# Summary of Analysis between 2024 Virginia Standards of Learning and 2026 NAEP Framework

Overall, there is a strong alignment between the Virginia Standards of Learning and the 2026 NAEP Framework for Proficient and Advanced Levels. The areas outlined in the following pages are where alignment may need to be stronger so stakeholders can consider how to approach them. The areas are divided into ‘significant areas to consider’ and ‘minor areas to consider’ for each NAEP testing grade.

Here are the areas that will be discussed:

[Summary of Analysis between Virginia Standards of Learning and 2026 NAEP Framework](#_2hia5uqeypu8)

[4th Grade 2](#_e5q6h64ipu83)

Minor [Area to Consider for Proficient: Literature Texts 2](#_2tppkssyq6nm)

[Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Science Texts 3](#_mm6hzduzljcu)

[Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Social Studies Texts 5](#_q1bevgmz37wd)

[4th Grade 5](#_dxphwp8ffopr)

Significant [Area to Consider for Advanced: Literature Texts 5](#_nhjibx85bl6z)

[Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Science Texts 7](#_n8eyl4ep12l8)

[Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Social Studies Texts 9](#_fvlbsyuojirn)

[8th Grade 10](#_tbty1qcrl8x6)

[Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Science Texts 10](#_1p3j6wv7wznw)

[Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Social Studies Texts 11](#_1axnqxvwfp08)

[8th Grade 12](#_ldqstk4qjfy4)

[Minor Area to Consider for Advanced: Literature Texts 12](#_yfcjkltctk7m)

[Minor Area to Consider for Advanced: Science Texts 13](#_tifa5mplx2u)

[Minor Area to Consider for Advanced: Social Studies Texts 14](#_dtcnx7jmx9t1)

##

## 4th Grade

### Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Literature Texts

The depth of cognitive comprehension in literature texts in and leading up to the Virginia Grade 4 standards does not fully match the cognitive comprehension targets in the 2026 NAEP Proficient Achievement Level. The areas where this separation is most apparent are thinking levels involving theme or central idea, multimedia resources, and character interpretation.

| NAEP 2026 (Proficient)**When engaged in reading literature texts:** | Virginia (2024 SOL) |
| --- | --- |
|
| SWBAT use textual evidence as support to describe in depth character, setting, and plot and to explain how a theme or central message is conveyed through details in a text. | **4.DSR The student will build knowledge and comprehension skills from reading a range of challenging, content-rich texts. This includes fluently reading and gathering evidence from grade-level complex texts, reading widely on topics to gain worthwhile knowledge and vocabulary, and using reading strategies when comprehension breaks down.**A. When responding to texts through discussions and/or writing, draw several pieces of evidence from read alouds and grade-level complex texts to support claims, conclusions, and inferences, including quoting or paraphrasing from texts accurately and tracing where relevant evidence is located **(Textual Evidence, K-12)**.**4.RL.1 Key Ideas and Plot Details**A. Summarize the theme of stories, dramas, or poetry, including the thematic topic (e.g., courage, loyalty, family) and how characters respond to the challenges.B. Describe the central conflict and explain the resolution using an understanding of text structure and events from the plot as evidence.C. Analyze characters in-depth, drawing on specific details from the text, including their words, actions or a character’s thoughts.**5.RL.1 Key Ideas and Plot Details**A. Summarize the story or play, including the overarching theme and lessons learned, and explain how they are developed or conveyed through specific details. |
| SWBAT analyze how information from a multimedia source contributes to understanding of a printed text. | **4.C.4 Examining Media Messages**A. Differentiate between auditory, visual, and written media messages (e.g., videos, podcasts, print advertisements) and their purposes (to explain, to inform, to persuade).B. Compare and contrast how ideas and topics are depicted (e.g., animation, famous images and words, music and sound, photo-editing) in a variety of media and formats. |
| SWBAT apply understanding of a character to an interpretation of another character’s point of view.  | **4.RL.1 Key Ideas and Plot Details**A. Summarize the theme of stories, dramas, or poetry, including the thematic topic (e.g., courage, loyalty, family) and how characters respond to the challenges.C. Analyze characters in-depth, drawing on specific details from the text, including their words, actions or a character’s thoughts. |

**Implications**: As seen above, the Virginia Grade 4 standards involving literature texts ask students to summarize the theme of stories, dramas, or poetry, differentiate between auditory, visual, and written media messages, compare and contrast how ideas and topics are depicted in a variety of media and formats, and analyze characters in-depth. Regarding literature texts, the NAEP standards ask students to explain a theme, analyze multimedia resources with printed text, and apply a character’s point of view to understand another character’s point of view. In Virginia Grade 5 standards, students summarize and explain how themes are developed and conveyed through specific details, showing a higher cognitive comprehension level in Grade 5 than in Grade 4 standards. The disparity in cognitive complexity may lead to shortcomings for students demonstrating Grade 4 NAEP Proficient Achievement.

