

Grade 8

Key Ideas and Details

Online MCA: 23–34 items

Paper MCA: 27–41 items

Grade 8 Standard 1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Standard Specifications

- Textual evidence may be explicitly stated or implied.
- Students may be required to cite specific textual evidence literally or to identify such evidence generally.
- Items include, but are not limited to, making inferences, generalizations, and predictions; drawing conclusions; recognizing cause/effect relationships; comparing and contrasting; identifying relevant details; distinguishing between fact and opinion.
- Writing and speaking will be assessed at the classroom level only.

8.4.1.1 Literature

Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Item Specifications

- Items may require interpretation of symbolism.

8.5.1.1 Informational Text

Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Item Specifications

- Items may require interpretation of symbolism.

Grade 8 Standard 2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Standard Specifications

- Items may encompass either parts of a text (e.g., determine the central idea/main idea of one or more paragraphs, a section, a verse, etc.) or an entire text.

- Items may assess central idea, theme, central message or main idea. Any of these terms may be used when referencing an entire text or an extended section of a text.
- Items may also assess identification of topic and/or subject.
- Items may use the term *author's message* when assessing the central or main idea the author intended to convey to the reading audience. (Items may also use this term in conjunction with and/or when assessing author's point-of-view (see Standard 6).
- The terms *central concept* or *central issue* may also be used.
- *Key supporting details and ideas* are considered relevant, or specific, details and ideas.
- Items may require summarizing or paraphrasing.
- Items may require distinguishing fact from opinion.
- Item may require recognizing similarities and differences in ideas or themes.

8.4.2.2 Literature

Determine a theme or central idea of a text, including those by and about Minnesota American Indians, and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

Item Specifications

- For the purpose of assessment, the term *by and about* should be interpreted as *by and/or about*.
- Passages and items are not limited to the cultural experience of Minnesota American Indians but may also include representation of the cultural experience of diverse cultures, groups, or communities within the United States and around the world.
- Items may address themes/central ideas that focus on matters other than cultural experience of specific groups, communities, or cultures.
- Items include, but are not limited to, character traits (emotions, motivations); methods of characterization (behavior, action, speech); characters' effect on plot (sequence of events), setting (time and place), and/or theme; comparison/contrast of characters; prediction of characters' likely action in the future; impact of setting on characters; and conflict within, between, and/or among characters.

8.5.2.2 Informational Text

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

Item Specifications

- Passages and items may include/address topics representing the cultural experience of Minnesota American Indians; however, items are not limited to the cultural experience of Minnesota American Indians.

- Items may address ideas that focus on the experience of diverse groups, communities, or cultures.
 - Items include, but are not limited to, character traits (emotions, motivations); methods of characterization (behavior, action, speech); characters' effect on plot (sequence of events), setting (time and place), and/or theme; comparison/contrast of characters; prediction of characters' likely action in the future; impact of setting on characters; and conflict within, between, and/or among characters.
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Grade 8 Standard 3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Standard Specifications

- For the purpose of assessment, in addition to their literal meaning, the terms *events* and *ideas* may include a consideration of literary elements and concepts—how they develop, interact, and/or shape a character (or an individual) or plot (or someone's story) over the course of a text.
- For the purpose of assessment, the term *individuals* may include inanimate or nonhuman subjects (characteristics, relationships, etc.).

8.4.3.3 Literature

Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

Item Specifications

- Items are not limited to analysis of dialogue or incidents.
- Items may address characterization in a poem as well as a story or drama.
- Items may address basic and/or complex characterization.
- When assessing characterization, items may include evaluation of:
 - character traits (emotions, motivations, attitudes, intentions)
 - methods of characterization (behavior/actions, dialogue/speech, thoughts)
 - characters' influence or effect on story/plot development (sequence of events, setting—time and place—and /or theme)
 - comparison/contrast of characters
 - conflict within, between, and/or among characters (including recognition of specific types of conflict such as person vs. person, person vs. society, person vs. self, person vs. nature, etc.)
 - impact of setting on characters
 - prediction of characters' likely action in the future
- Items may require the identification of main ideas or supporting ideas that aid in development of character, setting, or events—plot.

- Items may assess literary elements as stand-alone features (e.g., students may be required to identify the events that comprise the main plot, or students may be required to identify the setting of a story).
- Items may assess literary elements in relationship to one another (e.g., students may be required to understand how setting impacts conflict, how the sequence of events shapes the resolution, or how setting and plot work together to create mood, etc.).
- In the case of first person point-of-view where the narrator is a character in the passage, items may assess literary point-of-view.

8.5.3.3 Informational Text

Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

Item Specifications

- Items include, but are not limited to, understanding sequence of events and their effect on individuals; cause and effect; and prediction.
- Items may include analysis of the motivation of individuals—real people—and/or interpretation of their actions based on events.
- Items may address the author’s method of organization for nonfiction text or an individual’s method of evaluating a problem or concept (e.g., problem/solution; cause/effect; compare/contrast; chronological order; description).
- In the case of literary nonfiction presented as a narrative, such as a memoir, introduction of real people or characters and/or events and their development may be assessed via plot technique (i.e., exposition, rising action), etc.
- If an author uses literary style in informative text, items may assess literary elements such as mentioned above in item specifications for benchmark 8.4.3.3.

Craft and Structure

**Online MCA: 11–22 items
Paper MCA: 14–27 items**

Grade 8 Standard 4

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Standard Specifications

- Items are not developed from a predetermined list of words and phrases. Items arise from words and phrases appearing in context and are appropriate to the assessment of reading comprehension.
- *Tone* refers to the author’s attitude towards her/his subject. Author’s tone—as derived from specific words, phrases, figures of speech/figurative language—may be assessed under this benchmark.

- Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. Context may appear in close proximity to the word or phrase in question (i.e., in the same sentence, paragraph, or surrounding paragraphs) or it may be represented cumulatively throughout the text.
- Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).
- Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionary, glossary, or thesaurus), both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of a word or its part of speech.
- Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.
- Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.
- Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).
- Accurately use grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- Items may include, but are not limited to, identification of: imagery, synonyms, antonyms, multiple-meaning words and phrases, figures of speech/figurative language such as analogy, simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, irony, pun and paradox; analysis of: symbolism and samples and examples to arrive at meaning.

8.4.4.4 Literature

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

8.5.4.4 Informational Text

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

Grade 8 Standard 5

Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

Standard Specifications

- Analysis may require a consideration of a single text in its entirety.

- Items may compare or contrast components of a single text or components of more than one text (e.g., how one paragraph differs from another in function or purpose).
- Items may assess how the structure of the text contributes to the development of theme, setting, plot, topic, concept, and/or idea.
- Author’s and/or narrator’s tone—as it is made evident from structuring of text—may be assessed under this standard.
- Creation of mood—as it is made evident from structuring of text—may be assessed under this standard.
- Items may assess recognition of the impact or efficacy of text features such as photographs, illustrations, examples, captions, headings, graphics, charts, and tables.
- Items may assess author’s presentation of sequence of events or sequence of ideas.
- Considerations of text structure may also include the devices used to create lines of poetry (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter, rhyme, syllabication, alliteration, assonance, consonance).

8.4.5.5 Literature

Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

Item Specifications

- Items may assess distinguishing features of fiction, drama, or poetry.

8.5.5.5 Informational Text

Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.

Item Specifications

- The author’s sequencing of events may be a consideration in the author’s development of ideas.
- Items may address author’s method of organization for nonfiction text; problem/solution; cause/effect; compare/contrast; chronological order; classification; description.
- Because informational text can include literary nonfiction, considerations of text structure may also require evaluation of some literary techniques (e.g., the function of lines of poetry, either created by the author or quoted from another source to convey an idea or further illustrate a point).

Grade 8 Standard 6

Assess how point-of-view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Standard Specifications

- *Point-of-view* items assessed under this standard may include either the method of narration (i.e., literary point-of-view) or the author's perspective (i.e., author's point-of-view.) (Literary point-of-view items may also be assessed under benchmark 8.3).
- The terms *point-of-view* and *narration*, solely as they relate to the vantage point from which the author presents action of a story, are interchangeable
- The terms *author's point-of-view* and *author's perspective*, solely as they relate to the author's purpose, may be used.
- Items may use the term *author's message* in conjunction with and/or when assessing author's point-of-view or author's perspective. (Items may also use this term when assessing the central or main idea the author intended to convey to the reading audience. See Standard 2.)
- Items may assess the recognition of and/or the distinction among first-person, third-person limited, and third-person omniscient literary points-of-view.
- Author's choices, as they relate to author's purpose, include stylistic techniques that shape the author's message. These choices and techniques are therefore assessed under this standard. Considerations of the author's style include, but are not limited to, development of voice, word choice, syntax, use of different types of language (e.g., literal, figurative, satirical, poetic devices, imagery), etc.
- Author's and/or narrator's tone—as derived from author's style—may be assessed under this standard.
- Creation of mood—as derived from author's style—may be assessed under this standard.

8.4.6.6 Literature

Analyze how differences in the points-of-view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

Item Specifications

- Items may assess a character's point-of view/perspective.
- In addition to dramatic irony, items may include evaluation of how devices designed to affect the audience's point-of-view (e.g., ethos, pathos, and catharsis) help determine meaning and create mood.

8.5.6.6 Informational Text

Determine an author's point-of-view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

Item Specifications

- The terms *author's point-of-view* and *author's perspective*, solely as they relate to the author's purpose, are interchangeable. (In literary nonfiction, the author and the narrator may be—but are not necessarily—one and the same.)
- Items may assess the appropriateness and/or credibility of author's sources.

Grade 8 Standard 7

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

8.1.7.7 Literature

Assessed at classroom level only.

8.2.7.7 Informational Text

Assessed at classroom level only.

Grade 8 Standard 8

Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Standard Specifications

- *Validity of reasoning* refers to logicity or probability (i.e., whether something makes sense, for example an article discussing dinosaurs that gives an obviously incorrect historical time frame for their existence).
- *Relevance and sufficiency of evidence* refers to the author's credibility (i.e., whether her/his claims are supported by appropriate sources such as an article on a life-changing experience featuring quotations from an interview with the featured person).

8.4.8.8 Literature

Not applicable to literature.

8.5.8.8 Informational Text

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.

Item Specifications

- Items may assess the author's appropriate or inappropriate use of methods of argumentation (e.g., analogy, details and examples, use of authoritative sources, use of inductive and deductive reasoning, etc.).
- Recognition of effective persuasive argumentation versus argumentation containing bias.
- Items may assess basic fallacies of logic (e.g., stereotyping, hasty generalization, false analogy, emotional appeal, post hoc ergo propter hoc, false dilemma, etc.).

- Items may assess adequacy, accuracy and appropriateness of author's evidence and credibility of sources.
 - Items may assess the identification of author's use of fact versus opinion or the appropriateness of author's defense of facts or opinions.
 - Items may examine cause and effect relationships.
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Grade 8 Standard 9

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

8.1.9.9 Literature

Assessed at classroom level only.

8.2.9.9 Informational Text

Assessed at classroom level only.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

Grade 8 Standard 10

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

8.1.10.10 Literature

Assessed at classroom level only.

8.2.10.10 Informational Text

Assessed at classroom level only.