Grade 9 ELA & Math Performance Descriptors

This is the descriptors provided parents for each level of performance

Content Strand/Reporting Category Statements	
Reporting Category	**Text**
Reading for Information	Students find a main idea or claim in a text and tell how an author supports it with evidence. They judge an author's use of evidence to make a claim. They describe the effect of specific words and phrases on a text. They compare major historical U.S. documents.
Reading for Literature	Students tell how the major theme is developed in a text. They examine how characters develop, interact, and move a story forward. They analyze words and phrases to determine how they affect a story. They compare and contrast works of art and literature from outside the United States.
Writing and Language	Students write clearly to inform or make an argument. They judge if sources are reliable and use appropriate evidence to support their claims. They understand the literal and figurative meanings of words and use them in their writing. They spell correctly and use correct grammar.

What These Results Mean	
Reporting Category	**Text**
Reading for Information – Below Mastery	Your student may have trouble giving an objective summary of a text; finding the main idea and telling how it is supported and developed by evidence; identifying how the author shows point of view; evaluating the author's reasoning; and recognizing when information is unimportant.
Reading for Information – At/Near Mastery	Your student can often tell how an author introduces and connects events and ideas in a text; show how an author chooses words to present his or her point of view; identify if information is relevant and necessary to the argument; and find main ideas in major U.S. historical documents.

Reading for Information – Above Mastery	Your student explains how the main idea is developed in a text; analyzes word choice in a text and how it affects the way information is presented; critiques the strengths and weaknesses of an argument; and compares the use of language in major U.S. historical documents.
Reading for Literature – Below Mastery	Your student may have trouble finding the theme of a text; showing how a character develops throughout a story; using clues to figure out the meaning of new words; or making connections between an author's story and other classic literature (like Ovid or Shakespeare).
Reading for Literature – At/Near Mastery	Your student can often find the main theme of a text; tell how characters change throughout a story and interact with other characters; show how an author uses writing tools (like flashbacks) to organize a story; and determine the point of view of a non-U.S. work of literature.
Reading for Literature – Above Mastery	Your student analyzes theme in a text; shows how word choice can affect the tone (like formal or informal) of a story; explains how an author's choices affect the way a story is presented; and analyzes the differences in a subject presented in other art forms.
Writing and Language – Below Mastery	Your student may have trouble writing clearly organized arguments; addressing opinions that are different from his or her own; making connections between ideas when writing to inform; using information from many sources when doing research; and spelling and using punctuation correctly.
Writing and Language – At/Near Mastery	Your student can often use reasoning and evidence to support claims when making an argument; address points that are different from his or her own; make revisions to make his or her writing stronger; collect useful information from many sources; and spell and use punctuation correctly.
Writing and Language – Above Mastery	Your student writes clearly and connects ideas and arguments when writing; includes relevant information from multiple sources to support arguments; counters differing points of view; uses correct grammar; spells correctly; and uses precise language to make his or her points.

AzMERIT ELA 6-11 Writing Essay Performance Text (Informative)

Dimension 1: Grades 6-11				
ELA	Statement of Purpose/Focus and Organization	6-11 (Informative)	NS	Your student earned no score out of 4 possible points. Your student's essay was difficult to read or written in a foreign language. The response was off topic or unrelated to the purpose.
ELA	Statement of Purpose/Focus and Organization	6-11 (Informative)	1	Your student earned 1 out of 4 possible points. Your student's essay may be related to the topic but may be very short, unclear, or drift off topic. The response is not very organized and does not use transitions to connect ideas. It may often include ideas that are not relevant to the topic.
ELA	Statement of Purpose/Focus and Organization	6-11 (Informative)	2	Your student earned 2 out of 4 possible points. Your student's essay is somewhat on topic and may have a minor drift in focus. The main idea may be unclear and somewhat unfocused. The response is not clearly organized. It does not use transitions consistently or make clear connections between ideas. If there are a conclusion and an introduction, they are weak.
ELA	Statement of Purpose/Focus and Organization	6-11 (Informative)	3	Your student earned 3 out of 4 possible points. In general, your student's essay stays on topic and is focused. The main idea of the topic is given context and addresses the audience and purpose for writing. The response is organized and develops connections between ideas. It uses transitions and has an introduction and conclusion.

ELA	Statement of Purpose/Focus and Organization	6-11 (Informative)	4	Your student earned 4 out of 4 possible points. Your student's essay is focused and stays on topic. The main idea of a topic is clearly stated and communicated to the audience. The response is clearly and effectively organized. It uses transitions to make and develop strong connections between ideas. It uses an introduction and conclusion to bring together the essay.
Dimension 2: Grades 6-11				
ELA	Evidence/Elaboration	6-11 (Informative)	NS	Your student earned no score out of 4 possible points. Your student's essay was difficult to read or written in a foreign language. The response was off topic or unrelated to the purpose.
ELA	Evidence/Elaboration	6-11 (Informative)	1	Your student earned 1 out of 4 possible points. Your student's essay includes little support or evidence for the main idea. It uses few sources, facts, or details, which may be unrelated or incorrect. The response does not express ideas clearly and uses limited language and vocabulary. It does not address the audience or purpose for writing well.
ELA	Evidence/Elaboration	6-11 (Informative)	2	Your student earned 2 out of 4 possible points. Your student's essay includes some support or evidence for the main idea. It uses some facts and details from other sources but does not use citations regularly. The response does not expand on ideas or make clear connections between ideas. It uses simple and sometimes inappropriate language for the audience and purpose.
ELA	Evidence/Elaboration	6-11 (Informative)	3	Your student earned 3 out of 4 possible points. Your student's essay gives support or evidence for the main idea using facts and details. The response generally cites information used from other sources. It expands on ideas. The response expresses ideas clearly using specific vocabulary that is appropriate for the audience and style of writing.

