ACTFL READING PROFICIENCY TEST (RPT)
FAMILIARIZATION MANUAL & ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES 2012 – READING
What Is ACTFL?

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) is a national membership organization of foreign language professionals dedicated to promoting and fostering the study of languages and cultures as an integral component of American education and society. ACTFL strives to provide effective leadership for the improvement of teaching and learning of languages at all levels of instruction and in all languages. Its membership of more than 12,000 language professionals includes elementary, secondary, and post-secondary teachers as well as administrators, specialists, supervisors, researchers, and others concerned with language education. ACTFL represents all languages and all levels of language instruction.

What are the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines?

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 20121 are descriptions of what individuals can do with language in terms of speaking, writing, listening, and reading in real-world situations in a spontaneous and non-rehearsed context. For each skill, these guidelines identify five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are subdivided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels.

These Guidelines present the levels of proficiency as ranges and describe what an individual can do with language at each level and cannot do at the next higher level, regardless of where, when, or how the language was acquired. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The Guidelines are not based on any particular theory, pedagogical method, or educational curriculum. They neither describe how an individual learns a language nor prescribe how an individual should learn a language, and they should not be used for such purposes. They are an instrument for the evaluation of functional language ability.

Reading is an interpretive skill. Reading comprehension is largely based on the amount of information readers can retrieve from a text, and the inferences and connections that they can make within and across texts. By describing the tasks that readers can perform with different types of texts and under different types of circumstances, the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading describe how readers read texts and retrieve information. These Guidelines do not describe how reading skills develop, how one learns to read, nor the actual cognitive processes involved in the activity of reading. Rather, they are intended to describe what readers are able to understand from what they read. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading can be found in the appendix of this document.

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading can also be found on the ACTFL website along with authentic text samples associated with each major level.

To access this website, go to http://actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org/reading.

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WHAT IS THE ACTFL READING PROFICIENCY TEST (RPT)?

The ACTFL Reading Proficiency Test (RPT) is a standardized test for the global assessment of reading ability in a language. The RPT measures how well a person spontaneously reads a language when presented with texts and tasks as described in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading without access to dictionaries or grammar references.

The ACTFL RPT is a carefully constructed assessment that evaluates Novice to Superior levels of reading ability. It is delivered by computer via the Internet. The test can assess a specific range of proficiency. The available ranges are shown in the grid below. These options insure that the test administered targets the range of the test-taker’s reading ability and is economical in terms of time and effort.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superior</th>
<th>Advanced High</th>
<th>Advanced Mid</th>
<th>Advanced Low</th>
<th>Intermediate High</th>
<th>Intermediate Mid</th>
<th>Intermediate Low</th>
<th>Novice High</th>
<th>Novice Mid</th>
<th>Novice Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test Length</td>
<td>50 minutes for a two-level test (A, B, C &amp; D)</td>
<td>75 minutes for a three-level test (E, F &amp; G*)</td>
<td>125 minutes for the full-range test (H**)</td>
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* This is a semi-adaptive version of the test, which ranges in time from 50-75 minutes. It is designed to start at Advanced Low, and based on the candidate’s responses, the test will offer higher or lower level tasks. This is the test to choose if the student’s proficiency is unknown and/or the instructor would like to give all of his or her students the same test and not select ranges individually, etc.

** This is the full-range test.

WHAT IS THE ACTFL RATING SCALE?

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading describes five major levels of reading proficiency (Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice). The ACTFL RPT tests reading proficiency through four of these levels. The rating scale for the ACTFL RPT is:

- Superior
- Advanced
- Intermediate
- Novice

The four major levels are delineated according to a hierarchy of global tasks. This hierarchy is summarized in a rating scale spanning a full range of reading abilities from Superior (individuals who can understand texts from many genres dealing with a wide range of subjects) to Novice (those who can recognize words and get limited information from highly predictable simple texts in familiar contexts and formats, simple forms and documents). Major borders divide the major levels of the scale (Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice).
As shown in the inverted pyramid here, each level represents a range of functional language ability.

**WHAT IS BEING EVALUATED IN AN ACTFL RPT?**

Reading is an interpretative skill. Reading comprehension is based largely on the amount of information readers can retrieve from a text as well as the inferences and connections that they can make within and across texts, and under different circumstances. The ACTFL RPT assesses how well readers understand these texts and the reading tasks that readers can perform with different types of texts and under different types of circumstances.

**ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Text Type</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>Familiar and unfamiliar abstract topics</td>
<td>Professional Academic Literary</td>
<td>Complex lengthy texts</td>
<td>Broad Precise Specialized</td>
<td>Complax structures Cultural references Aesthetic properties</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
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<td>Opinion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hypothesis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Concrete current and general interest topics</td>
<td>Public Education Work News</td>
<td>Paragraph-based connected texts with a clear, predictable structure</td>
<td>Broad general vocabulary</td>
<td>Sequencing Time frames Chronology Most common cultural patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Narration</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Exposition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Explanation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Convey basic information</td>
<td>Highly familiar everyday content</td>
<td>Highly familiar everyday contexts</td>
<td>Simple, predictable, loosely-connected texts</td>
<td>High frequency vocabulary</td>
<td>Simple sentence patterns and strings of sentences A few of the most common cultural patterns</td>
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</table>
WHAT IS THE FORMAT OF THE ACTFL RPT?

Delivered on a computer via the Internet, the RPT presents between 10 and 25 texts for the test-taker to read based on the range of proficiency selected.

Each text is followed by three questions with multiple choice response items. Each question has four possible answers; only one answer is correct. The texts and questions with multiple choice answers are in the target language.

Test-takers can move between texts, questions, and answers, by clicking on the “Next” and “Back” buttons. A test item tree on the left-hand side of the test page indicates which texts have questions that have already been answered and which texts have questions that are still unanswered.

WHAT ARE READING TEXTS AND TASKS LIKE?

A variety of texts are presented in the target language. They vary in genre, content, length, and complexity depending on the proficiency level targeted. These are real-world types of texts ranging from informal notes, emails, letters, and announcements to short technical reports, excerpts from literary texts, articles, and commentaries. The texts cover social, academic, and professional topics.

The questions target the main idea, supporting detail and, for some texts, the inferences and connections the test-taker can make from the content and organization of the text.

Examples of Reading Texts from the ACTFL Guidelines 2012 Website

Superior

Google Books

...[T]he big issues here are well worth public attention. Should a private corporation (Google) become the librarian for the world’s collected knowledge? Even if it offers to play nice, share revenues, and make books easily accessible now, what about in the future?

Google has scanned about 10 million books so far, with a goal of 40 million or more. For the price of constructing just 60 miles of new highways, the Library of Congress could digitize 10 million books and put them online to be read free of charge in perpetuity by anyone, points out Brewster Kahle, the founder and director of the Internet Archive. That nonprofit group has digitized more than a million books itself but lacks the financial resources of Google.

And what about privacy? Google will be capturing information on which books users search for and search within, as well as those they might purchase. What will it do with that information? Information on what people choose to read is sensitive and subject to abuse. The company has promised strong privacy protections under the settlement but has been unwilling so far to spell them out in detail. And no matter how good protections may sound at the outset, what assurance is there that Google’s policy won’t change in the future? These issues plague the Internet in general but have especially important implications here.

The idea of digitizing the world’s written record and making it freely available to everyone is exhilarating. The ability of a student in Alabama or Albania to have access to the contents of the world’s libraries online at their fingertips, for example, is a powerful concept and just one of the ways a free and open Web can lift humanity.

But history shows that when a company – even one with talent and good intentions – acts like a monopoly, it is subject
to abuses. Despite the potentially monumental effects of this settlement, it has had little public scrutiny. Yet it needs a rigorous examination.

If it stands, the agreement must include long-term safeguards that allow public access to the full collection at reasonable cost, maintain the rights of copyright holders, and ensure the necessary privacy of those who use the service.

**Rationale for Rating**

*Readers of this text must deal with subject matter that is most likely unfamiliar. Their comprehension comes in part from command of the language that is supported by a broad vocabulary, an understanding of more complex structures and knowledge of the target culture.*

*Readers must be able to process a reasoned, thoughtful argument about an abstract topic—copyright, both explicit and implicit—with cultural references (Google, Library of Congress). They must also understand the author’s use of precise and specialized vocabulary (in perpetuity) and complex grammatical structures (And no matter how good protections may sound at the outset, what assurance is there that Google’s policy won’t change in the future?).*

*Readers at the Superior Level will read to learn from this text and learn from reading it.*

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**Advanced**

**Hikers**

When New Hampshire lawmakers decided to bill negligent hikers for their rescues, they figured they would solve some budget problems and teach hapless tourists a lesson. Then a 17-year-old Eagle Scout got lost on Mount Washington and ended up with a bill for $25,000.

Now New Hampshire officials, facing possible litigation, are defending a law that hasn’t solved their budget troubles and puts the state at odds with national search-and-rescue groups that say billing hikers is dangerous.

