

Eighth Grade Literacy Benchmarks

Language Arts

(211-220)

Standard 1: Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process to write for a variety of purposes and audiences

Benchmark 8.1.1 Demonstrates prewriting skills

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Writing Process

- **Recognizes the steps of the writing process**
- **Identifies the process of revising**
- **Uses prewriting strategies to plan written work**
- **Uses organizing as a prewriting strategy**
- **Describes process of revision**
- **Identifies the form of writing that is most appropriate for a given purpose**
- **Selects writing form appropriate to topic and purpose**
- **Chooses persuasive writing as the most effective form for the given purpose**
- **Evaluates to determine what type of language is most appropriate for a given purpose**
- **Identifies suitable research questions**
- **Gathers research information from analyzing original documents**
- **Describes the writing tasks organized by a particular graphic organizer**
- **Identifies the main topic in an outline**
- **Interprets outlines**
- **Explains how and why outlines are used**
- **Recognizes the last step of the writing process within a given writing scenario**
- **Evaluates the level of detail and information appropriate for a given audience**
- **Uses clustering as a prewriting strategy**

Benchmark 8.1.2 Demonstrates composing skills

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Writing Process

- **Describes the characteristics of effective multiple-paragraph compositions**
- **Writes and introductory paragraph to introduce the main topic**
- **Defines simile**
- **Examines the use of similes in written text**
- **Identifies the use of metaphors**
- **Defines personification**
- **Identifies types of figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor, personification)**
- **Describes characteristics of descriptive writing**
- **Evaluates written passages for the use of descriptive words to clarify ideas**
- **Defines imagery**
- **Evaluates descriptive passages for the mood conveyed**
- **Identifies the thesis statement for a given passage**
- **Examines the use of similes in written text**
- **Examines the use of metaphor in written text**
- **Examines the use of personification in written text**
- **Evaluates passages for characteristics of descriptive writing**
- **Examines the use of imagery in poems**

- Examines the use of alliteration in poetry
- Examines the use of onomatopoeia in poems
- Defines hyperbole
- Defines idiom
- Evaluates the use of viewpoints as technique to convey personal style and voice

Benchmark 8.1.3 Demonstrates editing and proofreading skills

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Writing Process

- **Revises compositions for clarity in purpose**
- **Evaluates writing samples for descriptive word choice**
- **Evaluates word choice for the meaning or feeling it suggests (connotation, term not used)**
- **Identifies combining sentences as a revision technique**
- **Combines sentences to improve clarity by using a compound sentence**
- **Rewrites sentences in question form**
- **Revises and combines sentences using gerund phrases (e.g., Jon is a soccer player. Sue is a soccer player. Jon Plays for Lincoln High School. Sue plays for Jefferson High School. Jon and Sue are soccer players, Jon playing for Lincoln High School and Sue for Jefferson High School.).**
- **Revises sentences by using an adverb clause to combine sentences (e.g., Marie always practices the flute. She is an excellent flutist. Because Marie always practices the flute, she is an excellent flutist).**
- **Revises sentences to further character development (e.g., How could you revise the sentence to provide clues about John’s appearance?).**
- **Changes word order of sentences form first person to third person point of view**
- **Arranges word order of sentences into alternate forms by rephrasing adverb clauses**
- **Evaluates the syntax (word order, form) of sentences**
- **Determines the most appropriate thesis statement for a given scenario**
- **Analyzes writing to revise multiple- paragraph compositions**
- **Evaluates which sentence will best serve as a topic sentence for a given subject**
- **Identifies run-on sentences while editing work**
- **Edits for proper punctuation**
- **Edits a paragraph for spelling**
- **Edits a sentence for spelling**
- Understands that the process of revision includes revising for audience interest
- Uses the writing process to align content with purpose
- Distinguishes examples of thesis statements from other written text
- Recognizes examples of proofreading for grammar
- Uses editing symbols (spelling)
- Evaluates for pronoun and sentence revision

Benchmark 8.1.4 Uses appropriate forms of writing

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Writing Process

- **Analyzes writing samples to determine the author’s purpose (to persuade)**
- **Gives examples of narrative writing**
- **Chooses the most effective format for expository writing**
- **Describes the characteristic of expository text**
- **Describes the purpose of expository writing**
- **Classifies writing samples as examples of expository text**

