

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS

GRADES 1-5

RESPONDING TO THIS DOCUMENT

We welcome your response to this document.

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NOTE: Glossary words are highlighted the first time they are used within each stage.

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Benchmark Indicators Chairs

We also wish to thank the many English Language Arts educators who developed benchmark indicators during the 1999-2000 school year. Their work was instrumental in developing the performance descriptors. In particular, we would like to thank the following team leaders assigned to each grade cluster:

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INTRODUCTION

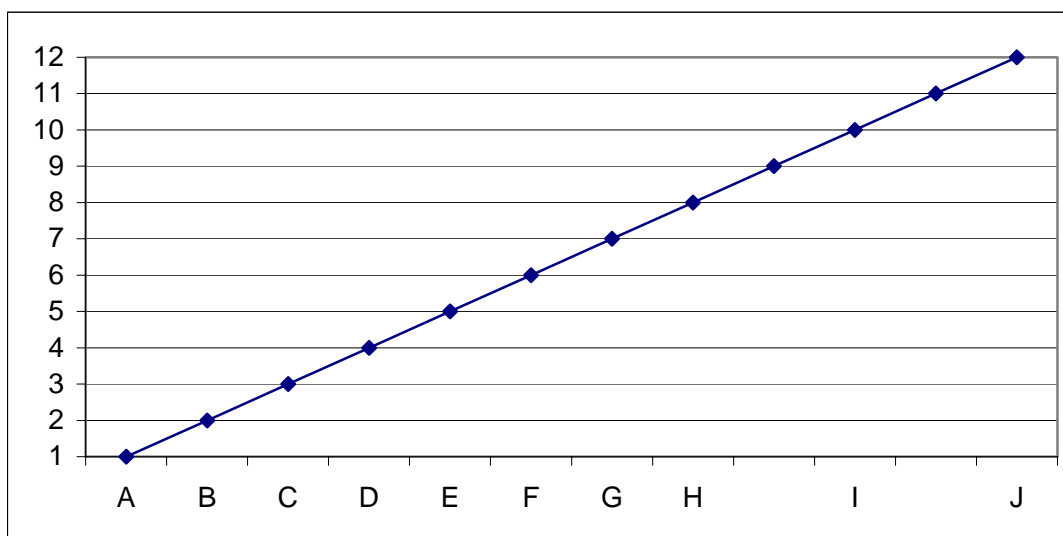
Design for Performance Standards

The Illinois Learning Standards are content standards that describe “*what*” students should know and be able to do in grades K – 12. Each content standard includes five benchmarks that describe what students should know and be able to do at early elementary, late elementary, middle/junior high, early high school, and late high school.

The challenge for the 2000-2001 school year was to produce performance standards that would indicate “*how well*” students should perform to meet the standards. To address this challenge, a number of perspectives needed to be considered. For example, the National Governors Association¹ raised two pertinent questions policymakers should consider for the design of performance standards:

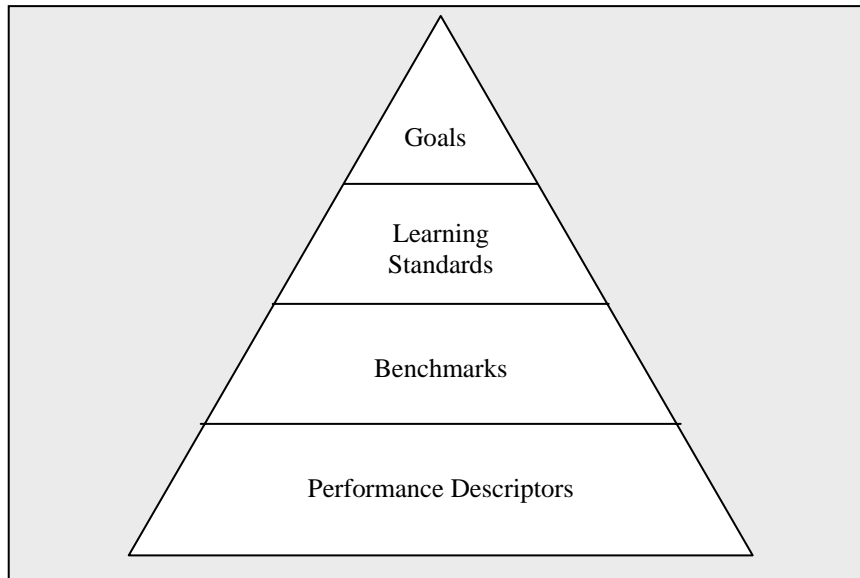
- Do the performance standards indicate the levels of performance students should attain, descriptions of performance at each level, and rules that enable educators to determine whether students have reached a given level?
- Do the performance standards include a range of work . . . to show that students can meet the standards in a variety of ways?

The performance standards describe how well students perform at various points on an educational development continuum. This continuum shows how students can demonstrate mastery of progressively more difficult content and cognitive skills over ten incremental stages of development. Performance within each stage can be assessed by the extent to which students are meeting the standards (i.e., starting, approaching, meeting, exceeding). Performance standards include four essential elements: performance descriptors, performance levels, assessment tasks, and performance examples.



¹ Ouellette, M. (2000). “Maintaining progress through systemic education reform: Performance standards,” Washington, DC: National Governors Association.

The performance standards are classroom resources for voluntary use at the local level. They are not intended to replace the Illinois Learning Standards. Instead, they supplement them by providing sufficient detail and examples to enable teachers to establish appropriate grade-level performance expectations for students. The performance descriptors are a direct outgrowth of the state goals for learning. Whereas the benchmarks filled in detail on each of the standards at five grade-level clusters, the performance descriptors provide additional detail at each grade level.



Definitions

performance standards: the knowledge and skills that students are to perform at various stages of educational development (*performance descriptors*) and the performance expectations (*performance levels and assessment tasks*) for student work (*performance exemplars*) at each of the stages.

performance descriptors: statements of how students can demonstrate the knowledge and skills they acquired.²

performance levels: descriptions of how well students have achieved the standards; that is, the range, frequency, facility, depth, creativity, and/or quality of the knowledge and skills they acquired. Students can demonstrate levels of achieving performance standards along six dimensions:

PERFORMANCE LEVEL =	RANGE +	FREQUENCY +	FACILITY +	DEPTH +	CREATIVITY +	QUALITY
Exceeding	extensively	consistently	automatically	profoundly	inventively	excellently
Meeting	fully	usually	quickly	deeply	imaginatively	well
Approaching	partially	occasionally	haltingly	cursorily	commonly	marginally
Starting	narrowly	rarely	slowly	superficially	imitatively	poorly

² New Standards. *Performance Standards*. (1997) Washington, DC: The National Center on Education and the Economy.

assessment tasks: descriptions of what students can do to demonstrate they have met the standards and a means for evaluating the levels of their performance.

performance examples: student work samples resulting from the classroom-based assessment tasks that illustrate performance levels.

Template For Expanded Performance Descriptors

BENCHMARKS ⇒	early elementary			late elementary		middle/ junior high			early high	late high
STAGES ⇒ PERFORMANCE LEVELS ↓	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Exceeding										
Meeting										
Approaching										
Starting										

Vision for English Language Arts Performance

An important aim of education from kindergarten through twelfth grade is to help every student learn to use language effectively, both as a tool for communicating and as an instrument for thinking, learning, and imagining. Guided by the **Illinois Goals and Learning Standards**, instruction in the English language arts is designed to help students become strong readers and writers, help them learn to speak and listen effectively, and help them develop skills as investigators capable of undertaking their own research.

Over the course of their schooling, students who meet the **Illinois Learning Standards** become increasingly skillful in their ability to read with understanding and fluency. By the end of twelfth grade, students who meet these standards can read relatively complex and demanding material for a variety of purposes. They can analyze new words and interpret their meanings on the basis of the components of the words themselves and the contexts in which the words appear. Students can also relate their previous knowledge to new information encountered in their reading, and they can use questions and predictions to guide their reading of particularly complex material. Their ability to read effectively includes the ability to use tables, graphs, and maps as well as text to acquire information and to evaluate arguments.

Students can also direct their reading ability to the reading and study of literature. They can analyze various elements of particular literary works, such as character, plot, conflict, theme, and setting. They can make appropriate inferences that enable them to interpret key themes in specific literary works. They can use insight gained from their reading of literature to enrich their understanding of their own cultures and individual lives, and to deepen their understanding of the cultures and individual lives of others, both past and present.

By the end of twelfth grade, students meeting the **Illinois Learning Standards** can also write and speak effectively for a range of purposes and in a variety of situations. Students can communicate information and ideas in narrative, expository, and persuasive writing, producing grammatically correct documents using available

technology. They can write effectively in a variety of academic settings and in actual, or potentially real, work-related and civic contexts. Students meeting the **Illinois Learning Standards** can also speak and listen effectively. They can comprehend and evaluate a speaker's verbal and nonverbal messages, and they can analyze and synthesize the spoken messages they hear. They can also deliver planned and impromptu presentations, use both verbal and nonverbal strategies for maintaining communication and resolving conflict, and participate effectively in discussions and collaborative work.

Finally, students who meet the **Illinois Learning Standards** can use their linguistic ability to acquire and assess information and to communicate the results of their inquiries. They can formulate a research plan, gather appropriate information, and analyze, evaluate, and synthesize the information they gather. They can communicate their findings and their own ideas effectively, supporting and defending a thesis by drawing information from appropriate sources and by offering evidence suited to the purpose and audience of the project at hand.

