

The Research-  
Driven Solution  
to Raise the  
Quality of High  
School Core  
Courses

**QualityCore<sup>®</sup>**



English 10

**End-of-Course Test Blueprint**



## Test Blueprint QualityCore® End-of-Course Assessment English 10

The QualityCore® End-of-Course (EOC) system is modular, consisting of either two 35–38 item multiple-choice components or one 35–38 item multiple-choice component combined with a constructed-response component. This approach to measuring achievement of ACT Course Standards allows users to select the configuration that best meets their particular needs, while still receiving scores on a standardized QualityCore scale.

The EOC Test Blueprint tables below show how the test items are distributed across reporting categories and depth-of-knowledge levels. The tables display ranges of the percentages of operational multiple-choice items and the number of operational constructed-response items per test. Sample standards by reporting category are provided, along with definitions of the depth-of-knowledge thinking processes covered by the assessment. The constructed-response scoring guide is also presented.

Reporting category	Percent of multiple-choice items	Number of constructed-response items
Reading Comprehension	25–50	—
Critical Reading	30–55	—
Modes of Writing	0–10	—
Mechanics of Writing	10–20	—
Essay	—	1
Total	100	1

Depth of Knowledge	Percent of multiple-choice items	Number of constructed-response items
Level 1 — Literal	15–25	—
Level 2 — Interpretive	50–70	—
Level 3 — Evaluative	15–25	1
Total	100	1

### Sample ACT Course Standards by Reporting Category

#### Reading Comprehension

- Identify key characteristics in various genres; interpret how form shapes meaning
- Identify elements of fiction; recognize how they shape meaning
- Summarize and paraphrase information
- Identify author’s purpose and basic elements of style
- Use context clues to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words
- Understand how organization and writer’s techniques shape meaning

**Critical Reading**

- Analyze various common literary devices
- Analyze various common poetic devices
- Analyze persuasive techniques and detect bias
- Make logical inferences
- Use important details and facts to support conclusions

**Modes of Writing (only if second multiple-choice component is administered)**

- Identify and analyze effective writing techniques in various modes
- Demonstrate understanding of effective organization
- Add important information and delete irrelevant information
- Use organizational strategies to clarify meaning and maintain consistency

**Mechanics of Writing**

- Correct errors in sentence construction; understand how sentence structure shapes meaning
- Correct common usage and punctuation errors
- Use punctuation to clarify meaning and create variety

**Essay (only if constructed-response component is administered)**

- Craft a first draft of an essay that thoughtfully and accurately analyzes the significance of literary elements in a reading passage; demonstrate insightful understanding of the passage
- Effectively explain and support an analysis using convincing evidence; maintain clear focus on critical ideas
- Effectively organize a discussion using logical progression of ideas and effective transitions; employ an engaging introduction and effective conclusion
- Demonstrate good command of language through well-constructed sentences and precise word choice; maintain appropriate voice and tone; express ideas clearly with correct grammar, usage, and mechanics

**Thinking Processes**

ACT uses the depth-of-knowledge (DOK) levels (Webb, 2002) to describe the thinking processes assessed by the EOC tests. Webb developed labels and descriptions of the DOK levels specifically for English Language Arts.<sup>1</sup>

**Level 1: Recall (Literal)** requires students to recite facts or to use simple skills or abilities. Items require only a literal understanding of text and often consist of verbatim recall from text. Level 1 items require students to:

- Support ideas by reference to details in a passage
- Identify figurative language in a passage
- Use appropriate grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling
- Recall elements and details of passage structure, such as sequence of events, character, plot, and setting

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<sup>1</sup> Webb, Norman L. (2002). Depth-of-Knowledge Levels for Four Content Areas. Retrieved from <http://facstaff.wcer.wisc.edu/normw/All%20content%20areas%20%20DOK%20levels%2032802.doc>

**Level 2: Skill/Concept (Interpretive)** requires mental processing that goes beyond recalling or reproducing an answer. It involves comprehension and subsequent processing of text; intersentence analysis and inference are required. The cognitive demands are more complex than in Level 1. Level 2 items require students to:

