

Grade 8 Language Arts TEKS

Overview

In Grade 8, language arts students demonstrate mastery of skills introduced in earlier grades. They read a wide variety of texts for different purposes. Using the writing process, students write for a variety of purposes in order to persuade, inform, or entertain. They produce error-free compositions by applying knowledge of usage, spelling, and punctuation. The goal is to produce well-written, publishable pieces. Students use proper citations from multiple resources in research reports, and create both oral and written presentations that are enhanced by visuals and media.

Listening and Speaking: Students will

- Analyze a speaker's message for content, persuasive technique, and tone.
- Distinguish between a speaker's opinion and provable fact.
- Listen to models of oral reading.
- Identify how language reflects regions and culture.
- Listen in order to learn, take notes, and organize and summarize ideas.
- Listen in order to connect personal experiences.
- Communicate effectively in a variety of settings such as interviewing, reporting, and requesting and providing information.

Reading: Students will

- Read fluently, regularly and independently with clear understanding for a variety of purposes and text.
- Build an extensive vocabulary through reading and word study.
- Offer observations, make connections, react, speculate, interpret, and raise questions in response to text.
- Use study strategies, including outlines, timelines, graphics, summaries, and paraphrases, to recall important ideas from text.
- Read to increase knowledge of their own culture, the culture of others, and the common elements of all cultures.
- Recognize how authors use form and literary techniques to complement the ideas of the text.
- Compare a print version with a live video performance of a literary work.
- Use the knowledge of the author's use of literary devices to understand a variety of forms of literature such as drama, novels, short stories, poetry, myth, and fable.

Writing: Students will

- Follow the writing process both independently and with others to revise and refine selected drafts.
- Publish for general and specific audiences for a variety of purposes, including persuasion, information, and entertainment.
- Apply the rules of capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and correct spelling to create error-free compositions.
- Evaluate their own writing and the writing of others using criteria that is appropriate for each purpose.
- Identify challenges that authors face and strategies they use to write different types of texts.

Viewing and Representing: Students will

- Describe, interpret, and use visual media to compare ideas and points of view.
- Analyze, critique, evaluate, and contrast the messages found in visual media.
- Produce class newspapers, multimedia reports, and/or short films.

Tips for Parents

- Read novels, newspapers, magazines, with your child and discuss connections to your child's and family's everyday life.
- Have family discussions about what your child is learning in school on a daily basis.
- Ask your child questions about his or her writing assignments. Have them read some of their written work aloud to you. Offer praise and helpful comments rather than criticism.
- Check daily to see that your child has written down his/her assignments in student agendas, notebooks, calendars, or other assignment books.
- Encourage your child to read books they are interested in and help them locate reading materials on their reading level. (Check with your child's teacher or a librarian for suggestions.)
- Visit the library or bookstores regularly so that your child becomes comfortable searching for materials that interest them.
- Make use of library and retail video resources, and encourage your child to view videos about new topics (science/history/documentaries)
- Seek out good sources for recommended reading. For example, The Young Adult Roundtable of the Texas Library Association for Grades 6-9 generates a reading list every year.
- Some titles from lists, that your child may be interested in, include:
 - Avi. **Midnight Magic**. Scholastic Press. 1999.
 - Creech, Sharon. **Walk Two Moons**. Harpercollins Juvenile Books. 1994.
 - Flake, Sharon G. **The Skin I'm In**. Hyperion. 1998.
 - Lowry, Lois. **Gathering Blue**. Houghton Mifflin. 2000.
 - Miller, Marvin. **You Be the Jury** (Jigsaw Puzzle Mysteries). Scholastic Press. 1991-1992.
 - Miller, Marvin. **You Be the Detective** (Jigsaw Puzzle Mysteries). Scholastic Press. 1991-1992.
 - Peck, Richard. **Bel-Air Bambi and the Mall Rats**. NY DELL/Laurel. 1995.
 - Rowling, J. K. **Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone**. Arthur A. Levine Books. 1998.
 - Sacher, Louis. **Holes**. Frances Foster Books, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 1998.
 - Soto, Gary. **Taking Sides**. Harcourt Brace. 1991.
 - Spinelli, Jerry. **Stargirl**. Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.