

# Linking Ontario Provincial Student Assessment Standards with those of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), 2006

Completed by Dr. Shelley Stagg Peterson,  
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto  
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Analysis of student booklets conducted with the assistance of the following teachers:  
Ms. Tuyet Binh Duong, gr. 3 teacher, Toronto District School Board  
Ms. Alyson Shearer, gr. 6 teacher, Durham District School Board  
Mr. Erik Sorensen, gr. 6 teacher, Durham District School Board

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## Introduction

The EQAO primary and junior reading assessments are administered in all elementary schools in Ontario annually. The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement and administered every five years, was administered in 2001 in 28 jurisdictions (including Ontario and Quebec), and in 2006 in 45 jurisdictions (including Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec). Grade 4 classes in 200 randomly selected Ontario schools participated in this evaluation. Students had 80 minutes to complete the PIRLS assessment, whereas students were allowed to take time beyond the one-hour guideline to complete the EQAO tests.

This report details the results of a content analysis of the following documents related to each of the large-scale assessments:

### PIRLS

1. PIRLS 2006 Assessment Framework and Specifications
2. Descriptions of PIRLS 2006 low, intermediate and high benchmarks
3. PIRLS 2006 Student Booklets 1-12
4. *PIRLS 2006 Reader* and Questions for the PIRLS Reader
5. PIRLS 2006 Scoring Guide: *Clay, Flowers, Shiny Straw*

### EQAO

1. Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Primary Division (Grades 1-3) Framework
2. Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Junior Division (Grades 4-6) Framework
3. Grade 3 Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Spring 2006 Student Booklet Language 1 and Language 2
4. Grade 6 Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Spring 2006 Student Booklet Language 1 and Language 2
5. Grade 3 Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Spring 2006 Student Booklet: Language 1 and 2 Scoring Guides
6. Grade 6 Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, Spring 2006 Student Booklet: Language 1 and 2 Scoring Guides

## Analysis Methods

The professional advisor created a template for analyzing the aspects of reading assessed, the item formats, and the genre, format, topics, and complexity of the reading passages of the student booklets. Three classroom teachers, two grade 6 teachers with the Durham District School Board and one grade 3 teacher with the Toronto District School Board, met with the professional advisor for training in using the template to analyze one passage and its accompanying items from the *PIRLS Reader*. After using one passage and its accompanying items from the PIRLS Reader, the analysis team added one additional category of information. The teachers independently conducted the initial analyses of the 12 PIRLS student booklets and the second passage in the *PIRLS Reader*. The professional advisor analyzed the EQAO student booklets, scoring guides for the grades 3 and 6 EQAO tests and the PIRLS test and benchmarks for the PIRLS test, as well as the framework documents for the provincial and international tests. Results of the analysis are found in Appendix A-H.

The three teachers and the professional advisor met to validate the analyses (two teachers analyzed each of ten PIRLS reading passages and their accompanying questions). The team identified similarities and differences between the EQAO and PIRLS reading assessments in terms of:

- constructs of reading
- item format
- aspects of reading that are measured and the relative emphasis on each aspect
- genre, format, topics, and complexity of reading passages
- benchmarks and performance levels

## Content Analysis: Executive Summary

### *Summary of Similarities*

The key similarities between the two reading assessments are:

- 1) Social constructivist theory underpins the EQAO and PIRLS reading assessments, as readers are viewed as active meaning makers who make sense of text. Understanding and using information and ideas from text are the primary goals of reading. Reading is viewed as an intentional process where individuals read to achieve a range of purposes.
- 2) The largest percentage of items in both tests (80% of the PIRLS test and 64% of the EQAO test) assesses students' abilities to infer, interpret and integrate ideas and information, and to examine and evaluate content, language and textual elements. Retrieving and understanding explicitly stated information is considered to be less demanding and a smaller proportion of questions is devoted to assessing this reading skill/process.
- 3) Reading passages used in the EQAO and PIRLS reading assessments are both informational and literary texts, with some informational texts taking non-continuous forms.
- 4) The High International Benchmark and the Level 3 (the Ontario Provincial Standard) are comparable in their expectation that students will be able to perform all of the reading skills/processes that are assessed, demonstrating understanding of the text and the purpose of the question. Student performance that ranks at both the PIRLS Advanced International Benchmark and at the EQAO Level 4 is distinguishable from the High International Benchmark and Level 3 by a wider interpretation that demonstrates complex, abstract understandings.

