

Text Complexity

Students select and read independently a variety of literary and information texts. Texts include

- a range of topics beyond personal experiences, often requiring cultural, historical or social perspectives; topics that appeal to preadolescents (e.g., pop culture, growing independence)
- more challenging/mature theme/ideas (e.g., human problems war, hardship, economic issues, racism, age-appropriate characters/information requiring the reader to interpret and connect information/ideas with other texts and subject areas; sometimes themes that evoke alternative interpretations)
- many complex sentence structures (including sentences greater than 20 words), more complicated use of dialogue; wide range of declarative, imperative and interrogative sentences; embedded phrases/clauses
- challenging language (meaning derived through context, glossary/dictionary); figurative language (e.g., similes, metaphors), descriptive and connotative language; some dialect or languages other than English
- many words greater than three syllables (requires knowledge of root words/affixes), complex plurals/spelling patterns, many nouns/technical words that are difficult to decode
- variety of illustrations/photographs/complex graphics that match/add meaning/extend text; some literary text with no or few illustrations
- many lines of print on a page; variation in layout/print styles/font within the same text (some examples of dense print); wide range of punctuation; often include readers' tools (e.g., glossary, pronunciation guide)

Note: Text complexity is not defined as appropriate or strong. The wide range of unfamiliar content at this level ensures sufficient challenges for most readers.

Literary (Science Fiction, Myths, Legends, Poetry, Mysteries, Fantasy, Realistic/Historical Fiction, Hybrids)

Texts are characterized by

- varied structures (e.g., short stories, plays) with multiple narrators, some longer books requiring sustained reading and recall of information; some collections with interrelated themes
- plots with detailed episodes/subplots/multiple story lines; occasional unexpected twists, description important to understanding, some obvious symbolism
- main character with some complexity and unpredictability, i.e. "hero" with shades of good and bad; factors that relate to character development that require inferences; multiple characters revealed through dialogue, actions, thoughts and/or perceptions of others
- variety of dialogue with use of descriptive language; relationship between characters becoming important to plot and character development; settings described in detail are important to understanding; often beyond personal experience

Information (Content Subject Textbooks, Reports, Instructions, Biography, Memoir, Autobiography, Hybrids)

Texts are characterized by

- several topics and/or explicit ideas/information often linked by categories and presented through clear structures (e.g., description, sequence, compare/contrast, problem/solution, cause/effect) - at times combined in same text
- small pieces of information per section; sections not always clearly identified; paragraphs of various length
- print and illustrations equal in prominence; print that adds details necessary for interpretation; variety in layout, often not linear
- wide variety of graphics, some dense and challenging, supplement text; scales/legends/labels often require interpretation; some complicated layouts
- additional information conveyed through text features (e.g., table of contents, index, glossary, subheadings, captions, sidebars, cutaways, charts, diagrams, maps, keys/legends, and bold type)

Reading Achievement Standards End of Grade 6



Reading Strategies and Behaviours

Appropriate Achievement

Students

- monitor reading and self-correct; adjust strategies (e.g., reread, read on, skim/scan, make connections) according to form, purpose, and specific text challenges
- use meaning, structure, and visual cues (e.g., word order, roots, affixes, syllables) to solve unknown words; make reasonable attempts at multi-syllabic and content-specific words
- read a wide variety of words with automaticity, including subject-specific terminology and words from oral language
- read familiar passages fluently, with appropriate pacing, phrasing and expression, to convey sense of text to audience; may hesitate occasionally with unfamiliar words
- use context clues, prior knowledge/experiences and knowledge of text forms/features to verify and adjust predictions while reading
- use text features (e.g., table of contents, glossary, headings/subheadings, index, sidebars, charts/diagrams, maps, font) to preview, interpret and locate information
- reflect on personal use of reading strategies to construct meaning (discussion/teacher prompts/journals)

