

Achievement Level Descriptors for Grade 3 English Language Arts

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Achievement Levels and Achievement Level Descriptors

With the implementation of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System, Georgia educators have developed four achievement levels to describe student mastery and command of the knowledge and skills outlined in Georgia's content standards. Most students have at least some knowledge of the content described in the content standards; however, achievement levels succinctly describe how much mastery a student has. Achievement levels give meaning and context to scale scores by describing the knowledge and skills students must demonstrate to achieve each level.

The four achievement levels on Georgia Milestones are *Beginning Learner*, *Developing Learner*, *Proficient Learner*, and *Distinguished Learner*. The general meaning of each of the four levels is provided below:

Beginning Learners do not yet demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students *need substantial academic support* to be prepared for the next grade level or course and to be on track for college and career readiness.

Developing Learners demonstrate partial proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students *need additional academic support* to ensure success in the next grade level or course and to be on track for college and career readiness.

Proficient Learners demonstrate proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students are prepared for the next grade level or course and are on track for college and career readiness.

Distinguished Learners demonstrate advanced proficiency in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level/course of learning, as specified in Georgia's content standards. The students *are well prepared* for the next grade level or course and are well prepared for college and career readiness.

More detailed and content-specific concepts and skills are provided for each grade, content area, and course in the **Achievement Level Descriptors** (ALDs). ALDs are narrative descriptions of the knowledge and skills expected at each of the four achievement levels and were developed for each grade level, content area, and course by committees of Georgia educators in March 2015 and July 2015. The ALDs are based on the state-adopted content standards.

ALDs show a *progression of knowledge and skills* for which students must demonstrate competency across the achievement levels. It is important to understand that a student should demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills within his/her achievement level *as well as all content and skills in any achievement levels that precede his/her own, if any*. For example, a Proficient Learner should also possess the knowledge and skills of a Developing Learner *and* a Beginning Learner.

ALD	Standard	Beginning Learner	Developing Learner	Proficient Learner	Distinguished Learner
Policy		Beginning Learners do not yet	Developing Learners	Proficient Learners	Distinguished Learners
		demonstrate proficiency in the	demonstrate partial proficiency	demonstrate proficiency in the	demonstrate advanced
		knowledge and skills necessary	in the knowledge and skills	knowledge and skills necessary	proficiency in the knowledge
		at this grade level/course of	necessary at this grade	at this grade level/course of	and skills necessary at this
		learning, as specified in	level/course of learning, as	learning, as specified in	grade level/course of learning,
		Georgia's content standards.	specified in Georgia's content	Georgia's content standards.	as specified in Georgia's
		The students need substantial	standards. The students need	The students are prepared for	content standards. The
		academic support to be	additional academic support to	the next grade level or course	students are well prepared for
		prepared for the next grade	ensure success in the next grade	and are on track for <i>college and</i>	the next grade level or course
		level or course and to be on	level or course and to be on	career readiness.	and are well prepared for
		track for <i>college and career</i>	track for <i>college and career</i>		college and career readiness.
		readiness.	readiness.		
Range		A student who achieves at the Beginning Learner level tends to read and comprehend informational texts and literature that do not meet the demands of grade level texts that would signal this student is on track for college and career readiness and requires substantial instructional support to improve reading skills.	A student who achieves at the Developing Learner level tends to read and comprehend informational texts and literature of low-to-moderate complexity and sometimes struggles to meet the demands of grade level texts that would signal this student is on track for college and career readiness and requires some instructional support to enhance reading skills.	A student who achieves at the Proficient Learner level reads and comprehends informational texts and literature of moderate-to-high complexity and is meeting the demands of grade level texts that signal this student is on track for college and career readiness.	A student who achieves at the Distinguished Learner level reads and comprehends informational texts and literature of high complexity and is meeting and often exceeding the demands of grade level texts that clearly signal this student is on track for college and career readiness.
	3.RL.1	Answers simple questions to	Answers questions to	Asks and answers questions to	Asks and answers complex
		demonstrate understanding of	demonstrate understanding of	demonstrate understanding of	questions to demonstrate
		texts.	texts, referring to texts as the	texts, referring explicitly to texts	understanding of texts,
			basis for answers.	as the basis for answers.	referring explicitly to texts as
	0.5.				the basis for answers.
	3.RL.2	Recounts stories by identifying	Recounts stories by identifying	Recounts stories by identifying	Recounts stories by explaining
		details and identifies explicitly	key details and determines	key details in sequential order	key details in sequential order
		stated central messages,	simple central messages,	and determines central	and determines implicitly
		lessons, or morals.	lessons, or morals.	messages, lessons, or morals	stated central messages,
				and explains how they are	lessons, or morals and explains
				conveyed through key details.	how they are conveyed

