Students select and read independently a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts. Texts include:

- topics often beyond personal experiences, requiring cultural, historical or social perspectives
- examples of more challenging/mature themes/ideas (e.g., war, immigrant experiences) which require the reader to interpret and connect information/ideas with other texts
- an increasing number of complex sentences in conjunction with longer simple sentences and compound sentences; greater sophistication in the use of dialogue with more examples of split quotations
- language which is often uncommon and challenging (e.g., new vocabulary and content-specific words, supported by context or use of glossary); greater use of figurative (e.g., metaphor, simile) and specific, descriptive language
- many words with more than three syllables, some of which are difficult to decode
- chapter books with no or few illustrations; illustrations/photographs that represent and extend print in nonfiction
- many lines of print on a page, organized in paragraphs, predominantly standard-sized font with greater variation in layout within same text

**Text Complexity**

**Appropriate Achievement**

- Students demonstrating strong achievement apply strategies and exhibit behaviours described at the appropriate level in an increasingly efficient and deliberate manner. They also:
  - monitor reading and self-correct; begin to adjust strategies according to form, and purpose
  - use all sources of information to solve many unknown words; analyze words in flexible ways (e.g., word order, roots, plurals, contractions); make reasonable attempts at multi-syllabic and content-specific words
  - read a wide variety of words with automatically, including content-specific words
  - read familiar passages with appropriate pacing, phrasing and expression to convey sense of text to audience; occasional hesitations may occur with unfamiliar words
  - use context clues, prior knowledge/experiences and knowledge of text forms/features to verify and adjust predictions while reading
  - use text features (e.g., table of contents, headings/subheadings, index, glossary, charts/diagrams) to preview, and locate information; may need support with features requiring interpretation

**Reading Strategies and Behaviours**

**End of Grade 4**

**Strong Achievement**

- Students demonstrating strong achievement apply strategies and exhibit behaviours described at the appropriate level in an increasingly efficient and deliberate manner. They also:
  - solve a range of words, including multi-syllabic and content-specific words
  - acquire new vocabulary while reading
  - question and predict based on interpretations that go beyond the obvious

**Nonfiction (Informational, Biography, Autobiography)**

Texts are characterized by:

- varied structures (short stories, letters) that may have multiple narrators; longer books which require sustained reading and recall of information
- plots with expanded and detailed episodes, proceeding in time-order and ending in clear resolution; descriptions that provide details important to understanding
- the inclusion of a main character, usually easily identified as the “hero”, who is often developed through conflict; factors related to character development that are explicit and obvious; multiple characters revealed through dialogue, actions, thoughts, and/or perspectives of others
- a wide variety of dialogue and stretches of descriptive language important to understanding characters
- settings (i.e., time and place) that are often unfamiliar and important to understanding plot, characters, and theme

**Fiction (Realistic, Fantasy, Traditional, Historical Fiction, Mysteries)**

Texts are characterized by:

- several topics/explicit ideas, linked by categories and presented through clear structures (e.g., description, sequence, compare/contrast, problem/solution, cause/effect)
- at times, many pieces of limited information per section (signalled by font style, headings, or subheadings), usually written in short paragraphs with a clear topic sentence
- print and illustrations/photographs that are equal in prominence; print that adds details necessary for interpretation; variety in layout, often not linear
- a full-range of graphics, not always fully explained; varied, and sometimes dense layout
- additional information, at times requiring interpretation, found throughout text (e.g., table of contents, subheadings, index, glossary, pictures, captions, sidebars, charts/diagrams, maps, simple keys and legends, boldface type, highlights)

**Strong Achievement**

- Students demonstrating strong achievement select and read independently texts as described above, as well as, some texts at a higher level of difficulty. The increase in text complexity is often created by
  - topic choices that require the reader to draw upon extensive background knowledge and knowledge from other subject areas
  - the development of abstract main ideas/themes that require the reader to understand information and viewpoints on experiences different from his/her own
  - the inclusion of longer stretches of descriptive language that add important details to plot, character, and setting, and consequently increase challenges for comprehension
  - characters in narrative texts facing conflicts with more abstract entities (i.e., nature or society)
  - the addition of content-specific words in nonfiction texts that are often not explained in context
  - the inclusion of more complex graphics that require the reader to interpret visual information in combination with print (e.g., graphs, scales)

