

How to help **your child** succeed in school

Reading and Writing Performance Standards for students by the end of grade 2

Dear Parent/Guardian:

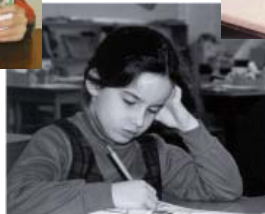
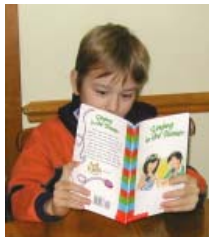
Like you, the public school system wants your child to develop strong reading and writing skills — his or her keys to future learning. When your child entered kindergarten, teachers began building on the literacy skills you had helped your child develop at home. Through working together, you and your child's teachers continue to help your child grow as a reader and writer.

This booklet describes how well your child should be able to read and write by the end of grade two. It explains two levels of performance – appropriate and strong. These performance levels are based on the learning outcomes for grade two English language arts and are used on the provincial school report card to record student achievement. Samples of reading texts and student writing, along with descriptions, are included to show the levels of performance expected by the end of grade two.

The final pages give ideas you may already be using or might like to try to help your child become a more confident reader and writer.



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Educational Programs & Services
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READING

Appropriate Performance

Fiction — Sample Reading Text

By the end of grade 2, students should be able to read and understand texts at the level of difficulty shown below.

The Hat Came Back

... We had good fun at the park.
Grandma's large, comfy old hat
shaded her from the sun.
Then it blew off.
"Catch it!" I said, but it was too late.
A dog grabbed it and ran away.
"Goodbye hat," Grandma said,
and she smiled.
Then people came running
from everywhere.
"I'll get it!" they cried. "Stop that dog!"
The dog ran back towards us,
and dropped the hat at Grandma's feet.
"Good dog," said Grandma.
But Grandma told me that she was
still going to get a new hat tomorrow. ...



Excerpt from the book "The Hat Came Back" written by Meredith Costain and illustrated by Marina McAllain; used with permission from Mimosa Publications, a member of the McGraw-Hill Group of Companies.

Fiction — Description of Performance Level

By the end of grade 2, students should be able to read and understand texts at the performance level described below.

READING

Appropriate Performance

Description of Appropriate Reading Performance

Students can read fictional texts with ...

- simple, straightforward language and some picture support
- basic and some long sentences, paragraphs and short chapters
- a clear beginning, middle and end

When reading, students ...

- recognize a number of words by sight
- decode using meaning, language structure and phonics
- reread when meaning is unclear
- read quite smoothly and with expression (when reading aloud)

Students are able to ...

- describe the characters, the main events, the central problem and how the problem is solved
- retell the main events of a story in order
- answer most literal questions (ones that ask students to find information clearly stated in the text, e.g., *Where were Grandma and the little boy when she lost her hat?*)
- answer most simple inferential questions (ones that ask students to interpret or draw conclusions) about characters and events (e.g., *Why does Grandma smile when the dog grabs her hat?*)
- make connections between what they read and their own experiences and knowledge

READING

Appropriate Performance

Non-Fiction — Sample Reading Text

By the end of grade 2, students should be able to read and understand texts at the level of difficulty shown below.

Where Jeans Come From

... Jeans are made of cotton. And cotton comes from a plant that grows in a field.

A machine plants cotton seeds in the ground. In about two weeks, the cotton plants come up.

The small plants grow green leaves. Then they grow buds.

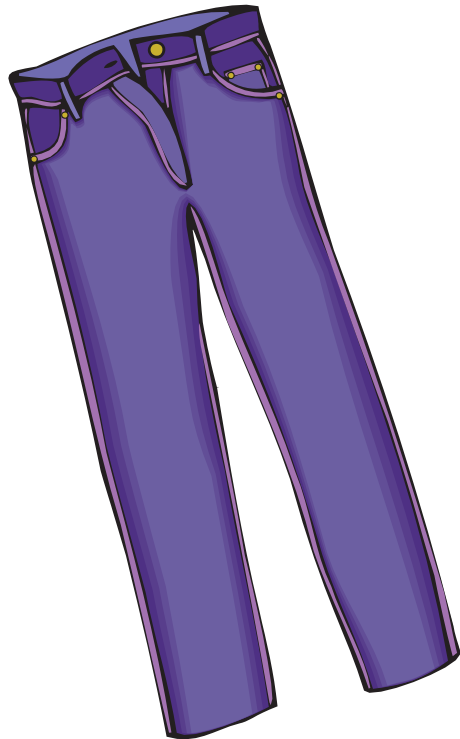
Soon the buds turn into flowers. When each flower falls off, a pod is left.

