

Family

Friendly

GUIDE FOR EIGHTH GRADE

English Language Arts

Students entering eighth grade continue building on the learning and skills developed in previous grades, including **critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity**. As eighth graders, students should be reading a variety of challenging texts closely, proficiently, and independently. To develop their close reading skills, eighth grade students begin to analyze an author's purposeful manipulation of time to create mystery and suspense in a text.

As readers, students also analyze an author's use of rhetoric in a text, building on previous grades' learning about the rhetorical appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos. Eighth grade students read a variety of print and nonprint texts in both the literary and informational genres.

As writers, students continue strengthening their stamina and organization. Using their research skills, they work on bringing together information from multiple credible and relevant sources. Eighth graders write creative pieces and may also practice authentic college- and career-ready writing. Both oral and written communication skills continue to be a focus as students continue learning how to best communicate for a variety of audiences and purposes as well as to consider the ideas and perspectives of others.

This document is designed to:



- Provide examples of the standards, skills, and knowledge your child will learn in English Language Arts and should be able to do upon exiting the eighth grade.
- Suggest activities on how you can help your child at home.
- Offer additional resources for information and help.

Log on to the [SC Department of Education website](#), for the complete standards.

The 2023 South Carolina College and Career-Ready English Language Arts (ELA) Standards:

- Outline the knowledge and skills students must master to be successful in college, career, or the military.
- Provide a set of grade-level indicators that are built on the previous grades' learning.
- Guarantee that no matter where a student lives in South Carolina, the expectations for learning are the same.
- Align to the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*, which summarizes the knowledge, skills, and habits employers expect.



OVERARCHING EXPECTATIONS

The ELA Overarching Expectations (OE) capture expectations of students as readers, writers, and communicators over the course of K-12 ELA education.

In eighth grade, students should:

- **independently choose** appropriate texts for reading and writing purposes.
- **analyze** various types of texts and media, using both clearly stated and implied information to draw conclusions and support their ideas.
- **use** a variety of printed and digital resources with increasing independence.
- **create** multimedia presentations effectively conveying ideas to specific audiences, utilizing appropriate technology and media.
- **actively engage** in discussions, sharing and incorporating ideas to enhance learning, while citing sources appropriately and following given guidelines for quality work.



FOUNDATIONS OF LITERACY

The Foundations of Literacy (F) strand contains four standards that help students build fundamental skills to be successful in reading, writing, and communicating. These standards outline how a student learns to read, spell, and write.

- There are no Foundations of Literacy standards or indicators for eighth grade.

APPLICATIONS OF READING

The Applications of Reading (AOR) strand has ten standards. It shows the reading skills and ideas all students must learn to become successful readers who can think carefully about different kinds of texts.

In eighth grade, students should:

- analyze how elements like setting, characters, plot, and descriptive details work together to convey the overall meaning of a text.
- explore how various literary devices such as simile, metaphor, and personification evoke emotions and deepen understanding in texts.
- identify and discuss the use of symbolism by authors to convey deeper meanings in their texts.
- examine how important details across multiple texts highlight various life lessons and themes.
- discuss how authors employ different techniques, such as point of view and perspective, to create suspense and provide insight into characters' thoughts and motivations.

RESEARCH

The Research (R) standard and indicators support students in learning the processes of inquiry, investigation, and drawing conclusions on a wide variety of topics.

In eighth grade, students should:

- will conduct research effectively by asking good questions to find accurate and relevant information.
- will utilize a variety of sources, such as books, websites, and documentaries, to support their research and learning.
- will critically evaluate sources to determine their accuracy and credibility, prioritizing the use of reliable sources.
- will identify the most suitable types of sources for specific topics, considering which ones will provide the most relevant information.
- will properly attribute sources and avoid plagiarism by citing direct quotes and including a Works Cited, Reference, or Bibliography page.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Written and Oral Communications (C) strand is organized into nine standards and describes the skills required to effectively communicate ideas, information, arguments, and stories through writing, speaking, and presenting.

