



ISASP

IOWA STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT
of STUDENT PROGRESS

**ISASP Test Specifications
English Language Arts
Spring 2026**

Prepared By
**Iowa Testing
Programs**

ISASP Specifications 2026

English Language Arts – Reading

The English Language Arts (ELA) assessments of Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) address the Iowa Academic Standards in Reading, Language, and Writing adopted by the state in Spring 2024. The ISASP ELA assessment is comprised of two separately administered tests: Reading and Language/Writing.

For the 2026 administration, coverage of all three Reading domains (Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas) across all grade levels was increased with the addition of one reading passage and accompanying items per test. The results will provide a more reliable estimate of student reading proficiency and a deeper coverage of the standards.

The addition of one reading passage will enhance the alignment of the distribution of literature and informational text to both the Iowa Academic Standards for English Language Arts (p.6) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading assessment frameworks. Reading specifications will follow the distribution of literature and informational text as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Literature and Informational Text for Reading

Grades	Literature	Informational Text
3-5	50%	50%
6-8	45%	55%
9-11	30%	70%

Adaptive Testing

All Reading tests use an adaptive design, allowing for greater precision of student performance across the entire performance continuum. Utilizing the adaptive design will help ensure that students see content that is appropriately rigorous.

Specifications Tables

Table 2 provides the item totals for Reading by grade. Although ISASP is an untimed test, Table 3 provides recommended administration times. Table 4 provides the percentage of operational items on each test form aligned to each Depth-of-Knowledge (DOK) level. Table 5 provides domain-level specifications. Domain-level specifications can be used to better understand domain coverage on all operational ISASP tests and to support interpretation of student scores.

Tables 6-13 provide standards-level specifications. Standards-level specifications help guide test assembly at a more granular level.

When developing aligned items for ISASP to the Iowa Academic Standards, both the applicable College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards as well as the grade-specific standards are considered. This approach is in accordance with the following guidance given in the Iowa Academic Standards for English Language Arts (p. 13 and repeated elsewhere): “The CCR [Anchor] and grade-specific standards are necessary complements – the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity – that together define the skills and understanding that all students must demonstrate.”

Table 2. Item Totals, ISASP Reading

Grade	Operational Item Total	Field Test item Total	Total Items
3	36	6	42
4	37	6	43
5	38	6	44
6	40	6	46
7	41	6	47
8	41	6	47
9	41	6	47
10	41	6	47
11	41	6	47

Table 3. Recommended Testing Time (in Minutes), ISASP Reading

Grade	Recommended Testing Time
3	85
4	85
5	85
6	80
7	80
8	80
9	70
10	70
11	70

Table 4. Depth-of-Knowledge Levels, ISASP Reading

Grades	Depth- of-Knowledge Level	Percent of Operational Items
3-11	DOK 1	10-30%
	DOK 2	35-55%
	DOK 3	30-45%

Table 5. Domain-Level Specifications, Reading Grades 3-11

Grade	Domain	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
3	Key Ideas and Details	14-22	40-60%
	Craft and Structure	11-16	30-45%
	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	3-7	9-20%
4	Key Ideas and Details	15-22	40-60%
	Craft and Structure	11-17	30-45%
	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	3-7	9-20%
5	Key Ideas and Details	15-23	40-60%
	Craft and Structure	11-17	30-45%
	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	3-7	8-20%
6	Key Ideas and Details	16-24	40-60%
	Craft and Structure	12-18	30-45%
	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	3-8	8-20%
7	Key Ideas and Details	16-25	40-60%
	Craft and Structure	12-19	30-45%
	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	3-8	7-20%
8	Key Ideas and Details	16-25	40-60%
	Craft and Structure	12-19	30-45%
	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	3-8	7-20%
9	Key Ideas and Details	16-25	40-60%
	Craft and Structure	12-19	30-45%
	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	3-8	7-20%
10	Key Ideas and Details	16-25	40-60%
	Craft and Structure	12-19	30-45%
	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	3-8	7-20%
11	Key Ideas and Details	16-25	40-60%
	Craft and Structure	12-19	30-45%
	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	3-8	7-20%

