



EOCEP for English 2 2025 Test Data Review Report

Office of Assessment and Standards

Updated October 2025

South Carolina Department of Education

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Introduction

Data Recognition Corporation and the South Carolina Department of Education Office of Assessment and Standards (OAS) convened a panel of content experts to review item data from the Spring 2025 administration of the EOCEP for English 2. The panel of content experts analyzed operational and field test items, including information about how students performed on each item. Based on their analyses, the panel offered the instructional insights and strategies outlined in this document to support student learning.

Operational items on the Spring 2025 EOCEP for English 2 assessment were aligned to the *2024 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready ELA Standards*. All instructional insights and strategies in this document, including those from the analysis of operational items, have been organized based on their alignment to the 2024 ELA standards.

To be most useful for teachers, all relevant instructional insights and strategies from the 2024 EOCEP for English 2 Test Data Review Report are included in this year's report. This includes instructional insights and strategies to support student learning offered by both the 2024 and 2025 panels of content experts. New instructional insights and strategies not previously identified in the 2024 EOCEP for English 2 Test Data Review Report are labeled as "New for 2025".

The OAS recognizes the hard work of the panel and South Carolina educators and offers these relevant and useful suggestions for improving instruction as an addendum to those from previous years.

Insights and Instructional Strategies Aligned to AOR.1.2

New for 2025

Below is a partial sample item from English 2 that targets a section of AOR.1.2. The format of the item has been changed for the purpose of this document.

Read the sentence from the passage.

But Brittany felt the tiniest whisper of a wish stirring inside her when her cousin Ellen came to visit. Ellen had been on vacation to the states of Oregon and Washington. Ellen opened her mind to the idea of a different kind of garden altogether.

Which idea is the author most likely trying to convey with the phrase “tiniest whisper of a wish stirring inside her”?

ELA.E2.AOR.1.2 asks students to analyze how figurative language impacts mood, tone, and meaning in a text. The second part of the indicator asks students to explain an author’s use of allegory. This item asks students to determine the author’s purpose in using figurative language in this excerpt. To be successful with a question like this, the student must be able to recognize an author’s use of figurative language in a text, why an author may choose to use figurative language, and how it can affect a written text.

- At the high school level, instruction of figurative language extends beyond identification and definition. English 2 students must have practice examining figurative language in texts and explaining why an author chooses to use figurative language and how it impacts the text. Students should pay careful attention to how figurative language affects mood, tone, and meaning.
- Instruction should include how to determine tone in a literary text. Students should practice examining the characteristics of formal tone vs. informal tone, serious tone vs. humorous tone, along with other types of tone. Instruction should support students in noticing and examining word choice, figurative language (AOR.1.2), context, and sentence length and structure. Instruction should extend beyond a list of tone words and provide students with the opportunity to examine how an author creates tone and why he or she creates a specific tone.
- Instruction should also include studying an author’s craft of creating mood within a text. Students should practice examining the author’s choice of setting, how an author describes the setting, a character’s emotions, the conflict, and how it is resolved (or not), and the author’s use of imagery and figurative language (AOR.1.2). As with tone, students in English 2 should not be restricted to a list of words that describe mood, but analyze the author’s craft of creating mood.

Insights and Instructional Strategies Aligned to AOR.2.1

New for 2025

Below is a partial sample item from English 2 that targets a section of AOR.2.1. The format of the item has been changed for the purpose of this document.

Part A

Which theme is best developed in the passage?

Part B

Which detail from the passage best supports the answer in part A?

From the 2024 Data Review Document

The committee noted that English 2 students may struggle to understand theme (ELA.E2.AOR.2.1). Teachers should reinforce the idea that “theme” is a complex statement, not a single word. A theme is universal and can be applied to multiple texts. If a theme can only apply to one specific text, it is not a theme. The committee recommends instructional strategies such as:

- Define theme and provide examples. The classroom discussion should include how the statement can apply to multiple works. Using a short video, ask students to track the different *motifs. A motif is a recurring element used to reinforce a theme. Examples of motifs include greed, power, love, and revenge. Ask students to explain what they can learn about one motif as presented in the video. As a class, determine the theme. Then, ask students to explain how the creator of the video helped illustrate the theme. This can also be completed in small groups or individually.
- Pre-select a text for students to use. Then, pull motifs from the text. Each motif will serve as a station. Allow students to work in a station to determine a theme based on that motif. The theme should be written as a complete sentence. Allow each group of students to present their theme and explain how they determined it. Students should consider questions such as:
 - How do the characters help develop this theme?
 - How does dialogue help develop this theme?
 - Are there any symbols related to the theme? If so, how do the symbols help develop the theme?
 - How does the author depict characters with the motif?* For example, what happens to a character(s) associated with power if the motif is power? Do things end well for the character, or do they end badly? Why does the author choose to do this?
- Some students may need to start with simpler texts. Fables are an effective way to teach a theme: ask students to determine the theme of a fable and then write it in a complete sentence. Move on to more complex texts when students are ready.