- **Defines a “how to” essay**
- **Defines summary**
- **Defines poem**
- **Determines the rhyme scheme for a given poem**
- **Describes different forms of poems**
- **Identifies addresses using appropriate punctuation and abbreviations**
- **Identifies content appropriate for memos**
- **Identifies appropriate content for a research paper**
- **Selects comparison-contrast reasoning as the most effective method to organize writing for a given purpose**
- **Identifies cause/effect organizational patterns**
- **Chooses the best transition word for cause/effect paragraphs**
- **Explains how to best organize directions**
- **Defines plagiarism**
- **Describes the contents of a bibliography**
- **Describes the appropriate format for citing sources**
- Describes the purpose of different forms of workplace writing (e.g., resume, policy manual, memo)
- Recognizes ways to represent data
- Defines anecdote
- Classifies text as narrative writing
- Describes the purpose of expository writing
- Describes the format of reports
- Describes the purpose of thesis statements in report
- Uses the appropriate format for a persuasive electronic presentation
- Uses writing to respond to literature
- Uses counterarguments in persuasive essays
- Evaluates effectiveness of persuasive essays
- Identifies when poetry is an appropriate format
- Describes characteristics of epic poems
- Identifies addressing using appropriate punctuation and abbreviations
- Evaluates the characteristics of technical documents
- Recognizes the format of memos
- Identifies content appropriate for memos
- Selects a pamphlet as an appropriate format
- Describes characteristics of research papers
- Describes the contents of a bibliography in a research paper
- Identifies the pattern of organization used in a writing sample (sequence)
- Recognizes MLA format for citing sources
- Defines citing sources

Benchmark 8.1.5 Uses appropriate sentence forms in their writing

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Writing Process

- **Recognizes examples of inverted order in written sentences**
- **Identifies the two main parts of a sentence as subject and predicate**
- **Identifies the part of speech needed to complete a sentence**
- **Identifies run-on sentences**
- **Defines run-on sentences**
- **Identifies sentence fragments**
- **Evaluates the use of parallel structure in writing**
- **Identifies declarative sentences**

- **Defines a statement (declarative sentence, term not used)**
- **Classifies examples of declarative complex sentences (terms not used)**
- **Classifies sentences as declarative**
- **Classifies sentences as interrogative**
- **Classifies sentences as simple**
- **Identifies compound sentences**
- **Selects the conjunctive adverb “although” to create a compound sentence**
- **Classifies sentences as compound**
- **Uses the conjunction “for” to create a compound sentence**
- **Uses the conjunction “so” to create a compound sentence**
- **Identifies components of complex sentences (independent clause)**
- **Identifies participial phrase in written compositions (term defined)**
- **Identifies prepositional phrases**
- **Defines verb phrase (predicate)**
- **Describes the word modified by a given prepositional phrase in a written composition**
- **Describes the function of a prepositional phrase in a written composition**
- **Uses verb phrases (predicates, terms not used) in written compositions**
- **Uses verb phrases in written compositions**
- **Identifies the main clause in a sentence**
- Identifies the predicate of a sentence
- Defines rhetorical question
- Classifies sentences as exclamations/exclamatory when ending punctuation is present
- Classifies sentences as imperative based on punctuation, word order, and content
- Defines compound sentences
- Uses complex sentences to expand ideas
- Identifies prepositional phrases
- Identifies participial phrase in written compositions
- Identifies appositive phrases in written compositions
- Recognizes examples of dependent clauses
- Identifies dependent clauses in written compositions
- Identifies independent clauses
- Identifies introductory clauses in written compositions

Benchmark 8.1.6 Demonstrates ability to develop paragraphs

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Writing Process

- **Selects the best topic sentence for a given paragraph**
- **Identifies how to make a topic sentence**
- **Identifies the topic sentence for a given paragraph when the topic sentence is not the first sentences of the paragraph**
- **Determines which details do not support the topic after determining the topic of a paragraph**
- **Evaluates the best way to develop a topic with supporting details after determining the topic of the paragraph**
- **Recognizes transitional words and phrases**
- **Organizes text into paragraphs with a clear beginning, middle, and ending using transitions, and logical sequencing**
- **Identifies the pattern of organization used in a writing sample (deductive)**
- **Identifies the pattern of organization used in a writing sample (inductive)**
- Identifies the topic sentence for a given paragraph when the topic sentence is not the first sentence of the paragraph

- Recognizes transitional words and phrases
- Uses clear transitional words and phrases in writing

