



ACTFL RPT  
READING PROFICIENCY TEST

# READING PROFICIENCY TEST **FAMILIARIZATION GUIDE**



ACTFL  
Language Connects



# ACTFL READING PROFICIENCY TEST

## FAMILIARIZATION GUIDE

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### WHAT IS ACTFL?

ACTFL is a membership organization of world language professionals dedicated to promoting and fostering the study of languages and cultures as an integral component of education and society. ACTFL's membership includes more than 13,000 language educators and administrators from elementary through graduate education, as well as government and industry. Since 1967, ACTFL has led the field in world language research and assessments, while publishing, and disseminating performance and proficiency standards that guide best practices for language learning, teaching, and assessment.

### WHAT IS CARD?

The ACTFL Center for Assessment Research and Development (CARD) supports PK-12 schools and institutions of higher education in areas of assessment, articulation, and research. To that end, CARD develops and maintains high-quality language proficiency assessments, and certifies, norms, and maintains highly reliable testers and raters of the assessments. Research focuses on proficiency and performance standards and outcomes that inform language teaching and learning. CARD collaborates with state and national language organizations and government agencies to support research in quality language teaching and learning, including examination of the implications for teacher education. CARD aims to help bridge the divide between language research and classroom practice.

## WHAT ARE THE ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES?

The *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012*<sup>1</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 may be used for non-profit, educational purposes only, provided that they are reproduced in their entirety, with no alterations, and with credit to ACTFL.

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The ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading* can also be found on the ACTFL website ([www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org)) along with authentic text samples associated with each major level. Sample texts are also included in this manual.

To access the proficiency guidelines online, go to:  
[www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manual](http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manual)

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## WHAT IS THE ACTFL READING PROFICIENCY TEST (RPT)?

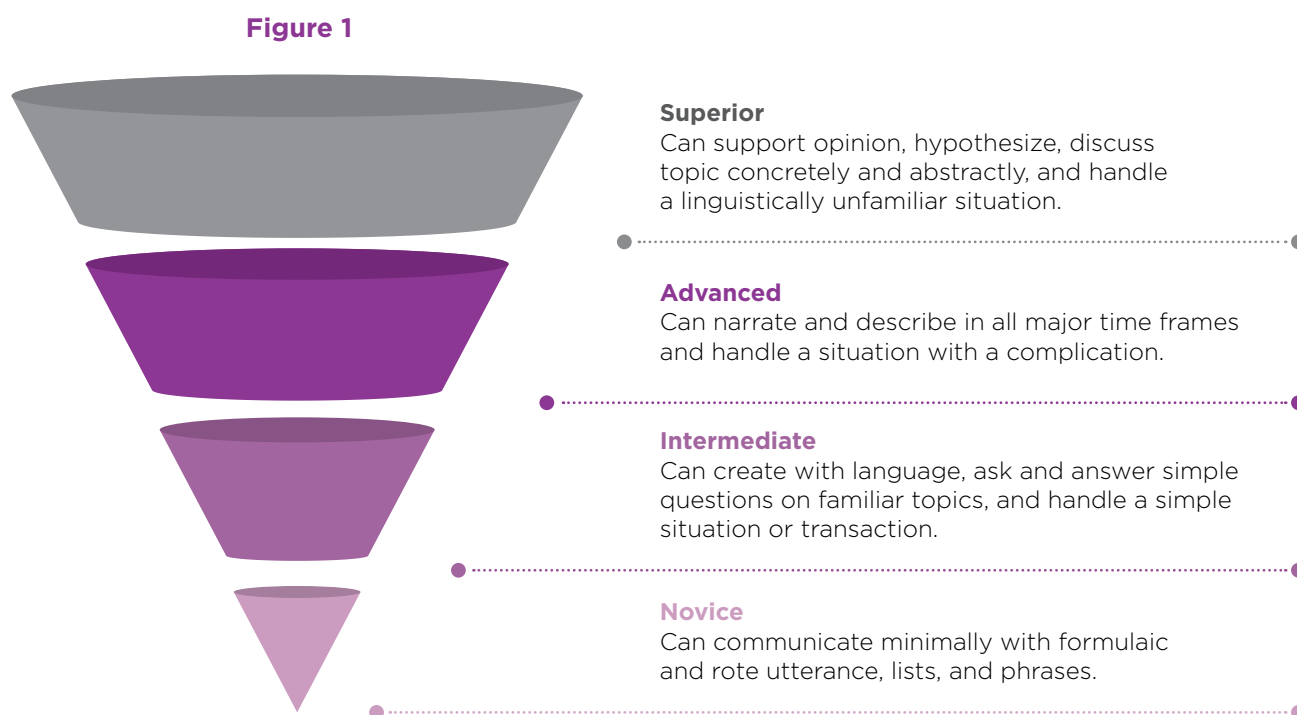
The ACTFL Reading Proficiency Test (RPT) is a proficiency-based global assessment of reading ability in a language. It is an assessment of the interpretive communication mode, as described in the *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages*. The RPT measures how well a person spontaneously reads 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 RPT assesses general language proficiency, rather than what is learned in a specific language program, class, school, or university. It is not tied to a specific teaching method or book. Rather than assessing what you “know” about the language, the RPT is an assessment of how well you can understand while reading the language.

