Foundation Skills Assessment

Definitions of the FSA Components of Reading, Writing, and Numeracy

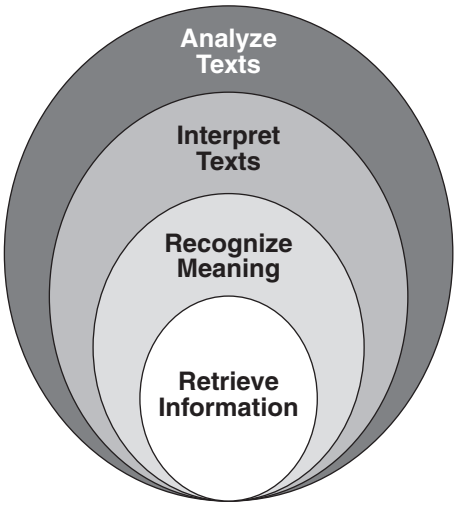
Reading

The definition of *reading* for the Foundation Skills Assessment is derived from the provincial English Language Arts Curriculum: Kindergarten to Grade 7.

Reading is a process that involves interaction between reader and text, as well as among readers. Reading is about making meaning. Meaning is constructed in the interaction between reader and text in the context of a particular reading experience, and culturally and socially derived expectations. Texts are broadly defined to include print, graphic, and digital forms.

FSA Reading passages include the following types of text: literature (prose and poetry), and informational. The informational passages may contain discontinuous text (e.g., timetables, recipes) and material presented in visual or graphical formats (e.g., charts, maps, diagrams, schedules, numerical data, cartoons, web pages).

The following diagram illustrates the relationships among the four categories in the Table of Specifications. Subsequent categories incorporate the preceding categories. For example, although closely related, "retrieving information" is generally a prerequisite to "recognizing meaning."



Reading Categories with Examples of Assessment Tasks

1. Retrieve Information

The reader locates information that is explicitly stated in the text. No inferences or interpretations are required. The information is usually contained within a phrase or sentence.

Reading Literature	Reading Information
For example: • identify explicit information about characters, and events • identify setting (where and when) • recount events • locate details relevant to a particular task (e.g., to complete a template or answer a question) • identify the sequence of explicitly stated events or steps • locate the definition of a word or phrase provided in the text	*For example:* • locate details relevant to a particular task (e.g., to complete a template or answer a question) • identify explicitly stated topic or main idea • identify the sequence of explicitly stated events or steps • locate the definition of a word or phrase provided in the text

2. Recognize Meaning

The reader uses information provided in the text and reformulates it in her/his own words, or recognizes an equivalent statement. The information is usually contained within a phrase or sentence.

Reading Literature	Reading Information
For example: • identify main ideas that are straightforward, and restates in own words • describe setting and main character • determine explicitly described character traits and motivation • determine a character's feelings from his or her actions or reactions • describe basic relationships between two characters • identify more obvious themes	*For example:* • identify main ideas that are straightforward, and restates in own words • describe basic cause-effect relationships • re-state conclusions or generalizations • explain the meaning of technical or specialized words or phrases in context • classify information

3. Interpret Texts

The reader integrates ideas and information to show an understanding or interpretation. The information may be implicit and open to interpretation. Information may need to be inferred, "filled-in" or linked across parts of a text. The information is generally derived across the text, but may sometimes be found in a word or sentence.

Reading Literature	Reading Information
For example: • make logical predictions • infer character traits and motivation • infer main ideas • infer a character's feelings from his or her actions or reactions • interpret themes or message • infer mood or tone • suggest alternatives to character's actions • integrate information to support a generalization or conclusion	*For example:* • infer main ideas • provide relevant details; supports inferences • compare information from two parts of a text • integrate information to develop a generalization or conclusion • draw conclusions about an author's viewpoints and opinions • develop categories that reflect the underlying framework of a text

4. Analyze Texts

The reader takes a stance, evaluating and making judgements about aspects of the text or the author's purpose, perspective, craft and effectiveness. The evaluation may focus on personal reactions and opinions, or on critical analysis. The reader may make connections with other texts, or synthesize information from multiple texts. The evaluation may require information to be integrated or transformed to fulfill a particular purpose, or the creation of a new representation of the material.

Reading Literature	Reading Information
For example: • make connections to other selections • offer an insightful analysis • generalize about a theme, relating it to other elements • explain relationship among ideas • analyze main ideas and provide textual support • analyze author's purpose/intent and provides textual support • compare two characters • compare features of two texts (e.g., themes, characters, style)	*For example:* • provide logical, supported judgements, evaluations • make comparisons with other texts • offer logical predications, speculations and conclusions supported by evidence • provide thoughtful questions and connections • analyze author's purpose/intent and provides textual support • interpret the influence of historical, social, or cultural context on a text

Writing

The definition of *writing* for the Foundation Skills Assessment is derived from the provincial English Language Arts Curriculum: Kindergarten to Grade 7.

Writing is a constructive, interpretive, and interactive process. Meaning is constructed in the context of a particular writing experience, and culturally and socially derived expectations.

- The FSA writing component consists of two writing tasks at each of grades 4 and 7; a shorter writing task and a longer, multi-paged writing task.
- For each task, the purpose, audience and form will be made clear. The purpose and audience will vary depending on the task. The forms will vary according to the grade.
- The shorter writing task is thematically linked to reading.
- The design of each writing task incorporates aspects of the writing process into the assessment in a standardized way.
- The scoring rubrics are developed based on the BC Performance Standards for Writing.

Numeracy

Numeracy is defined as the combination of mathematical knowledge, problem solving, and communication skills required by all persons to function successfully within our technological world. Numeracy is more than knowing about numbers and number operations.

Numeracy Strands

	Numeracy Strands	Mathematical Knowledge
Grade 4	Number	• Students apply their number sense to solve problems using whole numbers from 0 to 10 000, proper fractions, and decimal fractions to 100ths. • They use the four basic arithmetic operations in whole number contexts and the addition and subtraction of decimals.
	Patterns and Relationships	• Students investigate, establish and present rules for numerical and non-numerical patterns.
	Shape and Space	• Students estimate, measure and compare quantities, including time, using decimal numbers and standard units. • They describe, classify and relate three-dimensional objects and two-dimensional shapes.
	Statistics and Probability	• Students collect, assess, validate and graph data.
Grade 7	Number	• Students solve problems involving numbers, including decimal fractions and integers. • They use ratios, rates, percentages and decimal numbers in various contexts.
	Patterns and Relationships	• Students use expressions containing variables to make predictions. • They use variables and equations to express and summarize relationships.
	Shape and Space	• Students solve problems involving the properties of circles and their relationships to angles. • They solve problems involving perimeter, area, surface area, volume and angle measurement. • They analyze patterns and designs using symmetry, translation, rotation and reflection.
	Statistics and Probability	• Students analyze data using measures of variability and central tendency. • They solve problems using probability.