

High School English/Language Arts Standards

Reading Standards for Literature Grades 9-12

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The anchor standards and high school grade-specific standards work in tandem to define expectations—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity.

Grades 9-10 students:

Key Ideas and Details

1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as implicit inferences drawn from the text.
2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; restate and summarize main ideas or events, in correct sequence, after reading a text.
3. Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

Craft and Structure

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, use literary devices appropriate to genre (e.g., foreshadowing, imagery, allusion or symbolism), order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.
6. Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature (e.g., mythology, colonialism, local culture), drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic media, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" and Breughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).
8. (Not applicable to literature)
9. Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend a range of literature from a variety of cultures, within a complexity band appropriate to grade 9 (from upper grade 8 to grade 10), with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend a range of literature from a variety of cultures, within a complexity band appropriate to grade 10 (from upper grade 9 to grade 11), with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Grades 11-12 students:

Key Ideas and Details

1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain (ambiguity).
2. Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; restate and summarize main ideas or events, in correct sequence, after reading a text.
3. Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

Craft and Structure

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
5. Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
6. Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, understatement, or attitude).

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text. (Include at least one play by Shakespeare and one play by an American dramatist.)
8. (Not applicable to literature)
9. Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend a range of literature from a variety of cultures, within a complexity band appropriate to grade 11 (from upper grade 10 to grade 12), with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend a range of literature from a variety of cultures, at the high end of the grades 11–12 text complexity band independently and proficiently.