

Language Arts Literacy Areas of Focus: Grade 8

Mission: *Learning to read, write, speak, listen, and view critically, strategically and creatively enables students to discover personal and shared meaning throughout their lives.*

Standard 3.2 Writing	
All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.	
Big Idea: Writing is the process of communicating in print for a variety of audiences and purposes.	
3.2.8 A. Writing as a Process (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, postwriting)	
Essential Questions	Enduring Understandings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How do good writers express themselves? ▪ How does process shape the writer’s product? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good writers develop and refine their ideas for thinking, learning, communicating, and aesthetic expression.
Areas of Focus	Comments and Examples
1. Write stories or scripts with well-developed characters, setting, dialogue, clear conflict and resolution, and sufficient descriptive detail.	Instructional focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Process Example: Students write a play that examines a community issue, e.g., preservation of historic landmarks or parks.
2. Write multi-paragraph compositions that have clear topic development, logical organization, effective use of detail, and variety in sentence structure.	Instructional focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Process Example: Students write multi-paragraph compositions about graduation requirements for their district and their goals for meeting them.
3. Generate and narrow topics by considering purpose, audience, and form with a variety of strategies (e.g., graphic organizers, brainstorming, technology-assisted processes).	
4. Revise and edit drafts by rereading for content and organization, usage, sentence construction, mechanics, and word choice.	
5. Utilize the New Jersey Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric to improve and evaluate their writing and the writing of peers.	
6. Compose, revise, edit, and publish writing using appropriate word processing software.	
7. Reflect on own writing, noting strengths and setting goals for improvement.	

3.2.8 B. Writing as a Product (resulting in a formal product or publication)

Essential Questions	Enduring Understandings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How do writers develop a well written product? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good writers use a repertoire of strategies that enables them to vary form and style, in order to write for different purposes, audiences, and contexts.
Areas of Focus	Comments and Examples
<p>1. Extend knowledge of specific characteristics, structures, and appropriate voice and tone of selected genres and use this knowledge in creating written work, considering the purpose, audience, and context of the writing.</p>	
<p>2. Write various types of prose, such as short stories, biographies, autobiographies, or memoirs that contain narrative elements.</p>	<p>Instructional focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genre studies <p>ASSESS through Problem-Based Learning.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students write a sequel to a short story, using the same characters. • Students write an “academic biography” (chronicle their academic life).
<p>3. Write reports and subject-appropriate nonfiction pieces across the curriculum based on research and including citations, quotations, and a works cited page.</p>	
<p>4. Write a range of essays, including persuasive, speculative (picture prompt), descriptive, personal, or issue-based.</p>	<p>Instructional focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay writing <p>Example Writing Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You no longer have access to technology in your everyday life. Describe how your life changes. • The driving age is raised to 19. Write to persuade local officials to keep or change the age restriction. • Describe your personal hope for the future.

3.2.8 C. Mechanics, Spelling, and Handwriting

Essential Questions	Enduring Understandings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How do rules of language affect communication? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rules, conventions of language, help readers understand what is being communicated.
Areas of Focus	Comments and Examples
<p>1. Use Standard English conventions in all writing, such as sentence structure, grammar and usage, punctuation, capitalization, spelling.</p>	<p>Instructional strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students review exemplar essays. • Students edit sample essays. <p>Example: Use peer editing for student-generated work.</p>

2. Use a variety of sentence types correctly, including combinations of independent and dependent clauses, prepositional and adverbial phrases, and varied sentence openings to develop a lively and effective personal style.	
3. Understand and use parallelism, including similar grammatical forms, to present items in a series or to organize ideas for emphasis.	
4. Refine the use of subordination, coordination, apposition, and other devices to indicate relationships between ideas.	
5. Use transition words to reinforce a logical progression of ideas.	Instructional focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Segues • Transition words ASSESS through writing assignments using a rubric.
6. Edit writing for correct grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.	
7. Use a variety of reference materials, such as a dictionary, thesaurus, grammar reference, and/or internet/software resources to edit written work.	
8. Write legibly in manuscript or cursive to meet district standards.	
3.2.8 D. Writing Forms, Audiences, and Purposes (exploring a variety of forms)	
Essential Questions	Enduring Understandings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why does a writer choose a particular form of writing? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A writer selects a form based on audience and purpose.
Areas of Focus	Comments and Examples
1. Gather, select, and organize the most effective information appropriate to a topic, task, and audience.	
2. Apply knowledge and strategies for composing pieces in a variety of genres (e.g., narrative, expository, persuasive, poetic, and everyday/ workplace or technical writing).	
3. Write responses to literature and develop insights into interpretations by connecting to personal experiences and referring to textual information.	Instructional focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing for a purpose Example: Students keep a journal or notebook where responses to literature become daily entries and where connections are made to the students' personal experiences.

<p>4. Write personal narratives, short stories, memoirs, poetry, and persuasive and expository text that relate clear, coherent events, or situations through the use of specific details.</p>	<p>Instructional focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing for a purpose—to provide detail <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students examine expository pieces, e.g., after listening to a political speech, students will list words and phrases intended to incite, cause listeners to react or that are exaggerated. Then students write a speech or persuasive piece using this language of persuasion.
<p>5. Use narrative and descriptive writing techniques that show compositional risks (e.g., dialogue, literary devices sensory words and phrases, background information, thoughts and feelings of characters, comparison and contrast of characters).</p>	<p>Instructional focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative and descriptive writing techniques <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using graphic organizers, students compare and contrast characters from novels and explain in narrative how the • Students write sequels to stories, using the same characters, including dialogue between two characters.
<p>6. Use a variety of primary and secondary sources to understand the value of each when writing a research report.</p>	
<p>7. Write reports based on research and include citations, quotations, and works cited page.</p>	
<p>8. Explore the central idea or theme of an informational reading and support analysis with details from the article and personal experiences.</p>	<p>Instructional focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central idea or theme of an informational reading <p>ASSESS through writing assignments.</p> <p>Example: Students write about a recent medical breakthrough/research and its relationship to the lives of teens.</p>
<p>9. Demonstrate writing clarity and supportive evidence when answering open-ended and essay questions across the curriculum.</p>	
<p>10. State a position clearly and convincingly in a persuasive essay by stating the issue, giving facts, examples, and details to support the position, and citing sources when appropriate.</p>	<p>Instructional focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuasive writing <p>Example: Students write an essay to persuade government officials to continue/change provisional drivers' license requirements.</p>
<p>11. Present evidence when writing persuasive essays, examples, and justification to support arguments.</p>	<p>Example: Students write an essay citing evidence with examples justifying arguments about teen driving records and Motor Vehicle commission requirements.</p>

<p>12. Choose an appropriate organizing strategy such as cause/effect, pro and con, parody, to effectively present a topic, point of view, or argument.</p>	<p>Instructional focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of writing <p>Example: Students choose an appropriate organizing strategy to use when presenting their arguments for or against a change in provisional drivers' licenses.</p>
<p>13. Use of a personal style and voice effectively to support the purpose and engage the audience of a piece of writing.</p>	
<p>14. Maintain a collection of writing (e.g., a literacy folder, or a literacy portfolio).</p>	
<p>15. Review scoring criteria of relevant rubrics.</p>	