



Essential Standards Extended Guide

ELA Grades 9-10

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 7 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.

Teacher Guidance Standards
These standards provide direction for teachers in developing instructional materials, designing units, and creating learning opportunities.
RC.9-10.1. Independently and proficiently read and comprehend texts representing a balance of genres, cultures, and perspectives that exhibit complexity at the higher end of the grades 9–10 band.
RC.9-10.2. Regularly engage in a volume of reading related to the topics and themes being studied to build knowledge and vocabulary. (These texts can include a range of genres and should be at a range of complexity levels so students can read the texts independently, with peers, or with modest support.)
RC.9-10.4. 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.9-10.2. Read a series of texts organized around a variety of conceptually related topics to build knowledge about the world. (These texts should be at a range of complexity levels so students can read the texts independently, with peers, or with modest support.)

W.9-10.1. 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.9-10.3. Draw ample evidence from grade-level texts to support claims and inferences, attending to the precise details of the authors' descriptions or explanations through quoting, paraphrasing, and citing textual references.

RC.9-10.5a. Analyze the development of themes over the course of the text, including how themes emerge and are shaped and refined by specific details.

RC.9-10.5b. Analyze how complex characters—those with multiple or conflicting motivations—develop over the course of texts, interact with other characters, and advance the plot.

RC.9-10.6a. Analyze the development of central ideas over the course of texts, including how they emerge and are shaped and refined by specific details; provide accurate summaries of how key events or ideas develop.

RC.9-10.6d. Assess the argument and specific claims in texts, examining whether the reasoning is valid, the evidence is relevant, and whether there are any false or unsupported statements.

9/10.VD.2b. Interpret figurative language (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze its role in texts (e.g., The Party's embrace of the slogans "War is Peace" and "Freedom is Slavery" in Orwell's 1984).

RS.9-10.1. Conduct brief as well as multi-day research projects to take some action or share findings orally or in writing by formulating a research question and considering alternative avenues of inquiry; gathering relevant information from a variety of authoritative sources and assessing which provide the most reliable and useful information; and following a standard approved format (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago) for citations and bibliographies.

W.9-10.3. Write informational texts that introduce the topic clearly by providing needed context, presenting well-defined theses, and previewing what is to follow; develop the topic through sustained use of the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and

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examples from multiple authoritative sources appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic; and provide a concluding section that follows from the information or explanation presented.

ODC.9-10.1. Engage in collaborative discussions about grade-level topics and texts with peers by setting rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, defining individual roles, tracking progress on specific goals; responding to others’ questions and comments and diverse perspectives with precise evidence, relevant observations, and ideas; and making new connections considering the evidence and reasoning presented.

ODC.9-10.3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.

ODC.9-10.4. Report orally on a topic or text or present an argument, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound reasoning, and well-chosen details in a style appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

GC.9-10.1b. Use parallel structure.

Supporting Standards

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

RC.9-10.5. Use evidence from literature to demonstrate understanding of grade-level texts.

RC.9-10.5c. Analyze how authors structure specific parts of a text, including the choice of where to begin and end a scene, and explain how they contribute to its overall structure and meaning.

RC.9-10.5d. Analyze points of view or cultural experiences that represent diverse voices and perspectives in works of literature.

RC.9-10.6. Use evidence from nonfiction works to demonstrate understanding of grade-level texts.

RC.9-10.6e. Analyze seminal documents of historical and literary significance, including how they address related themes and concepts of liberty, equality, individual responsibility, and justice.

RC.9-10.6b. Explain how authors unfold an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn among them.

RC.9-10.6c. Analyze how authors use structure to explain relationships among concepts in a text, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and sections of texts contribute to the whole.

Supporting Standards

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

VD.9-10.1. 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.

VD.9-10.1a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or portion of text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

VD.9-10.1c. 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, or its etymology.

VD.9-10.1d. 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.9-10.2. Determine how words and phrases provide meaning and nuance to texts.

