



Alberta Reading Benchmarks

for adults

2nd Edition

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Introduction

The Alberta Reading Benchmarks (ARB) are a set of standards that measure reading in adults.

They describe what readers know and can do at successive levels as they develop and expand their reading capacity. Based on the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) framework, which is an international scale for measuring adult literacy levels, the ARB provide a means of comparison for reading skill levels, both nationally and internationally.

Because an outcome-based framework for adult reading did not previously exist in Alberta, the adult literacy and basic education system needed such a framework as a tool.

The ARB were developed in response to the government of Alberta's plan for improving adult literacy in Alberta, which was outlined in *Living Literacy: A Literacy Framework for Alberta's Next Generation Economy* (Alberta Advanced Education and Technology, 2009).

In 2011, a team of practitioners and policy-makers representing adult literacy, community learning, family literacy, colleges, and government from across the province created the benchmarks in an effort to contribute to a more coordinated adult literacy education system for Alberta.

The Alberta Reading Benchmarks show the progression of reading performance tasks and text complexity from levels 1A through to 3A. What follows is more detailed information about the reading tasks, readers' vocabulary, decoding skills, and text characteristics.

What are the Alberta Reading Benchmarks?

The Alberta Reading Benchmarks (ARB) consist of seven levels for adult literacy, upgrading, and essential skills programs to use.

Each level describes what developing adult readers can do and the characteristics of reading material that a reader at each level can manage. There are three categories within each level: **text characteristics; reading tasks; and readers' vocabulary and decoding skills.**

The benchmarks also provide suggestions for what content should be taught and which learning habits should be encouraged. To understand the ARB, it's useful to first look at what they are not. *They are not a curriculum. They are not an assessment. They are not a set of teaching activities.*

Rather, the ARB are a way for practitioners to think about the component skills that readers need to navigate and comprehend text. As a set of descriptive standards, the benchmarks can be used to guide the selection of reading materials, resources, and activities to match the skill level of learners. They can also inform the creation of learning plans, learning materials, curriculum, assessment tools, and teaching activities.

Having been developed within an information-processing framework, the ARB focus on how readers process information when they are reading and the conditions that affect the level of difficulty. The benchmarks break reading down into small, distinct tasks. These reading tasks build on each other and become more intricately interrelated and complex at higher levels. Each task's difficulty level is influenced by a set of factors that create increasingly complex conditions for the reading tasks of that particular benchmark level. While the ARB are based on the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS)

which has five levels in total, the ARB do not include the two upper levels because they are above the skill level of learners in literacy and foundational learning programs.

The three IALS levels used in these benchmarks have been subdivided further based on an analysis of data collected during the “International Survey of Reading Skills” (Statistics Canada 2008).

Although the distinctions between levels and between categories aim to demonstrate the incremental development of reading in authentic learning and reading, such distinctions do not actually exist in real-life people or texts.

The levels capture the ideal conditions at a particular point in the progression of learning. In reality, readers don’t fit cleanly into these constructed categories. Their learning is fluid and they possess skills from multiple levels at any one time. This is true for reading material, as well. Within one text, various sections may line up with different ARB levels. This is particularly true for authentic text found in a reader’s everyday life.

What Is the Purpose of the Alberta Reading Benchmarks?

As a standard point of reference for reading, the ARB’s key purposes are:

For Learners

- to assist in understanding their own learning and skills
- to provide a shared language
- to discuss learning and skills
- to provide a common measure of reading so learners’ skills can be recognized by others
- to ease the transition into and among literacy programs, and between program levels.

For Practitioners

- to enhance teaching practices and resource use
- to inform instruction and the development of learning plans, courses, and curriculum
- to provide a common form of measurement to assess learning
- to support and enhance best practices in instruction.

For Government

- to provide information for policy development
- to provide information and ways of reporting about literacy activity and needs.

In considering the benchmarks’ purposes, we also have to take into account their limits. First of all, the ARB measure only one of the many competencies that adults possess and that literacy and foundational learning programs assist their learners to develop. This should always be taken into account when using the benchmarks.

Second, learner progress as determined by these benchmarks is not recommended to be the primary accountability or performance measure of program quality. An increase in reading skills is only one measure of learner progress in literacy programs and learner progress is only one possible component of program accountability.

Excessive reliance on learner progress as an accountability measure will not give sufficient weight to all the other measures that support such progress — whether programmatically or from the learners’ perspective — or make a program successful.

Understanding the Benchmarks

The ARB is made up of three broad groupings called benchmarks: Benchmark 1, 2, and 3. Each of the three benchmarks is further divided into 3 levels (i.e., 1A, 1B, 1C, 2A, 2B, 2C, 3A). Within each level, the ARB includes a set of descriptors that describe what type of reading materials and reading tasks a reader can manage. For ease of understanding, each level is grouped into three categories: text characteristics; reading tasks; and readers' vocabulary and decoding skills. The last category is made up of two subcategories grouped together.

IALS LEVEL AND SCORE RANGE

Each of the three ARB benchmarks loosely aligns to the first three levels and score range from the international literacy surveys — Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALL), International Adult Literacy and Survey (IALS), and Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).¹

You will find examples that include questions and pictures after each level.

CATEGORIES



Text Characteristics

Text means anything that can be read — whether it's a newspaper article, a baby height-and-weight chart, a workplace safety sheet, or a web page. It is not used here to mean a course textbook only. The descriptions provided in the benchmarks are intended to provide guidance for generally determining differences in the difficulty of text.



Reading Tasks

A task is the type of action that the reader is asked to do with the text. The type of task a reader can do is a very important component of the reader's proficiency because tasks vary a great deal in difficulty.

For example, simply locating a specific date in an encyclopedia article about Canada becoming a country is much easier than using the same article to create a timeline of the most important events leading up to Canada becoming an independent country.

It is also important to think of the tasks as including real-life activities that are based on reading, such as assembling a piece of furniture from a set of instructions or taking medicine correctly based on reading the label on the bottle. Tasks should mirror as much as possible what a reader would be doing with a text in a real-life situation.

¹ The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) initiated a series of assessments of adult literacy skills on an international level starting in 1994 (ALL). To date there have been three surveys: ALL, IALS, and PIAAC. Each survey is based on the same framework and scoring scale. Canada has participated in all three literacy surveys.



Readers' Vocabulary

Readers' vocabulary refers to words in a text that a reader can identify by sight or by decoding and understand correctly.



Decoding Skills

Decoding skills involve the ability to analyze and piece together parts of words such as the units of sound (phonemes) and units of meaning (morphemes). Decoding using phonemes involves sounding out words and connecting the sounds of English with letters and groups of letters. Words are also decoded when a reader breaks them down into morphemes or units of meaning such as root words, prefixes, and suffixes. Context and configuration clues are also used in decoding.

Each level of the benchmarks provides suggestions for practitioners about content and learning habits. Such content and habits are not learned in a linear fashion. They must be introduced, reinforced, and reviewed at several levels for learners to become comfortable with them and make them their own.



Content To Be Taught

The Alberta Reading Benchmarks are concerned with the skills readers need to process information at increasingly more complex levels. They do not contain all of the content and skills that learners need to become proficient readers. Instructors must develop their own curriculum, referenced to the ARB but based upon learners' needs, goals, and abilities.

