In October 2018 the South Carolina Department of Education convened a panel of experts to review item data on the Spring 2018 End-of-Course Examination Program in English 1. The panel reviewed items with a high percentage of students answering correctly and items with a low percentage of students answering correctly. The discussion of that panel yielded the following recommendations.

The panel recognizes the hard work of South Carolina educators and offers the following suggestions for ways to improve student success. Teachers on this year’s panel felt that last year’s suggestions were still extremely relevant and that teachers should be reminded to look at last year’s Data Review Report (2017). The panel offers these suggestions as an addendum to those from last year.

Reading Literary Text and Informational Text
After reviewing the item data, the panel recommends that students experience a wider range of texts. The panel specifically suggests that students have more instructional exposure to primary sources, historical fiction and nonfiction, dramas, and speeches. In addition, the panel suggests that instruction should incorporate more paired texts.

In addition to more exposure to different genres of text, the panel also recommends that teachers provide students with more complex text. It is suggested that teachers gradually move students from shorter, easier texts to longer, more complex texts to help build reading stamina.

The panel noted indicators 9.RL.10.1 and 9.RI.9.1, “Use context clues to determine meanings of words and phrases,” as an area of concern. The panel suggests that teachers not only ask students to use context clues to determine the meaning of words and phrases, but that teachers also ask students to show what in the text they used as context clues to determine meaning. The panel believes there should be more instructional focus on the process of using context clues. The Teacher’s Guide and Sample Items document provides two examples of sample items addressing this indicator. (https://ed.sc.gov/tests/assessment-information/quick-links-for-teachers/2018-sample-release-items-for-scpass-sc-ready-and-eocep/)

The panel also suggests that the vertical articulation of some grade-level indicators may improve student performance with indicators such as RL.11.1.

| 8.RL.11.1 “Analyze how the author’s development of perspectives of the characters and the reader create suspense or humor.” | In grade 8, indicator 11.1 requires students to focus on how the author creates suspense and humor through the development of the characters’ perspectives and the reader’s perspective. While the term “irony” is not specifically named in this indicator, authors typically use irony (dramatic, verbal, and situational) to create suspense and humor. |
9.RL.11.1 “Analyze and provide evidence of how the author’s choice of point of view, perspective, and purpose shape content, meaning, and style.”

In grade 9, indicator 11.1 become more conceptual, but continues (and expands) the previous grade’s focus. This means that the grade 9 indicator’s focus on “content, meaning, and style” includes “suspense or humor.” This also means that instruction should still incorporate irony (dramatic, verbal, and situational) as part of indicator 11.1.

9.RI.11.1 “Explain how the author’s ideas or claims are supported through the use of text features and structures.”

The panel noted that students need more instructional guidance when analyzing text features and how they are used to support the author’s claims. Specifically, the panel noted that students need more instruction focusing on how authors use subtitles and introductory information at the beginning of texts. The Teacher’s Guide and Sample Items document provides two examples of sample items addressing this indicator. ([https://ed.sc.gov/tests/assessment-information/quick-links-for-teachers/2018-sample-release-items-for-scpass-sc-ready-and-eocep/](https://ed.sc.gov/tests/assessment-information/quick-links-for-teachers/2018-sample-release-items-for-scpass-sc-ready-and-eocep/))

### Writing and Communication

The panel noted that isolated grammar instruction is affecting the transfer of skills from isolated practice to student writing. As a result, the panel recommends that students have more practice editing and revising their own written work and less exposure to isolated grammar instruction.

As mentioned in the section, “Reading Literary and Informational Text,” the panel recommends that students read more speeches. In addition to reading speeches, the panel specifically noted that based on student performance, students are struggling with rhetorical analysis. The panel noted C.4.1 and C.4.3 as areas of concern and recommend that teachers look at the vertical articulation of this indicator as part of instruction.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>8.C.4.1 Determine the effectiveness of a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.</th>
<th>While the grade 9 indicators for C.4.1 and C.4.3 are more conceptual than those in previous grade levels, the grade 8 indicators provide more specific details for the study of rhetoric. By the end of grade 9, students should be able to not only evaluate the effectiveness of a speaker’s argument and/or claim(s), but also determine if the argument and/or claim(s) are supported by sound, relevant evidence or by insufficient, irrelevant evidence. In grade 9, C.4.3 specifically mentions repetition, rhetorical questions, and style as rhetorical elements used by speakers. While students need to have a working definition of these terms, the standard demands that students analyze how the speaker uses these techniques to deliver the message and impact</th>
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<tr>
<td>9.C.4.1 Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacies in reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence.</td>
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<td>8.C.4.1 Evaluate the presentation to determine how the speaker: a. articulates a clear message; b. monitors audience awareness; c. addresses possible misconceptions or objections; d. chooses appropriate media; and e. uses an appropriate style for the audience.</td>
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8.C.4.3 Analyze the speaker’s use of repetition, rhetorical questions, and delivery style to convey the message and impact the audience. This means that students must identify examples of these techniques, explain how the author uses them to impact the audience, and determine if the techniques are effective or ineffective and why. As part of this analysis, students must also determine the author’s purpose. Conversations and analysis of the speeches should also include an analysis of the style of writing and delivery of the speech or presentation.


### Instructional Strategies and Test-Taking Strategies

The panel recommends that in order to build reading stamina of complex texts for all students, teachers should gradually release students to more independent reading of complex, cold read texts.

The panel also suggests that teachers incorporate the language of the standards into their everyday questioning and formative and summative classroom assessments. This may help students better understand the types of questions they may see on the EOCEP. Sample items may be found at [https://ed.sc.gov/tests/assessment-information/quick-links-for-teachers/2018-sample-release-items-for-scpass-sc-ready-and-eocep/](https://ed.sc.gov/tests/assessment-information/quick-links-for-teachers/2018-sample-release-items-for-scpass-sc-ready-and-eocep/). In addition to the language of the standards, the panel also recommends that students be exposed to a variety of item types such as EBSR items and multi-select items, and that students have the opportunity to practice the item types on the Online Tools Training (OTT), which is located at [https://wbte.drcdirect.com/SC/portals/sc](https://wbte.drcdirect.com/SC/portals/sc).