

Text Complexity

Appropriate Achievement

Students select and read independently a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts. Texts include

- a variety of topics, ranging from familiar to less-known; content that at times introduces cultural or historical perspectives
- familiar themes which introduce more complex issues/feelings (e.g., responsibility, loyalty), usually with a clear message
- a variety of longer, simple sentences and compound sentences with diversity in the placement of adjectives, adverbs, phrases and subject/verbs and compound sentences; greater use of complex sentences with clauses
- some uncommonly used words and phrases, or new meanings for familiar words as well as content-specific words defined in text or illustrations; stronger (more specific) descriptive words (adjectives and adverbs) and a few examples of figurative language (e.g., simile, idiom)
- many multi-syllabic words (including words with suffixes and simple prefixes) most of which are in the readers' decoding control and/or can be understood through context
- chapter books with few illustrations; illustrations/photographs that represent and extend print in nonfiction
- many lines of print on a page, organized in paragraphs; predominantly standard-sized font with varied line-spacing and layout within same text

Fiction (Realistic, Simple Fantasy, Traditional, Historical Fiction, Mysteries)

Texts are characterized by

- multiple events related to a single plot, often arranged in chapters that require sustained reading over a period of time
- plot that proceeds in time-order with expanded events; details important for understanding
- easily defined characters (e.g., good/bad) that develop over time; factors related to character development are explicit and obvious; characters revealed through dialogue, actions, thoughts and/or other's perspectives
- dialogue variety, both assigned and unassigned; some opportunities to reveal characters' perspectives and "voice"
- settings (i.e., time and place) that may be unfamiliar and are important to understanding plot, characters and/or theme

Strong Achievement

Students demonstrating strong achievement select and read independently texts as described above, as well as, some texts at a higher level of difficulty. The increase in text complexity is often created by

- the need for students to take on unfamiliar perspectives to understand a topic
- the inclusion of themes and main ideas slightly more abstract than texts at lower levels
- the requirement to interpret characters' feelings, story events or ideas to understand the author's message
- the addition of more difficult content-specific words, usually explained by text, illustrations or a glossary, as well as multi-syllabic words that may be challenging to decode
- characters in narrative texts acting in unexpected ways, requiring the reader to infer reasons for their actions
- the inclusion of many small pieces of information per section in nonfiction texts supported by headings/subheadings and a variety of graphics as well as simple keys and legends that may require interpretation

Nonfiction (Informational, Biography)

Texts are characterized by

- several topics/explicit ideas within a text, linked by categories, presented through clear structures (e.g., description, compare/contrast, sequence, problem/solution, cause/effect); increased amount of information supported by clear relationships and transition words
- usually one idea or item per section or chapter; sections signalled by font style or headings/subheadings; usually written in short paragraphs with a clear topic sentence
- prominent illustrations/photographs elaborate print information; print that must be read to support illustrations/photographs; variety in layout, not always linear
- variety of graphics, usually fully explained; some graphics with information requiring interpretation to supplement print
- headings/subheadings, captions, charts/diagrams, cutaways, index, glossaries, sidebars, and maps which add information important to understanding



Reading Achievement Standards End of Grade 3

Reading Strategies and Behaviours Appropriate Achievement

Students

- monitor reading and self-correct when meaning is lost; identify problems and employ "fix-up" strategies (e.g., reread, read on)
- combine meaning, word structure (e.g., roots, compounds, contractions), language structure (word order and language patterns), and phonics (e.g., vowel patterns; onset and rime; common spelling patterns) to solve many unknown words
- read a wide variety of words with automaticity
- read familiar passages fluently with phrasing and expression to convey sense of text to audience; may hesitate occasionally with unfamiliar words
- use context clues, prior knowledge/experience and knowledge of text forms to verify and adjust predictions while reading
- use text features (e.g., table of contents, headings/subheadings, index, charts/diagrams) to preview and locate information; may require prompting with features requiring interpretation