There are many resources available to help with the content in teaching learners to read. The instructor can choose those that are compatible with their learners' culture and context.



Habits To Be Encouraged

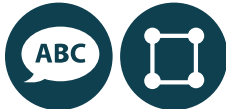
Instructors can help learners develop lifelong learning habits. These habits may be new to literacy learners but will enable them to take charge of their own learning and to become independent learners.

Reading Benchmarks and Instruction

The benchmarks are an important tool to help practitioners select learning materials and activities that are best suited to learners at different reading skill levels.



For example, the information provided in the “**text characteristics**” category can help a practitioner choose a reading passage at the right level of difficulty for a learner.



The information in the “**readers’ vocabulary and decoding skills**” category can help a practitioner identify what kind of words a learner at a particular level should be focusing on.



The information about “**reading tasks**” can help a practitioner select or create activities that focus on the tasks suited to a learner’s skill and difficulty level.

While they serve as a useful tool, the benchmarks are not intended to establish the topics of instruction. The instructional topics, themes, and teaching methodologies need to vary so they suit the diverse needs of learners and the different contexts for instruction. The skills that the benchmarks define can be used for any topic.

The Relationship of Texts and Tasks

The description of reading levels separates out text and task characteristics to make the elements of reading skills easier to understand. This is an artificial separation because, in fact, the two are actually very interconnected. A reader at a given level may be able to do a very simple task with a relatively difficult text or vice versa.

For example, a reader at level 1C may be able to find the date of an accident, which is a relatively simple task, in a front-page newspaper article that could be a relatively

complex text. On the other hand, a reader at level 2B may be challenged in selecting which rental apartment is most suitable for an international female university student (a more complex task) given a page listing numerous apartments for rent (a relatively simple text).

Keep both text and task in mind when thinking about either the benchmark level of a reader or the benchmark level of a reading activity you give to a learner.

Alberta Reading Benchmarks Resources

There are a number of companion ARB resources for practitioners to use for reading instruction, resource selection, and assessment. They are available online at www.arbforadults.ca.

Teaching Strategies

There are two teaching strategies guides with approaches and activities for teaching the foundational reading skills outlined in the ARB:

- *At a Glance ARB Teaching Strategies*
This is a guide for teaching reading to adult literacy learners.
It has many practical teaching strategies.
- *Sharing the Journey with Adult Indigenous Learners:
A Teaching Reading Strategies Guide*
This is a guide for teaching reading within an Indigenous world view.
It includes practical teaching strategies.

Benchmarking Materials

- *A Starter List of Materials for ARB Levels 1A to 2B*
This resource includes a list of reading resources that can be used at each level.

Benchmarking Tools

- *ARB Quick Reference*
This is a quick reference chart with key text features to look for when aligning materials to the ARB.
- *ARB Chart for Benchmarking Materials*
This is a companion document to the *ARB Quick Reference*.

Assessment

- *Read Forward Guide*
This is a user-friendly adult reading assessment that is aligned with the ARB and with IALS.

The Alberta Reading Benchmarks At a Glance

Get a quick overview of all Alberta Reading Benchmarks levels and skill sets in the following chart.

The Alberta Reading Benchmarks Levels Chart

This handy chart gives practitioners a quick overview of all Alberta Reading Benchmarks levels and skill sets.

ARB LEVEL

TEXT CHARACTERISTICS	1A	1B	1C
Readers at this level can manage texts that:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use simple, familiar, everyday words use single words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are about familiar topics contain only information that is directly related to the task are short — usually a few words long but can be up to one short, simple sentence in length make use of common formats (phone numbers, addresses, dates, prices) may use short simple lists with up to a few items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are clearly expressed using basic words use simple sentences on familiar topics are simple, and distraction-free are up to several sentences in length include simple forms that require personal information to be written on them use simple lists with several items
READERS' VOCABULARY AND DECODING SKILLS	1A	1B	1C
Readers at this level can identify:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> very few sight words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> concrete nouns and simple action verbs one- and two-syllable words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> familiar, common, everyday words some familiar three-syllable words
Readers at this level:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have little decoding ability do not yet have the skills to sound out words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can decode words that are simple and easy to sound out and that follow the most common sound/spelling relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have moderate decoding skills; can sound out words that follow the most common sound/spelling relationships
READING TASKS	1A	1B	1C
Readers at this level:	<p>May be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify the alphabet's letter names identify sounds made by some of the letters identify a few sight words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus on words rather than on phrases or sentences recognize common formats (phone number, address, price, date) find common and concrete words in the text locate a single piece of information by matching word for word what is written in the text know where to write their own name on a simple form understand simple lists use simple comparisons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> find information that uses simple and common words rely on understanding meaning rather than relying on text structure to find information select from choices given several possibilities know where to write personal information on a form (name, phone number, address) use simple comparisons with three or more items interpret a short text

2A	2B	2C	3A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use variability in sentence structure, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> short and long sentences simple and complex sentences are up to several short paragraphs in length contains longer and more complex vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use complex organization with multiple text formats in one text, such as continuous text with lists, charts, graphs, or diagrams use abstract vocabulary are up to 500 words in length are not necessarily straightforward; meaning is subtle or implicit in text include content that may be distracting, uses synonyms, or has more information than is necessary for the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contain difficult and less common vocabulary on a wide range of topics are 500 - 700 words in length provides multiple pieces of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are of considerable complexity and length on a wide variety of topics: grade 12 high-school texts in university-track courses are 600 - 900 words in length include lots of information that may not be needed for the task may present conflicting or contradictory information
2A	2B	2C	3A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some longer and more complex words in a familiar context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some abstract words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> many abstract words; reading vocabulary is strong more complex words that relate to a broader general knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vocabulary that reflects some in-depth knowledge in specific areas of study or work; reading vocabulary is strong
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have decoding skills that are strong enough to sound out most words the reader knows orally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have strong decoding skills and can sound out most words quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have strong decoding skills and can sound out most words automatically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have fully developed decoding skills and are able to silently sound out words very automatically and quickly
2A	2B	2C	3A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relate information to other information further away in the text find complex information cycle to find more than one piece of information that is not side by side select among choices in a short text make more complex comparisons between items mentioned in the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use guiding features in the text to find information; e.g., scan for key words using headings, inset boxes, or bold print to find information without reading every word cycle to locate up to three or four pieces of information; the number of requested items is specified complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text manage distracting information such as the use of synonyms and the presence of extra information not related to the task use information in the text to find further information in the text figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed can be stated in the negative read longer and more complex text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cycle through text and locate all relevant information; the number of items is not specified in the search task reorganize or summarize many pieces of complex information from one part of text manage conditional information in longer, more complex text navigate through lengthy and complex text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cycle through and locate many pieces of complex information scattered throughout the text find complex information in order to summarize, reorganize, or integrate with background knowledge identify, compare, and contrast multiple pieces of information generate ideas and opinions by connecting information from the text with background knowledge from outside the text navigate through dense, detailed, and complex text

Benchmark 1

Level 1 is the largest level in the IALS complexity scale. Out of a possible 500 points, level 1 contains 225 — almost half of the possible maximum. Readers at this level have a lot to learn to ensure success at subsequent levels. Learning the basic building blocks of reading enables learners at this level to interact with text in simple, concrete ways. As well as learning content, learners will need to start seeing themselves in a different context. They will need to begin seeing themselves as learners and to start acquiring habits to help with their learning. Text at this level is short, simple, and direct; information is easy to locate; and learners use simple strategies for finding concrete and uncomplicated information in the text.

