



Standardized Assessment Tasks for  
STAAR Alternate

# Grade 4 Reading

## **Definitions/Examples for STAAR Reporting Category 1 (4.2) Essence Statement A**

The following definitions clarify terms used in the grade 4 reading assessment tasks to ensure that the content of the tasks is understood. When appropriate, examples and nonexamples have been provided for further clarification. These are just examples and do not represent all the appropriate ways to test the skills in the STAAR Alternate assessment tasks.

Levels 3, 2, and 1: pages 3 and 4

An **unfamiliar word** is a word a student may or may not have been exposed to, but has not received instruction and does not have an understanding for the meaning of the word.

Levels 3 and 2: pages 3 and 4

A **familiar** word is a word the student knows and whose meaning is immediately understood.

Level 3: page 3

For the Level 3 task the student will be presented with unfamiliar **antonyms**—words with opposite meanings. Examples of grade-appropriate antonyms include:

- wet—dry
- thin—fat
- curved—straight

Synonyms are words with similar meanings and are NOT appropriate for this task. Nonexamples for this task include:

- moist—damp
- slender—thin
- curved—windy

Level 2: page 4

As noted in the prerequisite skill for this task, **conceptual categories** include grouping words for colors, shapes, textures or might even include words for animals, workers, or tools.

<b>STAAR Reporting Category 1 – Understanding and Analysis Across Genres: The student will demonstrate an ability to understand and analyze a variety of written texts across reading genres.</b>	
<b>TEKS Knowledge &amp; Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectations</b>	<b>Essence of TEKS Knowledge &amp; Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectations</b>
<p><b>(4.2) Reading/Vocabulary Development.</b> Students understand new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing. The student is expected to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) determine the meaning of grade-level academic English words derived from Latin, Greek, or other linguistic roots and affixes; Readiness Standard</li> <li>(B) use the context of the sentence (e.g., in-sentence example or definition) to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words or multiple meaning words; Readiness Standard</li> <li>(E) use a dictionary or glossary to determine the meanings, syllabication, and pronunciation of unknown words. Readiness Standard</li> </ul>	<p><b>Essence Statement A:</b> Identifies new vocabulary words using a variety of strategies.</p>

### **Level 3**

**Prerequisite skill:** identify and sort words into conceptual categories (e.g., opposites, living things)

The student will be presented a wide array of familiar words, some of which are antonyms. The student will locate a pair of words that are antonyms. The student will be presented and read an unfamiliar word and its meaning. Using the wide array of words, the student will locate an antonym for the unfamiliar word. The student will generate a sentence using the unfamiliar word.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will locate a pair of words that are antonyms.
2. The student will locate an antonym for the unfamiliar word.
3. The student will generate a sentence using the unfamiliar word.

## **Level 2**

**Prerequisite skill:** identify and sort pictures of objects into conceptual categories (e.g., colors, shapes, textures)

The student will be presented and read familiar words that can be grouped into three teacher-selected conceptual categories. The student will sort the words into the three categories. The student will be presented with an unfamiliar word and its meaning. The student will identify the category for the unfamiliar word. The student will be presented three sentences each containing one blank. The blank in each sentence must be able to be meaningfully completed using a word from one of the categories. Each sentence must also require the use of a word from a different category. The student will complete the sentences.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will sort the words into the three categories.
2. The student will identify the category for the unfamiliar word.
3. The student will complete the sentences.

## **Level 1**

**Prerequisite skill:** use single words and simple phrases to communicate meaning in social situations

The student will be presented and read a story that introduces an unfamiliar word to be used in a social situation. The student will acknowledge the unfamiliar word in the story when it is read. The student will participate in using the unfamiliar word in an appropriate social context. The student will respond to the interaction resulting from the use of the unfamiliar word.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will acknowledge the unfamiliar word in the story when it is read.
2. The student will participate in using the unfamiliar word in an appropriate social context.
3. The student will respond to the interaction resulting from the use of the unfamiliar word.

Transition

## **Definitions/Examples for STAAR Reporting Category 2 (4. 4) Essence Statement B**

The following definitions clarify terms used in the grade 4 reading assessment tasks to ensure that the content of the tasks is understood. When appropriate, examples and nonexamples have been provided for further clarification. These are just examples and do not represent all the appropriate ways to test the skills in the STAAR Alternate assessment tasks.

Levels 3, 2, and 1: pages 8 and 9

**Poetry** is a form of literature in which the author, poet, uses the sound and meaning of words to create ideas and feelings. Poems are usually presented in verse composed of short lines that include rhythm, rhyme, or both.

