

# Item Specifications for the Indiana Assessment IREAD-3 English/Language Arts

These item specifications serve as a foundational resource in the assessment development process. Item specifications identify the standards being assessed. In addition they provide information about each of the related items including: evidence elicited, depth of knowledge (DOK), limits and constraints, and item types. A panel of elementary teachers, representative of Indiana student populations and in partnership with the Department of Education, reviewed and approved the items and forms these item specifications are derived from. Item specifications are provided only for standards that appear on the IREAD-3 assessment.

Learning outcomes for each strand (Reading: Literature, Reading: Nonfiction, and Reading: Vocabulary) are included at the beginning of this document. These are “umbrella standards” that encompass all other standards within that strand.

## Overview

The rows of each item specification highlight key features of items included on Indiana assessments as follows:

**Reporting Category:** The broad content category for the standard representing a segment or domain of content approved by educators as key for reporting. Examples across content areas may include: Number Sense in Mathematics (7.NS); Physical Science in Science (4.PS); and Writing in English/Language Arts (9-10.W).

**Standard:** Each Indiana Academic Standard is noted under the Reporting Category.

**Evidence Statement(s):** Statements that describe the knowledge and skills that an assessment item should elicit from students.

### Content Limit(s)/

**Constraint(s):** Statements that list the boundaries or limits of assessment items for that standard.

**Depth of Knowledge:** Webb’s Depth of Knowledge categorizes items by the complexity of thinking required. Descriptions of each level are: (1) recall and reproduction, (2) skills and concepts, (3) strategic thinking, and (4) extended thinking.

**Item Type(s):** Two possible item types, multiple choice (MC) and multi-part multiple choice (MMS).

**Sample Item Stem(s):** Examples of items stems that satisfy the requirements of the specification.

**Sample Item(s):** Full example items that satisfy the requirements of the specifications.

### Learning Outcomes

<b>Reading: Literature Learning Outcome</b>
3.RL.1: Read and comprehend a variety of literature within a range of complexity appropriate for grades 2–3. By the end of grade 3, students interact with texts proficiently and independently.
As the Learning Outcome is an umbrella standard for all standards under Reading: Literature, items will not be specifically aligned to this standard. Texts will represent a range of literature appropriate for 3rd grade.
<b>Reading: Nonfiction Learning Outcome</b>
3.RN.1: Read and comprehend a variety of nonfiction within a range of complexity appropriate for grades 2–3. By the end of grade 3, students interact with texts proficiently and independently.
As the Learning Outcome is an umbrella standard for all standards under Reading: Nonfiction, items will not be specifically aligned to this standard. Texts will represent a range of nonfiction appropriate for 3rd grade.
<b>Reading: Vocabulary Learning Outcome</b>
3.RV.1: Build and use accurately conversational, general academic, and content-specific words and phrases.
As the Learning Outcome is an umbrella standard for all standards under Reading: Vocabulary, items will not be specifically aligned to this standard.
<b>Reading: Foundations Learning Outcome</b>
3.RF.1: Apply foundational reading skills to build reading fluency and comprehension.
As the Learning Outcome is an umbrella standard for all standards under Reading: Foundations, items will not be specifically aligned to this standard.

Reporting Category	Reading: Foundations
Standard	3.RF.3.4: Students are expected to build upon and continue applying concepts learned previously.  1.RF.3.4: Distinguish beginning, middle (medial), and final sounds in single-syllable words.
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can identify the same beginning, middle, or ending sound as that in a given word.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	Beginning, middle, or ending sound in the given word and the options should be distinguishable to allow students to select the same sounds.
Depth of Knowledge	1
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	Find the word that has the same ending sound as...

**Sample Item (MC)**

Look at the words for Number [X]. Find the word that has the same ending sound as “hard” . . . “hard.”  
Fill in the circle that goes with the answer you choose.

