



Alabama Achievement Level Descriptors

Grade 4 – Reading/Language Arts

The descriptions below provide a brief summary of typical performance for each level. The skills identified in each descriptor represent, but are not all-inclusive of, the skills a student should be able to demonstrate at each achievement level.

Language					
Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner	Level 4: Distinguished Learner
Conventions of Standard English	<p>Demonstrates a limited command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Uses common pronouns.</i> - <i>Uses basic verb tenses.</i> - <i>Identifies adjectives.</i> - <i>Uses simple prepositional phrases.</i> - <i>Identifies complete sentences.</i> - <i>Identifies fragments.</i> 	<p>Demonstrates a basic command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Uses pronouns and adverbs.</i> - <i>Forms and uses verb tenses.</i> - <i>Uses multiple adjectives.</i> - <i>Uses prepositional phrases.</i> - <i>Produces complete simple sentences.</i> - <i>Recognizes fragments and run-ons.</i> - <i>Uses frequently confused simple words.</i> 		<p>Demonstrates a strong command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Uses relative pronouns and adverbs.</i> - <i>Forms and uses progressive verb tenses.</i> - <i>Uses modal auxiliaries to convey various conditions.</i> - <i>Orders adjectives according to conventional patterns.</i> - <i>Forms and uses prepositional phrases.</i> - <i>Produces complete sentences.</i> - <i>Recognizes and corrects fragments and run-ons.</i> - <i>Uses frequently confused words.</i> 	<p>Demonstrates a confident and consistent command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Uses and names relative pronouns and adverbs.</i> - <i>Forms, uses, and names progressive verb tenses.</i> - <i>Uses and explains modal auxiliaries that convey various conditions.</i> - <i>Uses and explains the conventional patterns of ordering adjectives.</i> - <i>Forms and uses prepositional phrases to enhance writing.</i> - <i>Produces complete sentences and varies sentence type.</i> - <i>Explains what a fragment and run-on is and recognizes and corrects both.</i> - <i>Uses frequently confused complex words.</i>



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Language						
Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner	Level 4: Distinguished Learner	
Conventions of Standard English	Demonstrates a limited command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.		Demonstrates a basic command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.		Demonstrates a strong command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.	Demonstrates a confident and consistent command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Uses limited capitalization.</i> - <i>Uses quotation marks to mark direct speech.</i> - <i>Spells simple words correctly.</i> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Uses basic, correct capitalization.</i> - <i>Uses quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.</i> - <i>Spells simple words correctly, consulting references as needed.</i> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Uses correct capitalization.</i> - <i>Uses commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.</i> - <i>Uses a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.</i> - <i>Spells grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Recognizes and explains when to use capitalization.</i> - <i>Uses commas and quotation marks to mark complicated speech and quotations from a text.</i> - <i>Uses a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence, recognizing the independent clauses within the compound sentence.</i> - <i>Spells challenging, grade-appropriate words correctly and independently.</i>



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Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner	Level 4: Distinguished Learner
Knowledge of Language	Exhibits a limited use of language and its conventions.	Exhibits a basic use of language and its conventions.	Exhibits a competent use of language and its conventions.	Exhibits a confident use of language and its conventions.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chooses words to convey simple ideas. - Chooses ending punctuation. - Identifies formal English. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chooses words and simple phrases to convey ideas. - Chooses common punctuation for effect. - Identifies both contexts that call for formal English and situations where informal discourse is appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chooses words and phrases to convey ideas precisely. - Chooses punctuation for effect. - Differentiates between contexts that call for formal English and situations where informal discourse is appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses colorful words and complex phrases to convey ideas precisely. - Chooses a variety of punctuation for effect. - Explains the differences between contexts that call for formal English and situations where informal discourse is appropriate. 	



