

## English Language Arts Grade 8

ALD	Standard	Novice	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced
Policy		The Level 1 student is below proficient in applying the English language arts/literacy knowledge/skills as specified in the North Dakota English Language Arts and Literacy (ELA) Content Standards. The student generally performs significantly below the standard for the grade level, is likely able to partially access grade-level content and engages with higher-order thinking skills with extensive support.	The Level 2 student is approaching proficient in applying the English language arts/literacy knowledge/skills as specified in the North Dakota English Language Arts and Literacy (ELA) Content Standards. The student generally performs slightly below the standard for the grade level, is likely able to access grade-level content and engages in higher-order thinking skills with some independence and support.	The Level 3 student is proficient in applying the English language arts/literacy knowledge/skills as specified in the North Dakota English Language Arts and Literacy (ELA) Content Standards. The student generally performs at the standard for the grade level, is able to access grade-level content and engages in higher-order thinking skills with some independence and minimal support.	The Level 4 student is highly proficient in applying the English language arts/literacy knowledge/skills as specified in the North Dakota English Language Arts and Literacy (ELA) Content Standards. The student generally performs significantly above the standard for the grade level, is able to access above grade-level content, and engages in higher-order thinking skills independently.
		For a range of grade-appropriate texts, the Level 1 student	For a range of grade-appropriate texts, the Level 2 student	For a range of grade-appropriate texts, the Level 3 student	For a range of grade-appropriate texts, high-complexity texts, the Level 4 student
<b>Reading: Literary/Fiction Text</b>					
Range	8.RL.1	reads carefully enough to basically understand text; cites textual evidence to support an analysis of what the text says explicitly; provides a basic retelling of the text.	reads closely to understand text; cites multiple examples of textual evidence to support an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text; provides a simple objective summary of the text.	reads closely to comprehend text; cites the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text; provides an objective summary of the text.	reads closely to interpret text; cites the textual evidence that most strongly supports a deep analysis of the text as well as complex inferences drawn from the text; provides a comprehensive objective summary of the text.
Range	8.RL.2	identifies a theme or central idea of a text; identifies characters, setting, and plot.	identifies a theme or central idea of a text; analyzes characters, setting, and plot.	determines a theme or central idea of a text and analyzes its development over the course of a text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot.	determines a theme or central idea and analyzes its development over the course of a text; evaluates its relationship to the narrative elements.
Range	8.RL.3	identifies specific lines of dialogue or incidents in a story, poem, or drama that propel the action and reveal aspects of the character.	describes how specific lines of dialogue or incidents in a story, poem, or drama propel the action and reveal aspects of the character.	analyzes how specific lines of dialogue or incidents in a story, poem, or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of the character, or prompt a decision.	analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of an author's use of dialogue or incidents in a story, poem, or drama to propel the action, reveal aspects of the character, or prompt a decision.
Range	8.RL.4	With textual support (e.g., context clues, embedded definitions), identifies the denotative meaning of words and phrases.	With textual support (e.g., context clues, embedded definitions), determines the meaning of words and phrases, including figurative and connotative meanings; describes the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. (Figurative language may include simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification; sounds may include onomatopoeia, rhyme, rhythm.)	determines the meaning of words and phrases, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyzes the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. (Figurative language may include simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification; sounds may include onomatopoeia, rhyme, rhythm)	evaluates the impact of words and phrases, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyzes and evaluates the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. (Figurative language may include simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification; sounds may include onomatopoeia, rhyme, rhythm.)
Range	8.RL.5	compares and contrasts the content of two texts.	compares and contrasts the structure of two or more texts, describing the connection to their meaning and style.	compares and contrasts the structure of two or more texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.	compares and contrasts the structure of two or more texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style and evaluating their effectiveness.