The ACTFL RPT assesses reading comprehension in the target language across the four major levels of the ACTFL Proficiency Scale (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior). The RPT is a proctored online assessment that can be taken on a computer or tablet.

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## 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:



**Figure 1:** Inverted Pyramid Representing ACTFL Rating Scale with Major Levels and Global Tasks.

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). It is important to note that each level in the hierarchy subsumes all lower levels.

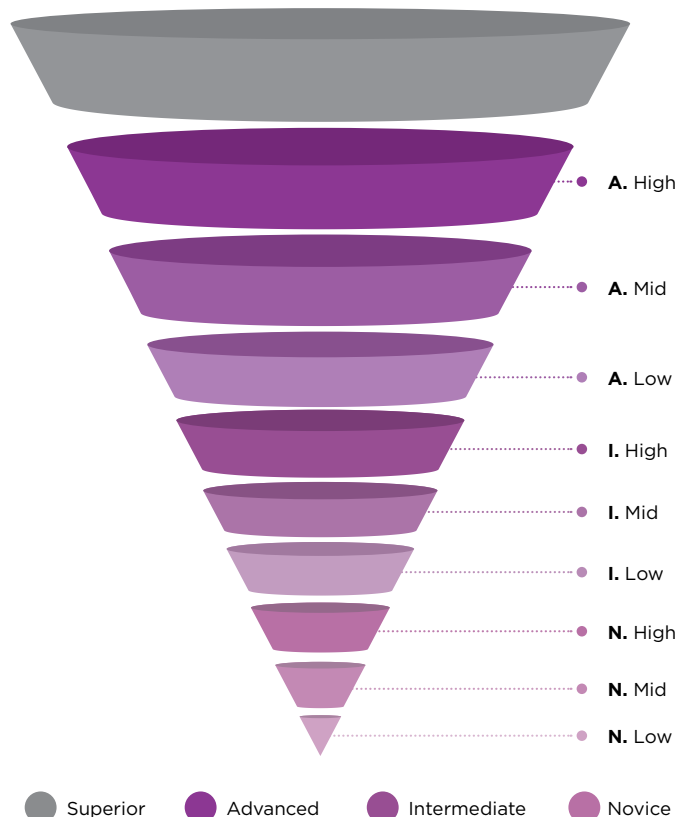
Major borders divide the major levels of the scale (Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice). As shown in the inverted pyramid (**see Figure 2**), each level represents a different profile of functional language ability.

Three of the major levels are further divided by minor borders into High, Mid and Low sublevels. (There are no sublevels for Superior.) These sublevels differ from each other in terms of the quantity as well as the inferences and connections readers can make within and across texts.

### The “High” sublevel

Readers at the “High” sublevel comprehend fully with ease written language of their respective level. They are capable of understanding texts and passages at the next higher level most of the time, but they are unable to sustain functional ability at the next higher level without intermittent lapses, misunderstandings, or evidence of difficulty.

**Figure 2**



### The “Mid” sublevel

Readers at the “Mid” sublevel represent different reader profiles, based on their particular mix of the quantity of written language comprehended and/or the degree to which they make inferences and connections within and across texts from the next higher major level. They may demonstrate some understanding of the passages at the next higher major level, but they are unable to sustain functional ability at that level most of the time.

