



# Essential Standards Extended Guide

## ELA Grades 11-12

### Guiding Information:

In response to requests from schools and districts for guidance on essential standards, committees of educators from around Idaho collaborated in the summer of 2024 to categorize ELA standards into four groups:

- **Essential standards** are explicitly taught, assessed multiple times, and receive targeted interventions for students who have not yet reached proficiency.
- **Supporting standards** are taught to reinforce essential standards and may or may not be formally assessed.
- **Additional standards** extend learning and are incorporated as time allows within course units, with assessment being optional.
- **Teacher Guidance standards** provide direction for teachers in developing instructional materials, designing units, and creating learning opportunities.

This guidance helps LEAs prioritize the most critical standards, recognizing that not all standards are of equal importance. This document serves as a resource—not a mandate—to assist local efforts. Importantly, this work did not remove or revise any of the adopted Idaho Content Standards and is intended to refocus time and effort.

Given the skills-based nature of ELA, the standards can be grouped flexibly to meet student needs and support various instructional materials. To assist educators, the committees created a step-by-step process, outlined on page 6 of this document. This guide can help educators develop scope and sequence for their instructional time and district-specific courses and provide a starting point for building formative and summative assessments around the standards.

<b>Teacher Guidance Standards</b>
These standards provide direction for teachers in developing instructional materials, designing units, and creating learning opportunities.
RC.11-12.1. Independently and proficiently read and comprehend texts representing a balance of genres, cultures, and perspectives that exhibit complexity at the lower end of the grades 11–12 band.
RC.11-12.2. Regularly engage in a volume of reading related to the topics and themes being studied to build knowledge and vocabulary.
RC.11-12. 4. Read grade-level text with accuracy, automaticity, appropriate rate, and expression in successive readings to support comprehension.

### Teacher Guidance Standards

These standards provide direction for teachers in developing instructional materials, designing units, and creating learning opportunities.

RS.11-12.2. Read a series of texts independently, with peers, or with modest support, organized around a variety of conceptually related topics to build knowledge about the world.

W.11-12.1. Develop flexibility in writing by routinely engaging in the production of shorter and longer pieces for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. This could include, among others, summaries, reflections, descriptions, critiques, letters, and poetry, etc.

### Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

RC.11-12.3. Draw and cite strong and thorough evidence from grade-level texts to support claims and inferences, attending to important distinctions authors make and how those are supported, as well as any gaps or inconsistencies in accounts offered.

RC.11-12.5c. Evaluate how authors structure texts to distinguish what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant, including satire, sarcasm, irony, and understatement.

RC.11-12.5d. Relate literary works and their authors' points of view to the political events and seminal ideas of their eras.

RC.11-12.6a. Compare texts that express similar central ideas and analyze in detail how their development and treatment of the topic compare over the course of the two texts; provide accurate summaries of how key events or ideas develop.

RC.11-12.6c. Evaluate the effectiveness of the structure(s) and rhetorical devices authors use in their exposition or argument, including whether the structure helps make points clear, convincing, and engaging.

VD.11-12.2d. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on the effectiveness of the message, meaning, and tone of the text.

RS.11-12.1. Conduct brief as well as multi-day research projects to take some action or share findings orally or in writing by formulating multiple interlocking research questions that span the field of inquiry in time and scope; gathering relevant information efficiently from a variety of authoritative sources, as well as from direct observation, interviews, and surveys; making distinctions about the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience, noting any discrepancies among the data; and following a standard approved format (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago) for citations and bibliographies.

W.11-12.2. Write arguments that support well-defined points of view that establish the significance of the claim(s) and distinguish those claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims with persuasive evidence and clear reasoning; point out the strengths and limitations of each claim in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, and values; and provide a concluding section that articulates the implications, or the significance, of the argument presented.

### Essential Standards

Standards are to be explicitly taught, assessed more than once, and intervened upon in this cluster of standards.

W.11-12.5. Produce clear and coherent organizational structures that attend to the norms and conventions of the writing genre, and in which ideas, concepts, and other information build on one another; include formatting and graphics to support the purpose, aid in comprehension, and create a unified whole; and use precise language, content-specific vocabulary, and varied transitions to link major sections of the text, create cohesion and clarify the relationships between and among ideas and concepts.