Benchmark 8.1.7 Spells high-frequency, age appropriate words

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Writing Process

- **Applies the spelling rules for words containing the vowel combination ei or ie**
- **Identifies the correct spelling of identified words within written compositions**
- **Identifies the correct spelling of commonly misspelled words of foreign, medical, or scientific origin in written compositions**
- **Identifies the correct use of then/than**
- **Identifies the proper use of the words except and accept within sentences**
- **Identifies commonly misspelled word (Latin root, in a word list**
- **Forms the plural of nouns**
- **Forms the plural of nouns ending in f (e.g., calf, half, belief)**
- **Applies the spelling rules for pluralization of words ending with –f or –few**
- **Recognizes correct spelling of words containing suffixes**
- **Recognizes incorrect spelling of words containing suffixes**
- Identifies words that contain double consonants that are misspelled
- Identifies commonly misspelled words in a word list (words of foreign origin, Latin root words)
- Identifies the correct plural of nouns of foreign origin (piano)
- Forms the irregular plural of nouns in written compositions where the plural takes the same form as the singular (e.g., deer, fish, sheep)
- Applies the spelling rules for words containing roots ending with ey to identify the correct spelling of words in written compositions

Previously Learned Vocabulary: alphabetical order, analysis, analyze, application, cliché, compose, contrast, documentation, expository paragraph, expository writing, format, how-to essay, imagery, independent clause, infinitive phrase, journalistic, limerick, main clause, modifier, noun phrase, onomatopoeia, organization, participial phrase, persuasive argument, pre-write, prewriting, rhetorical question, to explain, transition, verse

New Vocabulary: allegory, appositive, epic poem, infinitive, literary response, plagiarize, tragedy

Standard 2: Uses the grammatical and mechanical conventions of written language

Benchmark 8.2.1 Uses basic sentence patterns

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Grammar

- **Labels the parts of speech found in simple sentences (term not used)**

Benchmark 8.2.2 Uses correct forms of nouns

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Grammar

- **Defines proper noun**
- **Classifies nouns as abstract**
- **Identifies the possessive nouns in written composition**
- **Defines direct object**

- **Recognizes the plural of compound nouns (e.g., passersby)**
- **Determines whether a noun is singular or plural based on subject-verb agreement**
- Recognizes the plural of compound nouns (e.g., passersby)
- Recognizes the plural forms of nouns, including compound nouns

Benchmark 8.2.3 Uses correct forms of pronouns

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Grammar

- **Recognizes when the possessive pronoun “their” needs to be used**
- **Identifies subjective pronouns (nominative, term not used; (e.g.; I, you, he, she, it, we they) in written compositions**
- **Uses subjective pronouns (nominative, term not used) we, he, she, and they correctly in written compositions**
- **Uses the subjective pronouns (nominative, term not used), he, she, and we correctly in written compositions as part of a compound subject**
- **Uses indefinite pronouns (term not used) appropriately in written compositions**
- **Recognizes correct usage of reflexive pronouns (term not used)**
- Defines reflexive pronouns
- Recognizes correct usage of third person pronouns
- Uses indefinite pronouns appropriately in written compositions
- Uses interrogative pronouns correctly in written compositions

Benchmark 8.2.4 Uses correct forms of verbs

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Grammar

- **Identifies present participles in written compositions (e.g., is running)**
- **Uses a consistent tense form in writing with irregular verbs (terms not used)**
- **Uses the irregular verb (term not used) lie in written compositions**
- **Uses the past perfect and present perfect tenses of irregular verbs (terms not used) in written compositions**
- **Recognizes the correct use of irregular verbs**
- Recognizes examples of verbs used as nouns
- Recognizes appropriate use of active verbs
- Identifies participles (verbs used as adjectives) as adjectives in written compositions
- Uses helping verbs to form the past tense using passive voice in written compositions (e.g., It was colored green.)