Level 1A



Text Characteristics

Readers at this level can manage texts that:

- use simple, familiar, everyday words
- use single words.

Even short, simple texts with a few words are mostly beyond a reader's skills at this level.

IALS LEVEL AND SCORE RANGE

LEVEL 1: No IALS score range because IALS scores below 200 can't be divided into level ranges



Readers' Vocabulary

Readers at this level can identify:

- very few sight words.

Readers at this level have little or no reading vocabulary.



Decoding Skills

Readers at this level:

- have little decoding ability
- do not yet have the skills to sound out words.



Reading Tasks

Readers at this level may be able to:

- identify the alphabet's letter names
- identify sounds made by some of the letters
- identify a few sight words.

Readers at this level are mostly unable to do reading tasks.



Content to be taught at this level:

- Letter knowledge — recognition, sound/symbol correspondence
- Different types of fonts
- Print conventions (left to right, top-down directionality)
- Exposure to organization of print — words, sentences, paragraphs
- Recognition that print represents the spoken word
- Awareness and exposure to different types of print (e.g., lists, forms, maps, signs, menus, bills, ads, lists, stories)
- Common sight words
- Different platforms/media for print — paper, computers, signage



Habits to be encouraged at this level:

- Awareness of self as a learner
- Awareness of already-developed life skills and how they can help in learning new material
- Recognition of the importance of print in our society
- First steps toward developing explicit learning strategies, for example, organization strategies, time management, establishing routines and practice time, asking questions, developing mnemonics and other memorization aids
- Understanding and recognizing one's own progress

Sample Text

Simple single words

- *open*
- *exit*
- *name*

Examples



Figure 1.



Figure 2.



Figure 3.

Level 1B



Text Characteristics

Readers at this level can manage texts that:

- **are about familiar topics**
- **contain only information that is directly related to the task**
There is no extra or irrelevant information that would be distracting to the reader.
The information is simple to locate.
- **are short — usually a few words long but can be up to one short, simple sentence in length**
 - o *e.g., 2-hour parking limit; Wash hands with soap; Please reply by February 8.*
- **make use of common formats**
phone numbers, dates, addresses, time, price
- **may use short, simple lists with up to a few items.**

IALS LEVEL AND SCORE RANGE

LEVEL 1: No IALS score range because IALS scores below 200 can't be divided into level ranges



Readers' Vocabulary

Readers at this level can identify:

- **concrete nouns and simple action verbs**
fork, key, phone, sleep, drive, shop
- **one- and two-syllable words**
dog, pay, dollar, hockey



Decoding Skills

Readers at this level:

- **can decode words that are simple and easy to sound out and that follow the most common sound/spelling relationships.**



Reading Tasks

Readers at this level can:

- **focus on words rather than on phrases or sentences**
 - o *e.g., answering, "Where does the woman live?" from this sentence, "The woman lives in China."*

- **recognize common formats**
phone numbers, dates, addresses, time, price
- **find common and concrete words in the text**
Common words are frequently used words. Concrete words refer to things that can be seen, touched, heard, or smelled, *e.g., Pam, chips, horse.*
- **locate a single piece of requested information by matching word for word what is in the text,**
 - o *e.g.,* answering, “How much do you save?” from a grocery coupon that states, “Save \$2.00.”
 - o *e.g.,* finding the name of the doctor on a business card that lists the doctor’s name and title (i.e., doctor) close together.
- **know where to write his or her own name on a simple form**
on a luggage tag, a raffle ticket
- **understand simple lists**
 - o *e.g.,* answering, “How many notebooks are on the list?” from a short school-supply list
 - o *e.g.,* finding the suite number of a dentist from an office directory sign inside a building
- **use simple comparisons**
Comparing two items using a single feature such as *first, last, most, cheapest.*



Content to be taught at this level:

- Sight vocabulary
- Common formats such as phone numbers, dates, addresses, prices, time
- Phonics and decoding skills such as
 - o Letter combinations (*e.g., or, ar, ay, ai, oy*)
 - o Word families (*e.g., bad, sad, mad*)
- Common spelling patterns
- Configuration clues (i.e., using the distinct shapes of words) to help with decoding
- Scanning — looking for one piece of information
- Learning about the organization of print information (*e.g., lists, forms*)
- Awareness of different types of texts (*e.g., information, warning, advertisements, enjoyment*)



Habits to be encouraged at this level:

- Developing strategies to help learning, for example, organization strategies, memory strategies, time management, routines, practice time
- Understanding and recognizing one's own progress

Sample Text

- Shopping list with the number of items needed:
 - o 4 apples
 - o 1 onion
 - o bread
- Simple menu with prices:
 - o burger - \$5.00
 - o fries - \$4.50
- Simple forms like a luggage tag that requires the reader's name to be written
- Simple flyer ads
- Simple rental listing such as those found on a bulletin board

Examples



1) When was the dog lost?

- Focus on words rather than on phrases or sentences.
- Find common and concrete words in the text.
- Locate a single piece of requested information by matching word for word what is in the text, with no distracting information.
- Recognize common formats.

2) What number do you phone?

- Focus on words rather than on phrases or sentences.
- Find common and concrete words in the text.
- Locate a single piece of requested information by matching word for word what is in the text, with no distracting information.
- Recognize common formats.

Level 1C

IALS LEVEL AND SCORE RANGE

LEVEL 2: Scores 200 - 225



Text Characteristics

Readers at this level can manage texts that:

- **are clearly expressed using basic words**
"Gets sick" rather than "becomes infected with the illness."
- **use simple sentences on familiar topics**
 - o e.g., Drink plenty of fresh water.
 - o e.g., Water helps get rid of excess salt and has many other benefits.
- **are simple and distraction free**
Texts and illustrations are presented in a simple format with only the most basic and relevant details.
- **are up to several sentences in length**
phone numbers, dates, addresses, time, price
- **include simple forms that require personal information to be written on them**
name, address, phone number, birth date on a sports registration form or a bank application form
- **use simple lists with several items**
Lists can be found in simple forms, directories, checklists, charts.



