



LINKING THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR READING, CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION, AND DCAS

GRADES 2 THROUGH 10

September 2011

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Document Control # 2011/09/04



Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS

List of Grade-Level Documents

Grade 2

Grade 3

Grade 4

Grade 5

Grade 6

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Grade 8

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Grade 10



Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS

Grade 2

Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS – Grade 2

Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to provide teachers with **sample** questions that are similar in **content** to those asked on the reading portion of DCAS. While DCAS is primarily a multiple choice test, rich discussions and writing tasks about what students read should be the focus of classroom instruction. The Common Core State Standards in reading provide an excellent framework from which to craft probing questions to encourage students to think deeply and critically about what they read. Students who are engaged, critical readers and thinkers will be able to transfer those skills and be successful no matter the question format.

For additional information on the Common Core State Standards see David Coleman and Susan Pimentel's "Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards" at http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/staff/ci/content_areas/files/ela/publisherscriteria_lit_k-2.pdf.

DCAS Content and Structure

Text Types

- **Literary Text:** Reading to explore others' experiences; reading for enjoyment
 - Stories
 - ♦ Includes adventure stories, folktales, legends, fables, fantasy, realistic fiction, and myths
 - Dramas
 - ♦ Includes staged dialogue and brief familiar scenes
 - Poetry
 - ♦ Includes nursery rhymes and the subgenres of the narrative poem, limerick, and free verse poem
- **Informational Text:** Reading to be informed
 - Literary Nonfiction and Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts
 - ♦ Includes biographies and autobiographies; books about history, social studies, science, and the arts; technical texts, including directions, forms, and information displayed in graphs, charts, or maps; and digital sources on a range of topics.

Grade	Text Type (approximate distribution)	
	Literary	Informational
2	50%	50%

Students should be exposed to a variety of texts that elicit close reading. Word counts will vary. The Lexile ranges presented in the Common Core State Standards should be used to guide the selection of texts. These ranges will be used to guide the selection of passages for the reading portion of DCAS. See Appendix A in the Common Core State Standards for further information regarding text complexity.

GRADES	LEXILE RANGE (approximate)
2-3	450-790

DCAS Item Types

- **Multiple Choice:**
 - Multiple choice items require students to show what they know and are able to do by selecting the best response from the four choices provided.
 - Multiple choice items are scored as one point each.
- **Grid/Innovative Items:**
 - There are two separate methods used when answering grid or innovative items. Students may be required to either “drag and drop” their answers into an answer box, or they may be required to select an answer and an option that supports their response.
 - Grid or innovative items are usually scored on a 0–1–2 scale, using an item-specific rubric.

Cognitive Levels – Depth of Knowledge (based on Norm Webb’s criteria)

- **Recall of Information:** Requires students to recall and recite facts from a text.
- **Basic Reasoning:** Requires mental processing beyond recalling information—summarizing, interpreting, classifying, predicting, comparing.
- **Complex Reasoning:** Requires students to show a deep understanding of the text—explaining, generalizing, synthesizing, connecting, analyzing.
- **Extended Reasoning:** Requires higher-order thinking on a multi-stepped task over an extended period of time.

Examples of Questions Using the Depth-of-Knowledge Criteria “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”

RECALL OF INFORMATION

Question: How did Goldilocks get her name?

Answer: Goldilocks got her name from the color of her hair which is yellow.

[Note: The information is “right there” in the text, but the reader needs to recognize the relevant content.]

BASIC REASONING

Question: What is porridge?

Answer: Porridge is a breakfast food that is heated.

[Note: The response is based on making an inference using context clues.]

COMPLEX REASONING

Question: How would the story be different if told from another point of view? What information from the story supports your answer?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The response requires the reader to critically analyze the information presented in the text to draw a conclusion.]

EXTENDED REASONING

Question: Does the Goldilocks tale appear in any other culture? How is each tale a reflection of its culture?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The answer would require research over an extended period of time.]

DCAS Reading – Cognitive Level Goals

Grade	Recall of Information	Basic Reasoning	Complex Reasoning
2	30%	50%	20%

While extended reasoning activities and projects are excellent for classroom instruction, they are not included on DCAS.

Sample Questions Reflecting the Common Core State Standards for Reading

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 2
<p>2RL1 – Ask and answer such questions as <i>who, what, where, when, why</i>, and <i>how</i> to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who finished the race first? • What is so special about Mario? • Where does the story take place? • When did Tiesha try out for the play? • Why did Tyrone get an “A” on his test? • How is John different from Paul?
<p>2RL2 – Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens in this story? What is the central message? • What happens in this story? What does the author hope the reader learns from the story? • What happens in this story? What lesson does Jose learn in the story? • What happens in this folktale? What lesson does this folktale teach? • What happens in this fable? What is the moral of this fable?
<p>2RL3 – Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why does the boy smile? • How does the girl feel when she learns what happened? • What does the dog do to find his owner? • How does the main character change during the story?

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 2

2RL4 – Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

- Why does the author repeat the words _____, _____, and _____?
- What is the meaning of _____ on page 2?
- Why does the author use rhyming words?
- Why does the author of the poem use the words _____, _____, and _____ (words that all start with the same letter)?
- How does the author supply rhythm in the song?
- How do the words _____, _____, and _____ supply rhythm in the poem?

2RL5 – Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.

- What happens at the beginning of the story?
- What happens at the end of the story?
- How does the beginning of the story introduce the characters and setting?
- How does the end of the story tie up the loose ends of the story?
- Complete a story map that shows the overall structure of the story. Be sure to include the beginning, middle, and end.

2RL6 – Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

- How does Lawanda feel about the trip? How is that different from how her brother feels?
- How does Frank feel about getting a new dog? How is that different from how his mother feels?
- Read a portion of the story aloud using a different voice for each character.

2RL7 – Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

- How does the illustration help the reader understand the setting of the story? Use examples from the illustration and story to support your answer.
- What clue to the ending of the story is in the picture? Use examples from the picture and story to support your answer.
- How do the picture and story together help the reader understand Carlos? Use examples from both the picture and the story to support your answer.
- What does the reader learn about Maria by looking at both the picture and reading the story? Use examples from the picture and story to support your answer.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 2

2RL8 – Not applicable

2RL9 – Compare and contrast two or more versions of the same story (e.g., Cinderella stories) by different authors or from different cultures.

- After reading two versions of the same folktale by different authors, explain how they are alike and different.
- How are the Cinderella stories from China and the United States the same and different?

2RL10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 2

2RI1 – Ask and answer such questions as *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

- Who invented electricity?
- What gave Edison the idea for his invention?
- Where was the first soccer game played?
- When do birds fly south for the winter?
- Why was a written language started?
- How are insects and mammals alike and different?

2RI2 – Identify the main topic of a multi-paragraph text as well as the focus of specific paragraphs within the text.

- What is the main idea of the article?
- What is the main idea of paragraph 3?
- Why is ____ a good title for the article?

2RI3 – Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.

- Describe the life cycle of a _____.
- What events lead up to the first Thanksgiving?
- Why was Christopher Columbus' voyage important?
- What are the steps in building a sandbox? Why is it important to sand the wood before it is painted?

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 2
<p>2RI4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 2 topic or subject area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the word _____ mean in paragraph 2? • What does the phrase, _____ mean in paragraph 4?
<p>2RI5 – Know and use various text features (e.g., captions, bold print, subheadings, glossaries, indexes, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the caption under the picture tell the reader? • What clue does the heading give the reader about the next section of the text? • Why are some words in bold print? • Why did the author include a glossary? • Find the word _____ in the glossary. What does the word mean? • Look in the index. On what page can more information about dinosaurs be found?
<p>2RI6 – Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What question does the author want to answer in the article? What information from the article supports your answer? • What is the author's purpose? What information from the article supports your answer? • What process does the author want to explain? What information from the article supports your answer? • What does the author want to describe? What information from the article supports your answer?
<p>2RI7 – Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the diagram help the reader understand how a person breathes? Use examples from the diagram and the text to support your answer. • How does the diagram help the reader understand how to put the chair together? Use examples from the diagram and the text to support your answer. • How does the diagram help the reader understand how to work the _____? Use information in the diagram and the text to support your answer.
<p>2RI8 – Describe how reasons support specific points the author makes in a text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which details in the article support the main points of the text? • How do the reasons the author gives support specific points? • How does the author support the point that dolphins are smart?
<p>2RI9 – Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After reading two texts on dinosaurs, explain how the most important points in each text are alike and different.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 2

2RI10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

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Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS

Grade 3

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Grade	Text Type (approximate distribution)	
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Cognitive Levels – Depth of Knowledge (based on Norm Webb’s criteria)

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Examples of Questions Using the Depth of Knowledge Criteria “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”

RECALL OF INFORMATION

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Answer: Goldilocks got her name from the color of her hair which is yellow.

[Note: The information is “right there” in the text, but the reader needs to recognize the relevant content.]

BASIC REASONING

Question: What is porridge?

Answer: Porridge is a breakfast food that is heated.

[Note: The response is based on making an inference using context clues.]

COMPLEX REASONING

Question: How would the story be different if told from another point of view? What information from the story supports your answer?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The response requires the reader to critically analyze the information presented in the text to draw a conclusion.]

EXTENDED REASONING

Question: Does the Goldilocks tale appear in any other culture? How is each tale a reflection of its culture?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The answer would require research over an extended period of time.]

DCAS Reading – Cognitive Level Goals

Grade	Recall of Information	Basic Reasoning	Complex Reasoning
3	30%	50%	20%

While extended reasoning activities and projects are excellent for classroom instruction, they are not included on DCAS.

Sample Questions Reflecting the Common Core State Standards for Reading

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 3
<p>3RL1 – Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who finished the race first? Which sentence(s) from the story supports your answer? • What is so special about Mario? Which sentence(s) from the story supports your answer? • Where does the story take place? Which sentence(s) from the story supports your answer? • When did Tiesha try out for the play? Which sentence(s) from the story supports your answer? • Why did Tyrone get an “A” on his test? Which sentence(s) from the story supports your answer? • How is John different from Paul? Which sentence(s) from the story supports your answer?
<p>3RL2 – Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens in this ____ (story/fable/folktale/myth)? • Place each event in a box to show the order in which it happens in the ____ (story/fable/folktale/myth). • What lesson does the author hope the reader learns from the story? What key details in the story help the reader understand this lesson? • What lesson does Jose learn in the story? What key details in the story help the reader understand this lesson? • What lesson does this folktale teach? What key details in the folktale help teach this lesson? • What is the moral of this fable? What key details in the fable help teach this moral? • What lesson is this myth trying to teach? What key details are used to convey this lesson?
<p>3RL3 – Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how the boy smiling changes the story. • Explain how the girl feels when she learns what happened. How does that affect what she does next? • Explain what the dog does to find his owner. What does that show the reader about the dog? • Explain why the main character changes during the story. How does that influence what happens next in the story? • Describe ____ (a character in the story). How does his/her actions contribute to the sequence of events in the story? • Explain how the actions of ____ (a character in the story) influence what happens next.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 3

3RL4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from non-literal language.

