

A focus on engaging and motivating early adolescents is critical for success, and students should be supported to explore topics of individual interest



Research, Writing, and Technology

Technology plays an important role in supporting students to gain knowledge, engage in research, and present information. They use the Internet to produce and publish writing as well as to interact with others, are able to link to and cite sources, and have developed keyboard skills to type numerous pages. In addition, students in grades 6–8 use multiple print and digital sources to

quote or paraphrase conclusions of others (while avoiding plagiarism);

assess the credibility of each source;

conduct short research projects to answer a question or to support analysis and reflection on a topic;

include graphics, images, music, sound, and visual displays to help clarify information in presentations.

Comprehending Informational Text

Students not only engage in careful analysis of texts in English language arts but in other subject-matter classes as well, such as history/social studies, science, mathematics, arts, health, and physical education. This table shows some of the skills in the Reading Standards for Informational Text that students learn by the end of each grade.

Grade	Examples of Making Meaning with Text
6	Students analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.
7	Students analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.
8	Students 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.

Developing Language Skills

For students to express themselves, it is important they understand the beauty of language—how to choose words wisely, the impact of a well-crafted sentence, and how punctuation affects the pace of a written piece. Students continue to build and demonstrate effective use of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling in writing or speaking. In addition, students build their understanding of figurative language using a range of strategies listed in the table below.

Grade	Increasing Effective Expression
6	Students interpret figures of speech (e.g.,