



To the Student:

After your registration is complete, you may take the Credit by Examination for ELAR 8A. This is equivalent to the first semester of eighth-grade English. (If you are taking the print exam, your proctor must be approved.)

WHAT TO BRING

- several sharpened No. 2 pencils
- lined notebook paper

ABOUT THE EXAM

The examination for English Language Arts and Reading 8, First Semester, includes multiple choice, true/false, matching, and short answer questions, plus one essay. The exam is based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for this subject. The full list of TEKS is included in this document (it is also available online at the [Texas Education Agency website](#)). The TEKS outline specific topics covered in the exam, as well as more general areas of knowledge and levels of critical thinking. Use the TEKS to focus your study in preparation for the exam. TEKS covered in this semester are indicated by a checkmark; the exam will focus on the checkmarked TEKS, but may touch on any of the full list.

The examination will take place under supervision, and the recommended time limit is three hours. You may not use any notes or books. A percentage score from the examination will be reported to the official at your school.

PRE-EXAM ASSIGNMENTS

You are required to read *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London (any unabridged edition) outside of the testing environment *before* you take the CBE. You should also be familiar with basic biographical information about the author and the time period in which this work was written.

You will not be able to pass the CBE without completing these tasks.

EXAM PREPARATION

A list of key concepts is included in this document to focus your studies. It is important to prepare adequately. Since questions are not taken from any one source, you can prepare by reviewing any of the state-adopted textbooks that are used at your school. The digital textbook used with our ELAR 8A course is:

SpringBoard English Language Arts and Language Workshop, Grade 8. (2021). The College Board. ISBN 9781457311796

Good luck on your examination!

ELAR 8A Key Concepts

The following information will give you a model of the types of questions that will be asked on your examination. It is **not** a duplicate of the actual examination. It is provided to illustrate the format of the exam, not to serve as a complete review sheet.

Literary Terms

In the examination, students will be expected to know and apply literary terms, including the following:

fiction	stereotype	irony
narrator	cause-effect relationship	idiom
plot	dialogue	diction
exposition	tone	dialect
rising action	symbol	folklore
conflict	characterization	folktale
climax	protagonist	moral
falling action	antagonist	nonfiction
resolution	motivation	essay
setting	suspense	oral tradition
point of view	mood	legend
flashback	inference	myth
foreshadowing	connotation	
theme	denotation	

Example:

In a drama, the explanation of characters and their situations is called

- A. exposition.
- B. climax.
- C. resolution.
- D. None of the above.

(The correct answer is A.)

continued →

Writing & Writing Techniques

Students will be expected to understand and be able to demonstrate writing concepts, including the following:

- research writing
- purposes of writing – describe, inform/explain, persuade, compare & contrast
- fact versus opinion
- transition words
- parallel structures
- use of multimedia and graphics
- plagiarism – what it is and how to avoid it

Example:

Transition words like *first*, *then*, and *later* show

- A. conclusion.
- B. time arrangement.
- C. space arrangement.
- D. theme.

(The correct answer is B.)

Written Conventions & Grammar

Students will be expected to understand and be able to demonstrate knowledge of written conventions and grammar, including usage in the following areas:

- correct use of punctuation, including commas, semicolons, colons, and dashes
- capitalization
- subject-verb agreement and inverted subject-verb order
- verb tenses
- types of sentences
- correct spelling

Example:

List the 3 criteria of a complete sentence.

(Correct answers include the following: It has a complete subject, a complete predicate, and a complete thought.)

Reading

Students must read and be prepared to write about *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London. Study the words in this reading vocabulary list:

aver
copious
prostrate
carnivorous
articulate
travail
inexorable
peremptorily
innocuous
precipitated
aristocrat
morose
progeny
egotistical
vicarious
introspective
prowess

Example:

Which word correctly completes the sentence below?

Although he was too old to participate in the spelling bee, the young man felt a _____ thrill in watching his sister compete.

- A. carnivorous
- B. copious
- C. vicarious
- D. morose

(The correct answer is C.)

