

DRAFT Achievement Level Descriptors

Grade 7 English Language Arts

EFFECTIVE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

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Achievement Levels and Achievement Level Descriptors

With the implementation of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System, Georgia educators have developed four achievement levels to describe student mastery and command of the knowledge and skills outlined in Georgia's content standards. Most students have at least some knowledge of the content described in the content standards; however, achievement levels succinctly describe how much mastery a student has. Achievement levels give meaning and context to scale scores by describing the knowledge and skills students must demonstrate to achieve each level.

The four achievement levels on Georgia Milestones are *Beginning Learner*, *Developing Learner*, *Proficient Learner*, and *Distinguished Learner*. The general meaning of each of the four levels is provided below:

Beginning Learners do not yet demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students need substantial academic support to be prepared for the next grade level or course and to be on track for post-secondary readiness.

Developing Learners demonstrate partial proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students need additional academic support to ensure success in the next grade level or course and to be on track for post-secondary readiness.

Proficient Learners demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students are prepared for the next grade level or course and are on track for post-secondary readiness.

Distinguished Learners demonstrate advanced proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students ***are well prepared*** for the next grade level or course and are well prepared for post-secondary readiness.

More detailed and content-specific concepts and skills are provided for each grade, content area, and course in the **Achievement Level Descriptors** (ALDs). ALDs are narrative descriptions of the knowledge and skills expected at each of the four achievement levels and were developed for each grade level, content area, and course by committees of Georgia educators. The ***draft ALDs for English Language Arts*** were developed by Georgia educators in July of 2023 and are subject to revisions during the standard setting process that occurs after the first administration of a new assessment.

ALDs show a progression of knowledge and skills for which students must demonstrate competency across the achievement levels. It is important to understand that a student should demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills within his/her achievement level as well as all content and skills in any achievement levels that precede his/her own, if any. For example, a Proficient Learner should also possess the knowledge and skills of a Developing Learner and a Beginning Learner.

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POLICY DESCRIPTORS			
Beginning Learner	**Developing Learner**	**Proficient Learner**	**Distinguished Learner**
Beginning Learners do not yet demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students *need substantial academic support* to be prepared for the next grade level or course and to be on track for *post-secondary readiness*.	**Developing Learners demonstrate partial proficiency in the knowledge and skills** necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students *need additional academic support* to ensure success in the next grade level or course and to be on track for *post-secondary readiness*.	**Proficient Learners demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills** necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students *are prepared for the next grade level or course* and are on track for *post-secondary readiness*.	**Distinguished Learners demonstrate advanced proficiency in the knowledge and skills** necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students *are well prepared for the next grade level or course* and are well prepared for *post-secondary readiness*.

RANGE DESCRIPTORS			
A student who achieves the Beginning Learner level demonstrates minimal command of the grade-level standards, working with various grade-level texts.	A student who achieves the Developing Learner level demonstrates partial command of the grade-level standards, working with various grade-level texts.	A student who achieves the Proficient Learner level demonstrates proficiency of the grade-level standards, working with various grade-level texts.	A student who achieves the Distinguished Learner level demonstrates advanced proficiency of the grade-level standards, working with various grade-level texts.
Domain: Texts Students grow in their learning as they purposefully engage with texts.			
Big Idea: Context Students recognize influences on texts and analyze how they shape meaning.			
7.T.C.1: Purpose & Audience – Analyze the impact of purpose and audience on a wide variety of texts.			
• Determine multiple purposes **within a single text**. • Determine multiple audiences **within a single text**. • Identify text mode feature(s) that aid comprehension of a disciplinary text. • Construct multimodal texts for a specific purpose or audience.	• Explain how multiple purposes target a specific audience **within a single text.** • Determine the audiences and purposes **of a single text**. • Use text mode feature(s) to aid comprehension of a disciplinary text and its related context. • Construct multimodal texts for a specific purpose and audience.	• Analyze the development of multiple purposes **within a single text** and how those purposes target specific audiences. • Use text mode feature(s) to aid comprehension and analysis of disciplinary text(s) and their context(s). • Construct multimodal texts and/or presentations for a specific purpose and audience using multiple, clearly identifiable features of incorporated modes.	• Analyze the development of multiple purposes **within two texts** and determine how those purposes target specific audiences.