- A. bird
- B. help
- C. skate

**Key:** A

Reporting Category	Reading: Foundations
Standard	<p>3.RF.4.3: Students are expected to build upon and continue applying concepts learned previously.</p> <p>2.RF.4.3: Apply knowledge of short and long vowels (including vowel teams) when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words.</p>
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can identify the same vowel sound as that in a given word.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	<p>Use words with regular vowel teams, avoiding words with irregular vowel teams.</p> <p>Use one-syllable words.</p>
Depth of Knowledge	1
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	N/A

Reporting Category	Reading: Vocabulary
Standard	3.RV.2.1: Apply context clues (e.g., <i>word, phrase, and sentence clues</i> ) and text features (e.g., <i>maps, illustrations, charts</i> ) to determine the meanings of unknown words.
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can use context clues to select appropriate words that complete a text.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	Provide a grade-level appropriate context that clearly supports the correct answer.
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multi-Part Multiple Choice (MMC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	<p>Read the passage. For each of the blanks, there is a list of words with the same number. Choose the word from each list that best completes the meaning of the passage.</p> <p>[Insert two related sentences that each contain one numbered blank.]</p> <p>Blank 1</p> <p>A. B. C. D.</p> <p>Blank 2</p> <p>A. B. C. D.</p>

Reporting Category	Reading: Vocabulary
Standard	3.RV.2.2: Identify relationships among words, including synonyms, antonyms, homographs, homonyms, and multiple-meaning words (e.g., <i>puzzle, fire</i> ).
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can use their knowledge of a given word in order to choose a word with almost the same meaning.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	Focus more on synonyms and antonyms, rather than homophones and homographs. Assess grade-level appropriate words. Do not test multiple skills (i.e., synonyms along with antonyms) in a single item. Assess homographs only if a passage naturally supports an item.
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	<p>Choose the word that means the same, or about the same, as the underlined word.</p> <p>[Insert sentence or phrase with underlined word.]</p> <p>Which word is an antonym, or means the OPPOSITE of . . . ?</p> <p>Choose the word that correctly completes both sentences.</p> <p>Read this sentence.</p> <p>[Insert sentence]</p> <p>Which word means ALMOST the same as . . . ?</p>

**Sample Item (MC)**

Choose the word that means the same, or about the same, as the underlined word.

choose a book

- A. pick
- B. help
- C. send
- D. offer

**Key:** A



Reporting Category	Reading: Vocabulary
Standard	3.RV.3.1: Determine how the author uses words and phrases to provide meaning to works of literature, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language, including figurative language (e.g., <i>similes</i> ).
Evidence Statement(s)	The student is able to identify the true meaning of a piece of text.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	Words and phrases should focus on the central meaning of the text.
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	Read this sentence. [Insert sentence] What does . . . mean when . . . says this?

Reporting Category	Reading: Nonfiction
Standard	3.RN.2.1: Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can demonstrate understanding of text by referring explicitly to a passage as their basis for the answer to a content question.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	Questions that assess this standard ask about a specific detail in the text. Try to include functional pieces (i.e., tables of contents from a science or social studies text, a train schedule). Student might be given a question and then asked in which paragraph the answer can be found in the numbered paragraphs of a passage.
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	Which fact about ... BEST shows why . . . needs . . .? Why does . . .? How does the reader know . . .? What information can be learned from . . .? Which sentence from the passage BEST shows . . .?

**Sample Item (MC)**

Why did people in China begin using chopsticks?

- A. Chopsticks took little practice.
- B. Chopsticks were brought by sailors.
- C. Chopsticks picked up food out of a pot.
- D. Chopsticks were traded for other goods.

**Key:** C

Reporting Category	Reading: Nonfiction
Standard	3.RN.2.2: Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can select the main idea of a passage.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	Main idea may be explicitly or implicitly stated in the passage. Items focus on the first part of the standard, determining the main idea.
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	What is . . . MOSTLY about? What is the MAIN idea of . . .? What is the MAIN idea of the article? What is this article MOSTLY about?

**Sample Item (MC)**

What is this article MOSTLY about?

- A. Chopsticks are long and thin.
- B. Chopsticks are used by sailors.
- C. Chopsticks are simple tools used for eating.
- D. Chopsticks are sticks that people in China use for trade.

**Key:** C

Reporting Category	Reading: Nonfiction
Standard	3.RN.2.3: Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in processes or procedures in a text, using words such as first, next, finally, because, problem, solution, same, and different.
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can establish a sequence of events within a passage in order to determine when a specific event occurred.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	The question may require students to identify language in the passage that conveys time or sequence.
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	What is the first way people used . . . ? Which event happened FIRST in the article? Which of these happened BEFORE . . . ?

