happened or what *probably* happened.

CONTENT DOMAIN II

After finding the old tin box, the next thing Amelia probably did was to

- A** place the box back into the wall
- B** place the box for sale at an online auction site
- C** return the box to the rightful owner
- D** keep the box for herself

Identifying the author's purpose is another type of question that falls under this particular standard. These questions ask you to determine the reason the author wrote a particular passage or section of a passage. Was the author trying to amuse readers, or was the goal to warn readers of a possible danger? The author's purpose will always affect the way a passage is written.

You will have to infer the author's purpose for the passage, since it is highly unlikely that a passage will begin, "The goal of my essay is to inform." Here are some common purposes for writing:

- To amuse or entertain
- To persuade or convince
- To inform
- To instruct
- To warn

When considering the author's purpose, you should consider the author's main idea and writing techniques. You should also consider how the passage makes you feel. If the author does his or her job well, reading the passage should affect you in some way. Passages written to prove a particular point should leave you convinced, or at least partially convinced. Passages meant to entertain you make you smile or laugh. Even if you don't find the jokes funny, you should realize a passage filled with humor is meant to entertain, while a passage written with a bunch of facts about a certain topic is designed to inform and educate.

*** Draw Reasonable Conclusions from Various Sources ***

A **conclusion** is a statement that must be true if the supporting statements are true. These supporting statements might be facts, or they might be assumptions that are believed to be true.



Visualizing a pyramid is one way to understand the relationship between conclusions and supporting statements. The conclusion is the top block of a pyramid. It rests on all the lower blocks, which are the supporting statements. With this image, you can see how conclusions are "held up" by their supporting arguments and how supporting arguments "build up" to a conclusion.

Conclusion questions will focus on the relationship between supporting arguments and conclusions. You could see something like:

Which statement from the passage supports the conclusion that a bird the size of a small plane really exists in the Alaskan wilderness?

- A Several Alaskan companies use small planes.
- B People outdoors often imagine they see things.
- C All the animals in Alaska have been researched.
- D Nature has the ability to constantly surprise us.

The conclusion is given to you in the question. Ask yourself, “Which answer choice helps support this conclusion?” The answer choice that helps will be the correct answer. In this case, “Nature has the ability to constantly surprise us” helps support the claim that something never seen before—a bird the size of a small plane—actually exists. The answer is D.

*** Understand Human Behavior Through Literature ***

Reading a good work of fiction can provide you with more than just entertainment. Thinking about what motivates different characters and how they interact with each other can give you ideas about how people—including you—might act in a similar situation.

Often a character in a book will do something that you would never do. Instead of throwing the book down and thinking, “That’s stupid!” why not ask yourself, Why did the character do that? How did this affect the other characters? How did this action change the course of events in the story?

Questions for this standard will focus on the feelings and motivations of characters and how the characters interact. Questions might look like some of these:

- How does Lenny feel about Randal at the beginning of the story?
- Why did Hiroko want to buy the new bike?
- What do Tanisha’s actions suggest about her character?

STRATEGY BOX – Empathize

Good readers usually try to understand the characters better by **empathizing**, or identifying with another’s thoughts and feelings. Empathizing with the characters helps stories come alive, and it gives readers more insight into the motivations of the characters and how they influence each other.

*** Create Hypotheses and Predict Outcomes ***

A **hypothesis** is something that is believed to be true for the purpose of investigation. Roughly speaking, you can say that a hypothesis is a “good guess.” Like an inference (see page 31), a hypothesis involves looking at what you know and forming a logical conclusion. The word is often used by scientists who come up with an idea or hypothesis and then work to determine whether or not their hypothesis is correct. In literature, hypotheses often predict events that happen before or after the story itself takes place.

Questions for this standard might look like these:

- In the future, what will Becky probably want to do?
- The next time Juan goes to the beach he will most likely
- After Malcolm leaves, the first thing he will probably do is

The words *probably* and *most likely* appear because the correct answer will be a hypothesis, rather than a statement of fact. All you have to do is determine which answer choice is the most plausible “good guess,” based on what you have already read in the story. If you can support your hypothesis with events and facts from the passage, then you stand a good chance of answering this type of question correctly.

