

# Introducing the

## Virginia Standards of Learning

End  
of  
Course

The complete set of items that appeared on the Spring 2000 Standards of Learning test taken by most public school students in Virginia is presented in the following pages. The intent of this release of these test questions is to provide parents and teachers additional information to accompany the Student Performance Report and/or the Parent Report.

The information accompanying each test question is broken into several components:

**Reporting Category:** Matches the score report and allows for identification of strengths and weaknesses indicated by student scores.

**Standard of Learning:** Presents the SOL used in developing the assessment question.

**Builds On:** Indicates what the student has studied in previous course work.

**Instruction:** Provides information for teachers to use as the SOL is incorporated into instruction.

The answer to each question can be found in the back of the booklet.

**Virginia**  
Standards of Learning Assessments

# English: Writing Test

End  
of  
Course

## RELEASED ▼ ITEMS

### *Telling Stories*

Gina's teacher has asked the students to locate recent articles about topics that they find interesting. They are to write a two-page essay about the topic they choose.

Gina found an article on storytelling that she thought she would enjoy. As she read the article, she made these notes. Use them to answer question 1.

1. Before there was writing, there was storytelling.
2. Writing has caused us to rely on storytelling less and less over the centuries.
3. Storytelling is becoming popular again.
4. Groups of storytellers gather to share their love of storytelling.
5. Storytelling festivals are now being held all over the nation.
6. All kinds of stories can be heard at storytelling festivals: family stories, spooky stories, inspirational stories, folk songs, poetry, and so forth.
7. Storytellers often use their voices and accents to enhance funny stories.
8. A family's history can be handed down from generation to generation through storytelling.
9. Storytelling festivals are helping others to realize the importance of telling stories.

# English: Writing Test

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**Reporting Category:** Plan, Compose, and Revise in a Variety of Forms for a Variety of Purposes

**A. Standard of Learning:** 10.7 The student will develop a variety of writings with an emphasis on exposition.

a) Plan and organize ideas for writing.

**Builds On:** Organizing information for a variety of writings begins with the third grade SOL in Writing.

<b>A</b>	<p>1 If Gina decides to discuss specific examples related to storytelling, which item on her list will be the <i>most</i> helpful to her?</p> <p>A 1 B 3 C 4 D 6</p>
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**Instruction:** Have students identify an item from a list that relates best to the order presented.

# English: Writing Test

End  
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Course

RELEASED ▼ ITEMS

Here is the first part of Gina's rough draft. Use it to answer questions 2-5.

(1)Before the development of written languages, people used storytelling as a means of recording history. (2)In fact, our first written literature was based on spoken tales. (3)Eventually books, radio, movies, and television became popular ways to tell stories. (4)As a personal form of learning and entertaining, many people now are going back to old-fashioned storytelling.

(5)The popularity of storytelling is spreading across the nation. (6)Large crowds are gathering to listen to people of all ages tell family stories, spooky stories, tall tales, or enhancements of poems or songs. (7)Because of the increasing interest, some storytellers have formed organizations. (8)These storytellers now hold festivals in their cities and towns. (9)Others travel across the nation to participate and take part in them.

(10)When I was younger, my favorite story was "Dancing Giraffes." (11)Many storytellers are being hired to tell stories. (12)At special functions such as conferences, weddings, and other social gatherings. (13)Many teachers are using storytelling techniques more often to add excitement and energy to their classes.

**Reporting Category:** Plan, Compose, and Revise in a Variety of Forms for a Variety of Purposes

**A. Standard of Learning:** 10.7 The student will develop a variety of writings with an emphasis on exposition.

c) Write clear, varied sentences.

**Builds On:** Work with sentence variety begins with the fourth grade SOL in Writing.

**A**

**2** How can Gina *best* combine sentences 7 and 8 without changing their meaning?

- F Because of the increasing interest, some storytellers have formed organizations, they now also hold festivals in their cities and towns.
- G Because of the increasing interest, some storytellers have formed organizations and now hold festivals in their cities and towns.
- H Some storytellers, because of the increasing interest, have formed organizations, they now hold festivals in their cities and towns also.
- J Some storytellers have formed organizations, because of the increasing interest they also now hold festivals in their cities and towns.

