Pennsylvania Department of Education
Grade 11 Reading
Performance Level Descriptors

Below Basic
A student scoring at the below basic level demonstrates competency with below grade-level text only and requires extensive support to comprehend and interpret fiction and nonfiction.

Basic
A student scoring at the basic level generally utilizes some reading strategies to comprehend grade-level appropriate fiction and nonfiction:

- Identifies word meanings using context clues and word parts
- Identifies and explains details in support of a conclusion
- Identifies or explains main ideas
- Attempts to summarize text and/or to make within or among text-to-text connections
- Identifies and interprets feature of texts (e.g., headings, graphics), including content appropriate to subsections
- Understands the relationships between text structure, organizational patterns (e.g., sequencing, comparison/contrast, and purpose of text (e.g., narrative, informational)
- Explains the use of figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor) and literary elements (e.g., character)
- Differentiates between factual statements and explicitly stated opinions in nonfiction
- Identifies, describes and/or explains bias in nonfiction
- Compares and/or explains the sequence of steps in a list of directions
- Identifies and describes the purpose of graphics and charts

Proficient
A student scoring at the proficient level routinely utilizes a variety of reading strategies to comprehend and interpret grade-level appropriate fiction and nonfiction:

- Applies a variety of strategies to determine meanings of words, including synonyms and antonyms, using context clues and word parts
- Makes inferences, draws conclusions, and generalizes, using textual support
- Identifies and explains main ideas
- Summarizes text
- Makes within and among text-to-text connections
- Interprets and analyzes: purpose of text (e.g., narrative, informational); organizational patterns (e.g., sequencing, comparison/contrast); and relationships among literary elements (character, setting, plot, theme, tone, style, mood, symbolism)
- Interprets and analyzes the use of figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor), author's style, and point of view
- Interprets and analyzes the use of facts and opinions in nonfiction
- Analyzes the effectiveness of bias and propaganda in nonfiction
- Describes and analyzes the sequence of steps in a list of directions
- Analyzes and evaluates graphics and charts

Advanced
A student scoring at the advanced level consistently utilizes sophisticated strategies to comprehend and interpret complex fiction and nonfiction:

- Analyzes and evaluates the use of word meanings and shades of meaning
- Analyzes and evaluates inferences, conclusions, and generalizations
- Effectively summarizes all ideas within text
- Summarizes and evaluates abstract themes
- Analyzes and explains within and among text-to-text connections
- Analyzes and explains differences among features of different texts
- Evaluates the author's use of text elements, organizational patterns (e.g., sequencing, comparison/contrast)
- Analyzes and evaluates the effect of figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor), author's style, and point of view
- Analyzes and evaluates strategies and evidence used in arguments in nonfiction
- Evaluates the relevance and accuracy of information in graphics and charts