
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments – Series III

Reading

Achievement Level
Descriptors

June 2013

Minnesota Department of
Education

Contents

Achievement Level Descriptors for Reading MCA-III, MCA-Modified and MTAS.....	2
Guide to Understanding the Reading MCA-III Achievement Level Descriptors.....	7
GRADE 3 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS	9
GRADE 4 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS	13
GRADE 5 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS	17
GRADE 6 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS	21
GRADE 7 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS	25
GRADE 8 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS	29
GRADE 10 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS	33

Achievement Level Descriptors for Reading MCA-III, MCA-Modified and MTAS

Overview

Minnesota issued its revised *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards–English Language Arts* in 2010. For this revision of standards, Minnesota supplemented the Common Core English language arts standards, which were adopted in their entirety. The first operational assessments based on the reading strand of the revised standards were administered in spring 2013.

The 2010 *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards–English Language Arts* represent greater expectations in reading comprehension over what was expected in the 2003 academic standards. These expectations are operationalized in the test specifications and assessments through increased complexity and rigor in the reading passages and test items. A goal of the revised standards and assessments is to ensure that students demonstrate college and career readiness.

Minnesota Reading Assessments

The Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) in this document are written for three reading assessments administered as part of the Minnesota assessment system. The test specifications and ALDs for all the Minnesota reading assessments are anchored on the reading strand of the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards–English Language Arts*. The ALDs for the three tests describe performance expectations that differ significantly according to the population taking the test, what is assessed in the test and how it is assessed.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments–Series III (MCA)

The Reading MCA is administered to students in the general population. All but a small percentage of students in grades 3-8 and 10 take the Reading MCA. The majority of students receiving special education services take this test as their reading assessment for accountability purposes.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments-Modified (MCA-Modified)

The Reading MCA-Modified is an alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards. Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams may select this assessment for students who have disabilities that preclude their demonstrating proficiency on the MCA. The MCA-Modified is based on the same test specifications as the MCA, but test difficulty and length are reduced. The U.S. Department of Education is withdrawing support for this assessment, and its last administration in Minnesota occurs spring 2014.

Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)

The Reading MTAS is an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards. IEP teams may select this assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The Reading MTAS test specifications are based on a reduced number of the grade-level standards assessed by the MCA and MCA-Modified. These selected standards have been reduced in depth, breadth and complexity.

Achievement Standards

Following the first administration of new assessments, the Minnesota Department of Education must convene content area experts and stakeholders to determine, through a standard setting process, the

levels of performance that are reported to students, parents and schools. Standard setting committees set the cut scores that delineate four levels of achievement on Minnesota statewide assessments. The achievement levels for the general, modified and alternate assessments are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Achievement level labels

MCA	MCA-Modified	MTAS
Does Not Meet the Standards	Does Not Meet the Modified Achievement Standards	Does Not Meet the Alternate Achievement Standards
Partially Meets the Standards	Partially Meets the Modified Achievement Standards	Partially Meets the Alternate Achievement Standards
Meets the Standards	Meets the Modified Achievement Standards	Meets the Alternate Achievement Standards
Exceeds the Standards	Exceeds the Modified Achievement Standards	Exceeds the Alternate Achievement Standards

Students who achieve the “Meets” and “Exceeds” levels on the MCA, MCA-Modified or MTAS are considered proficient with regard to the knowledge, skills and processes (KSPs) described in the academic standards.

The Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) for the Minnesota assessments in reading provide a description of grade-level student performance for each of the achievement levels. The reading strand of the Minnesota English language arts academic standards outlines the goals teachers and students work toward over the course of an academic year. The Minnesota assessments measure students’ attainment of these goals, and the ALDs explain grade-level student performance in each level of achievement based upon assessment results. Students who are proficient on the Minnesota assessments are considered to be on a trajectory for postsecondary success, and this high expectation is reflected in the ALDs for performance in the “Meets” and “Exceeds” achievement levels. Students who are proficient readers by this measure are on a path to leave high school well prepared for entry-level coursework without remediation in post-secondary education or training. As may be noted in the ALDs for the Minnesota reading assessments, post-secondary readiness for education, training or engagement in the workforce represents quite different expectations for students taking alternate assessments from those for students taking the assessment administered to the general population.

There is a range of student performance represented within each achievement level described by the ALDs. As they wrote the descriptors for each grade and at each achievement level, the ALD development team members envisioned a student whose performance falls in the middle of the range. To capture the KSPs that differentiate student performance at one level from another, it was also necessary to keep in mind the upper and lower thresholds of the range within an achievement level in order to adequately distinguish the level from adjacent levels.

During the standard setting process, content area experts—the majority of whom were educators—created a second type of ALDs to be used for setting cut scores. Working from the ALDs in this document, standard setters described student performance that “just barely meets” the criteria for inclusion in an achievement level. These “just barely meets,” or threshold, ALDs and the resulting cut scores, represent the minimum performance required to meet a given achievement level’s expectations.

Strand, Substrands, Skill Domains and Standards

As indicated above, the Minnesota reading assessments test the reading strand of the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards–English Language Arts*. The reading strand is composed of two substrands: Literature and Informational Text. The literature and/or informational text substrands are referenced in each of 10 standards. Seven of the 10 standards are assessed on the MCA and MCA-Modified. Four of the 10 standards are assessed on the MTAS. The three reading standards that are excluded from Minnesota statewide assessments do not lend themselves to standardized, large-scale testing formats and are to be evaluated by teachers in the classroom.

The 10 standards in the Reading strand are grouped by skill domains. Table 2 shows how the substrands, skill domains and standards are represented in the ALDs.

Table 2. Skill domains, standards and substrands included in reading assessments

Skill domains and standards*	Substrands assessed	Assessments
<i>Key Ideas and Details</i>		
Standard 1	Literature and Informational Text	MCA, MCA-Modified, MTAS
Standard 2	Literature and Informational Text	MCA, MCA-Modified, MTAS
Standard 3	Literature and Informational Text	MCA, MCA-Modified, MTAS
<i>Craft and Structure</i>		
Standard 4	Literature and Informational Text	MCA, MCA-Modified, MTAS
Standard 5	Literature and Informational Text	MCA, MCA-Modified
Standard 6	Literature and Informational Text	MCA, MCA-Modified
<i>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</i>		
Standard 7	—	—
Standard 8	Informational Text only	MCA, MCA-Modified
Standard 9	—	—
<i>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</i>		
Standard 10	—	—

*Standards 7, 9 and 10 involve extended tasks or projects that are assessed by the teacher over time. They are not included in the Minnesota reading assessments and are not addressed in the ALDs.