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7.T.C.2: Authors & Speakers – Analyze how authors' and/or speakers' perspectives influence texts and how circumstances shape their creation.			
• Identify the prevailing perspective in a text. • Identify the background information and context presented in the text (e.g., geography, location, era, historical happenings). • Identify credible source(s) to research the answer to a question on a provided topic.	• Identify the prevailing perspective in a text and explain how the author develops that perspective. • Identify specific evidence that the author used to strengthen credibility. • Explain the impact of the provided background information or context (e.g., geography, location, era, historical happenings) on text development. • Identify credible sources to research the answers to questions on a provided topic.	• Determine the prevailing perspective **in a text** and analyze how the author distinguishes or corroborates that position. • Analyze how evidence and tone reveal **one** author's perspective and impact credibility. • Analyze the impact of background information and context (e.g., geography, location, era, historical happenings) on text development. • Use credible sources to research the answer to a question on a provided research topic.	• Determine the prevailing perspective **across two texts** and analyze how the authors distinguish or corroborate that position. • Analyze how evidence and tone reveal **multiple** authors' perspectives and impact credibility. • Analyze how background information in one text (e.g., geography, location, era, historical happenings) impacts the audience's understanding of another text. • Use credible sources to expand upon ideas in the student's draft research text.
Big Idea: Structure & Style Students analyze and use organizational structures and style to shape ideas and information.			
7.T.SS.1: Organization – Analyze and use organizational structures to craft meaning.			

• Plan a text using a text structure or text feature appropriate to a provided purpose and/or audience.
• Use transition word(s) to connect ideas **within a sentence or paragraph**.
	• Explain how provided organizational structure(s) or feature(s) are used to convey meaning, respond to the audience, or achieve specific purpose(s).
	• Design a text using text structures or text features to convey information for a provided purpose, and/or audience.
	• Use varied transition words and phrases to connect ideas and sentences **within a paragraph**.
	• Craft part of a multi-paragraph text by focusing on one of the following:
	  ○ Craft a section of a text that guides the focus.
	  ○ Revise part of an introduction to address the research, question, purpose, and/or audience.
		• Analyze how authors use organizational structures or features to convey meaning, respond to the audience, or achieve specific purposes.
		• Design texts, flexibly employing a variety of text structures and text features to convey information as appropriate to purpose and audience.
		• Use varied transition words and phrases to connect ideas, sentences, and paragraphs **across two paragraphs**.
		• Craft part of a multi-paragraph text by focusing on one of the following:
		  ○ Craft a plan for a complete text that guides the focus.
		  ○ Craft a complete introduction that addresses the research
			• Use varied transition words and phrases to connect ideas, sentences, and paragraphs **throughout a text.**
			• Craft multi-paragraph texts using a coherent structure with an introduction that guides the focus; supporting facts, reasons, details, descriptions, and/or events; and a conclusion.

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	○ Use supporting facts, reasons, details, descriptions and/or events to increase the focus in one section of the text. ○ Revise part of a conclusion to guide the focus.	question, purpose, and audience. ○ Use supporting facts, reasons, details, descriptions and/or events to increase the focus in multiple sections of the text. ○ Craft a complete conclusion that contributes to guiding the focus.	
7.T.SS.2: Craft – Interpret and use language to craft engaging texts.			
• Identify figurative language and/or connotative language and/or literary device choices in a text that contribute to meaning, mood, or tone. • Determine the mood or tone in a text. • Determine situational use for formal or informal style.	• Describe the meaning of a provided excerpt of figurative language and/or connotative language and/or literary device choices in a text that is used to convey meaning, mood, or tone. • Use figurative language, literary devices, or connotative language for intentional effect(s) **in a section of text.** • Apply formal or informal style by identifying sentence(s) that deviate from the style and tone appropriate to the purpose and/or target audience.	• Explain how figurative language, connotative language, and/or literary device choices contribute to meaning, mood, or tone in text(s). • Use figurative language, literary devices, or connotative language for intentional effect(s) when creating **a section of text** to achieve specific purpose(s) or appeal to the target audience. • Determine situational use for formal or informal style and apply that determination to choices when writing or speaking.	• Explain how figurative language, connotative language, and literary device choices contribute to meaning, mood, or tone in text(s) and support that explanation with textual evidence. • Uses a variety of figurative language, literary devices, or connotative language **throughout a text** for intentional effects when creating texts to achieve specific purposes or appeal to the target audience.
Big Idea: Techniques Students analyze and apply various techniques to comprehend and shape meaning.			
7.T.T.1: Narrative Techniques – Analyze and apply narrative techniques.			
• Identify a narrative technique that is used (e.g., dialogue, description, foreshadowing) to develop plot, character(s), or setting. • Identify plot structure, conflict, or narrative device (e.g., flashback, foreshadowing) within a text. • Identify the theme(s) in a text. • Identify specific instance(s) within a literary text in which the author draws on a historical account of the same period.	• Describe how a narrative technique **within a section of text** develops the plot, character(s), or setting. • Determine specific detail(s) **within the text** that convey information about plot, characters, and/or setting. • Analyze the use of plot structure(s), conflict, or narrative device(s) (e.g., flashback, foreshadowing) **within a section of text.** • Describe how theme(s) are developed and expressed in text	• Analyze how narrative technique(s) are used **throughout a text** to develop plot, character(s), and/or setting. • Analyze the use of plot structures, conflict, and/or narrative devices (e.g., flashback, foreshadowing) **throughout a text.** • Compare and contrast how themes are developed and expressed in texts through characters, events, and/or other story elements. • Compare **and** contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, **or**	• Analyze how narrative technique(s) are used in conjunction **with other techniques** (e.g., argumentative, expository) to develop ideas. • Compare and contrast how themes are developed and expressed in texts through characters, events, and other story elements and support the comparison with textual evidence. • Compare **and** contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, **and** character with a historical account of the same period.