**Recommendations**: Provide additional guidance for stakeholders, including textbook providers, in explicit instruction and practice in higher-order thinking skills using literature texts. Instruction and practice should extend beyond summarizing a theme to explaining how a theme is conveyed using details from the text. Instruction and practice should extend beyond differentiating and comparing and contrasting multimedia sources to analysis of multimedia resources and how those resources help understand a printed text. Instruction and practice should extend beyond analyzing a character and how characters respond to challenges to applying knowledge of one character’s point of view to interpret another character’s point of view.

### Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Science Texts

The depth of cognitive comprehension in science texts leading up to the Grade 4 Standards of Learning mainly aligns with the cognitive comprehension targets in the 2026 NAEP Proficient Achievement Level. The areas where this separation is apparent are thinking levels involving comparing and contrasting an author’s point of view or purpose about a procedure or experiment to another text’s author’s point of view or purpose. A misalignment in expectations of Grade 4 NAEP Proficient Level and Virginia Grade 4 standards involves steps in procedures. Grade 4 Virginia Standards ask students to summarize a procedure, while NAEP asks students to determine missing steps.

| NAEP 2026 (Proficient)**When engaged in reading science texts:** | Virginia (2024 SOL) |
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| SWBAT make predictions based upon content in the text and interpret an author’s point of view or purpose, including in reference to a procedure or experiment and in comparison to another text’s author.  | **4.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**A. Use prior (experience) and background (content) knowledge as context for new learning.**4.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**B. Compare and contrast multiple accounts of the same event or topic and describe the differences in focus and the information provided.**6.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**A. Analyze ideas within and between selections including how specific sentences, paragraphs, or sections contribute to the development of ideas.B. Compare and contrast one author’s presentation of ideas or events with another’s identifying where the texts agree or disagree |
| SWBAT determine missing steps in a procedure (e.g., a simple investigation, craft-making related to a scientific concept) based on information gained from reading texts. | **4.RI.1 Key Ideas and Confirming Details**B. Summarize events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in historical, scientific, or technical texts, including what happened and why.**4.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**C. Describe the relationships between a series of historical events, scientific concepts, or steps in technical procedures in texts using words that pertain to comparison, sequence, or cause and effect. |

**Implications**: As seen above, the Virginia Grade 4 standards involving science texts ask students to compare and contrast an author’s point of view or purpose in a procedure or experiment with another text’s author. It is not until Virginia Grade 6 standards that students are expected to compare and contrast one author’s presentation of ideas or events with another author’s ideas or events. The disparity in cognitive complexity may lead to shortcomings for students demonstrating Grade 4 NAEP Proficient Achievement. Additionally, the NAEP standards expect Grade 4 students to determine a missing step in a procedure. However, Virginia Grade 4 standards ask students to summarize a procedure or describe the relationship between steps in technical procedures. Students may not have received explicit instruction and practice in determining missing steps in a procedure.

**Recommendations**: Provide additional guidance for stakeholders, including textbook providers, to have explicit instruction and practice in comparing and contrasting an author’s point of view or purpose with another author’s point of view or purpose using procedures or experiments. When learning to read procedures, there needs to be explicit instruction and practice in determining what steps are missing.

### Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Social Studies Texts

The 2026 NAEP Proficient Achievement Level for reading social studies texts asks Grade 4 students to adopt the persona of a historical figure when applying information learned to a new context. 2024 Virginia standards do not contain the depth of cognitive comprehension and standard specificity to align with the NAEP Proficient Achievement Level.

| NAEP 2026 (Proficient)**When engaged in reading social studies texts:** | Virginia (2024 SOL) |
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| SWBAT adopt the persona of a historical figure when applying information learned to a new context. | **4.DSR The student will build knowledge and comprehension skills from reading a range of challenging, content-rich texts. This includes fluently reading and gathering evidence from grade-level complex texts, reading widely on topics to gain worthwhile knowledge and vocabulary, and using reading strategies when comprehension breaks down.**A. Regularly engage in reading a series of conceptually related texts organized around topics of study to build knowledge and vocabulary (These texts should be at a range of complexity levels so students can read the texts independently, with peers, or with modest support.). Use this background knowledge as context for new learning (Deep Reading on Topics to Build Knowledge and Vocabulary K-12).**4.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**A. Use prior (experience) and background (content) knowledge as context for new learning. |

**Implications**: As seen above, the Virginia Grade 4 standards for informational texts ask students to use prior and background knowledge as context for new learning. Grade 4 NAEP Proficient Achievement asks students to apply their learning (content) to adopt the persona of a historical figure. Grade 4 students may have yet to receive specific reading instruction on how to adopt the persona of a historical figure.

**Recommendations**: Provide additional guidance for stakeholders, including textbook providers, for explicit instruction and practice in reading within social studies texts about various historical figures and writing from the perspective of different historical figures using prior and background knowledge as context for new learning.

## 4th Grade

### Significant Area to Consider for Advanced: Literature Texts

The depth of cognitive comprehension in literature texts in and leading up to the Virginia Grade 4 standards does not fully match the cognitive comprehension targets in the 2026 NAEP Advanced Achievement Level. The areas where this separation is most apparent are thinking levels involving characters and plot details, characters and theme, and applying knowledge about the author’s craft to produce a literary work that shows understanding.

| NAEP 2026 (Advanced)**When engaged in reading literature texts:** | Virginia (2024 SOL) |
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| SWBAT use textual evidence as support to explain character motivation and behavior and how characters interact with setting and plot. | **4.DSR The student will build knowledge and comprehension skills from reading a range of challenging, content-rich texts. This includes fluently reading and gathering evidence from grade-level complex texts, reading widely on topics to gain worthwhile knowledge and vocabulary, and using reading strategies when comprehension breaks down.**A. When responding to texts through discussions and/or writing, draw several pieces of evidence from read alouds and grade-level complex texts to support claims, conclusions, and inferences, including quoting or paraphrasing from texts accurately and tracing where relevant evidence is located **(Textual Evidence, K-12)**.**4.RL.1 Key Ideas and Plot Details**A. Summarize the theme of stories, dramas, or poetry, including the thematic topic (e.g., courage, loyalty, family) and how characters respond to the challenges.C. Analyze characters in-depth, drawing on specific details from the text, including their words, actions or a character’s thoughts.**5.RL.1 Key Ideas and Plot Details**C. Explain how events from the plot cause the character(s) to change or evolve and how the development of character(s) or settings impact the plot. |
| SWBAT evaluate how characters or themes resonate with common human experiences.  | **4.RL.1 Key Ideas and Plot Details**A. Summarize the theme of stories, dramas, or poetry, including the thematic topic (e.g., courage, loyalty, family) and how characters respond to the challenges.C. Analyze characters in-depth, drawing on specific details from the text, including their words, actions or a character’s thoughts. |
| SWBAT apply knowledge acquired about the author’s craft to produce a literary work evidencing their understanding.  | **4.RL.2 Craft and Style**A. Determine how an author uses language (dialogue, sensory language, and dialect), characters, and settings to advance the plot.**5.RL.2 Craft and Style**A. Describe how an author develops a character through what characters say, think, do, and how other characters respond.B. Analyze the author’s use of language (e.g., synonyms, figurative language, sensory words, dialogue, dialect) and their impact on understanding characters, setting, and plot events. |