Development of the Achievement Level Descriptors

The ALD development team included Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) staff as well as Minnesota educators. After this team wrote draft ALDs, the drafts for one grade were submitted for review to HumRRO, an independent organization. HumRRO has done extensive work in the evaluation of achievement and performance level descriptors, as well as the alignment of test items to content standards. The draft ALDs and HumRRO’s evaluation were then prepared for presentation to Minnesota’s Technical Advisory Committee for review. A second draft of the ALDs was then prepared incorporating recommendations as appropriate. This second draft was used during the standard setting process. The standard setting committee recommended no substantive changes to the ALDs, and the ALDs were thus considered final when the Commissioner of Education approved the cut score recommendations of the standard setting committee.

MDE staff on the ALD development team included two Reading MCA assessment specialists, a Reading Alternate Assessment specialist, and a Reading Academic Standards specialist. The MDE assessment

director and the supervisor of alternate assessments helped facilitate the meetings. MDE staff was joined by a high school English Language Arts teacher and a literacy coordinator for the elementary grades.

Before beginning its work, the ALD development team reviewed the draft ALDs issued by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. The team appreciated the work Smarter Balanced has done to distinguish threshold performance at each next higher level in addition to providing descriptions of the range of performance. The ALD development team also noted with interest the Consortium's policy descriptors for college and career readiness at each of its four achievement levels.

Because these ALDs are essential to the standard setting process for the reading assessments, the ALD team relied primarily on the academic standards for Reading and the MCA, MCA-Modified and MTAS test specifications to create the descriptions. Several questions were critical to the process:

- How does text range in complexity within a grade level and across grade levels?
- To what degree do students master each of the standards at each of the achievement levels?
- For which KSPs is it possible to describe gradations of performance across four levels and for which KSPs is it not feasible?
- How, according to the test specifications, are students able to show their mastery of KSPs?

By keeping these questions in mind, the ALD developers are certain they created descriptors that can be supported by evidence in the test design and in student performance on both statewide and classroom assessments. Understanding how test items can tease out partial comprehension of reading passages and understanding of textual analysis is vital to the process of creating ALDs. Variables that can be managed in test items include the degree of specificity or abstraction to which students must drill down, the amount of scaffolding provided directly or through carefully chosen wording, and the alignment to measures of cognitive complexity. It is also necessary to understand how the level of granularity of KSPs determines the extent to which they can be described across a continuum of performance levels. It is possible to distinguish four levels of performance in many KSPs, but in others it is not. For example, for some KSPs, we expect students to demonstrate mastery at the "Meets" level and the KSP will not be carried through to the "Exceeds" descriptor. In another instance, a KSP may not lend itself to fine distinctions in levels of performance. In this case, the KSP may appear only at the "Meets" level, and students are either able to do it or not.

A key assumption in the development of these Reading ALDs is that text increases in complexity and sophistication with each successive grade. Although there are identical or nearly identical descriptors across some grades, it must be understood that the texts students are using to demonstrate these skills are increasingly difficult.

The ALD development team drafted the MCA ALDs over the course of six working sessions. During these sessions, the team referred frequently to the academic standards and the test specifications, as noted above. The team also relied on the language of Webb's Depth of Knowledge scale to describe cognitive complexity and on the Lexile metric to anchor discussions of textual complexity and sophistication. Multiple points of view were represented in the working sessions, and discussions were lively. The ALD team began work on each grade level by first describing the "Meets the Standards"

performance of students working with literature and informational text. The “Meets” level separates proficient performance from performance that is partially proficient or not proficient. Because the reading assessments are targeted to make the distinction between proficient and less than proficient, there is more evidence of student performance to draw upon at this achievement level. It is also important to develop an accurate description of the “Meets” level since it is critical for purposes of accountability. After describing “Meets the Standards,” the ALD team turned its attention to “Exceeds the Standards,” and then worked its way down the scale to “Partially Meets” and “Does Not Meet.”

The draft ALDs that resulted from these sessions were subsequently reviewed and revised by MDE’s reading assessment specialists to ensure that the team’s intentions and commentary were accurately reflected in the descriptors. They also reviewed the articulation of the descriptors across achievement levels within a grade as well as the articulation of each of the four achievement levels across grades. In other words, did descriptions of what students know and can do increase appropriately from “Does Not Meet the Standards” to “Exceeds the Standards” within a grade? And did descriptions of what students know and can do at a level such as “Meets the Standards” increase appropriately across the grades?

After the draft of the MCA ALDs was complete, the alternate assessment staff at MDE used the ALDs as the starting point for the MCA-Modified and MTAS ALDs. The MCA-Modified is aligned to the same academic standards as the MCA; the regulations for the MCA-Modified require that grade-level standards be assessed but allow states to increase accessibility for students with disabilities and to set modified achievement standards. Accessibility is addressed in the MCA-Modified by reducing the complexity and number of passages students must read and by presenting fewer test questions overall. In addition, items are embedded in the passage, items have three answer options rather than four and language simplification guidelines are carefully applied. The modified achievement standard for this population of students with disabilities allows students to be proficient while demonstrating a reduced number of KSPs with lower levels of cognitive complexity.

The MTAS ALDs are based on Standards 1 through 4, which have been greatly reduced in depth, breadth and complexity. MDE refers to these standards as “extended standards” because the low end of the range of performance expected on these standards has been extended downward to include very basic skills of low cognitive complexity. MDE’s alternate assessment staff wrote the MTAS ALDs last and relied heavily on the MTAS test specifications where the extended standards are described (Minnesota does not publish alternate academic standards).

Finalizing the ALDs

The ALDs were presented to the standard setting committees in June 2013 as a policy document. It is the state’s intention that students who achieve a given proficiency level can demonstrate the knowledge, skills and processes described in these ALDs, and the purpose of standard setting was not to review or revise this document but to apply it in the determination of cut scores. The standard setting committees were required to create threshold or “just barely meets” descriptors from these ALDs and to apply them to the performance they saw demonstrated in the standard setting materials. The standard setting committees reported no issues with the performance descriptions at each level of the ALDs. The ALDs were then finalized when the Commissioner of Education approved the cut scores recommended by the standard setting committees.

Guide to Understanding the Reading MCA-III Achievement Level Descriptors

The **Achievement Level Descriptors** (ALDs) listed in each of the four achievement levels below describe the knowledge and skills assessed on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment in Reading, Series III (MCA-III).

Helpful Terms for Understanding the Structure of the Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) and What They Represent

ALD: One of four specific levels of performance associated with a particular reading skill. An ALD can be classified in one of four achievement levels: Does Not Meet the Standards, Partially Meets the Standards, Meets the Standards, Exceeds the Standards. See the description listed under each achievement level heading.

Strand: This is the content area under assessment. The title of the strand for the Reading MCA-III is **Reading**.