Readers' Vocabulary

Readers at this level can identify:

- **familiar, common, everyday words**
tomorrow, please, parent, wash
- **some familiar three-syllable words**
computer, apartment, hamburger



Decoding Skills

Readers at this level:

- **have moderate decoding skills**
- **can sound out words that follow the most common sound/spelling relationships.**



Reading Tasks

Readers at this level can:

- **find information that uses simple and common words**
The information is concrete such as an action, person, thing, group, animal, descriptor, time, location, or amount.
o e.g., *drive, Adam, jacket, team, panther, orange, Sunday, Alberta, fifty (50)*
- **rely on understanding meaning rather than relying on text structure to find information**
 - o e.g., filling in a registration form that asks for information the reader is not used to providing such as food allergies for a child's sports team.
 - o e.g., answering, "Where are the students with pink eye recovering?" from a school notice requires the reader to understand the meaning of key words in the text to find the answer.
- **select from choices given several possibilities**
 - o e.g., answering, "Who went shopping?" from a text that contains the names of two or three people, only one of whom went shopping.
 - o e.g., answering, "Name two body parts that lose heat most quickly," from a text on cold weather conditions that lists the body parts side by side in the same sentence.
- **know where to write personal information on a form**
name, phone number, address, birth date
- **use simple comparisons with three or more items**
Comparisons using a single criterion such as the first, last, most, or least item.
o e.g., finding the earliest class time from a fitness class schedule.
- **interpret a short text.**



Content to be taught at this level:

- **Language experience stories** — reading sentences from the learner's own life and experience
- **Word order in sentences**
- **Using conjunctions in simple sentences** (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*)
- **Building reading vocabulary**
- **Punctuation such as commas, periods, question marks, and the use of capital letters for proper nouns and words at the beginning of sentences**

- Reading in phrases or thought/idea groups to promote fluency
- Using context clues for decoding
- Predicting meaning based on context, pictures, titles, headings, etc.



Habits to be encouraged at this level:

- Taking more control of own learning; becoming less passive
- Setting goals for learning, for life
- Developing responsibility for working toward goals
- Developing responsibility for own learning
- Moving toward self-directed learning
- Taking risks with reading based on already-acquired knowledge
- Self-monitoring skills for accuracy
- Choosing appropriate strategies for dealing with different types of print or different ways to get information from print (e.g., prose or documents like forms, lists)

Sample Text

- Coupons, flyer ads, and rental listings with some detail but no more than a half page in length
- Sports registration forms or the personal information portion of a bank application form

Examples



Island Macaroons

- Preheat oven to 160 degrees Celsius.
- Line a baking sheet with tin foil.
- Beat the egg whites.
- Add sugar and extracts. Beat.
- Add coconut.
- Place scoops of mixture on foil.
- Bake for 15 minutes.

1) How long do the macaroons bake?

- Find information that uses simple and common words.

2) What 2 things are added to the egg whites?

- Find information that uses simple and common words.
- Rely on understanding meaning rather than relying on text structure to find information.
- Select from choices given several possibilities.

Benchmark 2

Level 2 ranges from IALS scores 226 up to 275. This is a much smaller range than in level 1. This level allows the learner to really consolidate the skills and content introduced in level 1 and learn how to apply them to print to get information. Texts become a little longer and more complicated; information is a bit more difficult to locate. This requires some more advanced skills. Learners will interact with the text more and use some inference to show understanding and find answers.

Level 2A

IALS LEVEL AND SCORE RANGE

LEVEL 2: Scores 225 – 240



Text Characteristics

Readers at this level can manage texts that:

- **use variability in sentence structure, including**
 - o short and long sentences
 - o simple sentences and complex sentences
- **are up to several short paragraphs in length**
- **contain longer and more complex vocabulary** that is difficult for readers at this level to decode because of the words' length or unusual spelling.



Readers' Vocabulary

Readers at this level can identify:

- **some longer and more complex words in a familiar context**, such as words that are difficult to decode because of their length or unusual spelling
apprenticeship, authorization, recipe, asthma, technique.



Decoding Skills

Readers at this level:

- **have decoding skills that are strong enough to sound out most words the reader knows orally**, including:
 - o multi-syllabic words, e.g., *relatives, popular, activity, authority*
 - o words with unusual spelling, e.g., *physical, walk, doubt*
 - o words made up of a root word and prefixes or suffixes, e.g., *impossible, unwanted, working, successful*
 - o compound words, e.g., *campground, website, lifetime.*



Reading Tasks

Readers at this level can:

- **relate information to other information further away in the text**
 - o e.g., answering, "What is the extra charge that costs \$8.50?" requires the reader to locate the amount of the charge, then relate it to the corresponding name of the charge on an invoice.

- o e.g., answering, “What 2 locations would you choose if you don’t need long-term care?” from a listing of seniors’ living accommodations requires the reader to relate information from two different listings.
- **find complex information**
 - o e.g., answering, “What effect do shadows have on weeds?” from an article that discusses natural methods for gardening where the effect of shadows is revealed in a couple of related but separate sentences.
 - o e.g., “Describe the condition of the tree that was removed,” from a landscaping company work order that includes simple descriptions of different parts of the tree.
- **cycle to find more than one piece of information that is not side by side**
 - o e.g., answering, “What are 2 things you should bring with you to your specialist appointment?” from an appointment-confirmation letter that requests specific items in different parts of the letter.
 - o e.g., answering, “List 2 animals from the article” from an article that mentions animals in separate sentences.
- **select among choices in a short text**
 - o e.g., answering, “What number do you call to ask about side effects of your medication?” from a community services phone list that contains the names and numbers of community contacts.
 - o e.g., answering, “Which apartment has 2 bedrooms?” from a rental listing.
- **make more complex comparisons between items mentioned in the text**
 - o e.g., comparing product price and make: “What is the cheapest fridge made by Maytag?” from an ad that lists more than one fridge by Maytag as well as fridges by another manufacturer.
 - o e.g., answering, “Which entree comes with a salad?” from a menu with a selection of several entrees as well as other choices such as appetizers.



Content to be taught at this level:

- Irregular spelling patterns (*ache, cycle, though*)
- Multisyllabic words
- Root words plus suffixes and prefixes
- Compound words (*weatherman, homemade*)
- Literal comprehension
- Relating factual details
- Identifying key words in text
- Identifying different types and formats of texts — factual, fiction, business
- Subordinating conjunctions (*e.g., but, although, because, after, then, that, if, whether*) and their use in complex sentences
- Fluency — reading in phrases or thought groupings and understanding meaning; less need for word-by-word decoding