Reporting Category	Reading: Nonfiction
Standard	3.RN.3.1: Apply knowledge of text features to locate information and gain meaning from a text (e.g., <i>maps, illustrations, charts, font/format</i> ).
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can use text features as a tool in further understanding a passage.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	Provide students with an excerpt from a real-world reference. Students may be asked to locate information that is general (main idea) or specific (a detail).
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	Which idea from the article does the picture help explain? What does [insert heading from passage] help the reader understand?

Reporting Category	Reading: Nonfiction
Standard	3.RN.3.2: Identify how a nonfiction text can be structured to indicate a problem and solution or to put events in chronological order
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can identify the structure of a nonfiction text to determine a timeline of events or to determine the ideas within a specific section of the text.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	Questions focus on “identify” only. Try to include functional pieces (i.e., tables of contents from a science or social studies text, a train schedule). Do not use passages with problem/solution or cause/effect text structures.
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	Which event happened BEFORE . . . ? What is the MAIN idea of [insert heading from passage]?

Reporting Category	Reading: Literature
Standard	3.RL.2.1: Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
Evidence Statement(s)	Student can demonstrate comprehension by answering questions about a piece of text.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	This is a specific detail question. Student might be given a question and then asked in which paragraph the answer can be found in the numbered paragraphs of a passage.
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	Which sentence BEST describes . . . ? When does . . . ? What happens AFTER . . . ? Why did . . . ? Where does . . . ?

**Sample Item (MC)**

Read this sentence.

At school Joe saw a bike, a swing, and a book.

What did Joe see last?

- A. a bike
- B. a book
- C. a swing

**Key:** B

Reporting Category	Reading: Literature
Standard	3.RL.2.2: Retell folktales, fables, and tall tales from diverse cultures; identify the themes in these works.
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can explain what happens in a passage.  Students can identify the theme in a passage.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	Do not ask students to predict the ending of a passage. Focus on sequencing of plots; ask students to “identify” beginning, middle, or end of passage or to comprehend other passage elements (i.e., setting, cause/effect, etc.).  In the question, use only the terms used in the indicator itself (i.e., theme, author’s message).
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	Which sentence explains what happens in the passage?  What did the author want you to learn from this passage?



Reporting Category	Reading: Literature
Standard	3.RL.2.3: Describe characters in a story (e.g., <i>their traits, motivations, or feelings</i> ) and explain how their actions contribute to the plot.
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can describe attributes of characters and how their actions affect the plot.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	Do not use illustrations to assess students' understanding of character. Questions may use explicit or implicit details from the passage to describe a character and how the character's actions affect the events in the passage.
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	<p>Why does ... MOST LIKELY ...?</p> <p>Which word BEST describes ...?</p> <p>How does ... MOST LIKELY feel when ...?</p> <p>How are ... and ... MOST alike?</p> <p>At the end of the story ... feels better because ...</p> <p>Read these sentences.</p> <p>[Insert sentences]</p> <p>What do these sentences tell the reader about ...?</p> <p>What does ... do when ...?</p>

Reporting Category	Reading: Literature
Standard	<p>3.RL.2.4: Students are expected to build upon and continue applying concepts learned previously.</p> <p>2.RL.2.4: Make predictions about the content of text using prior knowledge of text features, explaining whether they were confirmed or not confirmed and why.</p>
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can make predictions about a character's actions or the plot based on what has already happened in the text.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	The text must contain some basis for the student to make a prediction.
Depth of Knowledge	2
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	<p>What will . . . MOST LIKELY do . . . ?</p> <p>What can the reader predict will happen the next time . . . ?</p>

Reporting Category	Reading: Literature
Standard	3.RL.4.1: Explain how specific aspects of a text’s illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., <i>create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting</i> ).
Evidence Statement(s)	Students can explain how an illustration is relevant to a text.
Content Limit(s)/ Constraint(s)	The text must contain a piece of art that relates to the text and contributes meaning to the text.
Depth of Knowledge	1
Item Type(s)	Multiple Choice (MC)
Sample Item Stem(s)	What does the picture MOST help the reader understand?