

# ISTEP+ Performance Level Descriptors

## English/Language Arts – Grade 3

### Grade 3

#### Pass+

Third-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 3 students scoring at the *Pass +* level include:

- Describe how each successive part of a text builds on earlier sections;
- Describe characters and how their actions contribute to the plot of a text; and
- Synthesize and connect ideas across texts of the same author.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as articles and excerpts from books, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 3 students scoring at the *Pass +* level include:

- Determine the main idea in a text and use details to support main ideas;
- Determine relationships among events in texts; and
- Compare and contrast important points and details in two texts.

When **writing**, students craft well-organized, clearly focused, and detailed narrative, persuasive, and informative 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 3 students scoring at the *Pass+* level include:

- Write focused compositions containing several ideas and descriptive word choices;
- Connect ideas using transitions and phrases; and
- Provide a developed ending or concluding paragraph.

### Grade 3

#### Pass

Third-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 appropriate Standard English conventions when producing different writing forms.

When reading **literature**, such as fiction and poetry, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 3 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Answer questions about what is read;
- Retell what is read;
- Determine theme;
- Describe characters; and
- Determine how an author uses words and phrases to provide meaning.

When reading **nonfiction** texts, such as articles and excerpts from books, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 3 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Answer questions about what is read;
- Determine the main idea in a text;
- Explain how an author uses reasons and facts for support of ideas;
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text;
- Use text features to locate information in what is read;
- Identify text structure and understand its relevance; and
- Distinguish the purposes of various media messages.

When **writing**, students construct proficient narrative, persuasive, and informative compositions, including a response to a literature or nonfiction text, using mostly appropriate Standard English conventions. Examples of specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 3 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Recognize reliable sources;
- Write to a specific audience and purpose;
- Write paragraphs with topic sentences;
- Provide an ending or concluding statement; and
- Write compositions containing interesting word choices and organized ideas.

### **Grade 3**

#### **Did Not Pass**

Third-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 3 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Find answers in a text;
- Determine point of view of the narrator or characters; and
- Use sentence clues to find meanings of unknown words.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as articles and excerpts from books, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 3 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Find answers in a text;
- Use sentence clues to find meanings of unknown words; and
- Distinguish between fact and opinion.

When **writing**, students display limited writing skills when producing narrative, persuasive, and informative compositions, including a response to a literature or nonfiction text, using basic appropriate Standard English conventions. Examples of specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 3 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Write complete sentences;
- Introduce ideas; and
- Write compositions containing basic word choices and ideas.

# 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.

# 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.

# ISTEP+ Performance Level Descriptors

## English/Language Arts – Grade 6

### Grade 6

#### Pass+

Sixth-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 6 students scoring at the *Pass+* level include:

- Analyze how a section of text fits into the overall structure and contributes to the development of theme, characterization, setting, or plot and
- Explain how the point of view is developed and its influence on mood, tone, and meaning in a text.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 6 students scoring at the *Pass+* level include:

- Analyze how key individuals, events, or ideas are introduced and elaborated on in text;
- Analyze how parts of text contribute to the overall organizational structures of a text;
- Compare and contrast two author's presentations of similar events; and
- Distinguish claims that the author supports from claims that are not supported.

When **writing**, students craft well-organized, clearly focused, and detailed argumentative, 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 6 students scoring at the *Pass+* level include:

- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or convince, providing details and facts that connect to the purpose;
- Use precise words, phrases, and sensory language appropriate to the audience and purpose;
- Write focused and detailed compositions containing interesting word choices, effectively organized ideas, and well-developed thoughts; and
- Compare and contrast different forms or genres of literature with similar themes or topics.

### Grade 6

#### Pass

Sixth-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 6 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of explicit and inferred ideas in what is read;
- Determine how a theme or central idea is conveyed through particular details;
- Describe how the plot unfolds in a text, including how characters respond or change moving toward the resolution;
- Explain how the narrator or point of view in a text is developed; and
- Analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 6 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of explicit and inferred ideas in what is read;
- Determine how a central idea is conveyed through particular details;
- Analyze how key individuals, events, or ideas are introduced and elaborated on in a text;
- Analyze how an author structures a text;
- Determine an author's perspective or purpose and explain how it is conveyed in the text; and
- Evaluate the accuracy of information in media messages and identify the audience.

When **writing**, students craft proficient argumentative, 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 6 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or convince, providing details and facts that connect to the purpose;
- Write to a specific audience and purpose;
- Assess the credibility of sources;
- Write focused and detailed compositions containing some interesting word choices, effectively organized ideas, and developed thoughts.

## **Grade 6**

### **Did Not Pass**

Sixth-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 6 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of explicit ideas in what is read;
- Summarize text; and
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as used in a text.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 6 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of explicit ideas in what is read;
- Determine an author's perspective or purpose;
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as used in a text; and
- Identify the audience in media messaging.

When **writing**, students craft limited argumentative, 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 6 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or convince, providing minimal details and facts;
- Use some language appropriate to the audience and purpose;
- Gather relevant information from sources; and
- Write compositions containing some interesting word choices and ideas.

# ISTEP+ Performance Level Descriptors

## English/Language Arts – Grade 7

### Grade 7

#### Pass+

Seventh-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 7 students scoring at the *Pass+* level include:

- Analyze interactions of various elements in a text and how they contribute to its meaning;
- Analyze how the author develops and contrasts points of view of characters or narrators in a text; and
- Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal and a historical account of the same period.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 7 students scoring at the *Pass+* level include:

- Analyze interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in text;
- Analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from the positions of others;
- Assess whether an argument is sound and evidence is relevant and sufficient to support claims; and
- Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape the presentation of key information.

When **writing**, students craft well-organized, clearly focused, and detailed argumentative, 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 7 students scoring at the *Pass+* level include:

- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or argue, developing multiple, relevant details and facts that connect to the purpose;
- Use precise words, phrases, sensory language, and content vocabulary appropriate to the audience and purpose; and
- Write focused and detailed paragraphs and compositions containing interesting word choices, effectively organized ideas, well-developed thoughts, and cohesiveness.

### Grade 7

#### Pass

Seventh-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 7 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of inferences drawn from a text;
- Analyze the development of a theme or central idea over the course of a work of literature;
- Analyze the interactions of various elements in a text; and
- Analyze how structural elements contribute to meaning and plot.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 7 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of inferences drawn from a text;
- Analyze the development of two or more central ideas over the course of a text;
- Analyze a text's structure, including how major sections contribute to the development of ideas;
- Determine an author's perspective or purpose;
- Trace and evaluate an argument and specific claims in a text;
- Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone; and
- Identify information in media messaging that can influence the audience.

When **writing**, students craft proficient argumentative, 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 7 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or argue, providing details and facts that connect to the purpose;
- Write to a specific audience and purpose;
- Assess the credibility of sources; and
- Write focused and detailed paragraphs and compositions containing some interesting word choices, effectively organized ideas, developed thoughts, and cohesion.

## **Grade 7 Did Not Pass**

Seventh-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 7 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what a text says explicitly;
- Summarize text to support analysis; and
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 7 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what a text says explicitly;
- Provide a summary of a text; and
- Determine the meaning of words or phrases used in a text.

When **writing**, students craft limited argumentative, 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 7 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or argue, providing minimal details and facts that connect to the purpose;
- Use some language appropriate to the audience and purpose; and
- Write compositions containing some interesting word choices, organized ideas, and minimally developed thoughts.

# ISTEP+ Performance Level Descriptors

## English/Language Arts – Grade 8

### Grade 8

#### Pass+

Eighth-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 8 students scoring at the *Pass+* level include:

- Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience in a text;
- Analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone;
- Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how each structure impacts meaning; and
- Analyze how works of literature draw on and transform earlier texts.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 8 students scoring at the *Pass+* level include:

- Analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints;
- Analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone;
- Analyze how a text makes connections and distinctions among individuals, events, and ideas;
- Delineate and evaluate arguments; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced; and
- Analyze two or more works with conflicting information, explaining the differences.

When **writing**, students craft well-organized, clearly focused, and detailed argumentative, 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 8 students scoring at the *Pass+* level include:

- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or convince, providing developed details and facts that connect to the purpose and acknowledge other points of view;
- Use precise words, phrases, sensory language, and content vocabulary appropriate to the audience and purpose; and
- Write focused and detailed compositions containing interesting word choices, effectively organized ideas, well-developed thoughts, and cohesiveness.

### Grade 8

#### Pass

Eighth-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 8 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports analysis of inferences drawn from the text;
- Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts;
- Analyze the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in text;
- Analyze the development of a theme or central idea over the course of a text; and
- Analyze how dialogue or incidents in a text contribute to its meaning.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 8 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports analysis of inferences drawn from the text;
- Analyze the development of the central idea over the course of a text;
- Analyze the structure in a text, including how major sections contribute to the development of ideas;
- Analyze the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in text;
- Analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone; and
- Identify and analyze persuasive and propaganda techniques used in media.

When **writing**, students craft proficient argumentative, 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 8 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or convince, providing details and facts that connect to the purpose;
- Assess the credibility and accuracy of sources;
- Write to a specific audience and purpose; and
- Write focused and detailed compositions containing some interesting word choices, organized ideas, developed thoughts, and cohesion.

## **Grade 8 Did Not Pass**

Eighth-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 8 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports analysis of what the text says explicitly;
- Provide a detailed, objective summary of the text; and
- Determine the meaning of words or phrases used in a text.

When reading **nonfiction**, such as historical or scientific texts and articles, specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 8 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports analysis of what the text says explicitly;
- Provide a detailed, objective summary of the text; and
- Determine the meaning of words or phrases used in a text.

When **writing**, students craft limited argumentative, 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 8 students scoring at the *Did Not Pass* level include:

- Write compositions to describe, explain, and/or convince, providing minimal details and facts that connect to the purpose;
- Use language, words, and tone minimally appropriate to the audience and purpose; and
- Write compositions containing some interesting word choices, organized ideas, and minimally developed thoughts.