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Comprehension Responses

Appropriate Achievement
Students demonstrating appropriate achievement respond to a variety of comprehension tasks in the manner described below. Students

Literal Response
- respond accurately to most literal questions by selecting and locating relevant details; may omit some key information when skimming a large amount of text
- identify most key story elements (e.g., setting, characters, story events, problem/resolution, theme/lesson) of a narrative text and provide some relevant details; may include some unnecessary information; graphic organizers may be used
- distinguish between main idea and supporting details; may use graphic organizers to categorize ideas and make limited “ jot” notes

Inferential/Interpretive Response
- make logical inferences about a character (his/her actions, feelings, or personality), and story events with some supporting textual details
- interpret clear relationships among several ideas to draw conclusions (e.g., cause/effect, problem/solution), or make comparisons; support responses with some textual examples
- use context clues, prior knowledge, and reference tools (e.g., dictionary, glossary) to explain the meaning of new vocabulary; provide a reasonable interpretation of words/sentences used in figurative and descriptive ways
- interpret text features (e.g., captions, font, diagrams, maps) and demonstrate an overall understanding of their purpose; may require prompts when graphics are not explained in text

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response
- make some personal connections, relate relevant prior knowledge and make logical text-to-text comparisons; some connections go beyond the obvious and may be supported with a general explanation
- explain and support preferences for, and opinions about, texts, authors, and illustrators, providing some specific details or examples; may include some general or unrelated reasons
- recognize some elements of author’s style/technique (e.g., figurative language, descriptions); explain how they help the reader; support explanations with personal examples or preference
- distinguish between fact and opinion, and identify an author’s point of view; using details from the text
- identify a variety of text forms (e.g., narrative, report, instructions, explanation, autobiography); including key characteristics (e.g., grouping of ideas) and a form’s general purpose

Sample Questions/Tasks
The following types of questions/tasks may be used to assess students’ comprehension.

Strong Achievement
Students demonstrating strong achievement respond to questions/tasks described at the appropriate level with overall accuracy and completeness. They also

Literal Response
- Skim this part to find ___ (information/topic) and tell me about it.
- Find the part that tells ___.
- Tell the important parts of the story in your own words.
- Think like the author. What message do you want the reader to take away from this book?
- What are the important ideas in this book? What information can you tell me about each of these key ideas?
- Look back at the questions you had about this topic. Which ones can you now answer?

Inferential/Interpretive Response
- Why do you think the character ________ (behaved in a certain way)? What makes you think that way?
- How would you describe ________ (character) to someone who hadn’t read this book?
- After reading this book about weather, what can you tell me about the effects of extreme weather?
- What is the same/different about ___ (e.g., types of clouds)? Are there any ideas in this book we could use in our classroom?
- What does this word mean? How do you know?
- What does this expression mean?
- What does this diagram tell you? Is there any information in the diagram that isn’t in the words of the text?
- How does this map help you when you read this page?
- Why is it important to have this caption under the photograph?

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response
- How are you and the main character the same? Different? Would you have solved the problem the same way?
- What advice would you give the character?
- What did you already know about the topic? Did anything in this book surprise you?
- Why did you choose to read this book? Would you recommend it? Why or why not?
- Did the author convince you? Why or why not?
- What words did the author use to help you picture ____ (character, event, topic)? Is this information true or is this the author’s opinion?
- What might ____ (another character) say about this event?
- If you wrote this part of the story as a newspaper article, what would the headline be? What else would you include? Why?
- What advice would you give the character?
- When an author writes an information book, why do you think he/she often uses headings?
- How do you know these are instructions? What do you expect to find out from reading this?

- are beginning to question and evaluate information in texts
- support opinions with relevant textual examples and personal knowledge/experience

- demonstrate increasing efficiency with rereading and skimming to locate relevant details
- provide thoughtful and well-supported responses using specific and relevant textual examples and personal knowledge experience

- distinguish between fact and opinion, and identify an author’s point of view; using details from the text
- identify a variety of text forms (e.g., narrative, report, instructions, explanation, autobiography); including key characteristics (e.g., grouping of ideas) and a form’s general purpose

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