Benchmark 8.2.5 Uses correct forms of adjectives

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Grammar

- **Recognizes examples of verbs used as adjectives**
- **Defines adjectives**
- **Classifies words as adjectives**
- **Recognizes that the suffix –er means more when used with an adjective (term not used)**
- **Uses comparative forms of adjectives (terms not used) correctly**
- Recognizes that good is usually used as an adjective, not as an adverb
- Defines adjective
- Identifies comparative adjectives (e.g., er, more, less) in written compositions
- Defines comparative adjectives
- Defines superlative adjectives

Benchmark 8.2.6 Uses correct forms of adverbs

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Grammar

- **Uses adverbs to make comparisons in written compositions**
- **Recognizes incorrect forms of adverbs in written compositions**
- **Identifies adverbs in written compositions**
- **Uses well and good correctly in written compositions**
- **Recognizes examples of misplaced modifiers**
- Defines adverb
- Identifies conjunctions in written compositions

Benchmark 8.2.7 Uses phrases and clauses correctly

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Grammar

- **Uses verb phrases correctly in written compositions**
- **Recognizes prepositional phrases (when, where, how)**

Benchmark 8.2.8 Uses conjunctions and prepositions correctly

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Grammar

- **Identifies conjunctions in writing**
- **Identifies prepositions in written phrases**
- Identifies prepositions in written phrases

Benchmark 8.2.9 Uses negatives and interjections correctly

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Grammar

- **Uses negatives correctly in written compositions**
- **Recognizes the incorrect usage of double negatives in written compositions**
- Recognizes the incorrect usage of double negatives in written compositions

Benchmark 8.2.10 Uses appropriate end punctuation

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Mechanics

- **Uses periods to punctuate sentences containing subordinating conjunctions**
- **Uses an exclamation mark to end exclamatory sentences**
- **Uses exclamation marks to punctuate exclamations beginning with what and how**
- **Identifies correct use of parentheses in a sentence**
- **Identifies multiple punctuation marks needed in a sentence**
- **Recognizes that sentences which make a statement are declarative sentences**
- **Uses periods to punctuate sentences containing subordinating conjunctions**
- **Recognizes that sentences which make a statement are declarative sentences**
- **Uses periods to punctuate sentences containing subordinating conjunctions**

Benchmark 8.2.11 Uses commas correctly

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Mechanics

- **Recognizes incorrect placement of commas to delimit introductory phrases and clauses**
- **Recognizes correct placement of commas to delimit introductory clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction**
- **Recognizes the correct placement of commas to delimit explanatory words or phrases**

- **Recognizes the incorrect placement of commas to delimit explanatory words or phrases**
- **Recognizes correct placement of commas to delimit appositives**
- **Recognizes correct usage of commas in direct quotations**
- **Recognizes incorrect usage of commas in punctuation of locations (e.g., Des Moines, Iowa)**
- **Uses commas to enclose explanatory words or phrases**
- **Uses commas to separate contrasted elements within a sentence**
- **Uses commas to separate dependent clauses in compound, complex sentences**
- **Uses commas to set off interruptions**
- **Uses commas to set off unnecessary phrases**
- Recognizes incorrect placement of commas to delimit introductory phrases and clauses
- Recognizes incorrect placement of commas to delimit introductory clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction
- Recognizes incorrect placement of commas to delimit appositives
- Recognizes incorrect placement of commas to delimit interruptions
- Uses commas to set off dates in written compositions (e.g., On July 1, 1981,)
- Uses commas to separate contrasted elements within a sentence
- Uses commas to separate coordinate adjectives
- Uses commas to separate parenthetical elements within a sentence
- Uses commas to set off interruptions

Benchmark 8.2.12 Uses marks of punctuation correctly

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Mechanics

- **Recognizes or selects the correctly punctuated sentence containing multiple rules of punctuation(e.g., commas, periods, quotation marks)**
- **Uses periods to punctuate abbreviations**
- **Uses a colon to introduce a list**
- **Identifies correct use of a semicolon in a sentence**
- **Identifies correct use of parentheses in a sentence**
- **Recognizes incorrect use of a hyphen in a sentence**
- **Recognizes correct usage of quotation marks and ending punctuation within quotations**
- **Recognizes correct usage of quotation marks to delimit dialogue broken up by explanatory phrases (term not used; e.g., he said, she explained)**
- **Recognizes correct usage of double and single quotations marks to distinguish a quotation within a quotation (terms not used)**
- **Recognizes correct usage of quotation marks to punctuate the titles of poems, short stories, songs, and chapters**
- **Recognizes that apostrophe s is not used to show pluralization**
- **Discriminates between apostrophes used in contractions and apostrophes used to show possession**
- **Analyzes the use of apostrophes in written compositions**
- **Uses underlining (italics) in titles of books**
- **Uses underlining (italics) in titles of magazines**
- Recognizes or selects the correctly punctuated sentence containing multiple rules of punctuation (e.g., commas, periods, quotations marks)
- Recognizes correct usage of quotations marks and ending punctuation within quotations