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 deliberate manner, and

- adapt use of strategies to access challenging text
- make insightful text-to-text and text-to-world connections based on knowledge gained through broader reading experiences

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 selecting and locating relevant details; locate information using a variety of sources
- identify key story elements (setting, characters, events, problem/resolution, theme/lesson) of a narrative text including most relevant details; explain how events are related to the theme; graphic organizers (e.g., timelines, story maps) may be used
- identify main ideas and supporting details using graphic organizers (e.g., timelines, charts, webs); summarize key points

Inferential/Interpretive Response

Reading
“between the lines”

- make logical inferences about characters (motivations, feelings or personality), and story events, referring to some relevant textual details; describe relationships between characters and effect on plot or overall theme
- interpret relationships among several ideas to draw conclusions (e.g., plot, sequence, cause/effect, problem/solution) or make comparisons; support responses with relevant details
- use context clues, prior knowledge, and reference tools (e.g., dictionary, glossary) to explain the meaning of new vocabulary/technical terms; provide obvious interpretations of more subtle shades of meaning, and figurative and descriptive language
- interpret text features (e.g., headings, subheadings, captions, font, diagrams, maps, keys/legends, cutaways, graphs) and explain how they help the reader understand the text

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

Reading
“beyond the lines”

- make personal connections: compare/contrast with personal experiences/relevant prior knowledge and make logical text-to-text comparisons; many connections go beyond the obvious and can be supported with a reasonable explanation
- express and support preferences for, and opinions about particular texts, authors, illustrators and genres with specific details/examples
- recognize some aspects of an author’s style/technique (e.g., figurative language, dialect, descriptions); explain how this influences the reader’s experience; evaluate author’s effectiveness by providing relevant examples
- respond critically to texts: recognize language used to manipulate, persuade, or control; detect prejudice, stereotyping and bias
- recognize purpose, structure, and features of a variety of text forms (e.g., short story, ballad, report, explanation, persuasive, autobiography, science fiction, fantasy)

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.*
- *Summarize what you have found out so far. What key words did you make note of to help you remember?*
- *Where would you begin to construct a timeline to plot the events in this autobiography?*
- *Why is ____ (event/action of character) important to the story?*
- *What message do you think the author is trying to give to the reader?*
- *What were the main ideas in this selection? What did you find out about each of the main ideas?*

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

- read large amounts of text distinguishing between important and unimportant details
- organize and present information gathered from a wide variety of texts

Inferential/Interpretive Response

- *Describe ____ (character) at the beginning of the story and at the end of the story. What do you think caused this change?*
- *How did the character’s strengths/weaknesses affect the sequence of events in the story?*
- *How would the story be different if the character had acted differently?*
- *How does the information in this book fit with what you already knew about ____ (the topic)? What is the same? What is different?*
- *What does this word mean? What helped you figure that out?*
- *“The sky’s the limit” was used on page ____ . What does this expression mean? How else could this have been said?*
- *Show me how you used this key to understand the map.*
- *Look at this photograph and caption. What information do you learn that adds to the words of the text?*
- *How do the text features (e.g., headings, charts, questions) help you understand what you have read?*

- provide thoughtful and well-supported responses using specific and relevant textual examples and personal knowledge/experience

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

- *Which character is most like you? How?*
- *How would you have solved the problem?*
- *What did you already know about this topic? What questions do you still have? Where could you find that information?*
- *Would you recommend this book to someone? Why or why not?*
- *Does the author keep you interested in this story? How?*
- *What does the author do to help you picture this character?*
- *The problem is described by ____ . What do you think ____ would say about it?*
- *Compare these opposing points-of-view. Explain how each author supports their position. Take a stand and explain/defend your point of view.*
- *What are some examples of how the author used persuasive language in this piece?*
- *What are some similarities and differences between one form/genre and another? (e.g. myths and legends)*

- synthesize background knowledge and experiences gained through reading to make insightful text-to-text and text-to-world connections