ISTEP+ Performance Level Descriptors
English/Language Arts – Grade 5

Grade 5
Pass+
Fifth-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 5 students scoring at the Pass+ level include:
- Explain how parts of a text contribute to overall structure;
- Describe the impact two or more characters, settings, or events have on the plot; and
- Compare and contrast two stories with similar themes or topics.

When reading nonfiction, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 5 students scoring at the Pass+ level include:
- Explain the relationship between two or more events, ideas, or concepts in a text;
- Compare and contrast organizational structures of texts;
- Explain how an author supports claims in a text, identifying which evidence supports which claims; and
- Analyze multiple accounts of the same topic.

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 5 students scoring at the Pass+ level include:
- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or persuade, providing well-developed details and facts that connect to the purpose;
- Use language, words, and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose; and
- Write focused and detailed compositions containing interesting word choices, effectively organized ideas, and well-developed thoughts.

Grade 5
Pass
Fifth-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 5 students scoring at the Pass level include:
- Quote text to explain and interpret explicit and inferred ideas in what is read;
- Summarize text;
- Determine theme based on details in a text;
- Determine how words and phrases provide meaning to a text;
Understand how the point of view in a text influences meaning; and
Compare and contrast two stories with similar themes or topics.

When reading nonfiction, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 5 students scoring at the Pass level include:
- Quote text to explain and interpret explicit and inferred ideas in what is read;
- Determine two or more main ideas and explain how they are supported in text;
- Determine the meaning of words in text;
- Explain an author’s use of evidence to support claims; and
- Explain claims in various media sources.

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 5 students scoring at the Pass level include:
- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or persuade, providing details and facts that connect to the purpose;
- Use language, words, and tone mostly appropriate to the audience and purpose;
- Identify information in reliable sources; and
- Write focused and detailed compositions containing interesting word choices and organized ideas.

**Grade 5 Did Not Pass**
Fifth-grade students performing at the Did Not Pass level demonstrate limited understanding when reading, comparing, and responding to a range of 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 5 students scoring at the Did Not Pass level include:
- Quote text to explain explicit ideas in what is read;
- Determine theme based on details in text;
- Describe characters, settings, or events; and
- Use context to determine the meaning of words in text.

When reading nonfiction, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 5 students scoring at the Did Not Pass level include:
- Quote text to explain explicit ideas in what is read;
- Apply knowledge of text features to locate information and gain meaning; and
- Use context to determine the meaning of words in text.

When writing, students craft limited persuasive, informative, and narrative compositions, including a response to a literature or nonfiction text, using varied word choices and basic appropriate Standard English conventions. Specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 5 students scoring at the Did Not Pass level include:
• Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or persuade, providing minimal details and facts;
• Use language, words, and tone minimally appropriate to the audience and purpose; and
• Write compositions containing basic word choices and ideas.