**3** Which of these is *not* a complete sentence?

- A 10
- B 11
- C 12
- D 13

**Instruction:** Provide students with an opportunity to determine how to combine two sentences most effectively and how to decide what is **not** a complete sentence in a rough draft given to them.

# English: Writing Test

End  
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**A. Standard of Learning:** 10.7 The student will develop a variety of writings with an emphasis on exposition.

d) Organize ideas into a logical sequence.

**Builds On:** Organizing information by topic begins with the third grade SOL in Writing.

**A**

4 Which of these is the topic sentence of the second paragraph?

F 5  
G 6  
H 8  
J 11

**Instruction:** Have students choose the topic sentence for a specified paragraph.

**B. Standard of Learning:** 10.7 The student will develop a variety of writings with an emphasis on exposition.

e) Revise writing for clarity and content of presentation.

**Builds On:** Revising writing for clarity begins with the second grade SOL for Writing.

**B**

5 Which of these repeats information *within* the sentence?

A 1  
B 2  
C 3  
D 9

**Instruction:** Have students examine their own writing for examples of repetition within a sentence.

# English: Writing Test

End  
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RELEASED ▼ ITEMS

Read this next section of Gina's rough draft and answer questions 6-9. This section has groups of underlined words. The questions ask about these groups of underlined words.

(14)Narrators, who call themselves tellers, come in all sizes and ages. (15)Living in many different parts of the country, the narrators have dynamic voices and are capable of replicating many accents. (16)Also, coming from many cultures, tellers' stories reflect the flavor of their distinctive backgrounds. (17)However, whether fact or fiction almost all stories convey a lesson or principle.

(18)In a drastic move from the glitter of lights, cameras, and action, people are using their own imaginations as they listen to storytellers. (19)Happy or sad, the story comes to life as listeners picture in their minds what the teller describes. (20)Besides the lessons we learn and the togetherness we feel, it is important that these valuable tales be passed on to others. (21)What better way than through the art and craft of storytelling?

**Reporting Category:** Edit for Correct Use of Language, Capitalization, Punctuation, and Spelling

**A. Standard of Learning:** 10.7 The student will develop a variety of writings with an emphasis on exposition.

f) Edit final copies for correct use of language, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

**Builds On:** Editing final copies of writings begins with the third grade SOL in Writing.

<p><b>A</b></p> <p>6 In sentence 15, <u>different parts of the country</u>, is correctly written —</p> <p>F different parts of the country, G different parts of the Country, H different parts of the Country, J as it is</p> <p>7 In sentence 16, <u>their distinctive backgrounds</u> is correctly written —</p> <p>A his, or her distinctive backgrounds B they're distinctive backgrounds C thier distinctive background D as it is</p>	<p>8 In sentence 17, <u>However, whether fact or fiction almost all</u> is correctly written —</p> <p>F However, whether fact or fiction, almost all G However weather fact or fiction, almost all H However, weather fact, or fiction, almost all J as it is</p> <p>9 In sentence 18, <u>move from the glitter of lights, cameras, and action</u>, is correctly written —</p> <p>A move, from the glitter of lights, cameras, and action B move from the glitter, of lights, cameras, and action, C move from the glitter of lights, cameras and, action, D as it is</p>
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**Instruction:** Have students identify spelling errors, correct pronoun usage in a given sentence, and correct punctuation in passages.

# English: Writing Test

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Course

RELEASED ▼ ITEMS

*The Last Class of the Day*

For English class, Eric has been asked to write a narrative based on his own personal experience.

