

English Language Arts Specification: High School Claim 2 Target 8

Claim 2: Students can produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences.	
Target 8. LANGUAGE and VOCABULARY USE: Strategically use precise language and vocabulary (including academic and domain-specific vocabulary and figurative language) and style appropriate to the purpose and audience when revising or composing texts.	
Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The more precise, descriptive, effective and/or domain-specific word choices assessed in this target should not be above the assessed grade level. Items for this target DO require an audience/purpose/context setup statement. This is a word/language choice target. This target focuses on word choice and calls for replacing a grade-appropriate word or phrase. It does not test revising/replacing a complete sentence. When an entire sentence or more is revised, the item is aligned to Target 1b, 3b, or 6b. If the revision adds new information at the sentence level (e.g., adds evidence or conclusion, or dialogue), it is not aligned to Target 8; it is aligned to Target 1b, 3b, or 6b. The use of vague pronouns is a conventions (target 9) issue, not a language choice (target 8) issue.
Standards	<p>W-2d <u>Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.</u></p> <p>W-3d <u>Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language</u> to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.</p> <p>L-6 <u>Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.</u></p>
Depth of Knowledge	DOK 1, 2
Stimuli/Passages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimuli for this target may be brief (three sentences to one to two short paragraphs.) narrative, informational, or argumentative texts in order for students to determine language that is specific to audience and purpose.
Stimuli/Text Complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stimulus must be appropriately complex for the skill being assessed. The stimulus must be consistent with the purpose and intent of the target and standard being measured. The stimulus should provide words/phrases to get at evidence statements 2, 3, and 4 as well as evidence statement 1 (vague imprecise words). However, for evidence statement 1, words/phrases to be replaced should be <i>varied</i> and <i>grade appropriate</i>. At least one of the words/phrases needing replacement should avoid recycling the typical and obvious vague words/phrases used in early grades:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words such as good/bad, things/stuff, said/tell, nice, a lot, very, etc. are most appropriate at lower grades; regardless, stimulus should include less typical and obvious words/phrases whenever possible and avoid over-testing the obvious words. As students move toward the secondary level (from grades 6+), in addition to replacing vague, general, and/or overused words (<i>interesting, important, exciting, amazing</i>, etc.) items could ask to replace weak (linking) verbs with more precise active verbs (“<i>the cheese smelled bad</i>” with “<i>the cheese reeked</i>”) or adjective/adverb strings with more precise single adjective/adverb (“<i>exciting, amazing show</i>” with “<i>remarkable show</i>,” “<i>lovely little café</i>” with “<i>quaint café</i>,” “<i>ate quickly</i>” with “<i>devoured</i>,” etc.) For domain-specific vocabulary (standard L6) the vocabulary must be grade-appropriate but can be content-specific. However, note that the use of certain content-specific vocabulary can be appropriate at earlier grade levels than indicated by readability indices if that vocabulary is tied to curricula used at those earlier grade levels. In other words, for vocabulary that has different meanings in different contexts, attention must be paid to the grade level use of that particular word. An example of such a word would be “segregate” (a grade 10 word), which is generally defined as “separate.” However, depending on the context, there are multiple nuanced, connotative, meanings. For social studies, segregate could refer to societal separation of races, sexes, or ethnic groups, having a distinctively negative connotation. “Segregate” can also describe the process of separating/sequestering a jury. In science, genetic segregation (e.g., Mendel's Law) could refer to separation of chromosomes to deciding sex, a biologically determined process devoid of any connotation. Target 8 assesses Tier 2 words (e.g., not Tier 3 vocabulary exclusive to science, social studies, or a specific content area). See Appendix A (pp. 32-34) of the Common Core State Standards document for additional clarification of Tier 2 vocabulary. The stimulus will read as would authentic student writing for the targeted grade. That is, the content, language/vocabulary, and sentence structure of each stimulus should be similar to what students would write at the tested grade level. (Note: Do not lower the readability of a stimulus simply by converting complex or compound sentences into simple sentences. This usually results in choppy, less cohesive writing.) The stimulus should be a model of good writing. It should NOT promote formulaic writing (e.g., topic sentence, three development sentences, and a concluding sentence that restates the topic sentence). A one-to-two paragraph stimulus, for example, should be written as if it is part of a larger piece of writing.
Accessibility Concerns	<p>Students will be required to read brief narrative, informational/explanatory, or argumentative texts (three sentences to one to two short paragraphs) and write one or more paragraphs. Students with physical impairments may need to use an adapted mouse or a computer with eye-scanning capabilities. Students who are visually impaired or blind may need to have visual media described to them. Other formats or supports may be necessary for students with other disabilities. Speech-to-text may be an appropriate accommodation for students who have difficulty writing. The accommodations listed here are suggestions and could be altered depending on what</p>

