



The reading, writing, and communicating standards in the middle school grades ask students to be critical readers of complex literary and informational texts. The standards require that students develop the writing skills necessary to convey their experience in the world, to produce thoughtful analyses of academic and real-world topics, and to develop well-reasoned arguments on relevant topics in their lives. The standards foster opportunities for students to work collaboratively with others as they develop the literacy skills to be academically successful and prepared for life after high school.

Expectations for 8th Grade Students:

- **Oral Expression and Listening:** Speak and use multimedia to clarify information, strengthen claims, and add interest while emphasizing significant points in a focused and clear manner; use relevant evidence, sound reasoning, and well-chosen details; analyze a speaker's purpose as it relates to the information provided; identify when irrelevant evidence is introduced; collaborate in discussions, listen actively to group members' contributions, and pose relevant and thoughtful questions.
- **Reading for All Purposes:** Read a variety of literary and nonfiction texts; summarize, analyze, and evaluate themes and the relationship between characters, plot, and setting in literature; analyze key ideas, people, events, and claims in nonfiction; analyze the impact of word choice on meaning and tone; explain how authors use different points of view to create mystery, humor, or conflict and use different structures to organize texts; recognize the extent to which filmed, staged, or multimedia versions stay true to an original text; cite evidence to strongly support an analysis.
- **Writing and Composition:** Use technology to shape, produce, and publish grammatically correct writing that makes an argument or analyzes a topic; craft writing that introduces what is to follow, provides information that is meaningfully organized, and offers a concluding statement that logically follows from the information presented; write narratives of real or imagined experiences by establishing a setting/context, a point of view, and by using narrative techniques such as dialogue, imagery, pacing for effect.
- **Research and Reasoning:** Conduct short research projects to answer a question and generate additional focus questions; gather information from several sources; use search terms effectively; assess the credibility of sources; follow a standard format for citation; evaluate the soundness of reasoning and the relevance/sufficiency of evidence.

Throughout 8th Grade You May Find Students:

- Engaging in inquiry around a big question like: "How can social media both alienate individuals and create community?"; conducting research that generates questions and that gathers information from texts, the Internet, and community members in order to understand that multiple points of view exist on a topic; participating in debates and collaborative discussions to make connections and synthesize information; delivering individual or group research findings to inform or persuade an audience.
- Reading novels, shorter works of literature (stories, poems, fairy tales, myths, poetry), and informational articles that all address the same topic/theme in order to understand how authors of different texts may structure and use language to uniquely explore that topic/theme; using knowledge of different types of texts to create multi-genre pieces (poems, editorials, cartoons, letters) to express their understanding of the topic under study.
- Using web-based resources to research information and interact with others (both within and beyond their own community) via blogs, wikis, and Skype; publishing writings or multimedia presentations.