



Reading, Writing, and Communicating for Middle School

The reading, writing, and communicating standards in the middle school grades ask students to be critical readers of complex literary and informational texts. The standards require that students develop the writing skills necessary to convey their experience in the world, to produce thoughtful analyses of academic and real-world topics, and to develop well-reasoned arguments on relevant topics in their lives. The standards foster opportunities for students to work collaboratively with others as they develop the literacy skills to be academically successful and prepared for life after high school.

Expectations for 6th Grade Students:

- **Oral Expression and Listening:** Speak and use multimedia to present claims and findings to an audience, placing ideas in a logical order and supporting the main idea/theme with strong details and facts; actively listen to speakers in order to explain and interpret information and to identify supported and unsupported claims that may be made; work collaboratively in a variety of group settings by being prepared, listening actively, and sharing ideas.
- **Reading for All Purposes:** Read literary, informational, and persuasive texts from a variety of authors; summarize, analyze, and evaluate themes, characters, and plot in literature or key ideas, claims, and events in nonfiction; examine how text structure, point of view, and word choice affect the text's meaning, while being sure to use textual evidence to support explanations.
- **Writing and Composition:** Use technology to shape, produce, and publish grammatically correct writing that makes an argument, explains or analyzes a topic, and includes an introduction, logical development, and a thoughtful and relevant concluding statement; write narratives that develop real or imagined experiences by starting with an interesting opening, using narrative techniques such as description and dialogue while demonstrating command over different stages of writing (planning, revising, and editing).
- **Research Inquiry and Design:** Conduct short research projects to

Throughout 6th Grade You May Find Students:

- Collaborating in groups to explore how folktales, myths, and fables change across cultures and time; defining the characteristics and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of these literary genres; exploring how literature expresses ideas about the place and time in which they are written; studying plays, stories, and poems not just for what they say but how the authors say it.
- Gathering, interpreting, and synthesizing information regarding how past civilizations told their stories to understand how current societies and cultures tell stories; contributing writing and multimedia texts to a class wiki or blog dedicated to a subject; participating in round table discussions, literature circles, or other groups to debate topics and/or analyze texts; composing shared pieces of writing.
- Investigating community-based or local stories that reflect culture and identity; composing photo essays and accompanying pieces of short, creative nonfiction; writing personal narratives that reflect an understanding of their relationship with others in a

answer a question, gathering evidence from several sources and refocusing the question when needed; evaluate arguments and specific claims that are made in order to figure out which claims are supported by evidence and which are not.

Expectations for 7th Grade Students:

- **Oral Expression and Listening:** Speak and use multimedia to present claims and findings while emphasizing major points in a focused, clear manner with strong descriptions, facts, details, and examples; analyze a speaker's main ideas and supporting details and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study; collaborate in discussions, listen actively, and pose questions.
- **Reading for All Purposes:** Read literary, informational, and persuasive texts from a variety of sources and authors; summarize, analyze, and evaluate different themes, characters, key ideas/events, points of view and claims; analyze multimedia adaptations and fictional vs. historical accounts of an event; analyze the impact word choice and text structures have on meaning; cite several pieces of textual evidence in support of all analyses.
- **Writing and Composition:** Use technology to shape, produce, and publish grammatically correct writing that makes an argument or explains the analysis of a topic; craft writing that includes an introduction, logical development, and a concluding statement; write narratives that develop real or imagined experiences through the use of an engaging opening, narrative techniques that capture the action, and a conclusion that effectively ends the piece.
- **Research Inquiry and Design:** Conduct short research projects to answer a question and generate additional focus questions; gather information from several sources; use search terms effectively; assess the credibility of sources; follow a standard format for citation; evaluate the soundness of reasoning and the

neighborhood, community, or culture.

- Researching claims that companies make about their products and business practices; identifying which claims are legitimate and which are not; writing a letter or review either praising or questioning a company's policies.

Throughout 7th Grade You May Find Students:

- Reading works of literature in order to develop an understanding of the techniques authors use to develop characters, reveal conflict, and express universal themes; doing research to understand how the media uses words and images to influence perceptions and shape behavior around themes and ideas; analyzing how information is structured and delivered in various forms and using that understanding of the writer's craft to make informational brochures, write editorials, or produce public service announcement videos.
- Researching and discussing relevant issues, in collaborative groups, in order to write a narrative from the perspective of a child/teenager from another culture; writing personal narratives to convey their own experiences regarding a relevant issue, using imagery and dialogue to develop narrative effects; writing in different genres and using multimedia to share their narratives as an audio or video recording for a class website geared towards raising awareness about relevant teen issues.
- Comparing and contrasting a particular text with a different version of the text (film, television, play); analyzing each medium's portrayal of a subject, explaining the similarities and differences; analyzing and writing an informational essay on the decisions authors and directors make in producing different versions.

relevance/sufficiency of evidence.

Expectations for 8th Grade Students:

- **Oral Expression and Listening:** Speak and use multimedia to clarify information, strengthen claims, and add interest while emphasizing significant points in a focused and clear manner; use relevant evidence, sound reasoning, and well-chosen details; analyze a speaker's purpose as it relates to the information provided; identify when irrelevant evidence is introduced; collaborate in discussions, listen actively to group members' contributions, and pose relevant and thoughtful questions.
- **Reading for All Purposes:** Read a variety of literary and nonfiction texts; summarize, analyze, and evaluate themes and the relationship between characters, plot, and setting in literature; analyze key ideas, people, events, and claims in nonfiction; analyze the impact of word choice on meaning and tone; explain how authors use different points of view to create mystery, humor, or conflict and use different structures to organize texts; recognize the extent to which filmed, staged, or multimedia versions stay true to an original text; cite evidence to strongly support an analysis.
- **Writing and Composition:** Use technology to shape, produce, and publish grammatically correct writing that makes an argument or analyzes a topic; craft writing that introduces what is to follow, provides information that is meaningfully organized, and offers a concluding statement that logically follows from the information presented; write narratives of real or imagined experiences by establishing a setting/context, a point of view, and by using narrative techniques such as dialogue, imagery, pacing for effect.
- **Research and Reasoning:** Conduct short research projects to answer a question and generate additional focus questions; gather information from several sources; use search terms effectively; assess the credibility of sources; follow a standard format for citation; evaluate the soundness of reasoning and the relevance/sufficiency of evidence.

Throughout 8th Grade You May Find Students:

- Engaging in inquiry around a big question like: "How can social media both alienate individuals and create community?"; conducting research that generates questions and that gathers information from texts, the Internet, and community members in order to understand that multiple points of view exist on a topic; participating in debates and collaborative discussions to make connections and synthesize information; delivering individual or group research findings to inform or persuade an audience.
- Reading novels, shorter works of literature (stories, poems, fairy tales, myths, poetry), and informational articles that all addresses the same topic/theme in order to understand how authors of different texts may structure and use language to uniquely explore that topic/theme; using knowledge of different types of texts to create multi-genre pieces (poems, editorials, cartoons, letters) to express their understanding of the topic under study.
- Using web-based resources to research information and interact with others (both within and beyond their own community) via blogs, wikis, and Skype; publishing writings or multimedia presentations.