Cotton grows inside each pod. The pod is called a boll. This word can fool you. Say boll like bowl!

The cotton pops out of the boll. It is fluffy and white. The cotton looks like a little cloud.

Wow! The cotton field looks as if snow fell on it. But this isn't snow. It's cotton!

Now the cotton is ready to be picked. Do you know how this is done? ...



Non-Fiction — Description of Performance Level

By the end of grade 2, students should be able to read and understand texts at the performance level described below.

READING

Appropriate Performance

Description of Appropriate Reading Performance

Students can read non-fictional texts that...

- state ideas clearly using mostly simple sentences and short paragraphs
- use pictures and basic charts or diagrams to add information
- include some headings to help organize the information

When reading, students ...

- recognize a number of words by sight
- decode using meaning, language structure and phonics
- reread when the meaning is unclear
- may slow down to better understand the information in the text

Students are able to ...

- select and explain key facts
- answer most literal questions (ones that ask students to find information clearly stated in the text, e.g., *What is a boll?*)
- apply some information from the text to other situations (e.g., *What makes a cotton field look like snow?*)
- make connections between what they read and their own life experiences

READING

Strong Performance

Fiction — Sample Reading Text

By the end of grade 2, some students will be able to read and understand texts at or above the level of difficulty shown below.

Through the Garden Door

Chapter 4 – The Garden

The Gardener began to walk down one of the garden paths. Miko and Jason followed. As they walked, the children felt warmer.

Bugs that looked like jewels flew down and landed on the children’s shoulders. Birds sang in clear, bright voices. Each plant, tree, and animal seemed to have a personality.

The Gardener led the children around a curve in the path until they came to a big grassy area. They saw a herd of deerlike animals.

The animals all raised their heads when they saw Miko and Jason. They didn’t seem to be afraid. In fact, one of the animals came up to Miko. It nuzzled her hand and made a purring sound.

“Oh!” said Miko. “I could stay here forever!”

Suddenly, the Gardener became alarmed. “I’m afraid you can’t stay,” she gasped. “In fact, you have to leave now. You’ve seen enough.” ...



Fiction — Description of Performance Level

By the end of grade 2, some students will be able to read and understand texts at or above the performance level described below.

READING

**Strong
Performance**

Description of Strong Reading Performance

Students can read fictional texts with ...

- an increasing number of words per page and fewer pictures
- more difficult vocabulary, some complex sentences and longer chapters
- a greater number of events and a more complicated plot

When reading, students ...

- recognize many words by sight
- decode automatically using meaning, language structure and phonics
- reread when meaning is lost or unclear
- read fluently and with good expression (when reading aloud)

Students are able to ...

- discuss in detail the characters, the main events, the major problem(s) and how the central problem is solved
- retell a story accurately and explain the main idea
- answer almost all literal questions (ones that ask students to find information clearly stated in the text, e.g., *What did the children see in the grassy field?*)
- answer inferential questions (ones that ask students to interpret or draw conclusions) about characters' feelings and story events with appropriate details (e.g., *How do the Gardener's feelings toward the children change during the chapter?*)
- make connections between what they read and their own experiences and knowledge

READING

Strong
Performance

Non-Fiction — Sample Reading Text

By the end of grade 2, some students will be able to read and understand texts at or above the level of difficulty shown below.

Annie's Secret Diary [Private! Do Not Read!]

... June 22

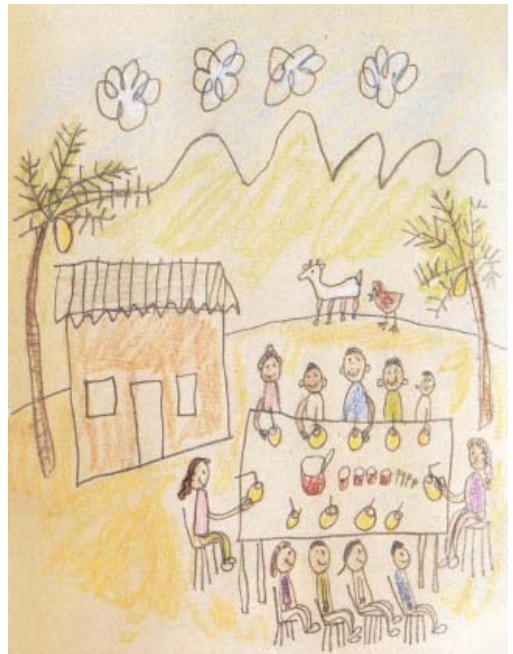
Dear Diary,

Today at the beach we saw a boat coming in. It was a long boat with a little motor in the back. When it landed, two men jumped out. Then everyone on the beach started pulling on a rope that stretched from the boat into the water.