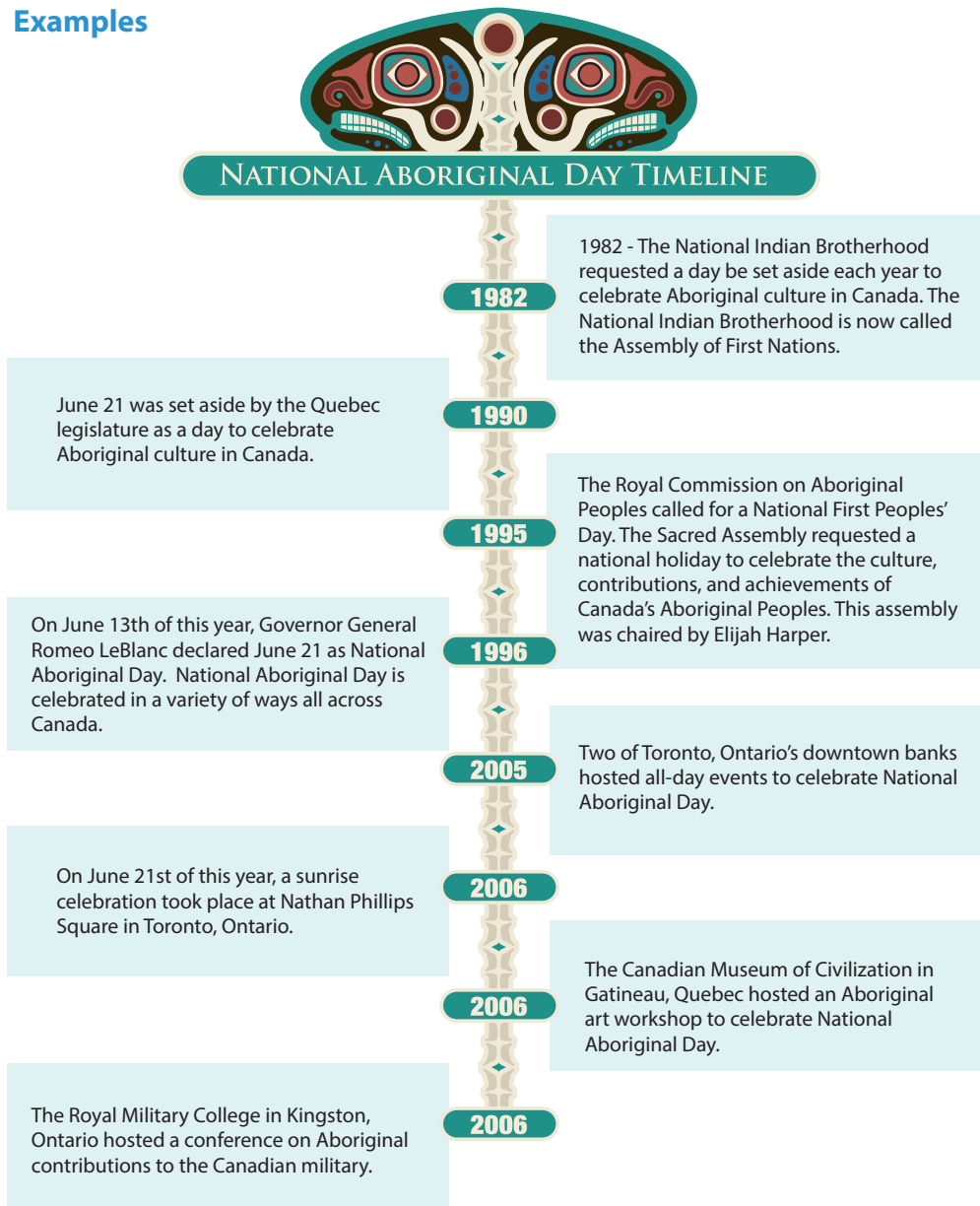
Habits to be encouraged at this level:

- Self-monitoring skills for comprehension
- Taking control of learning goals
- Considering context of information
- Considering/understanding intent of written documents
- Linking to prior knowledge; linking to real world

Sample Text

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • informal work memos | • health brochures |
| • simple operating instructions | • classified listings on the Internet |
| • flyers | or in a newspaper |

Examples



1) List 2 events held in Ontario in 2006.²

- Cycle to find more than one piece of information that is not side by side.
- Find complex information.
- Select among choices in a short text.

2) Which name existed first, the National Indian Brotherhood or the Assembly of First Nations?

- Make more complex comparisons between items mentioned in the text.
- Select among choices in a short text.

3) What are two provinces named in the timeline?

- Cycle to find more than one piece of information that is not side by side.

² All sample texts in this document are taken from *Read Forward: A Series of Easy-to-Use Adult Reading Tests Referenced to the International Adult Literacy Survey* and are used by permission (Calgary: Bow Valley College, 2014).

Level 2B

IALS LEVEL AND SCORE RANGE

LEVEL 2: Scores 241 – 260



Text Characteristics

- use complex organization with multiple text formats in one text, such as continuous text with lists, charts, graphs, or diagrams
- use abstract vocabulary: *eligible, correspondence, serious*
- are up to 500 words in length
- are not necessarily straightforward; meaning is subtle or implicit in text
- include content that may be distracting; uses synonyms, or has more information than is necessary for the task.



Readers' Vocabulary

Readers at this level can identify:

- some abstract words
insist, flexibility, convenient, contribute



Decoding Skills

Readers at this level:

- have strong decoding skills and can sound out most words quickly.



Reading Tasks

Readers at this level can:

- use guiding features in the text to find information; for example, scan for key words using headings, inset boxes, or bold print to find information without reading every word.
 - o e.g., answering, "List 3 tips about making phone calls in the office," from an article about office etiquette that has several sections, each with a descriptive bolded heading.
 - o e.g., answering, "Which location offers a morning yoga class?" from a community classes and events program that highlights locations and times in larger bold print.
 - o e.g., finding or comparing information from a chart or graph involves using column headings or row labels to find information.
- cycle to locate up to three or four pieces of information; the number of requested items is specified
 - o e.g., answering, "What are 4 effects of alcohol impairment on driving?" from a text that discusses each effect in a different sentence.
 - o e.g., answering, "List 3 conditions that contribute to nosebleeds."
 - o e.g., answering, "What are 4 dry ingredients in the list of ingredients?" from a recipe.

- **complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text**
 - e.g., answering, “What action should you take if the skin has turned blue?” from a health fact sheet about frostbite that lists symptoms and treatments in separate columns of a chart.
 - e.g., answering, “How can you get demerit points?” from a school-bus safety handout that requires scanning through longer text to find an explanation of traffic violations.
- **manage distracting information, synonyms, and the presence of extra information not related to the task**
 - e.g., finding, “When is high blood pressure typically diagnosed?” from a text that uses diagnosed and discovered interchangeably.
 - e.g., answering, “Which type of stain should be frozen before treating?” from a text that lists stain-removal techniques for numerous types of stains requiring the reader to sort through lots of information to find the answer.
- **use information in the text to find further information in the text**
 - e.g., answering, “What two stress-prevention tips suggest you talk to your manager?” from a stress-reduction flyer that requires the reader to find the section discussing prevention tips in order to find information about talking to a manager.
 - e.g., using a legend to interpret information in a pie chart.
- **figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed**
 - e.g., answering, “Can a 12 year old attend the Halloween party?” from an events program that does not provide the answer directly requires the reader to find out how the events are coded by age.
 - e.g., answering, “Are employees required to back up e-mail correspondence?” from a workplace memo discussing new procedures for backing up critical data that does not explicitly address e-mails — the reader must figure out whether e-mails would be included in the backup procedures.
- **can be stated in the negative**
 - e.g., answering, “Who was not at the meeting?”
- **read longer and more complex text.**



Content to be taught at this level:

- Synonyms, homonyms, antonyms
- Abstract concepts and words
- Different reading strategies (skimming, scanning, reading for detail) for different types of text (e.g., prose, charts, graphs) and for finding different types of information
- Pre-reading, using headings, formatting, and other guiding features to navigate text
- Finding relevant information among other irrelevant information
- Understanding the purpose, main idea, and details of text
- Paraphrasing to demonstrate understanding of a text
- Using inference to interpret content when it is implicit in the text
- Use of dictionaries



Habits to be encouraged at this level:

- Taking control of their learning goals
- Considering/understanding context and intent of documents
- Linking to prior knowledge; linking to real world
- Self-monitoring skills such as choosing appropriate reading strategies
- Self-monitoring skills for checking comprehension
- Knowing where to find information and support for their learning

Sample Text

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • Workplace communication about familiar topics: e-mails, a list of procedures | • Driving instructions for getting from A to B with distances and highway numbers | • Fishing guide describing fish types and restrictions on fishing |
| | • Nutritional information charts | • Community events listings with event descriptions and organizer contact information |

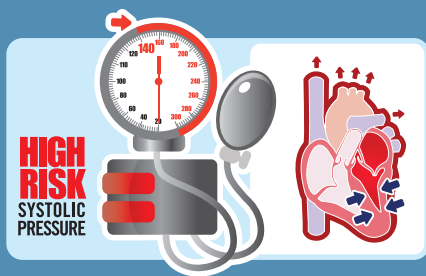
Examples

High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure affects many people in Canada. While the exact cause of high blood pressure in most people is not always clear, there are a variety of conditions that are known to cause it, or increase existing blood pressure problems. These causes include getting little or no exercise, eating a poor diet, being overweight, getting older, and also genetics.

