

# Eighth Grade Benchmarks English/Language Arts

Level 5 – Student performance exceeds year-end standard

Level 4 – Student performance meets year-end standard

Level 3 – Student performance approaches year-end standard

Level 2 – Student demonstrates limited performance to year-end standard

Level 1 – Student does not yet evidence understanding or application of skills related to year-end standard

NOTE: MPI and MPII performance levels are determined based on performance expectations at the time of reporting

Student Performance Standard	Level 1 Below	Level 2 Limited	Level 3 Approaches	Level 4 Exceeds	Level 5 Exceeds
<i>Reading for Literature:</i>					
Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development.	Determines a theme or central idea with guidance.	Determines a theme or central idea of a text with scaffolding; produces a summary of the text that includes references to theme.	Determines some themes or central ideas of specific text; analyzes the development of some themes over the course of the text, including the relationship to the characters, setting or plot; relates themes from previously read texts.	Determines a theme or central idea of a text; analyzes its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting and plot; provides an objective summary of the text; generalizes about universal themes, human nature, cultural and historical perspectives from reading multiple texts.	In addition to Level 3, compares and contrasts development of similar themes across authors, time periods, and cultures.
Analyze how differences in points of view impact the audience or reader.	Identifies point of view with guidance.	Identifies differing points of view within a text.	Analyzes how some points of view create specific effects.	Analyzes how differences in points of view of the characters and the audience or reader create such effects as suspense or humor.	In addition to Level 3, analyzes how different authors use point of view to develop specific effects.
Read and comprehend literature at the upper end of the 6-8 grade level band.	Reads and comprehends texts below the 6-8 grade level text complexity band.	Reads and comprehends literature proficiently at the lower end of the 6-8 grade level text complexity band or below.	Reads and comprehends literature proficiently at the mid-level of the 6-8 grade level text complexity band.	Reads and comprehends literature proficiently at the high end of the 6-8 grade level text complexity band (Lexile Level 1000-1155).	Consistently reads and comprehends literature proficiently above the high end of the 6-8 grade level text complexity band.

<i>Reading for Information:</i>					
Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development.	Determines a central idea of a text with guidance.	Determines the central idea of a text with scaffolding; produces a summary of the text that includes references to theme.	Determines the central idea of some texts; analyzes theme development over the course of specific texts; summarizes texts.	Determines a central idea of a text; analyzes its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provides an objective summary of the text.	In addition to Level 3, compares and contrasts texts with similar central ideas; analyzes how different authors extend or elaborate on similar ideas.
Determine an author's point of view or purpose.	Identifies an author's point of view or purpose with guidance.	Identifies an author's point of view or purpose.	Determines an author's point of view or purpose in some texts; analyzes how the author acknowledges and responds to some conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	Determines an author's point of view or purpose in a text; analyzes how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	In addition to Level 3, analyzes how different authors use point of view or purpose to address the same topic or issue from different perspectives.
Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text.	Delineates and evaluates arguments with guidance.	Delineates some arguments and claims in specific texts; inconsistently evaluates reasoning and evidence of claims; inconsistently recognizes when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	Delineates and evaluates some of the arguments and specific claims in a text; evaluates reasoning and evidence of some claims; recognizes when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	Delineates and evaluates the argument and specific claims in a text; assesses whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognizes when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	In addition to Level 3, analyzes and critiques the intended effects of propaganda techniques the author uses to influence readers' perspectives.
Read and comprehend literary non-fiction at the upper end of the 6-8 grade level band.	Reads and comprehends texts below the 6-8 grade level text complexity band (Lexile Level 1000-1155).	Reads and comprehends literary non-fiction proficiently below the 6-8 grade level text complexity band or below.	Reads and comprehends literary non-fiction proficiently at the mid-level of the 6-8 grade level text complexity band.	Reads and comprehends literary non-fiction proficiently at the high end of the 6-8 grade level text complexity band (Lexile Level 1000-1155).	Consistently reads and comprehends literary non-fiction proficiently above the high end of the 6-8 grade level text complexity band.
<i>Writing:</i>					
Write arguments to support claims.	Writes arguments with guidance.	Writes arguments that introduce claims; claims are supported with minimal	Writes arguments that include some of the following: introduction of claims; claims	Writes arguments that include the following: introduction of claims; alternate and	In addition to Level 3, arguments are eloquently written and persuade the reader

		reasoning and evidence; relationship between claims may not be clarified; conclusion is related to argument.	supported with logical reasoning and relevant evidence; use of words, phrases and clauses to clarify the relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons and evidence; concluding statement or section follows from and supports argument presented.	opposing claims acknowledged and distinguished; claims supported with logical reasoning and relevant evidence; use of words, phrases and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons and evidence; concluding statement or section follows from and supports argument presented.	through construction of argument, use of convincing and apt supporting claims, use of emotional appeals to the reader.
Write informative and explanatory texts.	Writes informative and explanatory texts with guidance.	Writes informative and explanatory texts that introduce topics, ideas and concepts; topics are supported with minimal evidence; concluding statement or section relates to topic, idea or concept.	Writes informative and explanatory texts that include some of the following: topic introduction; ideas, concepts and information organized into broader categories; topic developed with facts, definition, details, quotations and other information and examples; concluding statement or section follows from and supports information or explanation presented.	Writes informative and explanatory texts that include the following: topic introduction; ideas, concepts and information organized into broader categories; formatting, graphics and multimedia included to aid comprehension; topic developed with well-chosen facts, definition, concrete details, quotations and other information and examples; appropriate and varied transitions; precise language and domain-specific vocabulary; concluding statement or section follows from and supports information or	In addition to Level 3, writes informative and explanatory texts that are eloquently written, provide extensive information on the topic, and refer readers to additional sources of information.

