



Grade Eight

READING

1.0 Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

Students use their knowledge of word origins and word relationships, as well as historical and literary context clues, to determine the meaning of specialized vocabulary and to understand the precise meaning of grade-level-appropriate words.

Vocabulary and Concept Development

- 1.1 Analyze idioms, analogies, metaphors, and similes to infer the literal and figurative meanings of phrases.
- 1.2 Understand the most important points in the history of English language and use common word origins to determine the historical influences on English word meanings.
- 1.3 Use word meanings within the appropriate context and show ability to verify those meanings by definition, restatement, example, comparison, or contrast.

2.0 Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)

Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose. The selections in *Recommended Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students. In addition, students read one million words annually on their own, including a good representation of narrative and expository text (e.g., classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, online information).

Structural Features of Informational Materials

- 2.1 Compare and contrast the features and elements of consumer materials to gain meaning from documents (e.g., warranties, contracts, product information, instruction manuals).
- 2.2 Analyze text that uses proposition and support patterns.

Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- 2.3 Find similarities and differences between texts in the treatment, scope, or organization of ideas.
- 2.4 Compare the original text to a summary to determine whether the summary accurately captures the main ideas, includes critical details, and conveys the underlying meaning.
- 2.5 Understand and explain the use of a complex mechanical device by following technical directions.
- 2.6 Use information from a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents to explain a situation or decision and to solve a problem.

Expository Critique

- 2.7 Evaluate the unity, coherence, logic, internal consistency, and structural patterns of text.

3.0 Literary Response and Analysis

Students read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance their studies of history and social science. They clarify the ideas and connect them to other literary works. The selections in *Recommended Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students.

Structural Features of Literature

- 3.1 Determine and articulate the relationship between the purposes and characteristics of different forms of poetry (e.g., ballad, lyric, couplet, epic, elegy, ode, sonnet).

Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- 3.2 Evaluate the structural elements of the plot (e.g., subplots, parallel episodes, climax), the plot's development, and the way in which conflicts are (or are not) addressed and resolved.
- 3.3 Compare and contrast motivations and reactions of literary characters from different historical eras confronting similar situations or conflicts.
- 3.4 Analyze the relevance of the setting (e.g., place, time, customs) to the mood, tone, and meaning of the text.
- 3.5 Identify and analyze recurring themes (e.g., good versus evil) across traditional and contemporary works.
- 3.6 Identify significant literary devices (e.g., metaphor, symbolism, dialect, irony) that define a writer's style and use those elements to interpret the work.

Literary Criticism

- 3.7 Analyze a work of literature, showing how it reflects the heritage, traditions, attitudes, and beliefs of its author. (Biographical approach)

WRITING

1.0 Writing Strategies

Students write clear, coherent, and focused essays. The writing exhibits students' awareness of audience and purpose. Essays contain formal introductions, supporting evidence, and conclusions. Students progress through the stages of the writing process as needed.

Organization and Focus

- 1.1 Create compositions that establish a controlling impression, have a coherent thesis, and end with a clear and well-supported conclusion.
- 1.2 Establish coherence within and among paragraphs through effective transitions, parallel structures, and similar writing techniques.
- 1.3 Support theses or conclusions with analogies, paraphrases, quotations, opinions from authorities, comparisons, and similar devices.

Research and Technology

- 1.4 Plan and conduct multiple-step information searches by using computer networks and modems.
- 1.5 Achieve an effective balance between researched information and original ideas.

Evaluation and Revision

- 1.6 Revise writing for word choice; appropriate organization; consistent point of view; and transitions between paragraphs, passages, and ideas.

2.0 Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

Students write narrative, expository, persuasive, and descriptive essays of at least 500 to 700 words in each genre. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the research, organizational, and drafting strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0.