STRATEGY BOX – Be a Writer

One way to work on this standard is to imagine you are a sequel writer. Your job is to continue popular stories from the moment that the story ends. Remember that your sequel should include plausible events that would logically follow the action at the end of a story.

*** Defend Conclusions Rationally ***

Questions for this standard are related to the concepts that appear under the standard *Draw Reasonable Conclusions from Various Sources* on page 32. Make sure to look over this section if you are not fairly confident you understand what the terms **conclusions** and **supporting arguments** mean.

Strong supporting arguments are needed to defend a conclusion rationally. In fact, you might even see the word *support* in the question itself, which could look something like:

Which of the following statements BEST supports Katrina’s belief that she is “not a morning person”?

- A Katrina considers 11:30 a.m. to be early in the morning.
- B Katrina enjoys watching movies that start around midnight.
- C Katrina’s parents like to sleep in on the weekends.
- D Katrina enjoys jogging around the lake at sunrise.

For this question, the conclusion is that Katrina is “not a morning person.” One answer choice will contain a supporting argument that backs up this belief. Choice C has no relevance, since Katrina’s parents have nothing to do with the conclusion. Choice D is very wrong, since if Katrina enjoyed jogging at sunrise, she would be a morning person. Choice B might seem close, but staying up late doesn’t mean you don’t like to get up early. The answer is A, since 11:30 a.m. is not early in the morning, and only someone who is not a morning person would think 11:30 is early in the morning.

STRATEGY BOX – Become a Detective

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

* Solve Problems Using Analogies and Metaphors *

An **analogy** is a similarity or relationship between two words. The key to answering word analogy questions is to focus on the relationship between the two words. Consider the analogy between the words *collie* and *dog*. How are these words related?

A collie *is a type of* dog. The relationship can be described by the phrase “is a type of.” This same relationship will be found in the correct answer choice.

A collie is to dog as a

- A *spaniel is to friend*
- B *pet is to hound*
- C *grizzly is to bear*
- D *greyhound is to speed*

Many students do not focus on the relationship between the top two words, which leads them to make incorrect connections. For instance, some students might see the word *dog* in the question and connect it with *spaniel* in Choice A, *pet* and *hound* in Choice B, and even *greyhound* in choice D. Spaniels and greyhounds are both types of dogs, just as *collie* is a type of dog. Also, dogs make good pets, and *hound* is another word for *dog*, although many would say that hound has a different connotation. (Remember connotation from page 30?)

Yet choices A, B, and D are all incorrect. The relationship is that a collie *is a type of* dog, and the best answer will have that same relationship. Looking at choice D in this light, you can see that a “greyhound is a type of speed” does not make sense. Neither does a

“pet is a type of hound,” for that matter. You could make the argument that a “spaniel is a type of friend,” but it is not as strong as a “grizzly is a type of bear.”

The two words in choice C have the same relationship as the two words in the question, which is why it is the correct answer.

There are some analogous relationships that appear fairly frequently. Here is a list of them with examples given for each. Look over the analogies in the chart and make sure you understand the relationships.

Analogy Type	Example
Synonym	Drench : Soak
Opposite	Calm : Angry
Part & Whole	Blade : Lawn mower
Object & Attribute	Candle : Light

STRATEGY BOX – What’s the Relationship?

Always focus on the relationship between the first two words given in an analogy problem. Once you describe that relationship accurately, look for that same relationship in the answer choices. The correct answer will have the same relationship.

A **metaphor** (more thoroughly discussed under the standard *Apply knowledge of literary terms to works of literature*) is a direct comparison of two things. A metaphor states that something *is* something else. Metaphors can help us better understand the characteristics of something. Here is an example of a metaphor: “Jack’s mind is a computer with limited memory and clusters of lost files.” In this comparison, the workings of the mind are compared to those of a computer. It helps us understand something about Jack—that he cannot always remember important information when he would like to, even though his mind is a well-designed tool.

You might be asked a question like the following:

Hank is a _____ when he plays football.

Which word BEST completes the metaphor above?

- A gossip
- B prince
- C bulldozer
- D butterfly

Only C makes complete sense. Choice A may be true of Hank but it has nothing to do with playing football. Choice B implies formality and politeness, qualities not usually

associated with football. Choice D suggests light and fluttery movements, not the type of movements that are usually effective in a football game. Choice D suggests power and the ability to get through anything, both important qualities in a good football player. Therefore D is the correct answer.