Table 6. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 3

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Literature			
RL.3.1	Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	4-7	11-19%
RL.3.2	Recount and determine the central message, lesson, or moral of fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.	0-3	0-8%
RL.3.3	Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.	3-6	8-17%
RL.3.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.	2-5	6-14%
RL.3.5	Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.	1-5	3-14%
RL.3.6	Compare and contrast their own point of view (perspective) from that of the narrator or those of the characters.	0-3	0-8%
RL.3.7	Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).	0-3	0-8%
RL.3.8	(Not applicable to literature)		
RL.3.9	Compare and contrast the settings, plots, and themes of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series).	0-3	0-8%

Table 6. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 3

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Informational Text			
RI.3.1	Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.	2-6	6-17%
RI.3.2	Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.	0-3	0-8%
RI.3.3	Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.	0-4	0-11%
RI.3.4	Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.	1-5	3-14%
RI.3.5	Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.	0-3	0-8%
RI.3.6	Compare and contrast their own point of view and/or perspective from that of the author of a text.	0-3	0-8%
RI.3.7	Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).	0-3	0-8%
RI.3.8	Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).	0-3	0-8%
RI.3.9	Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.	0-3	0-8%

Table 7. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 4

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Literature			
RL.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences.	4-7	11-19%
RL.4.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.	0-3	0-8%
RL.4.3	Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).	3-6	8-16%
RL.4.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters.	2-5	5-14%
RL.4.5	Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.	1-5	3-14%
RL.4.6	Compare and contrast the point of view and/or perspective from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.	0-3	0-8%
RL.4.7	Make connections between a literary text and a visual/oral presentation of the text (e.g., mood, aspects of characters, or setting).	0-3	0-8%
RL.4.8	(Not applicable to literature)		
RL.4.9	Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in literary text.	0-3	0-8%

Table 7. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 4

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Informational Text			
RI.4.1	Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	2-6	5-16%
RI.4.2	Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.	0-3	0-8%
RI.4.3	Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific details from the text.	0-4	0-11%
RI.4.4	Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.	1-5	3-14%
RI.4.5	Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.	0-3	0-8%
RI.4.6	Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.	0-3	0-8%
RI.4.7	Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to comprehension of the text.	0-3	0-8%
RI.4.8	Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.	0-3	0-8%
RI.4.9	Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.	0-3	0-8%

Table 8. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 5

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Literature			
RL.5.1	Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences.	4-7	11-18%
RL.5.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.	0-3	0-8%
RL.5.3	Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).	3-6	8-16%
RL.5.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.	2-5	5-13%
RL.5.5	Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fit together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.	1-5	3-13%
RL.5.6	Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view and/or perspective influences how events are described.	0-3	0-8%
RL.5.7	Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or mood of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).	0-3	0-8%
RL.5.8	(Not applicable to literature)		
RL.5.9	Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.	0-3	0-8%

Table 8. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 5

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Informational Text			
RI.5.1	Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences.	2-6	5-16%
RI.5.2	Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.	0-3	0-8%
RI.5.3	Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, and/or technical text based on specific information in the text(s).	0-4	0-11%
RI.5.4	Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.	1-5	3-13%
RI.5.5	Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.	0-3	0-8%
RI.5.6	Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.	0-3	0-8%
RI.5.7	Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question or to solve a problem.	0-3	0-8%
RI.5.8	Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).	0-3	0-8%
RI.5.9	Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.	0-3	0-8%

Table 9. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 6

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Literature			
RL.6.1	Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	4-7	10-18%
RL.6.2	Analyze literary text development. a. Determine a theme of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details. b. Incorporate a theme and story details into an objective summary of the text.	0-3	0-8%
RL.6.3	Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.	3-7	8-18%
RL.6.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.	2-5	5-13%
RL.6.5	Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.	0-3	0-8%
RL.6.6	Explain how an author develops the point of view and/or perspective of the narrator or speaker in a text.	0-3	0-8%
RL.6.7	Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.	0-3	0-8%
RL.6.8	(Not applicable to literature)		
RL.6.9	Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.	0-3	0-8%

Table 9. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 6

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Informational Text			
RI.6.1	Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	4-9	10-23%
RI.6.2	Analyze informational text development. a. Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details. b. Provide an objective summary of the text that includes the central idea and relevant details.	1-4	3-10%
RI.6.3	Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through specific text examples).	0-4	0-10%
RI.6.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.	2-5	5-13%
RI.6.5	Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.	0-4	0-10%
RI.6.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.	0-4	0-10%
RI.6.7	Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.	0-3	0-8%
RI.6.8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.	0-3	0-8%
RI.6.9	Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).	0-3	0-8%