**Reporting Category:** Plan, Compose, and Revise in a Variety of Forms for a Variety of Purposes

**A. Standard of Learning:** 9.6 The student will develop narrative, literary, expository, and technical writings to inform, explain, analyze, or entertain.

a) Plan and organize writing.

**Builds On:** Developing a plan for writing begins with the third grade SOL in Writing.

<p><b>A</b></p> <p>10 Eric isn't sure what he should write about. Which of these would <i>best</i> help him think of topic ideas?</p> <p>F Reading a story or poem in his literature book</p> <p>G Listing aspects of his life he would like to write about</p> <p>H Thinking of a title for his story</p> <p>J Writing the rough draft of his story</p>	<p>11 Eric isn't sure how to begin a narrative. Which of these sources in his library would be the <i>most</i> helpful to him?</p> <p>A <i>Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature</i></p> <p>B <i>The Top Ten American Poems of 1998</i></p> <p>C <i>Shaping a Story: The Writing Process</i></p> <p>D <i>A Guide to the Best Children's Stories</i></p>
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**Instruction:** Have students use a prewriting strategy such as brainstorming or listing to determine the points to be addressed in a narrative.

# English: Writing Test

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RELEASED ▼ ITEMS

Here is the first part of Eric's rough draft of his story. Use it to answer questions 12-15.

(1)When I enrolled at Lexington High, classes already had been in session for an entire week. (2)My counselor worked quickly on my transfer. (3)She found classes that had a seat available for me. (4)I figured I would be assigned the required classes, but I wasn't sure what elective classes were available at this campus.

(5)As the bell rang for the second class, my counselor handed me my schedule, and I was off to government. (6)Throughout the day, I kept going from class to class, and I was eager to get to the end of the day. (7)My next-to-the-last class was P.E. (8)My schedule said that my last class was "FA—C...Room 112." (9)I didn't know what "FA—C" stood for, but I knew the counselor was pressed for time and had used abbreviations in her rush.

(10)Upon entering Room 112, I should have known I was in trouble. (11)It was a huge auditorium, and I was hoping that it wasn't drama class. (12)However I'm as tough as the next guy on the field, the thought of getting up on stage terrified me. (13)Football has been my favorite sport since I was six years old. (14)I saw some guys in football jerseys, so I figured I was fairly safe. (15)I asked one of them, "This isn't drama class or anything, is it?" (16)The guys kind of laughed and shook their heads to say no. (17)They indicated to me that it wasn't a drama class as they chuckled.

**Reporting Category:** Plan, Compose, and Revise in a Variety of Forms for a Variety of Purposes

**A. Standard of Learning:** 9.6 The student will develop narrative, literary, expository, and technical writings to inform, explain, analyze, or entertain.

d) Use specific vocabulary and information.

**Builds On:** Using specific vocabulary and information begins with the third grade SOL in Writing.

**A**

12 In sentence 4, which of these phrases could be added after "required classes" to provide more specific information?

- F such as English and geometry
- G just like everyone else
- H that every student must take
- J since that was done in all schools

**Instruction:** Provide students with an opportunity to add information within a sentence to make the sentence more specific.



# English: Writing Test

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## RELEASED ▼ ITEMS

Read this next section of Eric's rough draft and answer questions 16–20. This section has groups of underlined words. The questions ask about these groups of underlined words.

(18)Soon after the class started, I learned that "FA—C" stood for "Fine Arts—Choir."  
 (19)Even worst, I thought, than being in drama. (20)I couldn't sing a note, but at least in drama class, I could hide beside someone on stage. (21)Immediately I started trying to think of ways to get out of there as quick as I could.  
 (22)Even after I pleaded with the counselor, she politely refused my request.  
 (23)Day in and day out I went to choir, but for weeks I found no appreciation of music! (24)Finally, one day, I guess you can say that I found my voice, I could sing a note. (25)I wasn't the best or anything, not by a long shot, but I could carry a tune.  
 (26)I can hardly imagine why I got stuck in choir class; however, I think the counselor did me a favor that first semester by not letting me quit.  
 (27)At the end of that semester, I was humming along with the best of them.  
 (28)I was even the choir's star soloist once when we sang "Destined for stardom."  
 (29)Then I got another surprise. (30)The second half of "Fine Arts—Choir" was "Fine Arts—Drama." (31)I soon learned that conquering my fear of the stage was as easy as conquering my fear of singing. (32)I can only imagine what surprises my counselor is saving up for me during my senior year.