### The “Low” sublevel

Readers at the “Low” sublevel use all their linguistic knowledge to sustain the requirements of the level. They comprehend written language primarily within the level with minimal inferences and connections and little or no demonstrated ability to comprehend written language of the next higher level.

**Figure 2:** Inverted Pyramid Representing ACTFL Rating Scale with Major Levels

## WHAT ASSESSMENT CRITERIA ARE USED?

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 within different contexts. The ACTFL RPT assesses how well readers comprehend written texts and the reading tasks associated with the different types of texts in a variety of contexts, regardless of where, when, or how the language was acquired.

In assessing reading comprehension, the following criteria are considered:

- the functions and purposes of the written language the reader comprehends,
- the content areas and context for which texts have been written,
- the text type that the reader can understand in the language,
- the range of vocabulary and grammatical structures the reader can understand,
- the cultural references the reader can understand in the language.

The assessment criteria as they relate to the four major proficiency levels are shown below.

Proficiency Level*	Function	Content	Context	Text Type	Vocabulary	Grammar	Culture
Superior	Argumentation Supported Opinion Hypothesis	Familiar and unfamiliar abstract topics	Professional Academic Literary	Complex lengthy texts	Broad Precise Specialized	Complex structures	Cultural references Aesthetic properties
Advanced	Description Narration Exposition Explanation	Concrete current and general interest topics	Public Education Work News	Paragraph-based connected texts with a clear, predicatable structure	Broad general vocabulary	Sequencing Time frames Chronology	Most common cultural patterns
Intermediate	Convey basic information	Highly familiar everyday content	Highly familiar everyday contexts	Simple, predictable, loosely-connected texts	High frequency vocabulary	Simple sentence patterns and strings of sentences	A few of the most common cultural patterns
Novice	Recognize familiar words, and formulaic phrases	Very familiar and predictable content, basic information related to self	Highly contextualized, familiar, and predictable contexts	Words, lists, phrases	Key words, cognates, memorized vocabulary	Memorized, formulaic phrases and word combinations	Recognition of basic awareness informal and formal practices

\* A rating at any major level is arrived at by the sustained performance of the functions of the level, with the degree of accuracy and the text type described for that level. The performance must be sustained across ALL of the criteria for the level in order to be rated at that level.



## WHAT IS THE FORMAT OF THE ACTFL RPT

The RPT is offered in eight test forms, where each form targets a specific range of proficiency. Depending on the levels being assessed, test administration times will vary. Table 1 below provides information on the different test forms, proficiency ranges and time allotments. These options ensure that the test administered targets the range of the test-taker's reading ability and is economical in terms of time and effort.

Superior								
Advanced High								
Advanced Mid				D		F		
Advanced Low			C					
Intermediate High							G	H
Intermediate Mid		B						
Intermediate Low					E			
Novice High	A							
Novice Mid								
Novice Low								

Table 1: RPT Test Forms and Proficiency Ranges

<b>Test Length</b>	50 minutes for a two-level test (A, B, C & D)
	75 minutes for a three-level test (E, F & G*)
	125 minutes for the full-range test (H**)

\*\* 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.

The RPT presents between 10 and 25 texts for the test taker to read. Text difficulty is based on the proficiency range of the selected test form. Each text is accompanied 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.

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## WHAT ARE READING TEXT AND TASKS LIKE?

The RPT reading texts 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 test items target the main idea, supporting detail and, at the higher levels, the inferences and connections the test-taker can make from the content and organization of the text.

### Examples of what Readers can do at major proficiency levels (from Online ACTFL Guidelines 2012)

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## 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*

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*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.*

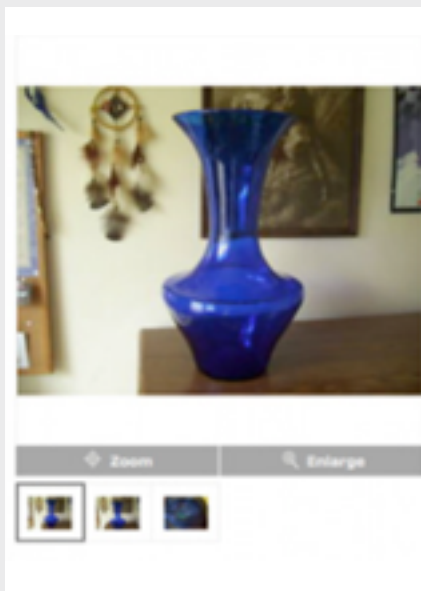
*In April, Scott Mason, then a high school junior from Halifax, Mass., set out on a 17-mile day hike in the White Mountains. The popular hiking destination includes Mount Washington, where unpredictable conditions have earned it the title "home of the world's worst weather."*

### 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.*

## NOVICE



### **FOR SALE BY OWNER:**

2 year old used compact car.

