
Grade 8 Objectives at a Glance

Focus: Communicating Ideas and Experiences with Clarity, Correctness, and Variety

Foundational Objective 1: Students will extend abilities to listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent effectively in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes.

- Listen to, read, and view and comprehend a range of contemporary and traditional texts in a variety of forms (including discussions, informational presentations dramatic presentations, Reader's Theatre, mini-debates, print fiction, non-fiction, poetry, plays, television programs, websites, news programs) and from a variety of cultural traditions for a variety of purposes including for learning and for enjoyment.
- Speak, write, and represent to describe (a landscape scene), to narrate (a personal story or anecdote, a historical narrative), to explain and inform (a presentation of findings, a biography, a documented research report, a résumé and covering letter), and to persuade (a mini-debate, a review) and recognize speaking, writing, and representing as useful tools for clarifying thinking, communicating, and learning.
- Experiment with a variety of text forms (Reader's Theatre, role play, humorous instructions, a PowerPoint presentation, a dramatization) and techniques (e.g., imagery, music, graphics and statistics in a multimedia presentation).

Foundational Objective 2: Students will extend abilities by practising the behaviours of effective, active listeners, speakers, readers, writers, viewers, and representers.

- Select and use the appropriate strategies and language cueing systems to construct meaning before, during, and after listening, reading, and viewing.
- Select and use the appropriate strategies and the language cueing systems and conventions to communicate meaning before, during, and after speaking, writing, and representing.
- Understand and apply the language cues and conventions (pragmatic, textual, syntactical, lexical/semantic/morphological, graphophonic, and others) as they listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent.

Foundational Objective 3: Students will extend abilities to assess strengths in listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and representing and set goals for future growth.

- Use information gathered in self-assessment and teacher's assessment to set and maintain goals for improving listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and representing.
- Appraise own and others' work for clarity, correctness, and variety.

Note: For specific learning objectives that express the breadth and depth of each foundational objective within each strand, refer to the following pages.

English Language Arts Objectives for Grade 8

Language study is an integral part of an English language arts program. Students in Grade 8 are expected to understand the following concepts about the language cues and conventions. As students listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent, they are expected to apply the concepts which constructing and communicating meaning in English language arts lessons and in daily communication.

Focus for Grade 8 Language Study: Communicating With Clarity, Correctness, and Variety

Grade 8 students will understand that:

Pragmatic Cues and Conventions	
	Identifying audience, role, purpose, and situation is important when considering the appropriate tone and level of language to be used (e.g., formal, informal, colloquial) and in order to understand what is heard, read, or viewed.
	Jargon, slang, clichés, contractions, and the personal “I/you” should be avoided in formal communication.
	Language register, tone, and usage should demonstrate respect for others and for people of different ages, abilities, genders, cultures, and races.
	Organizing and participating in special public events requires the use of appropriate language and tone.
	Standard Canadian English follows widely accepted rules of usage and conventions.
Textual Cues and Conventions	
	All ideas or information included in a text should serve a purpose.
	A single controlling idea and an appropriate sequence can ensure unity and coherence in a text.
	Non-fiction texts may present the main idea first or lead up to the main idea.
	Texts can employ features of narration, description, explanation, or persuasion.
	Narrative texts often include details such as description and dialogue that show rather than tell what happened.
	Narrative can be told by the person taking part or by an outside observer-narrator telling about others.
	The point of view in a text should be consistent throughout the text.
	Description focuses on creating a dominant impression of a person, place, or feeling.
	Exposition involves using supporting ideas to explain a main idea.
	Persuasion aims to move someone to support a point of view or to act in support of an idea or cause.
	Note: Students should understand and use a range of standard forms for texts including paragraphs, multi-paragraph compositions, description (e.g., landscape scene), narration (e.g., personal stories and anecdotes), exposition (e.g., biography), persuasion (e.g., a review), letters (e.g., format for the business letter), poetry (e.g., a lyrical or narrative poem), and script (e.g., a short scene or dialogue between two characters).
Syntactical Cues and Conventions	
	Ideas should be communicated in sentence patterns that are built around the verb and its subject (subject + verb [SV], subject + verb + object [SVO], subject + linking verb + completer [SLVC]).
	Complete thoughts are expressed in complete sentences (versus fragments) with a verb and subject (stated or understood).
	Some ideas can be subordinated to show more precisely the relationship between ideas (because, although, when) and to avoid a string of compound sentences.
	Some sentences can be made more precise by reducing a main idea (clause) to a subordinate idea (clause); a subordinate clause can, in turn, be reduced to a phrase or single word.
	Effective communicators use a variety of sentence types (e.g., statements and questions; simple, compound, and complex) and lengths.
	All sentences should serve a purpose.
	The recognition and correction of sentence errors ensures effective communication.
	Pronouns can act as subjects or objects and their subjective and objective forms should be used correctly (e.g., “Him and his brother ...”)
	The effective punctuation of sentences helps to communicate meaning clearly and correctly.
	Periods, commas, apostrophes, quotation marks, colons, semicolons, dashes, and hyphens assist comprehension of written texts.

