

PARCC MODEL CONTENT FRAMEWORKS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

GRADE 8

Version 2.0

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PARCC MODEL CONTENT FRAMEWORK FOR ELA/LITERACY FOR GRADE 8

Narrative Summary of ELA Standards for Grade 8

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.

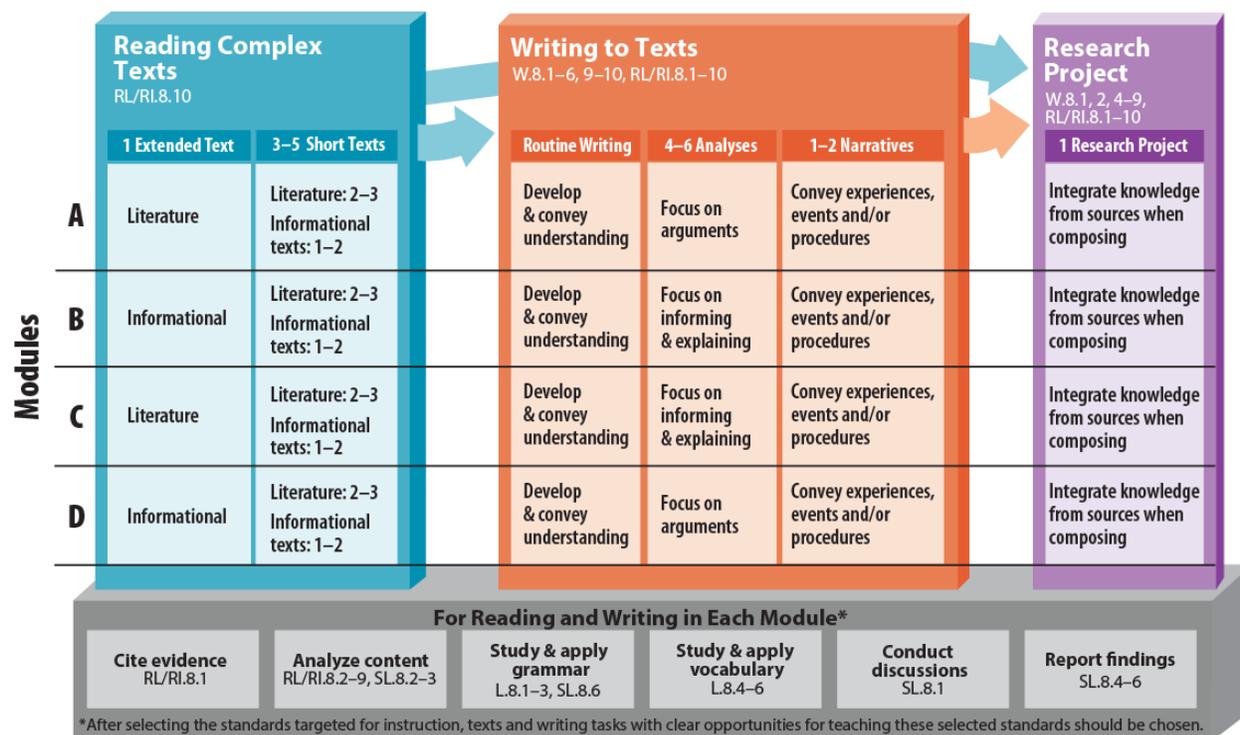
In addition, grade 8 students write with increasing sophistication, focusing on organizing ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; choosing relevant facts well; and using varied transitions to clarify or show the relationships among elements. The [Writing Standards](#) specify that 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.

Literacy Standards for Other Disciplines in Grades 6-8

Central to the vision for literacy embedded within the standards and the Model Content Frameworks is the idea that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language is a *shared responsibility* within schools. All fields of study demand analysis of complex texts and strong oral and written communication skills using discipline-specific discourse. Because each discipline acquires, develops, and shares knowledge in distinct ways, educators in each field must take ownership of building robust instruction around discipline-specific literacy skills to better prepare students for college and careers. The Model Content Frameworks provide all educators with foundational ideas for incorporating disciplinary literacy skills and practice into instructional programming. Accordingly, the Model Content Frameworks require educators in all disciplines to bear some responsibility for ensuring the literacy of the students in their classes.

ELA Model Content Framework Chart for Grade 8

Below is a chart that organizes the standards into four quarter-length modules that include the knowledge and skills students will learn and apply over the course of the year. As noted in the introduction, these modules are offered as optional models to consider when constructing a year-long course of instruction. The chart is meant to illustrate and provide context for the standards (but not replace engaging with the standards themselves).



Key Terms and Concepts for Grade 8 ELA Model Content Framework Chart

Reading Complex Texts

Exposing students to grade-level texts of appropriate complexity lies at the heart of each module. The modules reflect the balance of informational texts (literary nonfiction in ELA classes) and literature that students are expected to read. Fulfilling the ELA standards for grades 6-12 requires much greater attention to a specific category of informational text — literary nonfiction — than has been traditionally taught. Because the ELA classroom must focus on literature (stories, drama, and poetry) as well as literary nonfiction, a great deal of informational reading in grades 6-12 must take place in other classes to meet the demands of the standards.

