

PARENT GUIDE FOR GRADE 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Preparing Florida's Children for a Successful Future



All Florida students deserve to graduate high school with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college, careers and life. Over the last several years, Florida has made strong academic gains. But, we know today's workforce requires our graduates to have stronger critical thinking, problem solving and communications skills than ever before. Higher standards that challenge and motivate our students are essential.

To address this need, education leaders across the state of Florida improved our academic content standards, creating new expectations for what students need to know and be able to do. The Florida Standards are designed to ensure that **ALL** students reach their greatest potential—whatever their path may be.

Preparing your child for success begins in kindergarten and continues as your child moves up through each grade. This guide will support parents and families with children in **eighth grade** by helping you:

- **Learn** about the Florida Standards and why they matter for your child.
- **Talk** with your child's teachers about what he/she will be learning in the classroom.
- **Support** your child's learning in practical ways at home.

LEARN ABOUT THE STANDARDS

Florida students will continue to practice many of the same things you learned in eighth grade—along with some important additional skills. **Eighth grade** students are learning these types of lessons:

- Analyzing how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel action, reveal aspects of character or provoke a decision.
- Analyzing how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns or character types from myths, traditional stories or religious works.
- Evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of using different media to present a particular topic or idea.



- Drawing evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research.



Every child develops at his/her own pace. The activities in this guide are recommended age-specific guidelines for growing young minds.



Download the complete English Language Arts Florida Standards for Grade 8 at www.flstandards.org

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TALK WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER



Now that your child has reached eighth grade, he/she should be preparing to transition to high school. Parent/teacher conferences are a good time to focus on examples of student work and talk about ways your student's reading and communication skills are ready for high school.

Ask the teacher for good books you might read as a family and what he/she thinks your student might work on to improve his/her writing skill and art.

SUPPORT LEARNING AT HOME

You can encourage learning English language arts at home in ways that are fun for you and your child. Try these ideas after school, on weekends and during the summer:



Encourage your child to use book trailers to select a first, second and third choice to read. Ask him/her to tell you why and how each video made a book sound interesting. Go to the library to check out and read those top choices.



Read poems written by other teens and famous established poets at www.powerpoetry.org.



Utilize "Just Read, Florida," a resource sponsored by the Florida Department of Education at www.justreadflorida.com/recommend/PublicDisplay.asp.



Set up and carry out a family debate night on a topic that concerns you. Incorporate the principles of argument into your more informal discussions with your teen.



Encourage your student to see, understand and explain both sides of situations or conflicts.



Find and post a family word of the week or month. Learn the word, and use it in conversations with one another as well as written communication when opportunities arise.



Be frequent visitors to your local public library. Let him/her see you choosing, checking out and enjoying books.



Work with you child to develop a personal résumé and portfolio and practice filling out electronic applications.

Talk to your child's teacher or principal to learn more great ideas to support learning at home.

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Questions? Contact JustforParents@fldoe.org