

Theory of Action: Academic standards represent a collective commitment around what students should learn each year. The state assessment asks students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and understanding related to these standards using a common measure. The resulting data allows us to see patterns in performance that should guide school and district improvement, helping identify areas of strength and opportunity.

Role of Performance Level Descriptors in Defining Proficiency: Performance level descriptors bridge the state assessment to classroom instruction and the systems of formative assessments that guide local instruction and choices about individual students. **Academic proficiency represents a range of observable student performance characteristics.** There are multiple pathways to proficiency, and students rely upon their strengths differently within that range of performance.

Proficiency and Difficulty: A student’s ability to demonstrate proficiency is influenced by the complexity of the texts or stimuli presented, tasks they’re asked to complete, and the contexts in which they are engaged. As student performance improves, students are typically able to handle more challenging texts/stimuli, tasks, and contexts, and are able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge more accurately and consistently.

***Thorough** - Complete, detailed, and covering all aspects of something with great attention to detail.

***Accurate** - Free from errors, correct, and precise in details or measurements.

***Inconsistent** - Lacking uniformity, contradictory, or not staying the same over time.

***Inaccurate** - Containing errors, incorrect, or not precise.

Reading Literary Text *Student performance indicates the ability to...*

Claim 1	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
RL 8.1	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify one or two pieces of explicit and/or implicit textual evidence and <u>inaccurately</u> determine its relevance to the analysis.	<u>Inconsistently identify some</u> explicit and/or implicit textual evidence and may <u>inconsistently</u> support analysis of the text.	<u>Accurately</u> cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	<u>Thoroughly cite precise and varied pieces</u> of implicit and explicit textual evidence that strongly <u>support complex</u> analyses.
RL 8.2	<u>Inaccurately</u> determine a theme of a text using minimal details from the text. <u>Inaccurately</u> summarize the text overlooking important details or including unrelated events.	<u>Inconsistently</u> determine a theme of a text; partially summarize the text but may overlook important details or include minor inaccuracies or unrelated events.	<u>Accurately</u> determine a theme and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; <u>accurately</u> and objectively summarize the main events in the text.	<u>Thoroughly</u> determine a theme providing an in-depth analysis of its development over the course of the text and highlighting subtle shifts and complex relationships to the characters, setting, and plot; <u>precisely</u> and objectively summarize the main events in the text avoiding unnecessary details.

Test questions can measure a single skill or a set of knowledge and skills. The ELA test differs from other subjects in that it has fewer items overall, but each item assesses multiple skills or knowledge by asking students to demonstrate skills through performance, such as writing a prose-constructed response. Therefore, what differentiates the levels of performance are the degree to and quality with which a student performs.

Claim 1	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
RL 8.3	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.	<u>Inconsistently</u> explain how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.	<u>Accurately</u> 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.	<u>Thoroughly</u> analyze how particular lines of dialogue and incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. Integrate precise, implicit, and explicit textual evidence connecting complex elements to the overall work.
RL 8.5	<u>Inaccurately</u> compare or contrast two or more texts with a minimal understanding of meaning or style.	<u>Inconsistently</u> compare and/or contrast the structures of two or more texts, with partial understanding of how structure relates to meaning or style.	<u>Accurately</u> 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.	<u>Thoroughly</u> compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts analyzing and evaluating how the differing structure of each text shape meaning and style.
RL 8.6	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify differences in points of view between characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) with limited explanation and/or examples regarding their impact on the story.	<u>Inconsistently</u> explain differences in points of view between characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) and provide a partial explanation of how they create effects like suspense or humor with minimal examples from the text.	<u>Accurately</u> 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 using clear examples from the text.	<u>Thoroughly</u> analyze how differences and subtle nuances in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) enhance the story by creating elements of suspense or humor using clear and varied examples from the text.
RL 8.7	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify basic similarities or differences between a filmed or live production of a story or drama and the text or script. Minimally evaluate the choices made by the director or actors.	<u>Inconsistently</u> explain the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script. Partially evaluate the choices made by the director or actors.	<u>Accurately analyze</u> the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script. Evaluate the choices made by the director or actors.	<u>Thoroughly</u> analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama aligns with or departs from the text or script. Evaluate the choices made by the director or actors with clear and insightful reasoning and support.
RL 8.9	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify how a modern work of fiction addresses themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths and traditional stories. Vaguely or inaccurately explain how the material is reimagined or made new.	<u>Inconsistently</u> explain how a modern work of fiction incorporates themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths and traditional stories. Partially explain how the material is reimagined or made new.	<u>Accurately</u> analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths and traditional stories, including describing how the material is rendered new.	<u>Thoroughly</u> analyze how a modern work of fiction incorporates and transforms themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths and traditional stories. Clearly and insightfully explain how the material is reimagined or made new using appropriate support.