Sub-strand: The Reading standards are organized under two subcategories called sub-strands. The two sub-strands assessed on the Reading MCA-III are Literature and Informational Text. The description below of the types of texts commonly found within these two sub-strands is taken from the *Reading Test Specifications for MCA-III, Grades 3-8 and 10 and MCA-Modified, Grades 5-8*, pages 3-4 and 15. This document is available on the Minnesota Department of Education website. [View the MCA-III Grades 3–8, 10 and MCA-Modified Grades 5–8, 10 DRAFT Test Specifications: Reading \(2010 standards\)](#).

1. Literature: Passages with items aligned to the Literature substrand may include, but are not limited to, the following text types: stories, dramas, and poetry.
2. Informational Text: Passages with items aligned to the Informational Text substrand may include, but are not limited to, the following text types: literary nonfiction and historical, scientific, and technical texts.

Standard: Standards provide the general description of knowledge and skills in reading that all students must satisfy to meet state requirements. Seven of the 10 reading standards are assessed on the Reading MCA-III.

Skill Domain: This is a general categorization of standards related to reading as presented in the *Minnesota Academic Standards, English Language Arts K-12, 2010*. [View the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts \(2010\) on the Minnesota Department of Education website](#).

Three of four skill domains are assessed on the Reading MCA-III. These three domains are listed below:

1. Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3: e.g., text evidence, making inferences, main idea, theme, text features, and characteristics of individuals, events, ideas)
2. Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6: e.g., vocabulary, figurative language, format of texts, author's purpose, author's methods and style)
3. Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text substrand only: e.g., author's credibility and methods of presenting evidence)

ALDs listed in each of the four achievement levels can apply to one or more of the standards in each skill domain.

Note regarding the pattern of listing the ALDs: An ALD is not listed at a higher achievement level within a grade if the features of the skills presented in the ALD do not change from one achievement level to the next higher achievement level. In addition, repetition of ALDs at the same achievement level may occur across grades. Repetition of ALDs is the result of more rigorous text complexity within and across grades and does not suggest laxity in performance expectations.

GRADE 3 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Does Not Meet the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills inconsistently and with minimal accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

- Recall details from text
- Make simple predictions based on explicit text
- Identify obvious fact and opinion in explicit text
- Make general comparisons based on explicit text
- Locate explicit main idea and central message
- Identify basic sequence of events

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

- Recognize simple figures of speech
- Locate obvious context clues to understand word meanings
- Identify keywords and phrases
- Recognize the features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., listing) and their impact on meaning
- State author's obvious purpose in explicit text

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

- Identify obvious evidence in text (e.g., logical connections between sentences and paragraphs)

Partially Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with limited consistency and accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

- Use explicit text evidence to make logical conclusions
- Identify key details related to text
- Make predictions based on text
- Sequence basic plot events, real events, and steps in a process
- Locate cause and effect
- Identify fact and opinion
- Use evidence from text to make meaning
- Make simple comparisons based on implicit text
- State main idea and topic from a section of explicit text or from explicit text as a whole
- Identify obvious literary elements (e.g., plot, characterization, setting, theme)
- Identify literary terms (e.g., tale, moral)

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

- Identify basic literary devices (e.g., obvious puns, simple rhyme schemes)
- Identify basic connotations
- Use context clues to understand word meanings
- Define technical terminology in content area texts
- Recognize standard transitional words (e.g., but, yet, still)
- Use word structures to construct meaning (affixes and roots)

Identify features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., general description) and their impact on meaning

State author's basic purpose within text

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Make judgments about author's credibility based on explicit text:

- locate obvious argumentation within text
- identify credible evidence (e.g., logical explanation)
- recognize how the author presents fact/opinion

Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills consistently and accurately.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Use implicit text evidence to quote accurately and make logical conclusions

Identify relevant details that support conclusions from text

Make generalizations and predictions

Sequence plot events, real events, and steps in a process

Use text evidence to understand cause/effect relationships

Make inferences based on implicit text

Distinguish fact from opinion in explicit text

Use evidence from text to justify interpretations of meaning

Compare and contrast based on implicit text

Summarize from a section of text or text as a whole:

- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Distinguish among literary elements (e.g., plot, characterization, setting, theme)

Differentiate methods of characterization (e.g., dialogue, appearance, behavior)

Define meaning of literary terms (e.g., tale, moral)

Compare and contrast presentation of literary elements

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Identify literary devices (e.g., puns, end rhyme)

Identify figures of speech

Connect connotations to meaning

Use reasoning and evidence to understand word meanings

Categorize technical terminology in content area texts

Identify transitional words and phrases (e.g., for example, first, second, third)

Use etymology (word history) and morphology (word structure) to construct meaning of a word or phrase

Analyze the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., chronology) and their impact on meaning

Recognize how parts of text relate to the whole

Identify author's use of perspective (personal point of view) and tone (attitude toward what she or he has written)

Interpret authors' purposes within and across text(s)
Identify mood (emotional atmosphere of text)
Identify style (author's techniques and approach to meaning—e.g., word choice, sentence structure, use of literary devices, voice)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Analyze author's credibility based on sources used
Identify methods of argumentation (e.g., analogy, details and examples)
Recognize validity of reasoning
Recognize relevance and sufficiency of evidence
Recognize obvious fallacies of logic (e.g., stereotyping)
Recognize how credible information is presented in text (e.g., interviews with experts, current research)
Recognize author's obvious bias

Exceeds the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with a high degree of consistency and efficiency.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Draw logical conclusions from text
Identify specific details to support conclusions from text
Use generalizations to make predictions
Use text evidence to analyze cause/effect relationships
Make complex inferences based on implicit text
Distinguish fact from opinion in a variety of implicit texts
Compare and contrast text features in depth based on implicit text
Summarize from a section of text, text as a whole, and across texts:

- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Analyze literary elements (e.g., plot, characterization, setting, theme)

Analyze methods of characterization

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Analyze literary devices (e.g., effectiveness of puns, intricacy of rhyme scheme)
Recognize how connotations impact meaning
Analyze purpose of technical terminology in content area texts
Analyze use of transitional devices (e.g., obviously, unquestionably, certainly)
Evaluate the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., definition) and their impact on meaning
Analyze how parts of text relate to the whole
Analyze how author's message is shaped by perspective and tone
Recognize how author's choices impact style (e.g., impact on tone, imagery, etc.)
Analyze authors' purpose(s) within and across text(s)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Make judgments about author's credibility based on complex text:

- apply basic concepts of argumentation (background, discussion, and proof of claim)
- analyze validity of reasoning
- identify basic fallacies of logic (e.g., hasty generalization)
- analyze relevancy and sufficiency of evidence
- analyze author's bias

GRADE 4 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Does Not Meet the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills inconsistently and with minimal accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

- Recall details from text
- Make simple predictions based on explicit text
- Identify a cause or an effect
- Identify obvious fact and opinion in explicit text
- Make general comparisons based on explicit text
- Locate explicit main idea and central message
- Identify basic sequence of events

