

**State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®)  
Performance Level Descriptors  
Grade 5 Science**

**Performance Level Descriptors**

Scientific investigation and reasoning skills are not assessed in isolation but are incorporated into questions that assess science content. These skills focus on safe, environmentally appropriate, and ethical laboratory and outdoor investigations; using scientific methods and equipment in investigations; and using critical thinking and scientific problem solving to make informed decisions.

**Students achieving Masters Grade Level Performance can**

- Explain the flow of energy in series and parallel circuits
- Analyze the effects of changing variables while experimenting with forces
- Interpret causes and effects of gradual and rapid changes to Earth's surface
- Explain how adaptations help organisms survive in their environments

**Students achieving Meets Grade Level Performance can**

- Differentiate between substances and mixtures using physical properties
- Explore and describe various uses of energy
- Explain the effects of forces on objects through investigations
- Recognize and compare gradual and rapid changes to Earth's surface
- Identify patterns and cycles caused by interactions among the sun, Earth, and moon
- Investigate inherited traits, learned behaviors, and structures and functions of different species that allow organisms to survive and interact in an ecosystem
- Describe how energy from the sun is transferred through ecosystems

**Students achieving Approaches Grade Level Performance can**

- Describe substances based on their physical properties
- Identify the behaviors of light that produce an observable result
- Identify landforms and processes in sedimentary rock formation
- Recognize adaptations of different organisms that allow them to survive

**Students achieving Does Not Meet Grade Level Performance can**

- Classify objects as liquids, solids, or gases
- Identify Earth's renewable resources
- Identify basic characteristics of the sun, Earth, and moon
- Identify the roles of organisms in a food chain