Table 10. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 7

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Literature			
RL.7.1	Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	4-7	10-17%
RL.7.2	Analyze literary text development. a. Determine a theme or central idea of a text; analyze the development of the theme throughout the text. b. Provide an objective summary of the text.	0-4	0-10%
RL.7.3	Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).	3-7	7-17%
RL.7.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meaning; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning, tone, and mood, including words with multiple meanings within a text.	2-5	5-12%
RL.7.5	Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text and how it contributes to the text meaning.	0-4	0-10%
RL.7.6	Analyze how an author contrasts the points of view and/or perspectives of different characters or narrators in a text.	0-4	0-10%
RL.7.7	Compare a text to another text in a different medium about the same topic; evaluate the techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film) and its impact on the audience.	0-3	0-7%
RL.7.8	(Not applicable to literature)		
RL.7.9	Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.	0-3	0-7%

Table 10. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 7

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Informational Text			
RI.7.1	Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	5-9	12-22%
RI.7.2	Analyze informational text development. a. Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development throughout the text. b. Provide an objective summary of the text.	1-4	2-10%
RI.7.3	Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).	0-4	0-10%
RI.7.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.	2-5	5-12%
RI.7.5	Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.	0-4	0-10%
RI.7.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.	0-4	0-10%
RI.7.7	Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).	0-3	0-7%
RI.7.8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.	0-3	0-7%
RI.7.9	Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.	0-3	0-7%

Table 11. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 8

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Literature			
RL.8.1	Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	4-7	10-17%
RL.8.2	Analyze literary text development. a. Determine a theme of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot. b. Incorporate a theme and its relationship to other story elements into an objective summary of the text.	0-4	0-10%
RL.8.3	Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.	3-7	7-17%
RL.8.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	2-5	5-12%
RL.8.5	Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.	0-4	0-10%
RL.8.6	Analyze how differences in point of view and/or perspectives of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.	0-4	0-10%
RL.8.7	Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.	0-3	0-7%
RL.8.8	(Not applicable to literature)		
RL.8.9	Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works, including describing how the material is rendered new.	0-3	0-7%

Table 11. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 8

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Informational Text			
RI.8.1	Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	5-9	12-22%
RI.8.2	Analyze informational text development. a. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas. b. Incorporate central ideas and their relationships into an objective summary of the text.	1-4	2-10%
RI.8.3	Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).	0-4	0-10%
RI.8.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices and phrases on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	2-5	5-12%
RI.8.5	Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.	0-4	0-10%
RI.8.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	0-4	0-10%
RI.8.7	Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.	0-3	0-7%
RI.8.8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	0-3	0-7%
RI.8.9	Analyze how two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.	0-3	0-7%

Table 12. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grades 9-10

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Literature			
RL.9-10.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	3-6	7-15%
RL.9-10.2	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; provide an objective summary of the text.	0-4	0-10%
RL.9-10.3	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.	2-5	5-12%
RL.9-10.4	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).	1-4	2-10%
RL.9-10.5	Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.	0-3	0-7%
RL.9-10.6	Analyze a particular point of view, perspective, or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.	0-3	0-7%
RL.9-10.7	Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.	0-3	0-7%
RL.9-10.8	(Not applicable to literature)		
RL.9-10.9	Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work.	0-3	0-7%

Table 12. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grades 9-10

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Informational Text			
RI.9-10.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	5-9	12-22%
RI.9-10.2	Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.	2-5	5-12%
RI.9-10.3	Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.	0-5	0-12%
RI.9-10.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).	2-6	5-15%
RI.9-10.5	Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).	1-5	2-12%
RI.9-10.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.	0-4	0-10%
RI.9-10.7	Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.	0-4	0-10%
RI.9-10.8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify any false statements and fallacious reasoning.	0-4	0-10%
RI.9-10.9	Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance, including how they address related themes and concepts.	0-4	0-10%

Table 13. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 11

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Literature			
RL.11-12.1	Analyze and cite strong, clear, and thorough textual evidence to support what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including where the text leaves room for subjective interpretation and perspective.	3-6	7-15%
RL.11-12.2	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; provide an objective summary of the text.	0-4	0-10%
RL.11-12.3	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).	2-5	5-12%
RL.11-12.4	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.	1-4	2-10%
RL.11-12.5	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.	0-3	0-7%
RL.11-12.6	Analyze a case in which grasping point of view or perspective requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).	0-3	0-7%
RL.11-12.7	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.	0-3	0-7%
RL.11-12.8	(Not applicable to literature)		
RL.11-12.9	Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, twentieth-, and twenty-first-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.	0-3	0-7%

