# Pennsylvania Department of Education Grade 8 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 and interprets details in support of a conclusion
- Identifies stated and implied main ideas and relevant details
- Attempts to summarize text and/or to make within or among text-to-text connections
- Identifies and describes features of text (e.g., headings), including content appropriate to subsections
- Describes specific text elements, common organizational patterns (e.g., sequencing, comparison/contrast), and purpose of text (e.g., narrative)
- Identifies and interprets figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor), literary elements (e.g., character), and point of view
- Differentiates between factual statements and explicitly stated opinions in nonfiction
- Identifies and describes bias in nonfiction
- Compares and/or explains the sequence of steps in a list of directions
- Identifies and explains 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
- 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)
- Identifies and explains the effect of figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor) and point of view
- Interprets and analyzes the use of facts and opinions in nonfiction
- Identifies and analyzes bias and propaganda in nonfiction
- Describes and analyzes the sequence of steps in a list of directions
- Interprets and analyzes 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 explains the use of word meanings and shades of meaning
- Makes inferences, draws conclusions, generalizes, and evaluates supporting details
- Effectively summarizes all ideas within text
- Summarizes or evaluates abstract themes
- Analyzes and explains within and among text-to-text connections
- Analyzes and explains differences among the features and the purposes of different texts
- Analyzes and evaluates the relationships among text elements, organizational patterns (e.g., sequencing, comparison/contrast), and purpose of text (e.g., narrative)
- Analyzes the effect of figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor), literary elements (e.g., character) and point of view
- Identifies, analyzes, and evaluates textual evidence supporting multiple arguments and the use of bias and propaganda
- Analyzes and explains the connection between text and graphics