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

- Recognize simple figures of speech
- Locate obvious context clues to understand word meanings
- Identify key words and phrases
- Recognize the features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., listing) and their impact on meaning
- State author's obvious purpose in explicit text

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

- Identify obvious evidence in text (e.g., logical connections between sentences and paragraphs)

Partially Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with limited consistency and accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

- Use explicit text evidence to make logical conclusions
- Identify key details related to text
- Make predictions based on text
- Sequence basic plot events, real events and steps in a process
- Locate cause or effect
- Identify fact and opinion
- Use evidence from text to make meaning
- Make simple comparisons based on implicit text
- State main idea and topic from a section of explicit text or from explicit text as a whole
- Identify obvious literary elements (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)
- Identify literary terms (e.g., hero, villain)

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

- Identify obvious literary devices (e.g., simile)
- Identify basic connotations
- Use context clues to understand word meanings
- Define technical terminology in content area texts
- Recognize standard transitional words (e.g., besides, finally, however)
- Use word structures to construct meaning (affixes and roots)

Identify features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., general description) and their impact on meaning

State author's basic purpose within text

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Make judgments about author's credibility based on explicit text:

- locate obvious argumentation within text
- identify credible evidence (e.g., logical explanation)
- recognize how the author presents fact/opinion

Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills consistently and accurately.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Use implicit text evidence to quote accurately and make logical conclusions

Identify relevant details that support conclusions from text

Use generalizations and make predictions

Sequence plot events, real events, and steps in a process

Use text evidence to understand cause/effect relationships

Make inferences based on implicit text

Distinguish fact from opinion in explicit text

Use evidence from text to justify interpretations of meaning

Compare and contrast based on implicit text

Summarize from a section of text or text as a whole:

- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Distinguish among literary elements (e.g., plot, characterization, setting, theme)

Differentiate methods of characterization (e.g., dialogue, appearance, behavior)

Define basic meaning of literary terms (e.g., hero, villain)

Compare and contrast presentation of literary elements

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Define the meaning of literary devices (e.g., end rhyme)

Identify figures of speech

Connect connotations to meaning

Use reasoning and evidence to understand word meanings

Categorize technical terminology in content area texts

Identify transitional words and phrases (e.g., meanwhile, after all, on the other hand)

Use etymology (word history) and morphology (word structure) to construct meaning of a word or phrase

Analyze the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., chronology) and their impact on meaning

Identify author's use of perspective (personal point of view) and tone (attitude toward what she or he has written)

Interpret authors' purposes within and across text(s)

Identify mood (emotional atmosphere of text)

Identify style (author's techniques and approach to meaning—e.g., word choice, sentence structure, use of literary devices, voice)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Analyze author's credibility based on sources used

Identify methods of argumentation (e.g., analogy, details and examples)

Recognize relevance and sufficiency of evidence

Recognize validity of reasoning

Recognize obvious fallacies of logic (e.g. stereotyping)

Recognize how credible information is presented in text (e.g., interviews with experts, current research)

Recognize author's obvious bias

Exceeds the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with a high degree of consistency and efficiency.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Draw logical conclusions from abstract text

Identify specific details to support conclusions from text

Use generalizations and make complex predictions

Use text evidence to analyze and synthesize cause/effect relationships

Make complex inferences based on implicit text

Distinguish fact from opinion in a variety of implicit texts

Compare and contrast text features in depth based on implicit text

Summarize from a section of text, text as a whole, and across texts:

- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Analyze literary elements (e.g., plot, characterization, setting, theme)

Analyze methods of characterization

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Analyze literary devices (e.g., foreshadowing)

Analyze the use of figures of speech

Recognize how connotations impact meaning

Analyze purpose of technical terminology in content area texts

Analyze use of transitional devices (e.g., evidently, undeniably, clearly)

Evaluate the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., definition) and their impact on meaning

Analyze how author's message is shaped by perspective and tone

Analyze authors' purpose(s) within and across text(s)

Recognize how author's choices impact style (e.g., impact on tone, imagery, etc.)

Identify interaction between mood and style

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Make judgments about author's credibility based on complex text:

- apply basic concepts of argumentation (background, discussion, and proof of claim)
- analyze validity of reasoning
- identify basic fallacies of logic (e.g., hasty generalization)
- analyze relevancy and sufficiency of evidence
- analyze author's bias

GRADE 5 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Does Not Meet the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills inconsistently and with minimal accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

- Recall details from text
- Make simple predictions based on explicit text
- Identify a cause or an effect
- Identify obvious fact and opinion in explicit text
- Make general comparisons based on explicit text
- Locate explicit main idea, central message, and theme
- Identify basic sequence of events

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

- Recognize simple figures of speech
- Locate obvious context clues to understand word meanings
- Identify key words and phrases
- Recognize the features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., listing) and their impact on meaning
- State author's obvious purpose in explicit text

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

- Identify obvious evidence in text (e.g., logical connections between sentences and paragraphs)

Partially Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with limited consistency and accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

- Use explicit text evidence to make logical conclusions
- Identify key details related to text
- Make predictions based on text
- Sequence basic plot events, real events, and steps in a process
- Locate cause or effect
- Identify fact and opinion
- Use evidence from text to make meaning
- Make simple comparisons among text features based on implicit text
- State main idea and topic from a section of explicit text or from explicit text as a whole
- Identify literary elements (e.g., plot, characterization, setting, theme)
- Identify obvious characterization
- Identify literary terms (e.g., protagonist, antagonist)

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

- Identify literary devices (e.g., hyperbole)
- Identify basic connotations
- Use context clues to understand word meanings
- Define technical terminology in content area texts
- Recognize standard transitional words (e.g., similarly, furthermore, besides)
- Use word structures to construct meaning (affixes and roots)

Identify features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., general description) and their impact on meaning

State author's basic purpose within text

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Make judgments about author's credibility based on explicit text:

- locate obvious argumentation within text
- identify credible evidence (e.g., logical explanation)
- recognize how the author presents fact/opinion

Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills consistently and accurately.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Use implicit text evidence to quote accurately and make logical conclusions

Identify relevant details that support conclusions from text

Use generalizations and make predictions

Sequence plot events, real events, and/or steps in a process

Use text evidence to understand cause/effect relationships

Make inferences based on implicit text

Distinguish fact from opinion in explicit text

Use evidence from text to justify interpretations of meaning

Compare and contrast text features based on implicit text

Summarize from a section of text or text as a whole:

- important text evidence (explicit or implicit)
- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Distinguish among literary elements (e.g., plot, characterization, setting, theme)

Differentiate methods of characterization (e.g., dialogue, appearance, behavior)

Define meaning of literary terms (e.g., protagonist, antagonist)

Compare and contrast presentation of literary elements

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Define the meaning of literary devices (e.g., hyperbole)