Reading Informational Text *Student performance indicates the ability to...*

Claim 2	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
RI 8.1	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify explicit textual evidence and <u>inaccurately</u> determine its relevance to the analysis.	<u>Inconsistently</u> identify explicit and/or implicit textual evidence and may <u>inconsistently</u> support analysis of the text.	<u>Accurately</u> cite relevant pieces of evidence to strongly support an analysis of what the text says including explicitly and implicitly.	<u>Thoroughly</u> cite precise and varied <u>pieces</u> of implicit and explicit textual evidence that thoroughly <u>support</u> <u>complex</u> analyses.
RI 8.2	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify a central idea of a text and minimally describe how it develops. Demonstrate inaccurate understanding of the central idea's connection to supporting ideas. Provide a vague or subjective summary may include unrelated or irrelevant ideas.	<u>Inconsistently</u> identify a central idea of a text and partially describe how it develops. Demonstrate partial understanding of the central idea's connection to supporting ideas. Provide a summary with <u>some</u> <u>objectivity</u> .	<u>Accurately</u> determine a central idea of a text analyzing its development over the course of the text. Explain the central idea's relationship to supporting ideas and provide a clear and objective summary.	<u>Thoroughly</u> analyze one or more central ideas' development over the course of the text and their connection to supporting ideas, highlighting nuances and complexities. Craft a concise and comprehensive objective summary.
RI 8.3	<u>Inaccurately</u> make connections or distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events in a text describing how the text uses comparisons, analogies, or categories, with <u>minimal</u> understanding.	<u>Inconsistently</u> make connections and/or distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events in a text beginning to describe how the text uses comparisons, analogies, or categories with <u>partial</u> understanding.	<u>Accurately</u> analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events explaining the use of comparisons, analogies, or categories with clear examples.	<u>Thoroughly</u> analyze how a text creates meaningful connections and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events providing nuanced explanations of the use of comparisons, analogies, or categories.
RI 8.5	<u>Inaccurately</u> explain how a sentence contributes to the structure of a paragraph and attempt to identify a key concept with limited understanding.	<u>Inconsistently</u> explain how particular sentences contribute to the structure of a paragraph and begin to describe their role in developing a key concept with partial understanding.	<u>Accurately</u> analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph explaining how particular sentences develop and refine a key concept with clear reasoning.	<u>Thoroughly</u> analyze a paragraph's structure highlighting how particular sentences intricately develop and refine a key concept. Provide nuanced interpretations supported by evidence.
RI 8.6	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify the author's point of view or purpose and attempt to minimally describe how the author acknowledges or responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	<u>Inconsistently</u> explain the author's point of view or purpose and partially describe how the author acknowledges or responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	<u>Accurately</u> determine the author's point of view or purpose and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	<u>Thoroughly</u> analyze the author's point of view or purpose providing nuanced explanations of how the author effectively addresses conflicting evidence or viewpoints to strengthen their argument.
RI 8.7	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify the advantages or disadvantages with a minimal understanding of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a topic or idea.	<u>Inconsistently</u> explain the advantages and/or disadvantages with a partial understanding of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.	<u>Accurately</u> evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to effectively present a particular topic or idea.	<u>Thoroughly</u> evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) integrating clear and varied examples to highlight how subtle nuances of each medium shape understanding.