English language arts instruction seeks to tap the basic human capacity for learning and using language. In this key respect, the language arts are interwoven. Learning in one sphere (e.g., listening or reading) often supports learning in another (e.g., speaking or writing). People vary in the support they need as they develop specific skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. English language arts instruction must be especially attuned to providing appropriate support for students with special needs. People also vary in how they use their capacity for language, and this variation is often best understood as variation in cultural, social, and personal identity. The aim of English language arts instruction is not to eliminate or reduce the richness of linguistic diversity. Rather, the aim is to help students develop confident control over language as a powerful tool for comprehending, exploring, and communicating ideas in school and beyond, for succeeding in advanced study, for performing well in one's work, for contributing in civic and work-related arenas, and, most generally, for living a thoughtful and productive life.

Progressions

At every level, from kindergarten through twelfth grade, English language arts instruction in Illinois seeks to help students become strong readers and writers, help them learn to speak and listen effectively, and help them develop skills as investigators capable of conducting their own research. It is important to recognize that both the pace and the specific content of individual student's learning vary considerably, in part as a result of individual variation in linguistic, cognitive, and social development, and in part as a result of variation in students' broader experience with language. It is thus impossible, and in any case undesirable, to expect all students in Illinois schools to complete twelfth grade having learned to read, write, listen, and speak in precisely the same way. Nonetheless, it is possible and desirable to formulate goals, learning standards, and performance descriptors that describe common progressions of learning in the English language arts.

State-level **English Language Arts Goals** are deliberately general and thus allow for a significant range of choices in how individual school districts design and manage English language arts instruction. The goals provide broad descriptions of what students should be able to do as a result of their schooling: (1) read with understanding and fluency; (2) read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras, and ideas; (3) write to communicate for a variety of purposes; (4) listen and speak effectively in a

variety of situations; and (5) use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information.

These goals, along with the learning standards, are meant to guide the planning of instruction and anchor the assessment of learning from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The **Illinois English Language Arts Performance Descriptors** are keyed to these goals and standards, and are designed to suggest appropriate levels of learning at distinct stages of a K-12 education. The performance descriptors are thus meant to provide information to teachers and students at particular levels, giving them more specific targets for instruction and learning than are provided by the overarching **English Language Arts Goals and Standards**.

Goal 1 – Read with understanding and fluency. Taken together, the K-12 performance descriptor stages suggest a general progression of learning in the area described by the goal and standard to which they pertain. With respect to the goal of learning to read with understanding and fluency, for example, the stages suggest a progression from learning distinct word analysis techniques and comprehension strategies to developing a more automatic process for using integrated strategies in comprehending, analyzing, and synthesizing information presented in increasingly complex materials.

Goal 2 – Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras, and ideas. With respect to reading and studying literature, learning proceeds from learning to read and respond to relatively simple stories and poems to learning to comprehend, analyze, interpret, compare, and respond to increasingly complex literary works, including works in several genres and works from a range of cultural traditions.

Goal 3 – Write to communicate for a variety of purposes. In learning to write effectively, students learn to work with increasingly detailed and complex knowledge and tasks, learn to address increasingly varied audiences, and learn to manage increasingly sophisticated ways to form sentences, paragraphs, and structures for narrating, explaining, and persuading. At the same time, students learn to use the composing process with increasing sophistication as an opportunity to specify, explore, and revise their own knowledge and ideas, even as they learn to communicate more effectively the results of their thinking.

Goal 4 – Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations. Effective listening and speaking, the most commonly used of the language arts and therefore of central importance, develop through a progression of increasing sophistication in students' ability to sort, organize, evaluate, and present information. Inasmuch as listening, like reading, involves comprehending and interpreting meaning in the role of the "receiver" of a message or text, learning to listen effectively is related to learning to read well. Inasmuch as speaking, like writing, involves composing and presenting a message to a particular audience for a specific purpose, learning to speak effectively is also related to learning to write effectively.

Goal 5 – Use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information. Learning to use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information represents both a distinct kind of learning and the integration of abilities involved in learning to communicate effectively through spoken and written language. Students' learning progresses from learning to plan and complete relatively simple research

projects to developing skills needed for planning more complex research projects, for gathering, analyzing, and synthesizing information from several sources, and for preparing and presenting well-focused reports, both spoken and written, for a variety of purposes and audiences.

In using the English Language Arts Goals, Standards, and Descriptor Stages, educators can establish a useful context for planning instruction by considering the learning performance expectations for stages that come before and after the stages they emphasize in their own teaching. Teachers can adjust instruction to challenge those who are "Meeting" or "Exceeding" and provide additional support for those who are functioning at "Approaching" or "Beginning" levels. By considering the performance stages for all five goals and thirteen learning standards at a given level, educators can also coordinate instruction in different areas of the English language arts so that instruction in one area supports instruction and learning in other areas.

Finally, it should be noted that the repetition of some performance standards at successive levels of learning is meant to acknowledge that effective instruction in English language arts is not simply a matter of introducing new topics at each educational level. Effective instruction is also a matter of helping students learn to apply and extend familiar concepts, techniques, and strategies in new and increasingly challenging contexts. By the same token, as some descriptor concepts, techniques, and strategies progress through the stages, they are either absorbed into other bullets or dropped altogether as the student approaches/attains final mastery. Educators working with students in the higher stages should be aware of those concepts and abilities which have been mastered in the earlier stages and plan their instruction accordingly.

The ISBE English Language Arts Expanded Performance Descriptors: Intended Use and Interpretation

When the writing team charged with developing the performance descriptors for English Language Arts met and discussed the task, we became excited about the concept of creating a document that would both enhance and expand the classroom experience for educators and students alike. To utilize the descriptors to their full potential, several key points must be addressed prior to the implementation of the changes reflected within the stages.

Different goals receive different amounts of emphasis each year.

It is not expected that every topic within the content area will be addressed each year. For instance, students will reach a certain depth of understanding of concepts and demonstrate certain levels of proficiency within certain stages. Thereafter, instruction should be designed to extend what students can do. This approach supports a fundamental concept of best practices: Effective teachers determine where their students are and extend their learning from that point. Even though each of the thirteen English Language Arts standards applies to all grades, emphases will vary both within and between the grade bands.

The document is intended to be a developmental guide.

The stages are not intended to define grade levels. It can be assumed, however, that certain stages do correspond roughly to certain grade levels (i.e., stage C to the 3rd

grade ISAT expectations, stage E to 5th grade, stage H to 8th grade, stage I to early high school, and Stage J to late high school) and the performance descriptors match the “meets” standards at those levels. The other stages **are not** meant to explicitly correspond to the missing grades between. One stage below or above may not represent one grade level below or above. Instead, they represent the developmental stages of student learning and show a progression through which students acquire an understanding of English Language Arts concepts. Consequently, it is not enough for a teacher to look at a single stage and decide what content he or she will teach at that grade level. Rather, a series of at least three stages (the prior stage, the stage at which students are functioning, and the following stage) must be considered to define the progression of understanding students should experience in order to move from one ISAT stage to the next.

The document is a curriculum development tool.

The stages of development presented in this document may be used by a school district to establish a curriculum that will help students meet state standards. By using the stages corresponding to ISAT, curricula can move students through the stages of development without teaching every concept every year. Taken together, the K-12 performance descriptor stages suggest a general progression of learning in the area described by the goal and standard to which they pertain. In this manner the performance descriptors are used to help *develop* a curriculum, rather than to *prescribe* a state-mandated curriculum of what should be taught at each grade. In fact, while writing the descriptors, the team worked to avoid statements that advocated certain pedagogy. Instead, statements focus on measurable student performances.

Each stage represents growth from the previous stage.

It should be noted that the repetition of some performance descriptors at successive levels of learning is meant to acknowledge that effective instruction in English Language Arts is not simply a matter of introducing new topics at each educational level. Effective instruction is also a matter of helping students learn to apply and extend familiar concepts, techniques, and strategies in new and increasingly challenging contexts. By the same token, as some descriptor concepts, techniques, and strategies progress through the stages, they are either absorbed into other bullets or dropped altogether as the student approaches/attains final mastery. Educators working with students in the higher stages should be aware of those concepts and abilities which have been mastered in the earlier stages and plan their instruction accordingly.

The document uses appropriate English Language Arts terminology.

Occasionally, a reader may encounter an unfamiliar term. As a student progresses through the stages of development, it is assumed that a vocabulary shift will occur and the correct terms will be applied. In order to assist the reader with terminology used in this document, a glossary has been written with specific definitions to clarify intended meanings.

The document is based on the current form of the state learning goals and their benchmarks.

It is assumed that the state goals and benchmarks will undergo continual refinement, and this document will need to be revised as that happens. As such, this document should always be considered a work in progress. During their development, the performance descriptors were carefully aligned with the ***Illinois State Learning Standards*** and the ***National English Language Arts Standards***. Primarily guided by these two documents, all of the bullet points are written to indicate the "meets" level of performance for each stage and are not intended to limit instruction. Curriculum should be fluid and change as needed at local levels.

