



**State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®)**  
**Performance Level Descriptors**  
**Grade 8 Reading**

**Performance Level Descriptors**

**When reading texts of increasing complexity,\* students achieving Masters Grade Level Performance can**

- Analyze how the author develops informational texts to support the main points or argument
- Make complex inferences within and between literary and informational texts, supporting those inferences with relevant textual evidence

**When reading texts of increasing complexity,\* students achieving Meets Grade Level Performance can**

- Analyze literary texts by recognizing how the point of view and portrayal of characters influence plot development and theme
- Demonstrate an understanding of informational texts by identifying the author’s purpose and central argument and accurately summarizing the text
- Recognize the logical connections and thematic links between texts representing similar or different genres
- Make reasonable inferences about literary and informational texts, supporting those inferences with relevant textual evidence

**When reading texts of increasing complexity,\* students achieving Approaches Grade Level Performance can**

- Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words, words with novel meanings, and grade-level academic English words using context, roots and affixes, and reference materials
- Determine how the author’s use of literary techniques and figurative language supports meaning
- Demonstrate an understanding of informational texts by recognizing how the author organizes and presents ideas

**When reading texts of increasing complexity,\* students achieving Did Not Meet Grade Level Performance can**

- Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words using explicit context and reference materials
- Demonstrate a literal understanding of literary and informational texts
- Make plausible inferences about literary and informational texts

\* Text complexity increases from grade to grade. Texts can become increasingly complex 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.