

8th Grade ELA- Year at a Glance

M/J Language Arts 3- Standard and Advanced Levels

This course defines what students should understand and be able to do by the end of 8th grade. Knowledge acquisition should be the primary purpose of any reading approach as the systematic building of a wide range of knowledge across domains is a prerequisite to higher literacy. At this grade level, students are building their facility with rhetoric, the craft of using language in writing and speaking, using classic literature, essays, and speeches as mentor texts.

The benchmarks in this course are mastery goals that students are expected to attain by the end of the year. To build mastery, students will continue to review and apply earlier grade-level benchmarks and expectations.

English Language Arts is not a discrete set of skills, but a rich discipline with meaningful, significant content, the knowledge of which helps all students actively and fully participate in our society.

Standards should not stand alone as a separate focus for instruction, but should be combined purposefully.

The texts students read should be meaningful and thought-provoking, preparing them to be informed, civic-minded members of their community.

Curricular content for all subjects must integrate critical-thinking, problem-solving, and workforce-literacy skills; communication, reading, and writing skills; mathematics skills; collaboration skills; contextual and applied-learning skills; technology-literacy skills; information and media-literacy skills; and civic-engagement skills.

Honors and Advanced Level Course Note: Advanced courses require a greater demand on students through increased academic rigor. Academic rigor is obtained through the application, analysis, evaluation, and creation of complex ideas that are often abstract and multi-faceted. Students are challenged to think and collaborate critically on the content they are learning. Honors level rigor will be achieved by increasing text complexity through text selection, focus on high-level qualitative measures, and complexity of task. Instruction will be structured to give students a deeper understanding of conceptual themes and organization within and across disciplines. Academic rigor is more than simply assigning to students a greater quantity of work.

What is the purpose of this course?

The purpose of this course is to provide 8th grade students with an integrated study of English- Language Arts using reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language for college and career preparation and readiness.

The content should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- active reading of varied texts for what they say explicitly, as well as logical inferences that can be drawn
- analysis of literature and informational texts from varied literary periods to examine:
 - text craft and structure
 - elements of literature
 - arguments and claims supported by textual evidence
 - power and impact of language
 - influence of history, culture, and setting on language
 - personal critical and aesthetic response
- writing for varied purposes
 - developing and supporting argumentative claims
 - crafting coherent, supported expository texts

- responding to literature for personal and analytical purposes
- writing narratives to develop real or imagined events
- writing on sources (short and longer research) using text-based claims and evidence
- effective listening, speaking, and viewing strategies with emphasis on the use of evidence to support or refute a claim in multimedia presentations, class discussions, and extended text discussions
- collaboration amongst peers

What will 8th Grade students be expected to do?

In the 2023-2024 school year, SJCS D will continue to use the Florida B.E.S.T. Standards as the tool to guide ELA instruction in our schools. According to the [ELA B.E.S.T. Standards](#) (p. 78),

In grades 6-8, analysis and writing are the primary foci. Rhetoric is introduced in 6th grade [and continued to be studied in 7th and 8th]. In this grade band, students go from explaining theme to analyzing it. Students progress from examining character perspective to working with complex narrator types. Students are also being introduced to literature from historic time periods. This framework should help students in building a body of knowledge useful in being able to interpret multiple layers of meaning. In middle school, those periods are as follows:

- Colonial and Early National Period (1600–1830) American Literature
- Romantic Period (1790–1870)
- Realism and Naturalism Period (1870–1930)
- Modernist Period (1910–1945)
- Contemporary Period (1945–present)

The FLDOE’s “Parent Guide for Eighth Grade English-Language Arts” is an excellent resource for the specifics of the ELA standards as they pertain to this grade level. You can access that document via this link: <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/pgg-8-standards.pdf>.

What will 8th Grade students be reading and discussing?

The standards and texts below will be covered by ALL 8th grade ELA teachers in SJCS D. Moreover, teachers have autonomy to use additional, appropriate supplemental texts, lessons, and projects to address the quarter’s spotlight standards as well as to introduce and review the other standards for the grade-level.

