

Text Complexity

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

- a wide range of genres; some texts (hybrids) combine genres; longer texts, beyond personal experiences, often requiring diverse cultural, historical or social perspectives
- multidimensional mature/challenging themes/ideas (e.g., moral issues: abuse, war, hardship, poverty socioeconomic/social class barriers, racism, sexuality, murder, addiction) that cultivate social awareness and provide insight into the struggles of humanity; age appropriate characters/information requiring the reader to interpret and connect information/ideas with other texts and subject areas; sometimes themes with layers of meaning that evoke alternative interpretations
- many complex sentence structures (including sentences greater than 30 words); large amounts of description containing information vital to the understanding of the text; more complicated use of dialogue; wide range of declarative, imperative and interrogative sentences
- challenging language (requires context, glossary/dictionary); wide range of literary devices (e.g., figurative language, symbolism, flashbacks, flash forward, time lapses, stories within stories); dialects (regional/historical), some words from other languages, archaic words
- many long multi-syllable words (need knowledge of root words/affixes), complex plurals/spelling patterns, many nouns/technical words that are difficult to decode
- variety of challenging illustrations/photographs/complex graphics requiring interpretation that match/add meaning/extend text; much literary text with few or no illustrations
- many lines of print on a page; variation in layout/print styles/font within the same text (many examples of dense print); complex range of punctuation; may feature a wide range of readers' tools /text features (e.g. glossary, pronunciation guide index, italics, scales, legends)

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

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

Texts are characterized by

- varied structures (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
- main characters display 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
- some unassigned dialogue from which story action must be inferred; many lines of descriptive language vital to understanding setting, characters, theme, imagery, symbolism, figurative language

Information (Content Subject Textbooks, Reports, Directions, Biography, Memoir, Autobiography, Ads, Charts, Maps, Tables, Pamphlets, Graphs, Hybrids)

Texts are characterized by

- heavy content load requiring readers to synthesize information
- topics/explicit ideas/information linked by categories and presented through clear structures (e.g., description, sequence, compare/contrast, problem/solution, cause/effect) at times combined in same text
- variety of formats (paragraphs, columns, boxes, legends, question/answer)
- wide variety of graphics, some dense and challenging, support text; some complicated layouts
- information conveyed through text features (e.g., table of contents, index, glossary, subheadings, captions,



Reading Achievement Standards End of Grade 9

Reading Strategies and Behaviours *Appropriate Achievement*

Students

- check closely for understanding; adjust and use a wide variety of strategies (e.g., generate questions, make connections, analyze, synthesize and evaluate; organize significant information in notes or with graphic organizers)
- quickly solve unfamiliar words using a wide range of cues (e.g., dividing words into syllables, using root words/origins to gain meaning; using background knowledge and context cues); use references to find the meanings of unknown /technical words
- automatically read and understand most words in range of contexts (vocabulary from grade-level texts, subject terminology, oral language)
- read appropriate-level texts with expression and confidence; adjust rates to match form and purpose; use appropriate phrasing, pausing and intonation (most reading at this level is silent)
- use context clues, prior knowledge/experience, and knowledge of text forms/features to verify and adjust predictions while reading; inquire/conduct research to extend knowledge or to clarify when content is confusing or exceeds personal knowledge/experience
- use text features (e.g., table of contents, glossary, captions, headings/subheadings, index, sidebars, charts/diagrams, maps, font) to preview, interpret and locate information

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

- show insight with their questions and predictions, based on interpretations of subtle textual details
- recognize subtle biases
- make sophisticated text-to-text and text-to-world connections based on extensive knowledge gained through broader reading experiences/research



Education, Early Learning and Culture
English Programs

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 when reading longer, denser texts; skim large amount of text in search of information; research, in systematic ways, specific information from a variety of sources
- identify key story elements (setting, characters, events, problem/resolution, theme/lesson) of a narrative text; explain how events are related to the theme
- distinguish between main ideas and supporting details; concisely summarize key information

Inferential/Interpretive Response

Reading
“between the lines”

- make logical inferences about multiple complex characters (i.e., motivations, traits, feelings, personality) and story events, referring to relevant textual details; describe relationships among characters and effect on plot/subplots or overall theme
- interpret relationships among 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; interpret subtle shades of meaning, figurative and descriptive language; interpret symbols (objects, events, motifs) used by author to convey meaning
- interpret/use text features to understand the text (headings and subheadings, cut-aways, legends, diagrams, maps, graphs, glossaries, captions, charts, feature boxes, sidebars); make general inferences using this information

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

Reading
“beyond the lines”

- make personal connections: compare/contrast with personal experiences/relevant prior knowledge; make logical text-to-text, text-to-world comparisons; connect characters within and across texts/genres by circumstances, traits or actions; consider more than one point-of-view
- make connections between the social/moral issues of the present and those presented in realistic/historical fiction, biographies, satire and other genres
- express and support personal reactions, preferences for, and opinions about; particular texts, authors, illustrators and genres with specific details/examples; express changes in personal viewpoint/ideas as a result of reading a particular text
- explain how the different elements of author’s style/technique (e.g., dialect, descriptions, figurative language, imagery, irony, flashbacks, foreshadowing, symbolism, tone) creates meaning and reaction; 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; propose alternative perspectives; analyze and evaluate information; demonstrate an awareness that texts reveal and produce ideologies, identities, and positions; evaluate ways in which both genders and various cultures and socioeconomic groups are portrayed
- evaluate purpose, structure, and characteristics of a variety of text forms (e.g., short story, play, ballad, report, explanation, persuasive, biography, science fiction, high fantasy); explain how they contribute to understanding the text; explore the relationships among language, topic, genre, purpose, context, and audience

Comprehension Responses

Sample Questions/Tasks

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

Strong Achievement

Literal Response

- *What new information did you learn from reading and viewing this selection?*
- *Summarize what you have found so far. What key words did you note 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 were the key ideas in the information you read/viewed? Why did you identify them as important?*
- *Provide the “gist” of this article in twenty words or less.*

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

- handle effectively more complicated/longer texts containing new and unfamiliar concepts and ideas; reread and skim large amounts of information for details
- determine accurately importance of information

Inferential/Interpretive Response

- *Describe ____ (character) at the beginning of the story and at the end of the story. What caused this change?*
- *In what ways did the weaknesses/strengths of the character affect the chain of events in the story? How would the story be different if the character had acted differently?*
- *What is the theme or message of this selection? What do you think the author/poet wants you to think about and remember?*
- *What does this word mean? What helped you figure that out?*
- *Explain and give an example of how the author/poet used metaphor/simile/irony/personification/onomatopoeia.*
- *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?*

- demonstrate a strong understanding of how story events are interrelated
- provide thoughtful inferences supported by specific and relevant examples and by personal knowledge and experience

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

- *Which character is most like you? How?*
- *How would you have solved the problem?*
- *Tell me about your favourite genre. What is it about the genre that engages you?*
- *Does the author keep you interested in this selection? 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?*
- *Whose viewpoint is presented? What, if any, opposing viewpoints are presented? Whose viewpoint is missing? Describe the biases and assumptions presented in this selection. Whose interests are served?*
- *What are some examples of how the author used exaggeration/subtle misinformation in this piece?*
- *What are some similarities and differences between one form/genre (e.g., myths and legends) and another?*

- synthesize experiences with other texts and prior knowledge to make sophisticated connections
- provide insightful explanations and examples