- Identify and summarize major events, main ideas, and pertinent details
- Use context clues to determine the meaning of a word
- Predict a logical outcome based on information in a passage
- Use organizational strategies to structure written work

**Level 3: Strategic Thinking (Evaluative)** requires planning, thinking, explaining, justifying, using evidence, conjecturing, and postulating. The cognitive demands are complex and abstract, going beyond Level 2. Level 3 items require students to:

- Evaluate writing and writing strategies
- Describe the author’s purpose and how it affects the interpretation of a passage
- Analyze and describe the characteristics of a passage
- Infer across an entire passage
- Identify abstract themes
- Use voice appropriate to the purpose and audience
- Edit writing to produce a logical progression of ideas
- Analyze and synthesize information

## QualityCore English 10 Analytic Scoring Guide

### Purpose of Task: To Present a Response to Literature

For each English constructed-response item, four separate analytic scores (ranging from 1 to 6) are given: interpretation, development, organization, and language. These scores are added together and are reported as the Essay subscore. No score is given to an essay that is blank, off-topic, illegible, or written in another language.

### INTERPRETATION SCORE

**Score of 6: Essays at this score point demonstrate effective skill in writing a response to literature.** The essay thoughtfully and accurately analyzes the literary elements in the text. The essay makes insightful connections between the literary elements and the text’s meaning and/or their effect on the reader.

**Score of 5: Essays at this score point demonstrate competent skill in writing a response to literature.** The essay clearly and accurately analyzes the literary elements in the text. The essay addresses the connections between the literary elements and the text’s meaning and/or their effect on the reader.

**Score of 4: Essays at this score point demonstrate adequate skill in writing a response to literature.** The essay provides primarily accurate analysis of the literary elements in the text. The essay establishes the connections between the literary elements and the text’s meaning and/or their effect on the reader.

**Score of 3: Essays at this score point demonstrate some developing skill in writing a response to literature.** The essay provides some accurate analysis of the literary elements in the text, although some analysis provided may be inaccurate or incomplete. The essay offers a

little recognition of the connections between the literary elements and the text’s meaning and/or their effect on the reader.

**Score of 2: Essays at this score point demonstrate inconsistent or weak skill in writing a response to literature.** The essay provides little accurate analysis of the literary elements in the text. There is little or no recognition of the connections between the literary elements and the text’s meaning and/or their effect on the reader.

**Score of 1: Essays at this score point demonstrate little or no skill in writing a response to literature.** Although the essay may include some claims about the specified elements in the text, it includes no accurate analysis of the literary elements. There is no recognition of the connections between the literary elements and the text’s meaning and/or their effect on the reader.

## DEVELOPMENT SCORE

**Score of 6: Essays at this score point demonstrate effective skill in writing a response to literature.** The essay uses ample convincing evidence drawn from the passage to support the writer’s analysis. Ideas are thoroughly explained. The essay maintains a clear and consistent focus on critical analysis. If the essay includes references to other authors or texts, their relevance to the analysis is consistently clear and effective.

**Score of 5: Essays at this score point demonstrate competent skill in writing a response to literature.** The essay uses sufficient convincing evidence drawn from the passage to support the writer’s analysis. Ideas are clearly explained. The essay usually maintains focus on critical analysis. If the essay includes references to other authors or texts, their relevance to the analysis is clear.

**Score of 4: Essays at this score point demonstrate adequate skill in writing a response to literature.** The essay uses some valid evidence drawn from the passage to support the writer’s analysis. Ideas are adequately explained. The essay maintains focus on ideas appropriate to the interpretive task. If the essay includes references to other authors or texts, their relevance to the analysis is generally clear.

**Score of 3: Essays at this score point demonstrate some developing skill in writing a response to literature.** The essay uses a little valid evidence drawn from the passage to support the writer’s analysis. Ideas are only somewhat explained. The essay usually focuses on ideas appropriate to the interpretive task. If the essay includes references to other authors or texts, their relevance to the analysis may be unclear.

