

# Kansas State Reading and Assessment Guide

(based on the KS State Reading Standards  
approved by the Kansas State Board of Education on July 2003)

## Grade 8th

Developed by the Kansas State Department of Education  
and  
Reading Specialists from the Private Sector  
in Kansas

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**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.3.1

▲ determines meaning of words or phrases using context clues (e.g., definitions, restatements, examples, descriptions, comparison-contrast, clue words, cause-effect) from sentences or paragraphs.

**Explanation of Indicator**

When a student encounters an unknown word or phrase, he should be able to use the clues from the surrounding words to figure out the meaning of the unknown word or phrase.

**Instructional Example**

While reading an unfamiliar text, the student uses symbols to mark words as: I know this word; I am vaguely familiar with the word; and I don't have a clue. These words are then emphasized within the reading and the student uses context clues, examples, or the dictionary to record definitions

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB and NPB
- Passage types: N, E, T, P
- Tested words should be 2 or more grade levels above the student's grade level.
- There must be sufficient context for students to determine the meaning of the tested word. Generally speaking, the higher the tested word is above the student's grade level, the more explicit the context clues should be.

**(recommended)**

Interpret the e.g. lists as i.e. lists.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

In Step 10, the word replenish probably means

In the second paragraph, the word herbivorous is used to describe animals that

In the first paragraph, the phrase keep apprised of" probably means

Read the sentence below from the passage.

[space]

The lawn was so unkempt that it took us a whole day to mow and weed it.

[space]

In the sentence, the word unkempt probably means

Context Clues				
R.8.1.3.1				

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.3.3

▲ determines meaning of words through structural analysis, using knowledge of ▲ Greek, ▲ Latin, and Anglo-Saxon ▲ roots, ▲ prefixes, and ▲ suffixes to understand complex words, including words in science, mathematics, and social studies.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student knows how adding beginnings or endings to words change the meaning of the word.

**Instructional Example**

Have the student investigate word origins as an aid to understanding meanings, derivations, spellings, as well as influences on the English language.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB and NPB
- Passage types: N, E, T, P
- Roots: agri, aud, bene, circum, corp, dict, dur, equ/equi, hydro, luna, nav, ped, psych, sci, sent/sens, sol/soli, spec, grade-appropriate base words
- Prefixes: ab-, im-, in-, inter-, mal-, uni-
- Suffixes: -ee, -ette/-et, -ian/-ion, -ive
- Tested word can be at or above the student's grade level.

**(recommended)**

Only test examples marked with ▲.

Only test roots, prefixes, and suffixes listed above.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

Knowing the meaning of the Greek root *psych* helps the reader understand that "psychology" is the study of

	Word Structure			
	R.8.1.3.3			

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.3.4

▲ identifies and determines the meaning of figurative language including ▲ similes, ▲ metaphors, ▲ analogies, ▲ hyperbole, ▲ onomatopoeia, ▲ personification, ▲ idioms, ▲ imagery, and symbolism.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student understands the meaning of word images and figures of speech.

**Instructional Example**

The student reads poems containing examples of figurative language such as analogies, similes, metaphors, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, personification, idioms, or imagery. The student then creates his/her own examples of figurative language modeled after the poets.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB and NPB
- Passage types: N, E, T, P
- Identification only for onomatopoeia
- Items may request to identify or to determine the meaning of figurative language, not necessarily both.

**(recommended)**

Only test examples marked with ▲.

When the answer is metaphor, simile can be one of the distracters. However, when the answer is simile, do not use metaphor as a distracter (because simile is a type of metaphor).

Make sure there is only one possible CA (e.g., if the simile is “winter is like an angry giant,” do not use personification as a distracter).

Use the word “contains” when the figurative language is only one part of a more complex sentence (see fifth sample item).

**State Assessment Sample Item** (see more examples in the item specifications)

In the last paragraph, the phrase “turn over a new leaf” is an example of which type of figurative language?

Read the sentence below from the passage.

[space]

The lamb’s warm, wet breath tickled the end of my nose.

[space]

The sentence is an example of which type of figurative language?

In paragraph two, the phrase “a grocery list as long as a novel” is an example of which type of figurative language?

