ISTEP+ Performance Level Descriptors
English/Language Arts – Grade 4

Grade 4
Pass+
Fourth-grade students performing at the Pass+ level demonstrate advanced understanding when reading, comparing, and responding to a range of grade-level appropriate texts, including literature and nonfiction. Students display advanced writing skills using appropriate Standard English conventions when producing different writing forms.

When reading literature, such as fiction and poetry, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 4 students scoring at the Pass+ level include:
- Identify theme and provide evidence for its interpretation;
- Describe characters, settings, or events in a text and how they impact the plot;
- Determine the meaning of figurative language in a text;
- Compare and contrast themes and topics in multiple texts; and
- Compare and contrast point of view in how different stories are narrated.

When reading nonfiction, such as articles and excerpts from books, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 4 students scoring at the Pass+ level include:
- Compare and contrast firsthand and secondhand accounts of a topic;
- Explain the relationships between events, procedures, ideas, or concepts;
- Combine information from texts to demonstrate knowledge about a topic; and
- Recognize how claims are used in media, identifying support for claims.

When writing, students craft well-organized, clearly focused, and detailed persuasive, informative, and narrative compositions, including a response to a literature or nonfiction text, using varied word choices and appropriate Standard English conventions. Specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 4 students scoring at the Pass+ level include:
- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or persuade, providing specific details to add interest and
- Write focused and detailed compositions containing interesting word choices and effectively organized ideas.

Grade 4
Pass
Fourth-grade students performing at the Pass level demonstrate proficient understanding when reading, comparing, and responding to a range of grade-level appropriate texts, including literature and nonfiction. Students display proficient writing skills using mostly appropriate Standard English conventions when producing different writing forms.

When reading literature, such as fiction and poetry, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 4 students scoring at the Pass level include:
- Refer to details and examples from a text when drawing inferences;
- Paraphrase events in a text;
- Identify theme;
- Describe characters, setting, or events, drawing on details in a text;
• Identify differences among genres and refer to structural elements; and
• Determine how language provides meaning to texts.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as articles and excerpts from books, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 4 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:
- Refer to details and examples from a text when drawing inferences;
- Determine the main idea in a text and use details to support main ideas;
- Use text features to locate information and understand what is read;
- Describe organizational structure;
- Determine the meaning of unknown words or phrases in a text; and
- Recognize how claims are used in media.

When **writing**, students craft proficient persuasive, informative, and narrative compositions, including a response to a literature or nonfiction text, using varied word choices and mostly appropriate Standard English conventions. Specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 4 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:
- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or persuade, providing some details to add interest;
- Determine the reliability of sources; and
- Write focused compositions containing interesting word choices and effectively organized ideas.

**Grade 4**
**Did Not Pass**
Fourth-grade students performing at the *Did Not Pass* level demonstrate limited understanding when reading, comparing, and responding to grade-level appropriate texts, including literature and nonfiction. Students display limited writing skills using basic appropriate Standard English conventions when producing different writing forms.

When reading **literature**, such as fiction and poetry, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 4 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:
- Use details and examples to support what a text says explicitly;
- Paraphrase or retell main events in what is read; and
- Describe characters, setting, or events in a text.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as articles and excerpts from books, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 4 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:
- Use details and examples to support what a text says explicitly;
- Determine the main idea in a text; and
- Use text features to locate information.

When **writing**, students demonstrate limited writing skills when producing persuasive, informative, and narrative compositions, including a response to a literature or nonfiction text, using some varied word choices and basic appropriate Standard English conventions. Specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 4 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:
- Write for different purposes;
- Identify questions to address when writing; and
- Write compositions containing basic word choices and ideas.