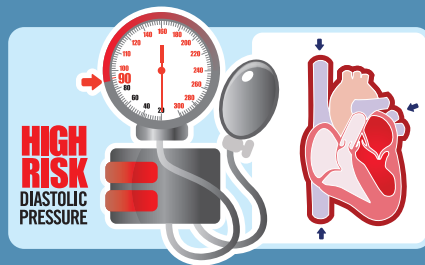
Blood pressure is measured in millimeters of mercury (mm Hg), and two numbers are used. Systolic pressure, the force of the blood against the artery walls as your heart beats, and diastolic pressure, the blood pressure in your blood system between heartbeats. The numbers are recorded with the systolic pressure over the diastolic reading. For example, a blood pressure reading is written as 125/82 mm Hg, or "125 over 82". In this example the systolic pressure is 125 and the diastolic pressure is 82.

Normal blood pressure is considered to be systolic pressure less than 120 and diastolic pressure less than 80 mmHg. Blood pressure is considered to be high when the systolic pressure is over 140 and the diastolic pressure is over 90. Between these levels a person is considered to be at risk of high blood pressure.



High blood pressure is known to cause several potentially serious health conditions, including:

- A build up of plaque, or fatty material, on the inside walls of the blood vessels
- Heart disease, ranging from heart failure to other types of heart issues
- Kidney disease due to damage to the blood vessels and filters in the kidneys
- Stroke, by either contributing to damage to arteries or by weakening the blood vessel wall and causing it to rupture
- Eye disease, again due to damage to the very small blood vessels in the retina



High blood is usually discovered by a health care professional on a routine visit as there are not typical symptoms. However, strong headaches, chest pain, and heart failure may indicate a high blood pressure condition. If you have any of these symptoms you should seek treatment immediately.

Reducing the risk of getting high blood pressure, and treatment once it is diagnosed can include lifestyle changes such as:

- Weight loss
- Quitting smoking
- Eating a healthy diet
- Reducing the amount of salt in your diet
- Regular exercise
- Limiting the amount of alcohol you drink
- High blood pressure can also be treated with medications.

1) When is high blood pressure typically diagnosed?

- Use guiding features in the text to find information.
- Manage distracting information, synonyms, and the presence of extra information not related to the task.
- Read longer and more complex text.

2) Your blood pressure is 118/76. Which of these numbers refers to the pressure when your heart is resting between beats?

- Complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text.
- Use information in the text to find further information in the text.
- Figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed.
- Read longer and more complex text.

Level 2C

IALS LEVEL AND SCORE RANGE

LEVEL 2: Scores 261–275



Text Characteristics

Readers at this level can manage texts that:

- **contain difficult and less common vocabulary on a wide range of topics**
- **are 500-700 words in length**
- **provide multiple pieces of information**
Text includes more extensive and detailed information.



Readers' Vocabulary

Readers at this level can identify:

- **many abstract words.**
perception, success, appropriate, consequence
- **more complex words that relate to a broader general knowledge**
e.g., terms relating to climate change: *ecology, carbon footprint*



Decoding Skills

Readers at this level:

- **have strong decoding skills and can sound out most words automatically.**



Reading Tasks

Readers at this level can:

- **cycle through text and locate all relevant information; the number of items is not specified in the search task**
 - o e.g., from a health website about headaches, answering, "What are all the possible causes of headaches that are mentioned?"
 - o e.g., answering, "In what ways are social networking websites perceived as unprofessional," from an article on using social networking to find a job.
- **reorganize or summarize several pieces of complex information from one part of text**

Reorganize

- o e.g., answering, "Identify the steps for closing up the store at the end of the day in order of first to last," from a memo that explains each of the key actions necessary but does not list them in chronological order.
- o e.g., answering, "List the minimum safety equipment required by Transport Canada for a 6m – 9m motorized pleasure craft," requires pulling the requested information from a boating regulations guide that discusses safety equipment requirements for different sizes and types of watercraft.

Summarize

- o e.g., answering, “Briefly explain the main factors that contribute to the higher rates of workplace injury in men,” from an article where all of the factors are located within the same section of the text.
- o e.g., answering, “What is the main point of the memo sent to all of the staff?”
- **manage conditional information in longer and more complex text**
 - o e.g., answering, “You have a 10-year-old child who is hearing challenged and would like to see a show. Under these circumstances, which shows are most suitable?” from an arts festival program. The reader must use the given criteria to figure out and select the shows that are age-appropriate and, from that grouping, select shows that have hearing assistance.
 - o e.g., answering, “What dosage should a pregnant woman in her first trimester take?” from a pain medication bottle that states the product is not recommended for pregnant women in their third trimester but does not mention the first trimester. The reader must figure out the answer from the information provided.
- **navigate through lengthy and complex text.**



Content to be taught at this level:

- Expanding reading vocabulary with synonyms, homonyms, antonyms, root words and affixes, and by use of dictionary and thesaurus
- Using all skills quickly to improve fluency (sight, phonics, context, prediction, use of guiding features)
- Practise different reading strategies for different types of text (e.g., prose, charts, graphs)
- Summarizing information from documents
- Comparing and contrasting information from documents
- Organizing, sequencing, and reorganizing information from documents



Habits to be encouraged at this level:

- Self-monitoring through predicting, searching, or relating information to make cues match and make sense
- Relating text to real-world and personal experience

Sample Text

- A front-page news article
- Articles on relatively complex subjects: mentorship, digital cameras, the methods available to quit smoking
- A fairly complex timeline document for a multi-person project
- Festival programs with information about where to get tickets and descriptions of the shows that are part of the festival

Examples



When taking images in your garden, you should consider not only images that you like but also images that would interest others. If you are a writer, you may want to submit a story and pictures to a community newsletter for publication. If you are a member of a horticultural society, you may wish to do a presentation for fellow gardeners. Taking images in a variety of ways also helps to enhance your photographic skills.

Lens choice is an important consideration for garden photography. Some cameras have built-in lenses with a large range in focal lengths. Focal length, measured in millimetres, is the distance from the front of the lens to the point where an image is in focus. In general, shorter focal length lenses are used for sweeping landscapes and long focal length lenses are used to fill the frame with wildlife.

Since you will want to capture all the diminutive details in your garden, a camera with macro capabilities is essential. A macro lens allows you to focus on subjects only a few inches away. Tiny forget-me-nots or a ladybug on a daisy are perfect subjects for close-up photography. Most cameras are capable of macro photography. For professional photographers, a single focal length macro lens attached to an SLR or single-lens reflex camera is desirable.

