

Grade 8

Overview

Eighth-grade students apply and expand the skills they have acquired in the earlier grades as they become increasingly more sophisticated readers and writers. Both on their own and with their peers, they read a variety of informational **texts** as well as four major types of literary **texts**: **fiction**, literary **nonfiction**, poetry, and **drama**. Adolescents continue to develop their own areas of reading interest. Informational **text** is analyzed for the purpose of discovering how **texts** reflect the backgrounds, attitudes, and beliefs of the authors. Students compare/contrast different perspectives on similar topics or **themes**. They evaluate elements of the **author’s craft** (for example, the use of **tone** and **imagery**) to create emotional responses in the reader.

Possessing a rich and authentic vocabulary allows any individual to be a skillful and appreciative reader. In order to read fluently, adolescent students use word analysis and other interpretive strategies. As they learn to master **texts** that use complex vocabulary, they transfer that knowledge of language into their own writing and speaking.

Writing for a variety of purposes and **audiences**, eighth graders increase their control over the written language. They blend elements of description into other modes of written works (for example, narrative, **expository**, and persuasive). They plan, draft, **revise**, **edit**, and publish their writings. They learn to pay careful attention to the **author’s craft**—examining the content and development, the organization, the quality of **voice**, and the use of language conventions in their own writing and the writings of others. They also learn to use a variety of sentence structures to express their thoughts in both oral and written form.

In the eighth grade, students continue to read and write for pleasure and to expand their knowledge. The research process offers them the opportunity to be actively involved in learning about topics that are relevant to their lives and that appeal to their interests. Eighth graders access information in print and electronic forms and use both primary and **secondary sources** as reference materials. They distinguish between their own ideas and the ideas of others in their research and in their writing. Using evidence to support the ideas they examine, they properly credit the work of others by documenting the sources they use. They deliver oral presentations about issues and show evidence to support their views and solutions. Through research, students learn how to access, to analyze, and to evaluate information and thus equip themselves for a lifetime of learning.

Grade 8

READING

Understanding and Using Literary Texts

Standard 8-1 The student will read and comprehend a variety of literary **texts** in print and nonprint formats.

Students in grade eight read four major types of literary **texts**: **fiction**, **literary nonfiction**, **poetry**, and **drama**. In the category of **fiction**, they read the following specific types of **texts**: chapter books, adventure stories, historical fiction, contemporary realistic fiction, science fiction, **folktales**, tall tales, and **myths**. In the category of **literary nonfiction**, they read personal essays, classical essays, memoirs, autobiographical and biographical sketches, **character** sketches, and speeches. In the category of **poetry**, they read narrative poems, lyrical poems, humorous poems, free verse, odes, songs/ballads, and epics.

The teacher should continue to address earlier indicators as they apply to more difficult **texts**.

Indicators

- 8-1.1 Compare/contrast ideas within and across literary **texts** to make **inferences**.
- 8-1.2 Explain the effect of **point of view** on a given literary **text**.
- 8-1.3 Interpret devices of **figurative language** (including **extended metaphor**, **oxymoron**, and paradox).
- 8-1.4 Analyze a given literary **text** to determine its **theme**.
- 8-1.5 Analyze the effect of the **author's craft** (including **tone** and the use of **imagery**, **flashback**, **foreshadowing**, **symbolism**, **irony**, and **allusion**) on the meaning of literary **texts**.
- 8-1.6 Create responses to literary **texts** through a variety of methods (for example, written works, oral and auditory presentations, discussions, media productions, and the visual and performing arts).
- 8-1.7 Compare/contrast literary **texts** from various genres (for example, poetry, **drama**, novels, and short stories).
- 8-1.8 Read independently for extended periods of time for pleasure.

Grade 8

READING

Understanding and Using Informational Texts

Standard 8-2 The student will read and comprehend a variety of informational **texts** in print and nonprint formats.

Students in grade eight read **informational (expository/persuasive/argumentative) texts** of the following types: essays, historical documents, research reports, contracts, position papers (for example, persuasive brochures, campaign literature), editorials, letters to the editor, informational trade books, textbooks, news and feature articles, magazine articles, advertisements, encyclopedia entries, reviews (for example, book, movie, product), journals, and speeches. They also read directions, schedules, and recipes embedded in informational **texts**. In addition, they examine commercials, documentaries, and other forms of **nonprint informational texts**.