Semantic/Lexical/Morphological Cues and Conventions	
	Effective communicators choose and use words that are appropriate and specific.
	Using a variety of synonyms appropriately can give variety to communication.
	Considering the audience, purpose and context as well as the meanings, associations, visual images, and sounds of words can help in determining their appropriateness.
	Common homonyms (e.g., whose/who's) and commonly confused words (e.g., lend/borrow) require careful attention.
	History, social trends, and geographic regions influence word choice.
	Reference tools such as dictionaries, thesauri, and handbooks can be used to find words and their meanings, check spelling, and verify usage.
Graphophonic Cues and Conventions	
	Words should be clearly enunciated and accurately pronounced with proper emphasis.
	Correct spelling is important for effective communication.
	Developing a systematic and effective approach to studying and remembering the correct spelling of common words and words needed in language tasks is important.
	Knowledge of a wide range of spelling patterns and rules helps to identify, analyze, and correct spelling errors.
	Proofreading carefully and using knowledge of spelling generalizations and how words are formed is important in writing.
	Identifying the use of spelling variants in print and other media texts helps one determine the appropriateness of variant spellings for specific audiences and purposes.
Other Cues and Conventions	
	Communication and understanding can be enhanced with graphic organizers, storyboards, videos, dramatizations, flow charts, sound effects, and visual aids.
	Along with language, effective communicators consider the arrangement and balance of words and visuals, as well as fonts (typefaces/print) in order to send a clear message to specific audiences.
	Using print (e.g., for labels on a map) or cursive writing (e.g., for writing a report) depends on purpose.
	Writing legibly requires practice and appropriate speed and control.

Grade 8 Objectives for Language Strands

Listening (Grade 8)

Students will extend abilities to listen effectively in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes	
	Participate in conversation and in small group and whole group discussion, showing an understanding of when to speak and when to listen
	Listen for a variety of purposes including to gather information, to follow directions, to participate in a discussion, to form an opinion, to understand information, and to enjoy and appreciate
	Evaluate the effectiveness of a range of oral texts
Students will extend abilities by practising the behaviours of effective, active listeners	
	Select and use the appropriate strategies and the language cueing systems and conventions to construct meaning before, during, and after listening to grade-level appropriate texts, including:
	Before
	Prepare to listen
	Draw on prior knowledge and experience by considering what they know and need to know about the topic
	Formulate questions for listening
	Identify purpose(s) for listening in a variety of situations
	During
	Adapt listening and focus to purpose and situation (*)
	Keep an open mind and consider ideas that differ from own (*)
	Make connections to prior knowledge and experiences (i.e., relate text to self, text to other texts, and text to world)
	Recognize the main ideas and supporting details
	Recognize the presenter's organizational structure and follow the sequence of ideas expressed
	Note how examples, illustrations, and visual aids support or take away from key message
	Determine literal and implied meaning of message

An asterisk in parentheses (*) following a learning objective indicates that this is a new objective for this grade level.