- What is the meaning of _____ on page 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- What is meant by the phrase, “Put on your thinking cap,” in paragraph 6?

3RL5 – Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

- Explain how the second chapter of the story helps the reader understand the setting of the story. Use examples from the story in your explanation.
- Explain how scene 2 builds suspense. Use examples from the drama in your explanation.
- Explain how the last stanza in the poem brings the ideas presented together. Use examples from the poem in your explanation.

3RL6 – Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

- Who is telling the story?
- How does Lawanda feel about the trip? How is that different from how you would feel?
- How does the narrator feel about Frank getting a new dog? How is that different from how you would feel?

3RL7 – Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).

- Explain how the illustration helps the reader understand the setting of the story. Use examples from the story and illustration in your explanation.
- Explain how the illustrations make the reader feel. Why?
- Explain how the illustration helps the reader understand the main character in the story. Use examples from the story and illustration in your explanation.

3RL8 – Not applicable

3RL9 – Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series).

- How are the themes/plots/settings in Kevin Henke's books _____ (title) and _____ (title) alike and different?

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 3

3RL10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Exemplar texts can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 3

3RI1 – Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

- Who invented electricity? Which sentence(s) from the article supports your answer?
- What gave Edison the idea for his invention? Which sentence(s) from the article supports your answer?
- Where was the first soccer game played? Which sentence(s) from the article supports your answer?
- When do birds fly south for the winter? Which sentence(s) from the article supports your answer?
- Why was a written language started? Which sentence(s) from the article supports your answer?
- How are insects and mammals alike and different? Which sentence(s) from the article supports your answer?

3RI2 – Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

- What is the main idea of the article? What key details support this main idea?
- What are the key details in the article? How do the key details support the main idea?
- What is ____ a good title for the article? How do the key details support the selection of this title?

3RI3 – Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

- What caused the plant to grow? What information from the article supports your answer?
- What is the effect of not getting enough sleep? What information from the article supports your answer?
- Why is it important to sand the wood before it is painted? What information from the article supports your answer?
- Explain how a bird makes its nest. Use information from the article in your explanation.
- Explain the relationship between ____, ____, and ____ (series of historical events). Use information from the article in your explanation.
- Explain the relationship between ____ and ____ (scientific concepts/ideas). Use information from the article in your explanation.
- Explain the steps in ____ (a technical procedure). Use information from the article in your explanation.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 3

3RI4 – Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.

- What does the word _____ mean in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- What does ____ (a general academic word/phrase) mean as it is used in this article? How does it help the reader's understanding of the information presented?
- What does ____ (a domain-specific word/phrase) mean?

3RI5 – Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.

- What does the caption under the picture tell you?
- What information do the headings give the reader about the next section of the text?
- Why are some words in bold print?
- Why does the author provide hyperlinks?
- Where can more information on ____ be located?

3RI6 – Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.

- How does the author feel about the topic? Do you agree or disagree? Explain why or why not.

3RI7 – Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

- How does the map help the reader understand why the countries fought for control of the river?
- How does the photograph help the reader understand why people were eager to visit the canyon?
- How does the map help the reader understand where the battle occurred?
- How does the photograph help the reader understand when the event occurred?
- How does the map help the reader understand how the Mississippi River helped farmers get their crops to market?

3RI8 – Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).

- Explain how the first paragraph relates to the second paragraph. Use examples from the article in your explanation.
- Explain how the author develops his/her idea across the paragraphs. Use examples from the article in your explanation.
- Explain what the author does to help the reader understand how to put the tent together. Use examples from the article in your explanation.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 3

3RI9 – Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

- How are the most important points in the two texts about _____ alike and different?
- How are the key details in the two texts about _____ alike and different?

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4-5	770-980

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BASIC REASONING

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Answer: Porridge is a breakfast food that is heated.

[Note: The response is based on making an inference using context clues.]

COMPLEX REASONING

Question: How would the story be different if told from another point of view? What information from the story supports your answer?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The response requires the reader to critically analyze the information presented in the text to draw a conclusion.]

EXTENDED REASONING

Question: Does the Goldilocks tale appear in any other culture? How is each tale a reflection of its culture?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The answer would require research over an extended period of time.]

DCAS Reading – Cognitive Level Goals

Grade	Recall of Information	Basic Reasoning	Complex Reasoning
4	30%	50%	20%

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Sample Questions Reflecting the Common Core State Standards for Reading

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 4
<p>4RL1 – Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who finished the race first? How do you know? Use details and/or examples from the story to support your answer. • What is so special about Mario? How do you know? Use details and/or examples from the story to support your answer. • Where does the story take place? How do you know? Use details and/or examples from the story to support your answer. • Why did Tiesha try out for the play? How do you know? Use details and/or examples from the story to support your answer. • Why did Tyrone get an “A” on his test? How do you know? Use details and/or examples from the story to support your answer. • How is John different from Paul? Use details and/or examples from the story to support your answer.
<p>4RL2 – Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the theme of _____ (text title)? What are the details in the story/drama/poem that help the reader determine this theme. • Summarize the story/drama/poem. What details from the story/drama/poem should be included in the summary?
<p>4RL3 – Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where does the story take place? Why is that important? Which specific details from the story support your answer? • Explain how the girl feels when she learns what happened. Use specific details from the drama in your explanation. • Explain what the dog does to find his owner. Use specific details from the story in your explanation. • Explain why the main character changes during the story. Use specific details from the story in your explanation. • What word best describes Adriana? Which specific details from the story support your answer? • Explain how the girl’s thoughts help the reader understand her. Use specific details from the drama in your explanation. • Explain how the boy’s actions help the reader understand him. Use specific details from the story in your explanation. • Explain how the girl’s words help the reader understand the setting of the drama. Use specific details from the drama in your explanation.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 4

4RL4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).

- What is meant by the phrase, “Put on your thinking cap,” in paragraph 4?
- What is the meaning of _____ on page 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- What does it mean to have the Midas touch? How does this reference help the reader understand the character in the story?
- What is meant by a Herculean task? How does this reference help the reader understand the task the character faced?

4RL5 – Explain the major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.

- Explain the major differences between poems, dramas, and prose. Use examples from your reading in your explanation.
- What are the structural elements of a story? How do they contribute to the telling of a story or the relaying of a message? How do they help the reader understand the story or message?
- What are the structural elements of a poem? How do they contribute to a poem? How do they help the reader understand the poem or its message?
- What are the structural elements of a drama? How do they contribute to the drama? How do they help the reader understand the drama or message?

4RL6 – Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.

- Why does the author tell the story in the third-person point of view instead of the first-person point of view?
- How would the story be different if it had been told in the first-person point of view rather than the third-person point of view?
- Is telling the story from the first-person point of view effective? Why or why not? Use examples from the story to support your answer.
- Which story is more effective—the one told from the first-person point of view or the one told from the third-person point of view? Why? Use examples from both texts in your answer.
- Compare and contrast the point of view from which _____ (text title) and _____ (text title) are narrated. Use examples from both texts in your comparison.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 4

4RL7 – Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.

- How is reading _____ (a drama) the same and different from viewing the drama? Use examples from each version to support your answer.
- How does watching a play help a reader understand stage directions?
- How is reading _____ (text title) the same and different from viewing a filmed version? Use examples from each version to support your answer.
- How is reading _____ (text title) the same and different from hearing an oral presentation of it? Use examples from each version to support your answer.

4RL8 – Not applicable

4RL9 – Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.

- _____ (text title) and _____ (text title) have similar themes. How are the authors' treatments of that theme alike and different? Which author is more effective in relaying this theme? Why? Use examples from both texts to support your answer. (Texts selected should be stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.)
- _____ (text title) and _____ (text title) have similar topics. How are the authors' treatments of that topic alike and different? Which text is more interesting? Why? Use examples from both texts to support your answer. (Texts selected should be stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.)
- Both _____ (text title) and _____ (text title) are quest tales. How are the patterns of events alike and different? Which text is more interesting? Why? Use examples from both texts to support your answer. (Texts selected should be stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.)

4RL10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 4

4RI1 – Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

- Based on the information in ____ (text title), which car is best for a large family? How do you know? Which details and/or examples from the article support your answer?
- Why are spiders important? How do you know? Which details and/or examples from the article support your answer?
- Which step is most important in constructing a bridge? How do you know? Which details and/or examples from the article support your answer?
- Why is it important that birds fly south for the winter? How do you know? Which details and/or examples from the article support your answer?
- As a result of their work, what will most likely happen to the snow geese population? How do you know? Which details and/or examples from the article support your answer?
- How are insects and mammals alike and different? How do you know? Use details and/or examples from the article to support your answer.

4RI2 – Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

- What is the main idea of the article? Which key details in the article support this main idea?
- What is the main idea of the article? Explain how the key details in each paragraph support this main idea.
- Summarize the information in the article.

4RI3 – Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

- What caused the plant to grow? What information from the article supports your answer?
- What is the effect of not getting enough sleep? What information from the article supports your answer?
- Why is it important to sand the wood before it is painted? What information from the article supports your answer?
- Explain how the bird made its nest. What information from the article supports your explanation?

4RI4 – Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

- What does the word ____ mean in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of ____ in paragraph 5?

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 4

4RI5 – Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.

- What is the overall structure of this article? What is the most likely reason the author chose that structure?
- What is the overall structure of paragraph 4?
- Why is chronological order a good way to organize the information in this article?
- Why is cause/effect a good way to organize the information in this article?

4RI6 – Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.

- Explain how the firsthand and secondhand accounts of the launching of the space shuttle are similar and different. Use examples from both accounts in your answer.
- Describe the differences in focus and in the information provided between the firsthand and secondhand accounts of the launching of the space shuttle. Use examples from both texts in your explanation.
- Explain why the firsthand and secondhand accounts of the launching of the space shuttle are similar and different. Use details from both accounts in your answer.
- Explain why the firsthand and secondhand accounts of the launching of the space shuttle have a different focus and present different information. Use details from both texts in your explanation.

4RI7 – Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

- How does the diagram help the reader understand how a person breathes? Use examples from the diagram and the text to support your answer.
- Explain how the chart helps the reader understand how the popularity of certain toys changes from year to year. Use examples from the chart and the text in your answer.
- How does the diagram help the reader understand the directions? Use examples from the diagram and the text in your answer.
- How does the graph contribute to the reader's understanding of crop yields? Use examples from the graph and the text in your answer.
- How does the timeline contribute to the reader's understanding of the development of chewing gum? Use examples from the timeline and the text in your answer.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 4

4RI8 – Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

- How does the author support the idea that ____? Use examples from the article to support your answer.
- Do the reasons and evidence provided in the article support the points the author is making? Why or why not?
- Which reasons and evidence does the author use to support the points he/she makes about ____? How do these reasons and evidence help the reader understand the points the author makes?

