

**Texas University Interscholastic League**

**Contest Event: Literary Criticism**

The contest requires knowledge of literary history and critical terms and a skill in literary criticism. Students are required to select the best answers involving judgment in literary criticism and to analyze literary passages from both the reading list and other sources. A tiebreaker is required in which the student must write a short essay regarding a topic about a selected literary passage.

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills are categorized by course area and grade level. The following are course area abbreviations used for the TEKS in Ready Writing:

English Language Arts and Reading = ELAR

The following are grade level indicators:

- ELAR 1= 9<sup>th</sup> grade
- ELAR 2 = 10<sup>th</sup> grade
- ELAR 3= 11<sup>th</sup> grade
- ELAR 4 = 12<sup>th</sup> grade

Each TEKS begins with the outline number for the appropriate course area.

<b>Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills</b>	<b>Contest Knowledge and Skills</b>
<p><u>Writing/purposes:</u></p> <p>(15)(C) write an interpretation of an expository or a literary text that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) advances a clear thesis statement;</li> <li>(ii) addresses the writing skills for an analytical essay, including references to and commentary on quotations from the text;</li> <li>(iii) analyzes the aesthetic effects of an author's use of stylistic or rhetorical devices;</li> <li>(iv) identifies and analyzes the ambiguities, nuances, and complexities within the text; and</li> <li>(v) anticipates and responds to readers' questions or contradictory information. (ELAR 1-4)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Writing/purposes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Write a critical analysis with a clear thesis of a literary selection.</li> <li>-Focus on specified critical aspects of a literary selection to write persuasively.</li> <li>-Identify and analyze the author's techniques for effect and message.</li> <li>-Find support for ideas in the literary work.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Writing/writing processes:</u></p> <p>(13) Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) plan a first draft by selecting the correct genre for conveying the intended meaning to multiple audiences, determining appropriate topics through a range of strategies (e.g., discussion, background reading, personal interests, interviews), and developing a thesis or controlling idea;</li> <li>(B) structure ideas in a sustained and persuasive way (e.g., using outlines, note taking, graphic organizers, lists) and develop drafts in timed and open-ended situations that include transitions and the rhetorical devices used to convey meaning;</li> <li>(C) revise drafts to improve style, word choice, figurative language, sentence variety, and subtlety</li> </ul>	<p><u>Writing/writing processes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Develop contest draft for tie-breaking essay.</li> <li>-Develop a mental plan before writing.</li> <li>-Writing alone, develop essay to fulfill assigned purpose.</li> <li>-Structure ideas for organization and supporting evidence.</li> <li>-Revise draft for clarity, appropriate style and audience.</li> </ul>

<p>of meaning after rethinking how well questions of purpose, audience, and genre have been addressed. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	
<p><u>Writing/grammar/usage/conventions/spelling:</u></p> <p>(13)(D) edit drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling; and  (E) revise final draft... (ELAR 1-4)  (18) Oral and Written Conventions/Handwriting, Capitalization, and Punctuation. Students write legibly and use appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions in their compositions. Students are expected to correctly and consistently use conventions of punctuation and capitalization. (ELAR 3-4)  (19) Oral and Written Conventions/Spelling. Students spell correctly. Students are expected to spell correctly, including using various resources to determine and check correct spellings. (ELAR 3-4)</p>	<p><u>Writing/grammar/usage/conventions/spelling:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Write with control of grammatical elements.</li> <li>-Proofread for content, style, and conventions.</li> <li>-Write with accurate spelling and correct use of conventions.</li> <li>-Review essay striving for error-free writing.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Writing/inquiry/research:</u></p> <p>(23) Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience. Students are expected to synthesize the research into an extended written presentation that:  (A) provides an analysis that supports and develops personal opinions, as opposed to simply restating existing information;  (B) uses a variety of formats and rhetorical strategies to argue for the thesis;  (C) develops an argument that incorporates the complexities of and discrepancies in information from multiple sources and perspectives while anticipating and refuting counter-arguments;  (E) is of sufficient length and complexity to address the topic. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	<p><u>Writing/inquiry/research:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use writing to organize and clarify ideas about the critical analysis of selection.</li> <li>-For this extemporaneous writing, use critical skills and information already acquired in research and preparation for contest.</li> <li>-Apply ideas and strategies of other critics gleaned from preparation for contest.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Writing/evaluation:</u></p> <p>(22)(B) evaluate the relevance of information to the topic and determine the reliability, validity, and accuracy of sources (including Internet sources) by examining their authority and objectivity; (ELAR 1-2)  (22)(B) differentiate between theories and the evidence that supports them and determine whether the evidence found is weak or strong and</p>	<p><u>Writing/evaluation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Evaluate the writing of a literary figure.</li> <li>-Consider the relevance and validity of ideas and support as part of the literary analysis.</li> </ul>