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

1A Students who meet the standard can apply word analysis and vocabulary skills to comprehend selections.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use phonics to decode simple words in age-appropriate material. • Demonstrate phonological awareness (e.g., counting syllables, hearing rhyme, alliteration, onset and rime) of sounds in words. • Demonstrate phonemic awareness by blending or segmenting phonemes in a one-syllable word. • Recognize 100 high frequency sight words including environmental print (but not including words the child can read using phonics). • Use appropriate strategies of decoding (e.g., illustrations, phonics, word patterns, context clues) to recognize unknown words when reading material. • Use knowledge of letter-sound correspondences and high frequency words to orally read age-appropriate material. • Begin to recognize miscues that interfere with meaning and use self-correcting strategies. • Use a variety of resources (e.g., age-appropriate dictionaries, pictures, illustrations, photos, ask others, context, previous experience) to determine and clarify meanings of unfamiliar words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use phonics to decode new words in age-appropriate material. • Use phonological awareness knowledge (e.g., isolate, blend, substitute, manipulate letter sounds) to identify phonetically regular one and two syllable words. • Recognize 300 high frequency sight words. • Use a variety of decoding strategies (e.g., phonics, word patterns, structural analysis, context clues) to recognize new words when reading age-appropriate material. • Use letter-sound knowledge and sight vocabulary to read orally and silently/whisper read age-appropriate material. • Self-monitor reading and use decoding strategies to self-correct miscues. • Use a variety of resources (e.g., context, previous experiences, dictionaries, glossaries, computer resources, ask others) to determine and clarify meanings of unfamiliar words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use phonics to decode new words in age-appropriate material. • Use word analysis (root words, inflections, affixes) to identify words. • Discuss the meanings of new words encountered in independent and group activities. • Use synonyms and antonyms to define words. • Use a variety of decoding strategies (e.g., phonics, word patterns, structural analysis, context clues) to recognize new words when reading age-appropriate material. • Self-monitor reading and use decoding strategies to self-correct miscues. • Use context and previous experience to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words in text. • Use a variety of resources (e.g., dictionaries, thesauruses, indices, glossaries, internet, interviews, available technology) to clarify meanings of unfamiliar words.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

1A Students who meet the standard can apply word analysis and vocabulary skills to comprehend selections.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a combination of word analysis and vocabulary strategies (e.g., phonics, word patterns, structural analyses) to identify words. 2. Learn and use high frequency root words, prefixes, and suffixes to understand word meaning. 3. Use synonyms and antonyms to define words. 4. Use word origins to construct the meanings of new words. 5. Apply word analysis and vocabulary strategies across the curriculum and in independent reading to self correct miscues that interfere with meaning. 6. Recognize the difference between denotative and connotative meanings of words. 7. Determine the meaning of a word in context when the word has multiple meanings. 8. Use additional resources (e.g., newspapers, interviews, technological resources) as applicable to clarify meanings of unfamiliar words. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a combination of word analysis and vocabulary strategies (e.g., word patterns, structural analyses) within context to identify unknown words. 2. Learn and use root words, prefixes, and suffixes to understand word meanings. 3. Use synonyms and antonyms to define words. 4. Use word origins to construct the meanings of new words. 5. Use root words and context to determine the denotative and connotative meanings of unknown words. 6. Determine the meaning of a word in context when the word has multiple meanings. 7. Identify and interpret common idioms, similes, analogies, and metaphors. 8. Use additional resources (e.g., newspapers, interviews, technological resources) as applicable to clarify meanings of material. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and apply appropriate word analysis and vocabulary strategies (e.g., word patterns, structural analyses) to identify unfamiliar words. 2. Use prefixes, suffixes, and root words to understand word meanings. 3. Use synonyms and antonyms to express the implied meaning of a new word. 4. Determine the meaning of words in context using denotation and connotation strategies. 5. Identify and interpret idioms, similes, analogies, and metaphors to express implied meanings of words. 6. Use etymologies to construct the meanings of new words. 7. Apply appropriate word analysis, vocabulary, and contextual clues to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words across a range of subjects. 8. Recognize literary devices (e.g., figurative language, description, dialogue) in text.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

1B Students who meet the standard can apply reading strategies to improve understanding and fluency.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make predictions before reading and relate to personal experiences (e.g., illustrations, title). 2. Discuss prior knowledge of topics and relate to the text before reading. 3. Connect the elements of narratives (e.g., character, setting, plot) to the text. 4. Distinguish between poetry and prose. 5. Begin to check for understanding (e.g., reread, read ahead, use illustrations and context clues) during reading. 6. Ask questions to clarify understanding before, during, and after reading. 7. Re-enact or dramatize the contents of stories for retellings. 8. Read age-appropriate material orally with accuracy, rhythm, volume, and flow that sounds like everyday speech. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read fiction and non-fiction materials for specific purposes. 2. Use clues (e.g., titles, pictures, themes, prior knowledge, graphs) to make and justify predictions before, during and after reading. 3. Recognize informational text structure (e.g., sequence, list/example) before and during reading. 4. Develop familiarity with poetry (e.g., choral reading to develop fluency). 5. Recognize when understanding requires re-reading to clarify meaning. 6. State facts and details of text during and after reading. 7. Locate answers to age-appropriate questions, before, during, and after reading, to clarify understanding. 8. Interpret text information gathered from diagrams, graphs, or maps before, during and after reading. 9. Demonstrate creative responses to text such as dramatizations, oral presentations, or “make believe” play after reading. 10. Interpret age-appropriate figurative language. 11. Read age-appropriate material orally with accuracy, rhythm, volume, and flow that sounds like everyday speech. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify purposes for reading before and during reading. 2. Make predictions about text events before and during reading and confirm, modify, or reject predictions after reading. 3. Use a variety of strategies (e.g., K-W-L, anticipation guide, graphic organizer, DR-TA) to connect important ideas in text to prior knowledge and other reading. 4. Identify explicit main ideas. 5. Make connections from text to text, text to self, text to world. 6. Differentiate between fact and opinion. 7. Identify genres of fiction and non-fiction. 8. Identify genres of poetry. 9. Continuously check and clarify for understanding (e.g., reread, read ahead, use visual and context clues) during reading. 10. Ask questions to clarify understanding. 11. Summarize or retell information from a text. 12. Interpret age-appropriate figurative language. 13. Read age-appropriate material aloud with fluency and accuracy.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

1B Students who meet the standard can apply reading strategies to improve understanding and fluency.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set a purpose for reading and adjust as necessary before and during reading. 2. Use self-questioning and teacher questioning to promote active reading. 3. Infer before, during, and after reading. 4. Select and use appropriate strategies according to textual complexities and reader purpose before and during reading. 5. Make connections from text to text, text to self, text to world. 6. Demonstrate an accurate understanding of information in the text by focusing on the key ideas presented explicitly or implicitly and making connections text to text, text to self, text to world. 7. Identify explicit and implicit main ideas. 8. Differentiate between fact and opinion. 9. Infer cause/effect relationships in expository text. 10. Paraphrase/summarize information in a text. 11. Clarify understanding continuously (e.g., read ahead, use visual and context clues) during reading. 12. Critique text using personal reflections and responses. 13. Generalize meanings from figurative language. 14. Apply self-monitoring techniques to adjust rate and utilize various resources according to purposes and materials. 15. Read age-appropriate material aloud with fluency and accuracy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set a purpose for reading and adjust as necessary before and during reading. 2. Formulate questions to determine meaning based on plot/character, action, or setting. 3. Apply survey strategies (e.g., use of bold print, organization of content, key words, graphics). 4. Make judgments based on prior knowledge during reading. 5. Distinguish between significant and minor details. 6. Connect, clarify, and extend ideas through discussions, activities, and various classroom groupings (e.g., partners, small group, ability levels, interest levels). 7. Identify structure (e.g., description, compare, cause/effect, sequence) of nonfiction text to improve comprehension. 8. Demonstrate understanding of structure through the use of graphic organizers and outlining (e.g., mapping, time lines, Venn diagrams). 9. Apply self-monitoring and self-correcting strategies (e.g., reread, read ahead, use visual and context clues, ask questions, retell, clarify terminology, seek additional information) continuously to clarify understanding during reading. 10. Read age-appropriate material aloud with fluency and accuracy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use skimming to preview reading materials and scanning to detect major visual patterns and identify text structure before reading. 2. Identify author's ideas and purposes. 3. Build and support plausible interpretations with evidence from the text through collaboration with others. 4. Make connections to real world situations or related topics before and during reading. 5. Identify main plot elements, conflicts, and themes in a variety of texts. 6. Distinguish between significant and minor details. 7. Connect and clarify main ideas and concepts, and identify their relationship to other sources and topics. 8. Demonstrate an accurate understanding of important information in the text by focusing on the key ideas presented explicitly or implicitly. 9. Demonstrate understanding of structure through the use of graphic organizers and outlining (e.g., mapping, time lines, Venn diagrams). 10. Apply survey strategies (e.g., use of bold print, organization of content, key words, graphics). 11. Summarize ideas from text to make and defend accurate inferences about character traits and motivations. 12. Interpret the meaning of figurative language in a variety of texts. 13. Evaluate new information and hypotheses by comparing them to known information and ideas. 14. Apply self-monitoring and self-correcting strategies during reading to check and clarify for understanding. 15. Read aloud fluently (with expression, accuracy, and appropriate speed). 16. Develop creative interpretations of reading. 17. Select and read books for recreation.
Grade 1 (A-B)	Grade 2 (A-B-C)	Grade 3 (B-C-D)
Grade 4 (C-D-E)	Grade 5 (D-E-F)	