*** Analyze Logical Relationships in Arguments and Detect Fallacies ***

Ever hear the saying, “There are two sides to everything”? No matter what the issue, no two people see it exactly alike. Suppose your school decides to serve food delivered from local food establishments instead of offering freshly made cafeteria meals every day. Does everyone agree with this idea? Probably not. Some people love the cafeteria’s food; other people long to have the choice to buy Pizza Heaven’s pizzas or Chicken King’s breaded chicken sandwiches. Who will “win” this debate? Most often it will be the side that presents the strongest argument.

A good argument relies on sound reasoning. You accept the basic truth of some statements and draw logical conclusions based on those statements (See pages 32 and 34 to refresh your memory on drawing conclusions.) Here is an example. You know that all Chicken King sandwich shops have the same menu. You’ve been to the Chicken King shop at the mall and you know that it serves curly fries on its menu. Therefore, you can logically conclude that the Chicken King school menu will offer curly fries. You began with statements you knew to be true and drew a reasonable conclusion based on those statements.

Some people may offer support for an argument that sounds good on the surface but relies on illogical thinking. This mistake in thinking is called a **fallacy**. “All the cool people eat Pizza Heaven pizza” is a fallacy. First of all, who are the cool people? And do they all really eat Pizza Heaven Pizza? This fallacy tries to make you feel left out if you don’t want to eat Pizza Heaven pizza. Another fallacy is “If you eat at the cafeteria, you will get a more nutritious meal.” This fallacy oversimplifies the situation. You won’t get a more nutritious meal at the cafeteria if all you eat is a bag of chips and a cookie.

Questions for this standard evaluate your ability to analyze arguments and detect fallacies. They may ask you to identify what is wrong with an argument or to choose an appropriate conclusion based on certain pieces of evidence.

STRATEGY BOX – Use a Syllogism

A **syllogism** is a three-part statement that helps you test your reasoning. It contains a **major premise**, a general statement we basically believe to be true; a **minor premise**, a more specific statement believed to be true; and a **conclusion**, one that can be reasonably drawn from the premises. Here is an example of a valid syllogism:

All teachers in my school drive a car to work.
Mr. Thompson is a math teacher in my school.
Therefore, Mr. Thompson drives a car to work.

An invalid syllogism might go something like this:

My English teacher eats a cookie every day after lunch.
Mr. Thompson is a teacher at my school.
Therefore, Mr. Thompson eats a cookie every day after lunch.

Organizing your reasoning into a syllogism can help you see whether an argument makes sense.

*** Recognize Different Purposes and Methods of Writing and Identify the Writer's Tone and Point of View ***

Every literary work has tone, an overall sense of the author's attitude toward the subject matter. Some works have a very strong tone and others may have a more neutral tone, but even a neutral tone suggests something important about the author's feelings. A work's tone may be described by any number of adjectives—sympathetic, sarcastic, playful, defiant, awed, nostalgic, ironic, somber—depending on the author's choice of words and details. (See page 81 for more information on tone.)

Here are two versions of the same scene. The words and details used suggest a completely different tone for each.

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

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

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

Therefore, you might describe tone of the first scene as somber or hopeless. In the second scene, the woman dances across the snow, so lightly that her feet do not seem to leave any marks in it. She welcomes both the wind and the snow. A splash of color—the red hat—brightens the scene. You might say that the tone of the second scene is joyful and hopeful.

Questions about tone might ask you to identify the overall tone of a story or the tone in a section of the story. It might also ask you to decide how the author establishes this tone, e.g., Which detail best illustrates the story’s hopeful tone?

The author’s point of view is how the author feels about a subject or issue. For example, Henry David Thoreau was an active environmentalist. He believed that people should simplify their lives and learn to live in harmony with nature. Writers may state their point of view directly, as Thoreau did in his book *Walden*, or they may imply their point of view by choosing precise words and details, such as with tone. In fiction, the writer’s point of view may become apparent by studying the words and actions of a particular character. For this standard, you might see questions like this: Based on the passage, how does the author feel about suburban life? Which statement best shows that the author supports the construction of a new performing arts center downtown?

STRATEGY BOX – Take Notes

Images and details that “jump out” at you are important in establishing both tone and point of view. Make note of these as you read so that you are prepared to answer questions for this standard.

