



Achievement Level Descriptors
for
Grade 8 English Language Arts

Georgia Department of Education
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Achievement Levels and Achievement Level Descriptors

With the implementation of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System, Georgia educators have developed four achievement levels to describe student mastery and command of the knowledge and skills outlined in Georgia’s content standards. Most students have at least some knowledge of the content described in the content standards; however, achievement levels succinctly describe how much mastery a student has. Achievement levels give meaning and context to scale scores by describing the knowledge and skills students must demonstrate to achieve each level.

The four achievement levels on Georgia Milestones are *Beginning Learner*, *Developing Learner*, *Proficient Learner*, and *Distinguished Learner*. The general meaning of each of the four levels is provided below:

Beginning Learners do not yet demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students ***need substantial academic support*** to be prepared for the next grade level or course and to be on track for college and career readiness.

Developing Learners demonstrate partial proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students ***need additional academic support*** to ensure success in the next grade level or course and to be on track for college and career readiness.

Proficient Learners demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students ***are prepared*** for the next grade level or course and are on track for college and career readiness.

Distinguished Learners demonstrate advanced proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia’s content standards. The students ***are well prepared*** for the next grade level or course and are well prepared for college and career readiness.

More detailed and content-specific concepts and skills are provided for each grade, content area, and course in the **Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs)**. ALDs are narrative descriptions of the knowledge and skills expected at each of the four achievement levels and were developed for each grade level, content area, and course by committees of Georgia educators in March 2015 and July 2015. The ALDs are based on the state-adopted content standards.

ALDs show a progression of knowledge and skills for which students must demonstrate competency across the achievement levels. It is important to understand that a student should demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills within his/her achievement level *as well as all content and skills in any achievement levels that proceed his/her own, if any*. For example, a Proficient Learner should also possess the knowledge and skills of a Developing Learner *and* a Beginning Learner.

ALD	Standard	Beginning Learner	Developing Learner	Proficient Learner	Distinguished Learner
Policy		Beginning Learners do not yet demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students need substantial academic support to be prepared for the next grade level or course and to be on track for <i>college and career readiness</i> .	Developing Learners demonstrate partial proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students need additional academic support to ensure success in the next grade level or course and to be on track for <i>college and career readiness</i> .	Proficient Learners demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students are prepared for the next grade level or course and are on track for <i>college and career readiness</i> .	Distinguished Learners demonstrate advanced proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students are well prepared for the next grade level or course and are well prepared for <i>college and career readiness</i> .
Range		A student who achieves at the Beginning Learner level tends to read and comprehend informational texts and literature that do not meet the demands of grade level texts that would signal this student is on track for college and career readiness and requires substantial instructional support to improve reading skills.	A student who achieves at the Developing Learner level tends to read and comprehend informational texts and literature of low-to-moderate complexity and sometimes struggle to meet the demands of grade level texts that would signal this student is on track for college and career readiness and requires some instructional support to enhance reading skills.	A student who achieves at the Proficient Learner level reads and comprehends informational texts and literature of moderate-to-high complexity and is meeting the demands of grade level texts that signal this student is on track for college and career readiness.	A student who achieves at the Distinguished Learner level reads and comprehends informational texts and literature of high complexity and is meeting and often exceeding the demands of grade level texts that clearly signal this student is on track for college and career readiness.
	8.RL.1	Cites textual evidence that supports what the text says explicitly.	Cites examples of textual evidence that support an analysis of what the text says explicitly and support basic inferences drawn from the text.	Cites the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly and supports inferences drawn from the text.	Cites the textual evidence that most strongly supports an in-depth analysis of the text and supports complex inferences drawn from the text.
	8.RL.2	Identifies a theme or central idea of a text; identifies characters, setting, and plot; and provides a summary of the text.	Identifies a theme or central idea of a text; analyzes characters, setting, and plot; and provides an objective summary of the text.	Determines a theme or central idea of a text and analyzes its development over the course of a text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and	Determines a complex theme or central idea and analyzes its development over the course of a text; assesses its relationship to the narrative elements; and provides a