ODC.11-12.1. Engage in collaborative discussions about grade-level topics and texts with peers by promoting civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, establishing individual roles, and tracking progress on specific goals; propelling conversations forward by synthesizing comments and ideas of several speakers and responding to diverse perspectives with relevant observations and ideas, resolving contradictions when possible, and determining what additional information is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

ODC.11-12.3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

ODC.11-12.6. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse digital media to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

GC.11-12.1d. Vary syntax for effect, consulting references (e.g., Tufte's Artful Sentences) for guidance as needed.

### Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

RC.11-12.5a. Compare the development of a universal theme over the course of two texts, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details in each.

RC.11-12.5b. Evaluate the choices authors make regarding how to develop and relate several elements of literary texts, including how the characters are introduced and developed and how the action is ordered.

RC.11-12.6b. Evaluate various explanations of concepts and ideas and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, noting discrepancies among sources.

RC.11-12.6e. Evaluate the premises and purposes in works of public advocacy.

VD.11-12.1. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade-level content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

## Supporting Standards

Standards that support the Essential Standards. These standards will be taught but may or may not be formally assessed.

VD.11-12.1a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or portion of text; a word's position or function in a sentence or a sentence within a paragraph) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

VD.11-12.2. Determine how words and phrases provide meaning and nuance to texts.

VD.11-12.2b. Analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how FDR explored different ideas regarding freedom in his "Four Freedoms" speech).

VD.11-12.2c. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations (e.g., aggressive, assertive, forceful, domineering).

VD.11-12.2d. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on the effectiveness of the message meaning and the tone of the text.

W.11-12.6. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on reframing points to address specific purposes or needs of the audience. (Editing should demonstrate command of grade-level Grammar and Conventions.)

ODC.11-12.4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence orally, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning; ensure alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed; and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

ODC.11-12.7. Analyze multiple interpretations of a text (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text.

ODC.11-12.8. Make strategic use of digital media in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

GC.11-12.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

GC.11-12.1b. Use a variety of sentence structures, including compound and compound-complex sentences with effective coordination and subordination of ideas and parallel, repetitive, and analogous sentence structures.

GC.11-12.1c. Write and edit work so that it conforms to the guidelines in a style manual (e.g., MLA Handbook, Turabian's Manual for Writers) appropriate for the writing type.

GC.11-12.1e. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when appropriate to task and situation; and distinguish where informal discourse is more appropriate.

GC.11-12.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of English punctuation and capitalization when writing and reading aloud to create meaning.

### Additional Standards

If time allows, these standards may be taught and/or assessed

RC.11-12.5. Use evidence from literature to demonstrate understanding of grade-level texts.

RC.11-12.5e. Compare and contrast how works of literary or cultural significance, including myths and traditional stories, draw on similar themes, patterns of events, or character types.

RC.11-12.6. Use evidence from nonfiction works to demonstrate understanding of grade-level texts.

RC.11-12.6d. Analyze the hypotheses, data, analysis, and conclusions in an argument, verifying the data when possible and corroborating or challenging conclusions with other sources of information.

VD.11-12.1b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., symbol, symbolism, symbolic, symbolize).

VD.11-12.1c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), print or digital, to find the pronunciation of a grade-level word and determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage.

VD.11-12.1d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

VD.11-12.2a. Use Greek, Latin, and Norse mythology; and other works often alluded to in American and world literature to understand the meaning of words or phrases (e.g., “narcissistic” from the myth of Narcissus and Echo).

VD.11-12.3. Acquire and use accurately general academic and content-specific words and phrases occurring in grade-level reading and content; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. Use these words in discussions and writing.

W.11-12.7. Write by hand or with technology to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

ODC.11-12.2. Analyze how visual and sound techniques or design (such as special effects, camera angles, and music) carry or influence messages in various media.

ODC.11-12.5. Demonstrate the responsible and ethical use of information and communication technologies by distinguishing between kinds of information that should and should not be publicly shared and describing the consequences of a poor decision.

GC.11-12.1a. Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested, consulting references (e.g., Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary of English Usage, Garner’s Modern American Usage) as needed.

GC.11-12.2a. Reflect appropriate manuscript requirements in writing, including correct use of seriation (headings and subheadings).

**Additional Standards**

**If time allows, these standards may be taught and/or assessed**

GC.11-12.3. Spell correctly, consulting reference materials to check as needed.

## Unit Planning with Standards

The Idaho Content Standards for English Language Arts have been grouped into four standard categories to acknowledge that the abundance of standards must be broken down for use in a classroom with students. This document provides guidance for educators to begin developing unit plans around the categorized standards.

