Readers at **Level N:**

At level N, readers will process the full range of genres, short fiction stories, chapter books and shorter informational texts; also, they read special forms such as mysteries and series books. Fiction narratives are straightforward but have more elaborate plots with many episodes and multiple characters who develop and change over time. Some nonfiction texts provide information in categories on several related topics, and readers can identify and use underlying structures (description, compare and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect). They continue to read silently at a good rate and automatically use a wide range of word-solving strategies while focusing on meaning. In oral reading, they will continue to read with phrasing, fluency, and appropriate word stress in a way that reflects meaning and recognizes punctuation. Readers will slow down to problem solve or search for information and then resume normal pace; there is little overt problem solving. They can process sentences that are complex, with prepositional phrases, introductory clauses, lists of nouns, verbs, or adjectives. They can read and understand descriptive words, some complex content-specific words, and some technical words. Length of text is no longer a critical factor as students are beginning to read texts that vary greatly. Word solving is smooth and automatic in both silent and oral reading.

**Selecting Texts:** Characteristics of Texts at This Level

**GENRE/FORMS**
- Genre
  - Informational texts
  - Simple fantasy
  - Realistic fiction
  - Traditional literature
  - Biography, mostly on well-known subjects
  - Historical fiction
  - Simple mysteries
  - Hybrid texts with embedded genres such as directions, letters, or recipes

**Forms**
- Picture books
- Plays
- Beginning chapter books with illustrations
- Series books
- Graphic texts

**TEXT STRUCTURE**
- Fiction
  - Narrative structure including chapters with multiple episodes related to a single plot
  - Plots with detailed episodes
- Nonfiction
  - Texts organized into categories and subcategories

**CONTENT**
- Presentation of multiple topics that represent subtopics of a larger content area or theme
- Underlying structures (description, compare and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect)
- Variety in organization and topic
- Variety in nonfiction formats (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, and call-outs)

**LANGUAGE AND LITERARY FEATURES**
- Some abstract themes requiring inferential thinking to derive
- Texts with deeper meanings applicable to important human problems and social issues
- Some texts (graphic texts) requiring readers to infer the story from pictures with minimal text or dialogue only

**SENTENCE COMPLEXITY**
- Variety in sentence length, with some longer (more than fifteen words), more complex sentences (prepositional phrases, introductory clauses, lists of nouns, verbs, or adjectives)
- Questions in dialogue (fiction) and questions and answers (nonfiction)
- Sentences with parenthetical material
- Sentences with nouns, verbs, or adjectives in series, divided by commas

**THEMES AND IDEAS**
- Many light, humorous stories, typical of childhood experiences
- A few abstract ideas, supported by the text but with less illustration support
- Building suspense through events of the plot
- Simple, traditional elements of fantasy
- Texts with multiple points of view revealed through characters' behaviors

**VOCABULARY**
- Many complex content-specific words in nonfiction, mostly defined in text, illustrations, or glossary
- New vocabulary in fiction texts largely unexplained
- Some words used figuratively
crouching and zigzagging and whirling, dribbling tight like five guys were on him, trying to take the ball away. Then he started coming up the driveway fast. He got near the basket and leaped high. "Madness!" he shouted.—What is that?"

"String," I said.

"Take it off! I can’t shoot a basket with that string over the hoop."

"Why not?" I asked.

"Don’t you know anything?" Julian asked.

"The ball can’t go in!"

"It’s my basketball hoop, too," I said. "It's half mine. And I’m using my half for string."

Julian walked up on the grass. He looked like he wanted to shove me. I braced my legs and protected my string with my arms. Spunky walked over and growled.

"Remember what Mom said. Remember what Dad said," I told him.
Readers at Level N:

At level N, readers will process the full range of genres, short fiction stories, chapter books and shorter informational texts; also, they read special forms such as mysteries and series books. Fiction narratives are straightforward but have more elaborate plots with many episodes and multiple characters who develop and change over time. Some nonfiction texts provide information in categories on several related topics, and readers can identify and use underlying structures (description, compare and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect). They continue to read silently at a good rate and automatically use a wide range of word-solving strategies while focusing on meaning. In oral reading, they will continue to read with phrasing, intonation, and appropriate word stress in a way that reflects meaning and recognizes punctuation. Readers will slow down to solve problems or search for information and then resume normal pace; there is little overt problem solving. They can process sentences that are complex, with prepositional phrases, introductory clauses, lists of nouns, verbs, or adjectives. They can read and understand descriptive words, some complex content-specific words, and some technical words. Length of text is no longer a critical factor as students are beginning to read texts that vary greatly. Word solving is automatic and smooth in both silent and oral reading.

Selecting Texts: Characteristics of Texts at This Level

GENRE/FORMS

- Genre
  - Informational texts
  - Simple fantasy
  - Realistic fiction
  - Traditional literature
  - Biography, mostly on well-known subjects
  - Historical fiction
  - Simple mysteries
  - Hybrid texts with embedded genres such as directions, letters, or recipes

- Forms
  - Picture books
  - Plays
  - Beginning chapter books with illustrations
  - Series books
  - Graphic texts

TEXT STRUCTURE

- Fiction
  - Narrative structure including chapters with multiple episodes related to a single plot
  - Plots with detailed anecdotes

- Nonfiction
  - Texts organized into categories and subcategories

CONTENT

- Presentation of multiple topics that represent subtopics of a larger content area or theme
- Underlying structures (description, comparison and contrast temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect)
- Varieties in organization and topic
- Varieties in sentence formats (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, and call-out)
- Some abstract themes requiring inferential thinking to derive
- Texts with deeper meanings applicable to important human problems and social issues
- Some texts (graphic texts) requiring readers to infer the story from pictures with minimal text or dialogue only