# English: Writing Test

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**Reporting Category:** Edit for Correct Use of Language, Capitalization, Punctuation, and Spelling

**A. Standard of Learning:** 9.6 The student will develop narrative, literary, expository, and technical writings to inform, explain, analyze, or entertain.

g) Edit final copies for correct use of language, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

**Builds On:** Editing final copies begins with the third grade SOL in Writing.

<p><b>A</b></p> <p>16 In sentence 19, <u>worst, I thought, than</u> is correctly written —</p> <p>F worse, I thought, than G worst, I thought then H worst I thought, than J as it is</p>	<p>19 In sentence 28, <u>sang "Destined for stardom."</u> is correctly written —</p> <p>A sang, "Destined for stardom." B sang "Destined for Stardom." C sang "Destined For Stardom". D as it is</p>
<p>17 In sentence 21, <u>ways to get out of there as quick</u> is correctly written —</p> <p>A ways to get out of there, as quick B ways to get out of they're as quickly C ways to get out of there as quickly D as it is</p>	<p>20 In sentence 32, <u>for me during my senior year</u> is correctly written —</p> <p>F for me, during my Senior year G for me during my Senior year H for myself during my Senior year J as it is</p>
<p>18 In sentence 24, <u>that I found my voice,</u> is correctly written —</p> <p>F that I found my voice; G that, I found my voice H that I have found my voice, J as it is</p>	

**Instruction:** In given sentences of a rough draft, have students find an error in the use of comparatives such as *worse/worst*, determine the correct use of an adverb, determine errors in punctuation, and determine if errors in capitalization appear.

# English: Writing Test

End  
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Course

RELEASED ▼ ITEMS

*Stay in School*

Since Josephine and Susan are troubled by the number of students who are dropping out of school, they have decided to write letters to the members of the state legislature. They both want to suggest that the legislature enact a law requiring students to stay in school in order to keep their drivers' licenses.

**Reporting Category:** Plan, Compose, and Revise in a Variety of Forms for a Variety of Purposes

**A. Standard of Learning:** 11.8 The student will write, revise, and edit personal and business correspondence to a standard acceptable in the work place and higher education.

a) Apply a variety of planning strategies to generate and organize ideas.

**Builds On:** Developing a plan for writing begins with the third grade SOL in Writing.

**A**

21 Before Josephine begins writing her letter, she wants to make an outline of her ideas. An outline will help her to —

- A use convincing vocabulary in her letter
- B locate relevant quotes from resources to include in her letter
- C decide which information will make her argument most convincing
- D think of additional topics to bring to the state legislature's attention

**Instruction:** Provide students with an opportunity to determine how an outline will help in writing a letter.

# English: Writing Test

End  
of  
Course

## RELEASED ▼ ITEMS

**Draft A below is Josephine's first draft of the first part of her letter. Draft B is Susan's draft. Use both rough drafts to answer questions 22–25.**

**Draft A: Josephine's draft**

To the Members of the State Legislature:

I have heard that the drop-out rate in our schools is very high. It might even be as high as 25 percent. That number is not acceptable. Because students who receive a high school diploma have a much better chance in life, a change is needed.

Students who quit attending school often do so because they are unsuccessful in the classroom. Most of these students, however, would attain a higher degree of academic success if only they would attend class regularly. If my idea were adopted, these students would become more motivated to stay in school. Then, as a result of regular school attendance, they would have better classroom experiences.

