

**Tennessee Department of Education**  
**English Language Arts Standards**  
**Grades 9-12 (English I, English II, English III, English IV)**

As noted in the introduction to the K-8 standards, the controlling concept strands continue all the way through Grade 12. Thus, the 9-12 standards are organized into eight strands: Language, Communication, Writing, Research, Logic, Informational Text, Media, and Literature. For brief explanations of these strands, see the Introduction to K-8.

One should not expect a correlation between the item check numbers and those of their corresponding indicators, nor between the item numbers from grade to grade. Most often, each learning expectation is supported by a number of item checks and indicators, which creates an automatic numbering difference. The fact that some item checks are assessed and some are not creates additional variations, as does the addition and deletion of items from grade to grade.

The organization of content changes somewhat at Grade 9. The upper grades are no longer so completely focused on building incremental knowledge and skills from grade to grade, although there is some of that. The focus now becomes ensuring that the material included is comprehensive enough to prepare students for life outside the classroom, whether it be in school, the military, or the workplace. Consequently, the grade levels are banded together: grades 9 and 10, and grades 11 and 12.

Currently, students are tested at Grade 9 (End-of-Course) and Grade 10 (Gateway). Because these tests echo each other both in form and in content, it may be noted that most of the performance indicators are the same in the two grades. Nonetheless, it is expected that, even though the same skill may be taught at both grades, the higher grade will include more challenging and complex concepts and illustrations.

Grades 11 and 12 are grouped together, primarily because instructors at this level are allowed more leeway in choosing strategies and materials that they know their particular students will require after their schooling is completed. In addition, although most systems teach American literature in Grade 11 and English literature in Grade 12, they are not bound to do so. If needed, systems can swap the courses of study for these two grades fairly easily.

**The third and final formal TCAP writing assessment (persuasion) occurs at Grade 11.** For this reason, the writing standard cannot be exchanged with Grade 12.

**NOTE: These standards will go into effect during the school year 2009-10.**