* Analyze American Literature Representing Diversity *

Literature is for and about all kinds of people—people of different ages, genders, races, religions, and cultures. When we read about people from another country or people whose beliefs are different from our own, we begin to understand the world a little better. While accepting other people’s differences, we also recognize the many ways in which we are all the same. Let’s say you read a story about Aida, a young girl from the Russian countryside who goes to live with her grandparents in Moscow. The customs, setting, and foods may be unfamiliar to you as you accompany Aida on her journey. You feel as though you have entered a different world. Yet when Aida tries to make new friends on her first day at a new school, you know exactly how she feels.

Aspects of cultural diversity may influence a story's plot, characters, setting, mood, and theme. Questions for this standard will ask you to analyze the significance of diversity in a story. For example, how does a character's ethnic origin influence his reactions to an event? What circumstances in a character's background determine how she behaves toward another character? How does the setting of the story affect the story's mood?

*** Apply Knowledge of Literary Terms to Works of Literature ***

Authors use a variety of techniques to make literature more powerful, more effective, and more memorable. Using these techniques allows writers to convey deep meanings with fewer words. (You are probably already familiar with a number of literary terms. If you wish to review other literary terms not defined here, see Appendix D.)

Questions for this standard will measure your knowledge of common literary terms. The best way to prepare for these questions is to study literary terms, be sure you understand them, and be able to identify examples of them. You might be given a word, phrase, or sentence from the text and asked to apply the correct literary term to it. Conversely, you might be given the literary term and asked to choose which phrase or sentence is an example of it. Below is an explanation of some common literary terms you may be tested on.

Alliteration. Alliteration is the repetition of identical beginning consonant sounds. You may have been introduced to alliteration with the tongue twister, “Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.” The repetition of the consonant p makes this line memorable. Alliteration adds emphasis to meaning and a rhythmic quality to a line of poetry or a sentence in a short story.

Flashback. In flashback, the author interrupts the scene of a narrative to tell about earlier events. The event is often told from a particular character's point of view, perhaps as he or she recalls an event from memory: “Lana thought back to her first visit to the beach....” This technique allows writers to reveal more about character and plot without disturbing the momentum of the story. Look for time order words such as *when*, *after*, *before*, and *earlier* to help you detect flashback.

Foreshadowing. An author often gives hints or clues as to what will happen in a story. This technique is called foreshadowing. Foreshadowing prepares the reader for what is to come, at the same time creating suspense. For example, as a boy is packing for a camping trip, the author may describe a multi-tooled camping knife in great detail. That same knife will become significant later as a tool for making a fire as the boy must survive alone in the wilderness. The author has left a clue as to its importance.

Hyperbole. Pronounced “hi PER bowl lee,” hyperbole simply means exaggeration. Authors use hyperbole for emphasis or humorous effect. The sentence, “She tramped through the house like an elephant thundering through the jungle,” is an example of hyperbole. It creates a vivid but exaggerated picture of how a girl moves through a house.

Irony. Does it seem like it always rains on the weekends, never on weekdays? That’s *ironic*. There are three types of irony. When things happen that are in direct contrast to what we expect (or would like to happen), **situational irony** occurs. When people say one thing but mean the opposite, such as you say “Isn’t this a *lovely* day?” on the rainy Saturday you had hoped to play a baseball game, they use **verbal irony**. The third type, **dramatic irony**, happens when the reader knows something the character doesn’t—that the character is about to have a surprise party, for example.

Metaphor. Metaphor is one of the most commonly used literary devices. A metaphor compares two things directly, without using the words *like* or *as*. One famous metaphor comes from William Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*: “All the world’s a stage,/And all the men and women merely players.” Here, and throughout the rest of this speech, Shakespeare says that daily life is pretty much like a stage play. Metaphor is a sort of shorthand, allowing an author to convey a lot of information in a very condensed way.

Onomatopoeia. *Splash, fizz, honk, whoosh, buzz*—all of these words are examples of onomatopoeia (ah no MAH toe PEE uh), or the technique of forming words that imitate specific sounds. Onomatopoetic words precisely fill a void, bridging a critical gap between sound and written language.