Identify figures of speech

Connect connotations to meaning

Use reasoning and evidence to understand word meanings

Categorize technical terminology in content area texts

Identify transitional words and phrases (e.g., concurrently, at the same time, in the meantime)

Use etymology (word history) and morphology (word structure) to construct meaning of a word or phrase

Analyze the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., chronology) and their impact on meaning

Identify author's use of perspective (personal point of view) and tone (attitude toward what she or he has written)

Interpret authors' purposes within and across text(s)
Identify mood (emotional atmosphere of text)
Identify style (author's techniques and approach to meaning—e.g., word choice, sentence structure, use of literary devices, voice)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Analyze author's credibility based on sources used
Identify methods of argumentation (e.g., analogy, details and examples)
Recognize relevancy and sufficiency of evidence
Recognize validity of reasoning
Recognize obvious fallacies of logic (e.g., stereotyping)
Recognize how credible information is presented in text (e.g., interviews with experts, current research)
Recognize author's obvious bias

Exceeds the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with a high degree of consistency and efficiency.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Draw logical conclusions from abstract text
Analyze relevant details to support conclusions from text
Generalize and make sophisticated predictions
Use text evidence to analyze and synthesize cause/effect relationships
Make complex inferences based on implicit text
Distinguish fact from opinion in a variety of implicit texts
Compare and contrast individuals and ideas based on implicit text
Summarize and/or paraphrase from a section of text, text as a whole, and across texts:

- important text evidence (explicit or implicit)
- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Analyze literary elements (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Analyze methods of characterization

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Analyze literary devices (e.g., effectiveness of hyperbole)

Analyze the use of figures of speech

Recognize how connotations impact meaning

Analyze purpose of technical terminology in content area texts

Analyze use of transitional devices (e.g., without a doubt, for the same reason, without reservation)

Evaluate the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., definition) and their impact on meaning

Analyze how author's message is shaped by perspective and tone

Analyze authors' purpose(s) within and across text(s)

Recognize how author's choices impact style (e.g., impact on tone, imagery, etc.)

Identify interaction between mood and style

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Make judgments about author's credibility based on complex text:

- apply basic concepts of argumentation (background, discussion, and proof of claim)
- analyze validity of reasoning
- identify basic fallacies of logic (e.g., hasty generalization)
- analyze relevancy and sufficiency of evidence
- analyze author's bias

GRADE 6 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Does Not Meet the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills inconsistently and with minimal accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

- Recall key details from text
- Make predictions based on explicit text
- Identify cause and effect
- Identify fact and opinion in explicit text
- Make comparisons among text features based on explicit text
- Identify general plotlines
- Locate explicit main idea, central message, and theme
- Identify setting in explicit text
- Predict character's actions based on explicit text

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

- Recognize simple figures of speech
- Use basic context clues to understand word meanings
- Locate key words and phrases
- Recognize the features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., chronology) and their impact on meaning
- State authors' basic purposes within and across text(s)
- Define basic technical terminology in content area texts

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

- Identify obvious evidence in explicit text (e.g., logical connections between sentences and paragraphs)
- Recognize how the author presents fact/opinion

Partially Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with limited consistency and accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Use explicit text evidence to:

- quote accurately and make logical conclusions
- make generalizations and predictions
- identify simple cause/effect relationships
- identify fact and opinion

Sequence basic plot events, real events, and steps in a process in chronological order

Describe how explicit supporting details are connected to conclusions from text and identify those details

Compare and contrast individuals and ideas based on explicit text

Summarize from a section of text or text as a whole:

- explicit text evidence
- main idea
- central message

- plot
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Distinguish among literary elements (e.g., plot, characterization, setting, theme)

Identify literary terms (e.g., exposition, resolution, denouement)

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Identify literary devices (e.g., stock character, dialect)

Identify basic connotations

Use context clues to understand word meanings

Define technical terminology and distinguish from nontechnical terminology across content area texts

Recognize standard transitional words (e.g., finally, previously, next)

Use word structures and multiple-meaning words to construct meaning (affixes and roots)

Identify figures of speech and their connotations

Identify features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., definition) and their impact on meaning

Identify author's use of perspective (personal point of view) and tone (attitude toward what she or he has written)

State authors' purpose within and across text(s)

Identify mood (emotional atmosphere of text)

Identify style (author's techniques and approach to meaning—e.g., word choice, sentence structure, use of literary devices, voice)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Make judgments about author's credibility based on explicit text:

- locate and understand argumentation within text
- identify credible evidence
- recognize how credible information is presented in text (e.g., interviews with experts, current research)
- identify methods of argumentation (e.g., analogy, details and examples)
- recognize author's bias

Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills consistently and accurately.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Use implicit text evidence to:

- quote accurately and make logical conclusions
- analyze symbolism
- make generalizations and predictions
- recall cause/effect relationships
- make inferences

Sequence plot events, real events, and/or steps in a process in chronological order

Identify relevant/key details that support conclusions from text

Compare and contrast individuals and ideas based on implicit text

Summarize and/or paraphrase from a section of text, text as a whole, and across texts:

- important text evidence (explicit or implicit)
- main idea
- central message

- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Recognize subtle presentation of literary elements (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Differentiate methods of characterization (e.g., dialogue, appearance, behavior)

Define meaning of literary terms (e.g., exposition, denouement)

Compare and contrast presentation of literary elements

Determine theme or central idea of text

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Define the meaning of literary devices (e.g., irony, understatement)

Connect connotations to meaning

Use reasoning and evidence to justify interpretations of word meanings

Recognize that word relationships, context, and structure lead to intended or precise word meanings

Categorize technical terminology across content area texts

Identify transitional words and phrases (e.g., in this case, in addition, for the same reason)

Use etymology (word history) and morphology (word structure) and multiple meanings of a word or phrase to construct meaning

Analyze the use of figures of speech

Analyze the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., cause and effect) and their impact on meaning

Analyze how author's message is shaped by perspective and tone

Interpret authors' purposes within and across text(s)

Identify interaction between mood and style

Recognize how author's choices impact style (e.g., impact on tone, imagery, etc.)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Analyze authors' credibility based on sources used

Analyze methods of argumentation (e.g., painting a picture, anecdotes)

Recognize relevancy and sufficiency of evidence

Recognize validity of reasoning

Identify basic fallacies of logic (e.g., false principle, either/or, emotional appeal)

Analyze how credible information is presented within and across text(s) (e.g., statistics, testimony)

Analyze author's bias

Exceeds the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with a high degree of consistency and efficiency.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Interpret subtle implicit text evidence to:

- quote accurately and make logical conclusions
- analyze symbolism
- make generalizations and predictions
- understand cause/effect relationships
- make inferences

Analyze relevant details that support conclusions from the text

Distinguish fact from opinion in a variety of implicit texts

Use evidence from text to synthesize interpretations

Compare and contrast individuals and ideas in depth based on implicit text

Synthesize to arrive at meaning from a section of text, text as a whole, and across texts:

