

Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program

Performance Level Descriptors

Performance Level Descriptors give teachers, parents/guardians and students more information about a student's strengths and areas for improvement after taking our state assessments. Performance Level Descriptors are broken down by grade and by the score levels students can earn: Basic (Level 2), Proficient (Level 3) and Advanced (Level 4). There are no descriptors for Below Basic (Level 1).



Reading Performance Level Descriptors

Grade 7

Basic Reading Behavioral Characteristics

- Students are challenged by comprehending, interpreting, and evaluating literary and informational texts.
- Students are afraid to take risks and rarely re-read to question or confirm understanding.
- Students are somewhat passive readers; they are uncomfortable making active connections between self and text.
- Students struggle to recognize when reading meaning breaks down and have very few “fix-it” strategies to return to a comprehension of the text.
- Students rely on explicit instruction, use of graphic organizers, and mental imagery to form a basic, literal understanding of text.
- Students are somewhat confused by informational texts, due to challenging, content-specific vocabulary.
- Students use resources to help them penetrate texts to a limited degree, and for the most part, are unable to access metacognitive strategies.

Basic Reading Skill Characteristics

- Students struggle to distinguish between major ideas and significant details when identifying theme.
- Students can summarize if the structure of the text is sequential, but their summaries are mostly literal.
- Students are unable to break down vocabulary through analysis of roots, suffixes, and prefixes, and they struggle with developing word understanding through analysis of the text context.
- Students rely on pictures to confirm their understanding, but their use of text features to enhance understanding is limited.
- Students struggle to independently recognize a cause and effect relationship in texts, but can understand it when provided with explicit instruction.
- Students attempt to evaluate by stating opinions but they infrequently provide text support for their ideas.
- Students can make predictions based on the text, but struggle when faced with evolving textual information.
- Students find identifying and applying understanding of figurative language and literary devices particularly difficult.

Reading Performance Level Descriptors

Grade 7

Proficient Reading Behavioral Characteristics

- Students comprehend, interpret, and evaluate literary and informational texts.
- Students take risks and re-read to question or confirm understanding.
- Students re-visit text and re-read to confirm information.
- Students can recognize when reading meaning breaks down and use immediate “fix-it” strategies to return to a solid comprehension.
- Students are active readers who make thoughtful connections between self and text.
- Students gain knowledge and expertise through guided instruction and independent use of graphic organizers.
- Students show strong understanding of informational texts even when faced with challenging, content-specific vocabulary.
- Students are self-directed to search out meanings for unknown words.
- Students use a wide variety of resources to help them penetrate texts and use a variety of metacognitive strategies to accomplish a successful comprehension of text.

Proficient Reading Skill Characteristics

- Students distinguish between major ideas and significant details when identifying theme.
- Students can summarize texts both sequentially and thematically.
- Students use literary elements to enhance understanding and analysis of texts.
- Students are able to put steps in a process, events in a story, or issues in a chronological order even when prompted by text that is out of order.
- Students break down vocabulary through analysis of roots, suffixes, and prefixes, and they develop word understanding through analysis of the text context.
- Students use pictures and text features to confirm their understanding.
- Students independently recognize a cause and effect relationship in texts and can provide textual support for analysis.
- Students evaluate by stating opinions and supporting them with textual evidence across a variety of genres and types of informational texts.
- Students can make predictions based on the text, and maintain appropriate predictions even when faced with evolving textual information.
- Students are challenged by identifying and applying understanding of figurative language and literary devices, but it is achievable.

Reading Performance Level Descriptors

Grade 7

Advanced Reading Behavioral Characteristics

- Students comprehend, interpret, and evaluate a wide variety of literary and informational texts that vary in sophistication and complexity.
- Students independently take risks and re-read to question or confirm understanding.
- Students re-visit text and re-read to confirm information and extend beyond the text.
- Students easily recognize when reading meaning breaks down and seamlessly use immediate “fix-it” strategies to order to return to a solid comprehension.
- Students easily prioritize information from texts and are capable of making “big leaps” in their connections between reading and other content areas.
- Students are active readers who make thoughtful connections between self, text, and world.
- Students gain knowledge and expertise through multiple experiences with text and instructional strategies.
- Students show superior understanding of informational texts even when faced with challenging, content-specific vocabulary.
- Students are self-directed to search out meanings for unknown words or contexts.
- Students use all resources available to help them penetrate texts while using a depth of metacognitive strategies to accomplish a successful comprehension of text.

Advanced Reading Skill Characteristics

- Students easily distinguish between major ideas and significant details when identifying theme.
- Students can summarize texts sequentially, thematically, and in abstraction.
- Students use literary elements to extend understanding and analysis of texts.
- Students are able to put steps in a process, events in a story, or issues in a chronological order across content areas and genres.
- Students break down vocabulary through analysis of roots, suffixes, and prefixes, and they develop word understanding through analysis of the text context.
- Students use all available text features to confirm their understanding and build a multi-layered comprehension.
- Students independently recognize a cause and effect relationship in texts and can provide textual support for analysis.
- Students evaluate by stating opinions and supporting them with textual evidence across a variety of genres and types of informational texts; additionally, they bring other authors and texts to their analysis for evidence.
- Students make solid predictions based on the text, and maintain appropriate predictions even when faced with evolving textual information.
- Students’ identification of and applying understanding of figurative language and literary devices is strongly embedded in their reading process, and it supports an overall competency when encountering challenging texts.