I think there should be a policy that causes students who are absent excessively to lose their drivers' licenses. Most teens cherish the freedom that a driver's license represents. This sort of policy is one solution to this problem. It would prevent many students from cutting classes. Students value their drivers' licenses.

**Draft B: Susan's draft**

To the Members of the State Legislature:

Recently I learned that 23 percent of the students who enter my high school as freshmen do not make it to their senior year. Because this number caught my attention, I decided to check on the overall drop-out rate for our school system. Unfortunately, this number is even worse—26.3 percent. Lowering this disturbing rate should be top priority for our lawmakers.

Many students have problems succeeding. They quit attending school. Most of these students could be more successful. This could happen if they went to class regularly. My plan will help these students stay in school. This will help create better classroom experiences.

I would like to suggest one possible solution to this problem. I think a new policy should be established mandating that students who have more than ten unexcused absences will lose their drivers' licenses. This policy is one solution to this problem, which would cause students to think twice about cutting classes. After all, having a driver's license is a highly valued privilege to most teens.

# English: Writing Test

End  
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Course

**Reporting Category:** Plan, Compose, and Revise in a Variety of Forms for a Variety of Purposes

**A. Standard of Learning:** 10.7 The student will develop a variety of writings with an emphasis on exposition.

c) Write clear, varied sentences.

**Builds On:** Writing for clarity begins with the second grade SOL in Writing.

**A**

22 What is the *best* way to rewrite this sentence in Draft B: This policy is one solution to this problem, which would cause students to think twice about cutting classes.?

F This policy, which would cause students to think twice about cutting classes, is one solution to this problem.

G Causing students to think twice about cutting classes, this policy is one solution to this problem.

H This policy is one solution, which would cause students to think twice about cutting classes, to this problem.

J One solution to this problem is causing students to think twice about cutting classes, which this policy does.

**Instruction:** Have students rewrite an identified sentence from a rough draft.

**B. Standard of Learning:** 11.7 The student will write in a variety of forms with an emphasis on persuasion.

e) Revise writing for accuracy and depth of information.

**Builds On:** Revising writing for depth of information begins with the third grade SOL in Writing.

**B**

23 Paragraph 1 of which draft provides more relevant, specific information?

A Draft A, because it describes how a student can have a good chance in life

B Draft B, because it tells the percentage of students who drop out

C Draft A, because it states that a 25 percent drop-out rate is not acceptable

D Draft B, because it ends with a strong statement

24 Which of these sentences in paragraph 1 of Draft B establishes the main focus of Susan's letter?

F Recently I learned that 23 percent of the students who enter my high school as freshmen do not make it to their senior year.

G Because this number caught my attention, I decided to check on the overall drop-out rate for our school system.

H Unfortunately, this number is even worse—26.3 percent.

J Lowering this disturbing rate should be top priority for our lawmakers.

**Instruction:** Provide students with an opportunity to determine which of two rough drafts contains the more relevant, specific information, and which sentence in a rough draft establishes the main focus of the writing.

# English Test: Writing

End  
of  
Course

**A. Standard of Learning:** 11.8 The student will write, revise, and edit personal and business correspondence to a standard acceptable in the work place and higher education.

c) Present information in a logical manner.

**Builds On:** Organizing information begins with the second grade SOL in Writing.

<b>A</b>	<p>25 In both drafts, paragraph 3 focuses mainly on —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A familiarizing the reader with the problem</li> <li>B suggesting a solution to the problem</li> <li>C creating a comparison relationship</li> <li>D voicing a complaint about the school system</li> </ul>
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**Instruction:** Provide students with an opportunity to compare identified paragraphs from two rough drafts in terms of their focus.

# English: Writing Test

End  
of  
Course

RELEASED ▼ ITEMS

Read this next section of Susan's rough draft and answer questions 26-30. This section has groups of underlined words. The questions ask about these groups of underlined words.

The program would require coordination by several governmental agencies. School administrators in each school district would need to turn in their attendance rolls to the department of Public Safety. In addition, a system of locating students who have more than ten unexcused absences would need to be developed.