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

1C Students who meet the standard can comprehend a broad range of reading materials.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize questions can be used to gain information. 2. Ask questions to seek elaboration of illustrations or portions of text and to monitor comprehension (e.g., ask why a character would do something, ask for clarification of something). 3. Begin to recognize the author's purpose across a broad range of materials. 4. Identify the motives of characters in various works (e.g., biography, non-fiction, diary). 5. Compare two books by the same author. 6. Compare a broad range of familiar books that have the same theme and topic. 7. Summarize information about fiction and nonfiction materials in illustrations, charts and other graphics. 8. Summarize or tell information from a broad range of reading material. 9. Predict and then confirm questions characters in stories might ask. 10. Create illustrations to answer questions about a story. 11. Use information in illustrations or text to make predictions and relate to prior knowledge. 12. Use text provided in functional classroom messages (e.g., labels, signs, instructions) to get information. 13. Select books appropriate to reading levels or interests. 14. Develop familiarity with available technology (e.g., computers, software, copiers). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respond to analytical and interpretive questions based on information in text. 2. Select passages in non-fiction materials to answer specific questions. 3. Ask questions to seek clarification of meaning. 4. Use information in text or illustrations to generate questions about the cause of a specific effect. 5. Use self-monitoring (e.g., re-read question, confirm) to solve problems in meaning to achieve understanding of a broad range of reading materials. 6. Identify the author's purpose and the main idea. 7. Compare an author's information with the student's knowledge of self, world, and other texts in non-fiction text. 8. Compare a broad range of books that have the same theme and topic. 9. Summarize and retell text read or heard. 10. Recognize and discuss the structure of a story in sequential order. 11. Use information in text to recognize differences of opinion. 12. Recognize how specific authors and illustrators express their ideas in text and graphics (e.g., dialogue, characters, color). 13. Identify and begin to interpret information presented in age-appropriate maps, diagrams, and charts for both fiction and nonfiction materials. 14. Select books appropriate to reading levels. 15. Develop familiarity with available technology (e.g., computers, copiers, cameras, interactive web sites). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use evidence in text to form questions and verify predictions. 2. Use information to generate and respond to questions that reflect higher level thinking skills (e.g., analyzing, synthesizing, inferring, evaluating). 3. Identify important themes and topics by using relevant and accurate references to provide a valid interpretation of text. 4. Identify the message the author conveys in the text. 5. Make comparisons across reading selections (e.g., themes, topics, story elements). 6. Interpret concepts or make connections through analysis, evaluation, inference, and/or comparison. 7. Use text structure (e.g., sequential order, chronological order, problem/solution) to determine most important information. 8. Explain how authors and illustrators express their ideas. 9. Use information from simple tables, maps, and charts to increase comprehension of a variety of age-appropriate materials, both fiction and nonfiction. 10. Use available technology (e.g., interactive web sites, software, electronic mail).
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

1C Students who meet the standard can comprehend a broad range of reading materials.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use evidence in text to modify predictions and questions. 2. Use evidence in text to respond to open-ended questions. 3. Use evidence in text to generate and confirm or reject hypotheses. 4. Compare themes, topics, and story elements of various selections by one author. 5. Interpret concepts or make connections through comparison, analysis, evaluation, and inference. 6. Select reading strategies for text appropriate to the reader's purpose. 7. Make generalizations based on relevant information from expository text. 8. Recognize main ideas and secondary ideas in expository text. 9. Paraphrase/summarize narrative text according to text structure. 10. Recognize how illustrations reflect, interpret, and enhance the text. 11. Recognize similarities and differences when presented with varying styles or points of view. 12. Apply information obtained from age-appropriate fiction and nonfiction materials to simple tables, maps, and charts. 13. Apply appropriate reading strategies to fiction and non-fiction texts within and across content areas. 14. Develop familiarity with available electronic literary forms (e.g., interactive web sites, interactive software, electronic mail). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use evidence in text to form and refine questions, predictions, and hypotheses. 2. Ask open-ended questions. 3. Identify evidence for inferences and interpretations based on text combined with prior knowledge. 4. Compare the content and organization (e.g., themes, topics, text structure, story elements) of various selections. 5. Recognize similarities/differences of varying styles or points of view. 6. Select reading strategies for text appropriate to the reader's purpose. 7. Synthesize key points (ideas) and supporting details to form conclusions. 8. Interpret imagery and figurative language (e.g., alliteration, metaphor, simile, personification). 9. Explain how authors and illustrators use text and art to express their ideas (e.g., points of view, design hues, metaphors). 10. Show examples of cultural styles in art to enhance meaning and comprehension as done by different illustrators. 11. Interpret information from tables, maps, visual aids, and charts to enhance understanding of text. 12. Apply appropriate reading strategies to fiction and non-fiction texts within and across content areas. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confirm, reject and modify questions, predictions, and hypotheses based on evidence in text. 2. Use relevant and accurate references, most of which are specific and fully supported to make generalizations from content. 3. Ask and respond to open-ended questions. 4. Compare the theme, topic, text structure, and story elements of various selections within a content area. 5. Interpret concepts or make connections through analysis, evaluation, inference, and/or comparison. 6. Select reading strategies for text appropriate to the reader's purpose. 7. Recognize how reader response is related to text interpretation. 8. Identify the author's controlling idea/thesis. 9. Interpret imagery and figurative language (e.g., alliteration, metaphor, simile, personification). 10. Explain how illustrators use art to express their ideas. 11. Recognize how illustrations from various cultures reflect, interpret, and enhance the text. 12. Recognize the influence media (e.g., television, film) can have on the reader's point of view concerning fiction materials. 13. Apply appropriate reading strategies to fiction and non-fiction texts within and across content areas.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

2A Students who meet the standard can understand how literary elements and techniques are used to convey meaning.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and compare characters, settings, and/or events in stories and/or pictures. 2. Tell a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. 3. Define unfamiliar vocabulary. 4. Imitate rhythm/rhyme patterns. 5. Distinguish between “real” and “make believe”. 6. Begin to recognize that prose is written in sentences and organized in paragraphs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe and compare characters, settings, and/or events in stories or pictures. 2. Retell stories and events using a beginning, a middle, and an end. 3. Define unfamiliar vocabulary. 4. Identify the topic or main idea (theme). 5. Distinguish between “make believe” and realistic narrative. 6. Compare different versions of the same story from different cultures and eras. 7. Recognize a regular beat and similarities of sound (rhythm and rhyme) in poetry. 8. Recognize that prose is written in sentences and organized in paragraphs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the theme (e.g., friendship, cooperation, sharing, change, exploration) in selected stories and books. 2. Identify the setting and tell how it affects the story. 3. Identify the elements of plot by retelling the story (i.e., problem, attempts to solve problem, or resolution of problem). 4. Identify/compare characters’ attributes across stories. 5. Define unfamiliar vocabulary. 6. Name several characteristics that distinguish fiction from nonfiction. 7. Classify major types of fiction (e.g., tall tale, fairy tale, fable). 8. Classify major types of nonfiction (e.g., essay, biography, autobiography). 9. Classify types of expository text structures (e.g., description, sequence, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution). 10. Recognize that prose is written in sentences and organized in paragraphs. 11. Recognize both rhymed and unrhymed poetry. 12. Discover poetic devices (e.g., rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, onomatopoeia, repetition, simile, metaphor).
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

2A Students who meet the standard can understand how literary elements and techniques are used to convey meaning.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read a wide range of fiction. 2. Identify and compare themes or messages in various selections. 3. Compare one or more story elements (e.g., character, plot, setting) and points of view in a variety of works by a variety of authors from different times and cultures. 4. Identify and discuss the elements of plot and subplot. 5. Identify/compare characters' attributes and motives. 6. Make inferences about character traits and check text for verification. 7. Analyze unfamiliar vocabulary. 8. Identify metaphor, simile, onomatopoeia, and hyperbole in text. 9. Discuss and respond to a variety of literature (e.g., folktales, legends, myths, fiction, nonfiction, poems). 10. Identify rhythm and rhyme in original work. 11. Identify poetic devices (e.g., alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, rhyme scheme). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read a wide range of fiction. 2. Identify literary elements and techniques in literary genres (e.g., fables, biographies, historical fiction) and tell how they affect the story. 3. Predict how the story might be different if the author changed literary elements or techniques (e.g., dialect, setting, vocabulary). 4. Explain how a technique or element affects the events or characterization in a literary work. 5. Make inferences about character traits and check text for verification. 6. Analyze the use of unfamiliar vocabulary. 7. Use comprehension strategies (e.g., association, categorization, graphic organizers) to enhance understanding. 8. Identify ways in which fiction and nonfiction works are organized differently. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read a wide range of fiction. 2. Identify literary elements and literary techniques (e.g., satire, characterization, narration, dialogue, figurative language) in a variety of genres and tell how they affect the work. 3. Predict how the story might be different if the author changed certain literary elements or techniques (e.g., dialect, setting, vocabulary). 4. Describe how the development of theme, character, plot, and setting contribute to the overall impact of a piece of literature. 5. Compare selections with similar characters, plots, and/or themes. 6. Understand and use literary terms (e.g., foreshadowing, metaphor, simile, symbolism, flashback, scene, dialogue). 7. Transfer new vocabulary from literature into other contexts. 8. Identify characteristics and authors associated with various literary forms (e.g., short stories, novels, drama, fables, biographies, documentaries, poetry, science fiction). 9. Recognize and use cognitive strategies (e.g., analysis, synthesis, inference) to enhance understanding. 10. Compare ways in which different kinds of literature are organized (e.g., plays, short stories, essays, poems).
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