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Language					
Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner	Level 4: Distinguished Learner
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use	Determines the meaning of simple, unknown words, using basic strategies.	Determines or clarifies the meaning of simple, unknown, and multiple-meaning words and phrases, using basic strategies.	Determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.	Determines or clarifies with precision and detail the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a broad range of strategies.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Uses context as a clue to the meaning of a simple word.</i> - <i>Recognizes basic affixes and roots.</i> - <i>Consults reference materials to determine the meaning of words.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Uses context as a clue to the meaning of a word or simple phrase.</i> - <i>Uses basic affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word.</i> - <i>Consults reference materials to determine the meaning of words and phrases.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Uses context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</i> - <i>Uses common, grade-appropriate affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word.</i> - <i>Consults reference materials to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Uses context as a clue to the meaning of a complex word or phrase.</i> - <i>Defines common and uncommon, grade-appropriate affixes and roots, and uses them as clues to the meaning of a word.</i> - <i>Consults reference materials to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of complex or challenging words and phrases in and out of context.</i> 	



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Language					
Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner	Level 4: Distinguished Learner
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use	<p>Demonstrates a limited understanding of simple figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Explains the meaning of simple expressions in context.</i> - <i>Recognizes the meaning of common adages.</i> - <i>Recognizes synonyms and antonyms.</i> 	<p>Demonstrates a basic understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Explains the meaning of simple similes and metaphors in context.</i> - <i>Recognizes the meaning of common adages and proverbs.</i> - <i>Recognizes the connection among well-known related words.</i> 	<p>Demonstrates a thorough understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings by choosing words that suit the purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Explains the meaning of similes and metaphors in context.</i> - <i>Recognizes and explains the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.</i> - <i>Defines words by relating them to their opposites and to words with similar but not identical meanings.</i> 	<p>Demonstrates an in-depth understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings by choosing words precisely and purposefully that suit the purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Explains the meaning of sophisticated similes and metaphors in and out of context.</i> - <i>Recognizes and explains the meaning of common, uncommon, and sophisticated idioms, adages, and proverbs.</i> - <i>Defines words by relating them to their opposites and to words with similar but not identical meanings using a broad vocabulary.</i> 	
	<p>Uses grade 4-appropriate conversational and simple general academic words.</p>	<p>Uses grade 4-appropriate conversational and general academic words including those that signal precise actions or emotions.</p>	<p>Uses grade 4-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being and that are basic to a particular topic.</p>	<p>Uses grade 4-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases in a precise and nuanced way, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being and that are essential to a particular topic.</p>	



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Reading - Literature							
Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner		Level 4: Distinguished Learner	
Key Ideas and Details	Recalls explicit details from the text.	Refers to details in a text to support what the text says explicitly and when drawing simple inferences from the text.	Refers to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	Refers to illuminating and subtle details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.			
	Identifies a theme of a story; provides a limited summary of the text.	Determines a theme of a story using explicit details from the text; provides a basic summary of the text.	Determines a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; provides a thorough summary of the text.	Determines a theme of a story, drama, or poem by noting subtle connections between details in the text; provides a detailed and nuanced summary of the text.			
	Provides a limited description of a character or setting in a text.	Provides a basic description of a character, setting, or event in a text.	Provides a thorough description of a character, setting, or event in a text, drawing on specific details from the text.	Provides an in-depth and nuanced description of a character, setting, or event in a text, drawing on specific, subtle, or complex details from the text.			



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Reading - Literature							
Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner		Level 4: Distinguished Learner	
Craft and Structure	Determines the meaning of simple words and phrases as they are used in a text.	Determines the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.		Determines the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including allusions to significant characters found in mythology.		Determines with precision and detail the meaning of complex words and phrases as they are used in a text, including allusions to significant characters found in mythology.	
	Identifies major differences between various types of texts.	Explains major differences in structure between various types of texts.		Explains major differences between various types of texts, and refers to structural elements within them.		Explains major and minor differences between various types of texts, and refers to structural elements within them.	
	Identifies the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including first- and third-person narrations.	Makes general observations about points of view from which different stories are narrated, including first- and third-person narrations.		Compares and contrasts the point of view from which different stories, dramas, and poems are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.		Compares and contrasts the point of view from which different stories, dramas, and poems are narrated, including first- and third-person narrations, using specific descriptions and details from the texts.	



