

Grade 8 English Language Arts/Literacy Performance Level Descriptors

Performance Level	Level of Text Complexity ¹	Range of Accuracy ²	Quality of Evidence ³
4	Very Complex Moderately Complex Readily Accessible	Mostly Accurate Mostly Accurate Accurate	Explicit & Inferential Explicit & Inferential Explicit & Inferential
3	Very Complex Moderately Complex Readily Accessible	Generally Accurate Generally Accurate Mostly Accurate	Explicit & Inferential Explicit & Inferential Explicit & Inferential
2	Very Complex Moderately Complex Readily Accessible	Minimally Accurate Partially Accurate Mostly Accurate	Explicit & Inferential Explicit & Inferential Explicit & Inferential
1	Very Complex Moderately Complex Readily Accessible	Inaccurate Minimally Accurate Partially Accurate	Explicit & Inferential Explicit & Inferential Explicit & Inferential

1. Text Complexity

The complexity framework reflects the importance of text complexity as it relates to the CCSS, which indicates that 50 percent of an item’s complexity is linked to the complexity of the text(s) used as the stimulus for that item. Consequently, to determine students’ performance levels, it is critical to identify the pattern of responses when students respond to items linked to passages with distinct text complexities. To this end, there is a clear and consistent model to define text complexity and has determined to use three text complexity levels: readily accessible, moderately complex, or very complex. For more information on text complexity, refer to the CCSS Appendix A (<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy>) and Appendix B (<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy>).

There are two components for determining text complexity for **all** passages:

- a. Two quantitative text complexity measures (Reading Maturity Metric and Lexile) will be used to analyze all reading passages to determine **an initial** recommendation for placement of a text into a grade band and subsequently a grade level.
- b. Text Analysis Worksheets, one for informational text and one for literary text, are then used to determine qualitative measures. Trained evaluators use these worksheets to determine a recommendation for qualitative text complexity within the grade level, with each text defined as readily accessible, moderately complex, or very complex.

For multimedia texts, qualitative judgments from one or both of the “optional” categories in the Complexity Analysis Worksheet will be combined with judgments in the other categories to make a holistic determination of the complexity of the material.

2. Range of Accuracy

There are five types of items on the summative assessments. For Multiple Choice (MC), Multiple Select (MS), Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR), and Technology-enhanced (TE) items, the design is such that the items help contribute to an understanding of how accurately students comprehend text (demonstrate mastery of CCSS Reading Standards 1–9). Some of these items offer opportunities for students to receive partial credit based on the range of accuracy. Extended Constructed Response (ECR) items assess written expression (CCSS Writing Standards 1-3), conventions of standard English (CCSS Language Standards 1-2), and knowledge of language (CCSS Language Standards 3). These items are passage-based and including reading comprehension MC, MS, EBSR, and TE items that scaffold understanding of the passage for the written expression.

Based on the level of text complexity, the Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) describe specific levels of accuracy at grades 3–8, 11 that are determined using the reading data collected through MC, MS, EBSR, TE and ECR items. Both the text complexity level and its associated level of accuracy is underlined in each PLD description.

Accurate – The student is able to accurately state both the general ideas expressed in the text(s) and the key and supporting details. The response is complete, and the student demonstrates full understanding.

Mostly accurate – The student is able to accurately state most of the general ideas expressed in the text(s) and the key and supporting details, but the response is incomplete or contains minor inaccuracies. The student demonstrates understanding.

Generally accurate – The student is able to accurately state the gist of the text(s) but fails to accurately state the key and supporting details in the text or to connect such details to the overarching meaning of the text(s). The student demonstrates basic understanding.

Partially accurate – The student is able to accurately state the gist of the text(s) but is unable to state some of the key or supporting details with accuracy. The student is partially able to connect the specific details of the text to the overarching meaning(s) of the text. The student demonstrates partial understanding.

Minimally accurate – The student is unable to accurately state the gist of the text(s) but is able to minimally state some of the key or supporting details with accuracy. The student does not connect the specific details of the text to the overarching meaning(s) of the text. The student demonstrates minimal understanding.

Inaccurate – The student is unable to accurately state either the gist of the text or the key and supporting details evident in the text. The student demonstrates limited understanding.

3. Quality of Evidence

Reading and writing items are designed to contribute to an understanding of how students closely examine texts to identify explicitly stated ideas and make logical inferences, as well as use textual evidence to support their conclusions. Some items offer opportunities for students to receive partial credit based on the quality of evidence provided. Students support their comprehension with explicit and/or inferential evidence:

Explicit evidence – Students show how the explicit words and phrases (details) from the text support statements made about the meaning of the text.

Inferential evidence – Students show how inferences drawn from the text support statements made about the meaning of the text.