Three to five short texts: Selections would include short texts of sufficient complexity for close reading that would allow students to draw ample evidence from the texts and present their analyses in writing as well as through speaking.¹ Educators can create coherence within the curriculum as a

¹ The recommended number of texts in each module closely corresponds to the recommended percentage of different kinds of texts (literary versus informational) in the CCSS.

whole by choosing short texts to complement the extended text described below, by focusing instruction on similar standards and skills across multiple genres, and by choosing informational texts that build the background knowledge needed to read and comprehend other texts students will study. (Shorter texts could account for about three to four weeks of instruction.)

- **Literature** includes adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, drama, graphic novels, one-act and multi-act plays, narrative poems, lyrical poems, free-verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, and epics (Common Core State Standards, page 57).
- **Informational texts/literary nonfiction** include the subgenres of exposition, argument and functional text in the form of personal essays; speeches; opinion pieces; essays about art or literature; biographies; memoirs; journalism; and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience (Common Core State Standards, page 57).

One extended text: This should be an extended, full-length work of literature (such as a novel or a play) or longer literary nonfiction, depending on the focus of the module. Like the others, this text would be aligned with the complexity and range specifications of the standards. As with shorter texts, students would perform a close, analytic reading of the extended text; compare and synthesize ideas across other related texts; conduct text-focused discussions; and produce written work aligned with the standards. (Such a study could take around two to three weeks of concentrated focus on a single text.)

Writing to Texts

The balance of student writing at this level is **70 percent analytical** (35 percent argument and 35 percent to explain/inform) and **30 percent narrative**, with a mix of on-demand and review-and-revision writing assignments. Building student competence and confidence with technology should be part of instruction.²

Routine writing: Routine writing, such as short constructed-responses to text-dependent questions, builds content knowledge and provides opportunities for reflection on a specific aspect of a text or texts. Routine written responses to such text-dependent questions allow students to build sophisticated understandings of vocabulary, text structure, and content and to develop needed proficiencies in analysis.

At least four to six analyses per module: All analytic writing should put a premium on using evidence (RL/RI.8.1 and W.8.9) as well as on crafting works that display logical integration and coherence (W.8.4, W.8.5 and L.8.1–3). These responses can vary in length based on the questions asked and task performed, from answering brief questions to crafting multiparagraph responses, allowing teachers to assess students' ability to paraphrase, infer, and integrate the ideas they have gleaned from what they have read. Over the course of the year, analytic writing should include comparative analysis and compositions that share findings from the research project.

² To help curriculum developers and teachers plan, a Writing Standards Progression Chart is found at the end of this grade-level Model Content Framework. The chart traces (in side-by-side fashion) the changes to the Writing Standards between the previous and current grades.

One or two narratives per module: Narrative writing offers students opportunities to express personal ideas and experiences; craft their own stories and descriptions; and deepen their understandings of literary concepts, structures, and genres (e.g., short stories, anecdotes, poetry, drama) through purposeful imitation. It also provides an additional opportunity for students to reflect on what they read through imaginative writing and to practice sequencing events and ideas through narrative descriptions.

Research Project

Each module includes the opportunity for students to compose one extended project that uses research to address a significant topic, problem, or issue. This task should entail integrating knowledge from several additional literary or informational texts in various media or formats on a particular topic or question drawn from one or more texts from the module. Students are expected to perform research that assesses the accuracy of sources and acknowledges the conclusions of others without plagiarizing. Students can present their findings in a variety of modes in both informal and more formal argumentative or explanatory contexts, either in writing or orally. (Research aligned with the standards could take one to two weeks of instruction.)³

For Reading and Writing in Each Module

In each module, students are expected to take a close look at the texts they encounter through the lenses of the following skills rooted in the standards.

Cite evidence: The goal of close, analytic reading is for students to be able to discern and cite evidence from the text to support assertions. In grade 8, students should cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports their analysis when both explicitly explaining the text and making inferences (RL/RI.8.1).

Analyze content: The content of each text should determine which standards (RL/RI.8.2–9 and SL.8.2–3) to target, allowing teachers to focus instruction and ensure that all the standards have been taught by the end of the year.

Study and apply grammar: While grammar is meant to be a normal, everyday part of what students do, students should be taught explicit lessons in grammar as they read, write, and speak, guided by L.8.1–3.

Study and apply vocabulary: To focus vocabulary instruction on words that students would be encouraged to use in writing and speaking, students should be given 5–10 Tier 2 academic words per week for each text (L.8.4–6).⁴ Students require multiple exposures to targeted vocabulary words in authentic contexts to retain an understanding of the words’ meaning(s) and use the words effectively when writing and speaking.

