



# English Regents Common Core Exam



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**PART 1: READING COMPREHENSION**

READING PASSAGE ONE: FICTION (NARRATIVE)

READING PASSAGE TWO: POETRY

READING PASSAGE THREE: NON-FICTION

**PART II: SOURCE BASED ARGUMENT ESSAY**

A. READ FOUR SOURCES

B. USE ALL SOURCES TO MAKE AN ARGUMENT

**PART III: TEXT BASED ANALYSIS**

A. ANALYZE TEXT USING LITERARY OR  
RHETORICAL WRITING STRATEGIES

**TIME LIMIT: 3-HOURS**

## READING COMPREHENSION

The reading comprehension sections of the English Regents will have TWO passages: fiction and fiction, non-fiction and non-fiction, or non-fiction and fiction. No matter what combination of reading passages are given, you should use the following reading comprehension skills to help you navigate through the passages and to help you answer the multiple-choice questions:

1. **Summary:** What is the overall gist of the passage?

2. **Main Idea:** What is the main idea of the passage?

3. **Implied Ideas:** Based on the details of the passage, what is the author suggesting?

4. **Words and Phrases:** What does that word or phrase mean?

5. **Author's Purpose** Is the general purpose to entertain, inform, or persuade?

6. **Inferred Ideas:** Based on the details of the passage, what can you logically conclude?

7. **Figurative Language:** What are the literary devices used in the passage?

8. **Tone:** What is the author's attitude toward the subject or main idea?

9. **Facts and Opinions:** What statements are facts? What statements are opinions?

10. **Bias:** What are the author's preferences or likings?

## Introduction

The first paragraph is your introduction. Start the conversation about the controversial topic. Last sentence in the introduction is your thesis statement with a plan of development:

Example Thesis Statement:

**Social media provides people with a meaningful way to connect with each other politically and to improve the quality of each classroom for all learners.**

## Body Paragraph #1

Example Topic Sentence: **First, social media creates a more interactive community where more people are involved politically.**

*Use evidence from text 1, text 2, text 3 OR text 4 to prove your first point. Be sure to cite text and line reference.*

## Body Paragraph #2

Example Topic Sentence: **Second, social media enhances the classroom learning experience for all learners.**

*Use evidence from text 1, text 2, text 3 OR text 4 to prove your first point. Be sure to cite text and line reference.*

## Body Paragraph #3 (Address the opposition/show how your evidence proves the opposition wrong)

Example Topic Sentence: **Third, although many suggest that social media has a negative impact on student skills, the evidence shows that this is not true.**

*Use evidence from text 1, text 2, text 3 OR text 4 to prove your first point. Be sure to cite text and line reference. **Hint: Use the text that goes against you point of view and prove how the evidence is wrong!***

## Conclusion

Make an inference and highlight something that emerged in your conversation. Think of some interesting connections you made in your argument that help prove your point.

## SAMPLE ESSAY

**THIS IS A SAMPLE RESPONSE INTENDED TO HELP STUDENTS UNDERSTAND THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE SOURCE BASED ARGUMENT.**

**STUDENTS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO READ THIS SOURCE BASED ARGUMENT RESPONSE CAREFULLY.**

It's 2015, and media is everywhere. People are surrounded from the moment they wake up until the moment they fall asleep by social media websites and apps. Typically, whenever someone speaks about social media, whether it's through school programs or on the news, it has a negative connotation. People sometimes forget that a short time ago talking to someone on another continent instantaneously was almost unheard of. Without social media, we wouldn't have the global connectivity that sustains our world today.

**Social media provides people with a meaningful way to connect with each other politically and to improve the quality of each classroom for all learners.**

**First, social media creates a more interactive community where more people are involved politically.** Due to an increase in the availability of social media platforms over the past decade or so, there are more places for voters to mix, debate, and share their political views. This social media revolution began with Barack Obama's election in 2008. **Text 1 states** that, "the presidential race may have been determined by a new group of voters: Americans under the age of 30 who have been actively engaged in the digital world" (**lines 20-22**). Through their different interactions online, they have the ability to sway other people as they advocate for their favorite candidate. **Text 1 explains** that, "These tech-savvy voters used the Internet to share their views about election issues, raise money for their favorite candidates, and arrange political rallies" (**lines 23-24**). Obama partly owes his first, and second, presidential wins to the fact that America is becoming an even more diverse, social media-based nation.

Obama's positive attributes, as depicted online, have made him seem more favorable as president than those running against him. Social media also allows for real communication between candidates and voters. Never before has anyone been able to send messages through Twitter and Facebook and expect a direct reply from the office of Congress (**Text 2, lines 9-10**). The growing ability to communicate, now people have higher expectations of change. Talking through social media with their government officials gives people hope that their voice might make a change for the better. Social media has changed the way people interact with their government and it has impacted American culture by creating a strong partnership between officials and the common people.

**Second, social media enhances the classroom learning experience for all learners.** Many educators still rely on traditional teaching methods when in the classroom. If they incorporate social media correctly into their conventional lectures, technology and social media can be helpful, not hurtful, to their students' learning experience. Teachers have changed lectures to appeal to the new generation. "Teachers find Twitter very helpful; by using a hashtag related to their course, his students can converse with one another on the topics they're learning, share information, and ask questions when teachers aren't available" (**Text 3, lines 30-32**). This approach to learning keeps students engaged and surrounded by their classes, since the typical high school or college student is on social media several times a day. Other than Twitter, there are handfults of other ways that social media can connect the classroom with every-day life. **In text 3**, the author identifies some options: "blogs can be used for discussions on different topics, YouTube can be used to upload classroom movies, Pinterest can be used as a site for research and inspiration, and even selfies can be used in art classes to draw a face with the rules of symmetry" (**lines 12-13**).

**Third, although many suggest that social media has a negative impact on student skills, the evidence shows that this is not true.** English teachers are worried about their students' skills; especially those of students going to college where formal writing is necessary for applications and final assignments. Also, the prevalence of Facebook, Twitter, and texting has all but obliterated punctuation, capitalization, and apostrophes in schools, threatening the future of formal writing. However, social media isn't as much of a problem as people are making it out to be. **Text 4 suggests,** "while text slang and the hashtag are assumed to be eroding the English language, many people forget that written conventions are constantly becoming parts of speech." Even acronyms like VIP, NGO, and NATO have become so common in spoken English that people forget they're abbreviations, the same as LOL, although it's much more infamous. As long as students continue to write in full sentences and adapt their writing to their audience they have less of a chance of making those common grammatical errors. Even the hashtag has become notorious for finding its way into casual conversations. Every generation seems to have a fad that make it famous, and for this group of kids growing up it happens to be the hashtag. However, **text 4** makes it clear that "there's no need for panic as text slang and Twitter are just passing trends and they won't harm the English language in the long run (**lines 46-48**). To sum up, social media is not a bad thing and most of the negative narrative about social media ruining student literacy is blown out of proportion. Language evolves in the same fashion that people evolve.

The debate between whether social media is helpful or hurtful to society is very controversial. But as proven, American society would not be as developed and connected as the internet has allowed. One can infer that social media is just about as much of a part of one person's life as it is of another. Most of those who think of social media as negative use it just as much as those who think it's positive, whether they want to admit it or not. People need to stay up to date on things happening globally; whether it be for work, knowledge gain, or just for pure entertainment. We individuals behave the way we do because we've all grown dependent on technology. The internet world is always changing, and it provides us with an outlet for creative expression where no two days are ever exactly the same. America has modernized and this is the result: a country dependent on the ability to communicate, with new cultural expectations to uphold.



**Step 1: Read passage carefully and determine the author's PURPOSE:**

- a. Persuade - Is the passage trying to convince the reader? Is the passage trying to prove an argument?
- b. Inform - Is the passage trying to give you information without trying to convince you?
- c. Entertain - Is the passage trying to provide you with a fictitious (fake) reading experience with story characters, story conflicts, etc.

**Step 2: Determine the Writing Strategy based on the author's purpose**

**Passage Type: FICTION**

**Author purpose: entertain**

**Author WRITING STRATEGIES to convey main idea (not a comprehensive list):**

- |                            |                              |               |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. external conflict       | 4. internal conflict         | 9. setting    |
| 2. direct characterization | 6. indirect characterization | 10. symbolism |
| 3. figurative language     | 7. plot                      | 11. mood      |
| 4. point of view           | 8. irony                     | 12. theme     |

**Passage Type: NON-FICTION**

**Author purpose: (inform or persuade)**

**Author WRITING STRATEGIES to convey main idea (not a comprehensive list):**

**1. Logos or the appeal to reason relies on logic or reason.**

*"The facts or data or research suggests that reading challenging material one hour a day will improve a student's writing skills".*

**2. Ethos or the ethical appeal is based on the character, credibility, or reliability of the writer.**

*"Teachers all over the world recommend this reading technique".*

**3. Pathos, or emotional appeal, appeals to an audience's needs, values, and emotional sensibilities.**

*"If we don't study now, we are all going to fail the test and get whipped by our parents."*

**4. Tone is an author's attitude toward his or her subject or audience**

**5. Diction is a writer's or speaker's word choice. Diction describes an author's style and may be described as formal or informal, plain or ornate, common or technical, abstract or concrete.**

**Use the following outline to GUIDE your written response.**

### **Introduction**

First, provide a concise background. Second, state the main idea of the passage. Third, state the author's intended purpose and the writing strategy (s) the author uses to advance his or her intended purpose.

### **Body Paragraph**

1. Write a topic sentence with an effective transitional phrase. The topic sentence should be broad enough to cover at least two supporting details.
2. Second, provide direct quote #1 that highlights the main idea.
3. Discuss how the author uses the writing strategy to emphasize the main idea of the passage.
4. Discuss how the author advances his or her writing purpose using the writing strategy.
5. Use a transitional phrase to introduce direct quote #2 that highlights the main idea.
6. Discuss how the author uses the writing strategy to emphasize the main idea of the passage.
7. Discuss how the author advances his or her writing purpose using the writing strategy.

### **Conclusion**

Make an inference or a logical conclusion based on the evidence you provided. Highlight any new observations - something new you realized about the author's techniques.

**Determine the author's purpose first before determining the Writing Strategy.**

**Writing Strategy - literary device or literary technique or rhetorical device**

Rhetorical Analysis of "I Have a Dream" by Stephanie Phibbs (modified)

The day of August 28, 1963 At the Lincoln Memorial 200,000 people gathered after the March on Washington. This is where Dr. Martin Luther King delivered his speech "I Have a Dream" to America. He spoke about the injustices of segregation and discrimination of African Americans that was taking place in our nation. In his first statement he said, "I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation" (King). In this statement, King describes the intended goal of his speech. He is speaking out for freedom. This speech is one among few to demonstrate the freedom our nation was built upon. We are a nation of democracy and our nation was built on the fact that we have the right to "alter and institute new government"(Congress). Dr. Martin Luther King's speeches and demonstrations would provoke a change in the minds and hearts of the American people. He stood up and inspired a nation into action with his words. **In the speech, Dr. Martin Luther King's purpose was to persuade the audience with his use of pathos and ethos to emphasize to all Americans that racism and segregation is not the intended foundation of America.**

**The speech masterfully uses many rhetorical or persuasive techniques throughout to convince the audience. *Some examples of ethos are present*** as he delivered his speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial he analogizes Lincoln in his speech, "Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the emancipation proclamation" (King). His use of Lincoln brought authority into his speech. Lincoln was a powerful and great president who empowered the American people throughout the civil war. He gained the trust of America and established a new sense of freedom. Martin Luther King is invoking the authority of Lincoln and his view on civil rights. This is providing a strong ethos appeal and establishing credibility with his audience. The speech advances Martin Luther King's purpose of persuading the audience to reject the ideals of racism and segregation. He also uses the Declaration of

Independence to invoke authority in his cause. He quotes, “unalienable Rights” of “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness” (Congress). Dr. King's use of this quote is to use a supreme authority as being on his side. He is stating that the American government has neglected on the obligation to ALL of the American people. He is setting up his own credibility by tapping into authority of a great American and our constitution. Once again, the speech's intended purpose aims to get the audience to doubt the old American notions about race relations. **Examples of pathos are also well crafted** into Dr. Martin Luther King's speech. His use of pathos is incredible as he strikes emotional values of both black and white people. The use of the bible causes an emotional response, “And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together” (Isaiah). He is using the bible to provide a belief and faith in what he is saying is truth, and that all people will stand together. Once again, the intended purpose of his speech moves the audience toward one point of view. Another example can be seen in the following: “I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but the content of their character” (King). Dr. King uses the American dream to appeal to all Americans by suggesting that his dream is part of the American dream - we all deserve to have the freedom to dream. The appeal that he is a father and that he wants more for his children tugs at the audience emotionally. This allows the listener to relate to him as a father and the aspirations we hold for our children. It provides a human appeal and uses pathos.

Martin Luther King's skillful and articulate use of rhetoric in his “I have a Dream” speech was a major turning point in American history and represented a firm stand for equal rights. He spoke out to confront the issues of racism in our nation. This speech was not the beginning or the ending, but a remarkable moment in the fight for equal rights of everyone. “When all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing,” “Free at last! Free at last!” (King).

*Lord of the Flies*, the famous novel written by William Golding, is the morbid, macabre derivative of the Victorian boys' adventure, *A Coral Island*. In this book, a plane full of boys escaping war-torn England crashes into an uninhabited island, untouched by mankind. Through way of a conch shell and natural leadership, Ralph leads a microcosmic society with democracy and laws. Unfortunately, the intrusively malevolent and tyrannical Jack seizes power from Ralph and controls the boys, in this case, through way of punishment and fear of a fictitious beast. The central idea that Golding conveys is that all humans are capable of evil. This capacity's origin has greatly been analyzed and many argue that his central idea is based off theories of some of the many great minds of the Enlightenment: Locke, Rousseau, and Darwin in particular. Nevertheless, this idea is amplified when man is free of institutions, such as government, religion, or society, which helps man stray away from becoming primitive and keep any notion of heinousness at bay. While entertaining the reader with an enlightened tale that makes the book's audience to analyze and ponder the human nature, Golding uses literary elements, such as characterization and allusion, to further this idea of human savagery.

William Golding manages to write with a purpose behind his work and this can be seen in many instances when Golding uses literary elements to advance the main idea of the novel. For instance, when Henry was playing by the beach, the author writes, "*Roger stooped, picked up a stone, aimed, and threw it at Henry— threw it to miss. ... [he] gathered a handful of stones and began to throw them. ... Round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and policemen and the law. Roger's arm was conditioned by a civilization that knew nothing of him and was in ruins.*" Roger's character isn't as developed in comparison to the other characters, such as Piggy or Ralph. However, his characterization has led to the reader seeing that Roger's character is naturally sadistic but his evil intentions are constrained by society. Without any well founded governance, Roger is at liberty to act upon his inhibitions and manifest the deeprooted immorality within him. Furthermore, in a later chapter, Golding writes, "*Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood! Do him in! ... The beast was on its knees in the center, its arms folded over its face... [the boys] lept onto the beast, screamed, struck, bit, tore... The great wave of the tide moved farther along the island and... Simon's dead body moved out toward the open sea*" (Golding 1524). Simon's role in the book has been largely disputed by literary analysts, nonetheless, many agree that he is a Christ figure within the book due to his humane disposition and endless devotion to helping others.

Unfortunately, Simon's character, like Christ, is sacrificed during the feast to represent the loss of morality and spirituality on the island, where the boys have turned to, in essence, savages. Therefore, with references to Christianity and to Jesus Christ, Golding uses allegory to demonstrate that without principles in society, whether enforced by government or religion, man becomes an uncivilized being, proving man's capacity for evil.