Using the writing strategies of grade eight outlined in Writing Standard 1.0, students:

- 2.1 Write biographies, autobiographies, short stories, or narratives:
 - a. Relate a clear, coherent incident, event, or situation by using well-chosen details.
 - b. Reveal the significance of, or the writer's attitude about, the subject.
 - c. Employ narrative and descriptive strategies (e.g., relevant dialogue, specific action, physical description, background description, comparison or contrast of characters).
- 2.2 Write responses to literature:
 - a. Exhibit careful reading and insight in their interpretations.
 - b. Connect the student's own responses to the writer's techniques and to specific textual references.
 - c. Draw supported inferences about the effects of a literary work on its audience.
 - d. Support judgments through references to the text, other works, other authors, or to personal knowledge.
- 2.3 Write research reports:
 - a. Define a thesis.
 - b. Record important ideas, concepts, and direct quotations from significant information sources and paraphrase and summarize all perspectives on the topic, as appropriate.
 - c. Use a variety of primary and secondary sources and distinguish the nature and value of each.
 - d. Organize and display information on charts, maps, and graphs.
- 2.4 Write persuasive compositions:
 - a. Include a well-defined thesis (i.e., one that makes a clear and knowledgeable judgment).
 - b. Present detailed evidence, examples, and reasoning to support arguments, differentiating between facts and opinion.
 - c. Provide details, reasons, and examples, arranging them effectively by anticipating and answering reader concerns and counterarguments.
- 2.5 Write documents related to career development, including simple business letters and job applications:
 - a. Present information purposefully and succinctly and meet the needs of the intended audience.
 - b. Follow the conventional format for the type of document (e.g., letter of inquiry, memorandum).
- 2.6 Write technical documents:
 - a. Identify the sequence of activities needed to design a system, operate a tool, or explain the bylaws of an organization.
 - b. Include all the factors and variables that need to be considered.
 - c. Use formatting techniques (e.g., headings, differing fonts) to aid comprehension.

WRITTEN AND ORAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

The standards for written and oral English language conventions have been placed between those for writing and for listening and speaking because these conventions are essential to both sets of skills.

1.0 Written and Oral English Language Conventions

Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions appropriate to this grade level.

Sentence Structure

- 1.1 Use correct and varied sentence types and sentence openings to present a lively and effective personal style.
- 1.2 Identify and use parallelism, including similar grammatical forms, in all written discourse to present items in a series and items juxtaposed for emphasis.
- 1.3 Use subordination, coordination, apposition, and other devices to indicate clearly the relationship between ideas.

Grammar

- 1.4 Edit written manuscripts to ensure that correct grammar is used.

Punctuation and Capitalization

- 1.5 Use correct punctuation and capitalization.

Spelling

- 1.6 Use correct spelling conventions.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

1.0 Listening and Speaking Strategies

Students deliver focused, coherent presentations that convey ideas clearly and relate to the background and interests of the audience. They evaluate the content of oral communication.

Comprehension

- 1.1 Analyze oral interpretations of literature, including language choice and delivery, and the effect of the interpretations on the listener.
- 1.2 Paraphrase a speaker's purpose and point of view and ask relevant questions concerning the speaker's content, delivery, and purpose.

Organization and Delivery of Oral Communication

- 1.3 Organize information to achieve particular purposes by matching the message, vocabulary, voice modulation, expression, and tone to the audience and purpose.
- 1.4 Prepare a speech outline based upon a chosen pattern of organization, which generally includes an introduction; transitions, previews, and summaries; a logically developed body; and an effective conclusion.
- 1.5 Use precise language, action verbs, sensory details, appropriate and colorful modifiers, and the active rather than the passive voice in ways that enliven oral presentations.
- 1.6 Use appropriate grammar, word choice, enunciation, and pace during formal presentations.
- 1.7 Use audience feedback (e.g., verbal and nonverbal cues):
 - a. Reconsider and modify the organizational structure or plan.
 - b. Rearrange words and sentences to clarify the meaning.

Analysis and Evaluation of Oral and Media Communications

- 1.8 Evaluate the credibility of a speaker (e.g., hidden agendas, slanted or biased material).
- 1.9 Interpret and evaluate the various ways in which visual image makers (e.g., graphic artists, illustrators, news photographers) communicate information and affect impressions and opinions.