- Provide a universal theme and ask students to find an example of it in a movie or story.
- Provide multiple potential themes for a text, and let students choose which of them apply and *why*.
 - A variation on this idea is to ask students to choose evidence from the passage to support each theme, and then rank the evidence to determine which theme is best supported and which themes don't apply.
- Ask students to generate a creative representation of a theme (a painting/drawing, a model, etc.).

Updated for 2025

**The term "motif" is not directly assessed on the EOCEP for English 2 because the term does not appear in ELA Standards; however, motif should be a part of ELA instruction because it is a recurring element that supports the development of the theme.*

Insights and Instructional Strategies Aligned to AOR.2.2

New for 2025

Below is a partial sample item from English 2 that targets a section of AOR.2.2. The format of the item has been changed for the purpose of this document.

Part A

Based on the speech, which quality does Twain most admire in Oliver Wendell Holmes?

Part B

Which sentence from the speech best supports the answer in part A?

ELA.E2.AOR.2.2 asks students to analyze how the author of a historical speech or essay uses supporting details to develop the central idea over the course of a text.

- This item focuses on the most admirable quality of Holmes, which is a central idea in the speech.
- Instruction at the English 2 level should include access to complex texts that may have more than one central idea. While a summative assessment item on the EOCEP will only address one central idea, there may be multiple items aligned with AOR.2.2 that each address a different central idea within a text.
- While this item is presented as a selected response item, classroom assessment should ask students to answer questions such as this one without providing answer options. Asking the students to determine the quality and supporting textual evidence allows the teacher to determine missteps in the students' thinking and any misconceptions the students may have.

Insights and Instructional Strategies Aligned to AOR.3.1

New for 2025

Below is a partial sample item from English 2 that targets a section of AOR.3.1. The format of the item has been changed for the purpose of this document.

Which sentence from the passage best demonstrates how the author uses sarcasm to reveal Brittany’s perspective about gardening?

ELA.E2.AOR.3.1 asks students to analyze how an author creates effects such as suspense, humor, or sarcasm through differences in the perspectives of the characters and the reader (e.g., situational, dramatic, or verbal irony). This item targets how the author uses sarcasm to reveal a character’s perspective.

- Instruction should include providing students with opportunities to analyze and discuss how an author creates sarcasm and for what purpose.
- Instruction should also include that sarcasm typically includes a negative connotation, while verbal irony does not.
- Lastly, sarcasm, satire, and irony can be used as both a rhetorical device and a literary device. Instruction should provide opportunities for students to analyze and discuss complex texts that illustrate the different uses of these devices.

Insights and Instructional Strategies Aligned to AOR.4.1

New for 2025

Below is a partial sample item from English 2 that targets a section of AOR.4.1. The format of the item has been changed for the purpose of this document.

Read the excerpts from the speech.

When one receives a letter from a great man...
Well, the first great man who ever wrote me a letter...
He was also the first great literary man...

What is the effect of Twain’s repetition in the excerpts?

ELA.E2.AOR.4.1 asks students to analyze an author’s perspective or purpose and analyze how the author’s rhetoric contributes to the effectiveness of the text. This item asks students to analyze the effect of Twain’s rhetoric (repetition).

- Students in English 2 should have a vocabulary of rhetoric that started building in the 6th grade.* Teachers in English 2 may need to introduce new terminology to students and review some of the existing terminology. It is important that English 2 students analyze the effect of rhetoric in a variety of texts.
- Instruction must include texts (and other forms of media) that provide opportunities for students to interact with and analyze an author’s use of rhetoric.

From the 2024 Data Review Document

The panel also suggests some specific teaching strategies to help students better understand rhetoric:

- Read and listen to speeches. Have students think about how rhetoric is applied and how the audience might perceive the language differently when reading vs. listening.
- Make graphic organizers based on watching commercials. Ask students to look at the script, visuals, music, etc.
- Analyze fictional speeches (e.g., *Antigone*, *Animal Farm*) to discuss rhetorical techniques.

**Because the 2024 ELA Standards were fully implemented in the 2024-25 school year, this year’s English 2 students may not have a strong background in rhetoric. English 2 teachers may need to introduce different types of rhetoric to English 2 students to build their knowledge.*

Insights and Instructional Strategies Aligned to AOR.5.2

New for 2025

Below is a partial sample item from English 2 that targets a section of AOR.5.2. The format of the item has been changed for the purpose of this document.