**Electric car:** no gas, no noise

**Clean Interior:** inside looks new  
Metallic Green exterior.  
Low mileage (28,000 miles).

Great car for city life. Small size  
makes parking easy.

**Call (503) 902 1099  
for more information.**

### **Chevy Advertisement**

#### **Rationale for Rating**

*The readers of this advertisement must be able to process a highly predictable, loosely organized text with limited cohesion. They may rely heavily on extralinguistic support—here, the picture—to understand the message. This is an example of a text where the readers' recognition of images, brand names, and numbers leads in part to their comprehension. Novice-level readers are best able to comprehend a text when they are able to anticipate the information in it.*

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## HOW DOES THE RPT WORK?

The ACTFL RPT is available online and can be taken on a computer or tablet. Before beginning the RPT the test taker completes a system check to make sure that their computer or tablet is set up correctly to support the test. Once the test taker logs into the online test delivery system, they are introduced to the test functionality with sample reading texts and multiple-choice questions. This provides the test taker an opportunity to become acquainted with the page layout, time management, and navigation features of the test. The reading texts and multiple-choice questions are displayed on the same page. During the test administration period, a clock will display the amount of time remaining. More information about the RPT administration can be found in the Examinee Handbook.

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## HOW ARE RPT TASKS SCORED?

The ACTFL RPT is a machine-scored test. The scoring procedure considers the difficulty of the passage, the questions' level of difficulty, and the test taker's ability to respond to the questions. An algorithm then uses the data points to assign a final rating.

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## WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL RPT RATING?

Official ACTFL RPT ratings are assigned to those RPTs that are conducted under the supervision of the ACTFL Assessment and Quality Assurance Programs. RPTs are delivered by Language Testing International (LTI), the Exclusive Licensee of ACTFL assessments. 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.

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## 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, formative and summative assessments, and determination of exit or graduation requirements.

Establishing proficiency outcomes based on 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 certification, hiring, and promotion in language-required positions.

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## WHAT ACCOMMODATIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

Accommodations for ACTFL assessments can be requested from Language Testing International (LTI), Exclusive Licensee of ACTFL. Available accommodations include, and are not limited to, extended testing time, extended breaks, screen magnification, human reader, oral interpreter for directions, testing environment adjustments, blank scratch paper, etc. LTI's accommodation team works with candidates to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations.

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## INTERESTED IN SCHEDULING AN ACTFL RPT?

To schedule individual or group ACTFL Reading Proficiency Tests, contact:

### **Language Testing International (LTI)**

580 White Plains Road, Suite 660

Tarrytown, NY 10591

[www.languagetesting.com](http://www.languagetesting.com)

[testing@languagetesting.com](mailto:testing@languagetesting.com)

Tel: (914) 963-7110

800-486-8444



# ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES 2012

## READING



### 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 [www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012](http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012).

The *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading* may be used for non-profit, educational purposes only, provided that they are reproduced in their entirety, with no alterations, and with credit to ACTFL.

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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.

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## **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.

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## ADVANCED

At the Advanced level, listeners can understand the main ideas and most supporting details in

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.

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## **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.

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## NOVICE

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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## INTERESTED IN MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE ACTFL RPT?