Reading Strategies and Behaviours Strong Achievement

Students demonstrating strong achievement apply strategies and exhibit behaviours described at the appropriate level in an increasingly efficient and independent manner. They also

- solve a variety of words rapidly
- acquire new sight vocabulary while reading
- question and predict based on attention to relevant textual details

Comprehension Responses

Appropriate Achievement

Students demonstrating appropriate achievement respond to a variety of comprehension tasks in the manner described below. Students

Literal Response

Reading
“the lines”

- respond accurately to most literal questions by locating specific details; reread and skim small amount of text to gather appropriate information
- identify most story elements (e.g., setting, characters, events, problem/resolution, and, when clearly stated, overall theme/lesson) of narrative text, and provide some supporting details; may include unimportant details; graphic organizers may be used
- identify most main ideas and supporting details; graphic organizers may be used, with support, to categorize and sort information

Inferential/Interpretive Response

Reading
“between the lines”

- make straight-forward inferences about a character (his/her actions, feelings or personality) and story events, referring to obvious textual details
- interpret clear relationships among ideas to draw conclusions (e.g., cause/effect; sequence) or make comparisons, using some supporting textual details
- use context clues and background knowledge to explain the meaning of new vocabulary, as well as some simple descriptive/figurative words and sentences
- use text features (e.g., captions, charts/diagrams, font, glossaries) to gain additional information from the text, demonstrating a general understanding of their purpose; may have difficulty interpreting some visual information

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

Reading
“beyond the lines”

- make obvious personal connections, relate relevant prior knowledge, and make logical text-to-text comparisons; connections tend to be straightforward, supported with a general explanation
- express preferences for, and simple opinions about texts, authors, and illustrators and provide some supporting details or examples; explanations may be general
- recognize some elements of an author's style/technique (e.g., descriptive language), explain how they help the reader by stating personal preference and/or a general example
- distinguish between fact and opinion and identify author's point of view, using some details from the text
- can identify a variety of text forms (e.g., narrative, report, instructions, biography), including basic text characteristics (e.g., sequence), and know a form's general purpose

Comprehension Responses

Sample Questions/Tasks

The following types of questions/tasks may be used to assess students' comprehension.

Strong Achievement

Literal Response

- *Skim this part to find ____ (information/topic) and tell me about it.*
- *Find the part that tells ____.*
- *What happened in the story? Tell about the events in the order they happened.*
- *Tell about the important parts of the story in your own words.*
- *What lesson do you think the author wants us to learn?*
- *What did the author tell you about (topic)?*

Students demonstrating strong achievement respond to questions/tasks described at the appropriate level with overall accuracy. They also

- read some longer texts and therefore must search for information in a variety of places

Inferential/Interpretive Response

- *What can you tell me about ____ (name of character)? How do you know that?*
- *Why do you think (character) acted this way? What information helps you to know that?*
- *What happened at the end of the experiment? What caused that?*
- *How are schools today different from schools of long ago? How are they the same?*
- *What does this word mean? How do you know?*
- *What does this expression (i.e., simile or idiom) mean?*
- *Show me the glossary. How can you use it to help you understand what you are reading?*
- *What can you learn from this diagram?*

- provide responses that go beyond the obvious and support these with textual details

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

- *Do any of the characters remind you of anyone you know? How?*
- *Have you heard information like this before? Where?*
- *Do you like the way this story ends? Why or why not?*
- *Did you find this book interesting? Why or why not?*
- *Why do you think the author used these descriptive words? How do they help you when you read?*
- *What did the author do to help you learn about (topic)? Did the author do a good job? Why or why not?*
- *Do you agree with the author? Is this (idea from book) always true?*
- *How would the story be different if the main character was ____ (e.g., an adult instead of a child)?*
- *Is this book fact or fiction? How can you tell?*
- *Why is it important to have the steps in order?*
- *How can you find the important information on this page?*
- *Why do you think the author told us about whales in an information book instead of in a story? What do you notice about how this report is organized? How does that help you?*

- support opinions with textual examples and personal experience/knowledge