Most poems are written to be read aloud, and how they sound is as important as what they mean. Sound patterns consist of two elements: **rhyme** and **rhythm**.

Levels 3 and 1: pages 8 and 9

**Rhyme** is the repetition of similar sounds in two or more words. The **rhyming pattern** is the arrangement of rhymes in a poem.

Level 3: page 8

**Rhythm** is the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables of the words in the poem.

Examples of poetry with rhythm:

- From *The Song of Hiawatha* by of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow:

By the shore of Gitchie Gumee,  
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,  
At the doorway of his wigwam,  
In the pleasant Summer morning,  
Hiawatha stood and waited.

- From *The Cow* by Robert Louis Stevenson:

The friendly cow, all red and white,  
I love with all my heart:  
She gives me cream with all her might,  
To eat with apple tart.

- From *Alphabet* by Edward Lear:

A  
A was once an apple pie,  
Pidy  
Widy  
Tidy  
Pidy  
Nice insidy  
Apple Pie!

**Repetition** in poetry is when the poet repeats words or groups of words to create an effect or an image. A pattern is created by the placement of the repetition.

For example:

- The pattern of the repetition of the word “galloped” creates the image of the horse galloping across the field.

*The horse galloped, galloped, galloped away*

- The pattern in the poem “Dare to Do Right” by George Lansing Taylor is created by the poet’s repetition of the first line of each stanza in the poem.

*Dare to do right! Dare to be true!*

- The pattern in the poem “The Charge of the Light Brigade” by Alfred Lord Tennyson is created by repeating the last line in each stanza of the poem.

*Rode the six hundred.*

- The pattern in the poem “Do It Now” by an anonymous poet is created by repeating a line for emphasis in the poem.

*If you’ve got a job to do,  
Do it now!  
If it’s one you wish were through,  
Do it now!*

For the Level 3 task, the teacher is ask to present two poems on the same topic that evoke different feelings. Both poems can be published, teacher-created, or the teacher can write a poem to pair with a published poem on the same topic that evokes a different feeling from the published poem.

The following poems are examples of grade four appropriate poetry that evoke different feelings students can relate to:

- “Uncle Dave’s Car” by Helen Ksypa (*A Bad Case of the Giggles*)
- “What My Parents Should Know About My Brother” by Bruce Lansky (*Poetry Pantry*)
- “Dumb Dog” by Shirlee Curlee Bingham (*A Bad Case of the Giggles*)
- “Sweet Dreams” by Joyce Armor (*Kids Pict the Funniest Poems*)
- “Where My Clothes Are ” by Bruce Lansky (*Poetry Pantry*)
- “Birthday Advice” by Bruce Lansky (*Happy Birthday to Me!*)

**Alliteration** is the repetition of the same sounds at the beginning of two or more adjacent words or stressed syllables. Tongue-twisters, such as “Peter piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,” rely on alliteration. The level 2 task requires a poem with an alliterative phrase. The teacher can create the poem or use a published piece.

The following texts include examples of alliteration:

- *Some Snug Snail* by Pamela Duncan Edwards
- *Sheep in a Shop* by Nancy Shaw
- *Alligators All Around* by Maurice Sendak
- Poems by Shel Silverstein including:
  - “Picture Puzzle Pieces”
  - “Noisy Day”
  - “Spoiled Brat”

**Cited texts are provided only as examples and do not imply TEA endorsement.**

<b>Reporting Category 2 – Understanding and Analysis of Literary Texts: The student will demonstrate an ability to understand and analyze literary texts.</b>	
<b>TEKS Knowledge &amp; Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectation</b>	<b>Essence of TEKS Knowledge &amp; Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectation</b>
<p><b>(4.4) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Poetry.</b> Students understand, make inferences, and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of poetry and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. The student is expected to</p> <p>(A) explain how the structural elements of poetry, (e.g. rhyme, meter, stanzas, line breaks) relate to form (e.g., lyrical poetry, free verse). Supporting Standard</p>	<p><b>Essence Statement B:</b> Identifies the structure and elements of poetry.</p>

**Level 3**

**Prerequisite skill:** describe how rhyme, rhythm, and repetition interact to create images in poetry

The student will be presented two poems on the same topic each with imagery evoking a different feeling. The student will locate examples of rhyme, rhythm, or repetition in each of the two poems. The student will determine how each poem made him or her feel. The student will locate words or phrases from each poem as evidence for the feeling that resulted.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will locate examples of rhyme, rhythm, or repetition in each of the two poems.
2. The student will determine how each poem made him or her feel.
3. The student will locate words or phrases from each poem as evidence for the feeling that resulted.

