# Essential Element, Linkage Levels, and Mini-Map

## ELA: Grade 8

### ELA.EE.W.8.2.a

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<td><strong>EMERGENT WRITING (EW.8)</strong></td>
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| Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension | Introduce a topic clearly and write to convey ideas and information about it including visual, tactual, or multimedia information as appropriate | **Initial Precursor**
  - Given a choice of two objects, uses eye-gaze, physical movement, gesture or vocalization to indicate choice |
|                      |                       | **Distal Precursor**
  - Can respond to wh- questions regarding choice of topic and other questions related to writing about the topic. |
|                      |                       | **CONVENTIONAL WRITING (CW.8)** |
|                      |                       | **Proximal Precursor**
  - Can select a topic for writing an informational text and then find information that is either tactile, visual, or multimedia for use when writing the text |
|                      |                       | **Target**
  - Can introduce an informational topic while writing and extend by writing about ideas and information related to the topic |
|                      |                       | **Successor**
  - Student is able to produce an informational piece of writing in which the topic is clearly introduced and the details about the topic (may be visual, tactual, or multimedia) are presented within a clear organizational structure |

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### How is the Initial Precursor related to the Target?

**Initial Precursor:** Selecting and writing about a topic requires students to successfully communicate a choice of topics. In the context of emergent writing, students at the Initial Precursor level can work on clearly communicating a choice between two familiar, preferred objects as a topic for writing. The key here is to practice communicating a choice before writing about the choice rather than communicating a choice during an activity unrelated to writing.

### How is the Distal Precursor related to the Target?

**Distal Precursor:** One way to help students learn to write an informational text is to help them brainstorm ideas about the topics they select. Teachers can work on this by asking students to select a topic for writing and then ask them basic questions about the topic. These questions might begin with yes/no personal preference questions, but as students grow more successful, can include the wh-questions that are the focus of this linkage level.

This Essential Element is tested in an ELA writing testlet. Writing testlets are assessed at two levels: Emergent Writing and Conventional Writing. The Initial and Distal Precursor nodes are assessed in the emergent writing testlet in Grade 8 with four other Essential Elements: ELA.EE.W.8.2.b, ELA.EE.W.8.2.c, ELA.EE.W.8.2.d, and ELA.EE.W.8.2.f. The Proximal Precursor, Target, and Successor nodes are assessed in the conventional writing testlet in Grade 8 with four other Essential Elements: ELA.EE.W.8.2.b, ELA.EE.W.8.2.c, ELA.EE.W.8.2.d, and ELA.EE.W.8.2.f.

A diagram showing the relationship of nodes in the mini-map appears below.

**Key to map codes in upper right corner of node boxes:**
- **IP** Initial Precursor
- **SP** Supporting
- **DP** Distal Precursor
- **S** Successor
- **PP** Proximal Precursor
- **UN** Untested
- **T** Target
ELA.EE.W.8.2.a - Introduce a topic clearly and write to convey ideas and information about it including visual, tactual, or multimedia information as appropriate.