The teacher should continue to address earlier indicators as they apply to more difficult **texts**.

Indicators

- 8-2.1 Compare/contrast **central ideas** within and across informational **texts**.
- 8-2.2 Compare/contrast information within and across **texts** to draw conclusions and make **inferences**.
- 8-2.3 Analyze informational **texts** for author **bias** (for example, **word choice** and the exclusion and inclusion of particular information).
- 8-2.4 Create responses to informational **texts** through a variety of methods (for example, drawings, written works, oral and auditory presentations, discussions, and media productions).
- 8-2.5 Analyze the impact that **text elements** (for example, **print styles** and chapter headings) have on the meaning of a given informational **text**.
- 8-2.6 Analyze information from **graphic features** (for example, charts and graphs) in informational **texts**.
- 8-2.7 Identify the use of **propaganda techniques** (including **card stacking, plain folks, and transfer**) in informational **texts**.
- 8-2.8 Read independently for extended periods of time to gain information.

Grade 8

READING

Building Vocabulary

Standard 8-3 The student will use word analysis and vocabulary strategies to read fluently.

The teacher should continue to address earlier indicators as they apply to more difficult **texts**.

Instructional appendixes are provided as the baseline expectations for instruction and are not intended to be all-inclusive documents.

Indicators

- 8-3.1 Use **context clues** (for example, those that provide an example, a definition, a restatement, or a comparison/contrast) to generate the meanings of unfamiliar and **multiple-meaning words**.
- 8-3.2 Analyze the meaning of words by using Greek and Latin roots and **affixes** within **texts**. (See *Instructional Appendix: Greek and Latin Roots and Affixes*.)
- 8-3.3 Interpret the meaning of **idioms** and **euphemisms** encountered in **texts**.
- 8-3.4 Interpret the **connotations** of words to understand the meaning of a given **text**.
- 8-3.5 Spell new words using Greek and Latin roots and **affixes**. (See *Instructional Appendix: Greek and Latin Roots and Affixes*.)

Grade 8

WRITING

Developing Written Communication

Standard 8-4 The student will create written work that has a clear focus, sufficient detail, coherent organization, effective use of **voice**, and correct use of the conventions of written **Standard American English**.

The teacher should continue to address earlier indicators as they apply to more difficult **texts**.

Instructional appendixes are provided as the baseline expectations for instruction and are not intended to be all-inclusive documents.

By the end of eighth grade, students should have mastered the concepts listed below. Review and/or reteaching may be necessary.

Conventions of Grammar	Mechanics of Editing
<p><u>Parts of Speech</u></p> <p>nouns (common and proper nouns, singular and plural nouns, collective nouns, agreement of nouns and their modifiers)</p> <p>pronouns (personal pronouns, nominative and objective-case pronouns, pronoun-antecedent agreement, indefinite pronouns, pronoun case)</p> <p>verbs (past, present, and future verb tenses; past participles of commonly misused verbs; subject-verb agreement; consistent verb tenses; verb formation)</p> <p>adverbs (adverbs of time, place, manner, and degree; irregular adverbs; formation of comparative and superlative adverbs)</p> <p>adjectives (comparative and superlative adjectives, proper adjectives, irregular comparative and superlative adjectives, formation of comparative and superlative adjectives)</p> <p>conjunctions (<i>and, but, or, because, since, yet, until, although, while, neither, nor</i>)</p> <p>prepositions and prepositional phrases</p>	<p><u>Capitalization</u></p> <p>first word of a sentence; the names of people; the pronoun <i>I</i>; proper nouns; the initials of a person's name; courtesy titles (for example, Mr. and Ms.); days of the week; months of the year; titles of books, poems, and songs; geographic names; holidays; historical and special events; titles of works of art; titles of publications; brand names; proper adjectives; names of organizations; names of ethnic and national groups; names of established religions and languages</p> <p><u>Punctuation</u></p> <p>end punctuation (periods, exclamation points, question marks)</p> <p>commas (to enclose appositives; to separate items in a series; in dates, addresses, and greetings and closings in letters; in compound sentences; between main clauses; to separate introductory clauses and long introductory phrases from the main body of sentences)</p> <p>periods in abbreviations</p> <p>apostrophes (contractions, possessive nouns)</p>