## **Level 2**

**Prerequisite skill:** respond to and use rhythm, rhyme, and alliteration in poetry

The student will be presented and read a poem with one alliterative phrase. The student will identify the definition for alliteration. The student will identify the beginning letter for each of the words in the alliterative phrase. The poem will be read again. The student will identify a new word that could fit into the phrase as added alliteration.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will identify the definition for alliteration.
2. The student will identify the beginning letter for each of the words in the alliterative phrase.
3. The student will identify a new word that could fit into the phrase as added alliteration.

## **Level 1**

**Prerequisite skill:** produce a word that rhymes with a given word

The student will be presented a written word paired with a representation for the word. The teacher will emphasize the last part of the word that will be used to produce a rhyme. The student will explore the representation as the word is presented. The student will participate in replacing the first letter of the word with a new letter to create a rhyming word to the original word. A representation for the new word will be presented and explored as the new word is presented. The teacher will present both words in close succession. The student will respond to the rhyming pair of words.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will explore the representation as the word is presented.
2. The student will participate in replacing the first letter of the word with a new letter to create a rhyming word to the original word.
3. The student will respond to the rhyming pair of words.

## Definitions/Examples for STAAR Reporting Category 2 (4.19) Essence Statement C

The following definitions clarify terms used in the grade 4 reading assessment tasks to ensure that the content of the tasks is understood. When appropriate, examples and nonexamples have been provided for further clarification. These are just examples and do not represent all the appropriate ways to test the skills in the STAAR Alternate assessment tasks.

Levels 3 and 2: pages 11 and 12

**Literary nonfiction** is text considered “literary” because it aspires to something more than providing basic facts and information and because it features style, structure, sensory language, and tone as other literary genres do—especially prose fiction. It is described as “nonfiction” because of its basis in reality.

Literary nonfiction includes:

- biography—text that presents a person’s life’s story
- autobiography—the story about the life of a person written by that person
- memoir—the written record of a personal experience or observation

Examples of grade four appropriate literary nonfiction include:

- *All Star! Honus Wagner and the Most Famous Baseball Card Ever* by Jane Yolen
- *Boys of Steel: The Creators of Superman* by Marc Tyler Nobleman
- *The Brothers Kennedy: John, Robert, and Edward* by Kathleen Krull
- *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez* by Kathleen Krull
- *Django: World’s Greatest Jazz Guitarist* by Bonnie Christensen
- *Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya* by Donna Jo Napoli
- *Night Flight: Amelia Earhart Crosses the Atlantic* by Robert Burleigh
- *Odd Boy Out: Young Albert Einstein* by Don Brown
- *POP!: The Invention of Bubble Gum* by Meghan McCarthy
- *Wizard for the Start: The Incredible Boyhood and Amazing Inventions of Thomas Edison* by Don Brown

**Cited texts are provided only as examples and do not imply TEA endorsement.**

<b>STAAR Reporting Category 2 – Understanding and Analysis of Literary Texts: The student will demonstrate an ability to understand and analyze literary texts.</b>	
<b>TEKS Knowledge &amp; Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectations</b>	<b>Essence of TEKS Knowledge &amp; Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectations</b>
<p><b>(4.19) Reading/Comprehension Skills.</b> Students use a flexible range of metacognitive reading skills in both assigned and independent reading to understand an author’s message. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts as they become self-directed, critical readers. The student is expected to</p> <p>(D) make inferences about text and use textual evidence to support understanding; Readiness Standard (Fiction)/Supporting Standard (Literary Nonfiction, Poetry, Drama)</p> <p>(E) summarize information in text, maintaining meaning and logical order. Readiness Standard (Fiction)/Supporting Standard (Literary Nonfiction, Poetry, Drama)</p>	<p><b>Essence Statement C:</b> Uses a variety of strategies to demonstrate comprehension of literary texts.</p>

**Level 3**

**Prerequisite skill:** establish purposes for reading selected texts based upon desired outcome to enhance comprehension

The student will determine a topic of interest. The student will locate a literary nonfiction text on a person related to the topic. The text will be read. The student will generate a list of interesting facts about the person that relate to the topic of interest.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will determine a topic of interest.
2. The student will locate a literary nonfiction text on a person related to the topic.
3. The student will generate a list of interesting facts about the person that relate to the topic of interest.

Reading Grade 4; Reporting Category 2 (4.19); Essence Statement: C

## **Level 2**

**Prerequisite skill:** discuss the purposes for reading and listening to various texts (e.g., to become involved in real and imagined events, settings, actions, and to enjoy language)

The student will choose a topic of interest. The student will identify a literary nonfiction text on a person related to the chosen topic. The text will be read. The student will assist in acting out an interesting event related to the topic.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will choose a topic of interest.
2. The student will identify a literary nonfiction text on a person related to the chosen topic.
3. The student will assist in acting out an interesting event related to the topic.