4RI9 – Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

- Given the information presented in two texts, explain why exercise is the key to good health.
- Given the information presented in two texts, explain the causes of the American Revolution.

4RI10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.



Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS

Grade 5

Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS – Grade 5

Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to provide teachers with **sample** questions that are similar in **content** to those asked on the reading portion of DCAS. While DCAS is primarily a multiple choice test, rich discussions and writing tasks about what students read should be the focus of classroom instruction. The Common Core State Standards in reading provide an excellent framework from which to craft probing questions to encourage students to think deeply and critically about what they read. Students who are engaged, critical readers and thinkers will be able to transfer those skills and be successful no matter the question format.

For additional information on the Common Core State Standards see David Coleman and Susan Pimentel's "Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards" at http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/staff/ci/content_areas/files/ela/PublishersCriteriaforLiteracy_312.pdf.

DCAS Content and Structure

Text Types

- **Literary Text:** Reading to explore others' experiences; reading for enjoyment
 - Stories
 - ♦ Includes adventure stories, folktales, legends, fables, fantasy, realistic fiction, and myths
 - Dramas
 - ♦ Includes staged dialogue and brief familiar scenes
 - Poetry
 - ♦ Includes nursery rhymes and the subgenres of the narrative poem, limerick, and free verse poem
- **Informational Text:** Reading to be informed
 - Literary Nonfiction and Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts
 - ♦ Includes biographies and autobiographies; books about history, social studies, science and the arts; technical texts, including directions, forms, and information displayed in graphs, charts, or maps; and digital sources on a range of topics.

Grade	Text Type (approximate distribution)	
	Literary	Informational
5	50%	50%

Students should be exposed to a variety of texts that elicit close reading. Word counts will vary. The Lexile ranges presented in the Common Core State Standards should be used to guide the selection of texts. These ranges will be used to guide the selection of passages for the reading portion of DCAS. See Appendix A in the Common Core State Standards for further information regarding text complexity.

GRADES	LEXILE RANGE (approximate)
4-5	770-980

DCAS Item Types

- **Multiple Choice:**
 - Multiple choice items require students to show what they know and are able to do by selecting the best response from the four choices provided.
 - Multiple choice items are scored as one point each.
- **Grid/Innovative Items:**
 - There are two separate methods used when answering grid or innovative items. Students may be required to either “drag and drop” their answers into an answer box, or they may be required to select an answer and an option that supports their response.
 - Grid or innovative items are usually scored on a 0–1–2 scale, using an item-specific rubric.

Cognitive Levels – Depth of Knowledge (based on Norm Webb’s criteria)

- **Recall of Information:** Requires students to recall and recite facts from a text.
- **Basic Reasoning:** Requires mental processing beyond recalling information – summarizing, interpreting, classifying, predicting, comparing.
- **Complex Reasoning:** Requires students to show a deep understanding of the text – explaining, generalizing, synthesizing, connecting, analyzing.
- **Extended Reasoning:** Requires higher order thinking on a multi-stepped task over an extended period of time.

Examples of Questions Using the Depth of Knowledge Criteria “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”

RECALL OF INFORMATION

Question: How did Goldilocks get her name?

Answer: Goldilocks got her name from the color of her hair which is yellow.

[Note: The information is “right there” in the text, but the reader needs to recognize the relevant content.]

BASIC REASONING

Question: What is porridge?

Answer: Porridge is a breakfast food that is heated.

[Note: The response is based on making an inference using context clues.]

COMPLEX REASONING

Question: How would the story be different if told from another point of view? What information from the story supports your answer?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The response requires the reader to critically analyze the information presented in the text to draw a conclusion.]

EXTENDED REASONING

Question: Does the Goldilocks tale appear in any other culture? How is each tale a reflection of its culture?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The answer would require research over an extended period of time.]

DCAS Reading – Cognitive Level Goals

Grade	Recall of Information	Basic Reasoning	Complex Reasoning
5	30%	50%	20%

While extended reasoning activities and projects are excellent for classroom instruction, they are not included on DCAS.

Sample Questions Reflecting the Common Core State Standards for Reading

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 5
<p>5RL1 – Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who was the first to finish the race? How do you know? Which word(s) from the poem supports your answer? • What is so special about Mario? How do you know? Which sentence(s) from the story supports your answer? • Where does the drama take place? How do you know? Which sentence(s) from the drama supports your answer? • Why did Tiesha try out for the play? How do you know? Which sentence(s) from the story supports your answer? • Why did Tyrone get an “A” on his test? How do you know? Which sentence(s) from the story supports your answer? • How is John different from Paul? How do you know? Which sentence(s) from the story supports your answer?
<p>5RL2 – Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the theme of _____ (text title)? What details in the story/poem/drama help the reader determine this theme? • How does the author use the way Tyrone responds to his situation to develop the theme of the story? • Summarize the story/drama/poem.
<p>5RL3 – Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are Keisha and Lawanda alike and different? What specific details from the story support your comparison? • What do you learn about Chris and John by the way they compete for the prize? How are they alike and different? Use specific details from the drama in your answer. • How is the setting at the beginning of the story alike and different from the setting at the end of the story? Why is the change in setting important? • What are two major events in the story? How are they alike and different? How does each event contribute to the story?

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 5

5RL4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

- What is the meaning of _____ in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- What is meant by the phrase, “As solid as the ground we stand on,” in paragraph 4?
- What is meant by the phrase, “As cold as ice,” in paragraph 6?
- What is meant by the phrase, “You are the sun in my sky,” in paragraph 3?
- What is meant by the phrase, “He has the heart of a lion,” in paragraph 1?

5RL5 – Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fit together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.

- Why are chapters 1–3 important? How do these chapters contribute to the story?
- Why is scene 2 important in the drama? How does it provide the connection between scenes 1 and 3?
- How do the stanzas in _____ (text title) fit together so the poem flows from beginning to end?

5RL6 – Describe how a narrator’s or speaker’s point of view influences how events are described.

- What is the narrator’s point of view in the story? How does that point of view influence how the accident at the carnival is described? Use examples from the story to support your answer.
- What information is unknown to the reader because _____ (text title) is told from Paul’s point of view? How does that impact the story?
- What information is known to the reader because _____ (text title) is told from Paul’s the point of view? How does that impact the story?
- Why is telling _____ (text title) from John’s point of view effective? Use examples from the story to support your answer.
- Why does the author tell the story in the third-person point of view instead of the first-person point of view? Use examples from the story to support your answer.
- How would the story be different if it had been told in the first-person point of view rather than the third-person point of view? Use examples from the story to support your answer.
- Which story is more effective—the one told from the first-person point of view or the one told from the third-person point of view? Why? Use examples from the story to support your answer.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 5

5RL7 – Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).

- Which visual elements in _____ (a graphic novel) contribute to the novel's meaning/tone/beauty? Use specific examples from the graphic novel to support your answer.
- Which visual elements in _____ (a multimedia presentation of fiction) contribute to its meaning/tone/beauty? Use specific examples from the multimedia presentation to support your explanation.
- How do the multimedia elements (animation/video/audio/still images) in _____ (a multimedia presentation of fiction) contribute to its meaning/tone/beauty? Use specific examples from the multimedia presentation to support your answer.

5RL8 – Not applicable

5RL9 – Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.

- How are _____ (text title) and _____ (text title) alike and different in their approach to similar themes? Which text is more effective in relaying this theme? Why? Use examples from both texts to support your answer. (Texts should be two stories of the same genre—two mysteries or two adventure stories.)
- How are _____ (text title) and _____ (text title) alike and different in their approach to similar topics? Which text is more interesting? Why? Use examples from both texts to support your answer. (Texts should be two stories of the same genre—two mysteries or two adventure stories.)

5RL10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 5

5RI1 – Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

- Based on the information in _____ (text title), which car is best for a large family? How do you know? Which sentences from the article support your answer?
- Why are spiders important? How do you know? Give specific examples from the article that support your answer.
- Which step is most important in road construction? How do you know? Which sentences from the article support your answer?
- Why is it important that birds fly south for the winter? How do you know? Which sentences from the article support your answer?
- As a result of their work, what will most likely happen to the snow geese population? Which sentences from the article support your answer?
- How are insects and mammals alike and different? How do you know? Use specific examples from the article to support your answer.

5RI2 – Determine the two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

- What are the two main ideas of the article? Which key details in the article support these main ideas?
- Summarize the information in the article.

5RI3 – Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

- How did the competition between _____ and _____ lead to the discovery of _____? What specific information from the article supports your answer?
- How did the differing opinions of northern and southern states impact the writing of the U.S. Constitution? What specific information from the article supports your answer?
- Explain how the Boston Massacre and the Boston Tea Party influenced the relationship between England and its colonies in America. Use specific information from the article in your explanation.
- Explain how light interacts with water during photosynthesis. Use specific information from the article in your explanation.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 5

5RI4 – Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

- What does the word _____ mean in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- What does ____ (a general academic word/phrase) mean as it is used in this article? How does it help the reader's understanding of the information presented?
- What does ____ (a domain-specific word/phrase) mean?

5RI5 – Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.

- Which text was more effective in presenting the events leading up to the war, _____ (text title) which used chronological order or _____ (text title) which used a cause/effect structure? Use examples from the texts to support your opinion.
- Which text was more effective in explaining plant and animal cells, _____ (text title) which used compare/contrast or _____ (text title) which used description? Use examples from the texts to support your opinion.
- How is the overall structure used in the explanation of photosynthesis in _____ (text title) and _____ (text title) alike and different? Use examples from the texts to support your comparison.

5RI6 – Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

- After reading multiple accounts of the launching of the space shuttle, in what ways are they similar and different? How are those similarities and differences related to each author's point of view? Use examples from the accounts to support your answer.
- After reading multiple accounts of the Boston Massacre, in what ways are they similar and different? How are those similarities and differences related to each author's point of view? Use examples from the accounts to support your answer.

5RI7 – Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

- Looking at the indexes of several resources, which text would be the best to use to answer a question about rock formation? What information in the indexes did you use to make your decision?
- Using online databases, what is the best way to dispose of hazardous waste? Which websites offer the best advice? Use examples from the websites to support your answer.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 5

5RI8 – Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text, identifying which reasons and evidence support which point(s).

- How does the author support the idea that eating breakfast increases student performance in school? What examples from the article support your answer?
- Which reasons and/or evidence provided in the article do a good job of supporting the points the author makes about the importance of homework? Why?
- Do the reasons and/or evidence provided in the article support the points the author is making about eating healthy foods? Why or why not?
- What reasons and/or evidence does the author provide to support the points he/she makes about the benefits of exercise? How do these reasons and/or evidence help the reader understand the points the author makes?
- What are the author's main points? What reasons and/or evidence does the author provide to support these main points?