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				through key details.
3.RL.3	Identifies fundamental	Describes fundamental	Describes characters in stories	Describes intricate components
	components of characters in	components of characters in	and explains how their actions	of complex characters in stories
	stories and explains how these	stories and explains how these	contribute to sequence of	and explains how their actions
	features contribute to stories.	components contribute to	events in stories.	contribute to complex
		stories.		sequences of events in stories.
3.RL.4	Uses easily found, explicitly	Uses explicitly stated evidence	Determines the meanings of	Determines the meanings of
	stated evidence to determine	to determine the meanings of	words and phrases as they are	sophisticated words and
	the meanings of simple words	words and phrases as they are	used in texts, distinguishing	phrases as they are used in
	and phrases.	used in texts, identifying literal	literal from nonliteral language.	texts, distinguishing literal from
		and nonliteral language.		complex nonliteral language.
3.RL.5	Refers to basic elements of	Refers to parts of stories,	Refers to parts of stories,	Refers to detailed parts of
	stories, dramas, and poems	dramas, and poems when	dramas, and poems when	stories, dramas, and poems
	when writing about texts, using	writing about texts, using terms	writing about texts, using terms	when writing about texts, using
	terms such as chapter, scene,	such as chapter, scene, and	such as chapter, scene, and	terms such as chapter, scene,
	and stanza, and identifies how	stanza, and describes how one	stanza, and describes how each	and stanza, and describes how
	one part builds on an earlier	part builds on an earlier section.	successive part builds on earlier	each successive part builds on
	section.		sections.	earlier sections.
3.RL.6	Identifies clearly stated points	Distinguishes readers' points of	Distinguishes readers' points of	Distinguishes readers' points of
	of view of narrators or	view from clearly stated points	view from points of view of	view from implied points of
	characters.	of view of narrators or	narrators or characters and	view of narrators or characters
		characters.	explains what makes the points	and explains what makes the
			of view distinct or similar.	points of view distinct or
				similar.
3.RL.7	Identifies how specific aspects	Infers how specific aspects of	Explains how specific aspects of	Explains how specific aspects of
	of texts' simple illustrations	texts' simple illustrations show	texts' illustrations contribute to	texts' detailed illustrations
	show elements of stories.	elements of stories.	what is conveyed by words in	contribute to what is conveyed
			stories (e.g., create mood,	by words in stories (e.g., create
			emphasize aspects of characters	mood, emphasize aspects of
			or settings).	characters or settings).
3.RL.8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
3.RL.9	Identifies simple and directly	Describes directly stated	Compares and contrasts	Compares and contrasts very
	stated themes, settings, and	themes, settings, and plots of	themes, settings, and plots	complex, implicit themes,
	plots of stories written by the	stories written by the same	written by the same author	settings, and plots written by
	same author about the same or	author about the same or	about the same or similar	the same author about the
	similar characters (e.g., in books	similar characters (e.g., in books	characters (e.g., in books from a	same or similar characters (e.g.,
	from a series).	from a series).	series).	in books from a series).
3.RI.1	Answers simple questions to	Answers questions to	Asks and answers questions to	Asks and answers complex
	demonstrate understanding of	demonstrate understanding,	demonstrate understanding of	questions to demonstrate

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	texts.	referring to texts as the basis for answers.	texts, referring explicitly to texts as the basis for answers.	understanding of texts, referring explicitly to texts as the basis for answers.
3.RI.2	Identifies explicitly stated main ideas of texts and identifies details that support main ideas.	Determines simple main ideas of texts and identifies key details that support main ideas.	Determines main ideas of texts and recounts key details and explains how they support main ideas.	Determines implicitly stated main ideas of texts and recounts key details and explains how they support main ideas.
3.RI.3	Identifies historical events, scientific ideas, or some steps in technical procedures in texts, using language that attempts to address time or sequence.	Identifies simple relationships between historical events, scientific ideas, or steps in technical procedures in texts, using limited language that pertains to time, sequence, and/or cause/effect.	Describes relationships between series of historical events, scientific ideas, or steps in technical procedures in texts, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.	Describes and analyzes complicated relationships between series of historical events, scientific ideas, or steps in technical procedures in texts, using specific and academic language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.
3.RI.4	Uses easily found, explicitly stated evidence to determine the meanings of simple academic and domain-specific words and phrases as used in texts relevant to grade 3 topics or subject areas.	Uses explicitly stated evidence to determine the meanings of simple academic and domain-specific words and phrases as used in texts relevant to grade 3 topics or subject areas.	Determines the meanings of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases as used in texts relevant to grade 3 topics or subject areas.	Determines the meanings of sophisticated academic and domain-specific words and phrases as used in texts relevant to grade 3 topics or subject areas.
3.RI.5	Uses simple text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information directly stated in texts.	Uses simple text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic.	Uses text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic effectively.	Uses complex text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to analyze information relevant to a given topic effectively.
3.RI.6	Identifies directly stated points of view of authors of texts.	Distinguishes readers' points of view from clearly stated points of view of authors of texts.	Distinguishes readers' points of view from points of view of authors of texts and explains what makes these points of view distinct or similar.	Distinguishes readers' points of view from indirectly stated points of view of authors of texts and explains what makes these points of view distinct or similar.
3.RI.7	Uses information gained from simple illustrations and direct statements within texts to demonstrate understanding of texts.	Uses information gained from simple illustrations and basic inferences within texts to demonstrate understanding of texts.	Uses information gained from simple illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in texts to demonstrate understanding of texts (e.g.,	Uses information gained from elaborate illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and advanced inferences to demonstrate understanding of