2B Students who meet the standard can read and interpret a variety of literary works.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate self-selected/ teacher-selected literature (e.g., picture books, nursery rhymes, fairy tales, poems, legends) from a variety of cultures. 2. Respond appropriately to texts representing life skills (e.g., classroom labels, school signs, restroom symbols). 3. Re-enact and retell stories, songs, poems, plays, and other literary works. 4. Produce simple evaluative expressions about the text (“I like the story because…”). 5. Make simple connections from the story to events or people in their own lives. 6. Compare two books by the same author. 7. Discuss several books on the same topic. 8. Identify specific parts of the text to support a point. 9. Present a reasonable interpretation of a book. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate self-selected/ teacher-selected literature (e.g., picture books, nursery rhymes, fairy tales, poems, legends) from a variety of cultures. 2. Respond appropriately to texts representative of life skills (e.g., classroom label, school signs, restroom symbols.) 3. Re-enact and retell selections (e.g., stories, songs, poems). 4. Make a reasonable judgment with support from the text. 5. Apply text variations (e.g., change setting, alter a character, rewrite the ending). 6. Make connections from text to text, text to self, text to world. 7. Compare two works by the same author. 8. Discuss several works that have a common idea. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply events and situations in both fiction and nonfiction to personal experiences. 2. Investigate literature from a variety of time periods/ cultures/genres. 3. Compare works by the same author. 4. Discuss works that have a common theme. 5. Re-enact/role play/retell (e.g., stories, songs, poems, plays). 6. Support plausible interpretations with evidence from the text.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

2B Students who meet the standard can read and interpret a variety of literary works.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make inferences, draw conclusions, make connections from text to text, text to self, text to world. 2. Support an interpretation by citing the text. 3. Compare works by the same author. 4. Analyze several works that have a common theme. 5. Read a wide range of nonfiction (e.g., books, newspapers, magazines, textbooks, visual media). 6. Make inferences, draw conclusions, and make connections from text to text, text to self, and text to world. 7. Support plausible interpretations with evidence from the text. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create an extension to a literary text (e.g., alternate ending, additional dialog for a character). 2. Make inferences, draw conclusions, and make connections from text to text, text to self, and text to world. 3. Analyze and remedy difficulties in comprehension (e.g., questioning, rephrasing, analyzing). 4. Compare ideas from texts representing a variety of times and cultures. 5. Make inferences and draw conclusions about contexts, events, character, and settings. 6. Read a wide range of nonfiction (e.g., books, newspapers, magazines, textbooks, visual media). 7. Support plausible interpretations with evidence from the text. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respond to fiction using interpretive and evaluative processes. 2. Select favorite authors and genres. 3. Connect literary selections to historical context. 4. Make inferences, draw conclusions, and make connections from text to text, text to self, and text to world. 5. Discuss recurring themes across works in print and media. 6. Compare themes, conflicts, and figurative language from diverse times and cultures. 7. Make inferences and draw conclusions about contexts, events, character, and settings. 8. Discuss the impact of author's word choice on content. 9. Interpret nonfiction text and informational materials. 10. Support plausible interpretations with evidence from the text.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

3A Students who meet the standard can use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization and structure.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write simple 2-3 word sentences (e.g., subject-verb/subject-verb-complement). 2. Use beginning capitalization. 3. Use end marks (e.g., period, question mark). 4. Use phonemic clues, phonetic and/or developmental spellings to construct words. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extend simple sentences (e.g., subject-verb-complement pattern). 2. Use correct subject/verb agreement. 3. Use appropriate capitalization (e.g., beginning capitalization, proper nouns). 4. Use end marks (e.g., period, question mark, exclamation mark). 5. Use correct spelling of high frequency words. 6. Use phonemic clues, phonetic and/or developmental spelling to spell unfamiliar words. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a paragraph using proper form (e.g., topic sentence, details, summary/conclusion sentence). 2. Construct complete sentences. 3. Demonstrate subject-verb agreement. 4. Use end marks, commas, and quotation marks. 5. Use appropriate capitalization. 6. Use appropriate punctuation. 7. Use correct spelling of high frequency words. 8. Use knowledge of letter-sound relationships to spell unfamiliar words. 9. Demonstrate appropriate use of the various parts of speech (e.g., nouns, pronouns, verbs). 10. Proofread and revise one's own work.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

3A Students who meet the standard can use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization and structure.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write fully-developed paragraph(s) using proper form (e.g., topic sentence, details, summary/conclusion sentence) and a variety of sentence types (i.e., interrogative, declarative, imperative, exclamatory). 2. Demonstrate subject/verb agreement. 3. Use appropriate capitalization. 4. Use appropriate punctuation. 5. Use correct spelling of appropriate high frequency words. 6. Demonstrate progression from phonetic to conventional spelling of words. 7. Demonstrate appropriate use of the various parts of speech (e.g., noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb). 8. Proofread one's own work and the work of others and revise accordingly. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write paragraphs that include a variety of sentence types (i.e., declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, imperative). 2. Develop multi-paragraph compositions that include an introduction, first and second level support, and a conclusion. 3. Use a variety of sentence structures (e.g., simple, compound). 4. Use basic transition words to connect ideas. 5. Proofread for correct English conventions. 6. Demonstrate appropriate use of various parts of speech. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop multi-paragraph compositions that include an introduction, first and second level support, and a conclusion. 2. Use a variety of sentence structures (e.g., simple, compound/complex) and sentence types (i.e., declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, imperative). 3. Use basic transition words/phrases to connect ideas. 4. Proofread for correct English conventions. 5. Demonstrate appropriate use of the eight parts of speech.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

3B Students who meet the standard can compose well-organized and coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use age-appropriate prewriting strategies (e.g., drawing, brainstorming, graphic organizers) to generate and organize ideas with teacher assistance. 2. Tell a focused story using various approaches (e.g., pictures, scribbles, letter approximations, connected oral account). 3. Use details in the telling that relate only to the story in the picture or letter approximations. 4. Respond accurately to questions about the character(s) and event(s) in the picture. 5. Attempt to write text that is related to the picture. 6. Revise the picture/text for classroom publication or sharing with peers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use appropriate prewriting strategies (e.g., drawing, brainstorming, idea mapping, graphic organizers) to generate and organize ideas with teacher assistance. 2. Compose a focused story using picture(s) and/or basic text. 3. Use a series of pictures and basic text to tell a focused story. 4. Organize the picture(s) and text to tell the story in proper order. 5. Elaborate and support written content with facts, details, and description. 6. Begin to evaluate and reflect on own writing and that of others. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use appropriate prewriting strategies (e.g., drawing, webbing, brainstorming, listing, note taking, graphic organizers) to generate and organize ideas with teacher assistance. 2. Establish and maintain a focus. 3. Use stages of the writing process (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing) to develop paragraphs with focus, organization, elaboration, and integration. 4. Organize around a structure (e.g., paragraph, essay) appropriate to purpose, audience, and context. 5. Use basic transitions to connect ideas. 6. Elaborate and support ideas (e.g., pictures, facts, details, description, narration). 7. Revise and edit (e.g., conference with self, peer, volunteer, teacher).
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

3B Students who meet the standard can compose well-organized and coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use prewriting strategies to choose a topic and generate ideas (e.g., webbing, brainstorming, listing, note taking, outlining, drafting, graphic organizers) with limited teacher assistance. 2. Compose topic sentence; establish and maintain a focus. 3. Organize paragraph(s) with a clear beginning, middle, and end appropriate to purpose, audience, and context. 4. Use basic transitions to connect ideas. 5. Elaborate ideas through first level supporting details (e.g., facts, description, reasons, narration). 6. Use adjectives and adverbs to enrich written language. 7. Use a variety of sentence structures (e.g., simple, compound, complex) appropriately. 8. Revise and edit (e.g., conference with self, peer, volunteer, teacher). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use prewriting strategies to choose a topic and generate ideas (e.g., webbing, brainstorming, listing, note taking, outlining, drafting, graphic organizers). 2. Establish and maintain a focus. 3. Develop a topic sentence that is supported with details. 4. Organize a coherent structure appropriate to purpose (i.e., narration, exposition, persuasion), audience, and context using paragraphs and transition words. 5. Use appropriate transition words to connect ideas. 6. Elaborate ideas through facts, details, description, reasons, narration. 7. Use adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases to enrich written language. 8. Revise and edit (e.g., conference with self, peer, volunteer, teacher). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use pre-writing strategies (e.g., webbing, brainstorming, listing, note taking, outlining, graphic organizers). 2. Analyze basic audience and purpose for writing and choose the appropriate form (e.g., letters, poems, reports, narratives). 3. Establish and maintain focus/organization within and across paragraphs (coherence/cohesion). 4. Use organizational patterns (e.g., sequence, cause/effect, comparison). 5. Write using organization (e.g. introduction, body, conclusion) and elaboration (second level support) that demonstrate coherence. 6. Use figurative language. 7. Use appropriate transitional words and phrases to connect and unify key ideas. 8. Edit and revise content. 9. Select effective formats for publication. 10. Use available technology (e.g., word processing, desktop publishing, electronic dictionary/glossary, printing).
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

3C Students who meet the standard can communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use basic components of the writing process (e.g., prewriting, drafting, publishing) to write for a variety of purposes (e.g., narration, exposition). 2. Retell a focused story. 3. Create a basic publication using available resources (e.g., pictures, colors, computer, copier). 4. Experiment with different forms of writing (e.g., song, poetry, short fiction, recipes, diary, journal, directions). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use the writing process for a variety of purposes (e.g., narration, exposition). 2. Use available technology to plan, compose, revise and edit written work. 3. Begin to rely on text as well as pictures and oral narration to convey meaning. 4. Experiment with different forms of writing (e.g., song, poetry, short fiction, recipes, diary, journal, directions). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use the writing process for a variety of purposes (e.g., narration, exposition, persuasion). 2. Use available technology to plan, compose, revise, and edit written work. 3. Experiment with different forms of creative writing (e.g., song, poetry, short fiction, play).
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