				plot, and provides an objective summary of the text.	thorough, objective summary of the text.
	8.RL.3	Identifies lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama that propel the action and reveal basic aspects of the character.	Explains how specific lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action and reveal some aspects of the character.	Analyzes how specific lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of the character, or provoke a decision.	Analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of an author's use of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama to propel the action, reveal complex aspects of the character, or provoke a decision.
	8.RL.4	Determines the denotative meaning of some words and phrases with explicit textual support (e.g., context clues, embedded definitions).	Determines the meanings, including figurative and connotative meanings, of words and phrases with textual support (e.g., context clues, embedded definitions) and analyzes the impact of some specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	Determines the meanings, including figurative and connotative meanings, of words and phrases and analyzes the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	Evaluates the effect of words and phrases, including figurative and connotative meanings, and analyzes and evaluates the effect of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
	8.RL.5	Makes comparisons between the content of two texts.	Compares and contrasts the structure of two texts, describing the connection to their meaning and style.	Compares and contrasts the structure of two or more texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.	Thoroughly compares and contrasts the structure of two or more texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style and assessing their effectiveness.
	8.RL.6	Explains how differences in the points of view of the characters or the reader affect the text.	Analyzes how differences in the points of view of the main characters or the reader affect the text and identifies suspense or humor in the text.	Analyzes how differences in the points of view of the characters or the reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor in the text.	Analyzes how differences in the points of view of the characters and the reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor and evaluates their effect on the text.
	8.RL.7	Indicates the section of a film of a story or drama that stays faithful to or departs from the text or script.	Explains the extent to which a film of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, identifying how	Analyzes the extent to which a film of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the	Analyzes the extent to which a film of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the

			differences made by the director or actors affect meaning.	choices made by the director or actors.	choices made by the director or actors and proposing alternate ideas.
	8.RL.8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	8.RL.9	Establishes how a modern work of fiction draws on explicit patterns of events or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works.	Establishes how a modern work of fiction draws on explicit themes, events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works, including how the material is rendered new.	Analyzes how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works, including how the material is rendered new.	Cites specific textual evidence to support an analysis and evaluation of how a modern work of fiction draws on inferential themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works, including how the material is rendered new.
	8.RI.1	Identifies textual evidence to support an analysis of what the text says explicitly.	Identifies examples of textual evidence to support an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Identifies and cites the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Identifies and cites the textual evidence that most strongly supports an extensive analysis of the text as well as complex inferences drawn from the text.
	8.RI.2	Identifies a central idea of a text and provides a retelling of the text.	Identifies a central idea of a text and attempts to follow its development over the course of a text and provides a simple, objective summary of the text.	Determines a central idea of a text and analyzes its development over the course of a text, including its relationship to supporting ideas, and provides an objective summary of the text.	Determines a central idea of a text and analyzes its development over the course of a text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; assesses the strength of each supporting idea; and provides a thorough, objective summary of the text.
	8.RI.3	Explains how a text makes explicit connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons).	Interprets how a text makes explicit connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through categories).	Analyzes how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through analogies).	Evaluates how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events and their impact on the text.
	8.RI.4	Determines the literal meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, with textual support (e.g., context clues, embedded definitions), and	Determines the meanings, including common figurative, connotative, and technical meanings, of words and phrases as they are used in a	Determines the meanings, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings, of words and phrases as they are used in a	Interprets the meanings, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings, of words and phrases as they are used in a

		identifies the effect of basic specific word choices on meaning and tone.	text with textual support (e.g., context clues, embedded definitions) and explains the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	text and analyzes the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	text and evaluates the rhetorical effect of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
	8.RI.5	Explains the basic structure of a specific paragraph in a text and describes the role of particular sentences in creating that structure.	Determines the general structure of a specific paragraph in a text and describes the role of particular sentences in developing a key concept.	Analyzes in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.	Classifies the rhetorical effect of the structure of a specific paragraph in a text and its role in the text as a whole, including the role of particular sentences in developing, refining, and communicating a key concept.
	8.RI.6	Identifies an author's point of view or purpose in a text and provides basic examples where the author acknowledges or responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	Determines an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explains how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	Identifies an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyzes how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	Analyzes and evaluates an author's point of view or purpose in a text and evaluates the rhetorical effect of how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
	8.RI.7	Identifies an explicit topic or idea presented in two different media (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia).	Compares and contrasts the use of different media (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) in presenting a particular topic or idea.	Evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of using different media (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.	Assesses the advantages and disadvantages of using different media (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea, providing specific details and evidence to support the evaluation.
	8.RI.8	Determines the basic argument and claims in a text, describing the evidence used to support the claims.	Delineates and evaluates the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the evidence is relevant.	Delineates and evaluates the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient, and recognizes when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	Classifies and evaluates the argument and specific claims in a text, citing specific language in an assessment of whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient, and recognizes when irrelevant