“It certainly has put us on the hot spot,” says Lt. Todd Bogardus, head of search and rescue for the state Fish and Game Department.

Few other states bill those who are rescued — and most of the other laws target skiers who stray off marked slopes.

Oregon caps the amount that can be billed at $500. Hawaii requires there be an “intentional disregard” for safety, and Idaho limits reimbursement to rescues from lands that are closed to the public. A Maine law that permits the state to recover costs of a search and rescue is seldom enforced.

The National Association for Search and Rescue opposes billing for rescue, contending people won’t seek help if they’re afraid they’ll have to pay for it. “The public needs to understand that there’s going to be someone there to help them and you shouldn’t worry about downstream consequences,” spokesman Howard Paul says.

In April, Scott Mason, then a high school junior from Halifax, Mass., set out on a 17-mile day hike in the White Mountains. The popular hiking destination includes Mount Washington, where unpredictable conditions have earned it the title “home of the world’s worst weather.”
Rationale for Rating

Readers of this multi-paragraph text must deal with subject matter that is concrete and likely to be of general interest. Readers process a text that reports the facts of various hiking rescues and the consequences of reimbursement policies in a straightforward and predictable manner. The author uses general vocabulary although there are occasionally words and phrases for which the readers may need to use contextual clues to derive meaning (downstream consequences). While there is a journalistic style that is light-hearted in some cases (hapless tourists), there is no evidence of author’s voice that the readers need to understand.

Readers at the Advanced Level are able to read to learn from this text.

Intermediate

This is a very large, beautiful vase. There are no chips or cracks. The vase weighs over 9 lbs. This vase looks 100% better in person. Any questions, please ask.

Rationale for Rating

The readers of this text must deal with a straightforward text whose purpose is evident even before they read it. While written in complete sentences, there is very little cohesion among them, which facilitates the readers’ task. The format of the text is predictable and aids the readers’ comprehension.
WHAT DOES THE ACTFL RPT LOOK LIKE?

The ACTFL RPT is appropriate for individual, small group, and large scale testing. By offering the RPT over the Internet, the ACTFL RPT is accessible to test-takers in any area of the world where there is reliable Internet availability. Below are descriptions and screen shots of the test pages.

System Check Page
To ensure connectivity and full operational status, the System Check page ensures that the computer over which the test will be delivered is set to support the test.

System Check Page Screenshot

Login Page
After the System Check page, there is a Login page requiring a login and password. RPT logins and passwords are created by a proctor on a secure LTI client site. The client/proctor also chooses the range of the test (and corresponding length of the test). Once created, the login and password is valid for two weeks, after which time the login expiration date can be extended by the proctor on the LTI client site. If the date is not extended, the login and password will become invalid and a test-taker trying to enter an expired login and password will receive an “invalid login” message.

RPT Directions and Sample Item
Following the System Check, the test-taker views the directions for the test. There is also the option to view a sample test item (“Sample Task”) to become familiar with the layout of a test page and the progression of the reading test items. If already familiar with the RPT, the test-taker can click on “Start Test” to begin the RPT. Once started, the test will end in the allotted time given the test based on the range of proficiency being tested (50 minutes, 75 minutes, or 125 minutes).
Welcome to the ACTFL Reading Proficiency Test (RPT) – ENGLISH

Your test consists of 0 tasks.
- Each task consists of a reading passage in the target language and three questions about the text.
- Intermediate level tasks have texts in the target language and questions with multiple choice answers in English. Advanced and Superior level tasks have texts and questions with multiple choice answers in the target language.
- Each question has four multiple choice answers. Only one is correct.
- When you are done answering the questions for a task, click on the “Next” button to go to the next task.
- You can go back to a reading passage and prior questions by clicking on the “Previous” button.
- When you have completed the test, click on the “End Test” button that appears on the last task of the test.

The test is timed, but the amount of time allocated for each task is not fixed. You are given enough time to spend an average of 5 minutes to read a passage and answer the three questions about that passage. It is up to you to manage the amount of time you devote to answering the questions associated with each reading passage. A time clock counts down how much time you have left to finish the

To help you manage your time and complete the test questions, there is a list of the test tasks and questions on the left side of the test page. As you answer questions in the test, the color of the arrow in front of the task and question within the task changes: A RED arrow means the task and/or question is not completed. An ORANGE arrow means some but not all of the questions about that reading task have been answered. A GREEN arrow means the task and/or question is completed. A completed test should have all green arrows in front of all tasks and questions.