Table 13. Standards-Level Specifications, Reading Grade 11

Standard	Description	Number of Operational Items	Percent of Operational Items
Informational Text			
RI.11-12.1	Analyze and 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 room for subjective interpretation and perspective.	5-9	12-22%
RI.11-12.2	Determine two or more 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 provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.	2-5	5-12%
RI.11-12.3	Analyze a complex set of ideas or complex sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.	0-5	0-12%
RI.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.	2-6	5-15%
RI.11-12.5	Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in their exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.	1-5	2-12%
RI.11-12.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or artistry of the text.	0-4	0-10%
RI.11-12.7	Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively), as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.	0-4	0-10%
RI.11-12.8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence. Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy.	0-4	0-10%
RI.11-12.9	Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.	0-4	0-10%

ISASP Specifications 2026

English Language Arts – Language/Writing

The English Language Arts (ELA) assessments of ISASP address Iowa Academic Standards in Reading, Language, and Writing. The ISASP ELA assessment is comprised of two separately administered tests: Reading and Language/Writing.

Unlike the Reading test, the specifications for the ISASP Language/Writing test for 2026 are unchanged from previous ISASP administration years.

Language

The ISASP Language test focuses on students' abilities to understand how language is used to express ideas. Students must choose the best or most appropriate way to express the ideas in a piece of writing. Choices involve organization, sentence structure, usage, clarity, and the most effective or appropriate language for a particular audience. All questions are based on complete texts (ranging from 180 to 400 words) patterned after student writing in content and style. These texts are drawn from many different types of writing familiar to students, including argument, informative/explanatory, and narrative examples. Each is presented as a draft in which certain portions have been marked to indicate a possible need for revision.

Writing

The ISASP Writing test includes a writing prompt tied to relevant texts (in addition to standard texts, students may also gather information from graphs, charts, or other text types). In responding to the writing prompt, students must take a position based on what they have read, then cite evidence from the texts to support their claim. Prompts may ask students to write explanatory, persuasive, or narrative responses. As outlined on the expanded Language/Writing blueprint document, student scores on multiple traits allow for the writing test to contribute directly to coverage of multiple Iowa Academic Standards domains.

Analytic scoring provides detailed assessment of skill level in four different areas of writing skill: Prompt Task, Development, Organization, and Language Use. The responses are amenable to scoring by both human readers and automated, artificial-intelligence (AI)-based protocols.

Specifications Tables

Table 1 provides the items totals for Language and Writing by grade. Although ISASP is an untimed test, Table 2 provides recommended administration times. Table 3 provides the percentage of items on each test form aligned to each Depth-of-Knowledge (DOK) level. Table 4 provides domain-level specifications. Domain-level specifications can be used to better understand domain coverage on all operational ISASP tests and to support interpretation of

student scores. Since the Writing test is worth a possible 20 points, the percentages in Tables 3 and 4 are given on a combined Language/Writing points metric.

Tables 5-12 provide standards-level specifications. Standards-level specifications help guide test assembly at a more granular level.

When developing items aligned to the Iowa Academic Standards, both the applicable College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards as well as the grade-specific standards are considered. This approach is in accordance with the following guidance given in the Iowa Academic Standards for English Language Arts: “The CCR [Anchor] and grade-specific standards are necessary complements – the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity – that together define the skills and understanding that all students must demonstrate” (p. 26 and repeated elsewhere). Additionally, Language items may draw from standards first presented in earlier grades to align with the statement “Students advancing through the grades are expected to...retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades” (p. 37 and repeated elsewhere).

