

**Theory of Action:** Academic standards represent a collective commitment around what students should learn each year. The state assessment asks students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and understanding related to these standards using a common measure. The resulting data allows us to see patterns in performance that should guide school and district improvement, helping identify areas of strength and opportunity.

**Role of Performance Level Descriptors in Defining Proficiency:** Performance level descriptors bridge the state assessment to classroom instruction and the systems of formative assessments that guide local instruction and choices about individual students. *Academic proficiency represents a range of observable student performance characteristics.* There are multiple pathways to proficiency, and students rely upon their strengths differently within that range of performance.

**Proficiency and Difficulty:** A student’s ability to demonstrate proficiency is influenced by the complexity of the texts or stimuli presented, tasks they’re asked to complete, and the contexts in which they are engaged. As student performance improves, students are typically able to handle more challenging texts/stimuli, tasks, and contexts, and are able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge more accurately and consistently.

**Reading Literary Text** *Student performance indicates the ability to ...*

Claim 1	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
	LEAST COMPLEX	RI.10/RL.10 – Read and comprehend appropriate texts independently		MOST COMPLEX
Text Complexity:				
<b>RL 4.1</b>	Locate basic, explicit details.	Refer to details to explain explicit ideas and make general inferences.	Explain explicit ideas and draw logical inferences, using relevant evidence.	Integrate and analyze multiple pieces of evidence from texts with layered meaning.
<b>RL 4.2</b>	Recognize a familiar topic or event. Describe general events or characters.	Identify a theme, citing a general detail for support. May retell rather than summarize.	Determine the theme and summarize clearly, using key details.	Analyze nuanced or implied themes and craft insightful summaries, using precise evidence.
<b>RL 4.3</b>	Identify a character or event, using a basic detail.	Describe characters, settings, or events, using relevant details.	Describe characters, settings, or events in depth, using specific evidence and key details.	Interpret and analyze character motivations and relationships in depth, using a variety of specific evidence.
<b>RL 4.5</b>	Identify whether a text is a poem, play, or story, using explicit features.	Describe basic differences between poems, drama, and prose, (e.g., verse, dialogue, stage directions) recognizing a common element.	Explain major structural differences between poems, drama, and prose (e.g., verse, dialogue, stage directions) explaining how they support understanding.	Analyze how structural elements (e.g., verse, dialogue, stage directions) differ and contribute to meaning, evaluating their effectiveness.
<b>RL 4.6</b>	Identify characters’ thoughts.	Recognize different points of view.	Compare and contrast first- and third- person narration types and describe how they impact meaning.	Distinguish narration types and evaluate how perspectives shape meaning.

Test questions can measure a single skill or a set of knowledge and skills. The ELA test differs from other subjects in that it has fewer items overall, but each item assesses multiple skills or knowledge by asking students to demonstrate skills through performance, such as writing a prose-constructed response. Therefore, what differentiates the levels of performance are the degree to and quality with which a student performs.

Claim 1	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
Text	LEAST COMPLEX	<i>RI.10/RL.10 – Read and comprehend appropriate texts independently</i>		MOST COMPLEX
<b>Complexity:</b>				
<b>RL 4.7</b>	Recognize a similarity between text and visuals.	Identify how a visual relates to general ideas.	Explain important connections between text and visual/oral presentations, describing how they enhance understanding.	Evaluate how visual/oral elements alter or deepen meaning, using specific details to support analysis.
<b>RL 4.9</b>	Identify a familiar theme or event.	Describe similar themes or events and make general comparisons between texts.	Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes, topics, and plots within different cultural contexts.	Analyze how cultural contexts influence the development of themes, topics, and plots, using a variety of key details for support.
<b>RL 4.10</b>	Comprehend parts of literature with clear structure.	Ask and answer basic comprehension questions to show understanding of literature.	Comprehend grade-level literary texts, citing details and identifying structural elements.	Synthesize and analyze structure, themes, and language in increasingly complex literary texts.

Reading Informational Text <i>Student performance indicates the ability to ...</i>				
Claim 2	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
Text	LEAST COMPLEX	<i>RI.10/RL.10 – Read and comprehend appropriate texts independently</i>		MOST COMPLEX
<b>Complexity:</b>				
<b>RI 4.1</b>	Identify explicit facts in a clearly structured text.	Explain general ideas/inferences, using a relevant detail.	Refer to specific details/examples to explain meaning and support inferences.	Analyze how varied, precise details support nuanced inferences.
<b>RI 4.2</b>	Recognize a familiar topic and identify simple details.	Identify a main idea with a supporting detail. Provide a partial summary.	Determine a main idea, supporting the explanation with a clear summary, using key details.	Infer nuanced/multiple main ideas and integrate varied key details to summarize.
<b>RI 4.3</b>	Identify events, ideas, or steps in a technical procedure.	Describe connections between events, ideas, or steps in a technical procedure.	Explain complex events, ideas, or steps, using specific evidence/supporting details.	Evaluate how complex events, ideas, or steps develop over time, using specific evidence/supporting details.
<b>RI 4.5</b>	Recognize a list or basic sequence of events.	Identify common text structures (e.g., cause/effect or compare/contrast).	Describe and explain how the overall structure (e.g., cause/effect or compare/contrast) connects structure to meaning.	Analyze how structure (e.g., cause/effect or compare/contrast) enhances understanding.
<b>RI 4.6</b>	Identify basic details from one version of a topic or event.	Recognize key similarities or differences between two texts.	Compare and contrast firsthand and secondhand accounts with supporting evidence.	Evaluate how point of view affects understanding across accounts.