A “Sample Test Item” has been provided for you to become acquainted with the page layout, time management and navigation features of the test. You open it by clicking on “Sample Test Item” below. You may also begin the demo test by clicking on the “Start Test” button. Once you have clicked on “Start Test” you can not return to these instructions, but must begin and finish the test.
Test Page

Test-takers should not try to open any other windows, browsers or pop-ups while in the test. If a test-taker clicks outside of the test, the test will automatically shut down and the test-taker will need to log in to the test again. Test-takers are allowed three attempts to access the test; further login attempts will fail.

**Time Clock:** The time clock in the upper left-hand corner shows how much time is remaining before the test will automatically close.

**Task Navigation Tree:** This tool is found on the left side of the screen on every test page. It is a quick reference to track completion of the test showing Incomplete Tasks (red), Partially Completed Tasks (orange) and Completed Tasks (green). If the test-taker clicks on any of the tasks on the tree, it will open further and show which specific question(s) within that task are either answered (green) or not answered (red). A test-taker can go directly to a specific task, and then to the question within the task, by double clicking on this navigation tree.

**Task:** The window to the right of the navigation tree shows the Task, which is composed of the title of the text, the actual reading text and the questions and multiple-choice answers about the text.

**Questions and Answers:** The question and associated answers are found at the bottom of the Task screen. To select an answer, the test-taker clicks on the bubble to the left of the answer. To change an answer, the test-taker clicks on one of the other selections and the program will highlight the new selection and automatically erase the previous choice. To advance to other questions associated with this text, the test-taker clicks on the [Next Question] button on the bottom right. When the program advances to the next question, the text will remain on the screen and the question will change. Whenever an answer is selected by the test-taker, the navigation tree will change the color of that question to green and the color of the task from red (no questions answered), to orange (some but not all questions are answered), and then to green, when all questions for that Task are answered.

**Complete and “Finish” an RPT:** When all questions are completed, all Tasks on the Navigation Tree will be displayed as green. At the end of the last question for the last task on the test, there is a [Finish] button. Clicking on [Finish] will close the test permanently. If the test time runs out, the test will close automatically and permanently.
HOW ARE RPT TASKS SCORED?

The ACTFL RPT is a machine scored test and ratings are available within hours of the test administration.

WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL RPT RATING?

Official ACTFL RPT ratings are assigned to those RPTs that are conducted under the supervision of Language Testing International (LTI), the ACTFL Testing Office. Clients can request an ACTFL rating (according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading), an ILR rating (according to the U.S. Government’s Interagency Language Roundtable Skill Level Descriptions for Reading) or a CEFR rating (according to the Common European Framework of Reference). An ACTFL Certificate of Reading Proficiency is issued for test-takers and the results are permanently stored in the official ACTFL Test Management System.

HOW IS AN ACTFL RPT USED?

The ACTFL RPT can be used for a variety of purposes in the academic, commercial, and government communities.

Because an RPT rating provides a common metric for describing an individual’s ability to read, it serves as a way of providing parity among language programs. ACTFL RPT ratings may be used for purposes of admission into programs, placement within a language sequence, and determination of the fulfillment of exit or graduation requirements.

Establishing proficiency outcomes in terms of the descriptors that are contained in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (or U.S. Government’s Interagency Language Roundtable Skill Level Descriptions for Reading or the Common European Framework of Reference) provides a framework for the design and development of the reading component of the curriculum for language courses and sequences of language courses. Proficiency testing of students is also used as a means of evaluating the effectiveness of language programs.

Reading proficiency ratings are also used in business and the government for purposes of hiring and promotion in multi-lingual positions.

HOW CAN ONE BEST PREPARE FOR THE ACTFL RPT?

It is helpful to read the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading in order to be familiar with types of texts, range of content area, and types of reading tasks test-takers will be required to perform with texts at each level.

With that background, test-takers should select a range of materials to read on a wide range of topics: novels and other literary works, newspapers, magazines, and journals delivered in any medium (print or electronic) in the target language. As stated earlier, reading is an interpretive skill, so test-takers should practice reading for greater comprehension of texts, to understand all the facts, to interpret the connections between different parts of the texts, and to make inferences based on the information, organization, style and other rhetorical devises.
WHAT TEST-TAKING TIPS ARE RECOMMENDED?

- **Read carefully.** Read the questions you will need to answer before you read the text to help you read the text with specific goals.

- **Use time wisely.** Do not spend too much time on any one text or set of questions. The test provides a test-taker with enough time to read texts and answer questions.