LANGUAGE AND LITERARY FEATURES

- Multiple characters to understand
- Characters and perspectives revealed by how they say think and do and what others say or think about them
- Memorable characters who change and develop over time
- Factors related to character change explicit and obvious
- Descriptive and figurative language that are important to understanding the plot
- Setting important to understanding the plot in some texts
- Wide variety in showing dialogue, both assigned and unsigned
- Complex plots with numerous episodes and time passing
- Plots with numerous episodes, building toward problem resolution

SENTENCE COMPLEXITY

- Variety in sentence length, with some longer (more than fifteen words), more complex sentences (prepositional phrases, introductory clauses, lists of nouns, verbs, or adjectives)
- Questions in dialogue (fiction) and and questions and answers (narrative)
- Sentences with parenthetical material
- Sentences with nouns, verbs, or adjectives in series, divided by commas

VOCABULARY

- Many complex content-specific words in nonfiction, mostly defined in text, illustrations, or glossary
- New vocabulary in fiction texts largely explained
- Some words used figuratively
riously that Henry could not help ducking. Elroy tucked his tail between his legs and hastily left the kitchen.

Henry felt his mother’s hand on top of his head and heard the clippers at the back of his neck. Then he felt them touch his skin. “Ow,” he exclaimed, and pulled away. “They’re cold.”

“New, Henry, I haven’t even begun to clip,” said his mother.

Henry gritted his teeth. The clippers touched the back of his neck and whizzed up his head. “Mom!” protested Henry, feeling the back of his head. “That’s too short.”

“The clippers do cut awfully fast.” For the first time Mrs. Huggins sounded doubtful.

Once more the clippers tickled Henry’s neck and chattered up the back of his head. “There,” said Mrs. Huggins. “I didn’t get it quite so close that time.”

“But it’s supposed to match,” said Henry.
Readers at **Level P:**

At level P, readers can identify the characteristics of a full range of genres, including biographies on less well-known subjects and hybrid texts that blend more than one genre into a coherent whole. They read both chapter books and shorter informational texts; also, they read special forms such as mysteries, serial books, books with sequels, or short stories. Fiction narratives are straightforward but have elaborate plots and multiple characters who develop and change over time. Readers are able to understand abstract and mature themes and take on diverse perspectives and issues related to race, language, culture. Some nonfiction texts provide information in categories of several related topics, many of which are well beyond readers’ typical experience. Readers can identify and use underlying structures (description, comparison and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect). They can process sentences that are complex and contain prepositional phrases, introductory clauses, lists of nouns, verbs, or adjectives. They solve new vocabulary words, some defined in the text and others explained. Word solving is smooth and automatic in both silent and oral reading. They can read and understand descriptive words, some complex content-specific words, and some technical words. They read silently; in oral reading, they demonstrate all aspects of smooth, fluent processing with little overt problem solving.

### Selecting Texts:

**Characteristics of Texts at This Level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENRE/FORMS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genre</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple fantasy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic fiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional literature (folktales, tall tales, legends)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biography, many on well-known subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple mysteries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forms</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning chapter books with illustrations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Series books</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graphic texts</td>
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<tr>
<th>TEXT STRUCTURE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fiction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative structure including chapters with multiple episodes related to a single theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plots with detailed episodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meta-narrative clues to ends of a story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texts with parallel plots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texts with circular plots</td>
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<tr>
<th>Nonfiction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of multiple topics that represent subtopics of a larger topic or theme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Underlying structures (description, comparison and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texts with multiple topics and categories within them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety in organization and structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety in nonfiction formats (prose and essay, paragraphs, boxes, legends, and call-outs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topics that go well beyond readers’ personal experiences and content knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of content carried by the text, rather than pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content supported or extended by illustrations in most informational texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content requiring the reader to take on diverse perspectives (race, language, culture)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEMES AND IDEAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some texts with deeper meaning still familiar to most readers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE AND LITERARY FEATURES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideas and themes requiring taking a perspective not familiar to the reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few texts with difficult themes requiring inferential thinking and inference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texts with deeper meanings applicable to important human problems and social issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some more challenging themes (e.g., war, the environment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many ideas and themes requiring understanding of cultural diversity</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SENTENCE COMPLEXITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Longer (somewhat more than fifteen words) complex sentence structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions in dialogue (fiction) and questions and answers (nonfiction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences with parenthetical material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentences with nouns, verbs, or adjectives in series, divided by commas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many complex content-specific words in nonfiction, mostly defined in text, illustrations, or glossary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Fred used the edge of my bed to practice his street skating moves. “We’ve got to perfect the unity, the mute grab, the backside royale . . .”
“... Matilda, Flat Stanley . . .”
“... gumby, stale Japan . . .”
Fred and Sam traded skate moves and book titles one-on-one.
“... or here’s Tuck Everlasting . . .”
“... rocket three-sixty . . .”
“... Brer Rabbit . . .”
“... fishbrain . . .”
Without looking up from the list, Sam grabbed Fred’s hat and tossed it on the floor.
“Encyclopedia Brown.”
Fred did a half-wrist flip off the bed and took Sam’s list. He stuck it in a book from my shelf, shoved the book back on the shelf, and jumped back onto the bed.
“Misty-lip.”
“George and Martha.”
“One-eighth monkey plant.”
“Guys—”
“Frog and Toad.”
“Alley-oup soul.”

