Text Complexity
Appropriate Achievement

Students select and read independently a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts. Texts include

- a range of topics beyond personal experiences, often requiring cultural, historical or social perspectives; topics that appeal to preadolescents (e.g., pop culture, growing independence)

- often more challenging/mature themes/ideas (e.g., war, racial barriers) with age-appropriate characters and/or information, requiring the reader to interpret and connect information/ideas with other texts and subject areas

- a variety of complex sentence structures, including complex, compound and long simple sentences; examples of more complicated use of dialogue and variation in order of phrases, subjects, verbs, objects

- challenging language (e.g., new and content-specific vocabulary sometimes supported by context or glossary); figurative (e.g., similes, metaphors), descriptive and connotative language; dialect or languages other than English

- many words with more than three syllables, some of which are difficult to decode

- chapter books with no or few illustrations; illustrations/photographs that represent and extend text in nonfiction

- many lines of print on a page, organized in paragraphs with standard-sized font (some examples of dense print); variation in layout within same text

Fiction (Realistic, Fantasy, Traditional - including Myths and Legends, Historical Ficition, Science Fiction, Mysteries)

Texts are characterized by

- varied structures (short stories, letters) with multiple narrators; longer books which require sustained reading and recall of information

- plots with detailed episodes usually proceeding in time-order (may have foreshadowing); occasional unexpected "twists"; descriptions important to understanding; some obvious symbolism

- main character with some complexity and unpredictability, i.e., "hero" with shades of "good/bad"; factors related to character development that may require inferences; multiple characters revealed through dialogue, actions, thoughts, and/or perspectives of others

- variety of dialogue with use of descriptive language; relationship between characters becoming important to plot and character development; settings described in detail are important to understanding; often beyond personal experience

Nonfiction (Informational, Biography, Autobiography)

Texts are characterized by

- several topics and/or explicit ideas/information often linked by categories and presented through clear structures (e.g., description, sequence, compare/ contrast, problem/solution, cause/effect – at times combined in same text)

- small pieces of information per section; sections not always clearly identified; paragraphs of varied lengths

- print and illustrations/photographs equal in prominence; print that adds details necessary for interpretation; variety in layout, often not linear

- full-range of graphics, unexplained, supplement text; scales/legends/labels which often require interpretation; varied, and sometimes dense, layout

- additional information conveyed through text features including but not limited to: table of contents, subheadings, index, glossary, captions, sidebars, charts/ diagrams, maps and simple keys/ legends, and bold type

Strong Achievement

Students demonstrating strong achievement select and read independently texts as described above, as well as, some texts at a higher level of difficulty. The increase in text complexity is often created by

- the inclusion of varied content and complex themes requiring understanding of a variety of subject areas and perspectives

- the use of some challenging language that is often not supported by context

- the need to understand the relationship between increasingly complex character development and the overall theme of a narrative

- an increasing use of literary devices such as symbolism

- more text-dense and challenging layouts and graphics in nonfiction texts

Reading Strategies and Behaviours
Appropriate Achievement

Students
- monitor reading and self-correct; adjust according to form, purpose, and specific text challenges

- use meaning, structure, and visual cues (e.g., word order, roots, affixes, syllables) to solve unknown words; make reasonable attempts at multi-syllabic and content-specific words

- read a wide variety of words with automaticity, including content-specific words

- read familiar passages fluently, with appropriate pacing, phrasing and expression, to convey sense of text to audience; may hesitate occasionally with unfamiliar words

- use context clues, prior knowledge/experiences and knowledge of text forms/features to verify and adjust predictions while reading

- use a wide variety of text features (e.g., headings/ subheadings, index, sidebars, charts/diagrams, maps, font) to preview, interpret, and locate information

Reading Strategies and Behaviours
Strong Achievement

Students demonstrating strong achievement apply strategies and exhibit behaviours described at the appropriate level in an increasingly efficient and deliberate manner, and

- make appropriate choices about how to deal with challenging material

- solve new words independently

- show insight with their questions and predictions, based on subtle interpretations of textuals details and knowledge gained from reading texts

New Brunswick Nouveau Brunswick
Be...in this place • Être...ici on le peut

Appropriate Achievement
Students demonstrating appropriate achievement respond to a variety of comprehension tasks in the manner described below. Students

Sample Questions/Tasks
The following types of questions/tasks may be used to assess students' comprehension.

