Recommended Revisions to the NAEP Reading Reporting ALDs for 2026

Table 1. Reading Grade 4 – Draft Reporting ALD Revisions

Achievement Level	Reporting ALDs
NAEP Basic	When reading literary texts such as fiction, poetry, and literary nonfiction, fourth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Basic* level likely can • determine the relevant meaning of familiar words using context within the same sentence or paragraph • identify a specific detail to make a simple inference about the characters' actions, motivations, or feelings, using a single point or multiple points in the text if they are in close proximity • sequence or categorize events from the story • make a general reference to an appropriate section of the text or provide some support for ideas related to the plot or characters • find meaning or provide evidence from one of the texts when making a comparison across texts • identify explicit details from the text • state an opinion with general support from one section of the text When reading science and social studies texts such as articles and excerpts from books, fourth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Basic* level likely can • determine the relevant meaning of familiar words using context from a single section of the text • locate a specific detail from the text and make simple inferences from one section of the text • restate a problem or solution presented in a single section of the text • provide a description of text features using a general reference to the text [original statement: provide a description of a text feature or author's craft using a general reference to the text] • provide an opinion using a general reference to the text • identify the author's purpose or the main idea of a text
NAEP Proficient	When reading literary texts such as fiction, poetry, and literary nonfiction, fourth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Proficient* level likely can • determine the meaning of words using context from multiple sections of the text • provide a reason why a particular detail is important to the story

	• identify the key events to determine main idea and make complex inferences about the characters' actions, motivations, or feelings, using relevant evidence within or across texts • describe the impact of a character's actions or explain how characters influence others • recognize a text's structure and organization • draw conclusions from single or multiple locations across a text and provide limited support from the text • develop an opinion with relevant support from a text When reading science and social studies texts such as articles and excerpts from books, fourth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Proficient* level likely can • determine the relevant meaning of words with multiple meanings • use a specific detail from the text to make inferences or provide a description or an explanation about text features • provide an opinion with relevant support from the text • restate a problem or solution presented in a single section of the text • describe, explain, or draw conclusions about text structures (for example: compare and contrast; cause and effect; sequence and order) • integrate ideas across a text to determine purpose and main idea
NAEP Advanced	When reading literary texts such as fiction, poetry, and literary nonfiction, fourth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Advanced* level likely can • determine the meaning of nonliteral phrases • identify relevant details to support a detailed judgment about a character and infer a character's development from the beginning of the text to the end • interpret lines of poetry to determine meaning • make a judgment about the purpose of text structure with relevant evidence from the text • distinguish the theme of a text • provide support from across the text when selecting evidence • compare two texts to support an opinion • make inferences across texts and use relevant details for support When reading science and social studies texts such as articles and excerpts from books, fourth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Advanced* level likely can • make complex inferences about words with multiple meanings or nonliteral phrases • select details to support a solution to a problem and provide relevant support for a given idea

	• provide a detailed opinion with relevant support, using details from the text • summarize ideas presented in a text and explain and/or interpret the purpose of a text feature • begin to evaluate text structures or an author's purpose • begin to evaluate how ideas and details across a text support the main idea

Table 2. Reading Grade 8 – Draft Reporting ALD Revisions

Achievement Level	Reporting ALDs
NAEP Basic	When reading literary texts such as fiction, poetry, and literary nonfiction, eighth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Basic* level likely can • use explicit context within the same sentence or paragraph to determine the meaning of essential words • make simple inferences about one part of the text using explicit details from that same part of the text • identify basic literary elements such as order of events, character traits and motivation, and main idea • formulate an opinion about the text and provide evidence that demonstrates limited or incomplete understanding using general information from or reference to the text When reading science and social studies texts such as exposition and argumentation, eighth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Basic* level likely can • determine the meaning of words using context from one section of the text • locate and use explicit details to answer specific questions and make simple inferences about the text • determine the main idea or purpose of the text using explicit features from the text • demonstrate a general understanding of text features or graphics • demonstrate a general understanding of the concepts in the text but can support their understanding using only limited information from the text • formulate an opinion about a claim or argument and support this opinion using only limited information from the text

NAEP Proficient	When reading literary texts such as fiction, poetry, and literary nonfiction, eighth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Proficient* level likely can • use context explicitly and implicitly across the entire text to determine the meaning of words and nonliteral phrases • make inferences and draw conclusions about varied literary elements such as character interactions, comparison of characters, plot features, and theme • support ideas with relevant examples from the text and provide some explanation about the connection between the ideas and evidence • provide a reasonable opinion supported by some evidence from the text When reading science and social studies texts such as exposition and argumentation, eighth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Proficient* level likely can • use context to determine the meaning of multiple-meaning words [original statement: use context to determine the definition of multiple-meaning words] • make inferences or judgments about text structures, features, and author's craft but can provide only partial explanations or text support • make connections between text features and graphics to explain how they support the primary text • identify one or both sides of an argument • offer an opinion about the evidence an author uses to support a claim or argument
NAEP Advanced	When reading literary texts such as fiction, poetry, and literary nonfiction, eighth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Advanced* level likely can • interpret descriptive or figurative language and how it impacts the meaning of the text • evaluate the relationships between literary elements such as setting, characterization, tone, structure, and how they impact the overall meaning of the text • construct an opinion and support it with relevant details and specific examples from the text • make specific connections within and across texts by using relevant evidence and providing a thorough explanation When reading science and social studies texts such as exposition and argumentation, eighth-grade students performing at the *NAEP Advanced* level likely can

	• determine the meaning of words and their impact on the meaning and tone of the text [original statement: determine the meaning of words using information and ideas presented throughout the text] • make connections within a text to determine similarities and differences, causes and effects, and problems and solutions • express an opinion that evaluates whether a text feature is critical to the overall understanding of the text • synthesize information across related texts and fully support their ideas with multiple pieces of evidence from one or more texts [original statement: synthesize information across related texts and fully support their ideas with evidence from both texts] • evaluate the effectiveness of an author's argument and support their evaluation with evidence • use appropriate text evidence from multiple sources to substantiate their own opinions or claims made by the author