On the skills-based common assessment for this unit, students should be able to demonstrate their ability in the following areas:

● comprehending and analyzing informational texts to determine the central idea
● synthesizing information from different mediums such as print or digital text, as well as appropriate multimedia presentations in the form of pictures and video clips
● analyzing how a text makes connections and distinctions through comparisons and contrasts
● identifying the central idea and supporting details of informational text
● evaluating an argument and assessing its effectiveness
● analyzing the purpose and motives of information presented in diverse media and formats
● citing textual evidence and making inferences
● determining word meanings from their context
● constructing short responses to questions about text or other mediums
● engaging in the writing process to respond to an argumentative writing task prompt with an essay

The common assessment includes questions of the following types:

● multiple choice
● multiple correct response
● short written response
● extended written response

Writing pieces will be scored using rubrics that are aligned with the Common Core Standards, New Jersey Student Learning Standards and PARCC expectations.

Standards covered within the ELA *Unit of Study*:

Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	R.I. 8.1
Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.	R.I. 8.2
Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).	R.I. 8.3
Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g. print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.	R.I. 8.7
Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	R.I. 8.8
Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.	R.I. 8.9
Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.	W. 8.1
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	W. 8.4

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.	W. 8.6
Research to Build and Present Knowledge Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration	W. 8.7
Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	W. 8.8
Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	W. 8.9
Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.	W. 8.10
Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.	SL 8.2
Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	SL 8.3
Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	L 8.1
Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	L 8.2
Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.	L 8.3
Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.	L.8.4
Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings	L 8.5
Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression	L 8.6