- important text evidence (explicit or implicit)
- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Interpret and evaluate interrelationships among literary elements (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Evaluate methods of characterization and their impact on other literary elements

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Evaluate use of literary devices (e.g., omniscient narration, flashback)

Describe how word relationships, context, and structure lead to intended or precise word meanings

Compare and contrast figures of speech and their application and efficacy

Distinguish nuanced connotations

Analyze how connotations impact meaning

Evaluate application of technical terminology across content area texts: analyze adequacy and purpose

Analyze use of transitional devices (e.g., in spite of, on the contrary, in contrast)

Evaluate the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., comparison and contrast) and their impact on meaning

Evaluate authors' purpose(s) within and across text(s)

Analyze mood and style and their interaction and impact

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Evaluate author's credibility based on complex text(s):

- apply concepts of argumentation (background, discussion, and proof of claim)
- analyze validity of reasoning
- analyze fallacies of logic (e.g., begging the claim, ad hominem)
- analyze relevancy and sufficiency of evidence
- evaluate subtle bias

GRADE 7 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Does Not Meet the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills inconsistently and with minimal accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

- Recall key details from text
- Make predictions based on explicit text
- Identify cause and effect
- Identify fact and opinion in explicit text
- Make comparisons among text features based on explicit text
- Identify general plotlines
- Locate explicit main idea, central message, and theme
- Identify setting in explicit text
- Predict character's actions based on explicit text

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

- Recognize simple figures of speech
- Use basic context clues to understand word meanings
- Locate key words and phrases
- Recognize the features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., chronology) and their impact on meaning
- State authors' basic purposes within and across text(s)
- Define basic technical terminology in content area texts

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

- Identify obvious evidence in explicit text (e.g., logical connections between sentences and paragraphs)
- Identify how the author presents fact/opinion

Partially Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with limited consistency and accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Use explicit text evidence to:

- quote accurately and make logical conclusions
- make generalizations and predictions
- identify simple cause/effect relationships
- identify fact and opinion

Sequence plot events, real events, and steps in a process in chronological order

Describe how key details are related to conclusions from the text and identify those details

Compare and contrast individuals and ideas based on explicit text

Summarize and/or paraphrase from a section of text or text as a whole:

- explicit text evidence
- main idea
- central message
- plot

- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Distinguish among literary elements (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, theme)

Identify literary terms (e.g., comedy, tragedy)

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Identify literary devices (e.g., alliteration, onomatopoeia)

Identify connotations

Use context clues to understand word meanings

Define technical terminology and distinguish from nontechnical terminology across content area texts

Recognize standard transitional words (e.g., since, for instance, conversely)

Use word structures and multiple-meaning words to construct meaning (affixes and roots)

Identify figures of speech and their connotations

Identify the features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., definition) and their impact on meaning

Identify author's use of perspective (personal point of view) and tone (attitude toward what she or he has written)

State authors' purpose within and across text(s)

Identify mood (emotional atmosphere of text)

Identify style (author's techniques and approach to meaning—e.g., word choice, sentence structure, use of literary devices, voice)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Make judgments about author's credibility based on explicit text:

- locate and understand argumentation within text
- identify credible evidence
- recognize how credible information is presented in text (e.g., interviews with experts, current research)
- identify methods of argumentation (e.g., analogy, details and examples)
- recognize author's bias

Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills consistently and accurately.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Use implicit text evidence to:

- quote accurately and make logical conclusions
- analyze symbolism
- make generalizations and predictions
- recall cause/effect relationships
- make inferences

Sequence intricate plot events, real events, and/or steps in a process in chronological order

Use relevant/key details from the text to support conclusions

Distinguish fact from opinion in a variety of implicit texts

Use evidence from text to justify interpretations of meaning

Compare and contrast individuals and ideas based on implicit text

Summarize and/or paraphrase from a section of text or text as a whole:

- important text evidence (explicit or implicit)
- main idea

- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Analyze subtle use of, and connections among, literary elements (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Differentiate methods of characterization (e.g., dialogue, appearance, behavior)

Define meaning of literary terms (e.g., comedy, tragedy)

Compare and contrast presentation of literary elements

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Define the meaning of literary devices (e.g., paradox, oxymoron)

Connect connotations to meaning

Use reasoning and evidence to justify interpretations of word meanings

Recognize that word relationships, context, and structure lead to intended or precise word meanings

Categorize technical terminology across content area texts

Identify transitional words and phrases (e.g., subsequently, surprisingly, as a result)

Use etymology (word history) and morphology (word structure) and multiple meanings of a word or phrase to construct meaning

Analyze the use of figures of speech

Identify connotative meanings of words and phrases

Analyze the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., cause and effect) and their impact on meaning

Analyze how author's message is shaped by perspective and tone

Interpret authors' purposes within and across text(s)

Identify interaction between mood and style

Recognize how author's choices impact style (e.g., impact on tone, imagery, etc.)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Analyze authors' credibility based on sources used

Analyze methods of argumentation (e.g., painting a picture, anecdotes)

Recognize relevancy and sufficiency of evidence

Recognize validity of reasoning

Identify basic fallacies of logic (e.g., false principle, either/or, emotional appeal)

Analyze how credible information is presented within and across text(s) (e.g., statistics, testimony)

Analyze author's bias

Exceeds the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with a high degree of consistency and efficiency.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Interpret subtle implicit text evidence to:

- quote accurately from the text and make logical conclusions
- analyze symbolism
- make generalizations and predictions
- understand complex cause/effect relationships
- make inferences

Analyze relevant details from text to support conclusions

Use evidence from text to synthesize interpretations

Compare and contrast individuals and ideas in depth based on implicit text

Synthesize to arrive at meaning from a section of text, text as a whole, and across texts:

- important text evidence (explicit or implicit)
- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Interpret and evaluate interrelationships among literary elements (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Evaluate methods of characterization and their impact on other literary elements

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Evaluate use of literary devices (e.g., parallelism, juxtaposition)

Describe how word relationships, context, and structure lead to implied, intended or precise word meanings

Compare and contrast figures of speech and their application and efficacy

Distinguish nuanced connotations

Analyze how connotations impact meaning

Evaluate application of technical terminology across content area texts: analyze adequacy and purpose

Analyze use of transitional devices (e.g., on this occasion, in this situation, with this in mind)

Evaluate the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., comparison and contrast) and their impact on meaning

Evaluate authors' purpose(s) within and across text(s)

Analyze mood and style and their interaction and impact

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Evaluate author's credibility based on complex text(s):

- apply concepts of argumentation (background, discussion, and proof of claim)
- analyze validity of reasoning
- analyze fallacies of logic (e.g., begging the claim, ad hominem)
- analyze relevancy and sufficiency of evidence
- evaluate methods of argumentation
- evaluate subtle bias