					evidence is introduced and justifies reasoning.
	8.RI.9	Identifies a case in which two texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and attempts to identify where the texts disagree.	Identifies a case in which two texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identifies where the texts disagree on matters of fact.	Analyzes a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identifies where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.	Analyzes a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identifies where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation, assessing the strength or reliability of each.
	8.W.1	Attempts to write basic arguments to support a claim with reasons: a. Introduces the claim and organizes reasons and evidence. b. Supports the claim with evidence and demonstrates a basic understanding of the topic or text. c. Attempts to use transitions to link the claim with reasons. d. Attempts to establish a formal style. e. Provides a concluding statement.	Writes general arguments to support a claim with reasons and evidence: a. Introduces the claim and organizes the reasons and evidence logically with minor errors. b. Supports the claim with uneven reasoning and evidence, using few sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. c. Uses words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among the claim, reasons, and evidence. d. Establishes a formal style with minor errors. e. Provides a concluding statement or section that supports the argument presented.	Writes arguments to support a claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence: a. Introduces the claim, acknowledges and distinguishes the claim from alternate or opposing claims, and organizes the reasons and evidence logically. b. Supports the claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. c. Uses words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among the claim, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. d. Establishes and maintains a formal style. e. Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.	Writes conclusive arguments to support a claim with clear reasons and analysis of relevant evidence: a. Introduces the claim, acknowledges and distinguishes the claim from alternate or opposing claims, evaluates their validity, and organizes the reasons and evidence logically. b. Supports the claim with a clear position based on logical reasoning and relevant evidence using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating a profound understanding of the topic or text. c. Precisely uses a variety of words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among the claim, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. d. Establishes and maintains a formal style throughout the entire piece of writing. e. Provides a compelling concluding statement or

					section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
	8.W.2	<p>Attempts to write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey information through the selection and organization of information.</p> <p>a. Introduces a topic, organizes ideas into categories, and attempts to include formatting (e.g., headings) and graphics (e.g., charts, tables).</p> <p>b. Develops the topic with relevant facts or other information and examples.</p> <p>c. Attempts to use appropriate transitions.</p> <p>d. Uses appropriate language to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Attempts to establish a formal style.</p> <p>f. Provides a concluding statement.</p>	<p>Writes general informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information through the selection and organization of relevant content.</p> <p>a. Introduces a topic, organizes ideas and information into broader categories, and includes some formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia.</p> <p>b. Develops the topic with relevant facts, definitions, or other information and examples.</p> <p>c. Uses appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Uses clear language to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Establishes a formal style.</p> <p>f. Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information presented.</p>	<p>Writes informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <p>a. Introduces a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organizes ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; and includes formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. Develops the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</p> <p>c. Uses appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Establishes and maintains a formal style.</p> <p>f. Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.</p>	<p>Writes precise informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <p>a. Clearly and concisely introduces a topic, previewing what is to follow; seamlessly organizes ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; and includes various formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. Develops the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples from reliable sources.</p> <p>c. Uses a variety of appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts and allow the information to flow.</p> <p>d. Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to eloquently inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Establishes and maintains a formal style throughout the piece of writing.</p> <p>f. Provides a compelling</p>

					concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
	8.W.3	<p>Attempts to write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using details and event sequences.</p> <p>a. Engages the reader by establishing a point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters and organizes a basic event sequence.</p> <p>b. Uses dialogue and description to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</p> <p>c. Attempts to use transition words to convey sequence and show the relationships among experiences and events.</p> <p>d. Uses words, phrases, and relevant descriptive details to explain the action and convey experiences and events.</p> <p>e. Provides a conclusion.</p>	<p>Writes general narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using relevant descriptive details and event sequences.</p> <p>a. Engages the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters and organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally.</p> <p>b. Uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</p> <p>c. Uses transition words and phrases to convey sequence and show the relationships among experiences and events.</p> <p>d. Uses specific words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.</p> <p>e. Provides a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.</p>	<p>Writes narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</p> <p>a. Engages and orients the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters and organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.</p> <p>b. Uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</p> <p>c. Uses a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.</p> <p>d. Uses precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.</p> <p>e. Provides a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.</p>	<p>Writes descriptive narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</p> <p>a. Engages and orients the reader by establishing a context and clear point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters and organizes a complex event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.</p> <p>b. Expertly uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</p> <p>c. Uses a wide variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.</p> <p>d. Uses precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to clearly capture the action and convey experiences and events.</p> <p>e. Provides a compelling conclusion that follows from</p>

					and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.
	8.W.4	Produces writing in which the development, organization, and style are inadequate to tasks, purposes, and audiences.	Produces writing in which the development, organization, and style are incomplete or inadequate to tasks, purposes, and audiences.	Produces clear and coherent writing in which development, organization, and style are appropriate to tasks, purposes, and audiences.	Produces effective writing in which the development, organization, and style are complete and appropriate to tasks, purposes, and audiences.
	8.W.5	With guidance and support from peers and adults, strengthens writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.	With guidance and support from peers and adults, develops and strengthens writing by planning, revising, editing, and rewriting, taking into consideration how well purpose and audience have been addressed.	With minimal guidance and support from peers and adults, develops and strengthens writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.	With support from peers and adults, develops, elaborates on, and strengthens writing as needed by using strategic planning, concise revising, accurate editing and rewriting, and trying new approaches, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
	8.W.6	Uses technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact with others.	Uses technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing, which may present the relationship between information and ideas incompletely, as well as to interact with others.	Uses technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas completely as well as to interact and collaborate with others.	Uses technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish effective or creative writing and present the relationships between information and ideas effectively as well as to effectively interact and collaborate with others.
	8.W.7	Conducts short research projects to answer a question, drawing on a source.	Conducts short research projects to answer a question, drawing on a few sources and attempting to generate additional related questions.	Conducts short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.	Conducts short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several reliable sources and generating additional related, focused, higher-level questions for further research and investigation.
	8.W.8	Gathers information from print and/or digital sources, attempting to use search terms, and assesses the accuracy of	Gathers information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms; assesses the accuracy of each	Gathers relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assesses the	Gathers relevant and important information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms

		each source while avoiding plagiarism.	source; and paraphrases the conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and attempting to follow a standard format for citation.	credibility and accuracy of each source; and quotes or paraphrases the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	effectively; evaluates and analyzes the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quotes or precisely paraphrases the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and always following a standard format for citation.
	8.L.1	Demonstrates understanding of the basic conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking: a. Identifies the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general. b. Forms and uses verbs in the active and passive voice. c. With assistance, forms and uses verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood. d. Attempts to recognize and correct some basic inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.	Demonstrates a general understanding of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking: a. Describes the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences. b. Forms and uses verbs in the active and passive voice. c. With minimal assistance, forms and uses verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood. d. Recognizes and corrects some general inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.	Demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking: a. Explains the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences. b. Forms and uses verbs in the active and passive voice. c. Forms and uses verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood. d. Recognizes and corrects inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.	Demonstrates a consistent, strong command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking: a. With accuracy, explains the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences. b. Consistently forms and uses verbs in the active and passive voice. c. Consistently forms and uses verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood. d. Consistently recognizes and corrects inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.
	8.L.2	Demonstrates some awareness of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing: a. Attempts to use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break. b. Inconsistently uses an ellipsis	Demonstrates understanding of the basic conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing: a. Usually uses punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break. b. Sometimes uses an ellipsis to	Demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing: a. Uses punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break. b. Uses an ellipsis to indicate an omission. c. Spells correctly.	Demonstrates a consistent, strong command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing: a. Expertly uses punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break. b. Consistently uses an ellipsis

		to indicate an omission. c. Attempts to spell correctly.	indicate an omission. c. Generally spells correctly.		to indicate an omission. c. Consistently spells correctly.
	8.L.3	Attempts to apply the basic conventions of language when writing, speaking, reading, or listening: attempts to use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).	Demonstrates basic knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening: sometimes uses verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).	Uses knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening: uses verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).	Uses extensive knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening: consistently uses verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).
	8.L.4	Attempts to determine or clarify the meaning of multiple-meaning words or phrases, with textual support (e.g., context clues, embedded definitions), choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: a. Attempts to use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Attempts to use common, basic Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede). c. Consults provided general reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a basic word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.	Determines or clarifies the meaning of general unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: a. Uses basic context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Uses common, basic Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., recede). c. Consults provided general reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.	Determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: a. Uses context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Uses less common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., secede). c. Consults provided general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.	Expertly determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: a. Consistently uses context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. b. Consistently uses less common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word. c. Expertly consults provided general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

	8.L.5	<p>Demonstrates an understanding of basic, familiar figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings:</p> <p>a. Identifies common figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.</p> <p>b. Attempts to use the relationship between particular basic words to better understand each of the words.</p> <p>c. Attempts to distinguish among the connotations (associations) of some simple words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).</p>	<p>Demonstrates an understanding of familiar figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings:</p> <p>a. Interprets some common figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.</p> <p>b. Uses the relationship between some words to better understand each of the words.</p> <p>c. Distinguishes among the connotations (associations) of some words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).</p>	<p>Demonstrates understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings:</p> <p>a. Interprets more abstract figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.</p> <p>b. Uses the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.</p> <p>c. Distinguishes among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).</p>	<p>Demonstrates a solid understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings:</p> <p>a. Interprets more abstract figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.</p> <p>b. Uses the relationship between particular words to develop a more thorough and better understanding of each of the words.</p> <p>c. Distinguishes and assesses the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).</p>
	8.L.6	<p>Uses general, academic, and domain-specific words and phrases and gathers vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</p>	<p>Acquires and uses some grade-appropriate general, academic, and domain-specific words and phrases and gathers vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</p>	<p>Acquires and accurately uses grade-appropriate general, academic, and domain-specific words and phrases and gathers vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</p>	<p>Acquires and accurately uses above-grade general, academic, and domain-specific words and phrases and gathers and uses vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</p>