	Determine the congruency between the speaker's verbal and nonverbal cues (*)
	Make jot notes to assist recall of the main idea(s) expressed by the speaker
	Create visual images
	Make inferences based on text and prior knowledge
	Draw conclusions based on evidence in presentation
	Recognize speaker's use of language (formal, informal, colloquial)
	Determine whether fact or opinion to expressed in speaker's viewpoint and recognize generalizations (*)
	Interact appropriately with speaker and seek clarification when meaning is not clear (*)
	Use pragmatic (e.g., speaker's purpose and appeals), textual (e.g., speaker's plan), syntactic (e.g., use of the rhetorical question and emphasis on particular words in a sentence), semantic/lexical/morphological (e.g., specific word meanings and emotional appeals, common affixes and roots), graphophonic (e.g., word patterns), and other cues (e.g., the speaker's nonverbal cues and visual aids) to construct and confirm meaning (*)
After	
	Recall and summarize main points and supporting detail
	Relate what was heard to personal experiences or needs
	Analyze and evaluate what was heard
	Draw conclusions about speaker's values
	Consider and respect ideas from speaker's point of view
	Compare own values with those identified in speaker's message (*)
	Seek additional information from other sources as needed or desired
Students will extend abilities to assess strengths in listening and set goals for future growth	
	Use information gathered in self-assessment and teacher's assessment to set and maintain goals for improving listening (*)
	Appraise own and others' work for clarity, correctness, and variety (*)

Speaking (Grade 8)

Students will extend abilities to speak fluently in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences	
	Initiate conversation about a range of topics and respond appropriately when others initiate conversation (*)
	Use talk to express and to share feelings, ideas, opinions, and aesthetic responses in one-to-one, small group, and large group discussions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share ideas/knowledge clearly and logically • encourage others to contribute • disagree courteously/sensitively • take turns speaking • answer others' questions clearly and politely • give reasons for opinions and point of view (*) • add to others' ideas • repeat points for clarification • restate points already made for emphasis and reconsideration • summarize main ideas discussed and conclusions drawn(*)
	Speak to describe (e.g., a landscape scene) and to narrate (e.g., personal stories and anecdotes to illustrate a point)
	Speak to explain, report, and inform (e.g., give reports and presentations of findings)
	Speak to influence and to persuade (e.g., speak to debate a point)
	Read aloud with enthusiasm, expression, and fluency and speak to share and to entertain (e.g., give a dramatic reading of a poem or play excerpt; participate in Reader's Theatre)
	Experiment with speaking in formal situations (e.g., mini-debates, meetings)
Students will extend abilities by practising the behaviours of effective speakers	
	Select and use the appropriate strategies and the language cueing systems and conventions before, during, and after speaking to promote understanding of ideas, including:

Before	
	Identify purpose for speaking
	Identify personal and audience knowledge
	Generate ideas and consider appropriate ideas and information to include in presentation
	Access information and ideas from a variety of sources
	Choose appropriate format
	Organize ideas in appropriate format in preparation for sharing or presenting orally (e.g., demonstrate logical order in a how-to explanation)
	Support key points with evidence and examples
	Rehearse and consider ways to enhance clarity of presentation
	Consider appropriate technology to communicate and to enhance presentation
	Set and manage deadlines (*)
During	
	Present ideas clearly and at a rate that enables others to follow
	Explain personal viewpoint clearly
	Use volume appropriate to the purpose, audience, and situation and modulate voice for effect
	Use level of language and tone to suit audience, purpose, and situation (*)
	Use gestures, facial expressions, and visual aids to enhance meaning of talk
	Respond to questions and comments concisely, clearly, and appropriately
	Summarize key ideas (*)
	Justify and support opinions (*)
	Acknowledge sources
After	
	Review feedback and questions asked by audience
	Consider ways to enhance clarity and impact of presentation
	Summarize ideas discussed and state own view in light of discussion
Students will extend abilities to assess strengths in speaking and set goals for future growth	
	Use information gathered in self-assessment and teacher's assessment to set and maintain goals for improving speaking (*)
	Appraise own and others' work for clarity, correctness, and variety (*)
Reading (Grade 8)	
Students will extend abilities to read effectively in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes	
	Read for a variety of purposes including to gather information, to follow directions, to give a response, to form an opinion, to understand information, and to enjoy and appreciate
	Select texts appropriate to interests and learning needs
	Evaluate the effectiveness of a range of written texts
	Read a range of contemporary and classical texts from a variety of genres and cultural traditions
	Read independently for self-identified purposes (*)
Students will extend abilities by practising the behaviours of effective, active readers	
	Select and use the appropriate strategies and the language cueing systems and conventions to construct meaning before, during, and after reading grade-level appropriate texts, including:
Before	
	Prepare to read
	Draw on prior knowledge and experiences by considering what they know and need to know about the topic
	Preview text and anticipate author's message
	Ask questions
	Set purpose(s) appropriate for each reading task
During	
	Read with purpose in mind
	Match reading rate (e.g., skimming, scanning, careful reading) to specific purpose and difficulty of material when reading aloud and silently
	Make and confirm or correct predictions
	Make connections to prior knowledge and experiences (i.e., relate text to self, text to other texts, and text to world)