<p><i>interjections</i></p> <p><u>Usage</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subject-verb agreement • subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement with collective nouns • main and subordinate clauses • idiomatic usage • placement of modifiers • shifts in construction 	<p><i>quotation marks</i> (to show dialogue, in direct quotations, to indicate titles of short pieces within longer pieces, underlining or italics of titles of separately published works)</p> <p><i>colons</i></p> <p><i>hyphens</i></p> <p><i>semicolons</i></p> <p><i>ellipses</i></p> <p><i>parentheses</i></p> <p><u>Spelling</u> high-frequency words; three- and four-letter short-vowel words; words that do not fit regular spelling patterns; basic short-vowel, long-vowel, <i>r</i>-controlled, and consonant-blend patterns; misused homonyms; commonly confused words; words that have blends; contractions; compound words; words with orthographic patterns; words with suffixes and prefixes; multisyllabic words; commonly confused words; double consonant patterns; irregular vowel patterns in multisyllabic words; and words with Greek and Latin roots and affixes</p>
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Indicators

- 8-4.1 Organize written works using prewriting techniques, discussions, **graphic organizers**, models, and outlines.
- 8-4.2 Use complete sentences in a variety of types (including simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex).
- 8-4.3 Create multiple-paragraph compositions that include a **central idea** with supporting details and use appropriate transitions between paragraphs.
- 8-4.4 Use grammatical conventions of written **Standard American English**, including the reinforcement of conventions previously taught. (See *Instructional Appendix: Composite Writing Matrix*.)
- 8-4.5 **Revise** writing to improve clarity, **tone**, **voice**, content, and the development of ideas. (See *Instructional Appendix: Composite Writing Matrix*.)
- 8-4.6 **Edit** for the correct use of written **Standard American English**, including ellipses and parentheses. (See *Instructional Appendix: Composite Writing Matrix*.)
- 8-4.7 Spell correctly using **Standard American English**.

Grade 8

WRITING

Producing Written Communications in a Variety of Form

Standard 8-5 The student will write for a variety of purposes and **audiences**.

The teacher should continue to address earlier indicators as they apply to more difficult **texts**.

Indicators

- 8-5.1 Create informational pieces (for example, reports and letters of request, inquiry, or complaint) that use language appropriate for the specific **audience**.
- 8-5.2 Create narratives (for example, memoirs) that communicate the significance of particular personal relationships.
- 8-5.3 Create descriptions for use in other modes of written works (for example, narrative, **expository**, and persuasive).
- 8-5.4 Create persuasive pieces (for example, editorials, essays, or speeches) that support a clearly stated position with concrete evidence.

Grade 8

RESEARCHING

Applying the Skills of Inquiry and Oral Communication

Standard 8-6 The student will access and use information from a variety of sources.

The teacher should continue to address earlier indicators as they apply to more difficult **texts**.

Indicators

- 8-6.1 Clarify and refine a research topic.
- 8-6.2 Use direct quotations, paraphrasing, or summaries to incorporate into written, oral, auditory, or visual works the information gathered from a variety of research sources.
- 8-6.3 Use a standardized system of documentation (including a list of sources with full publication information and the use of in-text citations) to properly credit the work of others.
- 8-6.4 Use vocabulary (including **Standard American English**) that is appropriate for the particular **audience** or purpose.
- 8-6.5 Use appropriate organizational strategies to prepare written works, oral and auditory presentations, and visual presentations.
- 8-6.6 Select appropriate graphics, in print or electronic form, to support written works, oral presentations, and visual presentations.
- 8-6.7 Use a variety of print and electronic reference materials.
- 8-6.8 Design and carry out research projects by selecting a topic, constructing inquiry questions, accessing resources, evaluating credibility, and selecting and organizing information.