Table 1. Operational Item Counts, ISASP Language/Writing

Grade	Operational Item Total, Language	Field Test Item Total, Language	Total Language Items	Total Writing Items (Prompt)
3	24	6	30	1
4	25	6	31	1
5	26	6	32	1
6	27	6	33	1
7	28	6	34	1
8	28	6	34	1
9	29	6	35	1
10	29	6	35	1
11	29	6	35	1

Table 2. Recommended Testing Time (in Minutes), ISASP Language/Writing

Grade	Recommended Testing Time, Language	Recommended Testing Time, Writing	Total Recommended Testing Time
3	35	45	80
4	35	45	80
5	35	45	80
6	35	35	70
7	35	35	70
8	35	35	70
9	30	30	60
10	30	30	60
11	30	30	60

Table 3. Depth-of-Knowledge levels, ISASP Language/Writing

Grades	Depth of Knowledge Level	Percent of Operational Points
3-11	DOK 1	5-15%
	DOK 2	20-35%
	DOK 3	60-70%

Table 4. Domain-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grades 3-11

Grades	Domain	Percent of Operational Points
3-11	Conventions of Standard English / Knowledge of Language	35-50%
	Vocabulary Acquisition and Use	5-15%
	Text Types and Purposes	20-35%
	Production and Distribution of Writing	5-15%
	Research to Build and Present Knowledge	5-15%

Table 5. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 3

Standard	Description	Direct Writing Assessment, Language Test, or Both?	Number of Operational Language Items	Percent of Operational Language Items
W.3.1	Write opinion pieces, supporting a point of view with reasons. a. Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons. b. Provide reasons that support the opinion. c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., <i>because, therefore, since, for example</i>) to connect opinion and reasons. d. Provide a concluding statement or section.	Both	1-4	4-16%
W.3.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. a. Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details. c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., <i>also, another, and, more, but</i>) to connect ideas within categories of information. d. Provide a concluding statement or section.	Both	1-4	4-16%
W.3.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. a. Use an organizational structure to establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. b. Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations. c. Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order. d. Provide a sense of closure.	Both	1-4	4-16%
W.3.4	With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above)	DWA		

Table 5. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 3

Standard	Description	Direct Writing Assessment, Language Test, or Both?	Number of Operational Language Items	Percent of Operational Language Items
W.3.5	With scaffolding and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 3.)	DWA		
W.3.6	With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.	NA		
W.3.7	Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.	NA		
W.3.8	Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.	DWA		
L.3.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. a. Explain the function of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in general and their functions in particular sentences. b. Form and use regular and irregular plural nouns. c. Use abstract nouns (e.g., <i>childhood</i>). d. Form and use regular and irregular verbs. e. Form and use the simple (e.g., <i>I walked</i> ; <i>I walk</i> ; <i>I will walk</i>) verb tenses. f. Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement. g. Form and use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified. h. Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. i. Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.	Both	5-8	20-33%
L.3.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. a. Capitalize appropriate words in titles. b. Use commas in addresses.	Both	3-6	12-25%

Table 5. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 3

Standard	Description	Direct Writing Assessment, Language Test, or Both?	Number of Operational Language Items	Percent of Operational Language Items
	c. Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue. d. Form and use possessives. e. Use conventional spelling for high-frequency and other studied words and for adding suffixes to base words (e.g., <i>sitting, smiled, cries, happiness</i>). f. Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words. g. Consult reference materials (e.g., beginning dictionaries) as needed to check and correct spellings.			
L.3.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. a. Choose words and phrases for effect. b. Recognize and observe differences between the conventions of spoken and written standard English.	Both	1-4	5-15%
L.3.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., <i>agreeable/disagreeable, comfortable/uncomfortable, care/careless, heat/preheat</i>). c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., <i>company, companion</i>). d. Use reference materials (e.g., glossaries or beginning dictionaries) to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.	LA	1-4	5-15%

Table 5. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 3

Standard	Description	Direct Writing Assessment, Language Test, or Both?	Number of Operational Language Items	Percent of Operational Language Items
L.3.5	Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings. a. Distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., <i>take steps</i>). b. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe people who are <i>friendly</i> or <i>helpful</i>). c. Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., <i>knew</i>, <i>believed</i>, <i>suspected</i>, <i>heard</i>, <i>wondered</i>).	LA	1-4	5-15%
L.3.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., <i>After dinner that night we went looking for them</i>).	NA		

Table 6. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing, Grade 4

Standard	Description	Direct Writing Assessment, Language Test, or Both?	Number of Operational Language items	Percent of Operational Language Items
W.4.1	Write an opinion piece, supported by a point of view. a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose. b. Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details. c. Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., <i>for instance, in order to, in addition</i>). d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.	Both	1-4	4-16%
W.4.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. a. Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic. c. Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., <i>another, for example, also, because</i>). d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.	Both	1-4	4-16%
W.4.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. a. Use an organizational structure to orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. b. Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.	Both	1-4	4-16%