Personification. Personification gives human characteristics to animals, objects, or ideas. You’ve probably read some of Aesop’s fables. In fables, the animals exhibit human qualities such as greed, compassion, cleverness, and wisdom, usually in order to teach a lesson about life. Personification helps us relate the unfamiliar to the familiar and strengthens the meaning of a poem or story.

Pun. Puns are plays on words that have similar meanings, as in the following example: “When you step on a *scale* and discover you have gained ten pounds, it’s time to *scale* back your eating habits.” Although puns are usually clever and witty, they often make us groan when we understand the double meanings of the words. Authors use puns most often to add humor, but also to call attention to dialogue or to illuminate character.

Refrain. “Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way! Oh, what fun it is to ride on a one-horse open sleigh!” This is probably one of the most famous examples of a refrain, a word, phrase, or series of lines that is repeated, adding rhythm and emphasis to a song or poem. Speechmakers also use refrains to make speeches more dramatic, rhythmic and memorable.

Repetition. Repetition is simply the act of repeating words and phrases throughout a work, or repeating literary devices, such as metaphors, symbols, or types of imagery. Repetition calls attention to the idea that is being repeated and gives it added importance. For example, an author may repeat an image of a watch several times during a story. The image may be emphasizing the idea that time passes by swiftly. You can be sure that whatever is being repeated in a story or poem is essential to understanding its complete meaning.

Rhyme. Rhyme is the repetition of sounds, most commonly heard at the ends of lines in poetry, as in “Twinkle, twinkle, little *star*/ how I wonder what you *are*.” Rhyme can occur every line or every fourth line—wherever the poet decides. Not all poems rhyme, nor do they have to, but rhyme can emphasize ideas or images and unify thought, as well as add music to a poem. When you read a poem that has rhyme, look at the rhyming words and see how they contribute to the overall meaning of the poem.

Simile. Like a metaphor, a simile compares two things. The difference is that a simile uses explicit words to make the comparison, such as *like* or *as*. Similes have the same effect as metaphors: they say a great deal using very few words. Here is an example: “The ants trailed under the canopy of leaves like a train moving slowly into the station.” Note that the comparison is unexpected; we don’t usually associate ants with trains. Yet the comparison helps us picture the ants moving at a slow, steady pace, one after the other, like the cars on a train.

Symbol. A symbol is a person, place, or object in a work that has significance beyond its surface meaning. Symbols are common in everyday life: people use flags to represent freedom, doves to represent peace, roses to represent love. In literature, symbols are usually not so obvious. For example, on a literal level a plow is just a farm tool, but it can take on deeper significance depending on its context. In a story about a family establishing a farm during the 1800s, the plow may come to symbolize the demanding and endless drudgery of pioneer life.

✱ **Understand Literary Movements and Periods** ✱

This standard tests your knowledge of literary movements and time periods in American literature and the ways in which literary works reflect the principles of these movements. Just as people grow and change, American literature has grown and changed a great deal over the centuries. A literary work from a specific time period usually reflects certain characteristics, depending on historical events, philosophical influences, and human interaction. Questions for this standard may ask you to identify the literary time period to which a work belongs or to identify an aspect of the work that is characteristic of a particular movement.

The information that follows summarizes the major movements and periods in American Literature.

Colonial Period, 1620-1800. During this period, the newly arrived colonists were settling in, creating villages and towns and establishing new governments, while protesting the regime of the old one ruled by the British. Literature of this period reflects the religious influence of the Puritans as well as the independent spirit of a new America. Famous writers include William Bradford, who writes about the establishment of the new colony; Anne Bradstreet, whose poetry focuses on daily life and family relationships; and Jonathan Edwards, a Puritan minister whose writing reflects the moral attitudes of the time. Political writings by Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson also belong to this time period.

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

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

Modern Period, 1900-Today. Twentieth century in America was marked by wars, economic prosperity along with depression, commercialism, and increased population. The independent, individualistic spirit that was distinctively American seemed threatened. Writers such as Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and T. S. Eliot explored themes of alienation and change and confronted people's fears and disillusionments. During this time, African-American literature flourished, inspired by writers such as Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston of the Harlem Renaissance. Characteristics of modern literature include extensive use of symbolism, irony, and understatement. Writers experimented with new techniques, such as **stream of consciousness**, in which the random, seemingly unconnected thoughts of a character are revealed. Readers must often use a good deal of inference to understand character and theme, as meaning is suggested more than directly stated.