Macro lenses are specialty lenses that have longer focal lengths and are considered “fast” lenses. The aperture blades in the lens can open wider than less expensive lenses to allow more light in. For example, a macro lens with an f2.8 180 mm focal length provides exceptional detail of tiny garden elements from a farther distance. This is helpful when photographing skittish insects that fly away if you get too close.

You may be tempted to shoot only the details in your garden, but shooting a wide-angle vista with a short focal length lens is important. Broad views of a flagstone path leading to a natural stone waterfall or a manicured lawn leading to a cheerful potting shed highlight design elements. Images of garden beds demonstrate your creative use of colour and plant choice.

Photographing your garden is an enjoyable past-time. Your garden changes from year-to-year as perennials flourish and creeping junipers spread out. Photography lets you appreciate the small details in your garden as well as the planning and hard work you’ve invested in it.



Please see the following page for example questions.

Example Questions

1) What are the characteristics of macro lenses that allow them to take pictures of small details?

- Cycle through text and locate all relevant information; the number of items is not specified in the search task.
- Navigate through lengthy and complex text.

2) Describe the reasons given in the article for switching from a film camera to a digital camera.

- Complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text.
- Use information in the text to find further information in the text.

3) You notice a raindrop is clinging to a leaf on one of your plants, in the shadow of your house.

What two features would your camera need to best capture this image?

- Manage conditional information in longer and more complex text.
- Navigate through lengthy and complex text.

Benchmark 3

By level 3, the reader has a good grasp of the skills needed to decode a document and is now using complex information processing skills that involve locating and integrating information within the text and also incorporating information from outside the text.

Level 3A

IALS LEVEL AND SCORE RANGE

LEVEL 3: Scores 276 – 300



Text Characteristics

Readers at this level can manage texts that:

- are of considerable complexity and length on an extensive variety of topics: grade 12 high-school texts in university-track courses
- are 600-900 words in length
- include lots of information that may not be needed for the task
- may present conflicting or contradictory information.



Readers' Vocabulary

Readers at this level can identify:

- vocabulary that reflects in-depth knowledge in specific areas of study or work; reading vocabulary is strong
 - o e.g., technical terms in subject areas like math or biology; work-related terms from areas like human resources or health and safety.



Decoding Skills

Readers at this level:

- have fully developed decoding skills and are able to internally sound out words very automatically and quickly.



Reading Tasks

Readers at this level can:

- cycle through and locate many pieces of complex information scattered throughout the text
 - o e.g., answering, "What are the reasons the government is considering a 50% reduction in clear cutting?" from an article on sustainable forest management.
- find complex information in order to summarize, reorganize, or integrate with background information
 - o e.g., "List all of the children's apparel stores from west to east," from a mall directory that includes a map and corresponding legend with the names of each of the stores.

- o e.g., “Why would it not be possible to do birchbark biting once the harvested bark is dried?” from an article that describes the best bark conditions for birchbark biting but does not contain explicit information about what makes biting difficult. The reader has to integrate the information from the text with their own personal knowledge to figure out the answer.
- **identify, compare, and contrast multiple pieces of information**
 - o e.g., answering, “Why would a company view phishing as less of a threat than social engineering to their computer systems and data?” requires the reader to understand the distinction between phishing and social engineering, identify the type of threats related to each, and then compare them from a workplace computer security article.
- **generate ideas and opinions by connecting information from the text with background knowledge from outside the text**
 - o e.g., answering, “Do you think the senate should be abolished? Why or why not?” from an article about the senate in Canada.
- **navigate through dense, detailed, and complex text**



Content to be taught at this level:

- Ability to gather information and make it relevant to one’s self
- Identify intent, audience, style, and purpose of documents
- Read critically. Sort out relevant, irrelevant, contradictory, and supporting information. Relate to learner’s purpose for reading.
- Read critically. Awareness of material that is difficult to understand and the reason for the difficulty — vocabulary? background knowledge? style?
- Organize information so it can be summarized, reorganized, compared, contrasted, or integrated



Habits to be encouraged at this level:

- Taking control of learning goals
- Using reading skills to achieve goals in work and study
- Linking to prior knowledge; linking to real world

Sample Text

- Articles on relatively complex topics: pioneers in Canada, bread-making (including explanations of how ingredients interact with each other), computer software licensing agreements
- Excerpts from city bylaws
- Multi-chart documents on how to select garden plants
- Passages from grade 12 texts in university-track courses

Examples

PIONEER SETTLEMENT OF WESTERN CANADA

Canada's Prairie Provinces cover a vast area of land that we know of today with major cities, large industrial areas, and vast farm land. The population of the three Prairie Provinces today is made up of millions of people from many ethnic backgrounds. But what we see today is not always the way it was.

In the mid-1800s the area was made up of small settlements, no large cities and inhabitants were made up of native tribes and small handfuls of European settlers that braved the sparsely populated prairies.


At that time, the populace of the prairies had limited means of communication, no power or public utilities as we know them today, or services such as major roads. This was all about to change drastically as the result of a number of activities.

Canada became a nation in 1867. Soon after, it was recognized that a means of transport across the country was needed not only as a link between centres, but also as a means of securing the provinces and territories in the Dominion. Southern and northern rail lines were constructed. The southern route was built first and reached the west coast of Canada through what is now Regina and Calgary. The northern route eventually linked Saskatoon and Edmonton to the west coast. This was the first key piece of the puzzle that was needed to enable mass settlement on the prairies.

The government of Canada also recognized that the large open prairies were sparsely populated and presented a potential for a takeover by the United States. The government saw one solution to the threat of an invasion by the United States in populating the prairies with settlers. They also recognized that the large open areas of the prairies were a potential agricultural area that offered the possibility of wealth through exports of grain and livestock.

In Europe in the 1800s, the countries of central and northern Europe housed not only great industrial cities but also large areas outside the cities which were inhabited by large numbers of peasant farmers. These farmers typically had small tracts of land amounting to only a few hectares, and raised barely enough crops or livestock to provide for their families; what they were able to sell only brought in small amounts of money. They were open to opportunities to better themselves and the Canadian government saw the potential in their vast numbers.

In the period of 1870-1900, the Canadian government undertook an official policy that was to see the settlement of the prairies. With government agents and the assistance of various shipping agents, the government carried out marketing activities in areas of Europe where there were large populations of peasant farmers to entice them to come to Canada. The peasants were told of the vast open tracts of land and that for a \$10 homesteading fee they would be given 160 acres (approximately 65



hectares) of land. There were specific requirements that had to be met for living on the land and the amount of land that must be cultivated over time. However, this was more land than most peasant farmers in Europe could even imagine ever owning. To peasant farmers who had only a few acres of land this sounded like a dream. This dream was enough to make hundreds of thousands of peasants sell what they could to travel to a place they had often never heard of – not really knowing what they would find when they got there.

It was not long before large numbers of immigrants were making the journey to Canada to claim their land. Canadian Pacific, which owned the railway from the east to west coast, also owned cargo and passenger ships which travelled between Canada and Europe. Their shipping agents were able to convince peasants about the possibilities on the Canadian prairies, and then sell the tickets on their ships and on their rail line to get them to the prairies.