Strong Achievement

Literal Response

Reading "the lines"

- respond accurately to most literal questions by selecting and locating relevant details, often skimming a large amount of text (i.e., a chapter or an article)
- identify most key story elements (setting, characters, events, problem/resolution, theme/lesson) of a narrative text with some relevant details; begin to explain how events are related to problem or overall theme; graphic organizers may be used
- distinguish between main ideas and supporting details; may use graphic organizers to categorize notes but may omit some information when synthesizing a large amount of text

Literal Response

- *Skim this part to find ___ (information/topic) and tell me about it.*
- *Summarize, or give me the "gist" of this story.*
- *Why is ___ (event/action of character) important to the story?*
- *What message do you think the author is trying to give to the reader?*
- *What were the main ideas in this book? What did you find out about each of the main ideas?*

Students demonstrating strong achievement respond to questions/tasks described at the appropriate level with overall accuracy and precision. They also
- reread and skim large amounts of information for details and distinguish important from unimportant information
- present information gathered from nonfiction texts in appropriate categories and organized notes

Inferential/Interpretive Response

Reading "between the lines"

- make logical inferences about a character (his/her motivations, feelings or personality), and story events, referring to some relevant textual details; describe relationships between characters and effect on plot or overall theme
- interpret relationships among several ideas to draw conclusions (e.g., cause/effect; problem/solution); or make comparisons; support responses with some relevant details
- use context clues, prior knowledge, and reference tools (e.g., dictionary, glossary) to explain the meaning of new vocabulary; provide a reasonable interpretation of more subtle shades of meaning as well as figurative and descriptive language
- interpret text features (e.g., captions, font, diagrams, maps, keys/legends) and demonstrate a general understanding of their purpose; gain literal information accurately but may require prompts when text/graphics not explained in text

Inferential/Interpretive Response

- *Do you think this character's actions and words show how he is really feeling? What information in the book makes you think that way?*
- *Describe ___ (character) at the beginning of the story and at the end of the story. What caused this change?*
- *After reading this book, what do you think about ___ (topic)? What evidence in the book helped you make that decision?*
- *How would the story be different if the character had ___ (e.g., acted in a certain way)?*
- *How does the information in this book fit with what you already knew about ___ (the topic)? What is the same? What is different?*
- *What does this word mean? What helped you figure that out?*
- *What does this expression mean?*
- *Show me how you used this key to understand the map.*
- *Look at this photograph and caption. What details do you learn that aren't in the words of the text?*

- demonstrate an understanding of how story events are connected

- provide thoughtful and well-supported responses using specific and relevant textual examples and personal knowledge/experience

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

Reading "beyond the lines"

- make personal connections, relate relevant prior knowledge and make logical text-to-text comparisons; some connections go beyond obvious and can be supported with a reasonable explanation
- explain and support preferences for, and opinions about, a text, authors, and illustrators with some specific details or examples
- recognize some elements of an author's style/technique (e.g., figurative language, descriptions, dialect) and explain how they help the reader; evaluate author's effectiveness by providing a relevant personal example or preference
- distinguish between fact and opinion, and identify author's point of view and use of evidence; suggest an alternative perspective
- identify a variety of text forms (e.g., narrative, report, instructions, explanation, persuasive writing, autobiography), including key characteristics (e.g., compare/contrast), and a form's purpose

Personal/Critical/Evaluative Response

- *Which character is most like you? How?*
- *How would you have solved the problem?*
- *What did you already know about this topic? What questions do you still have?*
- *If you were going to recommend this book to someone, who would you choose? Why?*
- *Does the author keep you interested in this story? How?*
- *What does the author do in this book to make the information easier to understand?*
- *What does the author do to help you picture this character?*
- *Do you agree with the author's opinion? Why or why not?*
- *This problem is described by ___ (e.g., the students). What do you think the ___ (e.g., principal) would say about the issue?*
- *What do you notice about how this report is organized? How does that help you?*

- take a critical stance toward some texts by questioning the author's use of information comparing it to what they believe or already know about a topic
- provide opinions that are well-supported by textual references, as well as personal examples