2.0 Speaking Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

Students deliver well-organized formal presentations employing traditional rhetorical strategies (e.g., narration, exposition, persuasion, description). Student speaking demonstrates a command of standard American English and the organizational and delivery strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0.

Using the speaking strategies of grade eight outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0, students:

- 2.1 Deliver narrative presentations (e.g., biographical, autobiographical):
 - a. Relate a clear, coherent incident, event, or situation by using well-chosen details.
 - b. Reveal the significance of, and the subject's attitude about, the incident, event, or situation.
 - c. Employ narrative and descriptive strategies (e.g., relevant dialogue, specific action, physical description, background description, comparison or contrast of characters).
- 2.2 Deliver oral responses to literature:
 - a. Interpret a reading and provide insight.
 - b. Connect the students' own responses to the writer's techniques and to specific textual references.
 - c. Draw supported inferences about the effects of a literary work on its audience.
 - d. Support judgments through references to the text, other works, other authors, or personal knowledge.
- 2.3 Deliver research presentations:
 - a. Define a thesis.
 - b. Record important ideas, concepts, and direct quotations from significant information sources and paraphrase and summarize all relevant perspectives on the topic, as appropriate.
 - c. Use a variety of primary and secondary sources and distinguish the nature and value of each.
 - d. Organize and record information on charts, maps, and graphs.
- 2.4 Deliver persuasive presentations:
 - a. Include a well-defined thesis (i.e., one that makes a clear and knowledgeable judgment).
 - b. Differentiate fact from opinion and support arguments with detailed evidence, examples, and reasoning.
 - c. Anticipate and answer listener concerns and counterarguments effectively through the inclusion and arrangement of details, reasons, examples, and other elements.
 - d. Maintain a reasonable tone.
- 2.5 Recite poems (of four to six stanzas), sections of speeches, or dramatic soliloquies, using voice modulation, tone, and gestures expressively to enhance the meaning.



Glossary

active voice	A verb form in which the subject of the verb carries out some action. <i>Example: He hit the ball.</i>
affix	A bound (nonword) morpheme that changes the meaning or function of a root or stem to which it is attached, such as the prefix <i>ad-</i> and the suffix <i>-ing</i> in <i>adjoining</i> .
alliteration	The repetition of the same sound, usually of a consonant, at the beginning of two or more words immediately succeeding each other or at short intervals. <i>Example: The repetition of f and g in fields ever fresh, groves ever green</i>
alphabetic principle	The assumption underlying alphabetic writing systems that each speech sound or phoneme of a language should have its own distinctive graphic representation.
analogy	A resemblance in some particulars between things otherwise unlike.
anecdotal scripting	The systematic recording of behavioral incidents cited in a literary work for purposes of organization and clarity.
annotated bibliography	The inclusion of additional comments in the works listed in the standard bibliography.
antecedent	A word, phrase, or clause to which a following pronoun refers. <i>Example: Iris tried, but she couldn't find the book. Iris is the antecedent of she.</i>
appeal to reason	A call upon the reader's faculty to think in a rational way to persuade his or her thoughts.
appeal to authority	A call upon an individual or other source as an expert to strengthen an argument made by the author of a work.
appeal to emotion	The <i>ad populum</i> approach is a common fallacy in arguments. Instead of presenting evidence in an argument, it relies on expressive language and other devices calculated to incite enthusiasm, excitement, anger, or hatred.