5RI9 – Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

- Given the information presented in multiple texts, explain why exercise is the key to good health.
- Given the information presented in multiple texts, explain the causes of the American Revolution.

5RI10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

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Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS

Grade 6

Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS – Grade 6

Purpose of This Document

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DCAS Content and Structure

Text Types

- **Literary Text:** Reading to explore others' experiences; reading for enjoyment
 - Stories
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire and graphic novels
 - Dramas
 - ♦ Includes one-act and multi-act plays
 - Poetry
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of narrative poems, lyrical poems, free verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, and epics
- **Informational Text:** Reading to be informed
 - Literary Nonfiction
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of exposition, argument, and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism, and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience
 - Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts

Grade	Text Type (approximate distribution)	
	Literary	Informational
6	45%	55%

Students should be exposed to a variety of texts that elicit close reading. Word counts will vary. The Lexile ranges presented in the Common Core State Standards should be used to guide the selection of texts. These ranges will be used to guide the selection of passages for the reading portion of DCAS. See Appendix A in the Common Core State Standards for further information regarding text complexity.

GRADES	LEXILE RANGE (approximate)
6-8	995-1155

DCAS Item Types

- **Multiple Choice:**
 - Multiple choice items require students to show what they know and are able to do by selecting the best response from the four choices provided.
 - Multiple choice items are scored as one point each.
- **Grid/Innovative Items:**
 - There are two separate methods used when answering grid or innovative items. Students may be required to either “drag and drop” their answers into an answer box, or they may be required to select an answer and an option that supports their response.
 - Grid or innovative items are usually scored on a 0–1–2 scale, using an item-specific rubric.

Cognitive Levels – Depth of Knowledge (based on Norm Webb’s criteria)

- **Recall of Information:** Requires students to recall and recite facts from a text.
- **Basic Reasoning:** Requires mental processing beyond recalling information—summarizing, interpreting, classifying, predicting, comparing.
- **Complex Reasoning:** Requires students to show a deep understanding of the text—explaining, generalizing, synthesizing, connecting, analyzing.
- **Extended Reasoning:** Requires higher order thinking on a multi-stepped task over an extended period of time.

Examples of Questions Using the Depth of Knowledge Criteria “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”

RECALL OF INFORMATION

Question: How did Goldilocks get her name?

Answer: Goldilocks got her name from the color of her hair which is yellow.

[Note: The information is “right there” in the text, but the reader needs to recognize the relevant content.]

BASIC REASONING

Question: What is porridge?

Answer: Porridge is a breakfast food that is heated.

[Note: The response is based on making an inference using context clues.]

COMPLEX REASONING

Question: How would the story be different if told from another point of view? What information from the story supports your answer?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The response requires the reader to critically analyze the information presented in the text to draw a conclusion.]

EXTENDED REASONING

Question: Does the Goldilocks tale appear in any other culture? How is each tale a reflection of its culture?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The answer would require research over an extended period of time.]

DCAS Reading – Cognitive Level Goals

Grade	Recall of Information	Basic Reasoning	Complex Reasoning
6	20%	50%	30%

While extended reasoning activities and projects are excellent for classroom instruction, they are not included on DCAS.

Sample Questions Reflecting the Common Core State Standards for Reading

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 6
<p>6RL1 – Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was Jonathan able to finish the race first? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer? • What is so special about Mario? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer? • How did moving to New York change Juan’s career? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer? • Why did Tiesha try out for the play? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer? • Why did Tyrone get an “A” on his test? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer? • How is John different from Paul? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer?
<p>6RL2 – Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the theme of _____ (text title)? What details in the story/poem/drama help the reader determine this theme? • How does the author of _____ (text title) help the reader understand the theme of the story? What details from the story support your answer? • How does the author use the way Tyrone responds to his situation to develop the theme of the story? • Summarize the story/drama/poem without including personal opinions or judgments.
<p>6RL3 – Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves towards a resolution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main events in the story/drama? How does each of these main events contribute to the development of the plot? • How did Karen and Mary respond to the crisis the family faced? How did their response contribute to its resolution? What specific details from the story/drama support your answer? • How does the main character change throughout the story/drama? What specific details from the story/drama support your answer?

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 6

6RL4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

- What is the meaning of _____ in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- What is meant by the phrase, “As solid as the ground we stand on,” in paragraph 3?
- What is meant by the phrase, “You are the sun in my sky,” in paragraph 1?
- What is the effect of using the word _____ in paragraph 4?
- What is the tone of the story? What word choices from the story support your answer?
- How does the use of the phrase “barged in” rather than “entered the room” change the tone of the scene the author is creating?
- How does the use of the word “scrawny” rather than “skinny” impact the image the author is creating of the character?
- What does the author’s word choice reveal about his/her attitude towards his topic? Use examples from the text to support your answer.

6RL5 – Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

- How does chapter 4 contribute to the rising action of the novel? Use information from the novel to support your analysis.
- How does the author use scene 2 to begin to develop the theme of the play? Use information from the scene to support your analysis.
- How does the description in the first stanza establish the setting of the poem? Use information from the poem to support your analysis.
- Analyze how chapter 3 contributes to the development of the theme/setting/plot of the book. Use information from the text to support your analysis.
- Analyze how scene 1 contributes to the overall structure of the drama. Use information from the text to support your analysis.

6RL6 – Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

- Explain how Gary Paulsen develops the point of view of the narrator in _____ (text title). Use examples from the story in your explanation.
- What is the most likely reason why the author decided to tell the story from Mike’s point of view? Is it effective? Why or why not? Use examples from the story in your explanation.
- How does telling the story from Tonya’s point of view influence the story? Use examples from the story in your answer.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 6

6RL7 – Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

- How is listening to an audiotope of “The Raven” by Edgar Allen Poe alike and different from reading the poem? Use specific examples from both versions in your answer.
- How is watching the filmed version of *Holes* alike and different from reading the book? Use specific examples from both versions in your answer.
- How is watching a performance of ____ (title of a play) alike and different from reading the play? Use specific examples in your explanation.
- Which did you prefer, listening to the audiotope version of “The Raven” or reading the poem? Why?
- Which did you prefer, watching the filmed version of *Holes* or reading the book? Why?

6RL8 – Not applicable

6RL9 – Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

- How are ____ (text title) and ____ (text title) alike and different in their approach to the theme of friendship and loyalty? Which text is more effective in relaying this theme? Why? Use examples from both texts to support your answer. (Texts should be two texts from different genres or forms—a story and a poem; historical novel and fantasy story.)
- How are ____ (text title) and ____ (text title) alike and different in their approach to the topic of competition? Which text is more interesting? Why? Use examples from both texts to support your answer. (Texts should be two texts from different genres or forms—a story and a poem; historical novel and fantasy story.)

6RL10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 6

6RI1 – Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- Based on the information in ____ (text title), which car is best for a large family? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer?
- Why are spiders more beneficial than harmful? Give specific examples from the article to support your answer.
- Which step is most important in ____? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer?
- Why is it important that birds fly south for the winter? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer?
- As a result of their work, what will most likely happen to the snow geese population? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer?
- How are insects and mammals alike and different? Give specific examples from the article to support your answer.

6RI2 – Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

- What is the central idea of ____ (text title)? How does the author convey that central idea? Use examples from the text in your answer.
- Summarize the information in the article without including personal opinions or judgments.

6RI3– Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

- How does the author help the reader understand what kind of person Harriet Tubman was? Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- How does the author help the reader understand the role trade played in the development of the United States? Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- Analyze how the author helps the reader understand how the idea of independence in America impacted the nations of Europe. Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- How does the author introduce, illustrate, and elaborate his/her portrait of Rosa Parks? Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- Analyze how the author introduces, illustrates, and elaborates his/her depiction of the Boston Tea Party so readers can understand the reasons behind it. Use examples from the article in your analysis.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 6

6RI4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

- What does the word _____ mean in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- Which definition of _____ is used in paragraph 6?
- What does the author's word choice reveal about his/her attitude towards the topic? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
- What does the phrase _____ (figurative language) mean in paragraph 3? How does the use of that phrase enhance the reader's understanding of the text?
- What is the connotation of _____ as it is used in the text? How does the use of that word enhance the reader's understanding of the text? Use examples from the text to support your answer.

6RI5 – Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

- How does the cause/effect structure of the third chapter contribute to the development of the author's central idea? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does the description in the fourth paragraph contribute to the development of the author's key ideas? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does the use of chronological order in the first section help the reader understand the development of the author's ideas? Use examples from the text in your analysis.

6RI6 – Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

- What is the author's viewpoint on evolution? How does the author convey his/her viewpoint in the text? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
- What is the author's purpose in this text? How do you know? Is he/she successful in achieving it? Why or why not? Use examples from the text to support your answer.

6RI7 – Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

- Using the information in the text and the diagram, explain how a person breathes.
- Using the information in the article and the graph, explain the impact of the weather on crop production.
- Using the information in the text and the time line, explain the development of transportation in the United States.
- Using digital resources, collect information about life in the Sudan. Then, read a blog posting from a Peace Corps volunteer in that country. Share the understanding you have gained from your research about that country.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 6

6RI8 – Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

- How does the author develop his argument about climate change? Is the argument effective? Why or why not? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
- Which of the author's claims about climate change are **not** supported by reasons and/or evidence? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
- Which of the author's claims about global warming are supported by reasons and/or evidence? Use examples from the text to support your answer.

6RI9 – Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

- How are the events depicted in _____ (a memoir) and _____ (a biography about the same person) alike and different? Use examples from the texts in your comparison.
- Explain why the events depicted in _____ (a memoir) and _____ (a biography about the same person) are alike and different. Use examples from the texts in your comparison.
- Which depiction of events do you think is more reliable, the one in _____ (a memoir) or _____ (a biography about the same person)? Why? Use examples from the texts in your comparison.

6RI10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.



Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS

Grade 7

Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS – Grade 7

Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to provide teachers with **sample** questions that are similar in **content** to those asked on the reading portion of DCAS. While DCAS is primarily a multiple choice test, rich discussions and writing tasks about what students read should be the focus of classroom instruction. The Common Core State Standards in reading provide an excellent framework from which to craft probing questions to encourage students to think deeply and critically about what they read. Students who are engaged, critical readers and thinkers will be able to transfer those skills and be successful no matter the question format.

For additional information on the Common Core State Standards see David Coleman and Susan Pimentel's "Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards" at http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/staff/ci/content_areas/files/ela/PublishersCriteriaforLiteracy_312.pdf.

DCAS Content and Structure

Text Types

- **Literary Text:** Reading to explore others' experiences; reading for enjoyment
 - Stories
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, and graphic novels
 - Dramas
 - ♦ Includes one-act and multi-act plays
 - Poetry
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of narrative poems, lyrical poems, free verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, and epics
- **Informational Text:** Reading to be informed
 - Literary Nonfiction
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of exposition, argument, and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism, and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience
 - Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts

Grade	Text Type (approximate distribution)	
	Literary	Informational
7	45%	55%

Students should be exposed to a variety of texts that elicit close reading. Word counts will vary. The Lexile ranges presented in the Common Core State Standards should be used to guide the selection of texts. These ranges will be used to guide the selection of passages for the reading portion of DCAS. See Appendix A in the Common Core State Standards for further information regarding text complexity.

