



State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®)  
Performance Level Descriptors  
Grade 4 Reading Language Arts (English and Spanish)

**Performance Level Descriptors**

**When reading texts of increasing complexity,\* students achieving Masters Grade Level Performance can**

- Synthesize information within a text to create new understanding
- Make meaningful connections between multiple texts supported by appropriate text evidence
- Make complex inferences about texts based on explicit and implicit text evidence
- Write skillfully developed essays that demonstrate grade-level mastery of writer’s craft with advanced command of language conventions

**When reading texts of increasing complexity,\* students achieving Meets Grade Level Performance can**

- Determine the meaning of unfamiliar and multiple-meaning words using context and affixes
- Explain literary texts by examining character changes and interactions, and inferring themes supported by text evidence
- Demonstrate an understanding of informational and argumentative texts by identifying evidence to support a claim or central idea, text structures and features, and an author’s intended audience
- Make connections between multiple texts by identifying meaningful similarities and differences in terms of key ideas and theme
- Explain the author’s purpose, message, use of imagery, literal and figurative language, literary and sound devices, and analyze text structures and print and graphic features to achieve specific purposes
- Make logical inferences and predictions based on explicit and implicit text evidence
- Write well-developed essays that are suited to the writing task, with consistent command of grade-level appropriate conventions
- Demonstrate proficient skills in revising and editing

**When reading texts of increasing complexity,\* students achieving Approaches Grade Level Performance can**

- Determine the meaning of unfamiliar and multiple-meaning words using context
- Identify the elements of literary texts by describing explicitly stated themes, settings, characters, and plot elements
- Use the characteristics of informational and argumentative texts to locate information, identify the explicitly stated central idea or claim, and explain how the author uses facts
- Identify connections and make simple comparisons between texts representing similar or different genres
- Make simple inferences and predictions based on explicit and implicit text evidence
- Write basic essays that are generally suited to the writing task, with a partial command of grade-level appropriate conventions
- Demonstrate developing skills in revising and editing

**When reading texts of increasing complexity,\* students achieving Did Not Meet Grade Level Performance can**

- Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words using reference materials
- Make simple inferences about texts based on explicit text evidence
- Write limited essays that are minimally developed and only marginally suited to the writing task, with little to no command of grade-level appropriate conventions
- Demonstrate limited skills in revising and editing

\*Text complexity increases from grade to grade. Texts can become increasingly complex for a variety of reasons: (1) vocabulary/use of language may be more varied and challenging because it is nonliteral/figurative, abstract, or academic/technical; (2) sentence structure may be more varied, dense, and sophisticated; (3) the author's use of literary elements/devices, rhetorical strategies, organizational patterns, and text features may be more nuanced or sophisticated; (4) the topic/content may be less familiar or more cognitively demanding; and (5) relationships among ideas may be less explicit and require more interpretation, reasoning, and inferential thinking to understand the subtlety, nuances, and depth of ideas. The rigor of the writing task also increases from grade to grade due to the text complexity of the source text(s) students use in developing the essay and the sophistication of the topic.