		Figurative Language		
		R.8.1.3.4		

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.4.2

▲ understands the purpose of text features (e.g., title, graphs/charts and maps, table of contents, pictures/illustrations, boldface type, italics, glossary, index, headings, subheadings, topic and summary sentences, captions, sidebars, underlining, numbered or bulleted lists) and uses such features to locate information in and to gain meaning from appropriate-level texts.

**Explanation of Indicator**

Student understands how the features located in text (e.g., title, graphs/charts and maps, table of contents, pictures/illustrations, boldface type, italics, glossary, index, headings, subheadings, *topic* and summary sentences, captions, sidebars, underlining, numbered or bulleted lists) can help them understand the meaning of the text.

**Instructional Example**

The student uses a news magazine and locates as many text features as possible. The student discusses why that text feature was selected for that information.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- Primarily PB; NPB acceptable for certain text features and uses of those features (e.g., using table of contents, headings, subheadings, and indexes to locate information in text)
- Passage types: N, E, T, P
- Use the language of the indicator in stem and answer choices.
- Items may include textbox as a text feature.

**(recommended)**

Test only features in the e.g. list.

Use the name of the text feature in stem or ACs.

Subheadings in ACs should be in the same order as subheadings in the passage.

**State Assessment Sample Item** (see more examples in item specifications)

The bulleted list at the beginning of the recipe helps the reader understand

The purpose of the sidebar is to

According to the sidebar, the average person drinks how many gallons of water each year?

The purpose of the title is to

- introduce the topic of the passage.
- explain the importance of the passage.
- inform the reader about the author of the passage.
- help the reader think about the setting of the passage.

			Text Features	
			R.8.1.4.2	

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.4.5

▲ uses information from the text to make inferences and draw conclusions.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student is able to make a prediction or draw a conclusion about the text.

**Instructional Example**

Encourage the student to make inferences or predictions about what could happen in the text after reading a chapter from a novel.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB
- Passage types: N, E, T, P

**(recommended)**

Various other State Assessment Sample Items are possible depending on content.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

Based on the passage, tusks would probably be **most** useful when elephants are

Which is the **main** benefit of aerobic exercise?

				Make Inferences/Draw Conclusions
				R.8.1.4.5

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.4.6

▲ analyzes how text structure (e.g., sequence, problem-solution, comparison-contrast, description, cause-effect) helps support comprehension of text.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student is able to tell how an author organizes material or information in the text (e.g., sequence, problem-solution, comparison-contrast, description, cause-effect).

**Instructional Example**

The student uses key words to identify the kind of text structure and why the author selected that particular type for that specific information.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB
- Passage types: E, T, P
- Questions may focus on the text structure of the whole passage or parts(i.e., important paragraphs or sections) of the passage.
- Use the language of the indicator in stem and answer choices (e.g. “text structure”, “sequence”, “cause and effect”). Do **not** use the term “chronological order”.

**(recommended)**

Test only structures in the e.g. list.

Do not hyphenate (e.g. cause-effect).

**State Assessment Sample Item**

The section titled “From Tree to Bottle” uses sequence as its text structure to

CA: explain the steps that farmers take to turn apples into apple juice.

The author uses cause and effect as the structure of the passage **mainly** to

Text Structure				
R.8.1.4.6				

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.4.7

▲ compares and contrasts varying aspects (e.g., characters' traits and motives, themes, problem-solution, cause-effect relationships, ideas and concepts, procedures, viewpoints, authors' purposes, persuasive techniques) in one or more appropriate-level texts.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student should be able to tell how varying aspects (e.g., characters' traits and motives, themes, problem-solution, cause-effect relationships, ideas and concepts, procedures, viewpoints, authors' purposes) are alike or different.

**Instructional Example**

The student read two stories, then, compares and contrasts the two stories looking for similarities and differences. This activity can be used with any novel or short story to compare and contrast characters' traits and motives.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB
- Passage types: N, E, T, P

**(recommended)**

Interpret the e.g. lists as i.e. lists.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

Unlike other mammals, bats are able to

During the chess match, Justin's feelings about his opponent changed from

The father and son are **similar** because they both

In the passage, what is the **main** difference between the first summer and the second summer?

	Compare and Contrast			
	R.8.1.4.7			

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.4.8

▲ explains cause-effect relationships in appropriate-level narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student understands how one or more things can have an effect on the outcome of another.

