

# Language Arts Levels of Depth of Knowledge

## Nevada Reading DOK Level Descriptors

### Level 1: Recall

Tasks at this level include the recall of facts or use of basic skills. They require a basic or literal understanding of text presented and often consists of verbatim recall from text or simple understanding of a single word or phrase. Words that correspond to some of the tasks at this level may include recall, identify, and locate.

### Level 2: Skill/Concept

Tasks at this level require comprehension and/or mental processing of text or portions of text. They include the engagement of some mental processing beyond recalling or reproducing a response. Level 2 tasks require the application of skills and concepts. Words that correspond to some of the tasks at this level may include summarize, interpret, infer, organize, compare.

### Level 3: Strategic Thinking

Tasks at this level require several processes including abstract reasoning, deep knowledge, and/or planning. They include understanding of ideas in text and may require thinking to go beyond the text. Support of thinking across or between passages may occur at this level. Words that correspond to some of the tasks at this level may include justify, generalize, or connect ideas.

### Level 4: Extended Thinking

Tasks at this level include deep knowledge of content, skills, and higher order thinking. They require time to plan, research, reason, and/or process. This level may result in an extended classroom activity that may require extended time. The extended time period is not a distinguishing factor if the required work is only repetitive and does not require applying significant conceptual understanding and higher-order thinking.

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*Interpreting and assigning depth-of-knowledge levels to both objectives within standards and assessment items is an essential requirement of alignment analysis. Four levels of depth of knowledge are used for this analysis.*

## **Reading (based on Wixson, 1999)**

### **Level 1**

Level 1 requires students to receive or recite facts or to use simple skills or abilities. Oral reading that does not include analysis of the text as well as basic comprehension of a text is included. Items require only a shallow understanding of text presented and often consist of verbatim recall from text or simple understanding of a single word or phrase. Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 1 performance are:

- Support ideas by reference to details in the text.
  - Use a dictionary to find the meaning of words.
  - Identify figurative language in a reading passage.

### **Level 2**

Level 2 includes the engagement of some mental processing beyond recalling or reproducing a response; it requires both comprehension and subsequent processing of text or portions of text. Intersentence analysis of inference is required. Some important concepts are covered but not in a complex way. Standards and items at this level may include words such as summarize, interpret, infer, classify, organize, collect, display, compare, and determine whether fact or opinion. Literal main ideas are stressed. A Level 2 assessment item may require students to apply some of the skills and concepts that are covered in Level 1. Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 2 performance are:

- Use context cues to identify the meaning of unfamiliar words.
- Predict a logical outcome based on information in a reading selection.
- Identify and summarize the major events in a narrative.

### **Level 3**

Deep knowledge becomes more of a focus at Level 3. Students are encouraged to go beyond the text; however, they are still required to show understanding of the ideas in the text. Students may be encouraged to explain, generalize, or connect ideas. Standards and items at Level 3 involve reasoning and planning. Students must be able to support their thinking. Items may involve abstract theme identification, inference across an entire passage, or students' application of prior knowledge. Items may also involve more superficial connections between texts. Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 3 performance are:

- Determine the author's purpose and describe how it affects the interpretation of a reading selection.
- Summarize information from multiple sources to address a specific topic.
- Analyze and describe the characteristics of various types of literature.

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## Level 4

Higher order thinking is central and knowledge is deep at Level 4. The standard or assessment item at this level will probably be an extended activity, with extended time provided. The extended time period is not a distinguishing factor if the required work is only repetitive and does not require applying significant conceptual understanding and higher-order thinking. Students take information from at least one passage and are asked to apply this information to a new task. They may also be asked to develop hypotheses and perform complex analyses of the connections among texts. Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 4 performance are:

- Analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources.
- Examine and explain alternative perspectives across a variety of sources.
- Describe and illustrate how common themes are found across texts from different cultures.

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## Writing

### Level 1

Level 1 requires the student to write or recite simple facts. This writing or recitation does not include complex synthesis or analysis but basic ideas. The students are engaged in listing ideas or words as in a brainstorming activity prior to written composition, are engaged in a simple spelling or vocabulary assessment or are asked to write simple sentences. Students are expected to write and speak using Standard English conventions. This includes using appropriate grammar, punctuation, capitalization and spelling. Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 1 performance are:

- Use punctuation marks correctly.
- Identify Standard English grammatical structures and refer to resources for correction.

### Level 2

Level 2 requires some mental processing. At this level students are engaged in first draft writing or brief extemporaneous speaking for a limited number of purposes and audiences. Students are beginning to connect ideas using a simple organizational structure. For example, students may be engaged in note-taking, outlining or simple summaries. Text may be limited to one paragraph. Students demonstrate a basic understanding and appropriate use of such reference materials as a dictionary, thesaurus, or web site. Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 2 performance are:

- Construct compound sentences.
- Use simple organizational strategies to structure written work.
- Write summaries that contain the main idea of the reading selection and pertinent details.

### Level 3

Level 3 requires some higher level mental processing. Students are engaged in developing compositions that include multiple paragraphs. These compositions may include complex sentence structure and may demonstrate some synthesis and analysis. Students show awareness of their audience and purpose through focus, organization and the use of appropriate compositional elements. The use of appropriate compositional elements includes such things as addressing chronological order in a narrative or including supporting facts and details in an informational report. At this stage students are engaged in editing and revising to improve the quality of the composition. Some examples that represent but do not constitute all of Level 3 performance are:

- Support ideas with details and examples.
- Use voice appropriate to the purpose and audience.
- Edit writing to produce a logical progression of ideas.

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## Level 4

Higher-level thinking is central to Level 4. The standard at this level is a multi-paragraph composition that demonstrates synthesis and analysis of complex ideas or themes. There is evidence of a deep awareness of purpose and audience. For example, informational papers include hypotheses and supporting evidence. Students are expected to create compositions that demonstrate a distinct voice and that stimulate the reader or listener to consider new perspectives on the addressed ideas and themes. An example that represents but does not constitute all of Level 4 performance is:

- Write an analysis of two selections, identifying the common theme and generating a purpose that is appropriate for both.

## **Source of Challenge Criterion**

The Source of Challenge criterion is only used to identify items where the major cognitive demand is inadvertently placed and is other than the targeted language arts skill, concept, or application. Cultural bias or specialized knowledge could be reasons for an item to have a source of challenge problem. Such items characteristics may cause some students to not answer an assessment item or answer an assessment item incorrectly or at a lower level even though they have the understanding and skills being assessed.