Conduct discussions: Students should engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, small group, teacher-led), building on others’ ideas and expressing their own based on evidence. Students ask and respond to specific questions as well as acknowledge new information and qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented (SL.8.1).

³ Ongoing incorporation of research for shorter tasks should also be a regular component of instruction.

⁴ For a definition of Tier 2 words, see the introduction to the Model Content Frameworks and Appendix A, pages 33–35.

Report findings: Using appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation, students orally present claims in a logical, coherent manner with valid reasoning and relevant evidence to accentuate main ideas or themes (SL.8.4–6).

Writing Standards Progression from Grade 7 to Grade 8

In grade 8, students write with increasing sophistication to present the relationships between ideas and information efficiently. Students are also expected to meet the grade-specific grammar and conventions standards and retain or further develop the skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades (refer to L.8.1–3).

Specific changes in the Writing Standards from grade 7 to grade 8 are highlighted in the chart below:

Grade 7, Standard 1 (W.7.1)	Grade 8, Standard 1 (W.8.1)
<p>Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence. d. Establish and maintain a formal style. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. 	<p>Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge <u>and distinguish the claim(s) from</u> alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), <u>counterclaims</u>, reasons, and evidence. d. Establish and maintain a formal style. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
Grade 7, Standard 2 (W.7.2)	Grade 8, Standard 2 (W.8.2)
<p>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful 	<p>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information <u>into broader categories</u>; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with relevant, <u>well-chosen</u>

<p>to aiding comprehension.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. c. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented. 	<p>facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
<p>Grade 7, Standard 3 (W.7.3)</p>	<p>Grade 8, Standard 3 (W.8.3)</p>
<p>Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 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. b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another. d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events. 	<p>Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 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. b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. 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. d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.
<p>Grade 7, Standard 4 (W.7.4)</p>	<p>Grade 8, Standard 4 (W.8.4)</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>

defined in standards 1–3 above.)	defined in standards 1–3 above.)
Grade 7, Standard 5 (W.7.5)	Grade 8, Standard 5 (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. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 7 on page 52.)	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. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 <u>up to and including grade 8</u> on page 52.)
Grade 7, Standard 6 (W.7.6)	Grade 8, Standard 6 (W.8.6)
Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing <u>and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently</u> as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
Grade 7, Standard 7 (W.7.7)	Grade 8, Standard 7 (W.8.7)
Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.	Conduct short research projects to answer a question (<u>including a self-generated question</u>), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for <u>multiple avenues of exploration</u> .
Grade 7, Standard 8 (W.7.8)	Grade 8, Standard 8 (W.8.8)
Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; 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.	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; 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.
Grade 7, Standard 9 (W.7.9)	Grade 8, Standard 9 (W.8.9)
Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Apply <i>grade 7 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history”). b. Apply <i>grade 7 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g. “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to 	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Apply <u>grade 8 Reading standards</u> to literature (e.g., <u>“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”</u>). b. Apply <u>grade 8 Reading standards</u> to literary nonfiction (e.g., <u>“Delineate</u> and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient;

support the claims”).	<u>recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).</u>
Grade 7, Standard 10 (W.7.10)	Grade 8, Standard 10 (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.	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.

Speaking and Listening Standards Progression from Grade 7 to Grade 8

In grade 8, students speak (both in formal presentations and in informal discussions) with growing maturity to convey ideas and information clearly and persuasively. Students are simultaneously developing listening skills that allow them to participate effectively and contribute to groups.

Specific changes in the Speaking and Listening Standards from grade 7 to grade 8 are highlighted in the chart below:

Grade 7, Standard 1 (SL.7.1)	Grade 8, Standard 1 (SL.8.1)
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 7 topics, texts, and issues</i> , building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <u>grade 8 topics, texts, and issues</u> , building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 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. b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. c. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed. d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 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. b. Follow rules for collegial discussions <u>and decision-making</u>, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. c. Pose questions <u>that connect the ideas of several speakers</u> and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant <u>evidence</u>, observations, and ideas. d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, <u>qualify or justify</u> their own views <u>in light of the evidence presented</u>.
Grade 7, Standard 2 (SL.7.2)	Grade 8, Standard 2 (SL.8.2)
Analyze the main ideas and supporting details	Analyze <u>the purpose of information</u> presented in

presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.	diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and <u>evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.</u>
Grade 7, Standard 3 (SL.7.3)	Grade 8, Standard 3 (SL.8.3)
Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.	Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence <u>and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.</u>
Grade 7, Standard 4 (SL.7.4)	Grade 8, Standard 4 (SL.8.4)
Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.	Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner <u>with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen</u> details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
Grade 7, Standard 5 (SL.7.5)	Grade 8, Standard 5 (SL.8.5)
Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.	Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify <u>information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.</u>
Grade 7, Standard 6 (SL.7.6)	Grade 8, Standard 6 (SL.8.6)
Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 7 Language standards 1 and 3 on page 52 for specific expectations.)	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See <u>grade 8</u> Language standards 1 and 3 on page 52 for specific expectations.)