<p>how that evidence helps create a cogent argument. (ELAR 3-4)</p>	
<p><u>Reading/word identification/vocabulary development:</u></p> <p>(1) Reading/Vocabulary Development. Students understand new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing. Students are expected to:</p> <p>(A) determine the meaning of grade-level technical academic English words in multiple content areas (e.g., science, mathematics, social studies, the arts) derived from Latin, Greek, or other linguistic roots and affixes;</p> <p>(B) analyze textual context (within a sentence and in larger sections of text) to draw conclusions about the nuance in word meanings;</p> <p>(C) infer word meaning through the identification and analysis of analogies and other word relationships;</p> <p>(D) recognize and use knowledge of cognates in different languages and of word origins to determine the meaning of words; and</p> <p>(E) use general and specialized dictionaries, thesauri, glossaries, histories of language, books of quotations, and other related references (printed or electronic) as needed. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	<p><u>Reading/word identification/vocabulary development:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use wide reading to expand vocabulary in literary contexts.</li> <li>-Rely on literary contexts to determine meanings in literary selections.</li> <li>-In preparation for questions over reading list, research selected word origins.</li> <li>-Use reference material in developing critical vocabulary skills for reading literature.</li> <li>-Identify literary terms that involve word meanings, such as connotation/denotation, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Reading/comprehension:</u></p> <p>(3) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Poetry. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of poetry and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to analyze the structure or prosody (e.g., meter, rhyme scheme) and graphic elements (e.g., line length, punctuation, word position) in poetry. (ELAR 1-4)</p> <p>(4) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of drama and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to analyze how archetypes and motifs in drama affect the plot of plays. (ELAR 1-4)</p> <p>(5) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Fiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to:</p>	<p><u>Reading/comprehension:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Establish purposes and structures of various texts, such as poetry, drama, fiction and nonfiction.</li> <li>-Apply principles of reader-response to literary criticism.</li> <li>-Use reading strategies to understand elements and evidence used in literary criticism.</li> <li>-Apply images to interpretation of literary texts.</li> <li>-Analyze text structures.</li> <li>-Identify main ideas and supporting details in literary texts.</li> <li>-Draw conclusions and analyze inferences about texts.</li> <li>-Develop comprehension skills through the examination of narration, character development, plot structures and moral dilemmas.</li> </ul>

<p>(A) analyze isolated scenes and their contribution to the success of the plot as a whole in a variety of works of fiction;</p> <p>(B) analyze differences in the characters' moral dilemmas in works of fiction across different countries or cultures;</p> <p>(C) evaluate the connection between forms of narration (e.g., unreliable, omniscient) and tone in works of fiction; and</p> <p>(D) demonstrate familiarity with works by authors from non-English-speaking literary traditions with emphasis on 20th century world literature. (ELAR 1-2)</p> <p>(5)(A) analyze how complex plot structures (e.g., subplots) and devices (e.g., foreshadowing, flashbacks, suspense) function and advance the action in a work of fiction;</p> <p>(B) analyze the moral dilemmas and quandaries presented in works of fiction as revealed by the underlying motivations and behaviors of the characters;</p> <p>(C) compare and contrast the effects of different forms of narration across various genres of fiction; and</p> <p>(D) demonstrate familiarity with works of fiction by British authors from each major literary period.(ELAR 3-4)</p> <p>(6) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Literary Nonfiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the varied structural patterns and features of literary nonfiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to evaluate the role of syntax and diction and the effect of voice, tone, and imagery on a speech, literary essay, or other forms of literary nonfiction. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	<p>Use appropriate study guides, note taking, outlining, etc., to interpret English and non-English-speaking texts.</p>
<p><u>Reading/variety of texts:</u></p> <p>(2) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to:</p> <p>(A) compare and contrast differences in similar themes expressed in different time periods;</p> <p>(B) analyze archetypes (e.g., journey of a hero, tragic flaw) in mythic, traditional and classical literature; and</p> <p>(C) relate the figurative language of a literary work to its historical and cultural setting. (ELAR 1-</p>	<p><u>Reading/variety of texts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Read for a variety of themes and purposes.</li> <li>-Read and analyze a variety of genres.</li> <li>-Analyze a wide range of texts, including classic and contemporary, for literary structures and devices.</li> <li>-Interpret and identify influences of the historical and cultural contexts and styles in a literary work.</li> </ul>