**Instructional Example**

The student uses a yellow highlighter to mark the cause and a green highlighter to mark the effects from a text. Student discusses how one cause can have multiple effects.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB

Passage types: N, E, T, P

**(recommended)**

n/a

**State Assessment Sample Item**

What would **probably** happen if Malcolm stopped delivering the paper on time?

How did Emily's absence affect her teammates?

Based on the passage, what causes the moths to stay away from the wool sweaters?

		Cause and Effect		
		R.8.1.4.8		

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.4.9

▲ uses paraphrasing and organizational skills to summarize information (e.g., stated and implied main ideas, main events, important details) from appropriate-level narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts in logical order.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student restates main idea and important details in logical order.

**Instructional Example**

Help the student to understand that summarizing is restating or translating information into your own words. Then, after reading a "how to" article, the student summarizes and lists the steps in proper sequence.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB
- Passage types: N, E, T, P
- For **all** passage types (i.e., narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive), main idea questions may focus on the main idea of the whole passage or parts (i.e., important paragraphs or sections, sidebars) of the passage.
- Example stem: "Which sentence(s) best summarizes the passage?" Answer choices must be complete sentences or short paragraphs containing main ideas or main events and important details in logical order.

**(recommended)**

Interpret the e.g. lists as i.e. lists.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

Which **best** summarizes the last two paragraphs of the passage?

Which **best** summarizes the passage?

CA: After class, Paul asked Katherine to help him with the science project. Although she was unsure, she agreed. They were rewarded for their efforts with a blue ribbon at the science fair.

			Retell/ Paraphrase	
			R.8.1.4.9	

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.4.10

▲ identifies the topic, main idea(s), supporting details, and theme(s) in text across the content areas and from a variety of sources in appropriate-level text.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student identifies the topic, main idea(s), supporting details, and theme(s) in text.

**Instructional Example**

The student answers the questions “Who?”, “What?”, “When?”, “Where?”, “How?”, and “Why?”. The student reads to find the main idea and to find answers to the questions. The student writes the main idea of the story and answers the questions “Who is the author talking about?”, “What did they do?”, “When did they do it?”, “Where did they do it?”, “How did they do it?”, and “Why did they do it?”.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB
- Passage types: N, E, T, P
- For **all** passage types (i.e., narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive), main idea questions may focus on the main idea of the whole passage or parts (i.e., important paragraphs or sections, sidebars) of the passage.
- Supporting details are details that support the topic, main idea(s), and/or theme(s) of a whole passage or part of a passage. Keep in mind that important (vs. trivial) details in a passage are not always supporting details.

**(recommended)**

The last three sample items ask about supporting detail.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

What is the **main** idea of Scene II?

What is the theme of the passage?

Which is a major theme of the passage?

What is the **main** idea of the passage?

The passage is **mainly** about

What is the **main** topic of the passage?

Which detail from the passage **best** supports the main idea?

According to the passage, where do sparrows make their homes?

What is the **most** important thing people can do to reduce energy bills?

				Topic/Main Idea/Supporting Detail
				R.8.1.4.10

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.4.11

▲ explains the relationship between an author’s use of literary devices in a text (e.g., ▲ foreshadowing, ▲ flashback, ▲ irony, symbolism, tone, mood) and his or her purpose for writing the text.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student explains how the author’s purpose for writing the text influences his style of writing.

**Instructional Example**

The student makes a text-to-text connection by comparing two pieces of text by the same author. The student compares both pieces to determine the author’s style. A discussion then follows as to how the author’s style supports their purpose for writing.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB
- Passage types: N, E, P
- Items may include imagery as a literary device.

**(recommended)**

Only test examples marked with ▲.

Foreshadowing should only be tested with narrative passages.

Flashback should only be tested with narrative passages, or expository passages written in narrative form.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

The author uses flashback when speaking about Wilma’s childhood injuries to show that Wilma

CA: had to work hard to become a great runner.

Author’s Purpose				
R.8.1.4.11				

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.4.14

▲ identifies the author's position in a persuasive text and describes techniques the author uses to support that position (e.g., bandwagon approach, glittering generalities, testimonials, citing statistics, other techniques that appeal to reason or emotion).

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student identifies the details that point to the conclusions drawn by the author.

**Instructional Example**

Encourage the student to view commercials and advertisements in magazines. The student identifies the techniques used to persuade.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB
- Passage types: P

Items may request author's position to be identified or techniques to be described, **not necessarily both**

**(recommended)**

Interpret the e.g. lists as i.e. lists.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

Which technique does the author use to support the position that daily exercise improves self-confidence?

