

Text Complexity

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

- a range of topics beyond personal experiences, often requiring cultural, historical, or social perspectives; topics that appeal to preadolescents (e.g., pop culture, growing independence)
- more challenging/mature theme/ideas (e.g., human problems: war, hardship, economic issues, racism); age-appropriate characters/information requiring the reader to interpret and connect information/ideas with other texts and subject areas; sometimes themes that evoke alternative interpretations
- many complex sentence structures (including sentences greater than 20 words), more complicated use of dialogue; wide range of declarative, imperative and interrogative sentences; embedded phrases/clauses
- challenging language (meaning derived through context, glossary/dictionary); figurative language (e.g., similes, metaphors), descriptive and connotative language; some dialect or languages other than English
- many words greater than three syllables (requires knowledge of root words/affixes), complex plurals/spelling patterns, many nouns/technical words that are difficult to decode
- variety of illustrations/photographs/complex graphics that match/add meaning/extend text; some literary text with no or few illustrations
- many lines of print on a page; variation in layout/print styles/font within the same text (some examples of dense print); wide range of punctuation; often include readers' tools (e.g., glossary, pronunciation guide)

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

Literary (*Science Fiction, Myths, Legends, Poetry, Mysteries, Fantasy, Realistic/Historical Fiction, Hybrids*)

Information (*Content Subject Textbooks, Reports, Instructions, Biography, Memoir, Autobiography, Hybrids*)

Texts are characterized by

- varied structures (e.g., 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, description important to understanding, some obvious symbolism
- main character with some complexity and unpredictability, e.g., “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
- variety of dialogue with use of descriptive language; relationship between characters becoming important to plot and character development; settings described in detail are important to understanding; often beyond personal experience

Texts are characterized by

- several topics and/or explicit ideas/information often linked by categories and presented through clear structures (e.g., description, sequence, compare/contrast, problem/solution, cause/effect) - at times combined in same text
- small pieces of information per section; sections not always clearly identified; paragraphs of various length
- print and illustrations equal in prominence; print that adds details necessary for interpretation; variety in layout, often not linear
- wide variety of graphics, some dense and challenging, supplement text; scales/legends/labels often require interpretation; some complicated layouts
- additional information conveyed through text features (e.g., table of contents, index, glossary, subheadings, captions, sidebars, cutaways, charts, diagrams, maps, keys/legends, and bold type)



Reading Achievement Standards End of Grade 6

Reading Strategies and Behaviours

Appropriate Achievement

Students

- monitor reading and self-correct; adjust strategies (e.g., reread, read on, skim/scan, make connections) according to form, purpose, and specific text challenges
- use meaning, structure, and visual cues (e.g., word order, roots, affixes, syllables) to solve unknown words; make reasonable attempts at multi-syllabic and content-specific words
- read a wide variety of words with automaticity, including subject-specific terminology and words from oral language
- read familiar passages fluently, with appropriate pacing, phrasing, and expression, to convey sense of text to audience; may hesitate occasionally with unfamiliar words
- use context clues, prior knowledge/experiences, and knowledge of text forms/features to verify and adjust predictions while reading
- use text features (e.g., table of contents, glossary, headings/subheadings, index, sidebars, charts/diagrams, maps, font) to preview, interpret and locate information
- reflect on personal use of reading strategies to construct meaning (discussion/teacher prompts/journals)

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

- adapt use of strategies to access challenging text
- make insightful text-to-text and text-to-world connections based on knowledge gained through broader reading experiences



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 by selecting and locating relevant details; locate information using a variety of sources
- identify key story elements (setting, characters, events, problem/resolution, theme/lesson) of a narrative text including most relevant details; explain how events are related to the theme; graphic organizers (e.g., timelines, story maps) may be used
- identify main ideas and supporting details using graphic organizers (e.g., timelines, charts, webs); summarize key points

Inferential/Interpretive Response

Reading
“between the lines”

- make logical inferences about characters (motivations, feelings, or personality), and story events, referring to some relevant textual details; describe relationships between characters and effect on plot or overall theme
- interpret relationships among several 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; provide obvious interpretations of more subtle shades of meaning, and figurative and descriptive language
- interpret text features (e.g., headings, subheadings, captions, font, diagrams, maps, keys/legends, cutaways, graphs) and explain how they help the reader understand the text

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

Reading
“beyond the lines”

- make personal connections: compare/contrast with personal experiences/relevant prior knowledge and make logical text-to-text comparisons; many connections go beyond the obvious and can be supported with a reasonable explanation
- express and support preferences for, and opinions about particular texts, authors, illustrators and genres with specific details/examples
- recognize some aspects of an author’s style/technique (e.g., figurative language, dialect, descriptions); explain how this influences the reader’s experience; 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
- recognize purpose, structure, and features of a variety of text forms (e.g., short story, ballad, report, explanation, persuasive, autobiography, science fiction, fantasy)

Comprehension Responses

Sample Questions/Tasks

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

Strong Achievement

Literal Response

- *Skim this part to find ____ (information/topic) and tell me about it.*
- *Summarize what you have found out so far. What key words did you make note of 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 message do you think the author is trying to give to the reader?*
- *What were the main ideas in this selection? What did you find out about each of the main ideas?*

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

- read large amounts of text distinguishing between important and unimportant details
- organize and present information gathered from a wide variety of texts

Inferential/Interpretive Response

- *Describe ____ (character) at the beginning of the story and at the end of the story. What do you think caused this change?*
- *How did the character’s strengths/weaknesses affect the sequence of events in the story?*
- *How would the story be different if the character had acted differently?*
- *How does the information in this book fit with what you already knew about ____ (the topic)? What is the same? What is different?*
- *What does this word mean? What helped you figure that out?*
- *“The sky’s the limit” was used on page___. What does this expression mean? How else could this have been said?*
- *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?*

- provide thoughtful and well-supported responses using specific and relevant textual examples and personal knowledge/experience

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

- *Which character is most like you? How?*
- *How would you have solved the problem?*
- *What did you already know about this topic? What questions do you still have? Where could you find that information?*
- *Would you recommend this book to someone? Why or why not?*
- *Does the author keep you interested in this story? 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?*
- *Compare these opposing points-of-view. Explain how each author supports their position. Take a stand and explain/defend your point of view.*
- *What are some examples of how the author used persuasive language in this piece?*
- *What are some similarities and differences between one form/genre and another? (e.g. myths and legends)*

- synthesize background knowledge and experiences gained through reading to make insightful text-to-text and text-to-world connections