Table 6. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing, Grade 4

	c. Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events. d. Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.			
W.4.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	DWA		
W.4.5	With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 4.)	DWA		
W.4.6	With some guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills.	NA		
W.4.7	Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.	NA		
W.4.8	Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.	DWA		
W.4.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions]."). b. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to informational texts (e.g., "Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text")	DWA		
L.4.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Both	5-9	20-36%

Table 6. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing, Grade 4

	a. Use relative pronouns (<i>who, whose, whom, which, that</i>) and relative adverbs (<i>where, when, why</i>). b. Form and use the progressive (e.g., <i>I was walking; I am walking; I will be walking</i>) verb tenses. c. Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., <i>can, may, must</i>) to convey various conditions. d. Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns. e. Form and use prepositional phrases. f. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting fragments and run-ons. g. Correctly use homophones (e.g., <i>to, too, two, there, their</i>).			
L.4.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. a. Use correct capitalization. b. Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text. c. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence. d. Spell correctly, consulting references as needed.	Both	3-6	12-25%
L.4.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. a. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely. b. Choose punctuation for effect. c. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).	Both	2-5	8-20%
L.4.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a. Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>telegraph, photograph, autograph</i>).	LA	1-4	5-15%

Table 6. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing, Grade 4

	c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses) to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.			
L.4.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. a. Explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors (e.g., <i>as pretty as a picture</i>) in context. b. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs. c. Demonstrate an understanding of synonyms and antonyms.	LA	1-4	5-15%
L.4.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., <i>wildlife, conservation, and endangered</i> when discussing animal preservation).	NA		

Table 7. Standards-Level Specifications. Language/Writing Grade 5

Standard	Description	Direct Writing Assessment, Language Test, or both?	Number of Operational Language Items	Percent of Operational Language Items
W.5.1	Write opinion pieces that explain a perspective or point of view with supporting reasons and evidence. a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer’s purpose. b. Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details. c. Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., <i>consequently</i>, <i>specifically</i>). d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.	Both	1-4	4-15%
W.5.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. a. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia elements when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic. c. Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., <i>in contrast</i>, <i>especially</i>). d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.	Both	1-4	4-15%
W.5.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. a. Use an organizational structure to orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.	Both	1-4	4-15%

Table 7. Standards-Level Specifications. Language/Writing Grade 5

	c. Use a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events. d. Use precise words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.			
W.5.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	DWA		
W.5.5	With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 5.)	DWA		
W.5.6	With some guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills.	NA		
W.5.7	Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.	NA		
W.5.8	Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.	DWA		
W.5.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply grade 5 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics”). b. Apply grade 5 Reading standards to informational texts (e.g., “Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point[s]”).	DWA		
L.5.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. a. Explain the function of conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections in general and their function in particular sentences.	Both	5-9	20-35%

Table 7. Standards-Level Specifications. Language/Writing Grade 5

	b. Form and use the perfect (e.g., <i>I had walked; I have walked; I will have walked</i>) verb tenses. c. Use verb tense to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions. d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense. e. Use correlative conjunctions (e.g., <i>either/or, neither/nor</i>).			
L.5.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. a. Use punctuation to separate items in a series. b. Use a comma to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence. c. Use a comma to set off the words <i>yes</i> and <i>no</i> (e.g., <i>Yes, thank you</i>), to set off a tag question from the rest of the sentence (e.g., <i>It's true, isn't it?</i>), and to indicate direct address (e.g., <i>Is that you, Steve?</i>). d. Use underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works. e. Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.	Both	3-6	11-23%
L.5.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. a. Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style. b. Compare and contrast the varieties of English (e.g., dialects, registers) used in stories, dramas, or poems.	Both	2-5	8-18%
L.5.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 5 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a. Use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>photograph, photosynthesis</i>). c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses) to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.	LA	1-4	4-15%
L.5.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. a. Interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors (e.g., <i>as pretty as a picture</i>), in context.	LA	1-4	4-15%