Vocabulary
- Many new vocabulary words that depend on readers’ context (such as glossaries)
- Many new vocabulary words that readers must derive meaning from context
- Some words with connotative meanings that are essential to understanding the text
- Some words used figuratively (metaphor, simile, idiom)
- Words with multiple meanings
- Words that stand for abstract ideas

Illustrations
General
- A variety of complex graphics, often more than one on a page

Fiction
- Most texts with no or only minimal illustrations
- In illustrated texts, highly colored and artistic illustrations that communicate meaning to match or extend the text (mood, symbolism)
- Most illustrations are black and white

Nonfiction
- Full range of graphics providing information that matches and extends the text
- Some texts with graphics that are complex and not fully explained
- Variety in the layout of print in nonfiction texts (question and answers, paragraphs, boxes, legends, call-outs)

- Variety of graphics (diagrams, labeled cutaways, maps, tables with legends)
- Some texts with graphics that have titles or legends that require understanding and interpretation

Book and Print Features
Print and Layout
- Variable space between lines, with some text having the use of it
- Use of words in italics, bold, or all caps to indicate emphasis, level of importance or signal other meaning
- Variety in print and background color
- Large variation among print styles and font size related to genre
- Sentences continuing over several lines of to the next page
- Cartoons under pictures that provide important information
- Print and illustrations integrated in most texts, with print wrapping around pictures
- Variety in layout of nonfiction formats (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, call-outs)
- More difficult layout of informational text, and some fiction texts, with denser forms
- Multi-level setting, action, and characters provided in pictures in graphic texts

Punctuation
- Full range of punctuation as needed for complex sentences

Tools
- Full range of reader’s tools: table of contents, glossary, pronunciation guide, titles, labels, headings, subheadings, subheads, legends, author’s notes, index, call-outs, references
- Full range of graphics: photos, drawings, maps, cutaways, tables, call-outs, graphs

Readers at Level Q:

At level Q, readers automatically read and understand a full range of genres, including biographies on less well-known subjects and hybrid texts that blend more than one genre in a coherent whole. They read both chapter books and shorter informational texts; also, they read special forms such as mysteries, series books, books with sequels, and short stories. Fiction narratives are straightforward but have elaborate plots and many complex characters who develop and change over time. As readers, they understand perspectives different from their own as well as settings and people far distant in time and space. They can process sentences that are complex, contain prepositional phrases, introductory clauses, lists of nouns, verbs, or adjectives, and they solve new vocabulary words, some defined in the text and others unexplained. Most reading is silent, but fluency and phrasing in oral reading are well established. Readers are challenged by many longer descriptive words and by context-specific and technical words that require using embedded definitions, background knowledge, and readers' tools, such as glossaries. They can take apart multiple words and use a full range of word-solving skills. They read and understand texts in a variety of layouts as well as fonts and print characteristics and consistently search for information in illustrations and increasingly complex graphics.

Selecting Texts: Characteristics of Texts at This Level

GENRE/FORMS

Genre
- Informational texts
- More complex fantasy
- Science fiction
- Realistic fiction
- Traditional literature (all forms)
- Biography, memoir, and autobiography
- Historical fiction
- Mysteries
- Hybrid texts

Forms
- Picture books
- Plays
- Chapter books
- Chapter books with sequels
- Series books
- Short stories
- Diaries and logs
- Graphic texts

TEXT STRUCTURE

Fiction
- Narrative structure including chapters with multiple episodes related to a single plot
- Flots with detailed episodes
- Moral lessons close to the end of a story

Nonfiction
- Presentation of multiple topics that represent subtopics of a large topic or theme
- Underlying structure (description, comparison and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect)
- Texts with multiple topics and categories within them
- Variety in organization and topic
- Variety in nonfiction formats (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, and call-outs)

CONTENT

- Topics that go beyond readers' personal experiences and content knowledge
- Fiction—settings requiring knowledge of content (history, geography, etc.)
- Most of content carried by the print rather than pictures
- Content supported or extended by illustrations in most informational texts

LANGUaje AND LITERARY FEATURES

- Content requiring the reader to take on diverse perspectives (race, language, culture)
- Extensive use of figurative language that is important to understanding the plot
- Specific descriptions of settings that provide important information for understanding the plot
- Settings distant in time and space from students' typical experiences
- Wide variety in showing dialogue, both assigned and unassigned
- Complex plots with numerous episodes and time passing
- Suspense built through the events of the plot
- Some more complex fantasy elements
- Texts with multiple points of view revealed through characters' behaviors

SENTENCE COMPLEXITY

- Longer and more complex sentence structures (some with more than fifteen words)
- Questions in dialogue (fictions) and questions and answers (nonfiction)
- Sentences with parenthetical material
Surviving the Cold

How do polar bears survive all that cold? Polar bears are very well adapted to life in the frozen Arctic. A polar bear's entire body, even the bottom of its feet, is covered in fur. The fur protects it from the cold. The top layer of fur is called guard hair. Guard hair sticks together when it's wet. The wet fur is a barrier that prevents polar bears from the cold water.

Below the guard hairs is a downy undercoat of fur that gives polar bears another layer of warmth. Underneath their fur, polar bears have black skin. The black

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**VOCABULARY**

- Many complex content-specific words in nonfiction, mostly defined in text, illustrations, or glossary
- Many new vocabulary words that depend on readers' tools (such as glossaries)
- Many new vocabulary words for readers to derive meaning from context
- Many words used figuratively (use of common clams, simile)
- Words with context-specific meanings essential to understanding the text

**ILLUSTRATIONS**

**General**
- A variety of charts, graphics, often more than one on a page

**Fiction**
- Most text with no or only minimal illustrations
- In illustrated texts, highly complex and artistic illustrations that communicate meaning in a story or extend the text (mood, symbolism)
- Black and white illustrations in novel fiction texts
- Much of setting, action, and characters provided in pictures in graphic texts