- A. bandwagon approach
- B. statistics
- C. glittering generalities
- D. testimonials

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the author's conclusion that bats are helpful to farmers?

	Author's Position			
	R.8.1.4.14			

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.1.4.15

▲ distinguishes between fact and opinion, and recognizes propaganda (e.g., advertising, media, politics, warfare), bias, and stereotypes in various types of appropriate-level texts.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student understands the difference between fact and opinion and recognizes different types of propaganda.

**Instructional Example**

The student reviews advertisements to determine which statements about a product are facts and which are opinions. Then student develops his/her own ad for the product utilizing both facts and opinions.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB
- Passage types: E, T, P
- Reading passages should not include examples of stereotypes, therefore, students' ability to recognize stereotypes will not be tested.

**(recommended)**

In the first sample item, ACs are exact sentences from the passage with quotation marks.

In the second sample item, ACs are paraphrased parts of the passage with no quotation marks.

Interpret the e.g. lists as i.e. lists.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

Which sentence from the passage is an opinion?

Which statement based on the passage is an opinion?

Which sentence from the passage **best** shows the author's bias about using solar energy?

		Fact and Opinion		
		R.8.1.4.15		

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.2.1.1

▲ describes different aspects of characters (e.g., their physical traits, personality traits, feelings, actions, motives) and analyzes how major characters are developed (e.g., through their thoughts, words, speech patterns, actions) and how they change over time.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student describes different aspects of major and minor *characters* (e.g., their physical traits, personality traits, feelings, actions, motives) and explains how those aspects change and develop over time.

**Instructional Example**

The student selects a favorite character from a book or a movie and discusses how the character's traits, feelings, actions, and motives develop and change over time.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB
- Passage types: N
- Items may request to describe or to analyze, **not necessarily both**.

**(recommended)**

Interpret the e.g. lists as i.e. lists.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

At the end of the passage, how does Nathan show that he has adjusted to his new school?

Why did Grandpa tell Mary to share the money with her sister?

After the tournament, Cathy **mainly** felt

Why did Cindy think Tim was conceited when she first met him?

Which is the **main** reason Alex brought the newspaper home?

			Character	
			R.8.2.1.1	

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.2.1.2

▲ identifies and describes the setting (e.g., environment, time of day or year, historical period, situation, place) and analyzes connections between the setting and other story elements (e.g., character, plot).

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student describes the setting (e.g., environment, time of day or year, historical period, situation, place) and explains the importance of the setting to the story.

**Instructional Example**

The student invents an alternative setting for the story and describes how that might impact the outcome of the story.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB
- Passage types: N
- Connections between setting and other story elements can include the ways in which the setting influences various aspects of characters (e.g., their traits, feelings, actions, motives) and various elements of the plot (e.g., conflict, crisis/turning moment, climax, resolution, rising action, falling action, subplots, parallel episodes).
- Items may request to describe or to analyze, **not necessarily both**.

**(recommended)**

Do not ask about how much time has passed.

Interpret the e.g. lists as i.e. lists.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

The explorer has trouble finding the treasure because the cave is

What is the setting at the beginning of the passage?

Which is the **main** setting of the passage?

The passage takes place during which time of day?

Which **best** describes how the rural setting affects events in the passage?

				Setting
				R.8.2.1.2

**Standard/Benchmark/Indicator**

R.8.2.1.3

▲ identifies major and minor elements of the plot (e.g., problem or conflict, climax, resolution, rising action, falling action, subplots, parallel episodes) and explains how these elements relate to one another.

**Explanation of Indicator**

The student describes the major and minor events in a story and explains how one event gives rise to another.

**Instructional Example**

The student draws the major events related to the conflict in a story and explains how one event leads to another.

**Test Specification Notes (official)**

- MC
- PB
- Passage types: N

**(recommended)**

Items may request to identify plot elements or explain how different elements relate to one another, **not necessarily both**.

The word “story” may be used if “passage” sounds awkward.

Interpret the e.g. lists as i.e. lists.

**State Assessment Sample Item**

By resolving her problem, Anita was able to

The **major** conflict in the story is resolved when

What is the **major** conflict in the passage?

Which is the climax of the passage?

Which is the resolution of the story?

Plot				
R.8.2.1.3				