Performance Descriptors
Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test

Reading
Grade 4

**Level IV (Exceeds Standards)**

Fourth-grade students performing at Level IV demonstrate a thorough understanding of fourth-grade textual/informational, functional, and literary/recreational materials. These students consistently use techniques and skills to comprehend a variety of materials. They consistently identify root words, prefixes, suffixes, and other elements of structural analysis, such as compound words, contractions, and possessives. They know a variety of synonyms and antonyms and can use context clues to determine word meanings. These students can distinguish fiction from nonfiction and can infer unstated meanings when reading. They can identify main ideas about characters, important details, and similes in literary/recreational materials. When reading informational/textual and functional materials, they can locate information and distinguish fact from fiction.

**Level III (Meets Standards)**

Fourth-grade students performing at Level III demonstrate a fundamental understanding of what they read by applying various strategies when reading textual/informational, functional, and literary/recreational materials. To some degree these students use various skills and strategies, including demonstrating a knowledge of sentence structure, making inferences, and distinguishing fiction from non-fiction. They recognize some literary elements and devices including characters, similes, and important details as they read literary/recreational text. As a part of understanding informational/textual and functional materials, Level III readers are beginning to locate information, identify important details, use sentence structure, and distinguish fact from fiction. Their vocabulary knowledge includes recognition of some antonyms, synonyms, and some use of structural analysis skills.

**Level II (Partially Meets Standards)**

Fourth-grade students performing at Level II demonstrate some understanding of the overall meaning of what they read. These students can determine sequence of events and identify root words, prefixes, and suffixes. When reading text appropriate for fourth graders, they are able to make relatively obvious connections between the text and their own experiences and extend the ideas in the text by sometimes making simple inferences. Level II fourth-grade readers apply phonetic and structural analysis to multiple-syllable words by recognizing consonants, digraphs, short vowels, blends, and diphthongs. They occasionally identify compound words and antonyms.

**Level I (Does not Meet Standards)**

Fourth-grade students performing at Level I demonstrate little or no ability to use the reading skills and abilities required in Level II.
Performance Descriptors  
*Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test*

**Reading**  
**Grade 6**

**Level IV (Exceeds Standards)**

Sixth-grade readers performing at Level IV consistently apply a variety of strategies that include making complex predictions, interpreting characters’ behaviors, and comparing and contrasting in order to gain a thorough understanding of literary/recreational text. They consistently interpret literary elements and devices that include implied main idea, conflict, climax, and personification. They utilize supporting details, sequence of events, context clues, and generalizations to comprehend a variety of text types. They also can identify the likely source of a text, compare and contrast, and recognize the use of implied main ideas, cause-effect relationships, and persuasive techniques in textual/informational and functional reading materials.

**Level III (Meets Standards)**

Sixth-grade readers performing at Level III apply strategies to comprehend literary/recreational materials, including making predictions, interpreting characters’ behaviors, and comparing and contrasting. They can interpret characters’ behaviors and compare and contrast to gain an understanding of the text. They often interpret literary elements and devices that include implied main idea, conflict, climax, and personification. They identify supporting details and sequence of events as well as use context clues and make generalizations. When reading textual/informational and functional materials, they can identify the likely source of a text, compare and contrast, and recognize the use of implied main ideas, explicit cause-effect relationships, and persuasive techniques.

**Level II (Partially Meets Standards)**

Sixth-grade readers performing at Level II can read literary/recreational text and identify sequence of events. They can draw some conclusions and identify stated main ideas to comprehend textual/informational, functional, and literary/recreational materials. They can identify some cause-effect relationships and sometimes use context clues to comprehend text.

**Level I (Does not Meet Standards)**

Sixth-grade students performing at Level I demonstrate little or no ability to use the reading skills and abilities required in Level II.
Performance Descriptors
*Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test*

**Reading**
**Grade 8**

**Level IV (Exceeds Standards)**

Eighth-grade students performing at Level IV consistently make inferences to determine bias or theme and use specific context clues to determine meanings of unfamiliar words. They can distinguish among characteristics of different types of poetry such as ballads, epics, haiku, limericks, and lyric. They can identify literary elements and describe their impact on setting, mood, characterization, or theme. These students also are able to identify the elements of plot.

**Level III (Meets Standards)**

Eighth-grade students performing at Level III utilize strategies to make inferences to determine bias or theme and use specific context clues to determine some word meanings. They can distinguish among characteristics of some types of poetry such as ballads, epics, haiku, limericks, and lyric. They often identify literary elements and can describe their impact on setting, mood, characterization, or theme. These students also are able to identify the elements of plot.

**Level II (Partially Meets Standards)**

Eighth-grade students performing at Level II utilize some strategies to infer bias and/or theme in selections. They sometimes use specific context clues to determine some word meanings. They may distinguish among characteristics of some types of poetry such as ballads, epics, haiku, limericks, and lyric. They identify some literary elements and occasionally may describe their impact on setting, mood, characterization, or theme. These students also are able to identify some elements of plot.

**Level I (Does not Meet Standards)**

Eighth-grade students performing at Level I demonstrate little or no ability to use the reading skills and abilities required in Level II.