**Nonfiction**
- Full range of graphics providing information that matches and extends the text
- Some texts with graphics that are complex and not easily explained
- Variety of graphics (charts, labels, cutaways, maps, charts, maps with legends)
- Some texts with graphics that have scales or legends that require understanding and interpretation

**BOOK AND PRINT FEATURES**

**Print and Layout**
- Varied spacing between lines, with some texts having cursive print
- Use of words in italics, bold, or all capital letters to indicate emphasis, level of importance, or signal other meaning
- Variety in print and background color
- Large variation among print styles and font size (related to genre)
- Some sentences continuing over several lines or to the next page
- Captions under pictures that provide important information
- Print and illustrations integrated in most texts with print wrapping around pictures
- Variety in layout of nonfiction format (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, headlines)
- More difficult layout in informational text
- Some fiction texts with denser format
- Information shown in a variety of picture and print combinations in graphic texts

**Punctuation**
- Full range of punctuation as needed for complex sentences

**Tools**
- Full range of readers' tools: table of contents, glossary, pronunciation guide, titles, labels, headings, abbreviations, sidebars, legends, captions, author's notes, index, calendars, references, hyperlinks
- Full range of graphics: photos, drawings, maps, cutaways, tables, graphs, timelines
Readers at Level R:

At Level R, readers automatically read and understand a full range of genres, including biographies on less well-known subjects, more complex fantasy, and hybrid texts that blend more than one genre in a coherent whole. They read both chapter books and shorter informational texts. Also, they read special forms such as mysteries, series books, books with sequels, short stories, diaries, and logs. Fiction narratives are straightforward but have elaborate plots and many complex characters who develop and change over time. As readers, they understand perspectives different from their own as well as settings and people far distant in time and space. They can process sentences (some with more than fifteen words) that are complex, contain prepositional phrases, introductory clauses, lists of nouns, verbs, or adjectives, and they solve new vocabulary words, some defined in the text and others unexplained. Most reading is silent, but fluency and phrasing in oral reading are well established. Readers are challenged by many longer descriptive words; and by content specific and technical words that require using embedded definitions, background knowledge, and readers' tools, such as glossaries. They can take apart multisyllabic words and use a full range of word-solving skills. They read and understand texts in a variety of layouts as well as fonts and print characteristics and consistently search for information in illustrations and increasingly complex graphics.

**GENRE/FORMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Nonfiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Picture books</td>
<td>Presentation of multiple topics that represent subtopic of a larger topic or theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plays</td>
<td>Underlying structures (description, comparison, contrast, temporal, sequence, problem, solution, cause, and effect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter books</td>
<td>Texts with multiple topics and categories within them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book with sequels</td>
<td>Variety in organization and topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Series books</td>
<td>Variety in nonfiction formats (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, and call-outs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short stories</td>
<td>Memorable characters, with both good and bad traits, who change and develop over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaries and logs</td>
<td>Memorable characters, with both good and bad traits, who change and develop over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic texts</td>
<td>Memorable characters, with both good and bad traits, who change and develop over time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THEMES AND IDEAS**

Complex ideas on many different topics requiring real or vicarious experiences (through reading)
A few texts with abstract themes requiring inferential thinking to derive
Tests with deeper meaning: applicable to important human problems and social issues
Some more challenging themes (e.g., war, the environment)
Many ideas and themes requiring understanding of cultural diversity

**LANGUAGE AND LITERARY FEATURES**

Multiple characters revealed by what they do, say, and think about others and their relationships
Figurative language that is important to understanding the plot
Long stretches of descriptive language that is important to understanding setting and characters
Specific descriptions of settings that provide important information for understanding the plot
Settings distant in time and space from students' experiences
Some long strings of unassigned dialogue from which story action must be inferred
Complex plots with numerous episodes and time passing
Building suspense through events of the plot
Some more complex fantasy elements
Texts with multiple points of view revealed through characters' behaviors
Jill bolted upright in bed, feeling dazed.

"I'm okay," she said in an unconvincing voice.

"What time is it?"

"Time to get ready to deliver your speech for class president," her mother said, smiling.

As the memory of her dream came flooding back, Jill felt a fresh wave of panic. "Mom, I don't know if I can do it. The thought of standing in front of all those people makes me feel sick!"

"Jill's mother was up late to help and smiled. "You know, Jill, sometimes I have to give speeches at big meetings."

"Jill's mother was a heart surgeon, an expert in her field. "I used to tea: as frightened as you are now."

"Jill asked. "How did you get over your fears?"

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**SENTENCE COMPLEXITY**
- Many longer (some with more than fifteen words) complex sentence structures
- Questions in dialogue (fiction) and questions and answers (nonfiction)
- Sentences with parenthetical material
- Sentences with nouns, verbs, or adjectives in series, divided by commas
- Many words with affixes (prefixes and suffixes that are difficult to decode)
- Words with a wide variety of very complex spelling patterns
- Many multisyllable proper nouns that are difficult to decode
- Many technical words that are difficult to decode
- Some words that are seldom used in oral language and are difficult to decode
- Many phonics, contractions, and compound words
- Word combinations signaled by picture and print combinations in graphic texts
- Black and white illustrations in fiction texts
- Much of setting action, and characters provided in pictures in graphic texts

**NONFICTION**
- Some texts with graphics that are complex and not fully explained
- Full range of graphics (diagrams, b&w, cutaway, maps, scales with legends) providing information that extends the text
- Some texts with graphics that have scales or legends that require understanding and interpretation

**ILLUSTRATIONS**

**General**
- A variety of complex graphics, often more than one or a page

**Fiction**
- Most texts with no or only minimal illustrations
- In illustrated texts, highly complex and artistic illustrations that communicate meaning to match or extend the text (mood, symbolism)

