Text Complexity

Appropriate Achievement

Students select and read independently a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts.
Texts include

- some content beyond children's typical "lived" experiences requiring them to draw upon knowledge gained from reading, viewing, and discussions
- familiar themes that are starting to reflect more universal ideas (e.g., friendship, bravery)
- longer, simple sentences with variety in the placement of adjectives, adverbs, phrases and subject/verbs; numerous compound sentences and a few complex sentences with clauses
- more uncommon words and phrases than in earlier levels as well as content-specific vocabulary (usually explained or illustrated); some figurative (e.g., simile) and book language beyond expressive language; descriptive language, usually dealing with concrete/physical attributes
- many two- or three-syllable words, including plurals, contractions, possessives, compound words and words with suffixes (most multi-syllable words are within reader's decoding control)
- illustrations/photographs that match text but are not necessary for word solving
- a varying number of lines of text per page with sentences consistently organized in short paragraphs; sentences that frequently carry over two or three lines; some longer sentences that start at left margin; large clear font with ample spacing provided between lines and some variation in text layouts; early chapter books with particularly "friendly layout"

Fiction (Realistic, Simple Animal Fantasy, Folktales)

Texts are characterized by

- multiple events (sometimes arranged in short chapters)
- events related to a single plot with an easily recognized beginning, middle and ending
- a straightforward, often predictable, plot developing over a number of episodes
- predictable characters who undergo little change or development and who are revealed through dialogue, actions, thoughts and/or other's perspectives which require the reader to infer meaning
- both assigned and unassigned dialogue; various points of view revealed through dialogue
- stories that may move from one time/place (usually no more than two settings); some stories in which setting is important for comprehension

Nonfiction (Informational)

Texts are characterized by

- explicit ideas that are presented through clear structures (e.g., description, compare/contrast, sequence, problem/solution, cause/effect) to show simple relationships
- one idea or item per page or section; bold print or headings that may be used to signal sections; short paragraphs with clear topic sentences
- prominent illustrations/photographs (may include insets), clearly separated from print; print that adds some supporting details
- graphics that are clearly explained, (usually one or two types per page)
- text features such as headings, captions, basic diagrams, and/or simple glossaries that support meaning

Strong Achievement

Students demonstrating strong achievement select and read independently texts as described above, as well as some texts at a higher level of difficulty. The increase in text complexity is often created by

- the inclusion of unfamiliar content that requires students to draw on general knowledge and/or knowledge gained though reading and viewing
- the use of more content-specific words, usually explained in context or supported by illustrations
- the inclusion of specific, descriptive words and some figurative language depicting more abstract ideas
- more detailed plots and simple character development in narratives
- the inclusion of several explicit ideas (in nonfiction texts), supported with a variety of graphics, sometimes presented in a non-linear layout (i.e., graphics are presented in an array or include insets and sidebars preventing the page from being "read" from top-to-bottom and left-to-right).

Reading Achievement Standards End of Grade 2

Reading Strategies and Behaviours

Appropriate Achievement

Students

- monitor reading and self-correct when reading does not make sense, sound right and/or look right; employ "fix-up" strategies (e.g., reread, read on); may require occasional prompting
- combine meaning, word structure (compounds, plurals, suffixes), language structure (e.g., word order and language patterns), and phonics (e.g., consonant blends; onsets and rimes; common spelling patterns) to solve unknown words; may need some support with irregular (e.g., young) or longer words
- read a variety of high frequency words, most with automaticity
- read familiar passages fluently with appropriate phrasing and expression to convey sense of text to audience; may hesitate with unfamiliar words
- use context clues, prior knowledge/experience, and knowledge of "story" to make reasonable predictions
- use simple text features (e.g., headings, table of contents, illustrations, captions, labels) to predict content and help locate information; may require prompting

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 independent manner, and

- recognize when comprehension has been lost, employing "fix-up" strategies with some consideration for their reading purpose (e.g., looking for specific information as compared to reading a narrative passage for enjoyment)
- solve many new words and make reasonable attempts at unfamiliar and multi-syllabic words
- have acquired a sight-word bank of personally significant and content-specific words

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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 locating specific details; tend to rely on information located in one place, rather than skimming text to gather details
- retell narrative text including main events in sequence with some supporting details, and most story elements (e.g., setting, main characters, problem/resolution); verbal prompts or graphic organizers may be used to support/extend a retell
- identify most main ideas and a few related details; may require verbal prompts or graphic organizers, with applicable headings

Inferential/Interpretive Response

Reading "between the lines"

- make simple inferences about a character (his/her actions or feelings) and story events, providing some general supporting details
- interpret direct relationships among ideas to draw conclusions (e.g., cause/effect) or make obvious comparisons, using some details from the text
- use context clues and background knowledge to explain the meaning of words and sentences
- use text features (e.g., headings, simple diagrams, captions, labels, font) to gain additional information from the text

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

Reading "beyond the lines"

- make obvious personal connections; relate prior knowledge and make concrete text-to-text comparisons, when similarities are clear and straightforward; explanation may be general and may include some unrelated examples
- express preferences for, and simple opinions about, texts, authors, and illustrators; provide some general examples to support statements, often related to overall topic
- identify a few simple text forms (e.g., story, poem, "how-to", information book); describe overall characteristics and general purpose

Comprehension Responses

Sample Questions/Tasks
The following types of questions/tasks may be used to assess students' comprehension.

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

- show an increasing ability to locate and organize information

Literal Response

- *Find the part that gives information on ___.*
- *What happened in the story? What was the problem and how did they solve it?*
- *Who was in the story? Where did it take place?*
- *Tell about one important idea you learned from this book.*
- *Reread this part (i.e., page or paragraph). Tell what you learned in your own words.*

Inferential/Interpretive Response

- *Why do you think ____ (name of character) did this ____ (certain action)?*
- *How do you think he/she is feeling? How can you tell?*
- *What made this happen? Why did this happen next?*
- *How are dogs and cats alike as pets? How are they different?*
- *Tell me what ___ (word from book) means. How did you know?*
- *How did this photograph help you understand ____ (idea from book)?*
- *What does this label tell us about this picture?*
- *Why is this word written this way (e.g., squiggly letters)?*
- *What do you notice about the way the author wrote the word, STOP? Why do you think the author did that?*

- provide interpretations and connections (often beyond the obvious) supported by details and/or experiences

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

- *What is one way you and the character are alike? Different?*
- *Did you like this book? Why or why not?*
- *Do you like the way the author described ___ (an event/character/topic)? Why or why not?*
- *What words did the author use to help you make a picture in your head?*
- *Do you think this story really happened? What makes you think that?*
- *Is this a story or an information book? How can you tell?*
- *How can you tell this is a recipe?*
- *Why might someone want to write an information book about ____ (topic)?*

- support opinions with relevant textual details and personal experiences