

# Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program

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## 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 8

### *Basic Reading Behavioral Characteristics*

- Students struggle with grade level material.
- Students require explicit directions, concrete examples, and frequent prompting for meaningful interaction with the text.
- Students find content area material very challenging.
- Students often misinterpret information and details are omitted.
- Students exhibit a lack of language and experience to support a breadth of knowledge.
- Students respond with general surface information and rarely display evidence of deep understanding and application.
- Students rely on scaffolding and are inconsistent when applying “fix-it” strategies.
- Students struggle to persevere and maintain focus when faced with challenging material.
- Students minimally read for pleasure and it is seldom a self-directed activity.
- Students are not risk takers and frequently display a lack of confidence concerning their reading abilities.

### *Basic Reading Skill Characteristics*

- Students struggle to comprehend, analyze, and evaluate both literary and informational text.
- Students have difficulty identifying a theme/main idea and supporting details without scaffolding.
- Students’ summarizing is often a simple retelling of the story with very little distinction between significant and insignificant details.
- Students are challenged by identifying and writing summary sentences.
- Students often base inferences and predictions on prior knowledge and may not support them using text.
- Students have limited vocabulary.
- Students are able to use context clues when attacking unfamiliar words; however, they generally fail to employ other strategies and have trouble with multiple meanings, synonyms, and antonyms.
- Students are inconsistent with applying the information from text features, and understanding literary elements and stylistic devices is on a very literal level.
- Students generally provide only surface comparisons and need the support of scaffolding when comparing and contrasting within and between texts.
- Students require concrete examples and explicit guidance to identify both cause and effect.
- Students may identify an author’s purpose from a list of choices, but have difficulty when asked to provide text-based evidence for support.
- Students inconsistently distinguish fact from opinion.

# **Reading Performance Level Descriptors**

## **Grade 8**

- Students may draw a reasonable conclusion when evaluating reasoning, but regularly use prior knowledge rather than text-based details.
- Students find difficulty in making a generalization beyond the text to a broader area or concept.

# Reading Performance Level Descriptors

## Grade 8

### *Proficient Reading Behavioral Characteristics*

- Students perform solidly when working with appropriate grade level material.
- Students read fluently with expression for greater comprehension.
- Students show evidence of higher thinking through generalizations, conclusions, and inferences.
- Students actively engage with the text while employing various reading strategies.
- Students frequently skim, re-read, and check for understanding without prompting.
- Students participate openly in discussions and ask questions for clarification.
- Students often automatically form “mind-movies” to aide in the visualization of the text.
- Students are able to read and follow directions with consistency and understand the common language of assessment and literacy.
- Students performing on the proficient level readily make the connection between self, the text, and the world in general.
- Students self-select appropriate materials for a variety purposes and read for both information and pleasure.

### *Proficient Reading Skill Characteristics*

- Students are able to comprehend, analyze, and evaluate both literary and informational text written on an eighth grade level.
- Students identify main ideas/themes and are able to supply supporting information.
- Students consistently sequentially summarize a selection by providing details; however they may struggle with producing a cohesive summary statement.
- Students are capable of making predictions and inferences while citing textual evidence.
- Students readily use context clues and other strategies to interpret vocabulary and can differentiate between multiple meanings.
- Students are able to transfer vocabulary meaning to other content areas.
- Students employ various text features to gain meaning.
- Students analyze literary elements and stylistic devices for a deeper level of understanding with the support of minimal scaffolding.
- Students accomplish comparing/contrasting and cause/effect within and between texts while synthesizing to a broader level.
- Students identify author’s purpose with ease; however evaluating effectiveness for different audiences proves to be a challenge.
- Students accomplish evaluating reasoning and ideas/themes, but these students may use prior knowledge as opposed to providing text-based evidence to support their answers.
- Students are able to extend information beyond the text to solve problems and make generalizations.

# Reading Performance Level Descriptors

## Grade 8

### *Advanced Reading Behavioral Characteristics*

- Students consistently deliver a superior academic performance.
- Students read with fluency, ease, and expression and are able to comprehend more complex and sophisticated material across a wide variety of genres.
- Students differentiate between the skill sets needed for informational versus literary text and automatically employ varied strategies when attacking challenging materials.
- Students easily transfer new concepts and skills to other content areas.
- Students are highly motivated, inquisitive, confident, and self-directed.
- Students frequently seek out resources on their own and ask questions for clarification.
- Students intuitively make the connection between their personal background knowledge and the text at hand.
- Students persevere when analyzing new material, and they readily use the common language of assessment and literacy.
- Students read for a wide variety of purposes.

### *Advanced Reading Skill Characteristics*

- Students are able to comprehend, analyze, and evaluate both literary and informational text written above the eighth grade level.
- Students easily generate main ideas and multiple themes while citing vast evidence.
- Students provide more fluid, higher level summarizations and summary statements written in their own words while discriminating between significant and insignificant details.
- Students regularly make inferences/predictions and provide a plethora of text-based evidence to support their answers.
- Students interpret vocabulary with ease and are able to provide multiple meanings, synonyms, and antonyms.
- Students grasp the subtle nuances of vocabulary.
- Students analyze and critique literary elements such as character, setting, plot, and stylistic devices; additionally, thinking is supported across several genres by advanced readers.
- Students readily understand, infer, and apply information from both text and graphic features.
- Students accomplish comparing/contrasting and cause/effect with a higher degree of sophistication within and between texts without the use of scaffolding.
- Students identify and analyze author's purpose and evaluate effectiveness for different audiences while providing relevant text support.
- Students have a comprehensive and deep evaluation of reasoning and themes/ideas related to the text. Students are able to extend and apply information beyond the text and make generalizations using clear and concise details from multiple sources to support their thought processes.