

## Essential Academic Learning Requirements for Reading & Strands and Targets for the Reading Washington Assessment of Student Learning

### Introduction to Reading

Early reading instruction is focused on the process of decoding text through letter sounds and word patterns. These two skills are important to ensuring that readers can attack the words they read. Early readers connect the words they read with the words they already know. They connect the language they read with the language structure they know. Finally, they connect the text they read with familiar stories and patterns of language.

As readers grow, they encounter words and text that are unfamiliar. As their fluency (ease of decoding words and sentences) increases, they more easily comprehend what they read. Their brains spend more time thinking about the ideas in text than breaking down words and connecting them to prior knowledge.

As readers continue to mature, they go beyond literal comprehension. Reading for meaning, they make interpretations of text; they consider whether the writer's ideas are believable and trustworthy; they decide whether they like the way an author writes – whether the work is convincing or entertaining. They question the author's intent and purpose.

Once readers master the tasks of reading, they become purposeful in their reading – choosing what to read for entertainment, to learn new information, and to complete tasks. They select authors they like or topics in which they are interested. Readers extract information from magazines and newspapers about important events and issues. They read and interpret graphs, charts, and tables related to important topics. They also combine pictorial information with text-based information to deepen their understanding of ideas presented in text. Readers think about text whether what they read is simple or complex.

Readers also act on what they read. They may discuss current issues and familiar topics with friends. They may use what they read to write reports or letters to policymakers. They may judge the urgency of issues or the positions of policymakers. Readers also use what they read to complete tasks such as sewing a dress, building a bookcase, or rebuilding an automobile engine.

As they mature, readers set goals for their reading. Young readers may strive to read “chapter books” while older readers strive to read and comprehend plays and novels. Young readers work to develop the skills they need so they can read about subjects that interest them such as wild animals, outer space, inventions, and famous people. Older readers may strive to read more difficult text so that they can better understand the events and issues in their lives

Given these many tasks, stages, and purposes of reading, the Essential Academic Learning Requirements are organized around four essentials. The first is focused on the basic skills of reading. The second is focused on the thinking skills that are applied to text – from literal comprehension to analysis, interpretation, and critical thinking. The third essential is focused on the range of different types of text and purposes for reading. The fourth is focused on the process of setting reading goals and striving toward those goals. In the pages that follow, these four essential requirements of reading are further defined.

## Essential Academic Learning Requirements—Reading

### **1: The student understands and uses different skills and strategies to read.**

- 1.1 Use word recognition skills and strategies to read and comprehend text.
- 1.2 Use vocabulary (word meaning) strategies to comprehend text.
- 1.3 Build vocabulary through wide reading.
- 1.4 Apply word recognition skills and strategies to read fluently.

### **2: The student understands the meaning of what is read.**

- 2.1 Demonstrate evidence of reading comprehension.
- 2.2 Understand and apply knowledge of text components to comprehend text.
- 2.3 Expand comprehension by analyzing, interpreting, and synthesizing information and ideas in literary and informational text.
- 2.4 Think critically and analyze author's use of language, style, purpose, and perspective in informational and literary text.

### **3: The student reads different materials for a variety of purposes.**

- 3.1 Read to learn new information.
- 3.2 Read to perform a task.
- 3.3 Read for career application.
- 3.4 Read for literary/narrative experience in a variety of genres.

### **4: The student sets goals and evaluates progress to improve reading.**

- 4.1 Assess reading strengths and need for improvement.
- 4.2 Develop interests and share reading experiences.

## HIGH SCHOOL READING ASSESSMENT STRANDS AND TARGETS

The Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) have been further defined as strands and targets for the purposes of assessment. The Reading strands and targets are given below.

Strands refer to the important reading skills that should be applied to different types of text. Learning targets further detail the knowledge and skills items are designed to assess within each strand. The learning targets were derived from the benchmark indicators<sup>1</sup> in the EALR Technical Document that was published in 1997. In the pages that follow, the numbers in parentheses after each learning target refer to particular benchmark indicators.

Each WASL Reading item is designed to assess students' attainment of one target within a strand. Strand reports on WASL score reports are based on total item scores within a particular strand.

---

<sup>1</sup> Benchmark indicators are the detailed learning expectations defined for each grade level in the 1997 EALR Technical Document.

## READING STRANDS AND LEARNING TARGETS

### STRANDS AND TARGETS FOR LITERARY TEXT

#### **Strand 1: Comprehends Main Ideas and Details of Literary Text (LC)**

- LC01 Demonstrate understanding of theme or message and supportive details (GLE 2.1.3)
- LC02 Summarize with evidence from the reading (GLE 2.1.7)
- LC03 Make inferences or predictions based on the reading (GLE 2.1.5)
- LC04 Interpret vocabulary critical to the meaning of the text (GLE 1.3.2)

#### **Strand 2: Analyzes, Interprets, and Synthesizes Literary Text (LA)**

- LA05 Demonstrate understanding of literary elements (genres; story elements such as plot, character, setting; stylistic devices) and graphic elements/illustrations (GLE 2.2.2; 2.2.3; 2.3.3)
- LA06 Compare and contrast elements of text (GLE 2.3.1; 2.4.5; 2.4.6)
- LA07 Make connections (cause and effect) within a text (GLE 2.3.1)

#### **Strand 3: Thinks Critically about Literary Text (LT)**

- LT08 Analyze author's purpose and evaluate effectiveness for different audiences (includes fact/opinion, author's point of view, tone, and use of persuasive devices) (GLE 2.4.2; 2.4.3; 2.4.4)
- LT09 Evaluate reasoning and ideas/themes related to the text (GLE 2.4.3)
- LT10 Extend information beyond text (make generalizations beyond the text to a broader idea or concept, or apply information to other texts or situations, or give a response to a reading) (GLE 2.4.1; 2.4.5)

**STRANDS AND TARGETS FOR INFORMATIONAL TEXT****Strand 4: Comprehends Main Ideas and Details of Informational Text (IC)**

- IC11 Demonstrate understanding of major ideas and supportive details (GLE 2.1.3)
- IC12 Summarize with evidence from the reading (GLE 2.1.7)
- IC13 Make inferences or predictions based on the reading (GLE 2.1.4)
- IC14 Interpret vocabulary critical to the meaning of the text (GLE 1.3.2)

**Strand 5: Analyzes, Interprets, and Synthesizes Informational Text (IA)**

- IA15 Demonstrate understanding of text features (titles, headings and other information divisions, table of contents, indexes, glossaries, prefaces, appendices, captions) and graphic features (GLE 2.2.2)
- IA16 Compare and contrast information presented in texts (GLE 2.3.1; 2.4.5; 2.4.6)
- IA17 Make connections (cause and effect) within a text (GLE 2.3.1)

**Strand 6: Thinks Critically about Informational Text (IT)**

- IT18 Analyze author's purpose (including distinguishing between fact and opinion) and evaluate effectiveness for different audiences (GLE 2.4.2; 2.4.3; 2.4.4)
- IT19 Evaluate reasoning and ideas/themes related to the text (GLE 2.4.1; 2.4.3)
- IT20 Extend information beyond text (make generalizations beyond the text to a broader idea or concept, or apply information to other texts or situations, or give a response to a reading) (GLE 2.4.1; 2.4.5)