

# Reading Standards for Informational Text K-5

RI

## Grade 3 students:

### Key Ideas and Details

1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
2. Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
3. Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

### Craft and Structure

4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.
5. Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.
6. Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).
8. Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).
9. Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

## Grade 4 students:

## Grade 5 students:

1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
2. Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
3. Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.
5. Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or part of a text.
6. Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.

7. Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

8. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

9. Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grades 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

- Students *explain* how Mark Teague's *illustrations* contribute to what is conveyed in Cynthia Rylant's *Poppleton in Winter* to *create the mood and emphasize aspects of characters and setting* in the story. [RL.3.7]
- Students read *fables* and *folktales from diverse cultures* that represent various origin tales, such as Rudyard Kipling's "How the Camel Got His Hump" and Natalie Babbitt's *The Search for Delicious*, and *paraphrase their central message, lesson, or moral*. [RL.2.2]
- Students *describe the overall story structure* of *The Thirteen Clocks* by James Thurber, *describing how the interactions of the characters of the Duke and Princess Saralinda introduce the beginning of the story* and how the suspenseful plot comes to an *end*. [RL.2.5]
- When discussing E. B. White's book *Charlotte's Web*, students *distinguish their own point of view* regarding Wilbur the Pig *from* that of Fern Arable as well as *from* that of *the narrator*. [RL.3.6]
- Students *describe how the character* of Bud in Christopher Paul Curtis' story *Bud, Not Buddy* *responds to a major event* in his life of being placed in a foster home. [RL.2.3]
- Students read Paul Fleischman's poem "Fireflies," determining the meaning of *words and phrases* in the poem, particularly focusing on identifying his use of *nonliteral language* (e.g., "light is the ink we use") and talking about how it suggests meaning. [RL.3.4]

### Informational Texts

**Aliki. *A Medieval Feast*. New York: HarperCollins, 1986. (1983)**

2-3 band

It was announced from the palace that the King would soon make a long journey.

On the way to his destination, the King and his party would spend a few nights at Camdenton Manor. The lord of the manor knew what this meant. The king traveled with his Queen, his knights, squires, and other members of his court. There could be a hundred mouths to feed!

Preparations for the visit began at once. The lord and lady of the manor had their serfs to help them. The serfs lived in huts provided for them on the lord's estate, each with its own plot of land. In return, they were bound to serve the lord. They farmed his land, managed his manor house, and if there was a war, they had to go to battle with the lord and the King.

But now they prepared.

The manor had its own church, which was attended by everyone on the estate.

The manor house had to be cleaned, the rooms readied, tents set up for the horsemen, fields fenced for the horses. And above all, provisions had to be gathered for the great feast.

The Royal Suite was redecorated.

Silk was spun, new fabric was woven.

The Royal Crest was embroidered on linen and painted on the King's chair.

The lord and his party went hunting and hawking for fresh meat.

Hunting was a sport for the rich only. The wild animals that lived on the lord's estate belonged to him. Anyone caught poaching—hunting illegally—was severely punished.

Falcons and hawks were prized pets. They were trained to attack birds for their masters to capture.

They trapped rabbits and birds of all kinds, and fished for salmon and eels and trout.

This is sweeter and sadder because he cannot stay. He must return to the faraway country where he is learning to be a doctor. He thinks of New York then. He remembers September.

A child asks if he has brought any stories. Kimeli nods. He has brought with him one story. It has burned a hole in his heart.

But first he must speak with the elders.

Later, in a tradition as old as the Maasai, the rest of the tribe gathers under an acacia tree to hear the story. There is a terrible stillness in the air as the tale unfolds. With growing disbelief, men, women, and children listen. Buildings so tall they can touch the sky? Fires so hot they can melt iron? Smoke and dust so thick they can block out the sun?

The story ends. More than three thousand souls are lost. A great silence falls over the Maasai. Kimeli waits. He knows his people. They are fierce when provoked, but easily moved to kindness when they hear of suffering or injustice.

At last, an elder speaks. He is shaken, but above all, he is sad. "What can we do for these poor people?" Nearby, a cow lows. Heads turn toward the herd. "To the Maasai," Kimeli says softly, "the cow is life."

Turning to the elders, Kimeli offers his only cow, Enkarûs. He asks for their blessing. They give it gladly. But they want to offer something more.

The tribe sends word to the United States Embassy in Nairobi. In response, the embassy sends a diplomat. His jeep jounces along the dusty, rugged roads. He is hot and tired. He thinks he is going to meet with Maasai elders. He cannot be more wrong. As the jeep nears the edge of the village the man sits up. Clearly, this is no ordinary diplomatic visit. This is...

...a ceremony. Hundreds of Maasai greet the American in full tribal splendor. At the sight of the brilliant blood-red tunics and spectacular beaded collars, he can only marvel.

It is a day of sacred ritual. Young warriors dance, leaping into the air like fish from a stream. Women sing mournful songs. Children fill their bellies with milk. Speeches are exchanged. And now it is time.

Kimeli and his people gather on a sacred knoll, far from the village. The only sound is the gentle chiming of cowbells. The elders chant a blessing in Maa as the Maasai people of Kenya present...

...fourteen cows for America.

Because there is no nation so powerful it cannot be wounded, nor a people so small they cannot offer mighty comfort.