				explanation presented.	
Write narratives.	Writes narratives with guidance.	Writes narratives that introduce a narrator and characters; context and point of view may be minimally described; limited use of narrative techniques; conclusion relates to narrated events.	Writes narratives that include some of the following: introduction of narrator and characters; establishment of context and point of view; use of some narrative techniques (i.e., dialogue, pacing, description, reflection); concluding statement or section that follows from and reflects on narrated experiences or events.	Writes narratives that include the following: introduction of narrator and characters; establishment of context and point of view; use of narrative techniques (i.e., dialogue, pacing, description, reflection); varied transition words, phrases and clauses; use of precise words, relevant descriptive details and sensory language; concluding statement or section that follows from and reflects on narrated experiences or events.	In addition to Level 3, writes narratives that are eloquently written, richly detailed, and attempt to engage the reader in an emotional reaction to an issue or theme.

<i>Speaking &amp; Listening:</i>					
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions.	Engages in collaborative discussions with guidance.	Prepares for discussions, reflects on ideas under discussion; asks questions and responds to others' questions; may miss exchanges or focus on his/her perspective.	Evidences some of the following skills: prepares for discussions; draws on preparation during discussions; follows rules for collegial discussions and decision-making; poses questions that connect to others' ideas; responds to others' questions or comments with relevant evidence, observation and ideas.	Evidences the following skills: prepares for discussions; draws on preparation during discussions; follows rules for collegial discussions and decision-making; poses questions that connect to others' ideas; responds to others' questions or comments with relevant evidence, observation and ideas; acknowledges new information;	In addition to Level 4 performance, leads classroom discussion by presenting a topic, engaging with other participants, modeling discussion practices, and focusing or redirecting other participants.

				qualifies or justifies personal viewpoint in light of evidence presented.	
Analyze and delineate orally presented information.	Analyzes and delineates information with guidance.	Summarizes information presented including argument and claims; evaluation of purpose, reasoning, and evidence may be minimal.	Evidences some of the following skills: analyzes the purpose of information presented; delineates a speaker's argument and specific claims; evaluates reasoning and evidence of identified argument and claims; identifies when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	Evidences the following skills: analyzes the purpose of information presented; evaluates the motives behind its presentation; delineates a speaker's argument and specific claims; evaluates the soundness of the reasoning, relevance and sufficiency of evidence; identifies when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	In addition to Level 4 performance, compares presentations to identify persuasive techniques, nuances of language, and other factors that influence listeners.
Present claims and findings.	Presents claims and findings with guidance.	Presents claims and findings by summarizing them; evidence, reasoning, and details may be minimal; eye contact, volume, and pronunciation may be inadequate.	Evidences some of the following skills: presents claims and findings by emphasizing specific points; uses evidence, reasoning and details; uses appropriate eye-contact, adequate volume and clear pronunciation.	Evidences the following skills: presents claims and findings by emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner; uses relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning and well-chosen details; uses appropriate eye-contact, adequate volume and clear pronunciation.	In addition to Level 4 performance, effectively uses strategies to engage and communicate with audience; presentations include audio/visual supports that elucidate claims.

<i>Language:</i>					
Use conventions of standard English grammar and usage.	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing and	Inconsistently forms and uses verb voice or mood; inconsistently recognizes inappropriate shifts in	Frequently evidences some of the following skills: forms and uses verbs in multiple voices and moods; recognizes and	Most of the time evidence most of the following skills: forms and uses verbs in multiple voices and moods; recognizes	Consistently evidences the following skills: forms and uses verbs in multiple voices and moods; recognizes

	speaking with guidance.	verb voice and mood.	corrects inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.	and corrects inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.	and corrects inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.
Use conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling.	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing with guidance.	Inconsistently uses punctuation; inconsistently spells commonly used words correctly.	Evidences some of the following skills: uses punctuation; uses an ellipsis to indicate an omission; spells commonly used words correctly.	Most of the time evidences most of the following skills: uses punctuation (commas, ellipsis, dash); uses an ellipsis to indicate an omission; spells correctly.	Consistently evidences the following skills: uses punctuation (commas, ellipsis, dash); uses an ellipsis to indicate an omission; spells correctly.
Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases.	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases with guidance.	Inconsistently uses context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase; inconsistently uses affixes and roots as clues to word meaning; inconsistently consults reference materials.	Frequently evidences some of the following skills: uses context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase; uses common affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word; consults reference materials.	Most of the time evidences most of the following skills: uses context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase; uses common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word; consults general and specialized reference materials to find pronunciation of a word or to clarify meaning or part of speech.	Consistently evidences the following skills: uses context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase; uses common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word; consults general and specialized reference materials to find pronunciation of a word or to clarify meaning or part of speech.