3C Students who meet the standard can communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use appropriate language, detail, and format for a specified audience. 2. Use the characteristics of a well-developed narrative, expository, and persuasive piece. 3. Write creatively for a specified purpose and audience (e.g., short story, poetry, play, rap, parody). 4. Write friendly letters. 5. Use available technology to design, produce, and present compositions and multimedia works. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use appropriate language, detail, and format for a specified audience. 2. Use the characteristics of a well-developed narrative, expository, and persuasive piece. 3. Write creatively for a specified purpose and audience (e.g., short story, poetry, directions, song, friendly letter). 4. Use available technology to design, produce, and present compositions and multimedia works. 5. Compose a multi-paragraph piece which presents one position of an issue that offers sufficient support. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use appropriate language, details, and format for a specified audience (e.g., gender, age, prior knowledge, interest). 2. Compose writing that supports a topic or thesis statement with evidence (e.g., newspaper article, pamphlet, report, brochure, manual, business letter). 3. Write a multi-paragraph narrative account (e.g., friendly letter, journal, autobiography, biographical account, memoir) that establishes a context, creates a point of view, and develops a focused impression. 4. Develop a multi-paragraph piece of persuasive writing. 5. Write creatively for a specified purpose and audience (e.g. short story, poetry, radio scripts, directions, TV commercial). 6. Compose a multi-paragraph persuasive piece which presents one position of an issue that offers sufficient support through multiple strategies (e.g., cause/effect, compare/contrast). 7. Use available technology (e.g., web pages, presentations, speeches) to design, produce, and present compositions and multi-media works.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

4A Students who meet the standard can listen effectively in formal and informal situations.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assume requested position and attend to speaker. 2. Respond appropriately through movements both individually and in unison (e.g., choral answers, gestures, questions, repeating and retelling). 3. Recognize common sounds (e.g., honk, bark, siren, whistle, running water). 4. Distinguish letter sounds. 5. Differentiate between words that rhyme and those that do not rhyme. 6. Distinguish between “real” and “make believe” events. 7. Differentiate between a statement and a question. 8. Formulate both a response statement and a question at appropriate times. 9. Complete a 2-step task based on oral instructions. 10. Demonstrate through body language, art, gestures, and oral responses that some visual and auditory messages are being understood. 11. Ask appropriate questions to clarify basic events in media presentations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assume appropriate position and attend to the speaker. 2. Respond appropriately through movements, gestures, questions, and retelling. 3. Identify common sounds (e.g., trumpet, train). 4. State words that rhyme with a word given orally. 5. Analyze qualities of sound (e.g., loudness, softness, pleasantness). 6. Differentiate between events that are “real” and “make believe”. 7. Demonstrate the ability to listen for different purposes (e.g., entertainment, information, social interaction). 8. Use question-building words appropriately (e.g., what, when, how, why, could, should, did). 9. Provide information that answers the question-building words when they are presented orally. 10. Complete a 2-step task based on oral instructions. 11. Demonstrate through body language, gestures, and written and oral responses that visual and auditory messages are being understood. 12. Respond appropriately to comments made by others by providing new, additional information. 13. Formulate relevant questions and respond appropriately to questions about the medium’s messages. 14. Begin to distinguish between main ideas and details that are heard. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend to the speaker and focus attention on what is being said. 2. Distinguish among different kinds of information (e.g., fact, opinion, detail, main idea, fantasy, reality). 3. Demonstrate the ability to listen for different purposes (e.g., information gathering, entertainment, social interaction). 4. Separate and retell main ideas from information that is given orally. 5. Formulate relevant and focused questions. 6. Respond in an appropriate manner to questions and discussion with relevant and focused comments. 7. Complete a task for which two or more steps are given orally. 8. Begin to paraphrase and summarize the content of both formal and informal presentations or messages (e.g., directions, media, announcements, speakers). 9. Demonstrate understanding of materials, concepts, or instructions presented in auditorily based media. 10. Paraphrase/summarize information presented in auditorily based media.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

4A Students who meet the standard can listen effectively in formal and informal situations.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to assess the situation and determine, with limited direction from the teacher, the appropriate level of focus. 2. Demonstrate the ability to listen for different purposes (e.g., information gathering, entertainment, social interaction). 3. Record appropriate notes from content of a formal presentation. 4. Paraphrase and summarize the content of both formal and informal presentations or messages (e.g., directions, announcements, conversations, speakers, media presentations). 5. Distinguish between and formulate questions that are based on facts and those that are based on inferences and opinions. 6. Formulate relevant and focused questions and answers in a variety of settings (e.g., cooperative learning groups, class discussions, guest speakers, debates, assemblies). 7. Demonstrate comprehension by repeating or paraphrasing and executing a simple set of directions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate the situation and assume appropriate listening mode. 2. Record appropriate notes from presentation. 3. Distinguish between nonverbal and verbal messages. 4. Separate main ideas from supporting facts and details. 5. Paraphrase and summarize the content of a formal/informal spoken presentation or message (e.g., classroom or assembly speakers, media presentations, student reports or speeches, classroom debates). 6. Formulate relevant and focused questions and comments based upon the content of a presentation and a variety of audiences or groups for authentic purposes (e.g., classroom and school government meetings, cooperative group learning and problem-based learning interactions). 7. Modify, control, and block out distractions. 8. Paraphrase or repeat and execute multi-stepped directions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate the situation and assume appropriate listening mode. 2. Focus attention on speaker as sender of the message. 3. Identify and analyze factors that will impact the message (e.g., dialect, language styles, setting, word choice). 4. Differentiate between formal and informal purposes for listening. 5. Distinguish between nonverbal and verbal messages. 6. Differentiate between the speaker's factual and emotional content. 7. Infer speaker's bias and purpose. 8. Recognize personal bias and its impact on the message. 9. Separate main ideas from supporting facts and details. 10. Anticipate information that might be forthcoming from presenter. 11. Formulate questions needed to gather and clarify information. 12. Contribute relevant and idea-inspiring comments during discussions. 13. Paraphrase and summarize, in both oral and written form, information in formal and informal presentations. 14. Modify, control, and block out distractions. 15. Restate a set of instructions in the order given and complete the task.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

4B Students who meet the standard can speak effectively using language appropriate to the situation and audience.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate awareness of personal space and spatial relationships (e.g., Where am I? Where are you? How far apart are we?). 2. Demonstrate awareness of speaker-audience relationship. 3. Demonstrate ability to stand and speak to a group independently. 4. Begin to use appropriate presentation techniques (rate, volume, some eye contact with audience). 5. Focus and present appropriate information on a single topic. 6. Present ideas in an appropriate order. 7. Use appropriate rules governing spoken English. 8. Demonstrate awareness of others' desires and rights to talk. 9. Demonstrate appropriate behaviors (e.g., avoid interrupting others, causing distractions, calling attention to self). 10. Recognize the differences between questions and statements and appropriately contribute either or both. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate awareness of situation and setting for the oral message. 2. Use presentation techniques appropriate for the situation (e.g., eye contact with audience, volume, rate, tone, avoid distracting behaviors). 3. Focus and present information on a single topic. 4. Present ideas in a logical order. 5. Use appropriate details (e.g., descriptive words, reasons). 6. Use appropriate rules governing spoken English. 7. Adapt language to the situation (e.g., playground, classroom, media center). 8. Demonstrate courtesy and respect for others' rights and points of view. 9. Formulate questions and statements at appropriate times. 10. Contribute relevant, appropriate information to discussions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate awareness of characteristics of an audience (e.g., age, gender, background knowledge, level of interest in topic) and how they affect content and style of presentation. 2. Determine the purpose of the oral report. 3. Select appropriate topic. 4. Use language that is clear, audible, and appropriate. 5. Use appropriate grammar, word choice, and pacing. 6. Establish and maintain a focus. 7. Present ideas in a logical order. 8. Elaborate upon main points with supporting details. 9. Prepare and practice the presentation. 10. Engage and maintain the interest of the listener. 11. Use rules governing spoken English. 12. Use appropriate presentation techniques (e.g., volume, rate, tone, pitch). 13. Contribute relevant, appropriate information to discussions. 14. Demonstrate respect for other participants and their ideas.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

4B Students who meet the standard can speak effectively using language appropriate to the situation and audience.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate awareness of characteristics of an audience and how they affect content and style of presentation. 2. Distinguish among oral presentations intended to inform, to entertain, and to persuade. 3. Organize information for the purposes of informing, entertaining, and persuading. 4. Use language that is clear, audible, and appropriate. 5. Use appropriate grammar, word choice, and pacing. 6. Use details to elaborate and develop main ideas for purposes of informing, entertaining, and persuading. 7. Adapt language to audience and purpose. 8. Distinguish between positive and negative verbal and nonverbal communication elements (e.g., space, body language, tone, volume). 9. Use notes and outlines. 10. Prepare and practice the presentation in advance. 11. Use notes and outlines. 12. Contribute meaningfully to small and large group discussions by following accepted guidelines for verbal interaction (e.g., appropriate volume and rate; courteous, turn-taking behavior; respectful, relevant responses; appropriate language and vocabulary). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze characteristics of one's audience and prepare appropriate presentations. 2. Identify and demonstrate different traits of oral presentations intended to inform, to entertain, and to persuade. 3. Use details to elaborate and develop main ideas for purposes of informing, entertaining, and persuading. 4. Use language that is clear, audible, and appropriate. 5. Use appropriate grammar, word choice, and pacing. 6. Use appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication elements (e.g., appropriate space, body language, pleasant tone, rate, volume). 7. Use notes and outlines. 8. Prepare and practice the presentation to fit within a given time limit. 9. Use notes and outlines. 10. Contribute meaningfully to small and large group discussions by following accepted guidelines for verbal interaction (e.g., appropriate volume and rate; courteous, turn-taking behavior; respectful, relevant responses; appropriate language and vocabulary). 11. Identify and use discussion techniques to arrive at a consensus of opinion. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze characteristics of one's audience and prepare appropriate presentations. 2. Evaluate and select details appropriate for informing, entertaining and persuading. 3. Align vocabulary and style to the intent of the message. 4. Use language that is clear, audible, and appropriate. 5. Use appropriate grammar, word choice, and pacing. 6. Incorporate appropriate nonverbal expressions that support the message (e.g., facial expressions, gestures, posture, eye contact). 7. Use notes and outlines. 8. Prepare and practice a presentation to fit within a given time limit. 9. Use rehearsal techniques (e.g., taking deep breaths, recording or video taping presentation) to plan and practice the presentation. 10. Contribute meaningfully to group discussions by following accepted guidelines of verbal interaction (e.g., appropriate turn-taking behavior, respectful and engaged responses, appropriately-aligned vocabulary, appropriate rate and volume). 11. Identify and use discussion techniques to arrive at a consensus of opinion.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

