Pennsylvania Department of Education
Grade 5 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 some word meanings, including synonyms and antonyms, using context clues
- Identifies details in support of a conclusion
- Identifies stated or implied main ideas and relevant details
- Attempts to summarize text and/or to make within or among text-to-text connections
- Identifies purpose of text (e.g., narrative) and some literary elements (e.g., character)
- Identifies features of text (e.g., headings), including content appropriate to subsections
- Identifies specific text elements and simple organizational patterns (e.g., sequencing, comparison/contrast)
- Identifies simple figurative language (e.g., simile) and recognizes point of view
- Locates factual statements and explicitly stated opinions in nonfiction
- Recognizes exaggeration (bias) in nonfiction
- Identifies steps in a list of directions
- Identifies 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:

- Identifies word meanings, including synonyms and antonyms, using context clues and word parts
- Makes inferences, draws conclusions, and generalizes, using textual support
- Identifies stated and implied main ideas and relevant details
- Summarizes text
- Makes within and among text-to-text connections
- Identifies purpose of text (narrative, informational, poetic, persuasive)
- Identifies and interprets literary elements (character, setting, plot, theme) and point of view
- Identifies and explains figurative language (personification, simile, alliteration)
- Identifies or interprets fact and opinion in nonfiction
- Describes how the author uses exaggeration (bias) in nonfiction
- Identifies and interprets organizational patterns of text (e.g., sequencing, comparison/contrast)
- Identifies and compares the proper sequence of steps in a list of directions
- Interprets and explains graphics, charts, and headings

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

- Identifies word meanings and shades of meaning, using context as support
- Makes inferences, draws conclusions, generalizes, and analyzes supporting details
- Explains main ideas, themes, and purpose of text
- Effectively summarizes all ideas within text
- Describes and/or explains within and among text-to-text connections
- Analyzes the relationships among text elements, organizational patterns (e.g., sequencing, comparison/contrast), and purpose of text (e.g., narrative)
- Identifies the effectiveness of author's use of figurative language (e.g., personification, simile), literary elements (e.g., character), and point of view
- Identifies and explains textual evidence in support of arguments in nonfiction
- Explains and/or describes the proper sequence of steps in a list of directions
- Analyzes how graphics, charts, and headings support and enhance text