

**ENGLISH
LANGUAGE
ARTS
GRADE 8**

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.

Claim 1: Reading Literary Textⁱ

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Level 4: Above Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>thoroughly</u>:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cite evidence that supports both explicit meanings and inferences in the text. • Identify a theme, analyze its development, and summarize the main events, including its relation to characters, setting, and plot. |
| <p>Level 3: Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>accurately</u>:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze how specific dialogue or incidents propel action, reveal character traits, or provoke decisions. • Compare and contrast the structure of multiple texts, analyzing how each contributes to its meaning and style. |
| <p>Level 2: Approaching Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>inconsistently</u>:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze how differing points of view (e.g., dramatic irony) create effects like suspense or humor, using text examples. • Analyze how a film or live production of a story stays true to or departs from the script, evaluating director or actor choices. |
| <p>Level 1: Below Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>inaccurately</u>:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze how modern fiction draws on themes, events, or characters from myths, describing how the material is reinterpreted. |

Claim 2: Reading Informational Textⁱⁱ

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Level 4: Above Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>thoroughly</u>:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cite relevant evidence to support analysis of both explicit and implicit meanings in the text. • Identify the central idea, analyze its development, and explain its relationship to supporting ideas with an objective summary. |
| <p>Level 3: Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>accurately</u>:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze how a text connects or distinguishes individuals, ideas, or events using comparisons, analogies, or categories, with clear examples. • Analyze a paragraph’s structure, explaining how sentences develop and refine a key concept. |
| <p>Level 2: Approaching Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>inconsistently</u>:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the author’s point of view or purpose and analyze how they address conflicting evidence or viewpoints. • Evaluate the pros and cons of using different mediums to present a topic. |
| <p>Level 1: Below Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>inaccurately</u>:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trace and evaluate the argument and claims in a text, assessing reasoning, relevance, and sufficiency of evidence. |

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.

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze conflicting information between multiple on the same topic, identifying areas of disagreement on facts or interpretations. |
| Claim 3: Reading Vocabulary (In both literary and informational texts)ⁱⁱⁱ | |
| Level 4: Above Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>thoroughly</u> : | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret the contextual meaning of words and phrases using context clues and provide evidence to support meaning (e.g., roots and affixes, figurative language, synonyms, and antonyms). |
| Level 3: Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>accurately</u> : | |
| Level 2: Approaching Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>inconsistently</u> : | |
| Level 1: Below Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>inaccurately</u> : | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Claim 4: Written Expression (Using both literary and informational prompts)^{iv} | |
| Level 4: Above Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>thoroughly</u> : | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address a prompt and provide development of a 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) by using logical reasoning supported by text-based evidence, details, and/or description. The development is appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. Demonstrate coherence, clarity, and cohesion with ideas that are logically connected and easy to follow. Include an introduction and conclusion. Demonstrate command of language explaining, describing, and/or comparing and/or analyzing ideas using concrete words and phrases, sensory details, linking and transitional words, and domain-specific vocabulary. Establish and maintain style. |
| Level 3: Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>accurately</u> : | |
| Level 2: Approaching Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>inconsistently</u> : | |
| Level 1: Below Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>inaccurately</u> : | |

| | |
|--|---|
| Claim 5: Knowledge of Written Language and Conventions^v | |
| Level 4: Above Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>thoroughly</u> : | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. This includes mechanics (e.g., punctuation, capitalization, and spelling), grammar, and usage, and the extent to which the conventions impact whether the meaning is clear. |
| Level 3: Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>accurately</u> : | |
| Level 2: Approaching Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>inconsistently</u> : | |
| Level 1: Below Proficient Student performance indicates the ability to <u>inaccurately</u> : | |

ⁱ Includes standards RL 8.1, RL 8.2, RL 8.3, RL 8.5, RL 8.6, RL 8.7, RL 8.9

ⁱⁱ Includes standards RI 8.1, RI 8.2, RI 8.3, RI 8.5, RI 8.6, RI 8.7, RI 8.8, RI 8.9

ⁱⁱⁱ Includes standards RL 8.4, RI 8.4, L 8.4, L 8.5, L 8.6

^{iv} Includes standards W 8.1, W 8.2, W 8.3, W 8.4, W 8.5, W 8.6, W 8.7, W 8.8, W 8.9, W 8.10

^v Includes standards L 8.1, L 8.2, L 8.3, L 8.6, W 8.1