



**State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR™)
Performance Level Descriptors
English II Reading**

Performance Level Descriptors

When reading texts of increasing complexity,* students achieving Level III: Advanced Academic Performance can

- Evaluate how the author's use of syntax, diction, and sensory language creates voice, tone, and meaning
- Make discerning inferences about literary and informational texts, supporting those inferences with specific and well-chosen textual evidence

When reading texts of increasing complexity,* students achieving Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance can

- Distinguish between the denotative and connotative meanings of words using context, structural analyses, and reference materials
- Analyze how the author's use of syntax, diction, and sensory language supports meaning
- Analyze literary texts by recognizing universal themes and the ways in which literary devices contribute to the development of linear and non-linear plots and complex, believable characters
- Demonstrate an understanding of informational texts by analyzing the controlling idea or argument, determining the author's purpose, identifying organizational patterns, and distinguishing between a summary and a critique of the text
- Identify the implicit connections and thematic links between texts representing similar or different genres
- Make logical inferences about literary and informational texts, supporting those inferences with accurate, relevant textual evidence

English II Reading—Continued

Performance Level Descriptors

When reading texts of increasing complexity,* students achieving Level I: Unsatisfactory Academic Performance can

- Determine the denotative meaning of words using context, structural analyses, and reference materials
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of literary and informational texts and identify universal themes and controlling ideas
- Make plausible inferences about literary and informational texts

* Text complexity increases from English I to English II. 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 structures 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.