- **Do your best to choose an answer to every question.** There is only one correct answer for each question. Any unanswered question will count as an “incorrect” question.

- **Refer to the Task Navigation Tree to keep track of texts and questions that are not completed.** This tool allows test-takers to move on to the texts and questions further in the test and leave those they are unsure of for review at the end.

INTERESTED IN SCHEDULING AN ACTFL RPT?

To schedule individuals or groups for the ACTFL Reading Proficiency Test, contact:

**LTI: The ACTFL Testing Office**

www.languagetesting.com

testing@languagetesting.com

Tel: (914) 963-7110

800-486-8444
Preface

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading describe five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The description of each major level is representative of a specific range of abilities. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are divided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels. The subdivision of the Advanced level is new. This makes the Reading descriptions parallel to the other skill level descriptions.

Reading is an interpretive skill. Reading comprehension is based largely on the amount of information readers can retrieve from a text, and the inferences and connections that they can make within and across texts. By describing the tasks that readers can perform with different types of texts and under different types of circumstances, the Reading Proficiency Guidelines describe how readers understand written texts. These Guidelines do not describe how reading skills develop, how one learns to read, nor the actual cognitive processes involved in the activity of reading. Rather, they are intended to describe what readers are able to understand from what they read.

These Guidelines apply to reading that is either Interpretive (books, essays, reports, etc.) or Interpersonal (instant messaging, texting, email communication, etc.).

The written descriptions of reading proficiency are accompanied online by authentic text samples and the functional reading tasks associated with each major level.

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**DISTINGUISHED**

At the Distinguished level, readers can understand a wide variety of texts from many genres including professional, technical, academic, and literary. These texts are characterized by one or more of the following: a high level of abstraction, precision or uniqueness of vocabulary; density of information; cultural reference; or complexity of structure. Readers are able to comprehend implicit and inferred information, tone, and point of view and can follow highly persuasive arguments. They are able to understand unpredictable turns of thought related to sophisticated topics.

Readers at the Distinguished level are able to understand writing tailored to specific audiences as well as a number of historical, regional, and colloquial variations of the language. These readers are able to appreciate the richness of written language. Distinguished-level readers understand and appreciate texts that use highly precise, low-frequency vocabulary as well as complex rhetorical structures to convey subtle or highly specialized information. Such texts are typically essay length but may be excerpts from more lengthy texts.

Distinguished-level readers comprehend language from within the cultural framework and are able to understand a writer’s use of nuance and subtlety. However, they may still have difficulty fully understanding certain nonstandard varieties of the written language.

**SUPERIOR**

At the Superior level, readers are able to understand texts from many genres dealing with a wide range of subjects, both familiar and unfamiliar. Comprehension is no longer limited to the reader’s familiarity with subject matter, but also comes from a command of the language that is supported by a broad vocabulary, an understanding of complex structures and knowledge of the target culture. Readers at the Superior level can draw inferences from textual and extralinguistic clues.

Superior-level readers understand texts that use precise, often specialized vocabulary and complex grammatical structures. These texts feature argumentation, supported opinion, and hypothesis, and use abstract linguistic formulations as encountered in academic and professional reading. Such texts are typically reasoned and/or analytic and may frequently contain cultural references.

Superior-level readers are able to understand lengthy texts of a professional, academic, or literary nature. In addition, readers at the Superior level are generally aware of the aesthetic properties of language and of its literary styles, but may not fully understand texts in which cultural references and assumptions are deeply embedded.
ADVANCED

At the Advanced level, readers can understand the main idea and supporting details of authentic narrative and descriptive texts. Readers are able to compensate for limitations in their lexical and structural knowledge by using contextual clues. Comprehension is likewise supported by knowledge of the conventions of the language (e.g., noun/adjective agreement, verb placement, etc.). When familiar with the subject matter, Advanced-level readers are also able to derive some meaning from straightforward argumentative texts (e.g., recognizing the main argument).

Advanced-level readers are able to understand texts that have a clear and predictable structure. For the most part, the prose is uncomplicated and the subject matter pertains to real-world topics of general interest.

Advanced-level readers demonstrate an independence in their ability to read subject matter that is new to them. They have sufficient control of standard linguistic conventions to understand sequencing, time frames, and chronology. However, these readers are likely challenged by texts in which issues are treated abstractly.