An asterisk in parentheses (*) following a learning objective indicates that this is a new objective for this grade level.

	Recognize author's main ideas and relevant supporting details (*)
	Recognize author's overall organization of ideas and patterns within that organization (*)
	Make jot notes to assist recall of the main idea(s) expressed by the author
	Create visual images
	Make inferences based on text and prior knowledge
	Draw conclusions based on evidence in text
	Use pragmatic (e.g., author's purpose, intended audience, point of view, and tone), textual (e.g., how author organized text to achieve unity and coherence), syntactic (e.g., main and subordinate ideas and variety of sentence structures), semantic/lexical/morphological (e.g., imagery, figurative language, specific word meanings by their context and allusions), graphophonic (e.g., word patterns), and other cues (e.g., layout and accompanying graphics) to construct and to confirm meaning (*)
	Identify ideas expressed as true or false, real or imaginary
	Recognize the author's use of language (formal, informal, slang) and techniques (e.g., foreshadowing)
	Consider author's reasons for choosing point of view (*)
	Determine whether fact or opinion is being portrayed
	Show understanding that the author's experience, background, and culture influence the treatment of theme
	Identify with and develop an understanding of the characters the author has created from what they say and do, and from what other characters and the narrator say about them
	Identify stereotyping in what is read and begin to recognize its negative impact on individuals and society
After	
	Reread to clarify understanding when necessary
	Recall and relate in own words, major ideas and their supporting details
	Summarize major ideas
	Relate what was read to personal experiences or needs
	Analyze and evaluate what was read
	Identify techniques used to create particular effects or portray various people and cultures (*)
	Draw conclusions about author's message, values, point of view, and craft
	Consider how text has contributed to understanding of self and others (e.g., cultural groups) (*)
	Compare values expressed in texts through characters to own values (*)
	Discuss how similar ideas, people, experiences, and traditions are conveyed in texts (*)
	Recognize how particular elements (e.g., setting, word choice, figurative language) work to create mood or tone (*)
	Recognize any underlying biases, stereotypes, or prejudices in texts (*)
	Reflect on and support personal and critical responses with reference to text
	Consider others' responses in reshaping and extending own response
	Seek additional information from other sources as needed or desired
Students will extend abilities to assess strengths in reading and set goals for future growth	
	Use information gathered in self-assessment and teacher's assessment to set and maintain goals for improving reading (*)
	Appraise own and others' work for clarity, correctness, and variety (*)

Writing (Grade 8)

Students will extend abilities to write fluently in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences	
	Write to describe (e.g., multi-paragraph description of a landscape)
	Write to create personal and fictional narratives (e.g., multi-paragraph personal, imaginary, or historical narrative)
	Write to explain, to report, and to inform (e.g., multi-paragraph researched report, news story, and biography)
	Write to convince and to persuade (e.g., multi-paragraph opinion piece or review)
	Write to experiment with a variety of forms (e.g., lyrical and narrative poems, letters, scripts, humorous instructions) and techniques (e.g., imagery, dialogue, figurative language)

