Pennsylvania Department of Education
Grade 7 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:

- Differentiates among word meanings, including synonyms and antonyms, using context clues and word parts
- Identifies details in support of a conclusion
- Identifies stated and implied main idea and relevant details
- Attempts to summarize text and/or to make within or among text-to-text connections
- Identifies and describes purpose of text (e.g., narrative), including text features (e.g., headings) and subsections
- Describes text elements and common organizational patterns (e.g., sequencing, comparison/contrast)
- Distinguishes between literal and figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor)
- Identifies literary elements (e.g., character) and point of view
- Locates factual statements and explicitly stated opinions in nonfiction
- Identifies some types of bias in nonfiction
- Identifies and/or compares the sequence of steps in a list of directions
- Identifies and interprets 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 or explains stated and implied main ideas
- Summarizes text
- Makes within and among text-to-text connections
- Describes and interprets: purpose of text (narrative, informational, poetic, persuasive); organizational patterns (e.g., sequencing, comparison/contrast); and relationships among literary elements (character, setting, plot, theme)
- Identifies and explains the effect of figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor) and point of view
- Describes and interprets the use of fact and opinion in nonfiction
- Identifies and analyzes bias and propaganda in nonfiction
- Compares and explains the sequence of steps in a list of directions
- Interprets and analyzes graphics, charts, and headings

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

- Explains word meanings and shades of meaning, using context as support
- Makes inferences, draws conclusions, generalizes, and analyzes use of textual support
- Effectively summarizes all ideas within text
- Identifies and analyzes universal themes
- Explains within and among text-to-text connections
- Analyzes and explains: the relationships among text elements, organizational patterns (e.g., sequencing, comparison/contrast), and purpose of text (e.g., narrative)
- Extends text by making text-to-text connections
- Analyzes the effectiveness of figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor), literary elements (e.g., character) and point of view
- Identifies, analyzes, and justifies arguments and the use of bias and propaganda in nonfiction
- Describes and/or analyzes the sequence of steps in a list of directions
- Analyzes information in graphics, charts, and headings