Claim 2	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
RI 8.8	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify the argument or claims in a text and minimally assess the reasoning or relevance of the evidence.	<u>Inconsistently</u> explain the argument and/or claims in a text and partially assess the reasoning and/or relevance of the evidence.	<u>Accurately</u> delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.	<u>Thoroughly</u> delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims, analyzing the soundness of the reasoning, the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence, and effectively identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
RI 8.9	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify where two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic minimally identifying some areas where they disagree on matters of fact.	<u>Inconsistently</u> explain where two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic partially identifying some areas where they disagree on matters of fact.	<u>Accurately</u> analyze where two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic clearly identifying the specific areas where they disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.	<u>Thoroughly</u> analyze where two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic precisely explaining where and why the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

Reading Vocabulary <i>Student performance indicates the ability to...</i>				
Claim 3	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
RL 8.4 RI 8.4 L 8.4-6	<u>Inaccurately</u> identify contextual meaning of words and phrases based on context clues or provide <u>inaccurate</u> evidence to support meaning (e.g., roots and affixes, figurative language, synonyms, and antonyms).	<u>Inconsistently</u> determine contextual meaning of words and phrases based on context clues or <u>inconsistently provide accurate</u> evidence to support meaning (e.g., roots and affixes, figurative language, synonyms, and antonyms).	<u>Accurately</u> interpret the contextual meaning of words and phrases using context clues and provide <u>accurate</u> evidence to support meaning (e.g., roots and affixes, figurative language, synonyms, and antonyms).	<u>Thoroughly</u> infer contextual meaning of both <u>literal and figurative</u> words and phrases using context clues and provide <u>multiple pieces of accurate</u> evidence to support meaning (e.g., roots and affixes, figurative language, synonyms, and antonyms).

Written Expression *Student performance indicates the ability to...*

Claim 4	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
W 8.1- W 8.10	<p>Development of Ideas:</p> <p><u>Minimally</u> address a prompt with <u>limited</u> or <u>unclear</u> development of the claim, topic, and/or narrative elements (e.g., establishing a situation; organizing a logical event sequence; describing scenes, objects, or people; developing characters' personalities; and using dialogue) using <u>limited</u> reasoning <u>unsupported</u> by text-based evidence. Details or descriptions are <u>vague</u> or <u>incomplete</u>; the response may <u>not fully</u> consider the task, purpose, or audience.</p> <p>Organization:</p> <p>Demonstrate <u>minimal</u> coherence, clarity, and cohesion with an introduction and/or conclusion that may be <u>missing</u>, <u>unclear</u>, or <u>underdeveloped</u>.</p> <p>Clarity of Language:</p> <p>Demonstrate <u>minimal</u> command of language <u>inaccurately</u> explaining, describing, and/or comparing and/or analyzing ideas with <u>limited</u> or <u>unclear</u> use of concrete words, sensory details, linking or transitional words, and/or domain-specific vocabulary.</p> <p>Establish a <u>minimally</u> effective or <u>inappropriate</u> style.</p>	<p>Development of Ideas:</p> <p><u>Partially</u> address a prompt with some development of the claim, topic, and/or narrative elements (e.g., establishing a situation; organizing a logical event sequence; describing scenes, objects, or people; developing characters' personalities; and using dialogue) using some logical reasoning supported by text-based evidence, details, and/or descriptions, though the development may be uneven or only <u>somewhat appropriate</u> to the task, purpose, and audience.</p> <p>Organization:</p> <p>Demonstrate <u>inconsistent</u> coherence, clarity, and cohesion with <u>some</u> organization and connections between ideas. Include an introduction and/or conclusion that may only be <u>partially</u> effective.</p> <p>Clarity of Language:</p> <p>Demonstrate <u>partial</u> command of language <u>inconsistently</u> explaining, describing, and/or comparing ideas using <u>some</u> concrete words, sensory details, linking or transitional words, and/or domain-specific vocabulary. <u>Inconsistently</u> or <u>partially</u> establish an effective style.</p>	<p>Development of Ideas:</p> <p>Address a prompt and provide <u>effective</u> and <u>comprehensive</u> development of the claim, topic, and/or narrative elements (e.g., establishing a situation; organizing a logical event sequence; describing scenes, objects, or people; developing characters' personalities; and using dialogue) using <u>clear</u>, <u>logical</u> reasoning supported by text-based evidence, details, and/or description; the development is <u>consistently appropriate</u> to the task, purpose, and audience.</p> <p>Organization:</p> <p>Demonstrate <u>effective</u> coherence, clarity, and cohesion with <u>well-organized</u> ideas that are <u>logically</u> connected and easy to follow. Include an <u>effective</u> introduction and conclusion.</p> <p>Clarity of Language:</p> <p>Demonstrate an <u>effective</u> command of language <u>accurately</u> explaining, describing, and/or comparing and/or analyzing ideas <u>effectively</u> using concrete words and phrases, sensory details, linking and transitional words, and domain-specific vocabulary. Establish and maintain a <u>mostly</u> <u>effective</u> style.</p>	<p>Development of Ideas:</p> <p>Address all aspects of a prompt with <u>thorough</u> and <u>comprehensive</u> development of the claim, topic, and/or narrative elements (e.g., establishing a situation; organizing a logical event sequence; describing scenes, objects, or people; developing characters' personalities; and using dialogue) using thorough reasoning supported by text-based evidence, <u>rich</u> and <u>well-chosen</u> details, and/or <u>vivid</u> descriptions that demonstrate a deep understanding of the task, purpose, and audience.</p> <p>Organization:</p> <p>Demonstrate <u>thorough</u> coherence, clarity, and cohesion with ideas that are <u>seamlessly organized</u>, logically connected, and presented in a <u>fluid</u> and <u>highly engaging</u> manner. Include an <u>engaging</u> and <u>well-crafted</u> introduction and conclusion that <u>effectively</u> support the task and purpose.</p> <p>Clarity of Language:</p> <p>Demonstrate a <u>thorough</u> command of language <u>effectively</u> explaining, describing, and/or comparing and/or analyzing ideas. <u>Skillfully</u> use <u>vivid</u> and <u>precise</u> concrete words, sensory details, seamless linking and transitional words, and <u>well-integrated</u> domain-specific vocabulary to <u>enhance</u> <u>clarity</u> and <u>depth</u> of ideas. Establish and maintain an effective style.</p>

