

5th Grade Range of Reading Level / Text Complexity Characteristics

Beginning of the Year - T

Characteristics of Texts at Level T

- Informational texts, more complex fantasy, realistic fiction, traditional literature (folktales), biographies, autobiographies, memoirs, mysteries, historical fiction, short stories, genre combinations (hybrids), diaries
- Some collections of short stories that have interrelated themes or build a single plot across the book
- Nonfiction texts with multiple topics and categories and subcategories within them
- Themes focusing on the problems of preadolescents
- Many texts focusing on human problems (war, hardship, economic issues)
- Themes that evoke alternative interpretations
- Some more complex fantasy elements, some showing conflict between good and evil
- Some obvious symbolism
- Wide range of declarative, imperative, or interrogative sentences
- Many words with affixes (prefixes and suffixes, multi syllable proper nouns that are difficult to decode)
- Words used in regional or historical dialects
- Some words from languages other than English
- Most texts with no or only minimal illustrations

Characteristics of Developing Readers

- Automatically read and understand a full range of genres, including biographies on less well know subjects, hybrid genres, fiction with elaborate plots and complex characters, informational texts, etc.
- Able to read longer texts and remember information and connect ideas over a long period of time (a week or two)
- Read and interpret complex fantasy, myths, legends that contain symbolism
- Understand perspectives different from their own
- Understand settings and people far distant in time and space
- Readers are challenged by many longer descriptive words and by content-specific/technical words
- Read and understand texts in a variety of layouts and formats

Middle of the Year – U

Characteristics of Text at Level U:

- Informational texts, complex fantasy, realistic fiction, traditional literature (folktales), biographies, autobiographies, memoirs, mysteries, historical fiction, short stories, genre combinations (hybrids), diaries
- Variety of underlying structures often combined in complex ways (description, comparison and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, etc.)
- Topics that go well beyond readers' personal experiences and content knowledge
- Content particularly appealing to adolescents
- Many themes presenting mature issues and the problems of society (racism, war)
- Many texts focusing on human problems (war, hardship, economic issues)
- Themes that evoke alternative interpretations
- Texts requiring inference to understand characters and why they change
- Many complex narratives that are highly literary
- Some literary devices (for example, stories within stories, symbolism, and figurative language)
- Fantasy and science fiction showing struggle between good and evil
- Some words from languages other than English
- Long, multisyllable words requiring attention to roots to read and understand
- Most fiction texts with no illustrations other than the cover jacket
- A wide variety of complex graphics that require interpretation (photos with legends, diagrams, labels, cutaways, graphics, maps)

Characteristics of Developing Readers

- Automatically read and understand a full range of genres, including biographies on less well known subjects, hybrid genres, fiction with elaborate plots and complex characters, informational texts, etc.
- Able to read longer texts and remember information and connect ideas over many days of reading
- Read and interpret complex fantasy, myths, legends that contain symbolism
- Understand perspectives different from their own
- Understand settings and people far distant in time and space
- Most reading is silent, but fluency and phrasing in oral reading are well-established
- Able to take apart multisyllable words and use a full range of word-solving skills
- Read and understand texts in a variety of layouts and formats
- Able to search for and use information in an integrated way, using complex graphics and texts that present content requiring background knowledge

End of the Year - V

Characteristics of Texts at Level V:

- Informational texts, complex fantasy, realistic fiction, traditional literature (folktales), biographies, autobiographies, memoirs, mysteries, historical fiction, short stories, genre combinations (hybrids), diaries
- Variety of underlying structures often combined in complex ways (description, comparison and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, etc.)
- Topics that go well beyond readers' personal experiences and content knowledge
- Critical thinking required to judge authenticity of informational texts, historical fiction, and biography
- Heavy content load in many texts, both fiction and nonfiction, requiring study
- Many themes presenting mature issues and the problems of society (racism, war)
- Many texts focusing on human problems (war, hardship, economic issues)
- Themes that evoke alternative interpretations
- Some switching from setting to setting, including time change (often un signaled, or signaled only by dialogue)
- Full range of literary devices (for example, flashback, stories within stories, symbolism, and figurative language)
- Many complex narratives that are highly literary
- Words used figuratively or with unusual or hard-to-understand connotations
- Archaic words or words from languages other than English that do not follow conventional pronunciation patterns
- Introduction to more abstract literary forms, such as satire

Characteristics of Developing Readers

- Automatically read and understand a full range of genres, including biographies on less well known subjects, hybrid genres, fiction with elaborate plots and complex characters, informational texts, etc.
- Able to read longer texts and remember information and connect ideas over many days of reading
- Read and interpret complex fantasy, myths, legends that contain symbolism
- Able to read and interpret more abstract forms of literature (satire)
- Understand perspectives different from their own
- Understand settings and people far distant in time and space
- Readers can be very expressive when presenting poetry or readers' theater
- Read and understand texts in a variety of layouts and formats
- Able to search for and use information in an integrated way, using complex graphics and texts that present content requiring background knowledge