Quarter	Spotlight B.E.S.T. Standards	Spotlight Texts
Quarter 1:	<p>Reading Strand: ELA.8.R.1.1: Literary Elements ELA.8.R.1.2: Theme ELA.8.R.1.3: Perspective and Point of View ELA.8.R.2.1: Structure (text sections/features)</p> <p>Communication Strand- Writing: ELA.8.C.1.4: Expository (Informational) Writing</p> <p>Communication Strand- Grammar ELA.8.C.3.1: Passive and Active Voice</p> <p>Vocabulary Strand: ELA.8.V.1.1: Academic Vocabulary ELA.8.V.1.2: Morphology ELA.8.V.1.3: Context and Connotation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allen Poe—short story ● “The Monkey’s Paw” by W.W. Jacobs—short story ● <i>Phineas Gage</i> (excerpt) by John Fleischman—biography ● “Cover Letter to LucasArts” by Tim Schafer—letter

<p>Quarter 2:</p>	<p>Reading Strand: ELA.8.R.1.4: Poetry ELA.8.R.3.1: Interpreting Figurative Language ELA.8.R.3.2: Paraphrasing and Summarizing ELA.8.R.3.3: Comparative Reading</p> <p>Communication Strand- Writing: ELA.8.C.1.4: Expository (Informational) Writing</p> <p>Communication Strand- Grammar: ELA.8.C.3.1: Semicolons</p> <p>Vocabulary Strand: ELA.8.V.1.1: Academic Vocabulary ELA.8.V.1.2: Morphology ELA.8.V.1.3: Context and Connotation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Invisible One—folktale retold by Idries Shah • “Slam, Dunk, and Hook” by Yusef Komunyakaa—poetry • The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost—poetry
<p>Quarter 3</p>	<p>Reading Strand: ELA.8.R.2.1: Structure (text structures) ELA.8.R.2.2: Central Idea ELA.8.R.2.3: Author’s Purpose and Perspective ELA.8.R.2.4: Argument ELA.8.R.3.4: Understanding Rhetoric</p> <p>Communication Strand- Writing: ELA.8.C.1.3: Argumentative (Persuasive) Writing</p> <p>Communication Strand- Grammar: ELA.8.C.1.4: Voice and Mood in Verbs</p> <p>Vocabulary Strand: ELA.8.V.1.1: Academic Vocabulary ELA.8.V.1.2: Morphology ELA.8.V.1.3: Context and Connotation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Address to the Nation on the Explosion of the Space Shuttle <i>Challenger</i>” by Ronald Reagan—speech • “Gaming Communities”—opposing viewpoint articles • “Speech to the Ohio Women’s Conference: Ain’t I a Woman?” by Sojourner Truth—speech • “Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech” by Elie Wiesel- speech
<p>Quarter 4</p>	<p>All B.E.S.T. Standards for the 8th grade year will be reviewed and/or covered in this quarter.</p> <p>Communication Strand- Writing: ELA.8.C.1.2: Narrative Writing and/or ELA.8.C.4.1: Researching and Using Info</p>	<p>School-based teacher teams will decide on the works they use in this quarter; please contact your student’s teacher for specifics.</p>

What longer works might 8th grade students study?

In addition to the prescribed works listed above, teachers may choose to teach longer works in their entirety. The list below comprises those works approved by the FLDOE for 8th grade study. If a work is neither a textbook offering (StudySync) nor a B.E.S.T. Sample Extended-Length Text, then teachers will have completed the novel approval process before using the work for whole-class instruction.

StudySync Novel Studies

- *A Night to Remember*, Lord
- *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*, Frank
- *Across Five Aprils*, Hunt
- *Children of Blood and Bone*, Adeyemi
- *Great Tales and Poems*, Poe
- *Inside Out & Back Again*, Lai
- *I Will Always Write Back*, Alifirenka, Ganda, Welch
- *Long Walk to Freedom*, Mandela
- *Monster*, Myers
- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Douglass
- *Refugee*, Gratz
- *Ten Days in a Mad-House*, Bly
- *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Twain
- *The Dark is Rising*, Cooper
- *The Diary of Anne Frank: A Play*, Goodrich, Hackett, Kesselman
- *The Call of the Wild*, London
- *The Hobbit*, Tolkien
- *The Outsiders*, Hinton
- *The War of the Worlds*, Wells

B.E.S.T. Sample Extended-Length Texts

- *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Stevenson
- *Rip Van Winkle*, Irving
- *Shane*, Schaefer
- *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*
- *Swiss Family Robinson*, Wyss
- *Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon*, Thimmesh
- *The Chosen*, Potok
- *The Princess and the Goblin*, MacDonald
- *The Wright Brothers: How They Invented the Airplane*, Freedman
- *Trapped*, Aronson