**Score of 2: Essays at this score point demonstrate inconsistent or weak skill in writing a response to literature.** The essay makes a few claims, but there is little and only weak evidence drawn from the passage to support the writer’s analysis. Explanations are unclear or incomplete. The essay only sometimes focuses on ideas appropriate to the interpretive task. If the essay includes any references to other authors or texts, their relevance to the analysis is unclear.

**Score of 1: Essays at this score point demonstrate little or no skill in writing a response to literature.** The essay provides no evidence from the text for any valid claims and lacks explanation of ideas. The essay focuses very little on ideas appropriate to the interpretive task.

If the essay includes any references to other authors or texts, their relevance to the analysis is unclear.

## ORGANIZATION SCORE

**Score of 6: Essays at this score point demonstrate effective skill in writing a response to literature.** Organization is unified and coherent, with a logical progression of ideas and effective transitions to clarify relationships among ideas. The essay includes a clear, engaging introduction and an effective conclusion that may extend or elaborate ideas.

**Score of 5: Essays at this score point demonstrate competent skill in writing a response to literature.** Organization is coherent, with some logical progression of ideas and clear transitions that clarify relationships among ideas. The essay includes a clear, well-developed introduction and a developed conclusion.

**Score of 4: Essays at this score point demonstrate adequate skill in writing a response to literature.** Organization is apparent, with ideas logically grouped and some transitions to clarify relationships among ideas. The essay includes a clear, somewhat developed introduction and conclusion.

**Score of 3: Essays at this score point demonstrate some developing skill in writing a response to literature.** Organization is simple, with most ideas logically grouped. A few transitions are used to clarify relationships among ideas. The essay includes an underdeveloped introduction and a brief conclusion.

**Score of 2: Essays at this score point demonstrate inconsistent or weak skill in writing a response to literature.** Organization is simple, with some ideas logically grouped and a few transitions used. The essay has a brief introduction and may have a brief conclusion.

**Score of 1: Essays at this score point demonstrate little or no skill in writing a response to literature.** Organization of ideas is not clear, with little or no evidence of the logical grouping of ideas. The essay has a very brief introduction but may have no conclusion.

## LANGUAGE SCORE

**Score of 6: Essays at this score point demonstrate effective skill in writing a response to literature.** Well-constructed sentences and precise word choice clearly and effectively convey ideas. Voice and tone are appropriate to the writer's purpose and are maintained throughout the essay. Although there may be a few minor errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics, meaning is clear throughout the essay.

**Score of 5: Essays at this score point demonstrate competent skill in writing a response to literature.** Well-constructed sentences and some precise word choice clearly convey ideas. Voice and tone are appropriate to the writer's purpose and are maintained throughout most of the essay. There are a few errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics, but they are rarely distracting and meaning is clear.

**Score of 4: Essays at this score point demonstrate adequate skill in writing a response to literature.** Sentences and word choice are usually clear and adequately convey ideas. Voice and tone are appropriate to the writer’s purpose, though they may not be consistently maintained. There are some distracting errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics, but meaning is usually clear.

**Score of 3: Essays at this score point demonstrate some developing skill in writing a response to literature.** Most sentences convey ideas clearly, and word choice is general. Voice and tone are somewhat appropriate to the writer’s purpose, but they are inconsistently maintained. Errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are distracting and occasionally impede understanding.

**Score of 2: Essays at this score point demonstrate inconsistent or weak skill in writing a response to literature.** Some sentences convey ideas clearly, and word choice is basic. Voice and tone are inconsistent and may not be appropriate for the writer’s purpose. Errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are frequently distracting and sometimes impede understanding.

**Score of 1: Essays at this score point demonstrate little or no skill in writing a response to literature.** A few sentences and some word choices convey ideas clearly. Voice and tone are not appropriate for the writer’s purpose. Errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are frequently distracting and significantly impede understanding.

ACT endorses the *Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education* and the *Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement*, guides to the conduct of those involved in educational testing. ACT is committed to ensuring that each of its testing programs upholds the guidelines in each *Code*. A copy of each *Code* may be obtained free of charge from ACT Customer Services (68), P.O. Box 1008, Iowa City, IA 52243-1008, 319/337-1429.