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• Apply a narrative technique to develop plot, characterization, or setting.	through characters, events, or other story elements.
	• Compare **or** contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, **or** character with a historical account of the same period.
	• Apply **one** of the following narrative techniques to achieve a specific purpose.
	  ○ Clearly sequence plot when given part of the sequence.
	  ○ Use one instance of dialogue to achieve a specific purpose.
	  ○ Use a descriptive detail to achieve a specific purpose.
		character with a historical account of the same period.
		• Apply **multiple** narrative technique(s) to enhance writing, engage an audience, and achieve a specific purpose.
		  • Clearly sequence plot, including the intro, climax, conflict/resolution, and conclusion.
		  • Apply dialogue to achieve specific purpose(s).
		  • Use descriptive details to achieve specific purpose(s).
			• Apply narrative techniques to engage the audience and achieve a specific purpose **in other text genres** (e.g., argumentative, expository).

7.T.T.2: Expository Techniques – Analyze and apply expository techniques.			
• Recognize the main idea(s) in an expository text. • Recognize an expository technique the author uses in a text. • Recognize a specific fact or key detail within an expository text that supports the main idea. • Explain how an author shapes a presentation of key information about a specific topic. • Apply an expository technique to introduce the topic, develop the topic, or provide a sense of closure.	• Determine the main idea(s) or key detail(s) in an expository text that is presented using a specific technique. • Determine specific facts, statistics, key details, and/or information from text features within an expository text that support the main idea(s). • Determine how the author provides a sense of closure. • Determine a main idea of an expository text and support that main idea with facts, statistics, key details, and/or information from text features. • Explain how two or more authors writing about the same topic are similar in how they shape their presentations of key information. • Explain how two or more authors writing about the same topic are different in how they shape their presentations of key information. • Apply expository techniques **within a paragraph** to introduce the topic, develop the topic with an idea, a	• Analyze expository techniques used to present and design content, including main ideas, facts, statistics, key details, information from text features, and/or a sense of closure. • Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts. • Apply expository techniques (e.g., main idea, facts, statistics, key details, text features, sense of closure) **across two paragraphs** to enhance writing and engage audiences.	• Analyze expository techniques used in **multiple texts** to present and design content. • Apply expository techniques **throughout the text** to enhance writing and engage audiences.