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				where, when, why, how key events occur).	texts.
	3.RI.8	Identifies basic connections	Identifies logical connections	Describes logical connections	Describes intricate connections
		between particular sentences	between particular sentences	between particular sentences	between particular sentences
		(e.g., comparison, cause/effect,	and paragraphs in texts (e.g.,	and paragraphs in texts (e.g.,	and paragraphs in texts (e.g.,
		first/second/third).	comparison, cause/effect,	comparison, cause/effect,	comparison, cause/effect,
			first/second/third).	first/second/third).	first/second/third) using
					textual evidence.
	3.RI.9	Identifies the most important	Describes the most important	Compares and contrasts the	Compares and contrasts the
		points and key details presented	points and key details presented	most important points and key	most important points and key
		in one text.	in two texts on the same topic.	details presented in two texts	details presented in two texts
				on the same topic.	on the same topic and provides
					evidence from texts to support
					the comparisons.
	3.W.1	Writes opinion pieces that show	Writes opinion pieces that show	Writes opinion pieces that show	Writes engaging multi-
		little or no organization, lack	loose organization, include	clear organization, include	paragraph opinion pieces that
		introductions or conclusions,	simple introductions and	introductions, provide relevant	show clear organization,
		and provide few or irrelevant	conclusions, and provide both	reasons that support stated	include effective introductions,
		reasons to support stated	relevant and irrelevant reasons	opinions, use linking words and	provide relevant reasons that
		opinions.	to support stated opinions.	phrases, and include concluding	effectively support stated
				statements.	opinions, use linking words and
					phrases, and include effective
					concluding statements.
	3.W.2	Writes informative/explanatory	Writes informative/explanatory	Writes informative/explanatory	Writes engaging multi-
		pieces that show little or no	pieces that show loose	pieces that show clear	paragraph
		organization, lack introductions	organization, include simple	organization, include	informative/explanatory pieces
		or conclusions, and provide few	introductions or conclusions,	introductions, provide relevant	that show clear organization,
		or irrelevant details to support	and provide both relevant and	details to support topics, use	include effective introductions,
		topics.	irrelevant details to support	linking words and phrases, and	provide relevant details that
			topics.	include concluding statements.	effectively support topics, use
					linking words and phrases, and
					include effective concluding
					statements.
	3.W.3	Writes narrative pieces that	Writes narrative pieces that	Writes narrative pieces that	Writes engaging narrative
		show little or no organization,	show loose organization, show	show clear organization, show	pieces that show clear
		show little or no establishment	simple establishment of	establishment of situations,	organization, show effective
		of situations, narrators, and/or	situations, narrators, and/or	narrators, and/or characters,	establishment of situations,
		characters, provide little sense	characters, provide some sense	provide a sense of closure, and	narrators, and/or characters,
		of closure, and include few	of closure, and include some	include appropriate techniques	provide a strong sense of

