

ELA Grade 8 Summary

In eighth grade, students grapple with high-quality, complex, nonfiction texts and great works of literature. The focus of informational texts shifts from narrative to expository. Students know how to cite textual evidence supporting an analysis or critique. Students know how to question an author's assumptions and assess the accuracy of the claims. Eighth grade students read closely and find evidence to use in their own writing; they analyze two or more texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify whether the disagreement is over facts or interpretation. They analyze how point of view can be manipulated to create specific effects such as dramatic irony and investigate how particular passages within a text connect to one another to advance the plot, reveal a character, or highlight an idea. Students have developed a strong vocabulary of academic words which they use to speak and write with more precision. Their writing continues to grow focusing on organizing ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; choosing relevant facts well; and using varied transitions to clarify or show the relationships among elements.

Quality of Writing—Content and Style

- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Use relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- Use relevant dialogue and descriptions of characters.

Quality of Writing—Editing

- Revise text to include precise and vivid details.
- Revise text to include topic-specific language.
- Appropriately use the active or passive voice and the conditional or subjunctive mood.

Conventions—Grammar and Sentence Formation

- Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
- Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
- Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.
- Understand and explain the function of gerunds, participles, and infinitives.

Conventions—Punctuation, Capitalization, and Spelling

- Use a comma, ellipsis, or dash to indicate a pause, a break, or an omission.
- Use correct capitalization.
- Spell grade-level words correctly.

PA Core Instructional Shifts in ELA/Literacy

1. Balancing informational and literary text
2. Knowledge in the disciplines
3. Staircase of complexity
4. Text based answers
5. Writing from sources
6. Academic vocabulary

Diagnostic Category Skills List

Quality of Writing—Focus and Organization

- Introduce a claim, topic, or event for an audience and establish a point of view.
- Clarify the relationships among claims, opposing claims, topics, and events.
- Present logically organized reasons, evidence, and sequencing.
- Use strategies such as definition, classification, cause/effect, or compare/contrast.
- Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and shifts in time and setting.
- Provide a logical conclusion reinforcing a narrative or a claim.



Additional Materials and Resources can be found at:

<http://www.pdesas.org/>

or

<https://pa.drctdirect.com/>

CLASSROOM DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS

ELA: Writing Grade 8 Grade Level Summary and Diagnostic Category Skills List

The English Language Arts summary for grade 8 describes the performance in English Language Arts that students in grade 8 are expected to demonstrate. The PA Core Instructional Shifts in ELA/Literacy represent the most significant shifts for student learning and thinking about assessment found in the PA Core Standards. The Diagnostic Category Skills List provides descriptions of skills that students can be expected to demonstrate within each Diagnostic Category while taking the Classroom Diagnostic Tools for Writing. While this list does not include every possible skill that students may encounter within the CDT, it does provide a representative sample for each diagnostic category.