VD.9-10.2c. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations (e.g., shrewd, clever, cunning, brainy).

VD.9-10.2d. Analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how Jonathan Swift uses exaggeration to create his satirical essay "A Modest Proposal").

W.9-10.5. 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 are logically grouped; include formatting and graphics to support the purpose 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.

W.9-10.6. 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 should demonstrate command of grade-level Grammar and Conventions.)

W.9-10.7. Write by hand or with 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.

ODC.9-10.6. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse digital media, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

ODC.9-10.8. Make strategic use of digital media presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

GC.9-10.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Supporting Standards

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

GC.9-10.1c. Place modifiers properly.

GC.9-10.1f. Use subordination, coordination, apposition, and other devices to indicate the relationship between ideas clearly.

GC.9-10.1g. Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.

GC.9-10.3. Spell correctly, consulting reference materials to check as needed.

Additional Standards

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

RC.9-10.5e. Compare multiple interpretations of texts (including recorded or live production), evaluating how each version interprets the source text.

VD.9-10.1b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., defend, defense, defendant, defensible).

VD.9-10.2a. 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., reference to “Achilles’s heel” from Greek mythology).

VD.9-10.3. Acquire and use accurately general academic and content-specific words and phrases occurring in grade-level reading and content; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. Use these words in discussions and writing.

ODC.9-10.2. Analyze the effect of text and images on the reader's or viewer's emotions in print journalism, and images, sound, and text in electronic journalism, distinguishing techniques used in each to achieve these effects.

OCD.9-10.5. Manage personal data to maintain digital privacy and security and be conscious and aware of data-collection technology used to track and exploit navigation online

ODC.9-10.7. Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different media (e.g., a person’s life story in print or digitally), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

GC.9-10.1a. Use verbs in the active and 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).

Additional Standards

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

GC.9-10.1d. Use the subjunctive mood accurately.

GC.9-10.1h. Use various types of clauses (independent, dependent, noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.

GC.9-10.1i. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when appropriate to task and situation.

GC.9-10.1j. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.

GC.9-10.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of English punctuation and capitalization when writing and reading aloud to create meaning.

GC.9-10.2a. Use a semicolon (or appropriate conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses.

GC.9-10.2b. Use a colon to introduce a list or quotation.

GC.9-10.2c. Observe hyphenation conventions.

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"> • RS.9-10.1 • RC.9-10.6a • ODC.9-10.4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODC.9-10.8 • GC.9-10.1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VD.9-10.3

Potential Assessment(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RS.9-10.1: Research Tracker with Annotated Bibliography • RC.9-10.6a: Annotated Research Articles • ODC.9-10.4: Round Table Presentation

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 so students could share their learning with their peers. while evaluating the credibility of these sources and identifying discrepancies in the findings.</p> <p>While working on an engaging presentation to share with their peers, the supporting standard encourages learners to include digital media in their research presentations (ODC.8). The supporting grammar and convention standard (GC.1) was added to support the writing or presentations students might complete. Additional standard allows for extension with practice using academic vocabulary (VD.3).</p>

Sample Unit Outline 2

Essential Standards	Supporting Standards	Additional Standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RC.9-10.5a• RC.9-10.5b• RC.9-10.3• ODC.9-10.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• W.9-10.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None

Potential Assessment(s)

- W.9-10.5a and 5b: Hexagonal thinking activity around theme and character connections in a short story
- ODC.9-10.1: Fishbowl Discussion or Paideia Seminar about theme statements developed in hexagonal thinking activity
- RC.9-10.3: Short answer responses citing evidence from the text to support theme statement and character development questions

Rationale

The essential standards in this sample were chosen on the premise that students could complete a hexagonal thinking activity connecting character development to theme (RC.5a and b) at the end of the hexagonal thinking activity, students can cite text evidence (RC.3) to support the connections they made in both theme and character development. The supporting writing standard (W.5) allows for students to focus on writing for a specific task and audience as determined by the teacher.

For Questions Contact

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