However, I feel that these efforts would be worth it. Students, who graduate from high school, enter the work force with marketable skills. They are able to help support themselves and their families, and they are better able to contribute creativity and intelligence to their communities. Our society is changing too quickly to lose the productivity of one-fourth of its' citizens.

Sincerely yours,

*Susan Medford*

Susan Medford

# English: Writing Test

End  
of  
Course

**Reporting Category:** Edit for Correct Use of Language, Capitalization, Punctuation, and Spelling

**A. Standard of Learning:** 11.8 The student will write, revise, and edit personal and business correspondence to a standard acceptable in the work place and higher education.

e) Edit final copies for correct use of language, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

**Builds On:** Editing final copies begins with the third grade SOL in Writing.

<b>A</b>	<p>26 How is <u>department of Public Safety</u> correctly written?</p> <p>F Department of public safety                  G Department of Public Safety                  H department of public safety                  J As it is</p>	<p>29 How is <u>too quickly to loose</u> correctly written?</p> <p>A too quick to loose                  B too quickly to lose                  C too quick to lose                  D As it is</p>
	<p>27 How is <u>Students, who graduate from high school, enter</u> correctly written?</p> <p>A Students who graduate from high school, enter                  B Students, who graduate from high school enter                  C Students who graduate from high school enter                  D As it is</p>	<p>30 How is <u>one-fourth of its' citizens</u> correctly written?</p> <p>F one-fourth of its citizens                  G one-forth of it's citizens                  H one-forth of its' citizens                  J As it is</p>
	<p>28 How is <u>themselves and their families,</u> correctly written?</p> <p>F theirselves and their families,                  G themselves and their families                  H theirselves and their families                  J As it is</p>	

**Instruction:** In identified sentences in a rough draft, have students correct capitalization errors, punctuation errors, the use of homophones, and pronoun usage.

# English: Writing Test

In the direct writing component, students write a composition about a topic presented to them in a writing prompt. The writing prompt page also includes a "Checklist for Writers" that lists points for students to keep in mind as they write. Writing compositions are scored on each of the following domains:

- Composing
- Written Expression
- Usage/Mechanics

Scores in the Composing and Written Expression domains are reported as part of the Reporting Category called **Plan, Compose, and Revise Writing in a Variety of Forms for a Variety of Purposes**. Scores in the Usage/Mechanics domain are reported as part of the Reporting Category called **Edit for Correct Use of Language, Capitalization, Punctuation, and Spelling**. A writing prompt from the Spring 2000 administration is shown below.



Standards of Learning Assessments

End-of-Course

## ENGLISH: WRITING

**PROMPT No. 111**

British writer George Eliot has said, "Decide on what you think is right, and stick to it." Think about a time in your life when you made a decision or choice about something and it turned out to be a positive one. Write about what happened.

**CHECKLIST FOR WRITERS**

I planned my paper before writing it.

I revised my paper to be sure that

- the introduction to my paper captures the reader's attention;
- my central idea is supported with specific information and examples that will interest my reader;
- the content of my paper relates to my central idea;
- my writing is organized in a logical manner;
- my sentences are varied and read smoothly;
- my word choice develops my purpose and tone; and
- the conclusion brings my ideas together without restating.

I edited my paper to be sure that

- correct grammar is used;
- words are capitalized when appropriate;
- sentences are constructed and punctuated correctly; and
- words are spelled correctly.

I reviewed my paper to make sure that it accurately reflects my intentions.

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# Correct Answers

End  
of  
Course

**ENGLISH:** *Writing Test*

1. D 2. G 3. C 4. F 5. D 6. F 7. D 8. F 9. D 10. G  
11. C 12. F 13. D 14. J 15. C 16. F 17. C 18. F 19. B  
20. J 21. C 22. F 23. B 24. J 25. B 26. G 27. C 28. J  
29. B 30. F

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