**BOOK AND PRINT FEATURES**

**Print and Layout**
- Varied space between lines, with some texts having dense print
- Use of words in italics, bold, or all capitals to indicate emphasis, level of importance, or signal other meaning
- Variety in print and background color
- Large variation among print styles and font size (related to genre)

**Punctuation**
- Full range of punctuation as needed for complex sentences

**Tools**
- Full range of reader's tools: table of contents, glossary, punctuation guide, titles, labels, headings, options, subheadings, sidebars, legends, author's notes, index, cutouts, references, hyperlinks
- Full range of graphics: photos, drawings, maps, cutaways, tables, graphs, timelines
Readers at **Level S:**

At Level S, readers automatically read and understand a full range of genres, including biographies on less well-known subjects, more complex fantasy, and hybrid texts that blend more than one genre in a coherent whole. They read both chapter books and shorter informational texts; also, they read special forms such as mysteries, series books, books with sequels, short stories, diaries, and logs. Fiction narratives are straightforward but have elaborate plots and many complex characters who develop and change over time. As readers, they understand perspectives different from their own as well as settings and people far distant in time and space. They can process sentences (some with more than fifteen words) that are complex, contain prepositional phrases, introductory clauses, lists of names, verbs, or adjectives, and they solve new vocabulary words, some defined in the text and others unexplained. Most reading is silent, fluent, and phrasing in oral reading is well established. Readers are challenged by many longer descriptive words and by content-specific and technical words that require using embedded definitions, background knowledge, and readers' tools, such as glossaries. They can take apart unfamiliar words and use a full range of word-solving skills. They read and understand texts in a variety of layouts as well as fonts and print characteristics and consistently search for information in illustrations and increasingly complex graphics.

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**Selecting Texts: Characteristics of Texts at This Level**

**GENRE/FORMS**

- **Fiction**
  - Narrative structure including interactions with multiple episodes related to a single plot
  - Plots with detailed episodes
  - Plots with subplots
  - Some complex plots with multiple story lines
  - Some collections of short stories that have interrelated themes or build a single plot across the book

- **Nonfiction**
  - Presentation of multiple topics that represent subsets of larger topic/theme
  - Underlying structure (description, comparison, contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect)
  - Texts with multiple topics and categories within them
  - Variety in organization and topic
  - Variety in nonfiction formats (question and answer, paragraph, boxes, legends, and cut-outs)

**FORMS**

- Picture books
- Plays
- Chapter books
- Chapter books with sequels
- Series books
- Short stories
- Diaries and logs
- Graphic texts
- Moral lessons close to the end of a story
- Texts with parallel plots
- Texts with circular plots

**TEXT STRUCTURE**

- Context supported or extended by illustrations in most informational texts
- Context requiring the reader to take on diverse perspectives (race, language, culture)
- Context particularly appealing to preadolescents

**THEMES AND IDEAS**

- Complex ideas on many different topics requiring rich or vivid experiences (through reading)
- Texts with deeper meanings applicable to important human problems and social issues
- Some more challenging themes (e.g., war, the environment)
- Many ideas and themes requiring understanding of cultural diversity

**CONTENT**

- Topics that go well beyond readers' personal experiences and content knowledge
- Fiction—settings requiring knowledge of content history, geography, etc.
- Most of context colored by the print rather than pictures

**LANGUAGE AND LITERARY FEATURES**

- Memorable characters, with both good and bad traits, who change and develop over time
- Multiple characters revealed by what they say, think, do, and what others say or think about them
- Long stretches of descriptive language that is important to understanding setting and characters
- Specific descriptions of settings that provide important information for understanding the plot
- Settings distinct in time and space from students' experiences
- Some origin stories of unimportance to which story action must be inferred
- Building suspense through events of the plot
- Some more complex fantasy elements
- Texts with multiple points of view revealed through characters' behaviors

**SENTENCE COMPLEXITY**

- Longer (some with more than fifteen words) complex sentence structures
- Questions in dialogue (fiction) and questions and answers (nonfiction)
- Sentences with parenthetical material
- Sentences with nouns, verbs, or adjectives in series, divided by commas

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Could Be Worse
by Sharon Peir

Every year has brought that old joke about how everything goes wrong for some guy. First he oversleeps; then, hustling out the door, he stumbles and sprains his ankle. He lurches to his car only to realize that his keys are still lying inside the house somewhere. So he stands there, locked out, with his nose thrumming uselessly. Knowing he’ll be late for that important job interview. Still, he tries to be philosophical.

"It could be worse," he says. "At least it’s not raining."

So here’s the punch line: it starts to pour.

I knew how that guy felt. It was cold when I woke up. I tossed over and bunched my leg on the side of the battered van that was now made more Home Sweet Home to Dad and me. Rain clattered on the metal roof overhead.

I hopped into the back, wrapped my two warm hard-boiled eggs, and shed his wet jacket.

