State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness Modified (STAAR™ Modified) Performance Level Descriptors Grade 4 Reading

Performance Level Descriptors
When reading a text of increasing complexity,* students achieving Level III: Advanced Academic Performance can • Determine the meaning of multiple-meaning words using context • Recognize how the author's use of figurative language creates images and affects meaning • Analyze literary texts by identifying the theme or message and recognizing how structural elements affect meaning • Demonstrate an understanding of expository texts by summarizing the text to maintain meaning and using organizational patterns to understand the content • Make complex inferences about literary and expository texts, supporting those inferences with relevant textual evidence
When reading texts of increasing complexity,* students achieving Level II: Satisfactory Academic Performance can • Determine the meaning of unfamiliar and grade-level academic English words using context and roots and affixes • Recognize how the author's use of sensory language creates images and affects meaning • Determine in a variety of literary texts the order of the plot's main events and describe the interaction of characters • Demonstrate an understanding of expository texts by identifying the author's purpose and using multiple text features to locate information • Make reasonable inferences about literary and informational texts, supporting those inferences with relevant textual evidence
When reading a text of increasing complexity,* students achieving Level I: Unsatisfactory Academic Performance can • Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words using explicit context • Demonstrate a literal understanding of literary and expository texts • Make plausible inferences about literary and expository texts

* STAAR Modified reading tests may include published pieces that cannot be simplified according to the Modification Guidelines. Text complexity increases from grade 3 to 8 for a variety of reasons: (1) vocabulary/use of language may be more varied and challenging because it is nonliteral/figurative, abstract, or academic/technical; (2) sentence structures may be more varied, dense, and sophisticated; (3) the author's use of literary elements/devices, rhetorical strategies, organizational patterns, and text features may be more nuanced or sophisticated; (4) the topic/content may be less familiar or more cognitively demanding; and (5) relationships among ideas may be less explicit and require more interpretation, reasoning, and inferential thinking to understand the subtlety, nuances, and depth of ideas.

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