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills ELAR 8A – English Language Arts and Reading, First Semester

TTU: ELAR 8A CBE, v.3.0	
TEKS: §110.20. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 8, Beginning with School Year 2009-2010	
TEKS Requirement (Secondary)	TEKS Covered
§110.20. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 8, Beginning with School Year 2009-2010.	
(a) Introduction.	
(1) The English Language Arts and Reading Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are organized into the following strands: Reading, where students read and understand a wide variety of literary and informational texts; Writing, where students compose a variety of written texts with a clear controlling idea, coherent organization, and sufficient detail; Research, where students are expected to know how to locate a range of relevant sources and evaluate, synthesize, and present ideas and information; Listening and Speaking, where students listen and respond to the ideas of others while contributing their own ideas in conversations and in groups; and Oral and Written Conventions, where students learn how to use the oral and written conventions of the English language in speaking and writing. The standards are cumulative--students will continue to address earlier standards as needed while they attend to standards for their grade. In eighth grade, students will engage in activities that build on their prior knowledge and skills in order to strengthen their reading, writing, and oral language skills. Students should read and write on a daily basis.	
(2) For students whose first language is not English, the students' native language serves as a foundation for English language acquisition.	
(A) English language learners (ELLs) are acquiring English, learning content in English, and learning to read simultaneously. For this reason, it is imperative that reading instruction should be comprehensive and that students receive instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, and word attack skills while simultaneously being taught academic vocabulary and comprehension skills and strategies. Reading instruction that enhances ELL's ability to decode unfamiliar words and to make sense of those words in context will expedite their ability to make sense of what they read and learn from reading. Additionally, developing fluency, spelling, and grammatical conventions of academic language must be done in meaningful contexts and not in isolation.	
(B) For ELLs, comprehension of texts requires additional scaffolds to support comprehensible input. ELL students should use the knowledge of their first language (e.g., cognates) to further vocabulary development. Vocabulary needs to be taught in the context of connected discourse so that language is meaningful. ELLs must learn how rhetorical devices in English differ from those in their native language. At the same time English learners are learning in English, the focus is on academic English, concepts, and the language structures specific to the content.	
(C) During initial stages of English development, ELLs are expected to meet standards in a second language that many monolingual English speakers find difficult to meet in their native language. However, English language learners' abilities to meet these standards will be influenced by their proficiency in English. While English language learners can analyze, synthesize, and evaluate, their level of English proficiency may impede their ability to demonstrate this knowledge during the initial stages of English language acquisition. It is also critical to understand that ELLs with no previous or with interrupted schooling will require explicit and strategic support as they acquire English and learn to learn in English simultaneously.	
(3) To meet Public Education Goal 1 of the Texas Education Code, §4.002, which states, "The students in the public education system will demonstrate exemplary performance in the reading and writing of the English language," students will accomplish the essential knowledge, skills, and student expectations at Grade 8 as described in subsection (b) of this section.	
(4) To meet Texas Education Code, §28.002(h), which states, "... each school district shall foster the continuation of the tradition of teaching United States and Texas history and the free enterprise system in regular subject matter and in reading courses and in the adoption of textbooks," students will be provided oral and written narratives as well as other informational texts that can help them to become thoughtful, active citizens who appreciate the basic democratic values of our state and nation.	
(b) Knowledge and skills.	
(1) Reading/Fluency. Students read grade-level text with fluency and comprehension. Students are expected to adjust fluency when reading aloud grade-level text based on the reading purpose and the nature of the text.	✓

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(2) Reading/Vocabulary Development. Students understand new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing. Students are expected to:	
(A) determine the meaning of grade-level academic English words derived from Latin, Greek, or other linguistic roots and affixes;	✓
(B) use context (within a sentence and in larger sections of text) to determine or clarify the meaning of unfamiliar or ambiguous words or words with novel meanings;	✓
(C) complete analogies that describe a function or its description (e.g., pen : paper as chalk : _____ or soft : kitten as hard : _____);	✓
(D) identify common words or word parts from other languages that are used in written English (e.g., phenomenon, charisma, chorus, passé, flora, fauna); and	✓
(E) use a dictionary, a glossary, or a thesaurus (printed or electronic) to determine the meanings, syllabication, pronunciations, alternate word choices, and parts of speech of words.	✓
(3) 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:	
(A) analyze literary works that share similar themes across cultures;	✓
(B) compare and contrast the similarities and differences in mythologies from various cultures (e.g., ideas of afterlife, roles and characteristics of deities, purposes of myths); and	✓
(C) explain how the values and beliefs of particular characters are affected by the historical and cultural setting of the literary work.	✓
(4) 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 compare and contrast the relationship between the purpose and characteristics of different poetic forms (e.g., epic poetry, lyric poetry).	✓
(5) 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 different playwrights characterize their protagonists and antagonists through the dialogue and staging of their plays.	
(6) 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:	
(A) analyze linear plot developments (e.g., conflict, rising action, falling action, resolution, subplots) to determine whether and how conflicts are resolved;	✓
(B) analyze how the central characters' qualities influence the theme of a fictional work and resolution of the central conflict; and	✓
(C) analyze different forms of point of view, including limited versus omniscient, subjective versus objective.	✓
(7) 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 analyze passages in well-known speeches for the author's use of literary devices and word and phrase choice (e.g., aphorisms, epigraphs) to appeal to the audience.	✓
(8) 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 effect of similes and extended metaphors in literary text.	