VOCABULARY
• Many new vocabulary words that reader must derive meaning from context or use glossaries or dictionaries
• Words with connotative meanings essential to understanding the text
• Many words used figuratively (use of common idioms, metaphor, simile)
• Many highly technical words: mostly defined in text, illustrations, or glossary
• Words with multiple meanings
• Words that stand for abstract ideas

ILLUSTRATIONS
• General
  • A variety of complex graphics, often more than one on a page

Fiction
• Most texts with no or only minimal illustrations
• Inset illustrations, highly complex artistic illustrations that communicate meaning or match the text (mood, symbolism)
• Black and white illustrations in most fiction texts
• Graphic text that requires inference from pictures to understand setting, characters, and plot

Nonfiction
• Full range of graphics providing information that extends the text
• Some texts with graphics that are complex and not fully explained
• Some texts with graphics that have scales or legends that require understanding and interpretation

BOOK AND PRINT FEATURES
• Print and illustrations integrated in most texts, with print wrapping around pictures
• Variety in layout of nonfiction formats (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, call-outs)
• More difficult layout of informational text, and some documents, with denser format
• A variety of picture and print combinations in graphic texts

Punctuation
• Full range of punctuation as needed for complex sentences
• Occasional use of less common punctuation (color, semicolon)

Tools
• Full range of reader’s tools: table of contents, glossary, pronunciation guide, titles, labels, headings, subheadings, sidebars, legends, author’s notes, index, call-outs, references
• Full range of graphics: photos, drawings, maps, cutaways, tables, graphs, timelines
Readers at Level T:

At level T, readers process the full range of genres and texts will be longer with many lines of print on each page, requiring readers to remember information and connect ideas over a long period of time (as much as a week or two). They use genre features to support comprehension. Complex fantasy, myths, and legends offer added challenge and an increased use of symbolism. Readers understand perspectives different from their own, and understand settings and people far distance in time or space. Most reading is silent; fluency and phrasing in oral reading is well established. Readers are challenged by many longer descriptive words and by content-specific and technical words that require using embedded definitions, background knowledge, and readers' tools, such as glossaries. They can take apart multisyllable words and use a full range of word-solving strategies. They search for and use information in an integrated way, using complex graphics and texts that present content requiring background knowledge.

### Selecting Texts: Characteristics of Texts at This Level

#### Genre/Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Narrative structure including chapters with multiple episodes related to a single plot</td>
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<td>• Plots with detailed episodes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Plots with subplots</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Some complex plots with multiple story lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some collections of short stories that have interrelated themes or build a single plot across the book</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nonfiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Presentation of multiple topics that represent subtopics of larger topic or theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Underlying structures (description, comparison and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Texts with multiple topics and categories and subcategories within them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Variety in organization and topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Variety in nonfiction forms (question and answer, paragraph, stories, legends, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEMES AND IDEAS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Themes focusing on the problems of preadolescents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Themes with deeper meanings applicable to important social and political issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Themes or schemes requiring attention to cultural diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some themes presenting content or issues of society (e.g., racism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Many texts focusing on human behavior (war, hardship, or economic issues)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Themes that evoke alternative interpretations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE AND LITERARY FEATURES</th>
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<td>• Memorable characters, with both good and bad traits, who change and develop over time</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Multicultural characters revealed by what they say, think, and do and what others say or think about them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Long stretches of descriptive language that is important to understanding setting and characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Specific descriptions of settings that provide important information for understanding the plot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Settings distant in time and place from the students' experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong verbs of unassigned dialogue from which story action must be inferred</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SENTENCE COMPLEXITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Longer (some with more than twenty words) complex sentence structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sentences with parenthetical material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Many complex sentences including dialogue and many embedded phrases and clauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sentences with non-verbs, or adjectives in sentences, divided by commas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wide range of declarative, imperative, or interrogative sentences</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<th>VOCABULARY</th>
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<td>• Many new vocabulary words that readers must derive meaning from context or use glossaries or dictionaries</td>
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<td>• Words with connotative meanings essential to understanding the text</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Types of Howls

There are several types of wolf howls, each with its own particular purpose. The most common howl is a loud, deep call that can be heard up to ten miles away, depending on the weather. The purpose of this type of howl is to unite the pack. The wolves within a pack are usually related, and the average-sized pack is eight to fifteen wolves. Sometimes, while hunting, one or more pack members may become separated from the rest of the group. A chorus of wolves may howl to help the lost wolves return to the family.

Get the Facts About Wolves!

| Average Length of Howl | How long it makes | Wolf Howls
|------------------------|------------------|---------------
| Howl 4 to 6 hours      | Howl 4 to 6 hours |               
| Male: 4 to 6 hours     | Howl 4 to 6 hours |               
| Female: 3 to 4 hours   | Howl 4 to 6 hours |               

Reasons for Howls

It's common for wolves to howl before setting out to hunt for food. The purpose of this howl may be to signal pack members and help them find food. It is also a way of preparing to return. But once the hunt begins, the wolves

- Many words used figuratively (metaphor, simile, idiom)
- Many highly technical words, mostly defined in text, illustrations, or glossary
- Words used in regional or historical dialects
- Some words from languages other than English
- Word connotations signaled by picture and print combinations

ILLUSTRATIONS

General

A variety of complex graphics, often more than one on a page

Fiction

Most texts with no or only minimal illustrations
In illustrated texts, highly complex and artistic illustrations that communicate meaning to match or extend the text (mood, symbolism)
Black and white illustrations in some fiction texts

Nonfiction

Full range of graphics providing information that matches and extends the text
Some texts with graphics that are complex and not fully explained

Some texts with graphics that have scales or legends that require understanding and interpretation

BOOK AND PRINT FEATURES

Print and Layout

- Varied spacing between lines, with some texts having dense print
- Use of words in italics, bold, or all capitals to indicate emphasis, level of importance, or signal other meaning
- Variety in print and background color
- Large variation among print styles and font size (related to genre)
- Many sentences continuing over several lines or to the next page
- Captions under pictures that provide important information
- Print and illustrations integrated in most texts, with print wrapping around pictures

- Variety in layout of nonfiction formats (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, call-outs)
- More difficult layout in informational text, and some fiction texts, with denser formats
- Information shown in a variety of picture and print combinations in graphic texts

Punctuation

- Full range of punctuation as needed for complex sentences
- Occasional use of less common punctuation (colon, semicolon)

Tools

- Full range of readers' tools (table of contents, glossary, sidebars, headings and subheadings, callouts, captions, pronunciation guides, index, references)
- Full range of graphics: photos, drawings, maps, cutaways, tables, graphs, timelines

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Readers at **Level U**: 

At level U, readers will process the full range of genres, and texts will be longer, requiring readers to remember information and connect ideas over many days of reading. They automatically adjust the different genres and use genre characteristics to support comprehension. Complex fantasy, myths, and legends offer added challenge and an increased use of symbolism. Readers understand perspectives different from their own, and understand settings and people far in distance in time or space. Most reading is silent fluency and phrasing in oral reading is well established. Readers are challenged by many longer descriptive words and by content-specific and technical words that require using embedded definitions, background knowledge, and readers' tools, such as glossaries. They can take apart long multivocative words and use a full range of word-solving strategies. They search for and use information in an integrated way, using complex graphics and texts that present content requiring background knowledge.