GRADES	LEXILE RANGE (approximate)
6-8	995-1155

DCAS Item Types

- **Multiple Choice:**
 - Multiple choice items require students to show what they know and are able to do by selecting the best response from the four choices provided.
 - Multiple choice items are scored as one point each.
- **Grid/Innovative Items:**
 - There are two separate methods used when answering grid or innovative items. Students may be required to either “drag and drop” their answers into an answer box, or they may be required to select an answer and an option that supports their response.
 - Grid or innovative items are usually scored on a 0–1–2 scale, using an item-specific rubric.

Cognitive Levels – Depth of Knowledge (based on Norm Webb’s criteria)

- **Recall of Information:** Requires students to recall and recite facts from a text.
- **Basic Reasoning:** Requires mental processing beyond recalling information—summarizing, interpreting, classifying, predicting, comparing.
- **Complex Reasoning:** Requires students to show a deep understanding of the text—explaining, generalizing, synthesizing, connecting, analyzing.
- **Extended Reasoning:** Requires higher order thinking on a multi-stepped task over an extended period of time.

Examples of Questions Using the Depth of Knowledge Criteria “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”

RECALL OF INFORMATION

Question: How did Goldilocks get her name?

Answer: Goldilocks got her name from the color of her hair which is yellow.

[Note: The information is “right there” in the text, but the reader needs to recognize the relevant content.]

BASIC REASONING

Question: What is porridge?

Answer: Porridge is a breakfast food that is heated.

[Note: The response is based on making an inference using context clues.]

COMPLEX REASONING

Question: How would the story be different if told from another point of view? What information from the story supports your answer?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The response requires the reader to critically analyze the information presented in the text to draw a conclusion.]

EXTENDED REASONING

Question: Does the Goldilocks tale appear in any other culture? How is each tale a reflection of its culture?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The answer would require research over an extended period of time.]

DCAS Reading – Cognitive Level Goals

Grade	Recall of Information	Basic Reasoning	Complex Reasoning
7	20%	50%	30%

While extended reasoning activities and projects are excellent for classroom instruction, they are not included on DCAS.

Sample Questions Reflecting the Common Core State Standards for Reading

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 7
<p>7RL1 – Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was Jonathan able to finish the race first? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer? • What is so special about Mario? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer? • How did moving to New York change Juan’s career? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer? • Why did Tiesha try out for the play? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer? • Why did Tyrone get an “A” on his test? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer? • How is John different from Paul? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer?
<p>7RL2 – Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the theme of _____ (text title)? How does the author develop this theme over the course of the text? Use examples from the text in your answer. • What is the central idea of _____ (text title)? How does the author develop this idea over the course of the text? Use examples from the text in your answer. • Summarize the story/drama/poem objectively.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 7

7RL3 – Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

- How does the setting shape the main character in this story? Use specific examples from the story in your analysis.
- How might the main character be different if the setting was in a rural area rather than a suburban one? Use information from the story in your analysis.
- How does the setting influence the plot in this story/drama? Use specific examples from the story/drama in your analysis.
- How might the plot of the story be different if it was set in a mountainous region rather than a desert? Use information from the story in your analysis.
- How does the setting influence the main character in this drama? Use specific examples from the drama in your analysis.
- What is the impact of the main character's personality on the plot? Use specific examples from the story/drama in your analysis.
- Analyze how the setting shapes the main character in this story/drama. Use specific examples from the story/drama in your analysis.
- Analyze how the setting shapes the plot in this story/drama. Use specific examples from the story/drama in your analysis.

7RL4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

- What is the meaning of _____ in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- What is meant by the phrase, "As solid as the ground we stand on," in paragraph 3?
- What is meant by the phrase, "You are the sun in my sky," in paragraph 6?
- What is the effect of using the word _____ in paragraph 4?
- What is the impact of the repetition of the word _____ in the third stanza?
- How does the use of the word "scrawny" rather than "skinny" impact the image the author is creating of the main character?
- What is the *most likely* reason the author used the rhyme scheme he/she does?
- What is the effect of the alliteration in the first paragraph?
- How does the use of the phrase "barged in" rather than "entered the room" change the tone of the scene the author is creating?

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 7

7RL5 – Analyze how a drama’s or poem’s form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

- What is the most likely reason the poet decided to express the ideas in _____ (title of a sonnet) in the form of a sonnet? Use information from the sonnet in your analysis.
- What is the most likely reason the playwright decided to include a soliloquy in the first scene? Use information from the drama in your analysis.
- How does the structure of this drama help the playwright convey meaning? Use examples from the drama in your analysis.
- How does the structure of this poem help the poet convey meaning? Use examples from the poem in your analysis.

7RL6 – Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

- What is the impact of alternating narrators in each chapter? Use examples from the novel in your analysis.
- Was alternating narrators in each chapter effective? Why or why not? Use examples from the novel in your analysis.
- What is the most likely reason the author decided to have different narrators in the story? Use examples from the story in your analysis.

7RL7 – Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).

- How is the audiotope of _____ (title) alike and different from the written version? How does the sound quality impact the audiotope version? Use specific examples in your answer.
- How is the filmed version of _____ (title) alike and different from the book? How do the camera angles the director uses impact the filmed version? Use specific examples in your answer.
- How is the performance of _____ (title) alike and different from the written version of the drama? How does the lighting impact the performance? Use specific examples in your analysis.

7RL8 – Not applicable

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 7

7RL9 – Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.

- How are _____ (historical fiction title) and _____ (a historical account of the same time period) alike and different in their portrayal of the 1920s? Use examples from both versions in your comparison.
- How are _____ (historical fiction title) and _____ (a historical account of the same time period) alike and different in their portrayal of colonial America? Use examples from both versions in your comparison.
- How are _____ (historical fiction title) and _____ (a historical account of the same time period) alike and different in their portrayal of Phyllis Wheatly? Use examples from both versions in your comparison.
- After reading fictional and historical accounts of the 1800s, explain how the author of the fictional account uses or alters history. Use examples from both versions in your explanation.

7RL10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 7

7RI1 – Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- Based on the information in _____, which car is best for a large family? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer?
- Why are spiders more beneficial than harmful? Give specific examples from the article that support your answer.
- Which step is most important in _____? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer?
- Why is it important that birds fly south for the winter? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer?
- As a result of their work, what will most likely happen to the snow geese population? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that supports your answer?
- How are insects and mammals alike and different? Give specific examples from the article that support your answer.

7RI2 – Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

- What are the central ideas of _____ (title of a text)? How does the author develop these central ideas over the course of the text?
- Summarize, objectively, the information in the article.

7RI3 – Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

- In what way(s) was Thomas Jefferson a product of his times? Use evidence from the article to support your analysis.
- In what way(s) did Dr. Martin Luther King influence his times? Use evidence from the articles to support your analysis.
- What role did the Boston Tea Party play toward moving the colonies to the Revolutionary War? Use evidence from the articles to support your analysis.
- What influence did Mahatma Gandhi have on the Civil Rights Movement in the United States? Use evidence from the articles to support your analysis.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 7

7RI4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

- What does the word _____ mean in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- Which definition of _____ is used in paragraph 6?
- What is the impact of the word _____ in paragraph 5?
- What is the most likely reason the author used the word _____ in paragraph 3?
- What is the tone of the article? How does the author create that tone? Use examples from the article in your answer.
- What does the author's use of the word _____ reveal about his/her attitude toward the topic? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
- What does the phrase _____ (figurative language) mean in paragraph 4? How does the use of that phrase enhance the reader's understanding of the text? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
- What is the connotation of _____ as it is used in the text? How does the use of that word enhance the reader's understanding of the text? Use examples from the text to support your answer.

7RI5 – Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.

- How does the cause/effect structure contribute to the development of the author's central idea? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- What is the most likely reason the author decided to organize the article the way he did? Use information from the text in your analysis.
- Is the structure of the paragraph effective? Why or why not? Use examples from the article to support your analysis.
- Analyze how the major sections of the text contribute to the whole and to the development of ideas. Use examples from the article in your analysis.

7RI6 – Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.

- What is the author's viewpoint on _____? How does the author distinguish his/her position from that of others? Use examples from the text to support your analysis.
- What is the author's purpose in this text? How is the author's purpose different from that of _____, who also wrote on this topic? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- What is the author's purpose in this text? Is he/she successful in achieving it? Why or why not? Use examples from the text to support your analysis.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 7

7RI7 – Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium’s portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

- Compare and contrast the written text of Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech and a video version. How does Dr. King’s delivery of the speech affect the impact of the words? Use examples from the written text and audio version in your analysis.
- After reading the speech and listening to an audio version, how does John Kennedy’s delivery affect the impact of his words? Use examples from the written text and audio version in your analysis.

7RI8 – Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.

- How does the author develop his/her argument in _____ (text title)? Is the reasoning sound? Is the supporting evidence sufficient and relevant? Why or why not? Use examples from the text in your answer.
- Is the argument the author presents effective? Using examples from the text, explain why or why not.
- Is the reasoning behind the author’s specific claims sound? Does the author provide relevant and sufficient evidence to support the claim? Use examples from the text to support your answer.

7RI9 – Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.

- After reading two or more articles on climate change, what is different about what each author chose to include? How is each author’s article a reflection of his/her beliefs on the topic? Use examples from the articles to support your analysis.
- After reading two or more articles on the same topic, how did each author emphasize different evidence to shape his/her position? Use examples from the articles to support your analysis.
- After reading two or more articles on the same topic, how did each author advance different interpretations of facts to promote his/her position? Use examples from the articles to support your analysis.

7RI10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

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- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.



Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS

Grade 8

Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS – Grade 8

Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to provide teachers with **sample** questions that are similar in **content** to those asked on the reading portion of DCAS. While DCAS is primarily a multiple choice test, rich discussions and writing tasks about what students read should be the focus of classroom instruction. The Common Core State Standards in reading provide an excellent framework from which to craft probing questions to encourage students to think deeply and critically about what they read. Students who are engaged, critical readers and thinkers will be able to transfer those skills and be successful no matter the question format.

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DCAS Content and Structure

Text Types

- **Literary Text:** Reading to explore others' experiences; reading for enjoyment
 - Stories
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, and graphic novels
 - Dramas
 - ♦ Includes one-act and multi-act plays
 - Poetry
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of narrative poems, lyrical poems, free verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, and epics
- **Informational Text:** Reading to be informed
 - Literary Nonfiction
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of exposition, argument, and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism, and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience
 - Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts

Grade	Text Type (approximate distribution)	
	Literary	Informational
8	45%	55%

Students should be exposed to a variety of texts that elicit close reading. Word counts will vary. The Lexile ranges presented in the Common Core State Standards should be used to guide the selection of texts. These ranges will be used to guide the selection of passages for the reading portion of DCAS. See Appendix A in the Common Core State Standards for further information regarding text complexity.