5A Students who meet the standard can locate, organize, and use information from various sources to answer questions, solve problems, and communicate ideas.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to brainstorm to generate questions to gather information. 2. Discuss prior knowledge of topic. 3. Generate questions gained from experiences (e.g., field trip, visitors, stories, discussions) to gather information. 4. Use aids (e.g., KWL, webs, graphic organizers, available technology) to locate generated information. 5. Provide answers to questions. 6. State and sort necessary information for a discussion. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin guided brainstorming to generate questions to gather information. 2. Discuss prior knowledge of topic. 3. Generate questions gained from experiences (e.g., field trip, visitors, stories, discussions) to gather information. 4. Use aids (e.g., KWL, webs, graphic organizers, technology) to locate and present information. 5. Recognize that information is available through an organizational system (e.g., library, media center, classroom resources, available technology). 6. Use text aids (e.g., table of contents, glossary, index, alphabetical order) to locate information in a book. 7. Begin to include facts and details. 8. Provide answers to questions. 9. State and sort necessary information for a project. 10. Express details in complete sentences. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generate questions of interest (e.g., using KWL, webs, graphic organizers). 2. Define the focus of the research. 3. Collect information relevant to the topic. 4. Use text aids (e.g., table of contents, glossary, index, alphabetical order) to locate information in a book. 5. Use an organizational system (e.g., media center, classroom resources, available technology) to locate information. 6. Analyze (e.g., categorize, classify, sort, organize, combine) information for a project.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

5A Students who meet the standard can locate, organize, and use information from various sources to answer questions, solve problems, and communicate ideas.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formulate questions using aids (e.g., KWL, webs, graphic organizers). 2. Define the focus of the research. 3. Use a variety of sources (e.g., reference books, newspapers, magazines, encyclopedia, interviews, available technology) to collect information relevant to a topic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize criteria for determining credible sources. • Use organizational systems to locate information. • Use available technology (e.g., menu feature, pull-down menu, word search, icons) to locate information. • Use text aids (e.g., table of contents, glossary, captions, chapter heading, index) to locate information. 4. Arrange information in an orderly manner (e.g., outlining, sequencing, graphic organizers). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generate questions of interest and narrow the focus of research. 2. Develop hypotheses based on prior knowledge. 3. Gather information based on a hypothesis (e.g., note taking). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and use (with limited support) a variety of sources (e.g., reference books, magazines, interviews). • Recognize criteria for determining credible sources. • Determine appropriate resources. 4. Compare (with limited support) information from a variety of sources. 5. Arrange information in an orderly manner (e.g., outlining, sequencing, graphic organizers). 6. Design a research plan and prepare a project. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Select a topic from a list of topics. 2. Formulate questions to direct research. 3. Gather information based on hypotheses. 4. Define the focus of research. 5. Apply criteria for determining credibility of sources. 6. Choose a variety of resources (e.g., newspaper, magazine, reference books, electronic information) to gain new information. 7. Organize and integrate information from a variety of sources (e.g., books, interviews, library reference materials, web sites, CD/ROMS). 8. Arrange information in an orderly manner (e.g., outlining, sequencing). 9. Develop a bibliography using a simple, acceptable form. 10. Design and prepare a project using multiple sources.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

5B Students who meet the standard can analyze and evaluate information acquired from various sources.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formulate questions to define ideas through oral discussion of determined topic. 2. Distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formulate questions to define ideas through oral discussion of determined topic. 2. Distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information. 3. Begin to organize ideas to define focus of details (e.g., drawing, telling, developmental writing). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use key words to identify relevant information. 2. Discriminate between relevant and irrelevant information. 3. Organize related information under main topics. 4. List title, author, and type of resource (e.g., magazine, book, encyclopedia, website, interviewee) used in research.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

5B Students who meet the standard can analyze and evaluate information acquired from various sources.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use organizational features of text and available technology (e.g., glossary, table of contents, indexes, icons, word search) to analyze and evaluate information. 2. Organize related information under main topics. 3. Distinguish between main ideas and supporting details. 4. List sources of information selected for use in project (e.g., title, author, copyright date). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze information from primary print and non-print sources. 2. Evaluate information from various sources by applying a set of criteria (e.g., accuracy, timeliness, reliability). 3. Use information from footnotes, illustrations, diagrams, charts, and graphs. 4. Identify relevant primary and secondary sources. 5. Recognize the purpose of a bibliography. 6. Develop a bibliography using a simple, acceptable form. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze information from primary print and non-print sources. 2. Evaluate sources by applying a set of criteria (e.g., accuracy, timeliness, reliability). 3. Use information from footnotes, illustrations, diagrams, charts, and graphs. 4. Evaluate and select primary and secondary sources. 5. Use a bibliography for a variety of purposes. 6. Develop a bibliography using a simple, acceptable form. 7. Cite the source of all direct quotations. 8. Cite the source of all paraphrased/summarized information.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

5C Students who meet the standard can apply acquired information, concepts and ideas to communicate in a variety of formats.

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain focus – stay on topic. 2. Access and use books and stories to learn something new about a topic. 3. Use life experiences as sources of information for written reports, letters, and stories. 4. Create a message by drawing, telling, using graphic aids, and/or developmental writing based on acquired information. 5. Gather, organize, and share information about a topic. 6. Retell information. 7. Explain information from a drawing, graphic aid, or developmental writing. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain focus – stay on topic. 2. Access and use books and stories to learn something new about a topic. 3. Use life experiences as sources of information for written reports, letters, and stories. 4. Gather, organize, and share information about a topic. 5. Create a report of ideas (e.g., drawing, using available technology, writing a story, letter, report). 6. Paraphrase information. 7. Summarize information. 8. Develop ideas by using details from pictures, diagrams, maps, and other graphic organizers. 9. Explain information using a drawing, graphic aids, oral presentation, available technology, or developmental writing. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access and use information from a variety of sources. 2. Organize and synthesize information. 3. Paraphrase/summarize information. 4. Compose information in an appropriate medium/format. 5. Present information in oral, written, and available technological/multi-media forms. 6. Begin to revise and edit the work.
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

English Language Arts Performance Descriptors

5C Students who meet the standard can apply acquired information, concepts and ideas to communicate in a variety of formats.

Stage D	Stage E	Stage F
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access print, non-print information for written reports, letters, and/or stories. 2. Gather/organize/synthesize information. 3. Develop acquired information by using a recognizable format (e.g., research paper, poem, story, play, letter). 4. Revise and edit the work. 5. Present information in oral, written, and available multi-media forms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the topic, sometimes providing a context. • Select an organizational structure that is useful to the reader. • Communicate ideas, insights, or theories that have been elaborated or illustrated through facts, details, quotations, statistics, and/or information. • Use diagrams, charts, or illustrations appropriate to the text. • Use text/graphic aids to present information (e.g., banner, charts, report, maps, models, games, interviews, surveys). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Select an appropriate format to accommodate characteristics of audiences (e.g., age, background, interest level, group size) and purposes of the presentation (e.g., inform, persuade, entertain). 2. Use text, graphic materials, or visual aids to present information (e.g., charts, written reports, banners, maps, models, artifacts, student-created games, multimedia). 3. Communicate in an appropriate format, information that was gathered by either inquiry or research (e.g., interviews, surveys, software presentations). 4. Revise/edit the work. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Select and justify adaptations in format to accommodate characteristics of audiences (e.g., age, background, interest level, group size) and purposes of the presentation (e.g., inform, persuade, entertain). 2. Evaluate and select text, graphic materials, or visual aids to present information (e.g., charts, written reports, banners, maps, models, artifacts, student-created games). 3. Communicate, in an appropriate format, information that was gathered by either inquiry or research (e.g., interviews, surveys, software presentations).
Grade 1 (A-B) Grade 2 (A-B-C) Grade 3 (B-C-D) Grade 4 (C-D-E) Grade 5 (D-E-F)		

GLOSSARY

ANALYSIS – 1. Level four of Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*.
 2. Separating into basic parts for detailed study. 3. The detailed examination of anything complex. 4. In literature, the study of a work through an examination of its component parts and their interrelationships.

APA – The style manual for documenting the use of sources in researched writing that is prescribed by the American Psychological Association.

ASSONANCE – The resemblance of sounds in words or syllables, particularly the closely recurring vowel sounds in stressed syllables of poetry (e.g., fleet feet sweep by sleeping geese).

BIBLIOGRAPHY - An alphabetical listing of ALL works consulted.