Reading Sub-Claims	Reading Literature Students demonstrate comprehension and draw evidence from readings of grade-level, complex literary text.	Reading Information Students demonstrate comprehension and draw evidence from readings of grade-level, complex informational text.	Vocabulary Interpretation and Use Students use context to determine the meaning of words and phrases.
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Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
A student who performs at Level 4 exceeds expectations for the assessed standards.	A student who performs at Level 3 meets expectations for the assessed standards.	A student who performs at Level 2 partially meets expectations for the assessed standards.	A student who performs at Level 1 did not yet meet expectations for the assessed standards.
In reading, the pattern exhibited by student responses indicates: - With <u>very complex text</u>, students demonstrate the ability to do <u>accurate</u> analyses of the text, showing understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text. - With <u>moderately complex text</u>, students demonstrate the ability to do <u>accurate</u> analyses of the text, showing understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text. - With <u>readily accessible text</u>, students demonstrate the ability to do <u>accurate</u> analyses of the text, demonstrating <u>full</u> understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text.	In reading, the pattern exhibited by student responses indicates: - With <u>very complex text</u>, students demonstrate the ability to be <u>mostly accurate</u> in the analyses of the text, showing understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text. - With <u>moderately complex text</u>, students demonstrate the ability to be <u>mostly accurate</u> in the analyses of the text, showing understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text. - With <u>readily accessible text</u>, students demonstrate the ability to be <u>mostly accurate</u> in the analyses of the text, demonstrating understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text.	In reading, the pattern exhibited by student responses indicates: - With <u>very complex text</u>, students demonstrate the ability <u>with partial accurate</u> in the analyses of the text, showing understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text. - With <u>moderately complex text</u>, students demonstrate the ability to be <u>partially accurate</u> when analyzing the text, <u>demonstrating partial</u> understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text. - With <u>readily accessible text</u>, students demonstrate the ability to be <u>partially accurate</u> when analyzing the text, demonstrating a basic understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text.	In reading, the pattern exhibited by student responses indicates: - With <u>very complex text</u>, students demonstrate minimal ability to do an accurate analysis of the text, showing <u>limited</u> understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text. - With <u>moderately complex text</u>, students demonstrate <u>limitedly accurate</u> analyses of the text, showing minimal understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text. - With <u>readily accessible text</u>, students demonstrate the ability to do <u>minimally accurate</u> analyses of the text, demonstrating <u>minimal</u> understanding of the text when referring to explicit details and examples in the text and when supporting sound inferences drawn from the text.

Writing Claim: Students produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience; and demonstrate knowledge of conventions and other important elements of language.

Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
A student who performs at Level 4 exceeds expectations for the assessed standards.	A student who performs at Level 3 meets expectations for the assessed standards.	A student who performs at Level 2 partially meets expectations for the assessed standards.	A student who performs at Level 1 did not yet meet expectations for the assessed standards.
In writing, students address the prompts and provide <u>effective</u> development of ideas, including when drawing evidence from multiple sources, while demonstrating <u>effective</u> coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion. The student: - Provides <u>effective</u> development of the claim, topic, and/or narrative elements, using clear reasoning, details, text-based evidence, and/or description. - Develops the claim, topic, and/or narrative elements in a manner that is appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. - Demonstrates coherence, clarity, and cohesion and includes an introduction, conclusion, and a logical progression of ideas. - Establishes and maintains an <u>effective</u> style, while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline. <u>Effectively</u> draws evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. - Includes <u>precise</u> language including descriptive words and phrases, sensory details, linking and transitional words, words to indicate tone, and/or domain-specific vocabulary. - Demonstrates command of the conventions of Standard English consistent with edited writing. There <u>are few errors</u> in grammar and usage, but overall meaning is clear.	In writing, students address the prompts and provide development of ideas, including when drawing evidence from multiple sources, while demonstrating coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion. The student: - Provides <u>mostly effective</u> development of the claim, topic, and/or narrative elements, using reasoning, details, text-based evidence, and/or description. - Develops the claim, topic, and/or narrative elements in a manner that is <u>mostly appropriate</u> to the task, purpose, and audience. - Demonstrates <u>general</u> coherence, clarity, and cohesion and includes an introduction, conclusion, and logically grouped ideas. - Establishes and maintains a <u>mostly effective</u> style, while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline. - Draws evidence mostly from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. - Includes <u>mostly precise</u> language, including descriptive words and phrases, sensory details, linking and transitional words, words to indicate tone, and/or domain-specific vocabulary. - Demonstrates command of the conventions of Standard English consistent with edited writing. There are <u>errors</u> in grammar and usage that <u>may occasionally impede</u> understanding.	In writing, students address the prompts and provide <u>basic</u> development of ideas, including when drawing evidence from multiple sources, while <u>generally</u> demonstrating <u>partial</u> coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion. The student: - Provides <u>some</u> development of the claim, topic, and/or narrative elements, using basic reasoning, details, text-based evidence, and/or description. - Develops the claim, topic, and/or narrative elements in a manner that is <u>generally appropriate</u> to the task, purpose, and audience. - Demonstrates <u>some</u> coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion, making the writer’s progression of ideas somewhat unclear. - Employs a style that is <u>generally</u> effective, with basic awareness of the norms of the discipline. - Draws <u>partial</u> evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. - Includes <u>some</u> descriptions, sensory details, linking or transitional words, words to indicate tone, or domain-specific vocabulary. - Demonstrates <u>minimal</u> command of the conventions of Standard English consistent with edited writing. There are <u>some patterns of errors</u> in grammar and usage that <u>impede</u> understanding, demonstrating <u>partial</u> control over language.	In writing, students address the prompts and provide <u>minimal</u> development of ideas, including when drawing evidence from multiple sources, while demonstrating <u>minimal</u> coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion. The student: - Provides <u>minimal</u> development of the claim, topic, and/or narrative elements, using minimal reasoning, details, text-based evidence, and/or description. - Development of the topic and/or narrative elements is <u>inappropriate</u> to the task, purpose, and audience. - Demonstrates <u>minimal</u> coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion, making the writer’s progression of ideas unclear. - Employs a <u>minimally effective</u> style, and minimal awareness of the norms of the discipline. - Draws <u>minimal</u> evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. - Includes <u>minimal</u> descriptions, sensory details, linking and transitional words, words to indicate tone, and/or domain-specific vocabulary. - Demonstrates <u>limited</u> command of the conventions of Standard English consistent with edited writing. There are <u>patterns of errors</u> in grammar and usage that <u>impede</u> understanding, demonstrating <u>minimal</u> control over language.