GRADES	LEXILE RANGE (approximate)
6-8	995-1155

DCAS Item Types

- **Multiple Choice:**
 - Multiple choice items require students to show what they know and are able to do by selecting the best response from the four choices provided.
 - Multiple choice items are scored as one point each.
- **Grid/Innovative Items:**
 - There are two separate methods used when answering grid or innovative items. Students may be required to either “drag and drop” their answers into an answer box, or they may be required to select an answer and an option that supports their response.
 - Grid or innovative items are usually scored on a 0–1–2 scale, using an item-specific rubric.

Cognitive Levels – Depth of Knowledge (based on Norm Webb’s criteria)

- **Recall of Information:** Requires students to recall and recite facts from a text.
- **Basic Reasoning:** Requires mental processing beyond recalling information—summarizing, interpreting, classifying, predicting, comparing.
- **Complex Reasoning:** Requires students to show a deep understanding of the text—explaining, generalizing, synthesizing, connecting, analyzing.
- **Extended Reasoning:** Requires higher order thinking on a multi-stepped task over an extended period of time.

Examples of Questions Using the Depth of Knowledge Criteria “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”

RECALL OF INFORMATION

Question: How did Goldilocks get her name?

Answer: Goldilocks got her name from the color of her hair which is yellow.

[Note: The information is “right there” in the text, but the reader needs to recognize the relevant content.]

BASIC REASONING

Question: What is porridge?

Answer: Porridge is a breakfast food that is heated.

[Note: The response is based on making an inference using context clues.]

COMPLEX REASONING

Question: How would the story be different if told from another point of view? What information from the story supports your answer?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The response requires the reader to critically analyze the information presented in the text to draw a conclusion.]

EXTENDED REASONING

Question: Does the Goldilocks tale appear in any other culture? How is each tale a reflection of its culture?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The answer would require research over an extended period of time.]

DCAS Reading – Cognitive Level Goals

Grade	Recall of Information	Basic Reasoning	Complex Reasoning
8	20%	50%	30%

While extended reasoning activities and projects are excellent for classroom instruction, they are not included on DCAS.

Sample Questions Reflecting the Common Core State Standards for Reading

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 8
<p>8RL1 – Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was Jonathan able to finish the race first? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that most strongly supports your answer? • What is so special about Mario? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that most strongly supports your answer? • How did moving to New York change Juan’s career? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that most strongly supports your answer? • Why did Tiesha try out for the play? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that most strongly supports your answer? • How is John different from Paul? What is the textual evidence that most strongly supports your answer?
<p>8RL2 – Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the theme of _____ (text title)? How does the author develop this theme over the course of the text? Use examples from the text in your answer. • What is the central idea of _____ (text title)? How does the author develop this idea over the course of the text? Use examples from the text in your answer. • How does the author use the main character to develop the theme of the drama? Use information from the drama to support your analysis. • How does the author use the plot to develop the theme of the story? Use information from the story to support your analysis. • How does the author use the setting to develop the theme of the poem? Use information from the poem to support your analysis. • Summarize the story/drama/poem objectively.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 8

8RL3 – Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

- How did Josh's response to his father provoke a decision in this story? Use evidence from the story in your analysis.
- What did the incident by the lake reveal about the main character? Use evidence from the story in your analysis.
- How did Tyrone's actions at the carnival propel the action in the drama? Use evidence from the drama in your analysis.
- What is the most likely reason the author had Matt walk home alone rather than join his friends? Use information from the story in your analysis.

8RL4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

- What is the meaning of _____ in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- What is meant by the phrase, "As solid as the ground we stand on," in paragraph 3?
- What is meant by the phrase, "You are the sun in my sky," in paragraph 6?
- How does the use of the word "scrawny" rather than "skinny" impact the image the author is creating of the main character?
- How does the use of the phrase "barged in" rather than "entered the room" change the tone of the scene the author is creating?
- What is the tone of the story? Which words and phrases does the author use to create that tone?
- What is the impact of using the word _____ in the second scene of the play? How does that word contribute to the meaning of the story?
- What is the impact of comparing the main character to Midas?
- How does the analogy provided by the author help the reader understand the theme of the poem?

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 8

8RL5 – Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

- After reading two or more texts, compare and contrast their structure. What is the most likely reason each author selected the text structure he/she did? Use examples from the texts in your analysis.
- After reading two or more texts, compare and contrast their structure. Which structure is more effective? Why? Use examples from the texts in your analysis.
- After reading two or more texts, how does the structure of each contribute to its style? Use examples from the texts in your analysis.
- After reading two or more texts, how does the structure of each contribute to its meaning? Use examples from the texts in your analysis.

8RL6 – Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

- How does telling the story from Monique’s point of view create suspense in the story? Use examples from the story in your analysis.
- How does telling the story from Theresa’s point of view create humorous situations? Use examples from the play in your analysis.
- How would the story be different if it were told from Kim’s point of view? What information from the story supports your analysis?
- What is the most likely reason the author told the story from Mark’s point of view? What information from the story supports your analysis?
- How does the author use dramatic irony to keep the reader engaged? Use examples from the story to support your analysis.

8RL7 – Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

- Compare and contrast _____ (text title) with the filmed version of the story. Use specific examples in your comparison.
- Is the filmed version of _____ (text title) effective? Why or why not? Use specific examples in your analysis.
- To what extent does _____ (filmed production) stay faithful to the text/script? Were the choices the director made effective? Why or why not? Use examples in your analysis.
- To what extent does _____ (live production) depart from the text/script? Were the choices the actors made effective? Why or why not? Use examples in you analysis.

8RL8 – Not applicable

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 8

8RL9 – Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

- How does _____ (a modern work of fiction) draw upon _____ (a myth or traditional story)? What does the author do to render the material new? Use examples from both works to support your analysis.
- How does _____ (a modern work of fiction) draw upon the themes expressed in _____ (a myth or traditional story)? What does the author do to render the material new? Use examples from both works to support your analysis.
- How does _____ (a modern work of fiction) draw upon the pattern of events presented in _____ (a myth or traditional story)? What does the author do to render the material new? Use examples from both works to support your analysis.
- How does _____ (a modern work of fiction) draw upon the character types presented in _____ (a myth or traditional story)? What does the author do to render the material new? Use examples from both to support your analysis.

8RL10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 8

8RI1 – Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- Based on the information in _____, which car is best for a large family? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that most strongly supports your answer?
- Why are spiders more beneficial than harmful? How do you know? Give the specific example from the article that most strongly supports your answer.
- Which step is most important in _____? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that most strongly supports your answer?
- Why is it important that birds fly south for the winter? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that most strongly supports your answer?
- As a result of their work, what will most likely happen to the snow geese population? How do you know? What is the textual evidence that most strongly supports your answer?
- How are insects and mammals alike and different? Give the specific example from the article that most strongly supports your answer.

8RI2 – Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

- What is the central idea of _____ (title of a text)? How does the central idea develop over the course of the text?
- What is the central idea of _____ (title of text)? How does the author use supporting ideas to develop the central idea over the course of the text?
- Summarize, objectively, the information in the article.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 8

8RI3 – Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

- How does the author help the reader understand the connections and distinctions between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson? Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- How does the author help the reader understand the connections and distinctions between mitosis and meiosis? Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- How does the author help the reader understand the connections and distinctions between the Boston Massacre and Boston Tea Party? Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- Was the analogy the author provided effective in helping the reader understand the relationship between the two ideas presented in the text? Why or why not? Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- Was the comparison the author provided effective in helping the reader understand the relationship between Jefferson and Adams? Why or why not? Use examples from the article in your analysis.

8RI4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

- What does the word _____ mean in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- Which definition of _____ is used in paragraph 6?
- What is the impact of the word _____ in paragraph 5?
- What is the most likely reason the author used the word _____ in paragraph 3?
- What is the tone of the article? What words and phrases does the author use to create that tone?
- What does the author's use of the word _____ reveal about his/her attitude toward the topic? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
- How does the author's allusion to _____ help the reader grasp the concept of _____?
- How does the analogy the author provides help the reader understand _____?
- What does the phrase _____ (figurative language) mean? How does the use of that phrase enhance the reader's understanding of the text? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
- What is the connotation of _____ as it is used in the text? How does the use of that word enhance the reader's understanding of the text? Use examples from the text to support your answer.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 8

8RI5 – Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.

- How does the compare/contrast structure of paragraph 3 contribute to the development and refinement of _____ (a key concept)? Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- How does the following sentence from paragraph 4 contribute to the development and refinement of _____ (a key concept)? (Provide appropriate sentence). Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- What is the most likely reason the author decided to organize the paragraph the way he/she did? Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- Is the structure of the paragraph effective? Why or why not? Use examples from the article to support your analysis.

8RI6 – Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

- What is the author’s viewpoint on climate change? How does the author acknowledge and respond to conflicting evidence and viewpoints? Use examples from the text to support your analysis.
- What is the author’s viewpoint on capital punishment? Is the author effective in responding to conflicting evidence or viewpoints? Why or why not? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- What is the author’s purpose? Analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints. Use examples from the text in your analysis.

8RI7 – Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.

- After reading Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, what would be the advantages and disadvantages of presenting this material in a different medium (an audio tape and/or video of Dr. King delivering the speech)? Use examples from both versions in your evaluation.
- After reviewing print, digital, video, and/or multimedia presentations on the same topic, what are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Which is the most effective in conveying an understanding of the topic? Why? Use examples from the different mediums to support your evaluation.

8RI8 – Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

- Is the argument the author presents effective? Using examples from the text, explain why or why not.
- Is the reasoning behind the author’s specific claims sound and the evidence relevant and sufficient to support the claim? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
- What irrelevant evidence has the author introduced? Explain why this evidence is irrelevant. Use information from the text in your answer.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 8

8RI9 – Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

- After reading and analyzing two or more articles with conflicting information on the same topic, identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation. Use examples from the articles to support your analysis.
- After reading and analyzing two or more articles with conflicting information on the same topic, identify where the texts disagree and determine whether it is on matters of fact or interpretation. Use examples from the articles to support your analysis.
- After reading and analyzing two or more articles with conflicting information on the same topic, which one presents the stronger argument? Use examples from the articles to support your analysis.

8RI10 – By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.



Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS

Grade 9

Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS – Grade 9

Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to provide teachers with **sample** questions that are similar in **content** to those asked on the reading portion of DCAS. While DCAS is primarily a multiple choice test, rich discussions and writing tasks about what students read should be the focus of classroom instruction. The Common Core State Standards in reading provide an excellent framework from which to craft probing questions to encourage students to think deeply and critically about what they read. Students who are engaged, critical readers and thinkers will be able to transfer those skills and be successful no matter the question format.