BRAINSTORM – An unstructured group invention technique to discover known information about a subject. Members of the group contribute information as they recall it with no attempt to organize the material.

CITATION FORMAT – A formal method for recognizing the borrowing of written or spoken words from an authority, either paraphrased or directly quoted. Common formats include, but are not limited to, APA and MLA styles.

COHERENCE – 1. The clear and orderly progression of ideas from beginning to end of a written piece. 2. The quality of writing which results in ideas/sentences blending together smoothly. 3. The top to bottom logic found in a well structured written piece.

COMPARISON - CONTRAST – The analysis of similarities between two apparently dissimilar items or the differences between two apparently similar items.

COMPLEMENT – The third component of some kinds of sentences (subject/verb/complement structure). Complements include direct object, predicate adjective, predicate noun, indirect and direct object pair, direct object and objective complement pair.

CONNOTATION – Suggested and associated meanings added to the literal meaning of a word or phrase. Connotations have context- and usage-derived meanings.

CONSONANCE - The resemblance of sounds in words or syllables, particularly the closely recurring consonant sounds in stressed syllables of poetry (e.g., the lady lounges lazily; dark, deep dread crept in).

CONTEXT (UAL) CLUES – Cues to the meaning of an unfamiliar word that occur in the sentence(s) or paragraph(s) in which the word appears.

DECODING –The process that a reader uses to recognize new words and meanings (e.g., phonics, word patterns, structural analysis, context clues).

DEDUCTIVE REASONING – Reasoning from the general to the specific. A conclusion is shown to proceed logically from a general truth.

DENOTATION – The literal (dictionary) definition of a word.

DR-TA (Directed Reading-Thinking Activity) –An activity in which readers are encouraged to read, think and predict about the reading selection.

EDITED TEXT - Text that has been evaluated for content and organization as opposed to an evaluation of the mechanics of writing.

e.g. – *exempli gratia* - for example (not intended to be a complete list).

ETYMOLOGY – The study of word origins.

EXPLICIT – Clearly stated, distinct, fully and clearly expressed. A literary work leaves nothing implied; everything is clearly and directly stated.

FIRST LEVEL SUPPORT – In writing, the sentences that expand and/or clarify the meaning of the topic sentence in a paragraph.

FORMAT -- Specifications that determine the physical appearance of a written piece (e.g., margins, typeface and size, title, subheadings).

GENRE – 1. A category or class of artistic endeavor having a common artistic form or content. 2. In literature, genres include the following: short story, drama, novel, fable, biography, poetry, epic.

GRAPHEME – The smallest part of written language that represents a phoneme in the spelling of a word.

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS – Visual aids (e.g., Venn diagrams, webs, K-W-L) used to arrange generated information in an orderly manner.

HYPERBOLE – 1. Obvious and deliberate exaggeration. 2. A figure of speech not intended to be taken literally (She has taught English for a hundred years!).

HYPOTHESIS/HYPOTHESES – An assumption, guess, or conjecture that can be proved or disproved by comparison with observed facts.

IDIOMS – 1. Language, dialect, jargon or style of speaking representative of a group of people. 2. Phrases or constructions with meaning different from the usual meaning of the words.

i.e.– *id est* - that is. All examples are included in the listing.

IMPLICIT – Not specifically stated; not expressed in direct terms; implied or inferred.

INDUCTIVE REASONING – Reasoning from the specific to the general. A general truth is inferred from the observation of specific facts.

INFERENCE – a judgment or conclusion based on evidence presented.

JURIED TEXT – A source of information that has undergone a review process by authorities in a field of study.

KEY WORD – A kind of context clue used to identify information or clarify meaning.

K-W-L (what you Know; what you Want to learn; what you Learn) – An investigative technique.

LITERARY ELEMENTS – See story elements

METAPHOR – 1. An implied comparison between two things that are only alike in the way they are being compared. (e.g., ...and the fog crept in on little cat feet.)

METER – Pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of a poem.

MISCUE ANALYSIS – 1. A technique for determining and analyzing mistakes in oral reading. 2. A formal examination of the use of miscues as the basis for determining the strengths and weaknesses in the background experiences and language skills of students as they read (*The Literacy Dictionary – Theodore Harris, Richard Hodges (editors), IRA, 1995*).

MLA - The style manual for documenting the use of sources in researched writing that is prescribed by the Modern Language Association.

ONOMATOPOEIA – Words that echo a sound from nature. (e.g., ring, meow, tinkle, buzz).

ONSET AND RIME – Parts of spoken language that are smaller than syllables but larger than phonemes. An onset is the initial consonant(s) sound of a syllable. A rime is the part of a syllable that contains the vowel and all that follows it.

PARAPHRASE – A restatement of information in the speaker's or writer's own words.

PHONEME – The smallest part of spoken language that makes a difference in the meaning of words.

PHONEMIC AWARENESS – The ability to hear, identify, and manipulate the individual sounds – phonemes – in spoken words.

PHONETICS – The study of the sounds people make when they speak and how these sounds are produced.

PHONICS – The understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes (the sounds of spoken language) and graphemes (the letters and spellings that represent those sounds in written language).

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS – A broad term that includes phonemic awareness. In addition to phonemes, phonological awareness activities can involve work with rhymes, words, syllables, and onsets and rimes.

PRIMARY SOURCES – A source of information of direct or immediate importance; First-hand knowledge.

PROOFREAD – Evaluation of the mechanics of writing.

RUNNING RECORD – Method of recording miscues in oral reading.

SECOND LEVEL SUPPORT – Example, detail, or illustration that further develops or clarifies the First Level Support in a paragraph. In research writing, the evidence used to support the writer's claims.

SECONDARY SOURCE – A general source of information that summarizes primary source information.

SIMILE – Comparison of two basically unlike things that are alike only in the way they are being compared using the words *like*, *as*, or *than*. (i.e., She ran like the wind.)

SIX STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING COMPREHENSION: Monitoring comprehension, using graphic and semantic organizers, answering questions, generating questions, recognizing story structure, and summarizing.

SQ3R – Survey, Question, Read, Review, Recite.

STANDARD MANUSCRIPT SPECIFICATION – A set of rules governing the physical appearance and organization of a manuscript.

STORY ELEMENTS – Character, plot, theme, setting, conflict.

SUBPLOT – Secondary or minor plot in a story which may contrast with the principal (main) plot.

SUBSTITUTION – The replacing of one word in the oral reading of text with another word (ex.: hop for hot).

SUMMARIZE – 1. To draw together main ideas in a brief, but comprehensive form.
2. To tell the main points briefly.

SYLLABLE – A word part that contains a vowel or, in spoken language, a vowel sound.

SYNTHESIS – 1. The fifth level of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. 2. The combining of elements into a single unified whole. 3. The formation of a novel thought, idea, product or perspective from pieces of information.

TEXT - (Not always used to refer to *text book*.) Printed or student-generated documents ranging from word approximations through formal compositions.

THEME – 1. Central or dominating idea of a talk or a piece of writing. 2. A multi-paragraph composition.

VISUAL REPRESENTATION – 1. visual aid. 2. text aid. 3. pictures, maps, illustrations, etc., which enhance, clarify, or convey meaning.

WRITING PROCESS – Prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing.

WORKS/SOURCES CITED – Alphabetical listing of bibliographic entries of resources actually consulted in the preparation of a research paper or report.

RELATIONSHIP OF PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS TO NATIONAL AND STATE STANDARDS

The NCTE/IRA English language arts document *Standards for the English Language Arts* contains a wide-ranging continuum of language proficiencies which students need in order to become effective users of language in school, work and social settings. These global guidelines place on the teacher the responsibility of identifying where his/her students fall on the continuum; then the teacher must determine what developmentally appropriate learning must occur. Inconsistencies result when different individuals attempt to identify what the developmental stages should be. In a society that is becoming increasingly global, the need for consistency dictates that these developmental stages be clearly defined.

The Illinois ELA Descriptors assist teachers by defining stages of progression that address skills students need in order to demonstrate proficiency. While defining these stages, the descriptors indicate what students should be able to achieve as they develop, rather than prescribe what educators must teach. The descriptors intentionally avoid mention of specific curricula or pedagogical techniques that would restrict teachers' choices as they work with their students. Furthermore, they sequence and bridge development expectations that recognize the diversity in most Illinois classrooms. Consequently, it soon becomes obvious that the descriptors in any stage should not be applied in isolation, but rather depend upon those that come before and after in order for the stakeholders to understand where any given student stands in his/her overall development of ELA proficiencies. This is a distinct advantage over the broader national standards. Because these descriptors are organized in this way, they are more likely to be utilized by the educational community.

Analysis of Illinois ELA performance descriptors in terms of other state standards in the ELA learning area:

A review of performance standards from four other states shows that, in general, these states have gaps in their proficiencies. Connecticut uses three grade clusters; Nevada uses five. California and Colorado attempt to cover all grade levels; in the process, however, they restrict teachers to a set of standards which does not allow them to effectively challenge students to achieve the prescribed standards by the end of a given grade. Many of these standards also are more product-oriented rather than development-oriented. The continuum of stages used in the Illinois ELA descriptors eliminates these difficulties.

The absence of consistently addressed higher-level skills (Bloom's taxonomy) in some other states' standards may result from their prescriptive product orientation. In recognition of this deficiency, the ELA Descriptors attempt to provide a vertical and horizontal progression through the inclusion of developmentally appropriate, verb-centered definitions designed to promote assessability. Therefore, they are more user-friendly, and stakeholders will gain a more accurate and understandable picture of student progress across the developmental stages.

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