

National Essential Skills Study (NESS)

Your final survey choices must be submitted electronically at www.LeaderEd.com/ness.html. Use this printout to examine the topics and make your preliminary selections.

English Language Arts

Choose a minimum of **20** topic statements and a maximum of **30** topic statements as the ones you think are most important for high school graduates to know and be able to do.

Reading

- Preview (skim) informational text to anticipate content (title, chapter headings, Internet search results, illustrations, table of contents, etc.).
- Develop processes or techniques for building vocabulary, decoding unfamiliar words/texts, and understanding or remembering information by using such strategies as context clues, word structure, letter-sound relationships, word histories, and mnemonics.
- Read for main ideas and supporting details and discriminate important ideas from unimportant ideas to aid comprehension.
- Assess the validity, reliability, authenticity, quality, and accuracy of an informational or literary text.
- Create a connection to a text by understanding the personal, social, cultural, and historical significance of it.
- Compare/contrast, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate ideas from various selections on similar topics or works by the same author.
- Evaluate the logic and organization of technical or other nonfiction texts for clarity and effectiveness in describing a set of directions or procedures.
- Apply personal, ethical, or impartial criteria for evaluating informational, persuasive, and literary materials.
- Assess the significance and importance of themes in literary text.
- Evaluate an author's uses of language, literary devices, and text characteristics (plot, setting, theme, character, point of view, genre, etc.) to evoke a response in a reader.
- Evaluate an author's uses of language (metaphors, analogies, etc.) and text characteristics (boldface, italics, parentheses, etc.) to aid comprehension.
- Compare/contrast literary genres (science fiction, romance, drama, etc.) or delivery systems (books, live performance, film, etc.).

Writing

Prewriting and Editing Skills

- Collect and focus thoughts about the writing activity (brainstorming, listing, drafting, etc.).
- Apply writing rules and conventions, (grammar, usage, punctuation, sentence structure, and spelling).
- Use resources (dictionary, grammar books, thesaurus, online references, etc.) as needed to edit.

Organizing Skills

- Organize supporting detail in logical and convincing patterns that focus on audience and purpose.
- Use a variety of organizational formats (compare/contrast, cause/effect, inductive/deductive, most important to least important, and least important to most important) that support the purpose of a writing activity.

- Research information from a variety of sources and draft a well-organized, accurate, and informative report or essay that engages an audience and addresses its needs.
- Use ideas from different sources to write a paper that expresses a personal opinion or uses specific evidence from literary texts to support an opinion.
- Compare, contrast, and synthesize ideas, concepts, and generalizations from a variety of literary sources in diverse writings.
- Write in various formats such as learning logs, laboratory reports, note-taking, response journals, organizers, and portfolios.

Literary and Technical Writing

- Develop and use expository writing skills in all content areas.
- Write clear and concise directions or procedures.
- Use and cite documented research in both print and nonprint presentations.
- Define a position on a controversial topic and write an essay to persuade a specific audience to change an opinion or take a particular action.
- Understand the nature and purpose of a variety of technical formats (essays, business letters, memos, investigative reports, brochures, critiques, instructions, policy statements, technical proposals, lab reports, etc.) and write in these formats.
- Write a biographical and autobiographical sketch.
- Prepare for and conduct an interview of a classmate, neighbor, or public figure and write a character sketch.
- Create an original piece of literature or poetry for personal enjoyment or to share with other readers.

Listening

- Locate and gather information such as data, facts, ideas, concepts, and generalizations from oral sources.
- Analyze and evaluate a speaker's opinions, personal values, and persuasive techniques.
- Listen for language cues that demonstrate a speaker's patterns of organization in formal presentations.
- Make informed judgments about the content, organization, and delivery (including non-verbal cues) of spoken communication.
- Identify and interpret idiomatic expressions and figures of speech that enhance oral communication.
- Identify and interpret vocal characteristics that influence meaning such as tone, volume, pitch, and rate.
- Summarize essential information from a variety of oral sources such as speeches, plays, commercials, and political debates.
- Follow oral directions.
- Understand the effect of sounds, words, imagery, repetition, rhyme, and rhythm patterns in language, including poetry and orations, on the speaker or audience.

Speaking

- Prepare and deliver individual speeches that address the needs of the target audience by gathering information, rehearsing, making eye contact, speaking loudly enough, and delivering information in a well-organized fashion.
- Apply rules of appropriate diction and grammar in formal and informal speaking situations.
- Give clear and concise oral directions.
- Participate in (sometimes leading) one-on-one or group discussions by asking questions, asking for clarification, taking turns speaking, agreeing and/or disagreeing courteously, making informed judgments, and working toward a common goal.

- Define a position on a controversial topic and make an oral presentation likely to persuade a specific audience to change an opinion or take a particular action.
- Interpret literature for an audience by reading out loud with appropriate expression.

Presenting and Viewing

- Critically appraise print and nonprint content and information in current events, popular media, and the Internet for accuracy, artistic or informational value, production quality, and entertainment value.
- Demonstrate ability to select and use appropriate technology or media for presenting information to the target audience for the specific purpose.
- Apply an understanding of graphics, layout, white space, italics, graphs, charts, and other visual aids to enhance informational reading, writing, or presenting.
- Understand and apply film and theatrical terms and techniques to an analysis and evaluation of films and plays.
- Research information about viewing by evaluating personal and societal viewing habits.
- Compare the role of print and nonprint sources, including advertising, in shaping public opinion, noting instances of unsupported inferences and fallacious reasoning.

When you enter your survey responses online, you will be asked to check one of the boxes below. If you will be giving your completed survey to someone else to enter your choices, please indicate your position below.

Your Position:		
<i>(Select only one)</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> English Language Arts Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Language Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Educator
<input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Art/Music Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent
<input type="checkbox"/> Science Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical/Health Education Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Member
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Business/Industry
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary (K-5) Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Career/Technical Education Educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Student
	<input type="checkbox"/> School Administrator	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Non Educator
	<input type="checkbox"/> Guidance Counselor	