GRADE 8 ELA/Literacy Expectations

In grade 8, the Common Core State Standards call for students to grapple with high-quality, complex nonfiction texts and great works of literature (RL/RI.8.10). Starting in grade 8, the focus of informational texts begins to shift from narrative to exposition. Students who leave grade 8 know how to cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis or critique (RL/RI.8.1). Students in grade 8 are primed to question an author's assumptions and assess the accuracy of his or her claims, and by the end of grade 8, they are adept at reading closely and uncovering evidence to use in their own writing. Students can, for instance, analyze in writing two or more texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify whether the disagreement is over facts or interpretation. They can 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. Additional Standards for Reading Literature (RL.8.2-9) and Standards for Reading Informational Text (RI.8.2-9) offer detailed expectations for student academic performance in preparation for college and careers.

The Speaking and Listening Standards detail how students are to draw explicitly on their reading and research in discussions. They respond to questions constructively by offering up relevant evidence, observations, and ideas. By grade 8, students have developed a rich vocabulary of academic words, which they use to speak and write with more precision.

In addition, grade 8 students write with increasing sophistication, 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. The Writing Standards specify that students should be able to distinguish their claims from alternate or opposing claims and use words and phrases to clarify the relationships and transitions among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

Adapted from the PAARC Model Content Framework for ELA/Literacy for Grade 8

Understanding this Document

Standards with multiple parts (a, b, c…) list each part separately. Standards headings have been omitted.

Red text indicates any addition to the standard since seventh grade.

* indicates skills and understandings that are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking.

Bold standards indicate the power standards as determined collaboratively by ELA/Reading teachers from North and South Middle Schools.

Vocabulary words were determined collaboratively by ELA/Reading teachers from North and South Middle Schools. Teachers may add to these vocabulary lists in their own classes, but will explicitly teach the vocabulary words in this document to all students during the trimester indicated. It is expected, as outlined in our Westfield Public School District Literacy Action Plan, that all teachers will use interactive word wall strategies to reinforce vocabulary understanding along with other effective vocabulary strategies.

Essential Questions were determined collaboratively by ELA/Reading teachers from North and South Middle Schools. Essential questions are overarching questions that provide focus for units of study and are aligned to big ideas, concepts, or themes. Essential questions are the mental velcro that helps ideas stick. Essential questions encourage higher-level thinking and place a focus on why or how this big idea, concept, or theme is important to the student. Essential questions help students to make learning relevant and to make connections to the real-world.

All on-going standards will be explicitly introduced by the end of October. These standards will be addressed each trimester throughout the school year.

Technology Focus	On-Going Standards	
Grade8 ↓ *Digital Audio Presentations* ↓ ***Word* Features:** **Home:** • Editing **Insert:** • Header & Footer **Page Layout:** • Arrange **Reference:** • Table of Contents **Review :** • Comments • Tracking	**RDG**	**RL.8.10.** By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
	RDG	**RI.8.10.** By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
	ELA	**W.8.4.** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
	ELA	**W.8.5.** With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
	ELA	**W.8.10.** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
	ELA/ RDG	**SL.8.6.** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 8 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 58 for specific expectations.)
	ELA/ RDG	**L.8.2c.** Spell correctly.
	ELA/ RDG	**L.8.6.** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Trimester 1		
September	**October**	**November**
• What is explicit information, and how do I "read" it to find the implicit meaning? • How do I prepare for/contribute to an academic discussion? • How does an author use literary devices to convey meaning?	**RDG** How does an author's purpose drive the choices made to establish theme and other literary elements? **ELA** Why does an author research and how does it inform the writing process? How do I grab my reader's attention and keep it?	• Why is word choice important for an author to consider when addressing audience, purpose, and meaning?

Trimester 1 Writing: W.8.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

RDG **RL 8.1.** Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. **RDG** **RL.8.3.** Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. **RDG** **RL.8.4.** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. **RDG** **L8.5b.** Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words. **L.8.5c.** Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute). **ELA/RDG SL.8.1a.** Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. **SL.8.1b.** Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. **SL.8.1c.** Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas. **SL.8.1d.** Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.	**RDG** **RL.8.2.** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text. **RDG** **RL.8.6.** Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor. **ELA** **W.8.3a.** Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. **W.8.3b.** Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. **W.8.3e.** Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events. **ELA** **W.8.7.** Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration. **ELA** **W.8.8.** Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively **RDG** **L.8.4a.** Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. **L.8.4b.** Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede). **L.8.4c.** Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. **L.8.4d.** Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).	**RDG** **RL.8.5.** Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style. **RDG** **RL.8.9.** Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new. **ELA** **W.8.3c.** Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events. **W.8.3d.** Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events. **ELA** **L.8.1a.** Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences. **L.8.1b.** Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice. **L.8.1c.** Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood. **L.8.1d.** Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.*

Vocabulary—implicit, explicit, inference, evidence, cite, context, structure, sequence, connotation, denotation, narrative, justify, claim

Trimester 2		
December	**January**	**February**
RDG **RI.8.1.** Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	**RDG** **RI.8.2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.**	**RDG** **RI.8.9.** Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
RDG **RI 8.6.** Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	**RDG** **RI.8.4.** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	**ELA** **W.8.1c.** Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. **W.8.1d.** Establish and maintain a formal style. **W.8.1e.** Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
RDG **RI.8.8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.**	**RDG** **RI.8.5.** Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.	
ELA **W.8.8.** Assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	**ELA** **W.8.1a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.** **W.8.1b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.**	**ELA/ RDG** **SL.8.4.** Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
ELA/ RDG **SL.8.3. Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.**	**ELA** **W.8.9a.** Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new"). **W.8.9b.** Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced").	**ELA/ RDG** **SL.8.5.** Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
Essential Questions • What is an argument? • What is a claim? • How can I evaluate the claim and the relevance of the evidence used?	• How does a writer use a claim to address the topic? • How does a writer organize an argument?	• How does a writer organize an argument? • How can I evaluate the claim and relevance of the evidence? • How does bias lead to conflicting interpretations?
Vocabulary—argument, persuasive, literary analysis, credible, criteria, sound, cohesive, assess, prose, style, rhetoric, ethos, pathos, logos		

	Trimester 3				
March		**April**		**May/June**	
RDG	**RI.8.7.** Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.	RDG	**RI.8.3.** Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).	RDG	**RL.8.7.** Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.
ELA	**RL.8.MA8.A.** Identify and analyze the characteristics of irony and parody in literary works.*	ELA	**W.8.2a.** Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.	ELA	**W.8.2c.** Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. **W.8.2d.** Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
ELA	**W.8.MA3A.** Write short narratives, poems, scripts, or personal reflections that demonstrate understanding of the concepts of irony and parody.*		**W.8.2b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.** **W.8.2e. Establish and maintain a formal style.** **W.8.2f.** Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.	ELA	**L.8.2a.** Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break. **L.8.2b.** Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.
RDG	**SL.8.2. Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.**			ELA	**L.8.3a.** Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).
RDG	**L.8.5a.** Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.	ELA	**W.8.6.** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.		
Essential Questions	• How does an author recognize and evaluate an author's motives? • How does an author choose a particular type of media format to address specific audiences? • How does a reader recognize the motives behind a media format?		• Why is using the most relevant information important when developing an idea? • Why is precise language necessary in helping to establish and maintain a formal style?		• What are the choices an author makes when adapting a text to a different media format? • How do these choices affect the adaptation?
Vocabulary—irony, parody, motive, pun, idiom, euphemism, analogy, voice, satire					