Table 7. Standards-Level Specifications. Language/Writing Grade 5

	b. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs. c. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, homographs) to better understand each of the words.			
L.5.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., <i>however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition</i>).	NA		

Table 8. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 6

Standard	Description	Direct Writing Assessment, Language Test, or both?	Number of Operational Language Items	Percent of Operational Language Items
W.6.1	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly. b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. d. Establish and maintain tone and style appropriate to task and audience. e. Provide a concluding statement or section from the argument presented.	Both	1-4	4-15%
W.6.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. a. Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. c. Use appropriate transitions, words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Establish and maintain tone and style appropriate to task and audience. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.	Both	1-4	4-15%
W.6.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.	Both	1-4	4-15%

Table 8. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 6

	b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another. d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.			
W.6.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	DWA		
W.6.5	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 6.)	DWA		
W.6.6	Use technology to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills.	NA		
W.6.7	Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.	NA		
W.6.8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.	DWA		
W.6.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”). b. Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not”).	DWA		
L.6.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Both	5-9	18-33%

Table 8. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 6

	a. Use pronouns in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive). b. Use intensive pronouns (e.g., <i>myself</i>, <i>ourselves</i>). c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person. d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents). e. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.			
L.6.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. b. Spell correctly, consulting references as needed.	Both	3-6	11-22%
L.6.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style. b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.	Both	2-5	7-18%
L.6.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>audience</i>, <i>auditory</i>, <i>audible</i>). c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses) to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or by using other reference materials).	LA	1-4	4-15%
L.6.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification, hyperbole) in context.	LA	1-4	4-15%

Table 8. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 6

	b. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>stingy</i>, <i>scrimping</i>, <i>economical</i>, <i>unwasteful</i>, <i>thrifty</i>).			
L.6.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	NA		

Table 9. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 7

Standard	Description	Direct Writing Assessment, Language Test, or both?	Number of Operational Language Items	Percent of Operational Language items
W.7.1	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence. d. Establish and maintain a tone and style appropriate for the task and audience. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows and supports the argument presented.	Both	1-4	4-14%
W.7.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. c. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.	Both	1-4	4-14%

Table 9. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 7

W.7.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another. d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.	Both	1-4	4-14%
W.7.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	DWA		
W.7.5	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 7.)	DWA		
W.7.6	Use technology to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.	NA		
W.7.7	Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.	NA		
W.7.8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	DWA		
W.7.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	DWA		

Table 9. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 7

	a. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history”). b. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims”).			
L.7.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. a. Explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and their function in specific sentences. b. Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas. c. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.	Both	5-9	17-33%
L.7.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. a. Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (e.g., <i>It was a fascinating, enjoyable movie</i> but not <i>He wore an old[,] green shirt</i>). b. Spell correctly, consulting references as needed.	Both	3-6	11-21%
L.7.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. a. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.	Both	2-5	7-18%
L.7.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>belligerent</i>, <i>bellicose</i>, <i>rebel</i>).	LA	1-4	4-14%

Table 9. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 7

	c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses) to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or by using other reference materials).			
L.7.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, and mythological allusions) in context. b. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonym/antonym, analogy) to better understand each of the words. c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>refined</i>, <i>respectful</i>, <i>polite</i>, <i>diplomatic</i>, <i>condescending</i>).	LA	1-4	4-14%
L.7.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	NA		

Table 10. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 8

Standard	Description	Direct Writing Assessment, Language Test, or both?	Number of Operational Language Items	Percent of Operational Language Items
W.8.1	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. d. Establish and maintain a tone and style appropriate to the task and audience. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows and supports the argument presented.	Both	1-4	4-14%
W.8.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.	Both	1-4	4-14%
W.8.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.	Both	1-4	4-14%

Table 10. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 8

	b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events. d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.			
W.8.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	DWA		
W.8.5	With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8.)	DWA		
W.8.6	Use technology to produce and publish writing to interact and collaborate with others through a variety of media to present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently, including linking to and citing sources.	NA		
W.8.7	Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.	NA		
W.8.8	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	DWA		
W.8.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works, including describing how the material is rendered new”).	DWA		