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(9) 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 analyze works written on the same topic and compare how the authors achieved similar or different purposes.	✓
(10) Comprehension of Informational Text/Expository Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about expository text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to:	
(A) summarize the main ideas, supporting details, and relationships among ideas in text succinctly in ways that maintain meaning and logical order;	
(B) distinguish factual claims from commonplace assertions and opinions and evaluate inferences from their logic in text;	
(C) make subtle inferences and draw complex conclusions about the ideas in text and their organizational patterns; and	
(D) synthesize and make logical connections between ideas within a text and across two or three texts representing similar or different genres and support those findings with textual evidence.	
(11) Comprehension of Informational Text/Persuasive Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about persuasive text and provide evidence from text to support their analysis. Students are expected to:	
(A) compare and contrast persuasive texts that reached different conclusions about the same issue and explain how the authors reached their conclusions through analyzing the evidence each presents; and	
(B) analyze the use of such rhetorical and logical fallacies as loaded terms, caricatures, leading questions, false assumptions, and incorrect premises in persuasive texts.	
(12) Comprehension of Informational Text/Procedural Texts. Students understand how to glean and use information in procedural texts and documents. Students are expected to:	
(A) analyze text for missing or extraneous information in multi-step directions or legends for diagrams; and	
(B) evaluate graphics for their clarity in communicating meaning or achieving a specific purpose.	
(13) 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 the role of media in focusing attention on events and informing opinion on issues;	
(B) interpret how visual and sound techniques (e.g., special effects, camera angles, lighting, music) influence the message;	
(C) evaluate various techniques used to create a point of view in media and the impact on audience; and	
(D) assess the correct level of formality and tone for successful participation in various digital media.	
(14) Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. Students are expected to:	
(A) plan a first draft by selecting a genre appropriate for conveying the intended meaning to an audience, determining appropriate topics through a range of strategies (e.g., discussion, background reading, personal interests, interviews), and developing a thesis or controlling idea;	✓
(B) develop drafts by choosing an appropriate organizational strategy (e.g., sequence of events, cause-effect, compare-contrast) and building on ideas to create a focused, organized, and coherent piece of writing;	✓
(C) revise drafts to ensure precise word choice and vivid images; consistent point of view; use of simple, compound, and complex sentences; internal and external coherence; and the use of effective transitions after rethinking how well questions of purpose, audience, and genre have been addressed;	✓
(D) edit drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling; and	✓
(E) revise final draft in response to feedback from peers and teacher and publish written work for appropriate audiences.	✓

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(15) Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. Students are expected to:	
(A) write an imaginative story that:	
(i) sustains reader interest;	✓
(ii) includes well-paced action and an engaging story line;	✓
(iii) creates a specific, believable setting through the use of sensory details;	✓
(iv) develops interesting characters; and	✓
(v) uses a range of literary strategies and devices to enhance the style and tone; and	✓
(B) write a poem using:	
(i) poetic techniques (e.g., rhyme scheme, meter);	
(ii) figurative language (e.g., personification, idioms, hyperbole); and	
(iii) graphic elements (e.g., word position).	
(16) Writing. Students write about their own experiences. Students are expected to write a personal narrative that has a clearly defined focus and includes reflections on decisions, actions, and/or consequences.	✓
(17) Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students are expected to:	
(A) write a multi-paragraph essay to convey information about a topic that:	
(i) presents effective introductions and concluding paragraphs;	✓
(ii) contains a clearly stated purpose or controlling idea;	✓
(iii) is logically organized with appropriate facts and details and includes no extraneous information or inconsistencies;	✓
(iv) accurately synthesizes ideas from several sources; and	
(v) uses a variety of sentence structures, rhetorical devices, and transitions to link paragraphs;	✓
(B) write a letter that reflects an opinion, registers a complaint, or requests information in a business or friendly context;	
(C) write responses to literary or expository texts that demonstrate the use of writing skills for a multi-paragraph essay and provide sustained evidence from the text using quotations when appropriate; and	✓
(D) produce a multimedia presentation involving text, graphics, images, and sound using available technology.	✓
(18) Writing/Persuasive Texts. Students write persuasive texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues. Students are expected to write a persuasive essay to the appropriate audience that:	
(A) establishes a clear thesis or position;	
(B) considers and responds to the views of others and anticipates and answers reader concerns and counter-arguments; and	
(C) includes evidence that is logically organized to support the author's viewpoint and that differentiates between fact and opinion.	
(19) Oral and Written Conventions/Conventions. Students understand the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:	
(A) use and understand the function of the following parts of speech in the context of reading, writing, and speaking:	
(i) verbs (perfect and progressive tenses) and participles;	