Claim 2	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
RI 4.7	Identify information shown in simple visuals like charts or timelines.	Explain basic connections between visual and text information.	Interpret visuals and explain their contribution to meaning.	Evaluate the strength and relevance of different types of information, supporting ideas with evidence.
RI 4.8	Identify a point made by the author.	Recognize a reason or piece of evidence used to support a point.	Explain how reasons and evidence support an author's point.	Synthesize and evaluate information across texts providing insights regarding specific authors' points.
RI 4.9	Recognize shared facts between texts.	Identify some similarities/differences between two texts.	Integrate information from two texts and explain the topic clearly.	Synthesize and evaluate information across texts, analyzing how each approach to a topic differs.
RI 4.10	Comprehend parts of texts with clear structure.	Ask and answer basic comprehension questions to show understanding.	Comprehend grade-level texts, citing details and identifying structural elements.	Synthesize and analyze structure, ideas, and language in increasingly complex texts.

Reading Vocabulary <i>Student performance indicates the ability to ...</i>				
Claim 3	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
Text Complexity:	LEAST COMPLEX	<i>RI.10/RL.10 – Read and comprehend appropriate texts independently</i>		MOST COMPLEX
RL 4.4, RI 4.4, L4.4-4.6	Use familiar strategies such as context or affixes to explore unfamiliar words. May rely on support.  Use general or familiar vocabulary to express ideas. Begin to notice topic-specific terms.  Recognize common figurative language or word relationships. May begin interpreting meaning in context.	Apply basic strategies (e.g., context, affixes, references) with growing independence.  Use academic or domain-specific vocabulary with growing accuracy and begin adjusting word choices for meaning.  Identify figurative language and explain basic relationships or connotations in grade-level texts.	Apply strategies (e.g., context, affixes, reference tools) to determine meaning in familiar grade-level texts.  Use grade-appropriate academic and domain-specific vocabulary, including words that signal precision in meaning.  Explain the meaning of similes, metaphors, idioms, and allusions in context. Recognize and describe word relationships.	Apply strategies independently and flexibly to analyze nuanced meanings in unfamiliar or technical texts.  Select vocabulary purposefully to enhance clarity, precision, or tone in varied contexts.  Analyze and explain how nuanced language, including figurative devices and word relationships, shape meaning and tone.

**Written Expression** *Student performance indicates the ability to ...*

Claim 4	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
<b>Text</b>	<b>LEAST COMPLEX</b>	<b>RI.10/RL.10 – Read and comprehend appropriate texts independently</b>		<b>MOST COMPLEX</b>
<b>Complexity:</b>				
<b>W4.1- W4.10</b>	<p>Express an opinion and may begin to include a reason or fact. May shift between ideas.</p> <p>Share information about a topic using words, lists, or phrases. Organization may be limited.</p> <p>Tell about an event or experience using basic description. Events may be loosely connected.</p>	<p>State a clear opinion and provide reasons supported by examples or facts. Organization may be uneven.</p> <p>Provide a general focus and includes related facts or definitions. May include an introduction or conclusion.</p> <p>Tell a story with a sequence of events, a clear setting or character, and some descriptive language.</p>	<p>Clearly state an opinion and support it with logically ordered reasons and relevant information.</p> <p>Clearly explain a topic using organized paragraphs, relevant facts, and a sense of structure.</p> <p>Tell a well-structured story with clear sequence, character development, and sensory or descriptive details.</p>	<p>Develop a convincing opinion with strong support and purposeful organization that guides the reader.</p> <p>Develop a topic with well-organized paragraphs, precise vocabulary, and elaborated details.</p> <p>Enhance a narrative with strong pacing, vivid imagery, and purposeful use of narrative techniques (e.g., dialogue, reflection).</p>

**Knowledge of Written Language and Conventions** *Student performance indicates the ability to ...*

Claim 5	Below Proficient	Approaching Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient
<b>L4.1-3 L4.6 W4.1</b>	<p>Use familiar sentence forms to share ideas. May show emerging use of subject-verb agreement or verb tense.</p> <p>Apply some familiar conventions, such as beginning sentences with capital letters or using end punctuation.</p> <p>Choose familiar words to share ideas. May begin to vary language for interest or clarity.</p> <p>Use context or familiar word parts to make sense of new words in familiar settings.</p>	<p>Use simple and compound sentences with increasing control. Show developing awareness of grammar rules.</p> <p>Use punctuation and capitalization with growing consistency. Spells many grade-level words correctly.</p> <p>Begin to adjust language and sentence structure for task or purpose.</p> <p>Apply basic strategies (e.g., context clues, known roots) to understand unfamiliar words.</p>	<p>Use a variety of sentence structures and grammar appropriate for grade-level writing.</p> <p>Use punctuation, capitalization, and spelling appropriate for grade-level writing.</p> <p>Use language choices that fit the task and purpose, including varied sentence patterns and vocabulary.</p> <p>Use a range of strategies to determine word meanings in grade-level texts.</p>	<p>Apply grammar and sentence variety intentionally to strengthen clarity and flow.</p> <p>Apply conventions with precision to support meaning and readability.</p> <p>Deliberately select words and structures to refine tone, engage the reader, or emphasize meaning.</p> <p>Flexibly and independently apply word-learning strategies to expand vocabulary in reading and writing.</p>