Ana and I helped. It was hard work! After a long time, a big net came out of the water. It was full of fish. Some were still flopping around. People started buying the fish right there on the beach.

I thought you could only buy fish in the stores!

Love,
Annie



... June 26

Dear Diary,

Héctor lives with his mom, dad, and two brothers in a tiny house by the beach.

When we got there, Héctor said he would get us something to drink. He started shaking a tall palm tree. Down came big yellow coconuts! His dad cut the top off each one and put in straws. Coconut milk is delicious! ...

Non-Fiction — Description of Performance Level

By the end of grade 2, some students will be able to read and understand texts at or above the performance level described below.

READING

Strong Performance

Description of Strong Reading Performance

Students can read non-fictional texts that include...

- subject-specific vocabulary and longer, more complex sentences
- topics or ideas explored in greater depth
- pictures, charts and diagrams to add information
- headings to organize the information

When reading, students ...

- recognize many words by sight
- decode automatically using meaning, language structure and phonics
- tend to read more slowly to understand all the information and often reread when information is more complicated

Students are able to ...

- use details from the text to make predictions and support ideas
- answer almost all literal questions (ones that ask students to find information clearly stated in the text, e.g., *How many people are in Héctor's family?*)
- compare and apply information from the text to other situations (e.g., *Explain two things Annie probably found different about life in Honduras from her life at home.*)
- make connections easily between the text and personal experiences and knowledge

WRITING

Appropriate Performance

Fiction — Writing Sample

By the end of grade 2, students should be able to write texts with traits at the performance level shown and described below.

One night my friend Bob had a sleep over at my house. When me and Bob went to sleep we heard a freaky noise. We went to find the noise it was a scary job. We looked for a long time, but we were hungry so we had a snack.

After the snack we started looking in the house. But we had no luck so we called the police but the freaky noise answered the phone.

We slammed the phone and ran to the police station. When we opened the door the police were there. We went home but then a monster was in the yard. We ran as fast as we could. We and the monster had a mask he took it off and it was my dad!

Description of Appropriate Writing Performance

Content – Students stay fairly focused on a topic and add some details to make the writing clearer for the reader.

Organization – Students write their ideas in a sequence that can be followed, and often use connecting words, such as *and*, *then* or *so*.

Word Choice – Students may include a few strong description or action words to help the reader picture the ideas.

Sentence Structure – Students use mostly short, basic sentences. They are beginning to attempt some longer ones that begin in different ways.

Conventions – In many cases, students use periods and question marks correctly and capitalize proper names, the first word in a sentence and the pronoun “I”. They also spell many high frequency words correctly and attempt to spell more difficult words using the sounds they hear.

Non-Fiction — Writing Sample

By the end of grade 2, students should be able to write texts with traits at the performance level shown and described below.

WRITING

Appropriate Performance

Going To Toronto

My family and I are going to Toronto this summer. So we have to pack up. Once we finish we put it in the car. We start driving to the airport. Finly we are at the airport. My mom got the tickits for the plane. We get on the plane and give our tickits to the man. We went to find our seats. We sit in our seats and the plane took off. I was a long flight there. The plane finly landed. Then we got off the plane. We were going to Toronto to visit my cusins. My cusins met us at the airport. They drove us to their house. We started to on pack. We stayed there for one week.

(This is the first part of the child's piece of writing)

Description of Appropriate Writing Performance

Content – Students stay fairly focused on a topic and add some details to make the writing clearer for the reader.

Organization – Students write their ideas in a sequence that can be followed, and often use connecting words, such as *and*, *then* or *so*.

Word Choice – Students may include a few strong description or action words to help the reader picture the ideas.

Sentence Structure – Students use mostly short, basic sentences. They are beginning to attempt some longer ones that begin in different ways.

Conventions – In many cases, students use periods and question marks correctly and capitalize proper names, the first word in a sentence and the pronoun “I”. They also spell many high frequency words correctly and attempt to spell more difficult words using the sounds they hear.

WRITING

Strong Performance

Fiction — Writing Sample

By the end of grade 2, some students will be able to write texts with traits at or above the performance level shown and described below.

SeaHorses new friend.

It was a sunny day at the ocean and May a little seahorse had lots of friends but she wanted a new friend. May new just the friend she wanted a human friend. Her mother said noway her new friend would probably eat you. May sat on her coral chair and did a big hug. Later while her parents were asleep May snuck out and began her adventure. Not long after she left home she was frightened by a crab that was eating his dinner. May crept closer and closer and bang. May was not out but what next her out? It was a baby dolphin. What are you thinking the crab said. I'm swarming said the dolphin. Well look what you did oh I'm so sorry said the dolphin. It did not mean to nudge her out. Well you did said the crab. Well I'm pretty sure you know what happened. She woke up and went home happy with her new friend. I guess she did not want a human friend after all. Well see you on my next story.