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(ii) appositive phrases;	✓
(iii) adverbial and adjectival phrases and clauses;	✓
(iv) relative pronouns (e.g., whose, that, which); and	
(v) subordinating conjunctions (e.g., because, since);	✓
(B) write complex sentences and differentiate between main versus subordinate clauses; and	✓
(C) use a variety of complete sentences (e.g., simple, compound, complex) that include properly placed modifiers, correctly identified antecedents, parallel structures, and consistent tenses.	✓
(20) Writing/Conventions of Language/Handwriting. Students write legibly and use appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions in their compositions. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:	
(A) use conventions of capitalization; and	✓
(B) use correct punctuation marks, including:	✓
(i) commas after introductory structures and dependent adverbial clauses, and correct punctuation of complex sentences; and	✓
(ii) semicolons, colons, hyphens, parentheses, brackets, and ellipses.	✓
(21) Oral and Written Conventions/Spelling. Students spell correctly. Students are expected to spell correctly, including using various resources to determine and check correct spellings.	✓
(22) Research/Research Plan. Students ask open-ended research questions and develop a plan for answering them. Students are expected to:	
(A) brainstorm, consult with others, decide upon a topic, and formulate a major research question to address the major research topic; and	
(B) apply steps for obtaining and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources and create a written plan after preliminary research in reference works and additional text searches.	✓
(23) Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather. Students are expected to:	
(A) follow the research plan to gather information from a range of relevant print and electronic sources using advanced search strategies;	✓
(B) categorize information thematically in order to see the larger constructs inherent in the information;	✓
(C) record bibliographic information (e.g., author, title, page number) for all notes and sources according to a standard format; and	✓
(D) differentiate between paraphrasing and plagiarism and identify the importance of using valid and reliable sources.	
(24) Research/Synthesizing Information. Students clarify research questions and evaluate and synthesize collected information. Students are expected to:	
(A) narrow or broaden the major research question, if necessary, based on further research and investigation; and	
(B) utilize elements that demonstrate the reliability and validity of the sources used (e.g., publication date, coverage, language, point of view) and explain why one source is more useful and relevant than another.	✓
(25) 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 a written or an oral presentation that:	
(A) draws conclusions and summarizes or paraphrases the findings in a systematic way;	
(B) marshals evidence to explain the topic and gives relevant reasons for conclusions;	

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(C) presents the findings in a meaningful format; and	✓
(D) follows accepted formats for integrating quotations and citations into the written text to maintain a flow of ideas.	
(26) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students will use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:	
(A) listen to and interpret a speaker's purpose by explaining the content, evaluating the delivery of the presentation, and asking questions or making comments about the evidence that supports a speaker's claims;	✓
(B) follow and give complex oral instructions to perform specific tasks, answer questions, or solve problems; and	✓
(C) summarize formal and informal presentations, distinguish between facts and opinions, and determine the effectiveness of rhetorical devices.	✓
(27) Listening and Speaking/Speaking. Students speak clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to advocate a position using anecdotes, analogies, and/or illustrations, and use eye contact, speaking rate, volume, enunciation, a variety of natural gestures, and conventions of language to communicate ideas effectively.	✓
(28) Listening and Speaking/Teamwork. Students work productively with others in teams. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to participate productively in discussions, plan agendas with clear goals and deadlines, set time limits for speakers, take notes, and vote on key issues.	✓
<i>Source: The provisions of this §110.20 adopted to be effective September 4, 2008, 33 TexReg 7162.</i>	