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	fact, a statistic, or a key detail, and/or provide a sense of closure. • Apply expository techniques **within a paragraph** to develop the topic with multiple ideas, facts, statistics, and/or key details. • Apply expository techniques **within a paragraph** using text features to enhance writing and engage audiences.		
7.T.T.3: Argumentative Techniques – Analyze and apply argumentative techniques.			
• Recognize an author's claim, a piece of supporting relevant evidence, or an identified counterclaim. • **Apply an argumentative technique** to develop an introduction or a logical conclusion.	• Recognize an author's claim along with the supporting relevant evidence for the claim. • Recognize **multiple** pieces of relevant evidence within an argumentative text that support a provided claim. • Explain an argumentative technique an author uses to present and design content. • Determine how the author provides a conclusion that logically follows the argument. • When provided an argumentative technique (e.g., claim, counterclaim, reason), **apply an additional technique** (e.g., counterclaim, relevant evidence) to enhance writing.	• Analyze argumentative techniques used to present and design content, including an author's claim, supporting relevant evidence, an identified counterclaim, and/or a conclusion that logically follows the argument. • **Apply more than one argumentative technique** (e.g., constructing a claim, supporting with relevant evidence, constructing a counterclaim, and providing a logical conclusion) **across two paragraphs** to enhance writing and engage audiences.	• Analyze argumentative techniques used in **multiple texts** to present and design content. • Apply more than one argumentative technique **throughout a text** to enhance writing and engage audiences.
7.T.T.4: Poetic Techniques – Analyze and apply poetic techniques.			
• Recognize a poetic technique (e.g., stanzas, rhyme scheme, imagery, figurative language, and/or sound devices).	• When provided a poetic technique, explain its use for presenting or designing content. • Apply **a poetic technique** (e.g., stanzas, rhyme/rhyme scheme, imagery, figurative language, sound devices) to produce poetry and engage an audience.	• Analyze poetic technique(s) used to present and design content, including stanzas, rhyme scheme, imagery, figurative language, and/or sound devices. • Apply **multiple poetic techniques** (e.g., stanzas, rhyme/rhyme scheme, imagery, figurative language, sound devices) to	• Apply **multiple poetic techniques** (e.g., stanzas, rhyme/rhyme scheme, imagery, figurative language, sound devices) **from multiple poetic texts** to produce poetry and engage audiences.

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		produce poetry and engage audiences.	
Big Idea: Research & Analysis Students use, discuss, analyze, and curate texts as they engage in various conversations, activities, and projects about a range of grade-level texts and topics.			
7.T.RA.1: Research & Inquiry – Conduct research, generating questions to guide investigations of complex topics of interest and using credible resources to support analyses.			
• Generate questions to guide research to investigate topic(s).	• Generate question(s) to guide research about a topic to extend the investigation of the topics and ideas. • Conduct research by locating and gathering information from **one credible source** (including print, digital, and personal communication) about texts or related topics. • Draw upon research to support ideas and information.	• Generate questions to guide research and make connections between related topics, formulating questions to investigate topics and ideas. • Conduct research by locating, gathering, curating, and/or integrating information from **multiple credible sources** (including print, digital, and personal communication) about texts and related topics. • Draw from accumulated knowledge and research to analyze texts, challenging or extending ideas and information.	
7.T.RA.2: Curating Sources & Evidence – Utilize multiple print and digital texts to address a specific topic or question, assessing source credibility and relevance and integrating evidence properly to avoid plagiarism.			
• **Use a basic citation** when integrating textual evidence.	• Locate evidence **in a print or digital source** to support a central idea or question. • Determine ideas and/or information within print and/or digital text(s) that make the text credible or relevant. • Follow a **standard format** for citation when integrating multiple pieces of textual evidence.	• Locate evidence **in multiple print and/or digital sources** to support a central idea or question. • Analyze print and digital texts for credibility and relevance, determining whether the ideas and information support the topic under investigation. • Follow a **standard format** for citation when integrating textual evidence, clearly identifying and citing the ideas and information of others, **drawing on information provided from a Works Cited entry.**.	• Locate evidence in print and digital sources to support **multiple** central ideas or questions.