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Range	8.RL.6	describes the differences in the point of view of the characters and the reader in a text.	explains how differences in the point of view of the characters and the reader affect the text.	explains how differences in the point of view of the characters and the reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) creates effects such as suspense or humor in the text.	analyzes how differences in the point of view of the characters and the reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) creates effects such as suspense or humor and evaluates their impact on the text.
Range	8.RL.7	describes the extent to which a film of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script.	describes the extent to which a film or a story of drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, identifying the choices made by the director or actors.	analyzes the extent to which a film of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.	analyzes the extent to which a film or a story of drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors and proposing alternate treatments (e.g. treatments created through the use of lighting, settings, sounds, interpretations, etc.).
Range	8.RL.9	identifies how a modern work of fiction draws on explicit patterns of events or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works.	identifies how a modern work of fiction draws on explicit themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works, including how the material is reimagined or made new.	analyzes how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works, including how the material is reimagined or made new.	cites textual evidence to evaluate how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works, including how the material is reimagined or made new.
<b>Reading: Informational/Nonfiction Text</b>					
Range	8.RI.1	reads carefully enough to basically understand text; cites textual evidence to support an analysis of what the text says explicitly; provides a basic retelling of the text.	reads closely to understand text; cites multiple examples of textual evidence to support an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text; provides a simple, objective summary of the text.	reads closely to comprehend text; cites the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text; provides an objective summary of the text.	reads closely to interpret text; cites the textual evidence that most strongly supports a deep analysis of the text as well as complex inferences drawn from the text; provides a comprehensive, objective summary of the text.
Range	8.RI.2	identifies a central idea of a text.	identifies a central idea of a text and follows its development over the course of a text.	determines a central idea of a text and analyzes its development over the course of a text, including its relationship to supporting ideas.	determines a central idea of a text and analyzes its development over the course of a text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; evaluates the strength of each supporting idea.
Range	8.RI.3	describes how a text makes explicit connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).	analyzes how a text makes explicit connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).	analyzes how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).	analyzes how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories) and evaluates their rhetorical impact on the text.
Range	8.RI.4	with textual support (e.g., context clues, embedded definitions), determines the literal meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text; identifies the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.	with textual support (e.g., context clues, embedded definitions), determines the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including common figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; describes the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	determines the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyzes the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	analyzes the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; evaluates the rhetorical effect of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

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Range	8.RI.5	identifies the structure the author uses to organize a text.	describes the structure the author uses to organize a text, including how sections, paragraphs, and/or particular sentences contribute to the whole.	analyzes the structure the author uses to organize a text, including how sections, paragraphs, and/or particular sentences contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.	evaluates the rhetorical effect of the structure the author uses to organize a text, including analysis of how sections, paragraphs, and/or particular sentences contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.
Range	8.RI.6	identifies an author's point of view or purpose in a text; identifies examples where the author acknowledges or responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	identifies an author's point of view or purpose in a text and describes how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	determines an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyzes how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	analyzes an author's point of view or purpose in a text and evaluates the rhetorical effect of how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
Range	8.RI.7	identifies a particular topic or idea presented in different media (e.g. print or digital text, video, multimedia).	compares and contrasts the use of different media (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) in presenting a particular topic or idea.	evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of using different media (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.	traces and evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of using different media (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea, providing specific evidence to support the evaluation.
Range	8.RI.8	traces the argument and specific claims in a text, describing the reasoning and evidence used to support the claims.	traces and evaluates the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient.	traces and evaluates the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognizes when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	explicitates and evaluates the argument and specific claims in a text, citing specific language in an assessment of whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognizes when irrelevant evidence is introduced and justifies reasoning.
Range	8.RI.9	describes a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic, and identifies where the texts disagree.	describes a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic, and identifies where the texts disagree on matters of fact.	analyzes a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic, and identifies where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.	analyzes a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic, and identifies where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation, evaluating the strength or reliability of each.