Description of Strong Writing Performance

Content – Students stay mostly focused on a topic and attempt to add more details to make the writing clearer for the reader.

Organization – Students present their ideas in a logical sequence and try to join ideas in different ways so the writing reads more smoothly.

Word Choice – Students begin to use a few strong description and action words to help the reader picture the ideas.

Sentence Structure – Students include sentences of different lengths that begin in different ways.

Conventions – In most cases, students use periods and question marks correctly and capitalize proper names, the first word in a sentence and the pronoun “I”. They also spell most high frequency words correctly and spell longer, more difficult words using the sounds they hear.

Non-Fiction — Writing Sample

By the end of grade 2, some students will be able to write texts with traits at or above the performance level shown and described below.

WRITING

Strong
Performance

There are two basic types of motorcycles. One type is made for riding on smooth surfaces like roads or paved race tracks. These motorcycles are called road bikes. They are heavier & faster & and powerfuller than off-road bikes. Off road motorcycles or dirt bikes are lighter than road bikes and they handle rough terrain like dirt & mud and rocks.

My favorite kind of road bike is the woman is a Harley Davidson.

Description of Strong Writing Performance

Content – Students stay mostly focused on a topic and attempt to add more details to make the writing clearer for the reader.

Organization – Students present their ideas in a logical sequence and try to join ideas in different ways so the writing reads more smoothly.

Word Choice – Students begin to use a few strong description and action words to help the reader picture the ideas.

Sentence Structure – Students include sentences of different lengths that begin in different ways.

Conventions – In most cases, students use periods and question marks correctly and capitalize proper names, the first word in a sentence and the pronoun “I”. They also spell most high frequency words correctly and spell longer, more difficult words using the sounds they hear.

How you can help your child become a better reader...

- Continue to read to your child. Choose a regular time that suits both of you. Sometimes, take turns reading to one another. You may invite your child to draw while you read.
- Encourage and praise your child as he or she reads.
- When you and your child are reading, sometimes stop and talk about what he or she thinks might happen next. Acting out what you have read can also be fun.
- Let your child see you reading and talk to him or her about what you read.
- Talk to your child about books he or she is reading.
- Tell your child stories and invite him or her to tell you a story.
- Discuss ideas or information in non-fiction books and talk about interesting words.
- Talk about your child's interests. If your child likes animals, find books on animals. If your child likes sports, find books or magazines about sports.
- Go to the library with your child to choose a book. Stop at bookstores to look at interesting books or magazines.
- Encourage your child to read to a younger child.
- Leave notes for your child to read (e.g., on the fridge, in a lunch box).
- Read together — letters from relatives, recipes, directions for games, or instructions on how to do something.



How you can help your child become a better writer...

- Praise your child's writing efforts. Make sure you respond to the writing, sometimes by writing back, other times by displaying the writing where others can enjoy it.
- Foster a positive attitude towards writing by letting your child see you writing. Talk to him or her about what and how you write.
- Look for natural opportunities for your child to write at home (e.g., writing a reminder for someone, helping with the grocery list, adding a message in a card, writing a letter to a grandparent).
- Encourage your child to tell you about his or her writing. Sometimes talking, drawing, brainstorming or role-playing ideas helps to make the thinking clearer and the writing easier.
- Invite your child to write captions under drawings he or she makes or to put under photos in the family album.
- Encourage your child to keep a journal. If you are going on a trip you may wish to take turns writing and drawing in the journal.



- Keep a family diary that records special events, funny happenings or things you will want to remember as a family.
- Leave magnetic letters on the fridge. Everyone likes using these to make words and leave messages.
- Share an interesting object with your child. Look at it together. Invite your child to write about the object.
- If you have a computer, encourage your child to try writing using the word processor.



Please speak with your child's teacher if you have further questions about the reading and writing performance standards or if you would like more information about helping your child in the area of literacy.

Notes/Questions

This booklet was created from information included in the document *Reading and Writing Performance Standards by the End of Grade 2*. This document gives a more detailed description of the reading and writing standards and includes more student writing samples. If you wish to view the standards document, the *English Language Arts Curriculum K-3* or the *Curriculum Outcomes Framework - Grade 2*, visit the Department of Education Web site at <http://www.gnb.ca/0000/index-e.asp>. Click on the left menu item titled Anglophone Sector.