**Implications**: As seen above, the Virginia Grade 4 standards involving literature texts ask students to summarize how characters respond to challenges and summarize the theme of stories, drama, or poetry. In Virginia Grade 5 standards, students explain how events from the plot cause characters to change and how character development or settings impact the plot. The Grade 4 NAEP asks students to explain character motivation and behavior and how characters interact with setting and plot. The Grade 5 standard is aligned to the Grade 4 NAEP Advanced Achievement Level, which may lead to students' shortcomings in demonstrating Grade 4 NAEP Advanced Achievement. The Grade 4 NAEP Advanced Level also asks students to evaluate how characters or themes resonate with common human experiences. Virginia Grade 4 standards ask students to summarize the literature texts' theme and how characters respond to the challenges. The disparity in cognitive complexity (evaluate in NAEP versus summarize in the Virginia standards) and the added expectation to connect with everyday human experiences may lead to shortcomings for students in demonstrating Grade 4 NAEP Proficient Achievement. In Virginia Grade 4 standards, students determine how an author uses language, characters, and setting to advance the plot. The Grade 4 NAEP Advanced Achievement Level asks Grade 4 students to apply knowledge about the author’s craft to produce a literacy work evidencing their understanding. The disparity in cognitive complexity may lead to shortcomings for students demonstrating Grade 4 NAEP Proficient Achievement.

**Recommendations**: Provide additional guidance for stakeholders, including textbook providers, for explicit instruction and practice of Grade 5 standards (RL.1.C, RL. 2.A, RL.2.B) in Grade 4 materials so that students can explain how characters interact with settings and plots. This requires a higher cognitive comprehension. When reading literature texts, materials for Grade 4 students should include an evaluation of characters and themes in relation to everyday human experiences. By Grade 4, students would benefit from explicit instruction in using their learning about the author’s craft to write their own literary works.

### Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Science Texts

The depth of cognitive comprehension in science texts leading up to the Virginia Grade 4 standard mainly aligns with the cognitive comprehension targets in the 2026 NAEP Advanced Achievement Level. The NAEP Advanced Level requires a higher cognitive comprehension of science texts, especially with information, arguments, and interpretations. For example, it asks Grade 4 students to determine the significance of information and arguments, interpret an author’s point of view or purpose, and argue for or against a particular interpretation. Virginia Grade 4 standards ask students to explain the author’s purpose for writing and describe the relationships of concepts in informational texts.

| NAEP 2026 (Advanced)**When engaged in reading science texts:** | Virginia (2024 SOL) |
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| SWBAT determine the significance of information and arguments made in a text.  | **4.RI.1 Key Ideas and Confirming Details**C. Explain the author’s purpose for writing, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe based on the connections between particular sentences and paragraphs.**4.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**C. Describe the relationships between a series of historical events, scientific concepts, or steps in technical procedures in texts using words that pertain to comparison, sequence, or cause and effect. |
| SWBAT make predictions based upon content in the text, interpret an author’s point of view or purpose, and argue for or against a particular interpretation**.**  | 4.RI.3 Integration of ConceptsA. Use prior (experience) and background (content) knowledge as context for new learning.**4.RI.2 Craft and Style**C. Explain the author’s purpose for writing, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe based on the connections between particular sentences and paragraphs.**4.W.1 Modes and Purposes for Writing**D. Write persuasive pieces on topics or texts that express a clear opinion supported by facts, details, and reasons. |

**Implications**: As seen above, the Virginia Grade 4 standards involving science texts ask students to explain the author’s purpose for writing. Grade 4 NAEP Advanced Achievement emphasizes determining significance, interpreting an author’s point of view, and arguing for or against an interpretation. Virginia Grade 4 Writing standards ask students to write persuasive pieces. The disparity in cognitive complexity about determining significance in an informational text and the author’s purpose may lead to shortcomings for students demonstrating Grade 4 NAEP Advanced Achievement.

**Recommendations**: Provide additional guidance for stakeholders, including textbook providers, to include explicit instruction and practice on how to determine significance based on the details of an informational or argumentative science text. After learning to determine significance, materials should teach how to interpret the author’s point of view or purpose. While Virginia Grade 4 Writing standards ask students to write persuasive pieces, intentional, explicit instruction and practice for planning and writing arguments for or against different interpretations using science topics would benefit students.

### Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Social Studies Texts

The depth of cognitive comprehension in social studies texts leading up to the Grade 4 Standards of Learning mainly aligns with the cognitive comprehension targets in the 2026 NAEP Advanced Achievement Level. The Grade 4NAEP Advanced Level requires a higher cognitive comprehension of social studies texts, especially with information, arguments, and interpretations. For example, it asks Grade 4 students to determine the significance of information and arguments, interpret an author’s point of view or purpose, and argue for or against a particular interpretation. Virginia Grade 4 standards ask students to explain the author’s purpose for writing and describe the relationships of concepts in informational texts.

| NAEP 2026 (Advanced)**When engaged in reading social studies texts:** | Virginia (2024 SOL) |
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| SWBAT determine the significance of information and arguments made in a text.  | **4.RI.1 Key Ideas and Confirming Details**C. Explain the author’s purpose for writing, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe based on the connections between particular sentences and paragraphs.**4.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**C. Describe the relationships between a series of historical events, scientific concepts, or steps in technical procedures in texts using words that pertain to comparison, sequence, or cause and effect. |
| SWBAT make predictions based upon content in the text, interpret an author’s point of view or purpose, and argue for or against a particular interpretation.  | **4.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**A. Use prior (experience) and background (content) knowledge as context for new learning.**4.RI.2 Craft and Style**C. Explain the author’s purpose for writing, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe based on the connections between particular sentences and paragraphs.**4.W.1 Modes and Purposes for Writing**D. Write persuasive pieces on topics or texts that express a clear opinion supported by facts, details, and reasons. |

**Implications**: As seen above, the Virginia Grade 4 standards involving social studies texts ask students to explain the author’s purpose for writing. Grade 4 NAEP Advanced Achievement emphasizes determining significance, interpreting an author’s point of view, and arguing for or against an interpretation. Virginia Grade 4 Writing standards ask students to write persuasive pieces. The disparity in cognitive complexity about determining significance in an informational text and the author’s purpose may lead to shortcomings for students demonstrating Grade 4 NAEP Advanced Achievement.

**Recommendations**: Provide additional guidance for stakeholders, including textbook providers, to include explicit instruction and practice on how to determine significance based on the details of an informational or argumentative social studies text. After learning to determine significance, materials should teach how to determine the interpretation of the author’s point of view or purpose. While Virginia Grade 4 Writing standards ask students to write persuasive pieces, intentional, explicit instruction and practice for planning and writing arguments for or against different interpretations using social studies topics would benefit students.

## 8th Grade

### Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Science Texts

Regarding science texts, there are minor discrepancies regarding the depth of comprehension complexity of scientific procedures and the standard specificity between Grade 8 Virginia standards and the 2026 NAEP Proficient Achievement Level.

| NAEP 2026 (Proficient)**When engaged in reading science texts:** | Virginia (2024 SOL) |
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| SWBAT use textual evidence as support to analyze the specific results of a multistep procedure based on explanations in the text.  | **8.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**A. Analyze ideas within and between selections including how specific sentences, paragraphs, sections, and text features contribute to the development and refinement of the ideas presented. |
| SWBAT generate an alternative procedure or experiment based on knowledge acquired from information gained from reading texts.  | **5.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**A. Use prior (experience) and background (content) knowledge as context for new learning.**6.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**A. Analyze ideas within and between selections including how specific sentences, paragraphs, or sections contribute to the development of ideas.**7.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**A. Analyze ideas within and between selections including how specific sentences, paragraphs, or sections contribute to the development and meaning of ideas.**8.RI.3 Integration of Concepts**A. Analyze ideas within and between selections including how specific sentences, paragraphs, sections, and text features contribute to the development and refinement of the ideas presented.**8.RI.1 Key Ideas and Confirming Details**A. Create a main idea statement and provide an accurate summary, clarifying the relationships among the key details and ideas or events.B. Analyze how the author unfolds a perspective or series of ideas or events in historical, scientific, or technical texts, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections drawn between them. |

**Implications**: As seen above, the Virginia Grade 8 standards ask students to analyze ideas within and between selections about specific sentences, paragraphs, sections and text features in informational texts. The 2026 NAEP Proficient Achievement level asks more specifically for Grade 8 students to analyze the specific results of a multistep procedure based on text explanations. There is a disparity in standard specifics regarding analyzing specific results of a multistep procedure and a more general expectation of analyzing informational text selections. The depth of cognitive comprehension in science texts in and leading up to the Virginia Grade 8 standards does not match the cognitive comprehension target in NAEP Proficient Achievement for generating an alternative procedure or experiment. Grade 8 students will be prepared to analyze a science text but not necessarily generate an alternate procedure or experiment.

**Recommendations**: Provide additional guidance for stakeholders, including textbook providers, to include explicit instruction and practice in the science texts so that students can analyze the results of a multistep procedure based on explanations in the text. By Grade 8, students would benefit from reading and writing instruction in generating alternate science procedures or experiments based on information gained from reading science texts.