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Students will extend abilities by practising the behaviours of effective writers	
	Select and use the appropriate strategies and the language cueing systems and conventions before, during, and after writing to ensure communication of ideas, including:
	Before
	Identify purpose and audience for writing
	Identify personal and audience knowledge
	Generate and explore ideas by brainstorming, clustering, discussing, dramatizing, representing, reading/listening/viewing, and experiencing
	Consider appropriate ideas and information to include in writing
	Use inquiry or research processes to gather additional ideas and information for specific purpose
	Identify, evaluate, select, and acknowledge relevant ideas and information from two or three sources
	Choose appropriate format for purpose and audience
	Plan, organize, and sequence ideas to fit purpose, point of view, and format (e.g., chronological, enumerative, problem/solution, cause/effect, comparison/contrast) (*)
	Set and manage deadlines (*)
	During
	Shape and develop pre-writing into written drafts using the chosen format and keeping purpose in mind
	Organize and sequence relevant ideas appropriately within identified formats
	Use level of language and vocabulary appropriate to audience and purpose
	Use appropriate point of view (including third person) when writing for particular audience and purpose
	Experiment with point of view and develop reasons for final choice (*)
	Use transition words to signal organizational pattern within compositions
	Use appropriate technology with increasing proficiency in writing
	Enhance compositions with illustrations, charts, and other graphics when appropriate
	Acknowledge sources
	Share writing-in-progress and final drafts in various ways (e.g., author's circle, peer response) and respond sensitively and constructively during conferences (*)
	After
	Revise final drafts for clarity of meaning and appropriate detail by adding, rearranging, or deleting ideas
	Revise final drafts to eliminate unnecessary repetition of ideas and words
	Revise final drafts to ensure that each paragraph has a topic sentence, a body, and a concluding sentence
	Revise final drafts to ensure that there is an effective beginning or introduction (e.g., topic sentence or narrative hook) and an effective ending or conclusion (e.g., concluding sentence or unexpected ending)
	Revise final drafts to ensure that the format and patterns within that format contribute to the effectiveness of the composition (*)
	Revise final drafts to ensure language is appropriate for audience and purpose
	Revise final drafts to enhance artistry of text (e.g., choose language to enhance emphasis of key ideas)
	Proofread final drafts for language conventions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paragraphing • sentence structures (e.g., ensure that they are complete, interesting, on topic, and connected to each other; combine sentences to form compound and complex sentences for variety, interest, and effect; ensure that the subjects and verbs agree; ensure that the sentences use appropriate verb tense and correct pronoun reference; ensure that qualifiers are not misplaced) • word choices (e.g., ensure that word choices are vivid, effective, and appropriate; that they accurately convey the intended meaning; that they are used correctly; and that colloquialisms and clichés are avoided) • spelling (e.g., ensure that words use correct and conventional Canadian spellings and that common homonyms are correctly spelled) • mechanics (e.g., ensure that the periods, question marks, exclamation marks, apostrophes, commas, and quotation marks as well as capitalization marks are correctly used)
	Polish final drafts to ensure legibility and correct formatting including printing and cursive writing appropriate for purpose (e.g., printing for labels on diagram, writing for reports; include a cover page and list of references; use appropriate spacing and layout)

