



English 1 — Year-at-a-Glance

Standard & Honors Levels • 2026–2027 School Year

Course Overview

English 1 begins where storytelling gets under our skin, then traces the threads that connect the ancient world to the modern one. Students open the year with the psychology of fear itself, using Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" alongside Cortázar's "House Taken Over" — paired with nonfiction on the science of suspense — to examine how writers manipulate structure and atmosphere to unsettle a reader. From there, students turn to the rhetoric of leadership and identity, studying Vonnegut's "Harrison Bergeron" alongside historical speeches from Henry V and Elizabeth I to weigh the tension between conformity and individuality, and to see how leaders have used language to rally, unite, or control. The year's centerpiece is a study of foundational storytelling: students read Ovid's "Pyramus and Thisbe" as the mythic root of *Romeo and Juliet*, then encounter Homer's *The Odyssey*, tracing how the epic hero and the tragic lover have been reimagined across three thousand years of literature. Students close the year applying these skills to various texts, synthesizing a year of reading and rhetorical study into original research and narrative writing. Throughout, students build the foundational literacy, argument, and analysis skills the Florida B.E.S.T. standards require for high school success.

Honors Courses: These courses raise rigor through the addition of more complex texts, deeper analysis across themes and disciplines, and more challenging tasks — not simply more work.

Course Focus

English 1 gives students an integrated study of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language, tracing literature from the Classical Period to the present. All coursework is framed around the [Grade 9 Florida B.E.S.T. Standards for English Language Arts](#) and includes:

- Reading widely and drawing logical inferences from texts
- Analyzing literature and informational texts for craft, structure, argument, and historical context
- Writing arguments, expository pieces, narratives, and research-based work
- Speaking, listening, and collaborating — using evidence to support or challenge ideas

Quarter-by-Quarter Breakdown

All English 1 teachers cover these standards using the spotlight texts below. Teachers may also add supplemental texts, lessons, and projects to reinforce the quarter's focus and extend learning. Standard codes (e.g., ELA.9.R.1.1) match the [Florida B.E.S.T. Standards for English Language Arts](#).

QUARTER 1 The Psychology of Fear

Reading: Literary Elements (ELA.9.R.1.1) · Theme (ELA.9.R.1.2) · Text Structures (ELA.9.R.2.1) · Figurative Language (ELA.9.R.3.1)

Writing: Expository (ELA.9.C.1.4)

Grammar: The Building Blocks of Flow (ELA.9.C.3.1)

Vocabulary: Academic Vocabulary (ELA.9.V.1.1) · Morphology (ELA.9.V.1.2) · Context & Connotation (ELA.9.V.1.3)

Spotlight texts:

- "The Fall of the House of Usher" — Edgar Allen Poe (short story)
- "House Taken Over" — Julio Cortázar (short story)
- "Why Do Some Brains Enjoy Fear?" — Allegra Ringo (non-fiction article)

QUARTER 2 The Rhetoric of Leadership and Identity

Reading: Perspective & Point of View (ELA.9.R.1.3) · Central Idea (ELA.9.R.2.2) · Author's Purpose (ELA.9.R.2.3) · Understanding Rhetoric (ELA.9.R.3.4)

Writing: Argumentative (ELA.9.C.1.3)

Grammar: The Power of Voice (ELA.9.C.3.1)

Vocabulary: Academic Vocabulary (ELA.9.V.1.1) · Morphology (ELA.9.V.1.2) · Context & Connotation (ELA.9.V.1.3)

Spotlight Texts:

- "Harrison Bergeron" — Kurt Vonnegut (short story)
- "St. Crispin's Day Speech" — from *Henry V*, Shakespeare (speech)
- "Speech Before Her Troops" — Elizabeth I (speech)

QUARTER 3 The Foundations of Storytelling

Reading: Poetry (ELA.9.R.1.4) · Argument (ELA.9.R.2.4) · Summarization (ELA.9.R.3.2) · Comparative Reading (ELA.9.R.3.3)

Writing: Literary Analysis (ELA.9.C.1.3)

Grammar: Roadmap of Advanced Punctuation (ELA.9.C.3.1)

Vocabulary: Academic Vocabulary (ELA.9.V.1.1) · Morphology (ELA.9.V.1.2) · Context & Connotation (ELA.9.V.1.3)

Spotlight Texts:

- *The Odyssey, Part 1 (Books IX, X, XII)* — Homer, Fitzgerald translation (epic poetry)
- "Pyramus and Thisbe" — Ovid (mythology)
- *Romeo and Juliet, Act I* — Shakespeare (play)

QUARTER 4 Synthesis & Review

Reading: All tested Grade 9 B.E.S.T. Standards are reviewed this quarter.

Writing: Narrative (ELA.9.C.1.2) · Research (ELA.9.C.4.1)

Grammar: Introduction to Advanced Rhetoric (ELA.9.C.3.1)

Vocabulary: Academic Vocabulary (ELA.9.V.1.1) · Morphology (ELA.9.V.1.2) · Context & Connotation (ELA.9.V.1.3)

Spotlight Texts: Chosen by your student's school team — contact your student's teacher for specifics.

Longer Works Students May Study

Teachers may also assign longer works in full. The titles below are approved by the Florida Department of Education for English 1. Any work outside the District's adopted resource, *myPerspectives Florida* (Savvas 2026), or the B.E.S.T. Sample Text List goes through the District's novel-approval process before instructional use. Teachers are expected to share with families information about studies of longer works at least two weeks before each study begins. This list is not comprehensive; see the [Florida B.E.S.T. Standards for English Language Arts](#) for more information.

<i>myPerspectives</i> — Abridged List of Extended Works	Grade 9 B.E.S.T. Sample List — Abridged List of Extended Works
• <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> — Twain • <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i> — Remarque • <i>All the Light We Cannot See</i> — Doerr • <i>Angela's Ashes</i> — McCourt • <i>Anthem</i> — Rand • <i>The Art of Public Speaking</i> — Carnegie, Esenwein • <i>Bartleby, The Scrivener</i> — Melville • <i>Between Shades of Gray</i> — Sepetys • <i>Black Boy</i> — Wright • <i>A Book of Myths</i> — Lang • <i>Does My Head Look Big in This?</i> — Abdel-Fattah • <i>A Doll's House</i> — Ibsen • <i>Ethan Frome</i> — Wharton • <i>Famous Modern Ghost Stories</i> — Scarborough, ed. • <i>The Fault in Our Stars</i> — Green • <i>Gifts of Passage</i> — Rama Rau • <i>The Girl from the Well</i> — Chupeco • <i>God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater</i> — Vonnegut • <i>Great Expectations</i> — Dickens • <i>How to Tell a Story and Other Essays</i> — Twain • <i>In the Time of the Butterflies</i> — Alvarez • <i>Incarceron</i> — Fisher • <i>An Island Like You</i> — Cofer • <i>A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier</i> — Beah • <i>The Marrow Thieves</i> — Dimaline • <i>Maus I: A Survivor's Tale</i> — Spiegleman • <i>The Metamorphosis</i> — Kafka • <i>Monster</i> — Myers • <i>Nerdlandia</i> — Soto • <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> — Wilde • <i>Picture Us in the Light</i> — Gilbert • <i>Piecing Me Together</i> — Watson • <i>Poe: Stories and Poems</i> — Hines • <i>The Poet X</i> — Acevedo • <i>The Time Machine</i> — Wells • <i>When I Was Puerto Rican</i> — Santiago • <i>Wild</i> — Strayed	• <i>The Aeneid</i> — Virgil • <i>Animal Farm</i> — Orwell • <i>Antigone</i> — Sophocles • <i>Antigone</i> — Anouilh • <i>The Death of Ivan Ilyich</i> — Tolstoy • <i>Democracy in America</i> — de Tocqueville • <i>Electra</i> — Sophocles • <i>Finding Mañana: A Memoir of a Cuban Exodus</i> — Ojito • <i>The Hero with a Thousand Faces</i> — Campbell • <i>The Iliad</i> — Homer • <i>The Joy Luck Club</i> — Tan • <i>Medea</i> — Euripides • <i>The Odyssey</i> — Homer • <i>Old Greek Stories</i> — Baldwin • <i>The Prince</i> — Machiavelli • <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> — Shakespeare • <i>Unbroken: An Olympian's Journey from Airman to Castaway to Captive (Young Adult Adaptation)</i> — Hillenbrand

Questions about your student's English 1 course? Reach out to their teacher any time.