Please visit

[www.actfl.org/assessments](http://www.actfl.org/assessments)

For information on Proficiency and Assessment workshops,  
please visit:

[www.actfl.org/learn/proficiency-assessment-workshops](http://www.actfl.org/learn/proficiency-assessment-workshops)

Please visit:

[www.actfl.org/certifications](http://www.actfl.org/certifications)

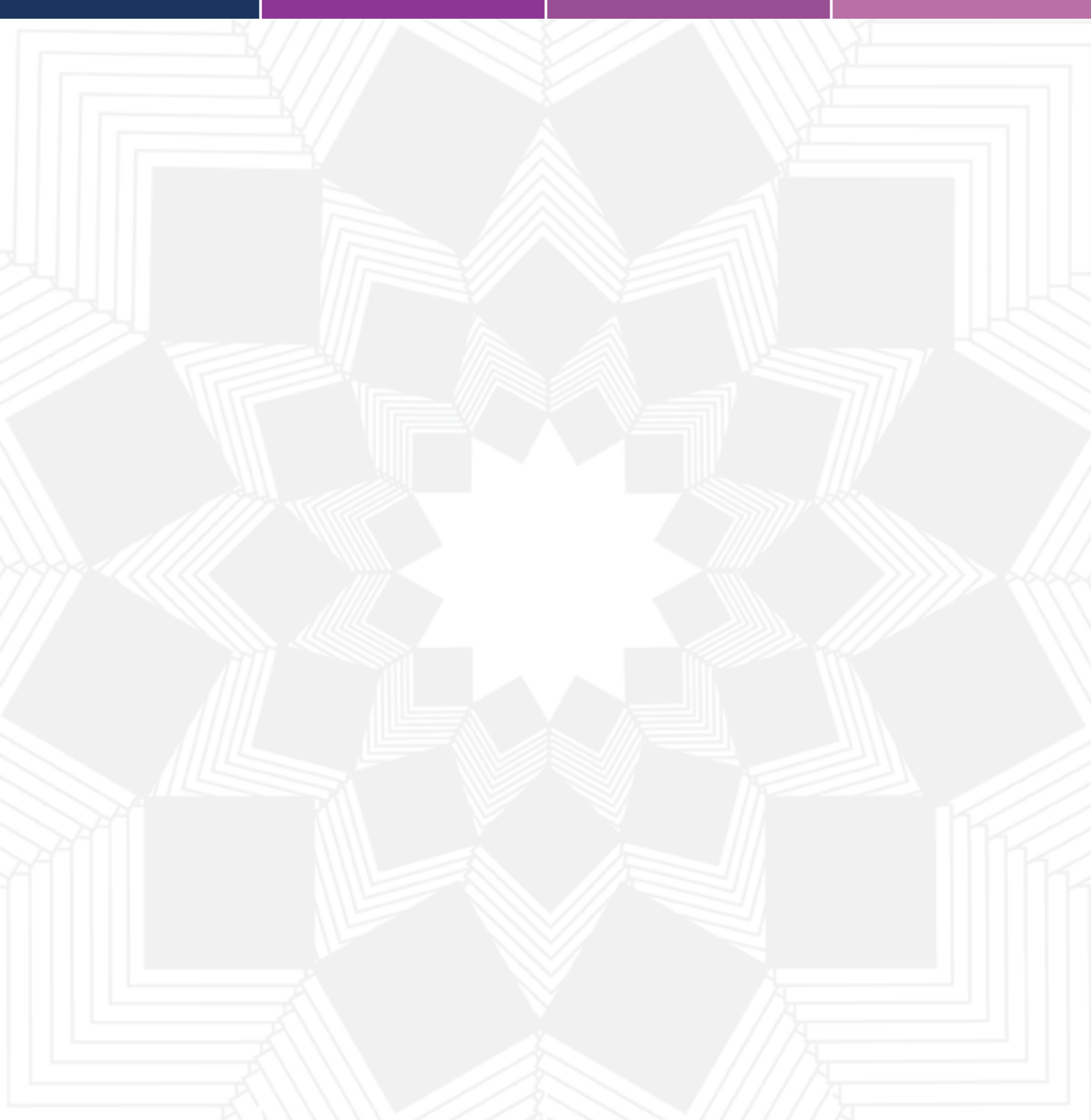
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## INTERESTED IN TAKING AN ACTFL RPT?

To schedule a test, please visit Language  
Testing International's website at

[www.languagetesting.com](http://www.languagetesting.com)

or call **1-800-486-8444**.



**ACTFL | CENTER FOR ASSESSMENT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (CARD)**  
1001 NORTH FAIRFAX STREET, SUITE 200 | ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

**[WWW.ACTFL.ORG](http://WWW.ACTFL.ORG)**