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	Use personal word lists (e.g., frequently misspelled words in own writing and new vocabulary encountered through listening, reading, and viewing) and a variety of strategies to learn conventional spelling (e.g., relating sounds of unknown words to known words and spelling using phonetic patterns and generalizations; taking risks and attempting unknown spelling; consulting resources such as dictionaries)
	Use cursive writing with increasing speed and control
Students will extend abilities to assess strengths in writing and set goals for future growth	
	Use information gathered in self-assessment and teacher's assessment to set and maintain goals for improving writing (*)
	Appraise own and others' work for clarity, correctness, and variety (*)
Viewing (Grade 8)	
Students will extend abilities to view effectively in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes	
	View for a variety of purposes including to understand and gather information, to form an opinion, to understand information, and to enjoy and appreciate
	Evaluate the effectiveness of a range of visual works (e.g., a television show, a website on the Internet, a news program) (*)
Students will extend abilities by practising the behaviours of effective, active viewers	
	Select and use the appropriate strategies and the language cueing systems and conventions to construct meaning before, during, and after viewing grade-level appropriate texts, including:
Before	
	Prepare to view
	Draw on prior knowledge and experience by considering what they know and need to know about the topic
	Formulate questions before viewing
	Set purpose(s) for each type of viewing situation
During	
	View attentively
	Predict and confirm the presentation's message and meaning
	Make connections to prior knowledge and experiences (i.e., relate text to self, text to other texts, and text to world)
	Recognize the main ideas, underlying messages and values, and relevant supporting details
	Recognize the overall organization of ideas
	Make notes to assist recall of the main idea(s) expressed or the point of the visual
	Make inferences based on visual presentation and prior knowledge
	Draw conclusions based on evidence in visual text
	Determine the difference between fact and underlying message portrayed in visuals and between real or imaginary images
	Recognize how images or other elements capture and hold viewer's attention (*)
	Identify the different techniques used in different media work to impact viewers (*)
	Use pragmatic (e.g., purpose, intended audience, point of view, and tone of presentation), textual (e.g., the medium, the organizational structure employed, and the key visual techniques used to create overall effect), and other cues (e.g., the layout and visual elements) to construct and to confirm meaning (*)
After	
	Recall and summarize main points, important details, and techniques employed
	Reflect and re-view in light of purpose and intended audience (*)
	Relate what was seen to personal experience or needs
	Analyze and evaluate what was seen (including elements, techniques, and overall effect) (e.g., critique a news program or documentary) and identify how it was constructed, shaped, and produced (*)
	Draw conclusions about the perspective and values portrayed in what was seen
	Respond personally and critically with reference to text
	Express and support personal reactions to and opinions of the visual
	Identify the strategies used to influence an audience (e.g., exaggeration, one-sided view of a group, jolts)
	Evaluate the effectiveness and overall impact of the medium to deliver the message intended (*)

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	Seek additional information from other sources as needed or desired
Students will extend abilities to assess strengths in viewing and set goals for future growth	
	Use information gathered in self-assessment and teacher's assessment to set and maintain goals for improving listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and representing (*)
	Appraise own and others' work for clarity, correctness, and variety (*)

Representing (Grade 8)

Students will extend abilities to represent fluently in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences	
	Use oral, print, and other media (e.g., storyboard, audio tape, website, illustrated report) to explore ideas and to express understanding
	Use oral, print, and other media (e.g., role play that ends with a tableau, illustrated report) to express and to share feelings, ideas, and opinions
	Integrate a variety of media (e.g., music, graphic, photograph) into oral and written representations to enhance the message
	Experiment with representing in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar forms (e.g., PowerPoint, dramatization) (*)
Students will extend abilities by practising the behaviours of effective representers	
	Select and use the appropriate strategies and the language cueing systems and conventions before, during, and after representing to promote understanding of ideas, including:
Before	
	Identify purpose for representing
	Identify personal and audience knowledge
	Generate ideas and consider appropriate ideas and information to include in representation using strategies such as brainstorming, questioning, storyboarding, clustering, drawing, and reflecting
	Access information and ideas from a variety of sources
	Determine key ideas, messages, or information to be expressed
	Choose appropriate media to fully explore and extend ideas (*)
	Choose appropriate media and format for purpose, audience, and situation
	Organize ideas in appropriate format (layout) in preparation for sharing or presenting
	Recognize and use the strategies in the representing process including planning and focusing, scripting and layout, and revising
	Rehearse, field test, and consider ways to enhance clarity of representation
	Consider appropriate technology to communicate and to enhance representation
	Set and manage deadlines
During	
	Present ideas clearly and at a rate that enables others to follow
	Use volume and presentation techniques appropriate to the purpose, audience, and situation
	Use level of language and vocabulary appropriate to audience and purpose
	Use visuals and other techniques that portray key understandings
	Acknowledge sources
After	
	Review feedback and questions asked by audience
	Consider ways to enhance clarity and impact of representation
Students will extend abilities to assess strengths in representing and set goals for future growth	
	Use information gathered in self-assessment and teacher's assessment to set and maintain goals for improving representing (*)
	Appraise own and others' work for clarity, correctness, and variety (*)

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