

A quick guide for observing classroom content and practice

Working with appropriate **complex texts**, students should:

Read About It

1. Stories
2. Drama
3. Poems
4. Nonfiction

Think About It

5. Research
6. Analysis
7. Reflection

Talk About It

8. Presentation
9. Collaboration

Write About It

10. Arguments
11. Explanations
12. Narratives

In a **grade 9 or 10 ELA class**, you should observe the teacher integrating the grade level ELA standards and students engaging in a variety of the following standards and practices:

Students engage independently with grade-level literary and informational texts, focusing on:

- Key Ideas and Details:** strong and thorough textual evidence to support explicit claims from text and inferences drawn; theme or central idea; objective summary
- Craft and Structure:** complex structures (e.g., parallel plots), manipulation of time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks), role of specific part (e.g., section, chapter) in whole, cumulative impact of word choices, multiple meanings, extended symbols or metaphors
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** evaluate and summarize argument and specific claims in text; themes and related concepts in seminal documents of historical and literary significance.

Students engage daily in higher-order reasoning, both orally and in writing, especially by:

- Synthesizing:** drawing on multiple authoritative print and digital sources of information to answer a question including a self-generated research question, adjusting the scope of inquiry and generating focused questions for further research as appropriate; integrate information; standard citation
- Analyzing:** use of rhetorical patterns by authors and speakers to advance their particular purposes and points of view, a variety of perspectives of cultural norms or intellectual ideas of a period or place around the world
- Evaluating:** assessing arguments with attention to specific claims and credibility of sources and relevance and sufficiency of evidence, recognizing false statements and incomplete truths

Students attend closely to language use in their own work and others', focusing on:

- Meanings:** strategies (e.g., consulting general and specialized reference materials, patterns) for understanding words and phrases in context, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings
- Conventions:** parallel structure, variety of phrases and clauses, semicolons and colons, adherence to style guides (e.g., Turabian)

Students interact frequently, purposefully, and effectively with diverse others, engaging in:

- Discussion:** being prepared, agreeing on rules and roles, actively propelling and developing conversation, summarizing points of agreement and disagreement, acknowledging other views and defending or adjusting own stance in response
- Presentation:** clear and concise organization and delivery, substance and style appropriate to audience and task, strategic integration of digital media, technology to present and link information in dynamic ways
- Collaboration:** use technology , including current Web-based communication platforms ,to produce and publish writing , integrating information and ideas from others into own work while maintaining flow of ideas, paraphrasing while avoiding plagiarism and providing citations in standard format

Students engage in writing within a range of time frames for a variety of audiences, producing:

- Arguments:** precise claims distinguished fairly from counterclaims, valid reasoning, relevant and sufficient evidence, accurate and credible sources
- Explanations:** well-chosen and sufficient details, figurative and sensory language, domain-specific vocabulary and extended definitions, useful formatting and multimedia elements
- Narratives:** develop experiences or events using effective literary techniques, well chosen details, well structured sequences; narrative techniques, dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, multiple plot lines
- All writing:** clear and effective beginning and end, logical and cohesive structure, varied and effective transitions, precise language, style appropriate to audience and purpose

ELA What to Look For The example below features three Indicators from the [Standards of Effective Practice](#). These Indicators are just a sampling from the full set of Standards and were chosen because they create a sequence: the educator plans a lesson that sets clear and high **expectations**, the educator then delivers high quality instruction, and finally the educator uses a variety of **assessments** to see if students understand the material or if re-teaching is necessary. This example highlights teacher and student behaviors aligned to the three Indicators that you can expect to see in a rigorous 9th or 10th grade ELA classroom.

Expectations (Standard II, Indicator E)	Plans and implements lessons that set clear and high expectations and also make knowledge accessible for all students.	
What is the teacher doing?	What are the students doing?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Selecting appropriate complex texts (e.g., texts with varied structures) •Asking students to use strong evidence to support an argument and refute a counterargument •Highlighting the choices an author makes and how they impact meaning and tone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identifying a lesson's standards or objectives and how they connect to unit goals •Persisting when engaging with meaningful literacy tasks •Using rich academic language when speaking and writing 	

Instruction (Standard II, Indicator A)	Uses instructional practices that reflect high expectations regarding content and quality of effort and work; engage all students; and are personalized to accommodate diverse learning styles, needs, interests, and levels of readiness.	
What is the teacher doing?	What are the students doing?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Highlighting culturally appropriate and effective negotiation skills they observe in students •Highlighting the impact of a text's structure (e.g., cliffhangers that create suspense) •Grouping students based on data and adjusting grouping as needed (using both homogenous and heterogeneous grouping) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Making connections between reading, writing, speaking and listening •Actively incorporating others into discussions of content •Analyzing the impact of a text's structure (e.g., flashbacks that create mystery) 	

Assessment (Standard I, Indicator B)	Uses a variety of informal and formal methods of assessments to measure student learning, growth, and understanding to develop differentiated and enhanced learning experiences and improve future instruction.	
What is the teacher doing?	What are the students doing?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Using multiple formative approaches to assess student learning (e.g., exit slips, classroom discussion) •Conducting frequent checks for student understanding and adjusting instruction accordingly •Providing exemplars of work (e.g. mentor texts, student work) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reflecting on how they are progressing toward goals •Demonstrating learning in multiple ways (e.g., exit slips, classroom discussion) •Engaging in challenging learning tasks regardless of learning needs (e.g., linguistic background, disability, academic gifts) •Engaging in meaningful writing in response to text 	