

or 12. Thus, students who attain Proficient (4) or Advanced (5) placement in a particular grade group have attained the goals commonly set forth in the curriculum of the highest grade in that grade grouping. Students who have attained partially proficient placement (Nearing Proficiency [3], Progressing [2], or Step 1/Starting Out [1]) are on the path to proficiency, but need to continue progressing toward Proficient and Advanced.

A question that often arises is, Would students at given grades in a grade grouping be expected to receive different performance ratings? The answer to this question is yes. One reason it was decided to set performance levels in grade groupings was so that students, teachers, and parents/guardians would be able to monitor academic growth over time. If separate performance levels were set for each grade level, chances are most students would stay in the same level year after year. Thus, although students would grow from year to year, this growth would not be directly reflected by movement to a higher performance level. By setting performance standards across grade levels, student growth will more likely be reflected by higher performance levels as students move from one grade to the next.

## Performance Level Descriptors : *TerraNova*

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This section provides the performance level descriptors for the five content areas in *TerraNova, Third Edition*, Form G—Reading, Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Each content area is introduced by defining the domain, as represented in the *TerraNova* assessments; descriptors are listed by grade groupings and performance level.

### □ Reading

The Reading descriptors cover Levels 11–21/22 and include aspects of reading content recognized by most educators and reading theorists as essential to the reading process and to aspects of comprehension of written material:

- structural analysis, including phonics (word analysis) and phonemic awareness (sound/visual recognition)
- development and application of listening and reading vocabulary strategies
- literal, or surface, understanding
- interpretive, or analytical, understanding
- critical evaluation of text and extension and application of concepts

The performance descriptors listed below describe the progression of knowledge and skills demonstrated by students who take the *TerraNova* Reading test.

#### **Grades 1 and 2, Reading Starting Out**

Students recognize basic sight words after hearing them read aloud. They select pictures of words with the same beginning and ending sounds as words read aloud. In written responses, they make some errors in capitalization, punctuation, and completeness when writing simple sentences. They write simple words that are dictated to them.

**Progressing**

Students choose grade-level words that describe a picture or that complete a sentence about a picture. They independently read two sentences composed of grade-level words and then identify one picture described by the sentences. They recognize the two words that make up a contraction. They identify words with similar beginning and ending sounds as words read aloud.

**Nearing Proficiency**

Students use details from passages read aloud or read independently to draw simple conclusions. They find synonyms for words at or above grade level. They identify words with similar beginning or ending consonant blends. In written responses, they write complete sentences with correct capitalization and punctuation. They provide details to complete a story sequence. They create compound words.

**Proficient**

Students evaluate character traits and make predictions. They identify things that could or could not happen. They identify types of reading material. They find a missing subject or predicate to complete a sentence. They select a sentence that best fits the middle or end of a short paragraph. They identify long, short, and variant vowels. In written responses, they identify cause and effect.

**Advanced**

Students make inferences and draw more complex conclusions. They identify appropriate sources of information. They combine subjects from two sentences to create one sentence. They identify suffixes. They select a topic sentence to complete a short paragraph. In written responses, they change a statement to a question or a question to a statement.

**Grades 3–5, Reading****Step 1**

Students identify details in text. Students performing at this level should work on prerequisite skills necessary to begin work on the more challenging subject matter mastered by students who have acquired skills at the Progressing level.

**Progressing**

Students identify synonyms for grade-level words and complete sentences using words with multiple meanings. Students performing at this level should work on prerequisite skills necessary to begin work on the more challenging subject matter mastered by students who have acquired skills at the Nearing Proficiency level.

**Nearing Proficiency**

Students recognize antonyms and use context clues to determine word meanings. They identify sequence and characters' feelings and motivations. They draw simple conclusions, analyze text structure, distinguish reality from