William Golding, among many praised authors of the modern era, carefully dissected man and his psyche, as well as his primal instincts, using refined and enlightened thinking, all while entertaining the readers. In particular, *Lord of the Flies*, with the help of literary elements, distinctively contemplates man's predisposition to evil when isolated from civilization. Whether the origin of this potential capacity for man to be freed by social and moral restraints and pursue his sinister inhibitions be what Rousseau, Locke, or Darwin argued, Golding unmistakably compels the reader into asking themselves: *Does this evil reside within me?*

## TRANSITIONAL PHRASES

**USE TRANSITIONAL PHRASES IN YOUR PARAGRAPH TO ADD COHERENCE TO YOUR IDEAS. TRANSITIONAL PHRASES WILL HELP YOUR READERS SEE THE PROGRESSION AND SEQUENCE OF YOUR IDEAS.**

### ILLUSTRATION

an illustration of	as an illustration	as follows	by way of illustration
for example	even	for example	for instance
in other words	in particular	namely	specifically
such as	the following example	thus	to demonstrate
to illustrate	a case in point is	another instance	another example
another illustration	here are a few examples		

### CONTRAST

conversely	however	in contrast	in opposition	although
even though	whereas	while	nevertheless	on the contrary
on the one hand	but	yet	on the other hand	

### COMPARE

also	as well	equally	in addition	in a similar way	in the same way
likewise	similarly				

### PERSUASION

#### Give reasons

another	next	first, second, third	more importantly
last	finally		

#### Draw conclusion

consequently	hence	therefore	thus
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19. **Alliteration:** The repetition of consonant (often initial consonant) sounds.  
ex: "What a tale of terror, no their turbulency tells!"
20. **Assonance:** The repetition of vowel sound that are NOT followed by similar consonants (as in rhyme).  
ex: "Sinful Caesar sipped his snifter, seized his knees and sneezed"
21. **Consonance:** The repetition of consonant sounds other than first letters (which is alliteration)  
ex: "Her eary leaf's a flower"
22. **Onomatopoeia:** The use of words that SOUND like what they mean.  
ex: shriek, bang, hiss, sweep

### **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**

23. **Simile:** Comparison which uses the word "like" or "as".  
ex: "O my love is a like a red, red rose" – Robert Burns
24. **Metaphor:** A direct comparison without using "like" or "as".  
ex: "O my love is a red, red rose"
25. **Personification:** When a writer gives human characteristics to non-human things.  
ex: The sky wept like a new born.
- ex: This poetry gets bored of being alone  
It wants to go outdoors to chew on the  
Winds  
To fill its commas with the keels of  
Rowboats  
by, Hugo Margenat, "Living Poetry"
26. **Hyperbole:** A figure of speech in which great exaggeration is used for emphasis or humorous effect.  
Ex. You've asked me a million times
27. **Pun:** A humorous play on two or more meanings of the same word  
Ex. I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it hit me.
28. **Allusion:** reference in a work of literature to a character, place, or situation from history or from another work of literature, music, art, etc.

### **OTHER LITERARY ELEMENTS**

28. **Imagery:** Picture painted by the poet through the use of words to appeal to the senses: sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch.
29. **Symbolism:** A symbol is a person, place, or object that represents something beyond itself.  
ex: The American Flag = Freedom      Winter season = death      Spring season = rebirth
30. **Theme:** The main idea or message in a work of literature. Message about life or human nature.
31. **Mood/Atmosphere:** Feeling created in the poem.

### **WORDS HAVE TWO LEVELS OF MEANING:**

32. **Connotation:** Idea and feeling associated with the word.  
ex: The word EAGLE connotes ideas of liberty and freedom. The word MOTHER connotes ideas of love, warmth, and security.
33. **Denotation:** Dictionary definition of a word.

## INTEGRATING INFORMATION INTO WRITING

Quotations serve as evidence to the claims you are making in your written response, and illustrate and support your main points. There are several different methods of incorporating quotations into your writing. To illustrate, here are the many different ways to incorporate the quote:

**“Many writers omit or improperly use quotations in their essays.”**

1. **Paraphrase (Indirect quotation)**—using different words to express the same idea; do not use quotation marks at all

- *Teachers and professors alike find that many students often misuse quotations in their papers.*

2. **Direct quotation**—using the same words exactly as the original source. Use quotation marks.