Table 10. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 8

	b. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).			
L.8.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. a. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences. b. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice. c. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood. d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.	Both	5-9	17-33%
L.8.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. a. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break. b. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission. c. Spell correctly, consulting references as needed.	Both	3-6	11-21%
L.8.3	Apply knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. a. Use verbs in the active or passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).	Both	2-5	7-18%
L.8.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>precede</i>, <i>recede</i>, <i>secede</i>). c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses) to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or by using other reference materials).	LA	1-4	4-14%

Table 10. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 8

L.8.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context. b. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words. c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>bullheaded</i>, <i>willful</i>, <i>firm</i>, <i>persistent</i>, <i>resolute</i>).	LA	1-4	4-14%
L.8.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	NA		

Table 11. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grades 9-10

Standard	Description	Direct Writing Assessment, Language Test, or both?	Number of Operational Language Items	Percent of Operational Language Items
W.9-10.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. a. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.	Both	1-4	3-14%
W.9-10.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.	Both	1-4	3-14%

Table 11. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grades 9-10

	f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).			
W.9-10.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters. b. Use narrative techniques, including dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole (e.g., flashback, foreshadowing, and cause and effect). d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.	Both	1-4	3-14%
W.9-10.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)	DWA		
W.9-10.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 9–10.)	DWA		
W.9-10.6	Use technology to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.	NA		
W.9-10.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.	NA		

Table 11. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grades 9-10

W.9-10.8	Gather relevant information from multiple credible primary and secondary authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	DWA		
W.9-10.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work.”). b. Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify any false statements and fallacious reasoning.”).	DWA		
L.9-10.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. a. Use parallel structure. b. Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.	Both	5-9	17-30%
L.9-10.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. a. Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses. b. Use a colon to introduce a list or quotation. c. Spell correctly, consulting references as needed.	Both	3-6	10-20%
L.9-10.3	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. a. Write and edit work so that it conforms to the guidelines in a style manual (e.g., <i>MLA Handbook</i> , <i>APA Style</i>) appropriate for the discipline and writing type.	Both	2-6	6-20%

Table 11. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grades 9-10

L.9-10.4	Use a variety of strategies to determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 9–10 reading and content. a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., <i>analyze, analysis, analytical; advocate, advocacy</i>). c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, or its etymology. d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or by using other reference materials).	LA	1-4	3-14%
L.9-10.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron, verbal irony, satire, idiom, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text. b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.	LA	1-4	3-14%
L.9-10.6	Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	NA		

Table 12. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 11

Standard	Description	Direct Writing Assessment, Language Test, or both?	Number of Operational Language Items	Percent of Operational Language Items
W.11-12.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. a. Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.	Both	1-4	3-14%
W.11-12.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. c. Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.	Both	1-4	3-14%

Table 12. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 11

	d. Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as figures of speech (e.g., metaphor, simile, analogy) or text structure, to manage the complexity of the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).			
W.11-12.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters. b. Use narrative techniques, including dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, or resolution). d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.	Both	1-4	3-14%
W.11-12.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)	DWA		
W.11-12.5	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 11–12.)	DWA		

Table 12. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 11

W.11-12.6	Use technology to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.	NA		
W.11-12.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.	NA		
W.11-12.8	Gather relevant information from multiple credible primary and secondary authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.	DWA		
W.11-12.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, twentieth-, and twenty-first-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.”). b. Apply grades 11–12 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy.”).	DWA		
L.11-12.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. a. Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested. b. Resolve issues of complex or contested usage, consulting academic references (e.g., <i>Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary of English Usage</i> , <i>Garner’s Modern American Usage</i>) as needed.	Both	5-9	17-30%
L.11-12.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	Both	3-6	10-20%

Table 12. Standards-Level Specifications, Language/Writing Grade 11

	a. Demonstrate appropriate use of complex punctuation (e.g., hyphens, colons, semicolons, dashes, parenthesis, brackets, ellipsis) both grammatically and for emphasis. b. Spell correctly, consulting references as needed.			
L.11-12.3	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. a. Vary syntax for effect, consulting academic references (e.g., Tufte's <i>Artful Sentences</i>) for guidance as needed; apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts when reading.	Both	2-6	6-20%
L.11-12.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., <i>conceive</i>, <i>conception</i>, <i>conceivable</i>). c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses) to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage. d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or by using other reference materials).	LA	1-4	3-14%
L.11-12.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, idiom, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text. b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.	LA	1-4	3-14%
L.11-12.6	Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	NA		