**Pre-Planning:** Read through all the Teacher Guidance standards. These standards are necessary for teachers to consider and remember while completing the steps below.

Step	Description
Step 1	Begin by choosing 3-4 essential standards that can be grouped into a cohesive unit. You should choose these essential standards from different strands (writing, reading comprehension, research, oral and digital communication, vocabulary development, and grammar and conventions). You also need to consider the text(s) you have available or might use with your students to teach, support, practice, and assess these standards.
Step 2	Choose supporting standards. After identifying your essential standards, you should choose 2-3 supporting standards to use and potentially assess alongside your essential standards. When choosing these supporting standards, consider which ones might lend themselves to the work your students will do with the essential standards and what skills might be necessary to complete assessments. Remember, these standards may or may not be formally assessed in your classroom as you work through the unit.
Step 3	Create or find summative assessments for each essential standard. For every essential standard, you need to have a goal in mind and then work backward to meet that goal. Daily lessons and practice, formative assessments, and interventions should work towards these summative assessments of your essential standards. At this point, you should have 3-4 summative assessments that directly assess each of your essential standards.
Step 4	At this point, you should have 3-4 essential standards identified, 2-3 supporting standards identified, and 3-4 summative assessments tied to essential standards with potential connections to your supporting standards. You should now work to create formative assessments for all essential standards while using the supporting standards to help support students and their learning. Consider creating/finding formative assessments that will lead to or practice the same types of work as your summative assessment. What might your students need to try and receive feedback on from your essential standards before they reach their summative assessment?

Step	Description
Step 5	Identify which additional standards you will use when/if there is time or need in your unit. These should be standards that might extend or enhance the grouping of standards and assessments you have already identified. Consider what blends well with the type of assessment you have created/found and what might benefit your students from learning once they are proficient with your essential and supporting standards.

### Sample Unit Outline 1

Essential Standards	Supporting Standards	Additional Standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RS.11-12.1</li> <li>• RC.11-12.6a</li> <li>• ODC.11-12.6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RC.11-12.6b</li> <li>• ODC.11-12.8</li> <li>• GC.11-12.1e</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RC.11-12.6d</li> <li>• VD.11-12.1d</li> </ul>

Potential Assessment(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RS.11-12.1: Research Tracker with Annotated Bibliography</li> <li>• RC.11-12.6a: Annotated Research Articles</li> <li>• ODC.11-12.6: Multi-Media Gallery Walk or Round Table Presentation</li> </ul>

Rationale
<p>The essential standards in this sample were chosen on the premise that the research process standard (RS.1) naturally includes the reading comprehension standard of comparing non-fiction texts on a similar topic (RC.6a). The oral and digital communication essential standard was included to encourage learners to include digital media in their research while evaluating the credibility of these sources and identifying discrepancies in the findings.</p> <p>While completing the research process, the supporting reading comprehension standard (RC.6b) could be helpful when considering data-driven research sources. The supporting communication standard (ODC.8)</p>



## Rationale

and grammar and convention standard (GC.1e) were added to support the presentations students might complete.

## Sample Unit Outline 2

Essential Standards	Supporting Standards	Additional Standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>W.11-12.2</li><li>RC.11-12.5d</li><li>ODC.11-12.1</li><li>GC.11-12.1d</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>W.11-12.6</li><li>GC.11-12.1c</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>VD.11-12.1b</li></ul>

## Potential Assessment(s)

- W.11-12.2: Argument Essay on Authors and Political Ideas of Their Time
- RC.11-12.5d: Hexagonal Discussion on Authorial Perspective or Argument Essay on Author's Political Ideas of Their Time
- ODC.11-12.1: Philosophical Chairs on Author's Politics in a Text, Fishbowl Discussion on Contrasting Ideas of Author's Era in Literature, Hexagonal Discussion on Authorial Perspective
- GC.11-12.1d: Argument Essay on Author's and Political Ideas of Their Time

## Rationale

The essential standards in this sample were chosen on the premise that the argument task (W.2) at the end of the discussion assessments (ODC.1) might be focused on the authorial perspective suggested in the reading comprehension standard (RC.5d). The grammar and convention essential standard (GC.1d) would be a natural fit to assess a final writing task from the writing essential standard. The supporting writing standard (W.6) was chosen to support the writing process with a piece of argument writing and the grammar and convention standard (GC.1c) was added to support the formatting for a piece of academic writing.

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**For Questions Contact**

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