Immigrants were soon arriving on the prairies in large numbers. They came from areas of Germany, Austria, Ukraine, Scandinavia, Poland, and many others. In most cases they arrived in Canada with only the possessions they could carry and little money. They travelled for days across the country only to be dropped off in tiny hamlets or towns and then set out for the land they had claimed from the government.

Settlement patterns can be traced to the rail line, with the first peasants homesteading on land close to the rail routes. As time went on and more settlers came, the distance from the rail routes to their homesteads became greater. This expanding settlement pattern also led to growth of the rail networks. As farms became productive, rail lines were extended to create local networks that were needed to collect the grain and livestock from rural areas and transport it to markets.

The first task for the immigrants upon arriving at their homestead was building a shelter. The first shelter was often only a sod hut that would serve as their home for their first few years. With hard work, they often could afford to build a proper house within a few short years of landing in Canada; within a decade of arriving, most would consider themselves prosperous compared to their lives in Europe. They proved that the Canadian prairie did offer great opportunity, and through their hard work and toil they created the base of the three Prairie Provinces that we know today.



Example Questions

1) How was life in Canada different from life in Europe for Canada's prairie settlers?

- Cycle through and locate many pieces of complex information scattered throughout the text.
- Identify, compare, and contrast multiple pieces of information.
- Navigate through dense, detailed, and complex text.

2) The Canadian Pacific Company of the 1800s has been referred to as the "father of the prairies."

How would someone conclude that the Canadian Pacific Company could be the "father of the prairies"?

- Find complex information in order to summarize, reorganize, or integrate with background knowledge.
- Navigate through dense, detailed, and complex text.

3) How do you think the changes that began during the settlement of the prairies affected the original inhabitants of the Canadian prairies?

- Generate ideas and opinions by connecting information from the text with background knowledge from outside the text.

Glossary

complex comparison	Involves either comparing pieces of information that share more than one feature or sorting through lengthier text to find the information. Comparison tasks involve cycling through to locate the pieces of information.
complex information	Information that is not easily apparent in the text; may be new information that is not familiar to the reader or that could be made up of multiple pieces.
complex search	A search that requires the reader to go to different parts of the text to gather the information or do a more active reading task that involves scanning through longer text for key words.
complex sentence	<p>Contains an independent clause and at least one dependent clause.</p> <p>e.g., <i>There are countless cover crops that can be useful with this strategy.</i></p> <div><div>independent clause</div><div>dependent clause</div></div>
conditional information	Searches for conditional information require putting information together to meet certain conditions or criteria. The answer may not be directly stated and it will involve some “figuring out.”
cycle	A process of repeatedly searching for and locating information in the text until each piece of requested information has been located.
distracting information	Information that could confuse the reader or that could be mistaken for the correct answer. The presence of synonyms or extra information means that the reader must figure out which information is relevant and which information can be ignored.
integrate	To combine information or connect information in ways not evident in the text. For example, comparing, reorganizing, or summarizing information provided in the text.
locate	A process of matching the information given in the question to exact or similar information in the text. The more closely the language of the question matches the language of the text, the easier it is to find.
reorganize	Involves sorting or grouping information in a different way than the text organizes it, such as in a sequence, or grouped by a shared feature or set of features (e.g., from a selection of animals, list the breeds of dogs; big dogs; big dogs with cropped ears; etc.).
simple sentence	A simple sentence is made of a subject and predicate. It can be one independent clause or two or more independent clauses joined by a conjunction such as <i>for</i> , <i>and</i> , <i>nor</i> , <i>but</i> , <i>or</i> , <i>yet</i> , <i>so</i> (compound sentence). It can be made longer with the addition of modifiers or descriptive words.
summarize	To briefly retell the key points.

How *Read Forward* Aligns with the ARB

Read Forward is a reading assessment aligned with the Alberta Reading Benchmarks. It aims to assess performance on reading tasks. The following chart outlines the correlation between the reading tasks in the Alberta Reading Benchmarks and the reading tasks in *Read Forward*.

LEVEL	ALBERTA READING BENCHMARKS	READ FORWARD	FORMERLY KNOWN AS
1A	<p>Readers may be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify names of letters of the alphabet identify sounds made by some of the letters identify a few sight words 	<p>Read Forward does not assess this level.</p>	
1B	<p>Readers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus on words rather than on phrases or sentences find common and concrete words in the text recognize common formats (phone number, address, price, date) locate a single piece of information by matching word for word what is written in the text know where to write their own name on a simple form understand simple lists use simple comparisons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and use familiar words use common structures such as phone numbers, addresses, and prices choose words from a list of words know where to write their name on a form understand simple lists such as shopping lists and simple menus 	Segment A
1C	<p>Readers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> find information that uses simple and common words rely on understanding meaning rather than relying on text structure to find information select from choices given several possibilities know where to write personal information on a form (name, phone number, address) use simple comparisons with three or more items interpret a short text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand common words in text make choices that are based on understanding meaning rather than on relying only on structure select from choices know where to write personal information on a form relate common words to other words in nearby text interpret a short text 	Segment B
2A	<p>Readers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> relate information to other information further away in the text find complex information cycle to find more than one piece of information that is not side by side select among choices in a short text make more complex comparisons between items mentioned in the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relate information to other information that is further away in the text, not only to nearby text find complex information by searching for it in the text cycle through text to find more than one piece of information select among choices in a short text make comparisons between items or people mentioned in the text use comparisons to find other information 	Segment C

LEVEL	ALBERTA READING BENCHMARKS	READ FORWARD	FORMERLY KNOWN AS
2B	Readers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use guiding features in the text to find information; e.g., scan for key words using headings, inset boxes, or bold print to find information without reading every word cycle to locate up to three or four pieces of information; the number of requested items is specified complete complex searches including combining information from different parts of the text manage distracting information such as the use of synonyms and the presence of extra information not related to the task use information in the text to find further information in the text figure out meaning when it is implicitly or indirectly expressed that can be stated in the negative read longer and more complex text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use text structure to find information such as headings, subheadings, and map legends identify a subset of examples complete complex searches for information including combining information from two separate charts manage distracting information such as the use of synonyms and the presence of more information than is needed to answer the question use information from the text to find further information in the text manage conditional information read longer and more complex texts understand the relationships between different parts of the text 	Segment D
2C	Readers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cycle through text and locate all relevant information; the number of items is not specified in the search task reorganize or summarize many pieces of complex information from one part of text manage conditional information in longer, more complex text navigate through lengthy and complex text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relate information to other information that is further away in the text, not only to nearby text find complex information by searching for it in the text cycle through text to find more than one piece of information select among choices in a short text make comparisons between items or people mentioned in the text use comparisons to find other information 	Segment E
3A	Readers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cycle through and locate many pieces of complex information scattered throughout the text identify, compare, and contrast multiple pieces of information find complex information in order to summarize, reorganize, or integrate it with background knowledge generate ideas and opinions by connecting information from the text with background knowledge from outside the text navigate through dense, detailed, and complex text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete complex cycling processes identify, compare, and contrast multiple pieces of information, including all examples within a set put the set in a requested order manage conditional information in the longer and more complex texts generate ideas and opinions by integrating information from a text with background knowledge from outside the text navigate through longer and more complex texts than in level 2C 	Segment F

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