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	accommodations will be allowable.
Evidence Required	<p>a. The student will identify and use a better word or words to make vague language in text more precise.</p> <p>b. The student will identify and use the best on- or below-grade-level academic domain-specific construct-relevant word(s)/phrase (e.g., Tier 2 words, not Tier 3 vocabulary exclusive to science or social studies) to convey the precise or intended meaning of a text, especially with informational/ explanatory writing.</p> <p>c. The student will identify and use precise words or phrases (including figurative/sensory language and telling details) to convey a vivid picture of setting, character, events, experiences or ideas in a text in narrative writing.</p> <p>d. The student will identify and use the best general academic or domain-specific word or words to use in a text to convey precisely actions, emotions, or states of being that are basic to a particular topic and specific to a writing task.</p> <p>* For items addressing evidence statement 1, stimulus words/phrases should be grade appropriate and avoid recycling the same hackneyed, vague and/or obvious words—see Stimuli/Text Complexity notes.</p>
Allowable Item Types	Multiple Choice, single correct response; Multiple Choice, multiple correct response; Hot Text, select text

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Note: Text included in brackets [] in the following task model item stems indicates possible alternative wording. When constructing questions, be sure to select only one wording option; do not include the additional options in brackets.

Task Models

Task Model 1
Item Type: Multiple-Choice, single correct response
DOK: 1, 2

Note: Items for this target must have a setup that states audience, purpose, and context/task.

Stimulus: Text should be at grade level. Text will be brief—varying from three sentences to one to two short paragraphs, depending on the needs of the task.

Task Description: The **stem** will pose a question about how to improve writing through more effective and grade-appropriate word choices or phrasing. **Answer choices** will present four options of similar structure. The **best answer** will be a clearly discernible and accurate solution to improve the writing in the stimulus. The **distractors** will be improvements in word choice/phrasing to the text that may be plausible to students who are not considering or aware of the needs of the audience and purpose.

Target Evidence Statements:

- a. The student will identify and use a better word or words to make vague language in text more precise.
- b. The student will identify and use the best on- or below-grade-level academic domain-specific construct-relevant word(s)/phrase (e.g., Tier 2 words, not Tier 3 vocabulary exclusive to science or social studies) to convey the precise or intended meaning of a text, especially with informational/ explanatory writing.
- c. The student will identify and use precise words or phrases (including figurative/sensory language and telling details) to convey a vivid picture of setting, character, events, experiences or ideas in a text in narrative writing.
- d. The student will identify and use the best general academic or domain-specific word or words to use in a text to convey precisely actions, emotions, or states of being that are basic to a particular topic and specific to a writing task.

Appropriate Stems:

Note: Item stems should emphasize the writing purpose (in addition to form), such as explanatory report or argumentative essay or narrative/story, so that the student is cued to choose words/phrases appropriate for the purpose.

A student is writing a [varied forms and purposes, e.g., narrative, explanatory article, explanatory or argumentative essay, research report, explanatory project proposal, critical review, editorial, etc.] for the [teacher/principal/school board; political/legislative entities; literary publications; news sources; web site; etc.] about _____. Read the draft of the _____ and [answer the question/complete the task] that follows. [Insert text.]

- The student wants to replace the underlined [word(s)/phrase] to make the meaning clearer [or more precise]. Which [word/words/phrase] would be the best replacement for the underlined word [phrase]?
- The student wants to explain the ideas in the _____ better [or more clearly, more precisely, more vividly, etc.]. What is a more specific word