### Writing

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ALD	Standard	Novice	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced
Range	8.W.1	<p>writes arguments to support claim(s) (thesis statement) with reasons and evidence.</p> <p><b>a.</b> introduces claim(s), states opposing claims, and organizes reasons and evidence.</p> <p><b>b.</b> supports claims with evidence, and demonstrating a basic understanding of the topic or text.</p> <p><b>c.</b> uses basic transitions to link claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</p> <p><b>d.</b> attempts to establish a formal writing style.</p> <p><b>e.</b> provides a concluding statement or section.</p>	<p>writes arguments to support claim(s) (thesis statement) with clear reasons and evidence</p> <p><b>a.</b> introduces claim(s), states alternate or opposing claims, and organizes the reasons and evidence logically.</p> <p><b>b.</b> supports claims with reasoning and evidence, using sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</p> <p><b>c.</b> uses words, phrases, and clauses as transitions to clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</p> <p><b>d.</b> establishes a formal writing style.</p> <p><b>e.</b> provides a concluding statement or section that supports the argument presented.</p>	<p>writes arguments to support claim(s) (thesis statement) with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</p> <p><b>a.</b> introduces claim(s), addresses and distinguishes the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organizes the reasons and evidence logically.</p> <p><b>b.</b> supports claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</p> <p><b>c.</b> uses words, phrases, and clauses as transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</p> <p><b>d.</b> establishes and maintains a formal writing style.</p> <p><b>e.</b> provides a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</p>	<p>writes arguments to support claim(s) (thesis statement) with clear reasons and analysis of relevant evidence.</p> <p><b>a.</b> introduces claims, acknowledges and distinguishes the claims from alternate or opposing claims, evaluating their validity, and organizes the reasons and evidence logically.</p> <p><b>b.</b> supports claims with a clear position based on logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating a deep understanding of the topic or text.</p> <p><b>c.</b> uses a variety of words, phrases, and clauses as transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</p> <p><b>d.</b> establishes and maintains a formal writing style and objective tone that enhances the argument.</p> <p><b>e.</b> provides a compelling concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</p>

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Range	8.W.2	<p>writes informative/explanatory text to describe a topic through the selection and organization of content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. introduces a topic; attempts an organization of ideas, concepts, and information.</li> <li>b. summarizes the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</li> <li>c. uses appropriate words, phrases, and clauses as transitions to create cohesion.</li> <li>d. uses topic-appropriate language and vocabulary to inform.</li> <li>e. attempts a formal style.</li> <li>f. provides a concluding statement or section.</li> </ul>	<p>writes informative/explanatory texts to explain a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection and organization of content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. introduces a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organizes ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories.</li> <li>b. develops the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</li> <li>c. uses appropriate words, phrases, and clauses as transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</li> <li>d. uses topic-appropriate language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</li> <li>e. establishes a formal style.</li> <li>f. provides a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.</li> </ul>	<p>writes informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. introduces a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organizes ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; includes formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), when useful to aiding comprehension.</li> <li>b. develops the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</li> <li>c. uses appropriate and varied words, phrases, and clauses as transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</li> <li>d. uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</li> <li>e. establishes and maintains a formal style.</li> <li>f. provides a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.</li> </ul>	<p>writes informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information with a strongly-developed focus through the selection, organization, and analysis of highly relevant content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. introduces a complex topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organizes ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; includes formatting (e.g., headings), and graphics (e.g., charts, tables) when useful to enhance comprehension.</li> <li>b. develops and analyzes the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience.</li> <li>c. effectively uses appropriate and varied words, phrases, and clauses as transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.</li> <li>d. uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to evaluate the topic.</li> <li>e. establishes and maintains a formal style and objective tone while attending to the conventions of the discipline in which he or she is writing.</li> <li>f. provides a compelling concluding statement or section that follows from, supports, and extends the information or explanation presented</li> </ul>
Range	8.W.4-6	<p>produces writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to a range of tasks; develops and strengthens writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on purpose and audience; editing should demonstrate basic command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 8; uses technology to produce writing.</p>	<p>produces clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences; develops and strengthens writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed; editing should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 8; uses technology to produce writing and present the relationships between information and ideas.</p>	<p>produces clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences; develops and strengthens writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed; editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 8; uses technology to produce writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently.</p>	<p>produces clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences; develops and strengthens writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed; editing for conventions should demonstrate skillful command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 8; uses technology to produce writing and present the relationships between information and ideas in a dynamic way.</p>