appeal to pathos (pity)	A common fallacy in arguments, the <i>ad misericordiam</i> approach is a special case of the appeal to emotion in which the altruism and mercy of the audience are the special emotions to which the speaker appeals.
appositive	A word or phrase that restates or modifies an immediately preceding noun. <i>Note:</i> An appositive is often useful as a context clue for determining or refining the meaning of the word or words to which it refers. <i>Example:</i> My son <i>Enrico</i> (appositive) is twelve years old.
archetypal criticism	The study of apparent perennial images, themes, symbols, stories, and myths in literature, including narratives that unite the seasons with literary genres.
archetype	The original pattern or model of which all things of the same type are representations or copies; a perfect example.
attack <i>ad hominem</i>	An attack “against the man”; a fallacious attack in which the thrust is directed, not at the conclusion one wishes to deny, but at the person who asserts or defends it.
bandwagon	A popular party, faction, or cause that attracts growing support; a current or fashionable trend.
base word	A word to which affixes may be added to create related words. <i>Example:</i> <i>Teach</i> in <i>reteach</i> or <i>teaching</i> .
blend	A combination of sounds represented by letters to pronounce a word; sounding out the joining of the sounds represented by two or more letters with minimal change in those sounds, such as the consonant cluster in <i>/gr/</i> in <i>grow</i> , <i>/spl/</i> in <i>splash</i> .
boundary	A division between units of a language, such as between words, word parts, or syllables.
climax	The point of highest dramatic tension or a major turning point in the action (such as in a play, story, or other literary composition).
clustering	A content field technique or strategy to help students freely associate ideas in their experience with a keyword proposed by the teacher, thus forming a group of related concepts; a teaching process of relating a target word to a set of synonyms and other word associations. <i>Note:</i> Clustering may be used to stimulate the recall of related ideas in reading and writing, especially in prewriting.
complement	The word (or words) that completes the action in the predicate of a sentence; to complete a grammatical construction in this way. <i>Example:</i> Tom is a <i>policeman</i> (complement).

compound sentence	A sentence consisting of two or more coordinate independent clauses. <i>Example: George talked and Harry listened.</i>
concrete image	A literal representation of a sensory experience or of an object that can be known by more than one of the senses; representation that involves no necessary change or extension in the obvious meaning of the words; the words call up a sensory representation of the literal object or sensation.
consonant doubling	The addition of a consonant in the formation of some gerunds and participles. <i>Example: Running.</i>
context clues	The information from the immediate textual setting that helps identify a word for decoding (sounding out) and words being read for the first time. The reader's speaking vocabulary is a back-up strategy and is primarily useful to resolve ambiguity (is <i>bread</i> pronounced <i>bred</i> or <i>breed</i> ?) and to confirm the accuracy of decoding (does it make sense and does it sound right?). The context helps resolve which shade of meaning is intended (<i>prog-ress</i> or <i>pro-gress</i>) and is used for learning the meaning of new words that can be decoded or pronounced but are not yet in the reader's speaking vocabulary; it is a primary strategy.
decoding	The ability and willingness to sound out words by generating all the sounds into a recognizable word (technically called phonological recoding). The ability to get the meaning of a word quickly, effortlessly, and unconsciously after a brief visual scan, such as in automaticity with individual words (which is the product of initial phonological decoding, followed by the reading of that word successfully several times, preferably in text, until the neural connections among the letters, the sounds, and the meaning of the word are fully established).
denouement	The final outcome of the main dramatic event in a literary work.
description	One of the four traditional forms of composition in speech and writing, it is meant to give a verbal picture of the character and event, including the setting.
digraphs	Two letters that represent one speech sound, such as <i>ch</i> for / <i>ch</i> / in <i>chin</i> or <i>ea</i> for / <i>e</i> / in <i>bread</i> .
discourse	A conversation; the act or result of making a formal written or spoken presentation on a subject; in linguistics, any form of oral or written communication more extensive than a sentence.
etymology	The history of words; the study of the history of words.

