

8th Grade ELA Essential Standards

The identified Essential Standards are targeted for emphasis, indicating that there could be a higher proportion of questions on those standards in the AASA. The state assessment will retain the same length and duration. **ALL STANDARDS remain valid and subject to inclusion in each year's AASA.**

It is essential to recognize that decisions to omit certain standards at the elementary level will have significant repercussions in the secondary grades. Foundational knowledge and skills developed through these standards are critical for ensuring students' success as they progress in their education.

The following document provides justification statements for each essential standard as well as suggested related standards:

Reading Standards for Literature	
Essential Standard	Justification and Related Standards
Key Ideas and Details	
8.RL.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Justification: This standard is essential because it builds foundational skills for comprehension, critical thinking, and communication. It promotes close reading, develops analytical thinking, supports argumentation skills, and prepares for advanced literary demands.
	<i>*8.RL.1 is embedded and assessed in all other RL standards.</i>
8.RL.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the	Justification: This standard is essential because understanding the theme and/or central idea is key to understanding a piece of literature. Understanding the theme helps to support comprehension about what a piece of literature is communicating. It supports building inferencing skills and encompasses many other literary

characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.	standards.
	8.RL.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
	8.RL.5 Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
8.RL.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.	Justification: This standard is essential because a deep understanding is needed of character and plot event development to analyze a theme and engage in text analysis.
	8.RL.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
	8.RL.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
Craft and Structure	
8.RL.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	Justification: Students must continually practice this skill as vocabulary increases in rigor throughout their academic career. Knowledge of vocabulary influences reading comprehension. It not only supports understanding of a literal meaning, but also of a connotative and/or figurative meaning to support overall understanding of a text.
	8.RL.5 Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
	8.RL.6 Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

8.RL.6 Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.	Justification: This standard is essential because understanding how an author develops the point of view of the characters and considers the audience or reader of a text is foundational for critical reading and comprehension.
	8.RL.5 Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
	8.RL.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
8.RL.9 Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories or religious works, including describing how the material is rendered new.	Justification: This standard fosters the ability to synthesize information across texts - an essential skill for research, writing, and real-world problem-solving.
	8.RL.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
	8.RL.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
	8.RL.5 Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

Reading Standards for Informational Text	
Essential Standard	Justification and Supporting Standards
Key Ideas and Details	

8.RI.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Justification: The ability to cite evidence to support claims is necessary for tasks like writing reports, crafting arguments, and analyzing news or research. In addition, this standard lays the foundation for higher-level reading and writing skills, which are crucial in later grades and standardized tests. <i>*8.RI.1 is embedded and assessed in all other RI standards.</i>
8.RI.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.	Justification: This standard is essential because understanding the central ideas of a text is key to understanding a piece of informational text. Understanding the central idea helps to support comprehension about what a piece of informational text is communicating. It supports building inferencing skills and encompasses many other RI standards.
	8.RI.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
	8.RI.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories). 8.RI.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.
Craft and Structure	
8.RI.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other text	Justification: Students must continually practice this skill as vocabulary increases in rigor throughout their academic career. Knowledge of vocabulary influences reading comprehension. It not only supports understanding of a literal meaning, but also of a connotative and/or figurative meaning to support overall understanding of a text.
	8.RI.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.
	8.L.3-8.L.6 Knowledge of Language Standards

8.RI.5 Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.	Justification: This standard is essential because understanding text structure is critical to comprehending an informational text. Understanding text structure helps students to understand main/key ideas and how ideas are developed by an author. 8.RI.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories). 8.RI.10 By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational texts and nonfiction in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 8.
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	
8.RI.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	Justification: This standard is an enduring standard and represents a building block for reading comprehension and for argumentative writing. 8.RI.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other text. 8.RI.6 Determine an author's point of view, perspective and purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
8.RI.9 Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.	Justification: The standard fosters the ability to synthesize information across texts, an essential skill for research, writing, and real-world problem-solving. 8.RI.6 Determine an author's point of view, perspective and purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

	8.RI.7 Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.
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Writing Standards	
Essential Standard	Justification and Supporting Standards
Text Types and Purposes	
8.W.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.	Justification: This standard supports the writing process and is important for college and career readiness. This encompasses both academic and workplace skills. At this grade level students are expected to introduce claims and acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and acknowledge/explain counter arguments and make effective rebuttals.
	8.RI.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
	8.W.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
	8.W.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
	Justification: This standard supports the writing process and is

8.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.	important for college and career readiness. This encompasses both academic and workplace skills. This standard encompasses a variety of writing types and supports students in organizing information effectively.
	8.RI.9 Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
	8.W.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
	8.W.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Production and Distribution of Writing	
8.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	Justification: This standard is critical to producing an appropriate piece of writing for a particular prompt. This is also part of the rubric for scoring writing.
	8.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
	8.W.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well the purpose and audience have been addressed.

	8.W.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
	8.W.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Speaking and Listening Standards	
Essential Standard	Justification and Supporting Standards
Comprehension and Collaboration	
8.SL.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.	Justification: This standard equips students with critical skills for understanding, integrating, and evaluating information in a multimedia world.
	8.RI.3 Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).
	8.RI.9 Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
8.SL.3	Justification: This standard helps develop students' critical thinking and argument analysis skills.

Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	8.RI.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
	8.RI.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

Language Standards	
Essential Standard	Justification and Supporting Standards
Conventions of Standard English	
8.L.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Justification: This standard teaches students to express their ideas clearly and accurately in both written and oral formats. Effective communication is critical for academic achievement.
	8.W.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well the purpose and audience have been addressed.
	8.SL.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

8.L.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	Justification: This standard teaches students to produce polished and professional writing, ensuring they are prepared for both academic and real-world demands.
	8.W.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well the purpose and audience have been addressed.