## **Level 1**

**Prerequisite skill:** use information learned from books by describing, relating, categorizing, or comparing and contrasting

The student will be presented a teacher-generated text about a person who shares a known common interest with the student and a representation for the topic of interest. The student will acknowledge the person written about in the text. The student will explore the representation for the common interest. The text will be read. The student will participate in pairing the representation for the topic with the text.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will acknowledge the person written about in the text.
2. The student will explore the representation for the common interest.
3. The student will participate in pairing the representation for the topic with the text.

## **Definitions/Examples for STAAR Reporting Category 3 (4.14)** **Essence Statement D**

The following definitions clarify terms used in the grade 4 reading assessment tasks to ensure that the content of the tasks is understood. When appropriate, examples and nonexamples have been provided for further clarification. These are just examples and do not represent all the appropriate ways to test the skills in the STAAR Alternate assessment tasks.

Levels 3, 2, and 1: pages 15 and 16

**Media presentation** refers to the variety of modes available as a means for communicating to an audience. Media is not limited to the use of technology or mass media such as television, radio, newspapers or magazines, and films.

Media presentations can be created by teachers and/or students and also include the following:

- Posters
- Flyers
- Paintings, drawings or illustrations
- PowerPoint slide shows

Levels 3 and 2: pages 15 and 16

An **expository text** factually clarifies or explains something.

Expository text on safety procedures will include books and articles about:

- Fire safety
- School safety
- Dialing 911
- Severe weather safety
- Bus safety
- Stranger danger
- Kitchen safety
- Food handling and storage safety
- Science experiment safety

The following are examples of **media techniques** used in media presentations:

- sound effects
- live action
- music
- animation
- slow-motion
- narration
- dialogue
- illustrations
- photos
- captions
- enlarged font
- bold print
- use of color

**Media features** are the prominent or noticeable characteristics used for **media presentations**. Examples of media features include:

- Color
- Shape
- Illustrations
- Size
- Texture

Examples of how media features might be exaggerated and incorporated into a media presentation:

- auditory components such as a recording of the bell for a fire drill or the sound of a bus backing up
- an enlarged, raised or textured universal "no" sign
- to emphasize danger and items to avoid
- objects attached to a poster that the student can interact with such as a cell phone to dial 911 or removable oven mitts the student can put on for safety in the kitchen

<b>STAAR Reporting Category 3—Understanding and Analysis of Informational Texts: The student will demonstrate an ability to understand and analyze informational texts.</b>	
<b>TEKS Knowledge &amp; Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectation</b>	<b>Essence of TEKS Knowledge &amp; Skills Statement / STAAR-Tested Student Expectation</b>
<b>(4.14) Reading/Media Literacy.</b> Students use comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning. Supporting Standard	<b>Essence Statement D:</b> Recognizes that informational media conveys meaning.

### **Level 3**

**Prerequisite skill:** describe techniques used to create media messages (e.g., sound, graphics)

The student will be presented an expository text about safety procedures. After the text is read, the student will locate a safety rule in the text he or she would like to share with others. Using a wide array of media techniques, the student will generate a presentation to convey the safety rule. The student will justify the media techniques he or she used to create the presentation.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will locate a safety rule in the text he or she would like to share with others.
2. The student will generate a presentation to convey the safety rule.
3. The student will justify the media techniques he or she used to create the presentation.

## **Level 2**

**Prerequisite skill:** identify techniques used in media (e.g., sound, movement)

The student will be presented an expository text about safety procedures. The student will be presented a presentation depicting a safety rule addressed in the expository text. The student will identify a statement that represents that safety rule. The student will be presented cards, some of which depict media techniques used in the presentation and others that do not represent media techniques. The student will identify the cards that depict media techniques. The student will match each identified card to an example of the media technique used in the presentation.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will identify a statement that represents that safety rule.
2. The student will identify the cards that depict media techniques.
3. The student will match each identified card to an example of the media technique used in the presentation.

## **Level 1**

**Prerequisite skill:** use books and other written materials to engage in pre-reading behaviors

The student will be presented a safety presentation with exaggerated media features used to enhance the safety rule presented in an expository text. The student will experience the media features in the presentation. The student will be presented the expository text about the safety rule. The student will participate in pairing the text to the presentation. After the text is read, the student will participate in demonstrating the safety rule.

Predetermined Criteria

1. The student will experience the media features in the presentation.
2. The student will participate in pairing the text to the presentation.
3. The student will participate in demonstrating the safety rule.