Advanced High

At the Advanced High sublevel, readers are able to understand, fully and with ease, conventional narrative and descriptive texts of any length as well as more complex factual material. They are able to follow some of the essential points of argumentative texts in areas of special interest or knowledge. In addition, they are able to understand parts of texts that deal with unfamiliar topics or situations. These readers are able to go beyond comprehension of the facts in a text, and to begin to recognize author-intended inferences. An emerging awareness of the aesthetic properties of language and of its literary styles permits comprehension of a wide variety of texts. Misunderstandings may occur when reading texts that are structurally and/or conceptually more complex.

Advanced Mid

At the Advanced Mid sublevel, readers are able to understand conventional narrative and descriptive texts, such as expanded descriptions of persons, places, and things and narrations about past, present, and future events. These texts reflect the standard linguistic conventions of the written form of the language in such a way that readers can predict what they are going to read. Readers understand the main ideas, facts, and many supporting details. Comprehension derives not only from situational and subject-matter knowledge but also from knowledge of the language itself. Readers at this level may derive some meaning from texts that are structurally and/or conceptually more complex.

Advanced Low

At the Advanced Low sublevel, readers are able to understand conventional narrative and descriptive texts with a clear underlying structure though their comprehension may be uneven. These texts predominantly contain high-frequency vocabulary and structures. Readers understand the main ideas and some supporting details. Comprehension may often derive primarily from situational and subject-matter knowledge. Readers at this level will be challenged to comprehend more complex texts.
INTERMEDIATE

At the Intermediate level, readers can understand information conveyed in simple, predictable, loosely connected texts. Readers rely heavily on contextual clues. They can most easily understand information if the format of the text is familiar, such as in a weather report or a social announcement.

Intermediate-level readers are able to understand texts that convey basic information such as that found in announcements, notices, and online bulletin boards and forums. These texts are not complex and have a predictable pattern of presentation. The discourse is minimally connected and primarily organized in individual sentences and strings of sentences containing predominantly high-frequency vocabulary.

Intermediate-level readers are most accurate when getting meaning from simple, straightforward texts. They are able to understand messages found in highly familiar, everyday contexts. At this level, readers may not fully understand texts that are detailed or those texts in which knowledge of language structures is essential in order to understand sequencing, time frame, and chronology.

**Intermediate High**
At the Intermediate High sublevel, readers are able to understand fully and with ease short, non-complex texts that convey basic information and deal with personal and social topics to which the reader brings personal interest or knowledge. These readers are also able to understand some connected texts featuring description and narration although there will be occasional gaps in understanding due to a limited knowledge of the vocabulary, structures, and writing conventions of the language.

**Intermediate Mid**
At the Intermediate Mid sublevel, readers are able to understand short, non-complex texts that convey basic information and deal with basic personal and social topics to which the reader brings personal interest or knowledge, although some misunderstandings may occur. Readers at this level may get some meaning from short connected texts featuring description and narration, dealing with familiar topics.

**Intermediate Low**
At the Intermediate Low sublevel, readers are able to understand some information from the simplest connected texts dealing with a limited number of personal and social needs, although there may be frequent misunderstandings. Readers at this level will be challenged to derive meaning from connected texts of any length.
At the Novice level, readers can understand key words and cognates, as well as formulaic phrases that are highly contextualized.

Novice-level readers are able to get a limited amount of information from highly predictable texts in which the topic or context is very familiar, such as a hotel bill, a credit card receipt, or a weather map. Readers at the Novice level may rely heavily on their own background knowledge and extralinguistic support (such as the imagery on the weather map or the format of a credit card bill) to derive meaning.

Readers at the Novice level are best able to understand a text when they are able to anticipate the information in the text. At the Novice level, recognition of key words, cognates, and formulaic phrases makes comprehension possible.

**Novice High**
At the Novice High sublevel, readers can understand, fully and with relative ease, key words and cognates, as well as formulaic phrases across a range of highly contextualized texts. Where vocabulary has been learned, they can understand predictable language and messages such as those found on train schedules, roadmaps, and street signs. Readers at the Novice High sublevel are typically able to derive meaning from short, non-complex texts that convey basic information for which there is contextual or extralinguistic support.

**Novice Mid**
At the Novice Mid sublevel, readers are able to recognize the letters or symbols of an alphabetic or syllabic writing system or a limited number of characters in a character-based language. They can identify a number of highly contextualized words and phrases including cognates and borrowed words but rarely understand material that exceeds a single phrase. Rereading is often required.

**Novice Low**
At the Novice Low sublevel, readers are able to recognize a limited number of letters, symbols or characters. They are occasionally able to identify high-frequency words and/or phrases when strongly supported by context.
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