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Big Idea: Periods & Movements Students demonstrate knowledge of dominant themes, genres, and verbal styles of literature from a particular time period.			
7.T.PM.1: Periods & Movements - Demonstrate knowledge of dominant themes, genres, and verbal styles of literature from a particular time period.			
	• Identify a specific element (e.g., character, event, conflict, lesson) that a modern writer adapted from a myth or text (fictional or historical). • Identify key features of style or theme in literature from a particular time period.	• Analyze a myth or text (fictional or historical) that a modern writer adapted into their own work by identifying key features of style or theme. • Analyze how an author uses key features of style and theme to convey a particular time period in literature.	• Analyze a myth or text (fictional or historical) that a modern writer adapted into their own work by identifying key features of style **and** theme.
Domain: Language Students learn and apply the structures and conventions of standard English. Students observe and analyze how grammar works in reading and writing. Students build vocabularies and determine word meanings as they relate to reading and writing.			
Big Idea: Grammar Conventions Students observe, analyze, and use the structures and conventions of Standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics as they interpret and construct texts.			
7.L.GC.1: Grammar, Usage, & Mechanics – Draw from knowledge of the conventions of Standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics when analyzing and constructing texts..			
• Use indefinite pronouns, ensuring correct agreement. • Use subordinating conjunctions to join clauses. • Use commas after introductory phrases or clauses. • Use conventional capitalization and underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works. • Use intensive pronouns.	• Form and use the progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive verb aspects. • Form and use participles. • Recognize and correct vague pronoun references. • Use correlative conjunctions to join words, phrases, or clauses. • Use conventional capitalization, quotation marks, commas, end punctuation, and attributions to indicate exact words and lines of dialogue. • Use semicolons to separate items in a series or list when at least one of the items already contains commas.	• Use commas, parentheses, and dashes to set off nonessential words, phrases, or clauses. • Use demonstrative pronouns.	
7.L.GC.2: Syntax – Apply understanding of syntax to comprehend, analyze, condense, and combine ideas and information, enhancing clarity, style, and meaning.			
• Determine when active voice should be used.	• Use a variety of simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to condense and	• Apply understandings of syntax to comprehend and analyze a variety of grade-level texts.	

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	combine ideas **within a paragraph.** • Use active voice in sentences, ensuring subject-verb agreement. • Determine when misplaced and/or dangling modifier(s) should be corrected in writing.	• Use a variety of simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to condense and combine ideas, maintaining consistent verb tense **throughout the text.** • Distinguish between active and passive voice, revising texts to maintain consistency in active voice. • Build and enrich ideas and information in texts, avoiding misplaced or dangling modifiers when incorporating details and descriptions to convey meaning and facilitate engagement.	
Big Idea: Vocabulary Students engage in a wide range of written and spoken activities during which they expand and deepen their vocabularies, build word analysis skillsets (morphology), and determine or clarify the meanings of words and phrases.			
7.L.V.1: General, Academic, & Specialized Vocabulary – Use a variety of approaches to continuously build vocabulary across a range of real-life, academic, and disciplinary contexts and apply those understandings to analyze texts and to communicate effectively.			
		• Determine the meaning of a range of general, academic, and/or disciplinary vocabulary through grade-level print, digital, and/or multimodal texts or content. • Use grade-level general, academic, and/or disciplinary vocabulary to communicate clearly and precisely in a variety of settings.	• Use grade-level general, academic, and/or disciplinary vocabulary words to communicate clearly and precisely
7.L.V.2: Word Analysis – Use word knowledge and word analysis skills to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases and to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes.			
	• Deconstruct word(s) to determine or clarify meaning using etymology knowledge when the tested Greek and Latin root, root word, or affix **was previously introduced.** • Identify the connection between parts of speech and the meaning of words (e.g., discuss as a verb vs. discussion as a noun).	• Deconstruct word(s) to determine or clarify meaning using etymology knowledge when the tested Greek and Latin root, root word, or affix is **at grade-level.** • Apply knowledge of parts of speech to determine the meanings of words and phrases in grade-level texts.	•

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	• Construct a **word** using a Greek or Latin root or root word and an affix.	• Construct and use **words** based on knowledge of Greek and Latin roots, root words, and/or affixes and use those words appropriately in context. • Use knowledge of parts of speech to determine precise words and phrases when constructing texts.	
7.L.V.3: Meaning & Purpose – Analyze the denotative and connotative meanings of words and phrases and strategically apply those understandings when interpreting and constructing texts.			
	• Analyze relationships between words, phrases, and/or clauses (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, analogies, contextual clues) **within a sentence** to determine the meaning of unknown **or** multiple-meaning words and phrases.	• Analyze relationships between words, phrases, and/or clauses (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, analogies, contextual clues) **beyond a sentence** to determine, distinguish, **and/or** clarify the meaning of unknown or multiple-meaning words and phrases. • Distinguish between the connotations of words that share a similar denotation (e.g., confident, assertive, egotistic, pompous, smug). • Use available print and/or digital resources, including reference materials and digital tools (e.g., online search, embedded word processing features), to determine, clarify, or verify the meaning of unknown or multiple-meaning words and phrases. • Determine or clarify the nuanced meanings of closely related words or phrases using available print and/or digital resources to make strategic decisions when writing.	• Analyze relationships between words, phrases, and/or clauses (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, analogies, contextual clues) **across a text** to determine, distinguish, **and/or** clarify the meaning of unknown or multiple-meaning words and phrases.

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