**Selecting Texts: Characteristics of texts at this level**

**Genre/Forms**
- **Nonfiction**
  - Presentation of multiple topics that represent subcategories of a larger topic or theme
  - Variety of underlying structures often combined in complex ways (description, comparison and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect)
  - Texts with multiple topics and categories within them
  - Variety in nonfiction formats (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, and call-outs)

- **Fiction**
  - Narrative structure including chapters with multiple episodes rather than a single plot
  - Plots with detailed exposition
  - Some complex plots with multiple story lines
  - Some collections of short stories that have interrelated themes or build a single story across the book
  - Texts with a variety of structures (parallel, circular)

**Content**
- Many themes presenting nature issues and the problems of society (e.g., racism, war)
- Many texts focusing on human problems (war, hardship, or economic issues)
- Themes that evolve alternative interpretations

**Sentence Complexity**
- Longer (some with more than twenty words) complex sentence structures
- Sentences with parenthetical material
- Many complex sentences including dialogue and many embedded phrases and clauses
- Sentences with nouns, verbs, or adjectives in a series divided by commas
- Wide range of declarative, imperative, or interrogative sentences

**Vocabulary**
- Many new vocabulary words that readers must derive meaning from context or use glossaries or dictionaries
- Words with connotative meanings essential to understanding the text
- Many words used figuratively (common idioms, metaphor, simile)
- Many highly technical words that require background knowledge and are not defined in the text
- Words used in regional or historical dialects
- Some words from languages other than English
- Words with multiple meanings

**Text Structure**
- **Nonfiction**
  - Presentation of multiple topics that represent subcategories of a larger topic or theme
  - Variety of underlying structures often combined in complex ways (description, comparison and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect)
  - Texts with multiple topics and categories within them
  - Variety in nonfiction formats (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, and call-outs)

- **Fiction**
  - Narrative structure including chapters with multiple episodes rather than a single plot
  - Plots with detailed exposition
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  - Texts with a variety of structures (parallel, circular)
Scientists describe the seismographs measurements with numbers. Since the 1950s, they have used
a system called the Richter 30K scale. An earthquake measures below 3.0 on the Richter; people
typically don't feel it. Earthquakes over 3.0 on the scale can cause damage, while a measurement of 7.0 is
evidence of a major earthquake.

What Causes Earthquakes?

How and why do these earthquakes occur?
Earth has many different layers. Its outermost layer is
called the crust and is made up of huge sections called
tectonic plates. Below the crust is another layer, called
the mantle, which is made up of softer rock. When
tectonic plates push against each other a huge amount
of force or pressure builds up.

Eventually, the force pushes the plates to shift on
sum of the results in different ways: they can push
against each other, pull away from each other, or
simply slide past each other. These movements are

ILLUSTRATIONS

FICTION
- Most books with no illustrations other
than cover jacket or symbolic
decoration on margins or at chapter
headings
- Black and white illustrations in some
texts
- Long series of word and picture
combinations in graphic texts

NONFICTION
- Full range of graphics providing
information that matches and
extends the text
- Some texts with graphics that are
dense and challenging
- Many texts that have scales or
legends that require understanding
and interpretation
- A wide variety of complex graphics
that require interpretation (photos
with legends, diagrams, labels,
cutaways, graphs, maps)

BOOK AND PRINT
FEATURES

Print and Layout:
- Varied space between lines, with
some texts having dense print
- Use of words in italics, bold, or all
capital letters to indicate emphasis, level
of importance, or signal other meaning
- Large variation among print styles, font
size, and color
- Many texts with very small text
- Many sentences continuing over
several lines onto the next page
- Print and illustrations integrated in
most texts, with print wrapping around
pictures
- More difficult layout of informational
text, and some fiction texts, with
denser format

WORDS
- Words that represent abstract
concepts
- Word connotations signaled by
picture and print combinations in
graphic texts
- Many words with affixes (prefixes
and suffixes, multisyllabic proper
nouns, or difficult to decode)
- Words with a wide variety of very
complex spelling patterns
- Many multisyllabic proper nouns
that are difficult to decode
- Many technical words that are
difficult to decode
- Words that are seldom used in oral
language and are difficult to decode
- Long, multisyllabic words requiring
attention to roots to read and
understand
- Many complex plurals, contractions,
and compound words

Punctuation
- Full range of punctuation as needed
for complex sentences

Tools
- Full range of reader's tools (table of
contents, glossary, headings and
subheadings, callouts, pronunciation
guides, index, references)
- Full range of graphics: photos,
drawings, maps, cutaways, tables,
graphs, timelines
Readers at Level V:

At Level V, readers will process the full range of genres, and texts will be longer, requiring readers to remember information and connect ideas over many days of reading. They automatically adjust strategic actions to skillfully use genre. Complex fantasy, myths, and legends offer added challenge and an increased use of symbolism. In addition, readers will encounter some abstract special forms of literature, such as satire. Readers understand perspectives different from their own, and understand settings and people far distance in time or space. Most reading is silent, fluency and phrasing in oral reading is well established. In addition, readers can be very expressive when they present poetry or readers theater. Readers are challenged by many longer descriptive words and by content-specific and technical words that require using embedded definitions, background knowledge, and readers' tools, such as glossaries. They can take apart multisyllable words and use a full range of word-solving strategies. They search for and use information in an integrated way, using complex graphics and texts that present content requiring background knowledge.