For additional information on the Common Core State Standards see David Coleman and Susan Pimentel's "Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards" at http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/staff/ci/content_areas/files/ela/PublishersCriteriaforLiteracy_312.pdf.

DCAS Content and Structure

Text Types

- **Literary Text:** Reading to explore others' experiences; reading for enjoyment
 - Stories
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, and graphic novels
 - Dramas
 - ♦ Includes one-act and multi-act plays
 - Poetry
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of narrative poems, lyrical poems, free verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, and epics
- **Informational Text:** Reading to be informed
 - Literary Nonfiction
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of exposition, argument, and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism, and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience
 - Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts

Grade	Text Type (approximate distribution)	
	Literary	Informational
9	30%	70%

Students should be exposed to a variety of texts that elicit close reading. Word counts will vary. The Lexile ranges presented in the Common Core State Standards should be used to guide the selection of texts. These ranges will be used to guide the selection of passages for the reading portion of DCAS. See Appendix A in the Common Core State Standards for further information regarding text complexity.

GRADES	LEXILE RANGE (approximate)
9-10	1080-1305

DCAS Item Types

- **Multiple Choice:**
 - Multiple choice items require students to show what they know and are able to do by selecting the best response from the four choices provided.
 - Multiple choice items are scored as one point each.
- **Grid/Innovative Items:**
 - There are two separate methods used when answering grid or innovative items. Students may be required to either “drag and drop” their answers into an answer box, or they may be required to select an answer and an option that supports their response.
 - Grid or innovative items are usually scored on a 0–1–2 scale, using an item-specific rubric.

Cognitive Levels – Depth of Knowledge (based on Norm Webb’s criteria)

- **Recall of Information:** Requires students to recall and recite facts from a text.
- **Basic Reasoning:** Requires mental processing beyond recalling information—summarizing, interpreting, classifying, predicting, comparing.
- **Complex Reasoning:** Requires students to show a deep understanding of the text—explaining, generalizing, synthesizing, connecting, analyzing.
- **Extended Reasoning:** Requires higher order thinking on a multi-stepped task over an extended period of time.

Examples of Questions Using the Depth of Knowledge Criteria “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”

RECALL OF INFORMATION

Question: How did Goldilocks get her name?

Answer: Goldilocks got her name from the color of her hair which is yellow.

[Note: The information is “right there” in the text, but the reader needs to recognize the relevant content.]

BASIC REASONING

Question: What is porridge?

Answer: Porridge is a breakfast food that is heated.

[Note: The response is based on making an inference using context clues.]

COMPLEX REASONING

Question: How would the story be different if told from another point of view? What information from the story supports your answer?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The response requires the reader to critically analyze the information presented in the text to draw a conclusion.]

EXTENDED REASONING

Question: Does the Goldilocks tale appear in any other culture? How is each tale a reflection of its culture?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The answer would require research over an extended period of time.]

DCAS Reading – Cognitive Level Goals

Grade	Recall of Information	Basic Reasoning	Complex Reasoning
9	20%	45%	35%

While extended reasoning activities and projects are excellent for classroom instruction, they are not included on DCAS.

Sample Questions Reflecting the Common Core State Standards for Reading

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 9
<p>9RL1 – Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was Jonathan able to win the competition? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer? • What is so special about Mario's accomplishments? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer? • How did moving to New York impact Juan's career? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer? • Why is Tiesha confused? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer? • How is John different from Paul? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer?
<p>9RL2 – Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the theme of _____ (text title)? How does the author develop this theme over the course of the text? Use examples from the text to support your analysis. • What is the central idea of _____ (text title)? How does the author develop this idea over the course of the text? Use examples from the text to support your analysis. • How is the theme of the story/novel/drama/poem shaped and refined by specific details? Use examples from the text to support your analysis. • Summarize the story/drama/poem objectively.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 9

9RL3 – Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

- How does _____ (a character) develop over the course of the drama? Use examples from the drama in your analysis.
- How does the development of _____ (a character) over the course of the story advance the plot? Use examples from the story in your analysis.
- How does the author use the actions of _____ (a character) over the course of the story to develop the theme? Use examples from the story in your analysis.
- How does the author use Maria's interactions with the other characters in the novel to reveal her conflicting motivations? Use examples from the novel in your analysis.
- How does the author use Justin's interactions with the other characters in the novel to advance the plot? Use examples from the novel in your analysis.

9RL4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

- What is the meaning of _____ in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- What is meant by the phrase, "As solid as the ground we stand on," in paragraph 3?
- What is meant by the phrase, "You are the sun in my sky," in paragraph 6?
- How does the use of the word "scrawny" rather than "skinny" impact the image the author is creating of the main character?
- How does the use of the phrase "barged in" rather than "entered the room" change the tone of the scene the author is creating?
- What is the overall tone of the text? How does the author create that tone? Use specific examples to support your analysis.
- How does the author's word choice impact the story? Use specific examples from the text to support your analysis.
- How does the author's word choice contribute to the text's sense of time and place? Use specific examples from the text to support your analysis.
- What is the cumulative impact of the author's specific word choices on the story's tone? Use specific examples from the text to support your analysis.
- What is the cumulative impact of the author's specific word choices on the story's meaning? Use specific examples from the text to support your analysis.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 9

9RL5 – Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

- How does the text structure the author chose contribute to the story? Use examples from the story in your analysis.
- How does the order of events contribute to the drama? Use examples from the drama in your analysis.
- How does having parallel plots contribute to the drama? Use examples from the drama in your analysis.
- How does the manipulation of time contribute to the story? Use examples from the story in your analysis.
- How does the author create mystery/tension/surprise in the story/drama? Use examples from the story/drama in your analysis.

9RL6 – Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

- How is the author’s cultural experience reflected in _____ (a work of literature from outside the U.S.)? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How is the author’s point of view reflected in _____ (a work of literature from outside the U.S.)? Use examples from the text in your analysis.

9RL7 – Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*).

- How do Dorothea Lange’s photographs from the Great Depression compare and contrast to the image created in *The Grapes of Wrath*? Use specific examples in your analysis.
- After reading a text and examining a painting of a key scene from that text, which elements are emphasized or absent in each treatment? Use specific examples in your analysis.
- After reading a text and examining a painting in a key scene, what is the most likely reason(s) the author and the artist decided to emphasize or omit elements in each treatment? Use specific examples in your analysis.

9RL8 – Not applicable

9RL9 – Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

- What source material does ____ (an author) draw upon in ____ (text title)? Use examples from both texts to support your analysis.
- How does ____ (an author) draw on and transform source material in ____ (text title)? Use examples from both texts to support your analysis.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 9

9RL10 – By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9-10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 9

9RI1 – Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- Based on the information in _____, which car is best for a large family? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer?
- Why are spiders more beneficial than harmful? Give strong and thorough evidence from the article that supports your answer.
- Which step is most important in _____? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer?
- Why is it important that birds fly south for the winter? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer?
- As a result of their work, what will most likely happen to the snow geese population? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer?
- How are insects and mammals alike and different? Give strong and thorough evidence from the article that supports your answer.

9RI2 – Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

- What is the central idea of _____ (title of a text)? How is the central idea developed over the course of the text?
- What is the central idea of _____ (title of text)? How does the author use specific details to shape and refine the central idea over the course of the text?
- Summarize, objectively, the information in the article.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 9

9RI3 – Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

- How does the author develop his/her analysis of a concept in order to help the reader understand the material being presented? Use examples from the text in your explanation.
- How does the author help the reader understand the connections between ideas presented in a text? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- What is the most likely reason the author presents a series of ideas in the order he/she does? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does the author introduce, develop, and draw connections between ideas and events? Use examples from the text in your analysis.

9RI4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

- What does the word _____ mean in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- Which definition of _____ is used in paragraph 6?
- What is the impact of the word _____ in paragraph 5?
- What is the most likely reason the author used the word _____ in paragraph 3?
- What does the author's use of the word _____ reveal about his/her attitude toward the topic? Use examples from the text in your answer.
- What is the tone of the article? How does the author create this tone? Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- How is the language in the *New York Times* different from a legal brief? Use examples from the text in your answer.
- What does the phrase _____ (figurative language) mean? How does the use of that phrase enhance the reader's understanding of the text? Use examples from the text in your answer.
- What is the connotation of _____ as it is used in the text? How does the use of that word enhance the reader's understanding of the text? Use examples from the text in your answer.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 9

9RI5 – Analyze in detail how an author’s ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).

- How does the author develop and refine his ideas with particular sentences? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does the author develop and refine his claims in the third chapter of the text? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does the following sentence from paragraph 4 contribute to the development and refinement of the author’s claim? (Provide appropriate sentence). Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does paragraph 6 contribute to the development and refinement of the author’s ideas? Use examples from the text in your analysis.

9RI6 – Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

- What is the author’s viewpoint on climate change? How does the author use rhetoric to advance that viewpoint? Use examples from the text to support your analysis.
- What is the author’s viewpoint on capital punishment? Is the author effective in advancing that viewpoint? Why or why not? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- What is the author’s purpose? How does the author use rhetoric to advance that purpose? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- What is the author’s purpose? Is the author effective in advancing that purpose? Why or why not? Use examples from the text in your analysis.

9RI7 – Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person’s life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

- After reading and analyzing a text and reviewing and analyzing a multimedia account about Franklin Roosevelt, what details are emphasized or absent in each account? What are the most likely reasons why? Use specific examples in your analysis.
- After reading and analyzing texts about Van Gogh’s life, what additional information can be gained by viewing and analyzing his *Self-Portrait*? Use specific examples in your analysis.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 9

9RI8 – Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

- Is the argument the author presents effective? Using examples from the text, explain why or why not.
- Is the reasoning of the author's specific claims valid and the evidence relevant and sufficient to support the claim? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
- Has the author introduced any false statements or fallacious reasoning? Explain why the statements are false or have fallacious reasoning. Use information from the text to support your answer.

9RI9 – Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington's Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech, King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"), including how they address related themes and concepts.

- Analyze Washington's Farewell Address to explain why it is considered a seminal U.S. document of historical and literary significance. Use examples from the speech to support your analysis.
- Analyze how Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech and Dr. King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" address the same concepts and themes. Use examples from the speeches to support your analysis.

9RI10 – By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.



Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS

Grade 10

Linking the Common Core State Standards for Reading, Classroom Instruction, and DCAS – Grade 10

Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to provide teachers with **sample** questions that are similar in **content** to those asked on the reading portion of DCAS. While DCAS is primarily a multiple choice test, rich discussions and writing tasks about what students read should be the focus of classroom instruction. The Common Core State Standards in reading provide an excellent framework from which to craft probing questions to encourage students to think deeply and critically about what they read. Students who are engaged, critical readers and thinkers will be able to transfer those skills and be successful no matter the question format.

