



# 2017–2018 NC Final Exams of English I, III, and IV North Carolina Assessment Specifications

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## Purposes of the Assessments

- North Carolina Final Exams (NCFEs) for high school English Language Arts (ELA) measure students' academic progress in the [NC Standard Course of Study](#), adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) in June 2010.
- NC State Board of Education policy [TEST-016](#) directs schools to use the results from all course-specific NCFEs as a minimum of 20% of the student's final course grade.
- NCFEs are not used for school and district accountability under the READY Accountability Model or for federal reporting purposes.

## Developing Assessments

- North Carolina educators are recruited and trained to write new items for the NCFEs. The diversity among the item writers and their knowledge of the current standards are addressed during recruitment. Trained North Carolina educators also review items and suggest improvements, if necessary. The use of North Carolina educators to develop and review items strengthens the instructional validity of the items. Teachers interested in training to become an item writer or reviewer for the North Carolina Testing Program can visit <https://center.ncsu.edu/ncpd/course/view.php?id=128>.
- For an in-depth explanation of the test development process see the [Test Development Process: Item, Selection and Form Development](#) (Updated May 2016).

## Curriculum and Assessment Cycle

- June 2010: North Carolina SBE adoption of the [NC Standard Course of Study](#)
- 2012–2013: Operational administration of the Measures of Student Learning: Common Exams
- 2013–14: Redesign and subsequent first operational administration of the NCFEs
- 2014–15: Second operational administration of the NCFEs
- 2015–16: Third operational administration of the NCFEs
- 2016–17: Fourth operational administration of the NCFEs
- 2017–18: Fifth operational administration of the NCFEs

### Prioritization of Standards

□ Members of the Test Development section of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) invited teachers to collaborate and develop recommendations for a prioritization of the standards, indicating the relative importance of each standard, the anticipated instructional time, and the appropriateness of the standard for multiple-choice and constructed response item formats.

□ Tables 1–3 describe the percentage range of total score points that will appear on the NCFE forms. English I, III, and IV will consist of multiple-choice items. English III will also include two constructed response items. Students may take longer to answer the constructed response items than to answer the multiple-choice items. The multiple-choice items are worth one point each, and each constructed response item is worth two points. The table of test specification weights describe the percentages of total score points, rather than the percentages of total items.

Table 1. *Test Specification Weights for the English I NCFE*

Domain ( <a href="#">2010 NC Standard Course of Study</a> )	Standards	Percent of Total Score Points
Language	L.4, L.5	10 to 15%
Reading for Informational Text	RI.1–RI.6	35 to 40%
Reading for Literature	RL.1–RL.6	45 to 50%
Total		100%

Table 2. *Test Specification Weights for the English III NCFE*

Domain ( <a href="#">2010 NC Standard Course of Study</a> )	Standards	Percent of Total Score Points
Language	L.4, L.5	10 to 15%
Reading for Informational Text	RI.1–RI.6	35 to 40%
Reading for Literature	RL.1–RL.6	45 to 50%
Total		100%

Table 3. *Test Specification Weights for the English IV NCFE*

Domain ( <a href="#">2010 NC Standard Course of Study</a> )	Standards	Percent of Total Score Points
Language	L.4, L.5	10 to 15%
Reading for Informational Text	RI.1–RI.6, RI.8	30 to 35%
Reading for Literature	RL.1–RL.6	50 to 55%
Total		100%

## **Cognitive Rigor**

☐ Multiple-choice items will require students to read, comprehend, and analyze information. Also, students will be expected to analyze the reading selections; identify points of view, claims, and evidence; apply concepts and skills; and make inferences.

☐ Constructed response items on the NCFE of English III will draw from the following

[NC Standard Course of Study](#) standards:

- Reading for Literature 2. Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
- Reading for Information 2. Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

## **Types of Items and Supplemental Materials**

☐ The NCFEs for English I, III, and IV consist of four-response-option multiple-choice items. English III also has constructed response items.

☐ Each form consists of selections drawn from works of literature, which include short stories and poetry, or informational texts, drawn from the domains of history/social studies or science/technology.

☐ In English III, two selections will each have a constructed response item. The constructed response items will be short answer and can typically be answered well in a paragraph or less. Each constructed response item targets reading skills and measures specific writing skills, and is worth two points.

- ✓ Students taking the exam on paper will write their responses on the nine lines provided on the answer sheet. Students must not write beyond the end of the lines or in the margins. Words written in the margins or unlined areas of the answer sheet will not be scored. Students must not add more lines to the answer sheet; words written on extra lines will not be scored. Scorers only review for the specific criteria as stated in the item. Additional information not required in the answer does not increase the student's score.
- ✓ Students taking the online format will type their responses in a text box. The online text box allows for 1000 characters.
- ✓ It is permissible to respond in bullets.
- ✓ The English III answer sheet may be reviewed at the [NCDPI/Accountability Services](#) website. The answer sheet may be shared with students to familiarize them with the expectations.

☐ A complete list of the supplemental test materials (i.e., *NC Final Exams Materials List*) may be reviewed at the [NCDPI/Accountability Services](#) website.