**Selecting Texts: Characteristics of Texts at This Level**

**GENRE/FORMS**
- Genre
  - Informational texts
  - Fantasy
  - Science fiction
  - Realistic fiction
  - Traditional literature, including myths and legends
  - Biography, memoir, and autobiography
  - Historical fiction, many with settings different from students' culture
- Mysteries
- Hybrid texts
- Satire

**Forms**
- Picture books
- Plays
- Chapter books
- Chapter books with sequels
- Series books
- Short stories
- Diaries and logs
- Graphic texts

**TEXT STRUCTURE**
- Fiction
  - Narrative structure
  - Chapters with multiple episodes related to a single plot
  - Plots with detailed episodes
  - Plot with subplots
- Nonfiction
  - Presentation of multiple topics that represent subtopics of a larger topic or theme
  - Variety of underlying structures often combined in complex ways (description, comparison and contrast, temporal sequence, problem and solution, cause and effect)
- Texts with multiple topics, categories, and subcategories
- Variety in organization and topic
- Variety in fiction formats (question and answer, paragraphs, boxes, legends, and call-outs)

**CONTENT**
- Many texts requiring knowledge of history
- Content supported or extended by illustrations in most informational texts
- Content requiring the reader to take on diverse perspectives (race, language, culture)
- Content particularly appealing to preadolescents and adolescents

**THMES AND IDEAS**
- Themes focusing on the problems of preadolescents and adolescents
- Many ideas and themes requiring understanding of cultural diversity
- Some themes presenting mature issues and problems of society (e.g., racism, war)
- Many texts focusing on human problems (hardship, or racism)
- Themes that make alternate interpretations

**LANGUAGE AND LITERARY FEATURES**
- Multiple characters revealed by what they say, think, and do and what others say or think about them
- Interpretation of characters essential to understanding the theme
- Multidimensional characters that develop over time, requiring inference to understand how and why they change
- Long stretches of descriptive language that are important to understanding setting and characters

**SENTENCE COMPLEXITY**
- Longer (some with more than twenty words) complex sentence structures
- Sentences with parenthetical material
- Many complex sentences including dialogue and many embedded phrases and clauses
- Sentences with nouns, verbs, or subjects in series, divided by commas
- Wide range of declarative, imperative, and interrogative sentences

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With no food or water, Ali drag the piece of coal for days. Where he spent an anxious few days, he marvelled at little things in his life and thought new ones. One day, he dreamt in the form of a horsemen on a horse. Upon waking, he found himself in the middle of a herd of buffaloes. He ran, hid in a cave, and retrieved a piece of coal. He was able to return to his village with this valuable discovery. He spent the next days teaching others how to use coal.

Ali could see many signs along the journey, but instead of leaving him, they followed him. Finally, a trip rough ride of Ali, rescued him, and delivered him home safely. He was celebrated by his family and friends.

A massive earthquake off the coast of Indonesia in 2004 caused the great
disaster that followed.

What Happened
Ali's crossing every leg cannon December 26, 2004, when an earthquake of the coast of Sumatra in the Indian Ocean

VOCABULARY

- Many new vocabulary words that
  readers must determine from
  context or use glossaries or
dictionaries.
- Words used figuratively or with
  unusual or hard-to-understand
  connotations.
- Many highly technical words that
  require background knowledge and
  are not defined in the text.
- Regional or historical dialects.
- Some non-English words.
- Words with multiple meanings.
- Words that represent abstract
  ideas.
- Words denoted by
  pictures in the illustrations.

ILLUSTRATIONS

- Many technical words that are
difficult to decode.
- Words that are seldom used in
  oral language and are difficult to
  decode.
- Long, multisyllabic words requiring
  attention to sounds in word
  pronunciation.
- Many complex plurals, contractions,
  and compound words.
- Ancient words or words from
  languages other than English that do
  not follow conventional
  pronunciation patterns.

Nonfiction

- Many texts with graphics that are
  complex and challenging.
- Many texts that have tables or
  charts that require understanding
  and interpretation.
- An array of complex graphics
  that require interpretation (photos
  with legends, diagrams, labels,
cutaways, graphs, maps).

BOOK AND PRINT FEATURES

Print and Layout

- Most texts with no illustrations other
  than cover jacket or symbolic
decoration on margins or at chapter
  headings.
- Black and white illustrations in some
  fiction texts.
- Acronyms, setting, and characters
  carried through picture and print
  combinations in graphic texts.
- Many multisyllabic words and
  proper nouns that are difficult to
decode.
- Print on illustrations integrated in
  most texts, with print wrapping
  around pictures.
- More difficult layout of informational
  text, and some fiction texts, with
  denser format.
- Variety in layout of nonfiction
  formats (question and answer,
  paragraphs, boxed, legends, cut-
  outs), often recurring across a two
  page spread.

Punctuation

- Full range of punctuation is needed
  for complex sentences.
- Occasional use of less common
  punctuation (comma, semicolon).

Tools

- Full range of readers' tools (table of
  contents, glossary, headings and
  subheadings, call-outs, pronunciation
  guides, index,.
- Full range of graphics: photos,
drawings, maps, cutaways, tables,
graphs, timelines.