

LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
English Language Arts Learning Expectations: Grade 8

Massachusetts
Standards

Strand:
Writing

Students will be able
to:

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. *(Standard 4)*

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. *(Standard 10)*

Big Ideas

- Through forms of writing, writers develop their ability to reason, communicate and defend ideas, and convey an experience to their audience.
- Writers who know how to change the organizational structures, word choice and tones of the texts they create are better able to convey the messages they intend.
- Effective writing requires both imaginative thinking and the ability to step back and critique one's creation in order to improve it.
- Use of standard English conventions are essential to a writer's success in conveying a message.
- Research encourages a deep and thorough exploration of a subject area in ways that build lasting knowledge and result in a more thorough understanding of the topic than that gained solely from individual sources or general reading.

Key Outcomes

Students will demonstrate an understanding of **writing** by:

- Writing arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. *(Standard 1)*
- Writing informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. *(Standard 2)*
- Writing narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. *(Standard 3)*
- Writing short narratives, poems, scripts, or personal reflections that demonstrate understanding of the literary concepts of irony or parody, *(Standard 3A)*

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the **writing process** by:

- Developing and strengthening writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. *(Standard 5)*
- Using technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and

ideas efficiently, as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
(*Standard 6*)

Students will demonstrate an understanding of **investigation to gain new insight** by:

- Conducting short research projects to answer a question (*including a self-generated question*), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration. (*Standard 7*)
- Gathering relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assessing the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quoting or paraphrasing the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. (*Standard 8*)
- Drawing evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (*Standard 9*)

Essential Knowledge and Skills

Students will:

Opinion (*Standard 1*)

- Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Informative (*Standard 2*)

- Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (*e.g., headings*), graphics (*e.g., charts, tables*), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

Narrative (Standard 3)

- Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.
- Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Students will:

- Improve the level of detail and precision of written language and determine where to add imagery and sensory when revising writing
- Demonstrate a command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8 when editing for conventions
- Demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting
- Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “*Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new*”).
- Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “*Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced*”).
- Formulate research questions around a particular topic that guides the inquiry.
- Use a range of print and non-print sources (*atlases, data bases, electronic, online resources*) to locate information relevant to their purpose.
- Follow established criteria for evaluating the accuracy and trustworthiness of information.
- Locate specific information by using various tools (*indexes, table of contents, search tools*).
- Take notes on information contained in a variety of sources.
- Synthesize information gained from multiple sources and organize and present their research findings in a written form.
- Use an established format for documenting resources.