<p>2)  (2)(A) compare and contrast works of literature that express a universal theme;  (B) compare and contrast the similarities and differences in classical plays with their modern day novel, play, or film versions; and  (C) relate the characters, setting, and theme of a literary work to the historical, social, and economic ideas of its time. (ELAR 3-4)</p>	
<p><u>Reading/media literacy:</u></p> <p>(12) Reading/Media Literacy. Students use comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts. Students are expected to:  (A) evaluate how messages presented in media reflect social and cultural views in ways different from traditional texts;  (B) analyze how messages in media are conveyed through visual and sound techniques (e.g., editing, reaction shots, sequencing, background music);  (C) examine how individual perception or bias in coverage of the same event influences the audience; and  (D) evaluate changes in formality and tone within the same medium for specific audiences and purposes. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	<p><u>Reading/media literacy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Study the contest literature as it is conveyed in text and film.</li> <li>-Recognize cultural aspects of texts as interpreted in the film version of the literature.</li> <li>-Compare text/media with personal or audience response.</li> <li>-Evaluate the interpretation of the film version of the literary work.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Reading/response to sensory language and cultural/historical influences:</u></p> <p>(7) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Sensory Language. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about how an author's sensory language creates imagery in literary text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the function of symbolism, allegory, and allusions in literary works. (ELAR 1-4)</p> <p>(8) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Culture and History. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the controlling idea and specific purpose of an expository text and</p>	<p><u>Reading/response to sensory language and cultural/historical influences:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Analyze author's use of such devices as imagery, symbolism, allusion, etc.</li> <li>-Examine the impact of cultural and historical details, setting, language, values and character development.</li> </ul>

<p>distinguish the most important from the less important details that support the author's purpose. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	
<p><u>Reading/inquiry/research:</u></p> <p>(23)(A) marshals evidence in support of a clear thesis statement and related claims;  (B) provides an analysis for the audience that reflects a logical progression of ideas and a clearly stated point of view;  (C) uses ...illustrations to help explain concepts where appropriate;  (D) uses a variety of evaluative tools (...teacher and expert evaluations) to examine the quality of the research. (ELAR 1-4)</p>	<p><u>Reading/inquiry/research:</u></p> <p>-Prepare for contest by generating possible contest questions based on readings and research.</p> <p>-Find and study expert, critical sources that analyze the literature on the contest reading list.</p>

## Appendix – Example of Literary Criticism Contest Reading List

### FICTION

*Candide* by Voltaire. Translation by Lowell Blair.

Paperback: Bantam Classics. ISBN: 0553211668. List price: \$4.95 <http://bantamdell.com>

Texas Education Paperbacks List Price: \$3.22

4433 Mint Way, Dallas TX 75236 Toll free: 800-443-2078 Fax: 800-437-7070 <http://www.tepbooks.com>

### POETRY

Selections by John Keats in *The Mentor Book of Major British Poets*, edited by Oscar Williams.

Paperback: Signet Classics. ISBN: 0451626370. Penguin Group USA. List price: \$8.99

401 Murray Hill Parkway, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. Toll free: 800-526-0295

<http://us.penguin.com>

Texas Education Paperbacks, List Price: \$5.84 <http://www.tepbooks.com>

4433 Mint Way, Dallas TX 75236 Toll free: 800-443-2078 Fax: 800.437.7070 <http://www.tepbooks.com>

All twenty of the John Keats selections in *The Mentor Book of Major British Poets* have been chosen for UIL

competition. Any unabridged edition of these selections will be appropriate for the competition.

- La Belle Dame Sans Merci
- To Sleep
- On the Grasshopper and the Cricket
- To One Who Has Been Long in City Pent
- On Seeing the Elgin Marbles
- On First Looking into Chapman's Homer
- Keen, Fitful Gusts Are Whisp'ring
- On the Sea
- When I Have Fears that I May Cease to Be
- Bright Star, Would I Were Steadfast as Thou Art
- Ode on Melancholy
- Ode to a Nightingale
- Ode on a Grecian Urn
- Ode to Psyche
- Ode to Indolence
- To Autumn
- A Thing of Beauty
- A Song About Myself
- Hymn to Pan
- The Eve of St. Agnes

### DRAMA

*Hamlet* by William Shakespeare. Any unabridged version of the play will be appropriate for the competition.

Dover Publishing Company offers a paperback edition of *Hamlet* for \$1. Paperback: ISBN: 0486272788.

31 East 2nd Street, Mineola, NY 11501 Toll free: 800-223-3130. <http://www.doverpublications.com>

Simon and Schuster offers the Folger Shakespeare Library edition with critical notes for \$5.99.

Washington Square Press. Mass Market Paperback. ISBN-13: 9780743477123.

Toll free: 800-223-2348. <http://simonsays.com>

Texas Education Paperbacks, List Price: \$5.17 (Folgers / Simon & Schuster)

4433 Mint Way, Dallas TX 75236 Toll free: 800-443-2078 Fax: 800.437.7070 <http://www.tepbooks.com>

### HANDBOOK

The authority for Part I of the contest, Literary History and Literary Terms: *A Handbook to Literature*, edited

by William Harmon; 8th, 9th, or 10th edition. ISBN: 0131344420 (10th).

Pearson Prentice-Hall, List Price: \$45

Upper Saddle River, N:J 07458. Toll free: 800-848-9500. <http://vig.prenhall.com>  
Texas Education Paperbacks, List Price: \$38.90  
4433 Mint Way, Dallas TX 75236 Toll free: 800-443-2078 Fax: 800.437.7070 <http://www.tepbooks.com>