□ Released items are available on the [NCDPI/Accountability Services](#) website. Released items may be used by school systems to help acquaint students with items. The released items may not reflect the breadth of the standards assessed and/or the range of item difficulty found on the NCFE. These materials must not be used for personal or financial gain. The released items are also available to schools through the online testing platform, NCTest.

□ Schools must ensure every student participating in an online assessment for the North Carolina Testing Program has completed the appropriate Online Assessment Tutorial for the associated assessment at least one time per year at the school before test day. The tutorial provides students the opportunity to practice the mechanics of navigating through the testing platform, to become familiar with the tools, and to respond to the sample items. Refer to the [Online Test Administrator’s Guide](#) for additional information.

**Testing Structure and Test Administration Time**

□ The NCFEs of English I and IV contain 50 multiple-choice items. For English III, the exam contains 48 multiple-choice items and two constructed response items. Included in the total item counts are embedded multiple-choice field test items that will not count toward or against a student’s score, but will be used for purposes of developing items for future test forms.

NC Final Exam 2017–18	Number of Operational Items	Number of Field Test Items*	Total Number of Items
English I	40 multiple-choice	10 multiple-choice	50
English III	39 multiple-choice, 1 constructed response	9 multiple-choice, 1 constructed response	50
English IV	40 multiple-choice	10 multiple-choice	50

\*Field test items will not count toward or against a student’s score, but will be used for purposes of developing items for future test forms.

□ Students will be given 120 minutes to answer all items.

□ Appendices A–C show the number of operational items for each standard assessed by the 2017–18 NCFEs. Note that future coverage of standards could vary within the constraints of the content category weights in Tables 1–3.

**Test Cycle and Delivery Mode**

□ The NCFEs are administered to students enrolled in fall and spring courses. A list of course codes that align with the 2017–18 NCFEs (i.e., *Course Codes that Align with the NC Final Exams*) is available on the [NCDPI/Accountability Services](#) website.

□ The NCFEs are administered through NCTest, the NCDPI’s online assessment platform. Paper editions are also available.

□ The NCFEs are only provided in English. Native language translation versions are not available.

**Appendix A**  
**English I NC Final Exam 2017–18**  
**Number of Operational Items by Standard**

The following table shows the number of operational items for each standard. Note that future coverage of standards could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in Tables 1–3. Some standards not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite standard, may be tested within the context of another standard, or may be included as an embedded field test item.

<u>English I Standard</u> (Grades 9–10)	Number of Operational Items by Standard
<b>Reading Standards for Literature</b>	
RL.1	5
RL.2	2
RL.3	2
RL.4	3
RL.5	5
RL.6	1
RL.7	–
RL.9	–
RL.10	–
<b>Language Standards</b>	
L.1	–
L.2	–
L.3	–
L.4.a	4
L.4.b	–
L.4.c	–
L.4.d	–
L.5.a	2
L.5.b	–
L.6	–
<b>Reading Standards for Informational Text</b>	
RI.1	2
RI.2	4
RI.3	3
RI.4	3
RI.5	2
RI.6	2
RI.7	–
RI.8	–
RI.9	–
RI.10	–

**Appendix B**  
**English III NC Final Exam 2017–18**  
**Number of Operational Items by Standard**

The following table shows the number of operational items for each standard. Note that future coverage of standards could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in Tables 1–3. Some standards not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite standard, may be tested within the context of another standard, or may be included as an embedded field test item.

<u>English III Standard</u> <u>(Grades 11–12)</u>	Number of Operational Items by Standard
<b>Reading Standards for Literature</b>	
RL.1	5
RL.2	3
RL.3	3
RL.4	3
RL.5	3
RL.6	4
RL.7	–
RL.9	–
RL.10	–
<b>Language Standards</b>	
L.1	–
L.2	–
L.3.a	–
L.4.a	2
L.4.b	–
L.4.c	–
L.4.d	–
L.5.a	4
L.5.b	–
L.6	–
<b>Reading Standards for Informational Text</b>	
RI.1	2
RI.2	–
RI.3	4
RI.4	3
RI.5	3
RI.6	1
RI.7	–
RI.8	–
RI.9	–
RI.10	–

**Appendix C**  
**English IV NC Final Exam 2017–18**  
**Number of Operational Items by Standard**

The following table shows the number of operational items for each standard. Note that future coverage of standards could vary within the constraints of the test specification weights in Tables 1–3. Some standards not designated with tested items (i.e., “–”) may be a prerequisite standard, may be tested within the context of another standard, or may be included as an embedded field test item.

<u>English IV Standard</u> <u>(Grades 11–12)</u>	Number of Operational Items by Standard
<b>Reading Standards for Literature</b>	
RL.1	4
RL.2	3
RL.3	4
RL.4	4
RL.5	4
RL.6	3
RL.7	–
RL.9	–
RL.10	–
<b>Language Standards</b>	
L.1	–
L.2	–
L.3.a	–
L.4.a	2
L.4.b	–
L.4.c	–
L.4.d	–
L.5.a	3
L.5.b	–
L.6	–
<b>Reading Standards for Informational Text</b>	
RI.1	2
RI.2	2
RI.3	4
RI.4	1
RI.5	2
RI.6	2
RI.7	–
RI.8	–
RI.9	–
RI.10	–