ELA	Evidence/Elaboration	6-11 (Informative)	4	Your student earned 4 out of 4 possible points. Your student's essay gives detailed and convincing support or evidence for the main idea. It uses sources, facts, and details to fully explain the main idea. The response expands on ideas and uses citations correctly. It explains information clearly using accurate language appropriate for the audience and style of writing.
Dimension 3: Grades 6-11				
ELA	Conventions/Editing	6-11 (Informative)	0	Your student earned 0 out of 2 possible points. Your student's essay shows a lack of understanding of sentence formation and other conventions. There are many mistakes in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. These errors make the meaning or main idea of the response unclear.
ELA	Conventions/Editing	6-11 (Informative)	1	Your student earned 1 out of 2 possible points. Your student's essay shows some understanding of sentence formation and other conventions. The response has some punctuation, capitalization, and spelling mistakes. These mistakes may confuse the meaning of the response.
ELA	Conventions/Editing	6-11 (Informative)	2	Your student earned 2 out of 2 possible points. Your student's essay shows an understanding of sentence formation and other conventions. The response may have some mistakes, but they are not repeated often in the text. It uses correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Grade 9 Math

Content Strand/Reporting Category Statements	
Reporting Category	**Text**
Algebra	Students solve equations and inequalities with one variable. They create equations that describe numbers or the relationships between numbers. They represent and solve equations and inequalities by creating graphs on the coordinate plane. Students solve a system of equations (more than one equation). They add, subtract, and multiply polynomial expressions (more than one term). Students interpret expressions and write them in equivalent forms.
Functions	Students define function and use function notation. They analyze and compare functions written as equations and in tables, graphs, and verbal descriptions. Students interpret and compare linear, quadratic, and exponential functions and the situations they model (like knowing exponents show percent rate of change). Students identify and explain important details of functions like maximums, minimums, and zeros. They build functions that model a context.
Statistics, Number, and Quantity	Students summarize and interpret one-variable numerical data and interpret the center, spread, and impact of extreme data. They represent this data in box plots, line plots, and histograms. Students summarize and interpret two-variable data using two-way tables. They identify and express trends in data using linear, quadratic, and exponential models. They represent this data in a scatterplot. Students solve rational and irrational number operations.

What These Results Mean	
Reporting Category	**Text**
Algebra – Below Proficient	Your student may have trouble solving equations and inequalities with one variable; describing the relationship between quantities using equations; representing linear equations and inequalities using graphs; solving a system of more than one equation by graphing; performing addition and subtraction on polynomial expressions (more than one term); and writing equivalent forms of one-term expressions.
Algebra – Proficient	Your student often solves equations and inequalities in one variable; describes the relationship between quantities using equations; represents and solves equations and inequalities using graphs; solves a system of more than one equation algebraically and graphically; performs addition, subtraction, and multiplication on polynomial expressions (more than one term); and writes equivalent forms of polynomial expressions.
Algebra – Above Proficient	Your student almost always solves equations and inequalities in one variable; describes the relationship between quantities using equations; represents and solves equations and inequalities using graphs; solves a system of more than one equation; performs basic operations on polynomial expressions (more than one term); and writes equivalent forms of polynomial expressions.
Functions – Below Proficient	Your student may have trouble defining a function as one input that has a unique output; identifying functions written as equations or represented by graphs; identifying key details about functions like the maximum or minimum values; fitting a linear function to a situation it models (like matching a function that increases to a scatterplot that shows data increasing); and writing a function to model a basic linear context (like showing how much money can be earned over time).
Functions – Proficient	Your student often defines and uses function notation correctly; interprets functions written as equations, values in tables, and graphs; applies function understanding to linear, quadratic, and exponential models to describe relationships; identifies key details like minimums, maximums, and zeros; and writes a function to model situations (like showing how much money can be earned over time at a certain rate) and answer questions.
Functions – Above Proficient	Your student almost always uses function notation correctly; interprets functions written as equations, values in tables, graphs, and complex verbal descriptions;

What These Results Mean	
Reporting Category	**Text**
	applies function understanding to linear, quadratic, and exponential models to describe relationships; identifies key details like minimums, maximums, zeros, and symmetry; explains relationship between key details and the situation the function models; and writes functions and models situations that use functions.
Statistics, Number, and Quantity – Below Proficient	Your student may have trouble interpreting one-variable numerical data; finding the mean and median for data; finding measures of center and spread; comparing sets of data using these measures; representing these data on line plots, box plots, and histograms; representing two-variable data in scatterplots; using a linear model to describe and analyze trends; and knowing the difference between rational and irrational numbers.
Statistics, Number, and Quantity – Proficient	Your student often interprets, summarizes, and represents one- and two-variable data; uses mean, median, interquartile range, and extreme data points to describe data within a set of data and across many sets of data; represents one-variable numerical data in line plots, box plots, and histograms; puts two-variable data in tables; represents data in scatter plots; sees data trends and fits linear and quadratic models; and works with rational and irrational numbers.
Statistics, Number, and Quantity – Above Proficient	Your student almost always interprets, summarizes, and graphs one- and two-variable data; uses measures of center and spread to compare and contrast many sets of data to make conclusions; represents one-variable numerical data using multiple formats and describes advantages of each format; models two-variable data using linear, quadratic, and exponential functions; uses models to predict future data; and understands impact of operations involving rational and irrational numbers.