Read the sentences from the passage in the chart. Then, move the text structure each sentence best reflects into the correct box.

Sentence from Passage	Text Structure Reflected by Sentence
He and colleague Gordon Danby began working on the superconductor idea, and by the late 1960s, they had invented the first electromagnetically levitating train.	
Hyperloop would use levitation, but instead of suspending a train above the tracks, it would use pods inside a tube to whisk cargo from point A to point B.	

ELA.E2.AOR.5.2 asks students to analyze the impact of multiple text structures and/or the use of text features in an informational text... This item asks students to determine which text structure is reflected by each sentence. This item, unlike others, does not ask students to analyze how the structures impact the text.

- English 2 instruction should begin with supporting students in determining text structures in sentences, sections, chapters, and entire texts. This skill is reflected in this item. Teachers should keep in mind that classroom instruction can target an entire indicator, whereas a selected response test item can only target part of an indicator.
- To meet the full intent of ELA.E2.AOR.5.2, students must then be able to analyze how the structure of a text illustrates an author’s purpose, impacts an author’s purpose, and impacts the meaning of the text. Additionally, students must be able to evaluate the text to determine if the author’s choice of text structure is effective, explain why it is or is not effective, and suggest and explain how a different structure would impact the text.

Insights and Instructional Strategies Aligned to AOR.6.1

New for 2025

ELA.E2.AOR.6.1 asks students to summarize and/or paraphrase from grade-level text to enhance comprehension.

- English 2 instruction should provide students with the opportunity to summarize full texts and sections of text. As part of instruction, students should develop their own summaries and share them verbally or in writing.
- For summative assessment, paraphrasing will apply to sections of text or one or more sentences. This is more limited than how it is taught in the classroom. Classroom instruction should provide opportunities for students to both paraphrase and summarize using the same text.
- While plagiarism and citing sources are not assessed on summative assessment, instruction should regularly include citing sources to avoid plagiarism.

Insights and Instructional Strategies Aligned to Writing Indicators

From the 2024 Data Review Document

The committee noted that demonstrating a command of English grammar and conventions remains a difficult skill for students to master. As with last year, the committee recommends peer editing and one-on-one conferences to help students revise their writing. The committee recommends using mentor texts to encourage students to think about more complex sentences or complex punctuation. The panelists noted that students may avoid complexity for fear of making mistakes, but modeling effective use of complexity can help move students away from, for example, comma-splice errors and move them toward a more nuanced incorporation of punctuation and sentence structure.

In addition to helping with mechanics, the panelists encourage teachers to use writing conferences to help students with organization. Ask students to think about why a paragraph is structured the way it is. “Sentence strips” are a good way for students to consider how a paragraph is structured. Introduce the concept first through mentor texts that show examples of writing with strong organization or structure. Ask students how a passage is organized, and give them suggestions (e.g., “Would changing this paragraph make the writing more effective? Why?”). Comparing and contrasting the use of headings can also help students think about organization more explicitly.

Ask students to consider how an audience will react to their writing. Start with examples: show them excessively wordy passages or excerpts that use inappropriately formal/informal language for the author’s intended purpose. The panel feels students too often focus on grammatical correctness but neglect word choice, clarity, and precision. Teaching students to “hear” their writing can help them develop and demonstrate their voice.

Some panelists expressed concern that students are not being taught to use voice in their writing and that instruction may focus only on passive and active voice. Informative and argumentative writing allows all students to express their real voice through writing. The reader should feel as though the writer is speaking directly to them. The committee recommends:

- Incorporate mentor texts with a strong voice, or even listen to podcasts to help introduce the idea of writing with voice. Students should understand that letting their personality show in their writing can often help their readers feel more connected to it.
- Students should understand that the topic impacts the tone of the writing. For example, if a student is writing about the impact of climate change on whales, a playful tone would be in opposition to the seriousness of the topic. Students should also understand that in addition to topic, audience, word choice, sentence structure, and style contribute to voice.

- Provide students with two versions of the same text. Each version should be written for a different audience. Ask students to examine each version and compare the tone, word choice, sentence structure, and style. How are they similar? How are they different? Why does the author choose certain words based on the audience? Why does the author use certain types of punctuation for one audience and not the other?
- Next, provide students with a topic and two different audiences. Ask the students to write a short informational or argumentative piece for each audience. Repeat the previously mentioned process with the students' writing. Allow students to work in small groups and provide feedback to one another. The teacher may also choose to confer with each student. Using the feedback, ask the students to rewrite each piece. Repeat the process as needed.