GRADE 8 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Does Not Meet the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills inconsistently and with minimal accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

- Recall key details from text
- Make predictions based on explicit text
- Identify cause and effect
- Identify fact and opinion in explicit text
- Make comparisons among text features based on explicit text
- Identify elements of plot
- Locate explicit main idea, central message, and theme
- Identify setting in explicit text
- Predict character's actions based on explicit text

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

- Recognize simple figures of speech
- Use basic context clues to understand word meanings
- Locate key words and phrases
- Recognize the features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., chronology) and their impact on meaning
- State authors' basic purposes within and across text(s)
- Define basic technical terminology in content area texts

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

- Identify obvious evidence in explicit text (e.g., logical connections between sentences and paragraphs)
- Identify how the author presents fact/opinion

Partially Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with limited consistency and accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Use explicit text evidence to:

- quote accurately and make logical conclusions
- make generalizations and predictions
- identify simple cause/effect relationships
- identify fact and opinion

Sequence plot events, real events, and steps in a process in chronological order

Describe how key details are related to conclusions from text and identify those details

Compare and contrast individuals and ideas based on explicit text

Summarize and/or paraphrase from a section of text or text as a whole:

- explicit text evidence
- main idea
- central message
- plot

- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Distinguish among literary elements (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Identify literary terms (e.g., ballad, ode, epic)

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Identify literary devices (e.g., allusion, soliloquy)

Identify connotations

Use context clues to understand word meanings

Define technical terminology and distinguish from nontechnical terminology across content area texts

Recognize standard transitional words (e.g., overall, lastly, moreover)

Use word structures and multiple-meaning words to construct meaning (affixes and roots)

Identify figures of speech and their connotations

Identify the features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., definition) and their impact on meaning

Identify author's use of perspective (personal point of view) and tone (attitude toward what she or he has written)

State authors' purpose within and across text(s)

Identify mood (emotional atmosphere of text)

Identify style (author's techniques and approach to meaning—e.g., word choice, sentence structure, use of literary devices, voice)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Make judgments about author's credibility based on explicit text:

- locate and understand argumentation within text
- identify credible evidence
- recognize how credible information is presented in text (e.g., interviews with experts, current research)
- identify methods of argumentation (e.g., analogy, details and examples)
- recognize author's bias

Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills consistently and accurately.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Use implicit text evidence to:

- quote accurately and make logical conclusions
- analyze symbolism
- make generalizations and predictions
- recall cause/effect relationships
- make inferences

Sequence intricate plot events, real events, and steps in a process in chronological order

Use relevant/key details to support conclusions

Distinguish fact from opinion in a variety of implicit texts

Use evidence from the text to justify interpretations of meaning

Compare and contrast individuals and ideas based on implicit text

Summarize and/or paraphrase from a section of text or text as a whole:

- important text evidence (explicit or implicit)
- main idea

- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Analyze subtle use of, and connections among, literary elements within text or multiple interpretations of text (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Differentiate methods of characterization (e.g., dialogue, appearance, behavior)

Define meaning of literary terms (ballad, ode, epic)

Compare and contrast presentation of literary elements

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Define the meaning of literary devices (e.g., assonance vs. consonance)

Connect connotations to meaning

Use reasoning and evidence to justify interpretations of word meanings

Recognize that word relationships, context, and structure lead to intended or precise word meanings

Categorize technical terminology across content area texts

Identify transitional words and phrases (e.g., formerly, despite, in any case)

Use etymology (word history) and morphology (word structure) and multiple meanings of a word or phrase to construct meaning

Analyze the use of figures of speech

Identify connotative meanings of words and phrases

Analyze the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., cause and effect) and their impact on meaning

Analyze how author's message is shaped by perspective and tone

Interpret authors' purposes within and across text(s)

Identify interaction between mood and style

Recognize how author's choices impact style (e.g., impact on tone, imagery, etc.)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Analyze authors' credibility based on sources used

Analyze methods of argumentation (e.g., painting a picture, anecdotes)

Recognize relevancy and sufficiency of evidence

Recognize validity of reasoning

Identify basic fallacies of logic (e.g., false principle, either/or, emotional appeal)

Analyze how credible information is presented within and across text(s) (e.g., statistics, testimony)

Recognize the effectiveness of persuasive argumentation

Analyze author's bias

Exceeds the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with a high degree of consistency and efficiency.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Interpret subtle implicit text evidence to:

- quote accurately from the text and make logical conclusions
- analyze symbolism
- make relevant generalizations and predictions
- understand complex cause/effect relationships
- make inferences

Analyze relevant details from text to support conclusions

Effectively paraphrase complex text

Use evidence from text to synthesize interpretations

Compare and contrast individuals and ideas in depth based on implicit text

Synthesize to arrive at meaning from a section of text, text as a whole, and across texts:

- important text evidence (explicit or implicit)
- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Interpret and evaluate interrelationships among literary elements (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Evaluate methods of characterization and their impact on other literary elements

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Evaluate author's use of literary devices (e.g., anachronism, flashback)

Describe how word relationships, context, and structure lead to implied, intended or precise word meanings

Compare and contrast figures of speech and their application and efficacy

Distinguish nuanced connotations

Analyze how connotations impact meaning

Evaluate application of technical terminology across content area texts: analyze adequacy and purpose

Analyze use of transitional devices (e.g., equally important, by comparison, although this may be true)

Evaluate the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., comparison and contrast) and their impact on meaning

Analyze mood and style and their interaction and impact

Evaluate authors' purpose(s) within and across text(s)

Use evidence to analyze author's choices

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Evaluate author's credibility based on complex text(s):

- apply concepts of argumentation (background, discussion, and proof of claim)
- analyze validity of reasoning
- analyze fallacies of logic (e.g., begging the claim, ad hominem)
- analyze relevancy and sufficiency of evidence
- evaluate methods of argumentation
- evaluate subtle bias

GRADE 10 – READING MCA-III ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Does Not Meet the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills inconsistently and with minimal accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Identify explicitly stated text evidence to support:

- general conclusions and predictions
- obvious cause/effect relationships

Locate obvious literary elements within explicit text (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Locate key/relevant details from text

Identify fact and opinion in explicit text

Identify explicit evidence in text

Compare individuals and ideas based on explicit text

Locate explicit main idea, central message, and theme

State explicit main idea, central idea, and obvious supporting details

Identify setting in a reading passage

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Identify the impact of word choices on meaning

Define basic literary devices (e.g., personification)

Use basic context and structure of words to understand word meanings

Recognize simple figures of speech

Locate key words and phrases

Recognize the features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., problem/solution) and their impact on meaning

State authors' basic purposes within and across text(s)

Define basic technical terminology in content area texts

Identify mood (emotional atmosphere of text)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Identify obvious evidence in explicit text (e.g., logical connections between sentences and paragraphs)