In eighth grade, students should:

- will write pieces that state a clear argument, organize evidence logically, and address counterclaims effectively.
- will write pieces that synthesize information from multiple sources, introducing topics clearly and using precise language to explain them.
- will craft engaging narratives with well-structured plots, vivid descriptions, and appropriate use of figurative language.
- will demonstrate mastery of grammar and punctuation rules, including the use of commas, dashes, ellipses, and parallel structure.
- will improve writing through planning, editing, seeking feedback, and presenting ideas effectively in various formats, while also actively participating in discussions and evaluating presentations critically.



HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR LEARNER AT HOME



By working together, parents and educators can ensure students have a successful learning experience. Below, you will see ways to work with your learner at home to support learning at school. Staying in communication with your child's teacher and knowing whether help is needed with specific skills is an important way to help support your learner.

Overarching Expectations:

- **Bridge School and Home Literacy:** Ask students to discuss and share what they have been reading and writing at school.
- **Model Literacy Habits:** Set aside time for reading at home. This time could include reading to or with your students and/or having them read to you or tell you about what they've read.
- **Visit the Library and Support Interests:** If your student has a fascination with a particular topic or enjoys a particular type of reading, visit the local library and model reading for enjoyment and learning.

Applications of Reading:

- **Discuss How Writers Use Specific Language:** Ask your student to point out examples of simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, idiom, imagery, alliteration, oxymoron, and onomatopoeia in the text. Ask them to describe how the author is using the figure of speech (e.g., What does this really mean? What does it make you imagine, feel, or think about? What does this show you about the author?). Talk with your student about the importance of word choice, and why an author might choose one word over another (e.g. pushy v. assertive, house v. home, smile v. smirk).
- **Capitalize on Cross Content Texts:** A great way to introduce or enhance non-fiction reading skills is to ask your student to share what they have been reading and learning in science and social studies.
- **Discuss Symbolism:** Ask your student to discuss how an author uses symbolism in a text by asking them to tell you how people, places, events, objects, etc. have a larger meaning and represent bigger ideas (e.g., an author may describe a storm on the horizon to symbolize change or conflict as it arrives in the story).

Research:

- **Encourage Curiosity:** Capitalize on your student's natural curiosity as they ask questions about the world they live in. Show them how you would find credible answers and talk with them about the process.
- **Discuss the Importance of Documentation:** Ask your student to talk with you about the documentation requirements for their particular assignment and show you where/how they give credit to the original authors of each piece of information they plan to present. Talk with them about the importance of acknowledging when they are using the ideas and words of others to support their own ideas.

Communications:

- **Model the Importance of Active Listening:** Ask your student questions and help them practice answering thoughtfully. Have them practice asking questions of you and others in a way that shows they have been listening, and ask them to tell you what they learned from others' comments.
- **Discuss A Speaker's Effectiveness:** When your student is reading, listening to, viewing a video of, or attending a live presentation of information, ask them to tell you whether or not they thought the presenter did a good job and to support their opinion with specific details from the presentation.

ASSESSMENT

Your student will be assessed in various ways throughout the school year. In the classroom, they will participate in formative, [norm-referenced interim assessments](#), and summative assessments. Your student's teacher can help support your understanding of these classroom-level assessments.

At the end of the school year, your student will participate in the statewide summative assessment, [SC READY](#). Parent resources are available [online](#).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- To access a variety of support and supplemental documents for the 2023 SC CCR ELA Standards, visit the [SCDE ELA Instructional Resources Page](#).
- Consider using the [glossary](#) to support understanding of any unknown words within the Family Friendly ELA Standards.
- Go to your [public library](#) for books and/or DVDs for learning and fun. Let your child get his/her own library card.
- Consider selecting books that have won the [Caldecott Award](#) or [Newbery Award](#), and browse the [SC Picture Book Award](#) winners and [SC Children's Book Award](#) winners.
- For more information about special services, visit the Office of Special Education Services [here](#).
- For more information about Federal Education programs, click [here](#).