### Minor Area to Consider for Proficient: Social Studies Texts

Regarding social studies texts, there is a minor discrepancy regarding the depth of comprehension complexity of arguments in social studies texts between Grade 8 Virginia standards and the 2026 NAEP Proficient Achievement Level.

| NAEP 2026 (Proficient)**When engaged in reading social studies texts:** | Virginia (2024 SOL) |
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| SWBAT present an argument that proposes a form of social action based on knowledge acquired and opinions formed from the reading texts. | **8.RI.1 Key Ideas and Confirming Details**C. Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning and evidence are relevant and sufficient to support the claims.**8.W.1 Modes and Purposes for Writing**C. Write persuasively, supporting well-defined points of view effectively with relevant evidence and clear reasoning in ways that logically advance the claim(s) made. |

**Implications**: As seen above, the Virginia Grade 8 standards ask students to trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text as well as write persuasively. The 2026 NAEP Proficient Achievement level asks for Grade 8 students to present an argument that proposes a form of social action based on textual knowledge and opinions. Grade 8 students will be prepared to trace, analyze, and write an argument based in social studies texts but not necessarily present an argument that proposes a form of social action based on knowledge and opinions gained from reading social studies texts.

**Recommendations**: Provide additional guidance for stakeholders, including textbook providers, to include explicit instruction and practice using the social studies texts to help students present an argument requiring a social action.

## 8th Grade

### Minor Area to Consider for Advanced: Literature Texts

The 2026 NAEP Proficient Achievement Level for reading literature texts asks Grade 8 students to analyze points of view of and between characters and the reader/audience and describe how a story would differ if written from another character’s point of view. Virginia standards do not contain the depth of cognitive comprehension and standard specificity to align with the NAEP Advanced Achievement Level.

| NAEP 2026 (Advanced)**When engaged in reading literature texts:** | Virginia (2024 SOL) |
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| SWBATuse textual evidence as support to analyze how multiple literary elements in a text relate to each other and to analyze points of view of and between character(s) and the reader/audience. | **Developing Skilled Readers and Building Reading Stamina****8.DSR The student will build knowledge and comprehension skills from reading a range of challenging, content-rich texts. This includes fluently reading and gathering evidence from grade-level complex texts, reading widely on topics to gain worthwhile knowledge and vocabulary, and using reading strategies when comprehension breaks down.**A. When responding to text through discussion and/or writing, draw several pieces of evidence from grade-level complex texts to support claims, conclusions, and inferences, including quoting or paraphrasing from texts accurately and tracing where relevant evidence is located (Textual Evidence, K-12).**8.RL.1 Key Ideas and Plot Details**A. Analyze and explain the development of theme(s) over the course of texts and their relationship to the characters, settings, plots, and overall messages.B. Explain how different plot patterns (e.g., comedy, drama, tragedy) and subplots create meaning and examine their influence on characters, theme, pacing, and point of view.C. Justify the decisions and actions of dynamic versus static characters using dialogue or specific events from the text. |
| SWBAT describe how a story might change if written from the perspective of another character.  | **8.RL.1 Key Ideas and Plot Details**A. Analyze and explain the development of theme(s) over the course of texts and their relationship to the characters, settings, plots, and overall messages.B. Explain how different plot patterns (e.g., comedy, drama, tragedy) and subplots create meaning and examine their influence on characters, theme, pacing, and point of view.C. Justify the decisions and actions of dynamic versus static characters using dialogue or specific events from the text. |

**Implications**: As seen above, the Virginia Grade 8 standards involving literature texts ask students to analyze and explain theme development relating to characters, settings, plots, overall messages as well as plot patterns and justifying the decisions and actions of characters. NAEP Advanced expects Grade 8 students to analyze the points of view of and between character(s) and the reader/audience. Based on state standards, Grade 8 students should be prepared to analyze and explain the development of themes and their relationships to the characters, theme, pacing, and point of view, but not necessarily analyze points of view between characters and the reader/audience. Additionally, NAEP Advanced requires Grade 8 students to describe how a story might change if written from another character’s perspective. In Virginia Grade 8 standards, students determine how an author uses language, characters, and setting to advance the plot. The disparity in Key Ideas and Plot Details standards may lead to shortcomings for students when it comes to considering and describing how a story might change when told from another character’s perspective.