Identify basic fallacies of logic (e.g., either/or, emotional appeal)

Identify how the author presents fact/opinion

Recognize methods of argumentation

Partially Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with limited consistency and accuracy.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Use explicit text evidence to support:

- basic conclusions and simple inferences
- recognition of basic symbols
- generalizations and predictions
- cause/effect relationships

Sequence plot events, real events, and steps in a process in chronological order
Recognize explicit similarities and differences among literary elements
Describe how key details support conclusions from text and identify those details
Use evidence from text to construct meaning
Compare and contrast individuals and ideas based on explicit text
Summarize and/or paraphrase from a section of text or text as a whole:

- important text evidence (explicit or implicit)
- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Identify obvious connections among literary elements within text (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Recognize basic methods of characterization (e.g., dialogue, appearance, behavior)

Identify literary terms (e.g., motif, archetype, foil)

Determine a theme or central idea of text

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Recognize the overall effect and impact of word choices on meaning and author's style

Identify the application of literary devices (e.g., allegory)

Identify connotations

Use evidence to understand authors' choices

Recognize how word relationships, context, and structure enhance meaning

Recognize standard transitional words (e.g., simultaneously, thereafter, henceforth)

Define technical terminology and distinguish from nontechnical terminology across content area texts

Use etymology (word history) and morphology (word structure) and multiple meanings of a word or phrase to construct meaning

Identify figures of speech and their connotations

Identify the features, format, and function of basic text structures (e.g., comparison and contrast) and their impact on meaning.

Identify author's use of perspective (personal point of view) and tone (attitude toward what she or he has written)

State authors' main purpose within and across text(s)

Identify style (author's techniques and approach to meaning—e.g., word choice, sentence structure, use of literary devices, voice)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Recognize how credible information is presented within and across text(s) (e.g., interviews with experts, current research)

Make judgments about authors' credibility based on explicit text(s):

- identify methods of persuasive argumentation (e.g., inductive/deductive reasoning, empathy, prestigious spokesperson)
- identify credible evidence
- analyze evidence based on sources used
- identify basic fallacies of logic (e.g. circular argument, slippery slope)
- recognize author's bias

Meets the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills consistently and accurately.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Use implicit text evidence to support:

- conclusions and inferences
- analyses of symbolism
- generalizations and predictions
- purpose of cause/effect relationships

Sequence intricate plot events, real events, and steps in a process in chronological order

Use relevant/key details to support conclusions

Distinguish fact from opinion in a variety of implicit texts

Use evidence from the text to justify interpretations of meaning

Compare and contrast individuals and ideas based on implicit text

Summarize and/or paraphrase from a section of text or text as a whole:

- important text evidence (explicit or implicit)
- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic
- similarities and differences among ideas and events

Analyze interrelationships among literary elements within text or multiple interpretations of text (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Determine a theme or central idea of text(s) and analyze in detail its development over the course of text(s), including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details

Differentiate methods of characterization

Define meaning of literary terms (e.g., motif, archetype, foil)

Compare and contrast presentation of literary elements

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings

Connect connotations to meaning

Analyze the cumulative effect and specific impact of word choices on meaning and author's style

Evaluate the use of literary devices (e.g., stream of consciousness)

Use reasoning and evidence to justify interpretations of word meanings

Analyze how authors' choices affect style (e.g., how the specific use of language and rhetoric, text structure and organization, graphics, and voice contribute to presentation of plot, theme, setting, concept building, and argumentation)

Recognize that word relationships, context, and structure lead to intended or precise word meanings

Categorize technical terminology across content area texts

Identify transitional words and phrases (e.g., to segue, as has been noted, at this point)

Analyze the use of figures of speech

Analyze the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., process analysis) and their impact on meaning

Analyze how author's message is shaped by perspective and tone

Interpret author's main purpose within and across text(s)

Analyze mood and style and their interaction and impact

Recognize how author's choices impact style (e.g., impact on tone, imagery)

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Analyze how credible information is presented within and across text(s)

Analyze authors' credibility based on complex text(s):

- analyze methods of persuasive argumentation (e.g., ethos, pathos, logos)
- analyze relevancy and sufficiency of evidence
- analyze complex fallacies of logic (e.g., false analogy, red herring)
- analyze validity of reasoning
- analyze author's bias

Exceeds the Standards

When interacting with literature and informational text, students at this achievement level demonstrate the following skills with a high degree of consistency and efficiency.

Key Ideas and Details (Standards 1, 2, 3)

Interpret subtle implicit text to support:

- conclusions and inferences
- analyses of symbolism
- generalizations and predictions
- explanations of cause/effect relationships

Paraphrase complex text clearly

Evaluate relevant details that support conclusions from text

Analyze the relationship of fact and opinion in a variety of implicit texts

Use inferential and literal evidence from text to justify interpretations of meaning

Compare and contrast individuals and ideas in depth based on implicit text

Synthesize from a section of text, text as a whole, or across texts to arrive at meaning:

- important text evidence (explicit or implicit)
- main idea
- central message
- supporting details
- plot
- subject
- theme
- topic

Interpret and evaluate complex interrelationships among literary elements within text or multiple interpretations of text (e.g., plot, conflict, characterization, setting, theme)

Evaluate a theme or central idea of text(s) and analyze in detail its development over the course of text(s), including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details

Evaluate methods of characterization and their impact on other literary elements

Interpret and explain the meaning of literary terms and elements

Compare and contrast the development and use of literary elements and devices

Craft and Structure (Standards 4, 5, 6)

Evaluate efficacy of words and phrases as they are used in text

Compare and contrast complex figures of speech and their application and efficacy

Distinguish nuanced connotations

Analyze how connotations impact meaning

Distinguish among connotative and figurative meanings of words and phrases

Evaluate the cumulative effect and specific impact of word choices on meaning and author's style

Evaluate sophisticated literary devices (e.g., iambic pentameter vs. iambic tetrameter)

Evaluate application of technical terminology across content area texts: analyze adequacy and purpose

Analyze how word relationships, context, and structure lead to intended or precise word meanings

Use reasoning and evidence to understand complex vocabulary

Analyze use of transitional devices (e.g., balanced against, vis a vis, in relation to, all things considered)

Evaluate the features, format, and function of complex text structures (e.g., classification) and their impact on meaning

Evaluate authors' choices and purpose(s) within and across text(s)

Analyze the effectiveness of author's stylistic choices as they impact message and meaning

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Standard 8, Informational Text sub-strand only)

Understand how and why credible evidence and arguments are presented within and across text(s)

Evaluate authors' credibility based on sophisticated text(s):

- evaluate methods of persuasive argumentation
- evaluate relevancy and sufficiency of evidence
- evaluate subtle fallacies of logic (e.g., straw man, post hoc ergo propter hoc)
- evaluate validity of reasoning
- evaluate subtle bias