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### Sample Performance Tasks for Informational Texts

2-3 band

- Students read Alikì's description of *A Medieval Feast* and demonstrate their understanding of all that goes into such an event by asking questions pertaining to who, what, where, when, why, and how such a meal happens and by answering using key details. [RI.2.1]
- Students describe the reasons behind Joyce Milton's statement that bats are nocturnal in her *Bats: Creatures of the Night* and how she supports the points she is making in the text. [RI.2.8]
- Students read Selby Beeler's *Throw Your Tooth on the Roof: Tooth Traditions Around the World* and identify what Beeler wants to answer as well as explain the main purpose of the text. [RI.2.6]
- Students determine the meanings of words and phrases encountered in Sarah L. Thomson's *Where Do Polar Bears Live?*, such as cub, den, blubber, and the Arctic. [RI.2.4]
- Students explain how the main idea that Lincoln had "many faces" in Russell Freedman's *Lincoln: A Photobiography* is supported by key details in the text. [RI.3.2]

Volcanoes are formed when magma pushes its way up through the crack in Earth's crust. This is called a volcanic eruption. When magma pours forth on the surface, it is called lava.

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**Nelson, Kadir. *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*. New York: Jump at the Sun, 2008. (2008)**  
**From "4th Inning: Racket Ball: Negro League Owners"**

Most of the owners didn't make much money from their teams. Baseball was just a hobby for them, a way to make their illegal money look good. To save money, each team would only carry fifteen or sixteen players. The major league teams each carried about twenty-five. Average salary for each player started at roughly \$125 per month back in '34, and went up to \$500-\$800 during the forties, though there were some who made much more than that, like Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson. The average major league player's salary back then was \$7,000 per month. We also got around fifty cents to a dollar per day for food allowance. Back then you could get a decent meal for about twenty-five cents to seventy-five cents.

Some of the owners didn't treat their players very well. Didn't pay them enough or on time. That's why we would jump from team to team. Other owners would offer us more money, and we would leave our teams and go play for them. We were some of the first unrestricted free agents.

There were, however, a few owners who did know how to treat their ballplayers. Cum Posey was one of them. He always took care of his ballplayers, put them in the best hotels, and paid them well and on time. Buck Leonard said Posey never missed a payday in the seventeen years he played for the Grays.

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**Cutler, Nellie Gonzalez. "Kenya's Long Dry Season." *Time for Kids* September 25, 2009. (2009)**

grades 4-5 **Hall, Leslie. "Seeing Eye to Eye." *National Geographic Explorer* September 2009. (2009)**

A hungry falcon soars high above Earth. Its sharp eyes scan the ground. Suddenly, it spies something moving in the grass. The falcon dives toward it.

Far below, a gray field mouse scurries through the grass. Its dark, beady eyes search constantly for danger. With eyes on either side of its head, the mouse can see almost everything around it.

Will the mouse see the falcon in time to escape? Or, will the speedy falcon catch the prey it spied from far above? Whatever happens, one thing is clear: Without eyes, neither animal has a good chance.

Why? Eyes help many animals make sense of the world around them - and survive. Eyes can guide the falcon to dinner or help the mouse see a perfect place to hide.

Animal eyes come in many different shapes, sizes, colors, and even numbers. Yet they do the same job. They all catch light. With help from the brain, eyes turn light into sight.

Eyes work in the same way for people. Look at this page. You may think you see words and pictures. Believe it or not, you don't. All you see is light bouncing off the page. How is this possible? The secret is in the rules of light.

#### **Light Rules**

Light is a form of energy, like heat or sound. It can come from a natural source, like the sun, or artificial sources, like a lamp or a flashlight.

Light is the fastest known thing. It travels in waves and in nearly straight lines. In air, it can speed 299,700 kilometers (186,200 miles) per second. It can race from the sun to Earth in just over eight minutes! Light doesn't always travel so fast. For example, water or glass can slow light down, but just a bit.

Light may seem to break all driving speed laws. Yet there are certain rules it always follows. Light reflects, or bounces off objects. It also refracts, or bends. And it can be absorbed, or soaked up, by objects. These rules of light affect what, and how, we see.

Buckmaster, Henrietta. "Underground Railroad." *The New Book of Knowledge*. New York: Scholastic, 2010. (2010)

### Sample Performance Tasks for Informational Texts

- Students *explain* how Melvin Berger uses *reasons and evidence* in his book *Discovering Mars: The Amazing Story of the Red Planet* to *support particular points* regarding the topology of the planet. [RI.4.8]
- Students identify the *overall structure of ideas, concepts, and information* in Seymour Simon's *Horses* (based on factors such as their speed and color) and *compare and contrast* that scheme to the one employed by Patricia Lauber in her book *Hurricanes: Earth's Mightiest Storms*. [RI.5.5]
- Students *interpret* the visual chart that accompanies Steve Otfinoski's *The Kid's Guide to Money: Earning It, Saving It, Spending It, Growing It, Sharing It* and *explain how the information* found within it *contributes to an understanding of* how to create a budget. [RI.4.7]
- Students *explain the relationship between* time and clocks using *specific information* drawn from Bruce Koscielniak's *About Time: A First Look at Time and Clocks*. [RI.5.3]
- Students *determine the meaning of domain-specific words or phrases*, such as *crust, mantle, magma, and lava*, and important *general academic words and phrases* that appear in Seymour Simon's *Volcanoes*. [RI.4.4]
- Students *compare and contrast a firsthand account* of African American ballplayers in the Negro Leagues to a *secondhand account* of their treatment found in books such as Kadir Nelson's *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*, attending to the *focus of each account and the information provided by each*. [RI.4.6]
- grades 4-5  
• Students *quote accurately and explicitly* from Leslie Hall's "Seeing Eye to Eye" to *explain statements* they make and ideas they *infer* regarding sight and light. [RI.5.1]
- Students *determine the main idea* of Colin A. Ronan's "Telescopes" and create a *summary by explaining how key details support* his distinctions regarding different types of telescopes. [RI.4.2]