Knowledge of Written Language and Conventions *Student performance indicates the ability to...*

Claim 5	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
<p>L 8.1-3 L 8.6 W 8.1</p>	<p>Demonstrate a <u>minimal</u> command of the conventions of Standard English producing incoherent meaning. <u>Frequent</u> and <u>varied</u> errors <u>impede</u> understanding regarding the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanics, such as spelling, capitalization, and punctuation (e.g., commas, ellipses, dashes). • Grammar (e.g., gerunds, participles, and infinitives). • Usage (e.g., appropriate shifts in active and passive voice, form indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive moods). 	<p>Demonstrate an <u>inconsistent</u> command of the conventions of Standard English producing <u>partially</u> clear meaning. Errors <u>often impede</u> understanding regarding the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanics, such as spelling, capitalization, and punctuation (e.g., commas, ellipses, dashes). • Grammar (e.g., gerunds, participles, and infinitives). • Usage (e.g., appropriate shifts in active and passive voice, form indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive moods). 	<p>Demonstrate an <u>accurate, grade-level</u> command of the conventions of Standard English producing clear meaning. Errors <u>seldom</u> impede understanding regarding the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanics, such as spelling, capitalization, and punctuation (e.g., commas, ellipses, dashes). • Grammar (e.g., gerunds, participles, and infinitives). • Usage (e.g., appropriate shifts in active and passive voice, form indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive moods). 	<p>Demonstrate a <u>thorough, above grade-level</u> command of the conventions of Standard English producing clear meaning. Errors <u>do not</u> impede understanding regarding the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanics, such as spelling, capitalization, and punctuation (e.g., commas separating coordinate adjectives). • Grammar (e.g., phrases, clauses, and modifiers). • Usage (e.g., varied sentence patterns and types signaling differing relationships among ideas).