exposition	One of the four traditional forms of composition in speech and writing, it is intended to set forth or explain. <i>Note:</i> Good exposition is clear in conception, well organized, and understandable. It may include limited amounts of argumentation, description, and narration to achieve that purpose.
expressive writing	Highly personal writing, such as in diaries, personal letters, and autobiographies.
false causality	Any reasoning that relies upon treating as the cause of a thing that which is not really its cause (e.g., the error of concluding that an event is caused by another simply because it follows that other).
fluency	The clear, easy, written or spoken expression of ideas; freedom from word-identification problems that might hinder comprehension in silent reading or the expression of ideas in oral reading; automaticity; the ability to execute motor movements smoothly, easily, and readily.
high-frequency words	A word that appears many more times than most other words in spoken or written language. <i>Note:</i> Basic word lists generally provide words ranked in order of their frequency of occurrence as calculated from a sample of written or spoken text suitable for the level of intended use.
historical investigation (reports)	The techniques used by historians to reconstruct and interpret the past. <i>Note:</i> The data for historical research are the spoken, written, and printed sources or other material originating from those who participated in or witnessed the events studied; the historian must evaluate these data for authenticity, bias, and generalizability and draw conclusions from them.
homograph	A word with the same spelling as another word but having a different meaning or sometimes a different pronunciation. <i>Example:</i> <i>Bow</i> , as in ~ and arrow compared to ~ of a ship.
homophone	A word with a different origin and meaning but having the same pronunciation as another word whether or not spelled alike. <i>Example:</i> <i>Hair</i> and <i>hare</i> ; <i>scale</i> , as in ~ of a fish compared to ~ a ladder. Also two or more graphemes that represent the same sound. <i>Example:</i> The /k/ sound in /c/andy, k/ing, and s/ch/ool.
idiom	A use of words peculiar to a particular language.
initial consonants (initial blends)	The joining of two or more consonant sounds, represented by letters, that begin a word without losing the identity of the sounds, such as /bl/ in <i>black</i> , /skr/ in <i>scramble</i> ; the joining of the first consonant and vowel sounds in a word, such as /b/ and /a/ in <i>baby</i> . <i>Note:</i> This process is regarded by some to be a crucial step in learning phonics.

irregularity	An exception to a linguistic pattern or rule. <i>Example:</i> <i>Good, better, and best</i> are exceptions to the usual <i>-er, -est</i> pattern of comparatives and superlatives in English.
literary analysis	The study of a literary work by a critic, student, or scholar; a careful, detailed reading and report thereof.
literary criticism	The analysis and judgment of works of literature. The body of principles by which the work of writers is judged. <i>Note:</i> The principles used in judging a literary work vary from the highly personal and subjective to the relatively objective; they may involve but are not limited to specific consideration of moral values, historical accuracy, and literary form and type; they may be different from one literary period to another.
main idea	The gist of a passage; central thought; the chief topic of a passage expressed or implied in a word or phrase; the topic sentence of a paragraph; a statement that gives the explicit or implied major topic of a passage and the specific way in which the passage is limited in content or reference.
media sources	The means of communication, especially of mass communication, such as books, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, motion pictures, recordings.
metaphor	A figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness between them. <i>Example:</i> He was <i>drowning in money</i> .
narration	One of the four traditional forms of composition in speech and writing, it tells a story or gives an account of something dealing with sequences of events and experiences, though not necessarily in strict order.
nonverbal	A nonlanguage communication, such as a noise, gesture, or facial expression.
nonsense syllable	A pronounceable combination of graphic characters, usually trigrams, that do not make a word, such as <i>kak, vor, mek</i> , pronounced in English as spellings. <i>Note:</i> Nonsense syllables are sometimes used in reading to test phonics knowledge; they are sometimes used in spelling to test for desired syllabic patterns while avoiding known words.
onomatopoeia	The term used to describe words whose pronunciations suggest their meaning (e.g., <i>meow, buzz</i>).
oral histories	The stories and histories kept alive by the spoken word rather than the written word. <i>Note:</i> Although an oral tradition is characteristic of an oral culture, it may coexist in a writing culture.