- Recognizes that titles of poems, short stories, songs, and chapters are punctuated with quotations marks, not italics or underlining
- Uses underlining (italics) in titles of full-length plays

Benchmark 8.2.13 Applies the rules of capitalization

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Mechanics

- Recognizes correct capitalization of names of organizations and groups
- Recognizes correct/incorrect capitalization of names of schools and institutions
- Recognizes that names of schools and institutions should be capitalized
- Recognizes correct capitalization of names of departments of government
- Recognizes that names of monuments/works of art are capitalized
- Recognizes that names of nationalities and languages should be capitalized
- Recognizes that names of counties should be capitalized (e.g., Black Hawk County)
- Recognizes correct capitalization of titles of stories
- Distinguishes between directional words (e.g., west, south) that are used as place names and those that are used as directions, and capitalizes appropriately
- Capitalizes names of companies
- Capitalizes titles of books correctly
- Capitalizes titles of works of art correctly
- Recognizes correct capitalization of the closing of letters (term not used)
- Recognizes correct/incorrect capitalization of direct quotation (term not used)
- Recognizes or selects the sentence that contains correct multiple capitalization rules (e.g., first word of a sentence, geographical locations, nationalities)
- Identifies multiple words within a sentence or passage that need capitalization (e.g., first word of a sentence, geographical locations, nationalities)
- Recognizes multiple examples of incorrect capitalization
- Recognizes correct capitalization of titles of songs
- Recognizes correct capitalization of dividend quotations in which one sentence is divided
- Capitalizes geological eras
- Recognizes or selects the sentence that contains correct multiple capitalization rules (e.g., first word of a sentence, geographical locations, nationalities)

Benchmark 8.2.14 Forms letters and numbers correctly

Goal Area (s) covered under the benchmark: Mechanics

Previously Learned Vocabulary: common noun, modifier, noun clause, present participle

New Vocabulary: active voice, apostrophe, predicate noun, reflexive pronoun, underlining

Previously Learned Signs and symbols: ‘ apostrophe

Standard 3: Uses a variety of print and non-print resources to locate and gather information

Benchmark 8.3.1 Selects print and non-print sources appropriate to the task (e.g., encyclopedia, dictionaries, periodicals, almanacs, atlases, and primary sources)

Goal Area (s) covered under this benchmark: Information Gathering

- **Evaluates electronic informational sources (Internet; web-based library resources)**
- **Identifies and uses structure of bibliographies in informational text**
- **Describes how an index is organized**
- Evaluates electronic informational sources (Internet; web-based library resources)
- Identifies and uses structure of bibliographies in informational text
- Describes how an index is organized

Benchmark 8.3.2 Uses strategies to gather and organize (e.g., note taking, graphic organizers, parts of a book, timelines, outlines, bibliography, direct quotes)

Goal Area (s) covered under this benchmark: Information Gathering

- **Underlining and highlighting important information**
- **Note taking**
- **Uses graphic organizers**
- **Identifies and utilizes parts of a book**
- **Uses and creates timelines**
- **Uses and creates outlines**

Previously Learned Vocabulary: secondary source

Standard 6: Uses speaking and listening strategies for a variety of purposes

Benchmark 8.6.1 Uses nonverbal skills to communicate (e.g. eye contact, facial expression, gestures, posture)

Goal Area (s) covered under this benchmark: Speaking and Listening

Benchmark 8.6.2 Uses verbal skill to communicate (e.g. pitch, tone, stress, juncture, projection, word choice)

Goal Area (s) covered under this benchmark: Speaking and Listening

Benchmark 8.6.3 Uses active listening skills (e.g. faces speaker, asks questions, paraphrases, gives feedback)

Goal Area (s) covered under this benchmark: Speaking and Listening

Benchmark 8.6.4 Listens for different purposes (e.g. gain information, be entertained, understand a different perspective)

Goal Area (s) covered under this benchmark: Speaking and Listening

Benchmark 8.6.5 Speaks for different purposes (e.g. gain information, be entertained, understand a different perspective)

Goal Area (s) covered under this benchmark: Speaking and Listening

Benchmark 8.6.6 Assumes a variety of roles in small groups (e.g. listener, leader, facilitator, contributor)

Goal Area (s) covered under this benchmark: Speaking and Listening