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	techniques to develop experiences/events.	techniques to develop experiences/events.	to develop experiences/events.	closure, and include appropriate and effective techniques to develop experiences/events.
3.W	.4 Produces writing with guidance and support from adults in which development and organization are inadequate for tasks and purposes.	Produces writing with guidance and support from adults in which development and organization are incomplete for tasks and purposes.	With guidance and support from adults, produces writing in which development and organization are appropriate for tasks and purposes.	With guidance and support from adults, produces effective writing in which development and organization are effective and appropriate for tasks and purposes.
3.W	.5 With guidance and support from adults, strengthens writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.	With guidance and support from adults, develops and strengthens writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.	With guidance and support from peers and adults, develops and strengthens writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.	With guidance and support from peers and adults, develops and strengthens writing to an advanced level by planning, revising, and editing.
3.W	.6 With guidance and support from adults, uses technology to produce writing projects.	With guidance and support from adults, uses technology to produce and publish writing as well as to interact with others.	With guidance and support from adults, uses technology to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others.	With guidance and support from adults, uses technology to produce and publish complex writing at an advanced level as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
3.W	.7 Conducts simple, short research projects.	Conducts simple, short research projects that build limited knowledge about topics.	Conducts short research projects that build knowledge about topics.	Conducts complex, short research projects that build extensive knowledge about topics.
3.W	.8 Gathers information from sources, providing evidence that is irrelevant or sorted incorrectly into provided categories.	Gathers information from sources, providing some evidence that is sorted incompletely into provided categories.	Gathers information from print and digital sources, takes brief notes on sources, and sorts relevant evidence into provided categories.	Gathers the most relevant information from print and digital sources, effectively takes notes on sources, and efficiently sorts relevant evidence into provided categories.
3.L.	Uses conventions of Standard English grammar and usage in simple sentences.	Uses conventions of Standard English grammar and usage in simple and compound sentences, including the use of common nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and conjunctions.	Demonstrates command of simple, compound, and complex sentences, including the use of regular and irregular plural nouns, abstract nouns, simple, regular, and irregular verbs, coordinating and subordinating	Demonstrates strong, sophisticated command of grammar in simple, compound, and complex sentences, including the use of regular and irregular plural nouns, abstract nouns, simple, regular, and

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				conjunctions, comparative and	irregular verbs, coordinating
				superlative adverbs, and	and subordinating
				subject-verb and pronoun-	conjunctions, comparative and
				antecedent agreement.	superlative adverbs, and
					subject-verb and pronoun-
					antecedent agreement.
	3.L.2	Capitalizes some simpler words	Uses conventions of Standard	Demonstrates a command of	Demonstrates a strong,
		in titles, uses some commas in	English capitalization in titles	Standard English capitalization	sophisticated command of
		addresses, and spells some	and commas in addresses, spells	in titles, commas in addresses,	Standard English capitalization
		high-frequency words correctly.	high-frequency words correctly,	commas and quotation marks in	conventions in titles, commas
			and uses common spelling	dialogue, and the use of	in addresses, commas and
			patterns when writing unknown	possessives; spells high-	quotation marks in dialogue,
			words.	frequency words correctly; uses	and the use of possessives;
				spelling patterns in writing	spells most words correctly;
				unknown words; and applies	and uses spelling patterns
				spelling generalizations when	when writing unknown words
				adding suffixes.	and when adding suffixes,
					including the use of intricate
					spelling patterns and irregularly
					spelled words.
	3.L.3	Chooses words and/or phrases	Chooses words and/or phrases	Chooses words and phrases for	Chooses precise words and
		when writing without apparent	for effect when writing and	effect when writing and applies	phrases for effect to enhance
		care regarding effect.	identifies the differences	the differences between spoken	the message of the writing and
			between spoken and written	and written English.	applies the differences
			English.		between spoken and written
					English.
	3.L.4	Determines the meaning of	Determines the meanings of	Determines the meanings of	Determines the meanings of
		unknown words using nearby	simple multiple-meaning words	unknown and multiple-meaning	sophisticated unknown and
		context clues.	using sentence-level context	words using sentence-level	multiple-meaning words using
			clues and determines the	context clues, morphemic	sentence-level and paragraph-
			meaning of unknown words	analysis, and/or reference	level context clues, morphemic
			using morphemic analysis	materials.	analysis, and/or reference
			and/or reference materials.		materials.
	3.L.5	Interprets simple word	Interprets simple word	Interprets word relationships	Interprets sophisticated word
		relationships and nuances in	relationships and nuances in	and nuances in word meanings,	relationships and subtle
		word meanings and identifies	word meanings, identifies the	distinguishes literal and	nuances in word meanings,
		real-life connections between	literal meanings of words and	nonliteral meanings of words	distinguishes literal and
		words and their uses.	phrases in context, and	and phrases in context,	nonliteral meanings of complex
			identifies real-life connections	identifies real-world	words and phrases in context,

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		between words and their uses.	connections between words and	identifies complex real-world
			their uses, and distinguishes	connections between words
			shades of meaning among	and their uses, and
			related words that describe	distinguishes subtle shades of
			states of mind or degrees of	meaning among related words
			certainty.	that describe states of mind or
				degrees of certainty.
3.L.6	Uses some simple grade-	Uses simple grade-appropriate	Uses grade-appropriate	Uses sophisticated grade-
	appropriate general academic	academic and domain-specific	academic and domain-specific	appropriate academic and
	words and phrases.	words and phrases, including	words and phrases, including	domain-specific words and
		those that signal simple spatial	those that signal spatial and	phrases, including those that
		and temporal relationships.	temporal relationships.	signal subtle spatial and
				temporal relationships.