orthography	The study of the nature and use of symbols in a writing system; correct or standardized spelling according to established usage in a given language.
parallelism	The phrasing of language so as to balance ideas of equal importance. <i>Note:</i> Parallelism may apply to phrases, sentences, paragraphs, longer passages, or whole selections.
passive voice	A verb form in which the subject of the verb is the receiver of some action or state indicated by the verb. <i>Example:</i> <i>He was hit</i> by the ball.
persuasion	One of the four traditional forms of composition in speech and writing, it is meant to move the reader by argument or entreaty to a belief or position.
phoneme	A minimal sound unit of speech that, when contrasted with another phoneme, affects the naming of words in a language, such as /b/ in <i>book</i> contrasts with /t/ in <i>took</i> , /k/ in <i>cook</i> , /h/ in <i>hook</i> . <i>Note:</i> The phoneme is an abstract concept manifested in actual speech as a phonetic variant, such as the allophones of the phoneme /t/ in <i>top</i> , <i>stop</i> , <i>pot</i> .
phonemic awareness	The awareness of the sounds (phonemes) that make up spoken words. Such awareness does not appear when young children learn to talk; the ability is not necessary for speaking and understanding spoken language; however, phonemic awareness is important for learning to read. In alphabetic languages, letters (and letter clusters) represent phonemes; to learn the correspondences between letters and sounds, one must have some understanding of the notion that words are made up of phonemes.
phonics	A system of teaching reading and spelling that stresses basic symbol-sound relationships and their application in decoding words; a system used especially in beginning instruction.
phonogram	A graphic character or symbol that may represent a phonetic sound, phoneme, or word; in word recognition, a graphic sequence composed of a vowel grapheme and an ending consonant grapheme, such as <i>-ed</i> in <i>red</i> , <i>bed</i> , <i>fed</i> .
prewriting	The initial creative stage of writing, prior to drafting, in which the writer formulates ideas, gathers information, and considers ways in which to organize the information; planning.
principal parts of verbs	The principal parts; the set of inflected forms of a grammatical class, such as <i>sing</i> , <i>sang</i> , <i>sung</i> .

prior knowledge	The knowledge that stems from previous experience. <i>Note:</i> Prior knowledge is a major component of schema theories of reading comprehension in spite of the redundancy inherent in the term.
r-controlled sound	The modified sound of a vowel immediately preceding /r/ in the same syllable, such as in <i>care, never, sir, or curse</i> .
red herring	A distractor that draws attention away from the real issue.
rhetorical strategies	The traditional forms of composition in speech and writing: exposition, narration, persuasion, and description (each is defined in this glossary).
root word	The meaningful base form of a complex word after all affixes are removed. <i>Note:</i> A root may be independent or free, such as <i>read</i> in <i>unreadable</i> , or may be dependent, or bound, such as <i>-liter-</i> (from the Greek for <i>letter</i>) in <i>illiterate</i> .
sentences:	
declarative	A sentence that makes a statement.
exclamatory	A sentence that makes a vehement statement or conveys strong or sudden emotion.
imperative	A sentence that expresses a command or request.
interrogative	A sentence that asks a question or makes an inquiry.
sight word	A word that is immediately recognized as a whole and does not require word analysis for identification.
standard American English	The language in which most educational texts and government and media publications are written in the United States. <i>Note:</i> Standard American English, a relative concept, varies widely in pronunciation and in idiomatic use but maintains a fairly uniform grammatical structure.
syllabication	The division of words into syllables (the minimal units of sequential speech sounds composed of a vowel sound or a vowel-consonant combination, such as /a/, /ba/, /ab/, /bab/).
theme	A topic of discussion or writing; a major idea or proposition broad enough to cover the entire scope of a literary or other work of art. <i>Note:</i> A theme may be stated or implicit, but clues to it may be found in the ideas that are given special prominence or tend to recur in a work.

thesis	The basic argument advanced by a speaker or writer who then attempts to prove it; the subject or major argument of a speech or composition.
topic	The general category or class of ideas, often stated in a word or phrase, to which the ideas of a passage as a whole belong.
topic sentence	A sentence intended to express the main idea in a paragraph or passage.
transitive verb	A verb that takes a direct object. <i>Example:</i> Francesca <i>read</i> (transitive verb) the book.
voice	A syntactic pattern that indicates the verb-subject relationship; the principal voices in English and many other languages are <i>active</i> and <i>passive</i> .
word recognition	The process of determining the pronunciation and some degree of meaning of a word in written or printed form; the quick and easy identification of the form, pronunciation, and appropriate meaning of a word previously encountered in print or writing.



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