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Reading - Literature								
Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner		Level 4: Distinguished Learner		
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	Makes simple connections between the words in a text and a visual or oral presentation.		Makes general connections between the words in a text and a visual or oral presentation, identifying explicit supporting details.		Makes connections between the words in a text and a visual or oral presentation, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions.		Makes detailed and nuanced connections between the words in a text and a visual or oral presentation, using evidence to identify where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions.	
	Compares and contrasts the topics and patterns of events in texts.		Compares and contrasts similar themes and topics and patterns of events in texts.		Compares and contrasts the treatment of similar themes and topics and patterns of events in various texts.		Compares and contrasts the treatment of similar, complex themes and topics and patterns of events using specific details from the text to support an analysis.	
Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity	Reads stories, dramas, and poems in the Grade 4-5 complexity band with limited comprehension and significant scaffolding.		Reads stories, dramas, and poems in the Grade 4-5 complexity band with basic comprehension and some scaffolding.		Reads stories, dramas, and poems in the Grade 4-5 complexity band with thorough comprehension and limited scaffolding.		Reads stories, dramas, and poems in the Grade 4-5 complexity band with in-depth comprehension and little to no scaffolding.	



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Reading - Informational Text					
Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner	Level 4: Distinguished Learner
Key Ideas and Details	Recalls explicit details from the text.	Refers to details in a text when supporting what the text says explicitly and when drawing simple inferences from a text.	Refers to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from a text.	Refers to subtle details and examples in a text when explaining and supporting what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from a text.	
	Determines the main idea; provides a limited summary of the text.	Determines the main idea; provides a basic summary of the text with few details.	Determines the main idea and explains how it is supported by key details; provides a thorough summary of the text.	Determines the main idea and gives an in-depth explanation of how it is supported by key details; provides a detailed and nuanced summary of the text.	
	Explains events or ideas in a text.	Explains events, ideas, or concepts in a text, including a basic explanation of what happened and why.	Explains events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.	Explains events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a text, including what happened and why, using specific and subtle information from the text as support.	



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Reading - Informational Text					
Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner	Level 4: Distinguished Learner
Craft and Structure	Determines the meaning of simple words in a text.	Determines the meaning of common, general academic words or phrases in a text.	Determines the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text.	Determines the precise meaning of less common academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text.	
	Identifies the overall structure of a text.	Provides a simple description of the overall structure of a text.	Provides a thorough description of the overall structure of a text.	Provides a detailed and nuanced description of the overall structure of a text.	
	Makes simple comparisons about a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic.	Compares and contrasts explicit details in a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describes general differences in the information provided.	Compares and contrasts a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describes the differences in focus and the information provided.	Compares and contrasts a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic, referencing details; describes the minor differences in focus and the information provided.	



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Reading - Informational Text					
Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner	Level 4: Distinguished Learner
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	Interprets basic information presented visually in a text.	Interprets information presented visually or orally and provides a basic explanation of how the information contributes to an understanding of the text.	Interprets information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively and explains how the information contributes to an understanding of the text.	Interprets information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively and provides a detailed and nuanced explanation of how the information contributes to an understanding of the text.	
	Identifies evidence that supports particular points in a text.	Determines reasons and evidence that support particular points in a text.	Explains how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.	Uses textual evidence to explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.	
	Identifies information from two texts on the same topic.	Compares information from two texts on the same topic.	Integrates information from two texts on the same topic.	Integrates information and ideas from two texts on the same topic and explains the similarities.	
Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity	Reads informational texts in the Grade 4-5 complexity band with limited comprehension and significant scaffolding.	Reads informational texts in the Grade 4-5 complexity band with basic comprehension and some scaffolding.	Reads informational texts in the Grade 4-5 complexity band with thorough and consistent comprehension and limited scaffolding.	Reads informational texts in the Grade 4-5 complexity band with in-depth comprehension and little to no scaffolding.	



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Foundational Skills								
Level 1: Emerging Learner		Level 2: Developing Learner		Level 3: Proficient Learner		Level 4: Distinguished Learner		
Phonics and Word Recognition	Applies limited phonics and word analysis skills when decoding simple words.		Applies basic phonics and word analysis skills when decoding words.		Applies phonics and word analysis skills when decoding words.		Applies phonics and word analysis skills when decoding complex words.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Demonstrates a competent use of letter-sound correspondences and syllabication patterns to read simple two-syllable words.</i> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Demonstrates a competent use of letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology to read two-syllable words.</i> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Demonstrates a competent use of letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology to read unfamiliar multisyllabic words.</i> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Demonstrates a competent use of letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology to read unfamiliar multisyllabic words demonstrating a broad vocabulary.</i> 	