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	<p>[phrase/telling detail] to use instead of the <u>underlined</u> word [phrase]?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the sentence from the paragraph. What would be the most exact word [phrase] to replace ____ in this sentence? • Read the <u>underlined</u> sentence from the paragraph. To add more description, select the best word [phrase] to replace the <u>underlined</u> word [phrase, or part of the...] _____. [Choices could include metaphor, simile, analogy and/or other descriptive detail] • The student wants to make sure that the word choices are appropriate to inform [to explain to or to convince] the audience about _____. What is the most concise word [or phrase] to replace the <u>underlined</u> word [phrase]? • The author of the [letter] wants to replace the <u>underlined</u> word [phrase]*. Which replacement best fits the intended audience? • The student wants to make sure that the word choices are appropriate to express ideas effectively for the audience and purpose. Choose the best word [phrase] to replace the <u>underlined</u> word [phrase]*. • The student wants to make sure that the word choices are appropriate to explain to [or to convince] the audience about _____. Choose the best word [phrase] to replace the <u>underlined</u> word [phrase]*. • For each <u>underlined</u> word [or phrase]*, choose the word [or phrase] that gives readers the best visual [or mental] image of the [story, narrative, etc.]. • Choose the best way to revise the <u>underlined</u> phrase* so that the essay maintains a(n) consistent/appropriate voice [style or tone]. <p>* For items addressing evidence statement 1, stimulus words/phrases should be grade appropriate and avoid recycling the same hackneyed, vague and/or obvious words—see Stimuli/Text Complexity notes.</p> <p>Scoring Rules: Correct answer = 1 point; other = 0 points.</p>
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Task Models	
<p>Task Model 2</p> <p>Item Type: Multiple-Choice, multiple correct response</p> <p>DOK: 1, 2</p>	<p>Note: Items for this target must have a setup that states audience, purpose, and context/task.</p> <p>Stimulus: Text should be at grade level. Text will be brief—varying from three sentences to one-to-two short paragraphs, depending on the needs of the task.</p> <p>Task Description: The stem will pose a question about how to improve writing through more effective and grade-appropriate word choices or phrasing. Answer choices for select text items should present more than four options (e.g., 5 to 7, so that fewer than half the choices should be correct responses). All answer choices, distractors as well as correct answer(s), must be <u>underlined</u>. The best answer will be clearly discernible and accurate solutions to improve the writing in the stimulus. The distractors will be improvements in word choice/phrasing to the text that may be plausible to students who are not considering or aware of the needs of the audience and purpose.</p> <p>Target Evidence Statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The student will identify and use a better word or words to make vague language in text more precise. The student will identify and use the best on- or below-grade-level academic domain-specific construct-relevant word(s)/phrase (e.g., Tier 2 words, not Tier 3 vocabulary exclusive to science or social studies) to convey the precise or intended meaning of a text, especially with informational/explanatory writing. The student will identify and use precise words or phrases (including figurative/sensory language and telling details) to convey a vivid picture of setting, character, events, experiences or ideas in a text in narrative writing. The student will identify and use the best general academic or domain-specific word or words to use in a text to convey precisely actions, emotions, or states of being that are basic to a particular topic and specific to a writing task. <p>Appropriate Stems:</p> <p>Note: Item stems should emphasize the writing purpose (in addition to form), such as explanatory report or argumentative essay or narrative/story, so that the student is cued to choose words/phrases appropriate for the purpose.</p> <p>A student is writing a [varied forms and purposes, e.g., narrative, explanatory article, explanatory or argumentative essay, research report, explanatory project proposal, critical review, editorial, etc.] for the [teacher/principal/school board; political/legislative entities; literary publications; news sources; web site; etc.] about _____. Read the draft of the _____ and [answer the question/complete the task] that follows. [Insert text.]</p> <p>Note: For this task model, if/when students are asked to replace two words/phrases, the stem must make it clear that the students still need to make two answer choices. Use language “pairs of” to clarify.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student wants to replace the <u>underlined</u> [word(s)/phrase] to make the meaning clearer [or more precise or more exact]. Which two [words/phrases] would be the best replacements for the underlined word [phrase]?