Argumentative Writing Rubric Grade 8

Criterion	5	4	3	2	1
Reading Comprehension NJSLS: RI-1, RI-2, RI-3, RI-4, RI-5, RI-6, RI-8, W-9b *Includes appropriate textual evidence to support reasoning.* *Determines and analyzes central ideas presented in a text.* *Analyzes how a text makes connections and distinctions among individuals, ideas, or events.* *Determines the meanings of words and phrases as they are used in a text.* *Determines the meanings of analogies and allusions.* *Analyzes the role particular paragraphs and sentences play in refining a key concept.* *Analyzes the author's point of view and how the author responds to conflicting points of view.* *Draws evidence from informational texts to support claims.* *Delineates and evaluates the argument presented in the text.* *Recognizes when irrelevant evidence is introduced.*	-Provides accurate analysis of what the text says -Explicitly and inferrentially cites convincing textual evidence to support the analysis -Shows full comprehension of complex ideas expressed in the text -Delineates and evaluates claims	-Provides accurate analysis of what the text says -Explicitly and inferrentially cites convincing textual evidence to support the analysis -Shows extensive comprehension of ideas expressed in the text -Delineates claims presented	-Provides a mostly accurate analysis of what the text says -Explicitly and inferrentially cites textual evidence -Shows a basic comprehension of ideas expressed in the text -Identifies claims presented	-Provides a minimally accurate analysis of what the text says -Cites textual evidence -Shows a limited comprehension of ideas expressed in the text -Inaccurately identifies claims presented	-Provides an inaccurate or no analysis of what the text says -Shows little or no comprehension of ideas expressed in the text -Fails to identify claims presented
Development of Ideas NJSLS: W-1b, W-4, W-9 *Supports claims with logical reasoning and evidence.* *Produces clear and coherent writing.* *Draws relevant evidence from texts to support analysis.*	-Provides substantial and pertinent evidence -Effectively integrates and cites credible sources -Uses persuasive and valid reasoning to connect evidence with claims -Convincingly refutes specific counter-claims	-Provides suffcicent and relevant evidence -Competently integrates and cites credible sources -Uses valid reasoning to connect evidence with claims -Competently refutes specific counter-claims	-Provides limited and/or superficial evidence -Competently integrates and cites credible sources -Uses some valid reasoning to connect evidence with claims -Ineffectively integrates evidence with claims -Minimally refutes specific counter-claims	-Provides minimal and/or irrelevant evidence -Incorrectly integrates and cites sources that may or may not be credible -Uses limited, simplistic, or flawed reasoning to connect evidence with claims -Ineffectively integrates evidence with claims -Acknowledges counter-claims	-Provides inaccurate, little, or no evidence -Incorrectly integrates and cites sources that may or may not be credible -Reasoning is missing or does not connect evidence with claims -Does not cite sources and/or text evidence -Fails to acknowledge counter-claims
Focus NJSLS: W-1, W-4 *Produces arguments to support claims with relevant reasoning and evidence.* *Produces clear and coherent writing.*	-Insightfully addresses all aspects of the prompt -Introduces precise claims -Thesis statement is sophisticated.	-Competently addresses all aspects of the prompt -Introduces reasonable claims -Thesis statement is clear.	-Superficially addresses all aspects of the prompt -Introduces claims -Includes thesis statement	-Partially addresses aspects of the prompt -Introduces superficial or flawed claims -Includes a weak thesis statement	-Addresses some aspects of the prompt -Does not engage or orient the reader -Lacks a thesis statement
Organization NJSLS: W-1a, W-1c, W-1e, W-4 *Introduces claims clearly.* *Distinguishes claims from opposing claims.* *Ideas and concepts are presented logically.* *Demonstrates an understatnding of the topic.* *Uses words and phrases to create cohesion and clarify ideas.* *Provides an appropriate conclusion.* *Produces clear and coherent writing.*	-Introduction skillfully orients reader -Thoroughly develops claim(s) with relevant body paragraphs -Includes purposeful and logical progression of ideas -Creates cohesion through skillful use of transitional techniques -Provides a meaningful and reflective conclusion which draws from and supports claims	-Introduction orients reader -Develops claim(s) with relevant body paragraphs -Includes logical progression of ideas -Creates cohesion through use of transitional techniques -Provides a conclusion that draws from and supports claims	-Introduction partially orients reader -Superficially develops claim(s) with body paragraphs -Includes adequate progression of ideas -Creates some cohesion through use of basic transitional techniques -Provides a conclusion which repetitively or partially supports claims	-Introduction inadequately orients reader -Inadequately develops claim(s) with minimal body paragraphs -Includes uneven progression of ideas -Uses limited and/or imappropriate transitional techniques -Provides an inadequate conclusion	-Introduction fails to orient reader or is missing -Fails to develop claim(s) with body paragraphs -Includes uneven progression of ideas -Uses few to no transitional techniques -Lacks a conclusion
Clarity of Language NJSLS: W-1c, W-1d, W-4 *Uses words and phrases to create cohesion and clarify ideas.* *Establishes and maintains formal style.* *Produces clear and coherent writing.*	-Includes sophisticated use of precise language -Skillfully establishes and maintains formal style	-Mostly uses precise language -Maintains and effective formal style	-Uses some precise language -Maintains a formal style that is mostly effective	-Uses only limited precise language -Formal style is limited in its effectiveness	-Uses little to no precise language -Lacks formal style
Knowledge of Conventions NJSLS: L-1, L-2, L-3, W-4, W-5 *Demonstrates command of standard English grammar and usage conventions.* *Produces clear and coherent writing.* *Develops and strengthens writing through writing process.*	-Uses purposeful and varied sentence structure. -Contains virtually no conventional errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. -Utilizes precise and sophisticated word choice.	-Uses correct and varied sentence structure. -Contains few, minor conventional errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization that do not disrupt narrative. -Utilizes strong, grade-level appropriate word choice.	-Uses mostly correct and some varied sentence structure. -Contains some conventional errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization which may cause confusion. -Usually utilizes grade-level appropriate word choice.	-Uses limited and/or repetitive sentence structure. -Contains numerous conventional errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization which may cause confusion. -Utilizes vague or basic word choice.	-Lacks sentence mastery (e.g. contains fragments, run-ons). -Contains serious and pervasive errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization which may cause confusion. -Utilizes incorrect and/or simplistic word choice.