For additional information on the Common Core State Standards see David Coleman and Susan Pimentel's "Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards" at http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/staff/ci/content_areas/files/ela/PublishersCriteriaforLiteracy_312.pdf.

DCAS Content and Structure

Text Types

- **Literary Text:** Reading to explore others' experiences; reading for enjoyment
 - Stories
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, and graphic novels
 - Dramas
 - ♦ Includes one-act and multi-act plays
 - Poetry
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of narrative poems, lyrical poems, free verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, and epics
- **Informational Text:** Reading to be informed
 - Literary Nonfiction
 - ♦ Includes the subgenres of exposition, argument, and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism, and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience
 - Historical, Scientific, and Technical Texts

Grade	Text Type (approximate distribution)	
	Literary	Informational
10	30%	70%

Students should be exposed to a variety of texts that elicit close reading. Word counts will vary. The Lexile ranges presented in the Common Core State Standards should be used to guide the selection of texts. These ranges will be used to guide the selection of passages for the reading portion of DCAS. See Appendix A in the Common Core State Standards for further information regarding text complexity.

GRADES	LEXILE RANGE (approximate)
9-10	1080-1305

DCAS Item Types

- **Multiple Choice:**
 - Multiple choice items require students to show what they know and are able to do by selecting the best response from the four choices provided.
 - Multiple choice items are scored as one point each.
- **Grid/Innovative Items:**
 - There are two separate methods used when answering grid or innovative items. Students may be required to either “drag and drop” their answers into an answer box, or they may be required to select an answer and an option that supports their response.
 - Grid or innovative items are usually scored on a 0–1–2 scale, using an item-specific rubric.

Cognitive Levels – Depth of Knowledge (based on Norm Webb’s criteria)

- **Recall of Information:** Requires students to recall and recite facts from a text.
- **Basic Reasoning:** Requires mental processing beyond recalling information—summarizing, interpreting, classifying, predicting, comparing.
- **Complex Reasoning:** Requires students to show a deep understanding of the text—explaining, generalizing, synthesizing, connecting, analyzing.
- **Extended Reasoning:** Requires higher order thinking on a multi-stepped task over an extended period of time.

Examples of Questions Using the Depth of Knowledge Criteria “Goldilocks and the Three Bears”

RECALL OF INFORMATION

Question: How did Goldilocks get her name?

Answer: Goldilocks got her name from the color of her hair which is yellow.

[Note: The information is “right there” in the text, but the reader needs to recognize the relevant content.]

BASIC REASONING

Question: What is porridge?

Answer: Porridge is a breakfast food that is heated.

[Note: The response is based on making an inference using context clues.]

COMPLEX REASONING

Question: How would the story be different if told from another point of view? What information from the story supports your answer?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The response requires the reader to critically analyze the information presented in the text to draw a conclusion.]

EXTENDED REASONING

Question: Does the Goldilocks tale appear in any other culture? How is each tale a reflection of its culture?

Answer: Answers will vary.

[Note: The answer would require research over an extended period of time.]

DCAS Reading – Cognitive Level Goals

Grade	Recall of Information	Basic Reasoning	Complex Reasoning
10	20%	45%	35%

While extended reasoning activities and projects are excellent for classroom instruction, they are not included on DCAS.

Sample Questions Reflecting the Common Core State Standards for Reading

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 10
<p>10RL1 – Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was Jonathan able to win the competition? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer? • What is so special about Mario's accomplishments? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer? • How did moving to New York impact Juan's career? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer? • Why is Tiesha confused? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer? • How is John different from Paul? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer?
<p>10RL2 – Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the theme of _____ (text title)? How does the author develop this theme over the course of the text? Use examples from the text to support your analysis. • What is the central idea of _____ (text title)? How does the author develop this idea over the course of the text? Use examples from the text to support your analysis. • How is the theme of the story/novel/drama/poem shaped and refined by specific details? Use examples from the text to support your analysis. • Summarize the story/drama/poem objectively.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 10

10RL3 – Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

- How does _____ (a character) develop over the course of the drama? Use examples from the drama in your analysis.
- How does the development of _____ (a character) over the course of the story advance the plot? Use examples from the story in your analysis.
- How does the author use the actions of _____ (a character) over the course of the story to develop the theme? Use examples from the story in your analysis.
- How does the author use Maria's interactions with the other characters in the novel to reveal her conflicting motivations? Use examples from the novel in your analysis.
- How does the author use Justin's interactions with the other characters in the novel to advance the plot? Use examples from the novel in your analysis.

10RL4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

- What is the meaning of _____ in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- What is meant by the phrase, "As solid as the ground we stand on," in paragraph 3?
- What is meant by the phrase, "You are the sun in my sky," in paragraph 6?
- How does the use of the word "scrawny" rather than "skinny" impact the image the author is creating of the main character?
- How does the use of the phrase "barged in" rather than "entered the room" change the tone of the scene the author is creating?
- What is the overall tone of the text? How does the author create that tone? Use specific examples to support your analysis.
- How does the author's word choice impact the story? Use specific examples from the text to support your analysis.
- How does the author's word choice contribute to the text's sense of time and place? Use specific examples from the text to support your analysis.
- What is the cumulative impact of the author's specific word choices on the story's tone? Use specific examples from the text to support your analysis.
- What is the cumulative impact of the author's specific word choices on the story's meaning? Use specific examples from the text to support your analysis.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 10

10RL5 – Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

- How does the text structure the author chose contribute to the story? Use examples from the story in your analysis.
- How does the order of events contribute to the drama? Use examples from the drama in your analysis.
- How does having parallel plots contribute to the drama? Use examples from the drama in your analysis.
- How does the manipulation of time contribute to the story? Use examples from the story in your analysis.
- How does the author create mystery/tension/surprise in the story/drama? Use examples from the story/drama in your analysis.

10RL6 – Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

- How is the author’s cultural experience reflected in _____ (a work of literature from outside the U.S.)? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How is the author’s point of view reflected in _____ (a work of literature from outside the U.S.)? Use examples from the text in your analysis.

10RL7 – Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*).

- How do Dorothea Lange’s photographs from the Great Depression compare and contrast to the image created in *The Grapes of Wrath*? Use specific examples in your analysis.
- After reading a text and examining a painting of a key scene from that text, which elements are emphasized or absent in each treatment? Use specific examples in your analysis.
- After reading a text and examining a painting a key scene, what is the most likely reason(s) the author and the artist decided to emphasize or omit elements in each treatment? Use specific examples in your analysis.

10RL8 – Not applicable

10RL9 – Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

- What source material does ____ (an author) draw upon in ____ (text title)? Use examples from both texts to support your analysis.
- How does ____ (an author) draw on and transform source material in ____ (text title)? Use examples from both texts to support your analysis.

Reading Standards for Literature – Grade 10

10RL10 –By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 10

10RI1 – Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- Based on the information in _____, which car is best for a large family? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer?
- Why are spiders more beneficial than harmful? Give strong and thorough evidence from the article that supports your answer.
- Which step is most important in _____? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer?
- Why is it important that birds fly south for the winter? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer?
- As a result of their work, what will most likely happen to the snow geese population? How do you know? What is the strong and thorough textual evidence that supports your answer?
- How are insects and mammals alike and different? Give strong and thorough evidence from the article that supports your answer.

10RI2 – Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

- What is the central idea of _____ (title of a text)? How is the central idea developed over the course of the text?
- What is the central idea of _____ (title of text)? How does the author use specific details to shape and refine the central idea over the course of the text?
- Summarize, objectively, the information in the article.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 10

10RI3 – Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

- How does the author develop his/her analysis of a concept in order to help the reader understand the material being presented? Use examples from the text in your explanation.
- How does the author help the reader understand the connections between ideas presented in a text? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- What is the most likely reason the author presents a series of ideas in the order he/she does? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does the author introduce, develop, and draw connections between ideas and events? Use examples from the text in your analysis.

10RI4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

- What does the word _____ mean in paragraph 2?
- Which words help the reader understand the meaning of _____ in paragraph 5?
- Which definition of _____ is used in paragraph 6?
- What is the impact of the word _____ in paragraph 5?
- What is the most likely reason the author used the word _____ in paragraph 3?
- What does the author's use of the word _____ reveal about his/her attitude toward the topic? Use examples from the text in your answer.
- What is the tone of the article? How does the author create this tone? Use examples from the article in your analysis.
- How is the language in the *New York Times* different from a legal brief? Use examples from the text in your answer.
- What does the phrase _____ (figurative language) mean? How does the use of that phrase enhance the reader's understanding of the text? Use examples from the text in your answer.
- What is the connotation of _____ as it is used in the text? How does the use of that word enhance the reader's understanding of the text? Use examples from the text in your answer.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 10

10RI5 – Analyze in detail how an author’s ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter).

- How does the author develop and refine his ideas with particular sentences? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does the author develop and refine his claims in the third chapter of the text? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does the following sentence from paragraph 4 contribute to the development and refinement of the author’s claim? (Provide appropriate sentence). Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- How does paragraph 6 contribute to the development and refinement of the author’s ideas? Use examples from the text in your analysis.

10RI6 – Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

- What is the author’s viewpoint on climate change? How does the author use rhetoric to advance that viewpoint? Use examples from the text to support your analysis.
- What is the author’s viewpoint on capital punishment? Is the author effective in advancing that viewpoint? Why or why not? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- What is the author’s purpose? How does the author use rhetoric to advance that purpose? Use examples from the text in your analysis.
- What is the author’s purpose? Is the author effective in advancing that purpose? Why or why not? Use examples from the text in your analysis.

10RI7 – Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person’s life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

- After reading and analyzing a text and reviewing and analyzing a multimedia account about Franklin Roosevelt, what details are emphasized or absent in each account? What are the most likely reasons why? Use specific examples in your analysis.
- After reading and analyzing texts about Van Gogh’s life, what additional information can be gained by viewing and analyzing his *Self-Portrait*? Use specific examples in your analysis.

Reading Standards for Informational Text – Grade 10

10RI8 – Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

- Is the argument the author presents effective? Using examples from the text, explain why or why not.
- Is the reasoning of the author's specific claims valid and the evidence relevant and sufficient to support the claim? Use examples from the text to support your answer.
- Has the author introduced any false statements or fallacious reasoning? Explain why the statements are false or have fallacious reasoning. Use information from the text to support your answer.

10RI9 – Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington's Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech, King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"), including how they address related themes and concepts.

- Analyze Washington's Farewell Address to explain why it is considered a seminal U.S. document of historical and literary significance. Use examples from the speech to support your analysis.
- Analyze how Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech and Dr. King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" address the same concepts and themes. Use examples from the speeches to support your analysis.

10RI10 – By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

- Information regarding text complexity can be found in Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards.
- Text exemplars can be found in Appendix B of the Common Core State Standards.