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the sentence from the paragraph. Choose two pairs of words that would be more specific [or more precise or more concrete] to replace [<u>underlined</u>] ____* and ____* in the paragraph. • The student wants to make sure that the word choices are appropriate to express ideas effectively for the audience. Choose the best two pairs of words [phrases] to replace the two underlined words [phrases] • The student wants to make sure that the word choices are appropriate to inform [to convince] the audience about _____. Choose the best two [pairs of] words [phrases] to replace each of [or both of] the <u>underlined</u> words [phrases]*. • For the [or for each] <u>underlined</u> word [or phrase]*, choose two [pairs of] words [phrases] to give readers the best visual [or mental] image of the [story, narrative, situation etc.]. [At grade 11, some choices should include metaphor, simile, analogy, and/or other descriptive detail.] • The student wants to make sure that the word choices are appropriate to inform [or explain to or to convince] the audience about _____. Choose the two best pairs of words [or phrases] to replace the two underlined words or phrases. • The student wants to revise the _____ to make the writing more detailed [descriptive]. To add more description, select the two best pairs of words [phrases] to replace the [underlined] words* ____ and ____. <p>* For items addressing evidence statement 1, stimulus words/phrases should be grade appropriate and avoid recycling the same hackneyed, vague, and/or obvious words—see Stimuli/Text Complexity notes.</p> <p>Scoring Rules: All correct = 1 point; other = 0 points.</p>
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Task Models	
<p>Task Model 3 Item Type: Hot Text, select text DOK: 1, 2</p>	<p>Note: Items for this target must have a setup that states audience, purpose, and context/task.</p> <p>Stimulus: Text should be at grade level. Text will be brief—varying from three sentences to one to two short paragraphs, depending on the needs of the task.</p> <p>Task Description: The stem will pose a question about how to improve writing through more effective and grade-appropriate word choices or phrasing. Answer choices for select text items should present more than four options (e.g., 5 to 7, so that fewer than half the choices should be correct responses). All answer choices, distractors as well as correct answer(s), must be underlined. The best answer will be clearly discernible and accurate solutions to improve the writing in the stimulus. The distractors will be improvements in word choice/phrasing to the text that may be plausible to students who are not considering or aware of the needs of the audience and purpose. If there are too many defensible options (check every possibility), do not use this item type; use multiple choice.</p> <p>Target Evidence Statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The student will identify and use a better word or words to make vague language in text more precise. The student will identify and use the best on- or below-grade-level academic domain-specific construct-relevant word(s)/phrase (e.g., Tier 2 words, not Tier 3 vocabulary exclusive to science or social studies) to convey the precise or intended meaning of a text, especially with informational/ explanatory writing The student will identify and use precise words or phrases (including figurative/sensory language and telling details) to convey a vivid picture of setting, character, events, experiences or ideas in a text in narrative writing. The student will identify and use the best general academic or domain-specific word or words to use in a text to convey precisely actions, emotions, or states of being that are basic to a particular topic and specific to a writing task. <p>Appropriate Stems:</p> <p>Note: Item stems should emphasize the writing purpose (in addition to form), such as explanatory report or argumentative essay or narrative/story, so that the student is cued to choose words/phrases appropriate for the purpose.</p> <p>A student is writing a [varied forms and purposes, e.g., narrative, explanatory article, explanatory or argumentative essay, research report, explanatory project proposal, critical review, editorial, etc.] for the [teacher/principal/ school board; political/legislative entities; literary publications; news sources; web site; etc.] about _____. Read the draft of the _____ and [answer the question/complete the task] that follows. [Insert text].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The _____ contains language that is not appropriate for the audience [or the purpose or the task]. Read the paragraph. Then click on two [or three] of the <u>underlined</u> words [phrases]* that are too informal [or inappropriate] for the audience [or purpose or task]. Note: all answer choices must be underlined. The student wants to revise [the underlined words/phrases] to make the meaning clear [or communicate the message more clearly]. Click on two [or three] of the underlined words or phrases* that need to be more

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	<p>precise [or more specific or explicit]. Note: Target language must clearly be too general or vague. Note: all answer choices must be underlined.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student wants to make the word choices appropriate to inform [or to convince] the audience about _____. Click on two of the underlined words that should be replaced. Note: Choices must be clearly inappropriate. For example, phrases such as “I’m really not sure” or “only unintelligent people think” would not be convincing for an audience reading an argumentative paper. However, the answer choices should not be full sentences, which would be Target 1b, 3b, 6b. Note: all answer choices must be underlined. • The student needs to add more concrete [or specific or exact] detail to the story. Click on two of the underlined words* that are too general and should be replaced by more concrete [or specific or exact] descriptive words. Note: all answer choices must be underlined. • The student needs to add more concrete [or specific or exact] detail to the story. Click on two of the underlined words* that are too general [abstract, vague] and should be replaced by more specific [or concrete or precise] descriptive words. Note: all answer choices must be underlined. • [Embed two (or three) <u>underlined</u> pairs of words separated by slash marks.] For each <u>underlined</u> pair of words*, click on the word that gives the most specific/precise information. • [Include in text two (or three) <u>underlined</u> pairs of words or phrases—one more vivid or grade-appropriate than the other—separated by slash marks (Word A/Word B).] For each <u>underlined</u> pair of words, click on the word/phrase that gives readers the best mental image of the [story, narrative, event, situation, etc.]. • [Include in text two (or three) <u>underlined</u> pairs of words*—one more specific or convincing or audience-appropriate or grade-appropriate than the other—separated by slash marks (Word A/Word B).] The student wants to choose words that would be more convincing [or would provide a better explanation] for the audience. Click on the word* in each pair that is the most [convincing, helpful for an explanation, etc.]. • Click on the two [or three] of the underlined words that should be replaced because they do not maintain a consistent/appropriate voice [style, tone] for the audience. Note: all answer choices must be underlined. <p>*For items addressing evidence statement 1, stimulus words/phrases should be grade appropriate and avoid recycling the same hackneyed, vague, and/or obvious words—see Stimuli/Text Complexity notes.</p> <p>Scoring Rules: All correct =1 point; other= 0 points.</p>
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