- *Mr. Fig mentions that “Many writers omit or improperly use quotations in their essays.”*

2. **Direct phrase or word quote**— using only one or a few words; use quotation marks around those words only

- *Many teachers find that their students “omit or improperly use” quotes when writing papers.*

3. **Full sentence quote with he/she said before the quotation**; place comma before the quotation mark

- *Watson claims, “Many writers omit or improperly use quotations in their essays.”*

4. **Full sentence quote with he/she said after the quotation**; comma replaces period at the end of the quote.

- *“Many writers omit or improperly use quotations in their essays,” he argued.*

5. **Full sentence quote with he/she said dividing the quote**; commas separate the quote.

- *“Many writers,” he admitted, “omit or improperly use quotations in their essays.”*

6. Which extend an argument you make:

***Many routines of our social life can be thought of as wasteful. For instance, as Mr. Figueroa argues, “More than 60% of the U.S. population spends time watching television or movies.”***

7. Or which you wish to challenge:

***While Mr. Figueroa argues that “watching television is wasteful (166), I wish to suggest that watching television has social benefits like being able to spontaneously win pop culture trivia in social conversation.***

There are many “signaling verbs” you can use in a signal phrase:

acknowledges	concludes	emphasizes	replies
agrees	concur	observes	responds
asserts	describes	offers	suggests
claims	disagrees	remarks	writes

## ANNOTATION

**What is the point of annotation?** Annotation encourages you to read actively and thoughtfully.

1. Use a pen so you can make circles, brackets, and notes. If you like highlighters, use one for key passages, but don't get carried away and don't only highlight.
2. Develop your own symbol system: square = characterization, circle = conflict, triangle = symbolism, star = imagery, asterisk = key theme, etc.
2. Look for patterns and label them (motifs, symbols, images, behavior, whatever).
3. Mark passages that seem to jump out at you because they suggest an important literary device: conflict, theme, symbolism, characterization, imagery, a striking example of foreshadowing, a key moment in the plot, a bit of dialogue that reveals character, clues about the setting, etc.
4. Write questions in the margins —“What does this mean?,” “What do the characters thoughts and actions suggest about the character?,” “Why does this idea keep recurring?”

**The more precise your marks are and the more focused your notes and reactions, the easier it will be to draw material from the text into your own writing.**

**The Journey**  
by Mary Oliver

Speaker + Audience:  
The speaker in the poem uses 2nd person point of view ("you") to address the reader directly; the constant repetition makes it feel as if it's a private talk between the speaker and each individual reader

Tone: I would characterize the tone as: strident, confident, determined, almost conspiratorial; the speaker wants me to listen carefully to the message before I set out on my own journey... which will be different than hers, of course.

One day you finally knew what you had to do, and began, though the voices around you kept shouting their bad advice— though the whole house began to tremble and you felt the old tug at your ankles. "Mend my life!" each voice cried. But you didn't stop. You knew what you had to do, though the wind pried with its stiff fingers at the very foundations, though their melancholy was terrible. It was already late enough, and a wild night, and the road full of fallen branches and stones. But little by little, as you left their voices behind, the stars began to burn through the sheets of clouds, and there was a new voice which you slowly recognized as your own, that kept you company as you strode deeper and deeper into the world, determined to do the only thing you could do— determined to save the only life you could save.

Occasion: The speaker may have been prompted by an actual walk down a road during a storm and used that experience to create a metaphor for a difficult journey, one with distractions and obstacles

Purpose: The speaker seems to be saying that the hardest journey of all may be to listen to your own inner voice, especially when there is a "storm" of other voices advising you otherwise

Subject: It's clear the poet feels that I need to pay attention to my own journey, my own vision of who and what I am and what my journey is all about as I stride "deeper and deeper into the world." Only when I listen to my own voice and chart my own course will the stars burn through and guide me safely inside to who I am