**Recommendations**: Provide additional guidance for stakeholders, including textbook providers, for explicit instruction and practice in analyzing points of view between the characters and the reader/audience. When reading literature texts, students would benefit from explicit instruction and practice in describing how a story might change when written from the perspective of another character.

### Minor Area to Consider for Advanced: Science Texts

Regarding science texts, there is a minor discrepancy regarding the depth of comprehension complexity of arguments in science texts between Grade 8 Virginia standards and the 2026 NAEP Advanced Achievement Level.

| NAEP 2026 (Advanced)**When engaged in reading science texts:** | Virginia (2024 SOL) |
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| SWBAT able to analyze the development of the central idea over the course of the text.  | **8.RI.1 Key Ideas and Confirming Details**A. Create a main idea statement and provide an accurate summary, clarifying the relationships among the key details and ideas or events.**9.RI.1 Key Ideas and Confirming Details**A. Analyze the development of main ideas over the course of texts, including how they emerge, are shaped, and are refined by specific details to help reveal the author’s intended purpose for writing. |

**Implications**: As seen above, the Virginia Grade 8 standards involving informational texts ask students to create a main idea statement and provide an accurate summary. The Grade 8 NAEP Advanced Level asks students to analyze the development of the central idea over the course of the text. In Virginia Grade 9 standards, students analyze the development of main ideas over the course of text. The Grade 9 standard is aligned to the Grade 8 NAEP Advanced Achievement, which may lead to students’ shortcoming in demonstrating Grade 8 Advanced Achievement.

**Recommendations**: Provide additional guidance for stakeholders, including textbook providers, for explicit instruction and practice of Grade 9 standard RI.1.A in the Grade 8 materials involving science texts, so that students can analyze the development of the central idea. This requires higher cognitive comprehension of students.

### Minor Area to Consider for Advanced: Social Studies Texts

Regarding social studies texts, there are minor discrepancies regarding the depth of comprehension complexity of arguments in social studies texts between Grade 8 Virginia standards and the 2026 NAEP Advanced Achievement Level.

| NAEP 2026 (Advanced)**When engaged in reading social studies texts:** | Virginia (2024 SOL) |
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| SWBAT analyze the development of the central idea over the course of the text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence and/or viewpoints.  | **8.R. The student will conduct research and read a series of conceptually related texts on selected topics to build knowledge on grade-eight content and texts, solve problems, and support cross-curricular learning.** **8.R.1 Evaluation and Synthesis of Information**C. Evaluate and analyze the relevance, validity, and credibility of sources (primary, secondary, digital, and print) identifying main and supporting ideas, conflicting information, points of view, and any biases**8.RI.1 Key Ideas and Confirming Details**A. Create a main idea statement and provide an accurate summary, clarifying the relationships among the key details and ideas or events.**9.RI.1 Key Ideas and Confirming Details**A. Analyze the development of main ideas over the course of texts, including how they emerge, are shaped, and are refined by specific details to help reveal the author’s intended purpose for writing. |

**Implications**: As seen above, the Virginia Grade 8 standards involving informational texts ask students to create a main idea statement and provide an accurate summary. The Grade 8 NAEP Advanced Level asks students to analyze the development of the central idea over the course of the text. In Virginia Grade 9 standards, students analyze the development of main ideas over the course of text, including how they emerge, are shaped, and are refined by specific details to help reveal the author’s intended purpose for writing. The Grade 9 standard is aligned to the Grade 8 NAEP Advanced Achievement, which may lead to students’ shortcomings in demonstrating Grade 8 Advanced Achievement. While Virginia Grade 8 standards ask students to evaluate and analyze conflicting information and points of view, Grade 8 standards do not necessarily ask for students to analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence and/or viewpoints, which is the expectation for NAEP Advanced with social studies texts.

**Recommendations**: Provide additional guidance for stakeholders, including textbook providers, for explicit instruction and practice of the Grade 9 standard RI.1.A in Grade 8 materials involving social studies texts so that students learn to analyze the development of the central idea and the author’s intended purpose of writing as well as how the author responds to conflicting evidence and/or viewpoints. This requires higher cognitive comprehension in social studies.