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Range	8.W.7-8	conducts short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources; gathers relevant information from multiple sources and redirects inquiry as appropriate; assesses the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quotes or paraphrases the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism. Attempts to follow a standard format for citation.	conducts short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional ideas; gathers relevant information from multiple sources; assesses the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quotes or paraphrases the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	conducts 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; gathers relevant information from multiple sources; assesses the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quotes or paraphrases the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	conducts 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 and evaluation; gathers and synthesizes relevant information from multiple sources; assesses the credibility and accuracy of each source; and judiciously quotes or paraphrases the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
Range	8.SL.2	uses inconsistent note-taking strategies to identify the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats.	uses note-taking strategies to identify the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats and the motives behind presentation.	uses effective note-taking strategies to analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats and evaluates the motives behind its presentation.	uses effective note-taking strategies to analyze and interpret the motives, main ideas, and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats.
Range	8.SL.3	identifies a speaker's argument and specific claims.	describes a speaker's argument and specific claims; identifies whether irrelevant evidence is introduced.	evaluates a speaker's argument and specific claims, the soundness of the reasoning, and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence; identifies when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	evaluates and analyzes a speaker's argument and specific claims, the soundness of the reasoning, and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence; identifies when irrelevant evidence is introduced and explains why it was used.
Language					
Range	8.L.1	attempts to meet the basics of English writing and speaking, including the limited ability to: rearrange complete simple and compound sentences of a variety of lengths; use and describe verbals in general and their function in particular sentences; use verbs in the active and passive voice; order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns; explain the function of an adverb; explain the function of and use coordinating conjunctions; use subordinating conjunctions.	demonstrates a basic understanding of English writing and speaking, including the inconsistent ability to: rearrange complete simple and compound sentences of a variety of lengths; use and describe verbals in general and their function in particular sentences; use verbs in the active and passive voice; order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns; explain the function of an adverb; explain the function of and use coordinating conjunctions; use subordinating conjunctions.	demonstrates a command of English writing and speaking, including the inconsistent ability to: rearrange complete simple and compound sentences of a variety of lengths; use and describe verbals in general and their function in particular sentences; use verbs in the active and passive voice; order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns; explain the function of an adverb; explain the function of and use coordinating conjunctions; use subordinating conjunctions.	demonstrates a strong command of English writing and speaking, including the inconsistent ability to: rearrange complete simple and compound sentences of a variety of lengths; use and describe verbals in general and their function in particular sentences; use verbs in the active and passive voice; order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns; explain the function of an adverb; explain the function of and use coordinating conjunctions; use subordinating conjunctions.

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	8.L.2	attempts to meet the basics of English writing and speaking, including the limited ability to: spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed; use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives.	demonstrates a basic understanding of English writing and speaking, including the inconsistent ability to: spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed and/or using spelling patterns and generalization; use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives.	demonstrates command of English writing and speaking, including the ability to: use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives.	demonstrates strong command of English writing and speaking, including the solid ability to: use punctuation (comma, parentheses, dash) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements; use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses; use a colon to introduce a list or quotation; spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed and/or using spelling patterns and generalization; use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives.
Range	8.L.4	with textual support (e.g., context clues, embedded definitions), determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases, choosing from a range of strategies: <b>a.</b> uses 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. <b>b.</b> uses common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede). <b>c.</b> consults general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.	generally determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases, choosing from a range of strategies: <b>a.</b> uses 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. <b>b.</b> uses common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede). <b>c.</b> consults general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.	determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: <b>a.</b> uses 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. <b>b.</b> uses common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede). <b>c.</b> consults general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.	consistently determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: <b>a.</b> uses 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. <b>b.</b> uses common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede). <b>c.</b> consults general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
Range	8.L.5	demonstrates limited understanding of figurative language, word relationships (analogies), and nuances in word meanings: <b>a.</b> identifies figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context. <b>b.</b> generally distinguishes among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).	demonstrates basic understanding of figurative language, word relationships (analogies), and nuances in word meanings: <b>a.</b> interprets figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context. <b>b.</b> distinguishes among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).	demonstrates understanding of figurative language, word relationships (analogies), and nuances in word meanings: <b>a.</b> interprets figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context. <b>b.</b> distinguishes among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).	demonstrates deep understanding of figurative language, word relationships (analogies), and nuances in word meanings: <b>a.</b> interprets figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context. <b>b.</b> distinguishes and evaluates the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute).