

ACT[®] Aspire[®] Performance Level Descriptors

Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs)

PLDs outline the knowledge, skills, and practices that students performing at any given level achieve in each content area at each grade level. They indicate if the students are academically prepared to engage successfully in further studies in each content area, the next grade's material and, eventually at the high school level to verify that they are college and career ready.

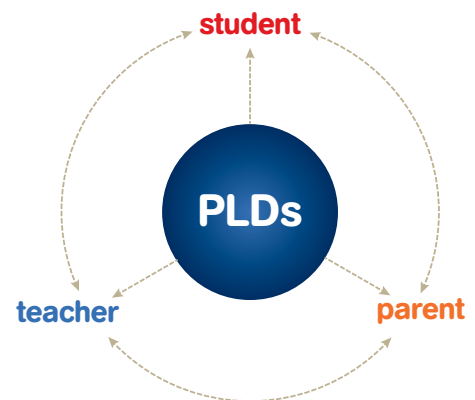
ACT [®] Aspire [®]		3rd Grade Reading — Performance Level Descriptors				Text Complexity: Basic [®]
Reporting Categories	Needs Support	Close	Ready	Exceeding		
Key Ideas and Details Students read informational and literary texts to determine central ideas and themes and accurately summarize information. They read closely to understand relationships and to draw logical inferences and conclusions.	<i>A student performing at the Needs Support level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is working toward being able to read to understand a simple purpose and short, basic sentences in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is working on identifying explicitly stated central ideas. is working on identifying explicit textual details. is working on making simple inferences about key details. 	<i>A student performing at the Close level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reads to understand a simple purpose, short, basic sentences, and clearly stated ideas in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies explicitly stated central ideas. identifies explicit textual details. makes simple inferences about key details. uses key details to make inferences about character traits. paraphrases portions of literary and informational texts. 	<i>A student performing at the Ready level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reads to understand a clear purpose and organizational structure, some longer and more complex sentences, and clearly stated ideas and concepts in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies central ideas. summarizes texts. connects ideas, events, and characters to make logical inferences. uses key details to draw conclusions about character traits and actions. 	<i>A student performing at the Exceeding level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reads to understand a clear purpose and organizational structure, some longer and more complex sentences, and clearly stated ideas and concepts in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies central ideas. summarizes texts. analyzes ideas, events, and characters to make logical inferences. uses key details to analyze character traits and actions. 		
Craft and Structure Students analyze the structure and purpose of informational and literary texts. They interpret authorial decisions rhetorically and differentiate between various perspectives and sources of information.	<i>A student performing at the Needs Support level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is working toward being able to read to understand a simple purpose and short, basic sentences in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is working on identifying author's purpose. is working on identifying characterization from textual evidence. is working on identifying word meaning from context. 	<i>A student performing at the Close level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reads to understand a simple purpose, short, basic sentences, and clearly stated ideas in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> connects author's purpose to specific events or information in the text. identifies details that support author's purpose. identifies characterization from textual evidence. identifies word and phrase meanings from context. 	<i>A student performing at the Ready level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reads to understand a clear purpose and organizational structure, some longer and more complex sentences, clearly stated ideas and concepts in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes connections between the structure and content in the text. identifies how structure and content contribute to author's purpose. identifies multiple perspectives in a text. identifies how parts of a text contribute to characterization. identifies word and phrase meanings from context. 	<i>A student performing at the Exceeding level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reads to understand a clear purpose and organizational structure, some longer and more complex sentences, and clearly stated ideas and concepts in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies how the structure and content shape author's purpose. distinguishes between multiple perspectives. identifies how parts of a text contribute to characterization and theme. identifies word and phrase meanings from context. 		
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas Students read a range of informational and literary texts critically and comparatively, making connections to prior knowledge and integrating information across texts. They analyze how authors construct arguments, evaluating reasoning and evidence from various sources.	<i>A student performing at the Needs Support level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is working toward being able to read to understand a simple purpose and short, basic sentences in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is working on identifying an author's explicit claims. is working on citing textual evidence to support claims. is working on identifying sentences with a simple structure as fact or opinion. is working on recognizing similarities and differences between two texts. 	<i>A student performing at the Close level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reads to understand a simple purpose, short, basic sentences, and clearly stated ideas in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies an author's explicit claims. cites textual evidence to support claims. distinguishes between fact and opinion. identifies a common topic clearly across two texts. 	<i>A student performing at the Ready level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reads to understand a clear purpose and organizational structure, some longer and more complex sentences, clearly stated ideas and concepts in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies an author's explicit or implied claims. cites textual evidence to support claims. distinguishes between fact and opinion. compares or contrasts two texts. identifies similarities and differences between topics or characters. 	<i>A student performing at the Exceeding level:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reads to understand a clear purpose and organizational structure, some longer and more complex sentences, and clearly stated ideas and concepts in literary and informational texts. To demonstrate comprehension of texts with these elements, a student performing at this level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> determines an author's explicit or implied claims. analyzes how authors use textual evidence to construct their claims. distinguishes between fact and opinion. compares and contrasts two texts. analyzes similarities and differences between topics or characters. cites textual evidence to support analysis. 		

Why did we develop PLDs?

PLDs were developed to give educators and parents further framework to what students in a score range are able to do and know, and to show progression of skill development within and across grades.

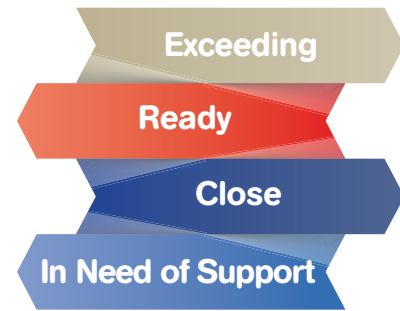
Who are they for?

PLDs are designed to be used by educators, students and parents. Because PLDs more clearly communicate the specific knowledge and skills that students demonstrate at different levels of proficiency within reporting categories, they can serve a number of purposes in guiding classroom instruction. They are the foundation of rich discussion around what students need to do to perform at higher levels and to explain the progression of learning within a subject area.



How will PLDs be used?

PLDs are essential in setting standards. Standard setting panelists use PLDs to determine the threshold expectations for students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to attain performance levels of “In Need of Support,” “Close,” “Ready,” and “Exceeding.” PLDs are also used to inform item development, as each test needs questions that distinguish performance all along the continuum.

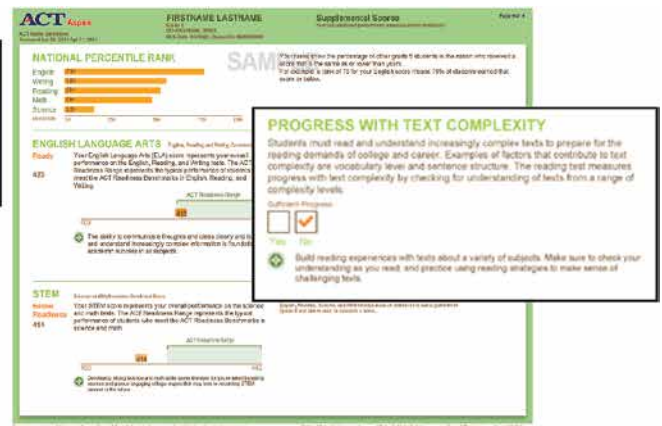
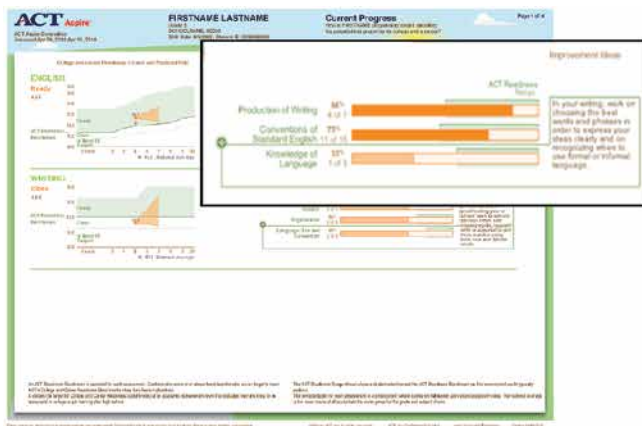


We encourage the use of the PLDs for a variety of purposes, such as:

- Differentiating instruction to maximize individual student outcomes
- Completing assessments to help identify target performance levels for individuals or groups of students
- Tracking student growth along the proficiency continuum as described by the PLDs. In order to facilitate the use of the PLDs in instruction, the skills differentiating performance levels have been identified using bold text.

The Current Progress report provides actionable information for educators and parents to work together to support student needs.

The Reading text complexity provides clarity on student progress.



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