### *Summary of Differences*

The key differences between the two reading assessments are:

- 1) The outcome of reading (understanding and use of text information and ideas) is emphasized in the PIRLS construct of reading literacy. The strategies (use of cueing systems, together with comprehension strategies) that are involved in reading are emphasized in the EQAO construct of reading.
- 2) The EQAO reading construct is clearly connected to the topics and values identified in the Ontario curriculum, whereas the PIRLS construct is grounded in broader societal topics and values.
- 3) The PIRLS reading literacy assessment assesses four reading comprehension processes, whereas the EQAO tests assess three reading skills. The PIRLS reading literacy assessment includes questions that ask students to examine and evaluate content, language, and textual elements. Although this reading process is not explicitly identified as one of the three reading skills in the EQAO reading assessments, there is a greater percentage of actual items assessing language and textual elements in the EQAO reading assessments than in the PIRLS reading literacy assessment.
- 4) The EQAO reading assessments explicitly invite students to use their background knowledge and experience to answer questions and the scoring guides show an expectation that students will draw on their personal knowledge and experience. The PIRLS reading assessment items and the benchmarks do not explicitly recognize students' use of background knowledge and experience, although the theoretical framework and definition of reading literacy clearly do.
- 5) The EQAO reading assessments are organized in two booklets with 14 items in the first booklet and 30 items in the 2<sup>nd</sup> booklet. There are 13 student booklets in the PIRLS reading literacy assessment. Sixty-one percent of the total points possible in the EQAO reading assessments are generated by constructed response questions. Half of the possible points in the PIRLS reading

literacy assessment are generated by the constructed response questions. Fifty-eight percent of the questions in the PIRLS reading assessment are multiple choice questions whereas 70% of the EQAO questions are multiple choice. All constructed response questions in the EQAO tests are weighted equally whereas constructed response questions in the PIRLS test are assigned 1-3 points, depending on the depth of understanding required.

- 6) Reading passages in the PIRLS reading literacy assessment, considerably longer and with more demanding vocabulary and complex and compound sentences, are taken from published narrative and informational literature whereas the EQAO reading passages are, for the most part composed for the test, though two of the grade six passages are excerpted from published literature. The topics of the PIRLS reading passage are further removed from Ontario children's immediate experience than are those of the EQAO reading passages and are not closely tied to the Ontario curriculum, as are the informational passages of the EQAO reading assessments. The PIRLS reading literacy assessment does not contain poetry passages whereas the EQAO reading assessment contains one for each grade level.
- 7) The reading passages in the PIRLS reading literacy assessment are more likely to be beyond the grade level of the students who write the tests than are the passages in the EQAO reading assessments.

### *Conclusions*

The constructs and their theoretical underpinnings, as well as the benchmarks and performance levels of the EQAO and PIRLS reading assessments are comparable. The PIRLS reading passages are more challenging, in terms of reading level, vocabulary, sentence structure, and length, than the EQAO reading passages, although they are similar in the range of genres that are used across student booklets. The EQAO and PIRLS tests measure the same aspects of reading except for the inclusion of items that assess the connections that students make between text information and ideas and their background knowledge and experience in the EQAO test. Although the PIRLS test assesses four reading processes and the EQAO test assess three reading skills, the items within these categories are similar and both tests place greater weight on higher level reading processes/skills such as inferring and evaluating, with the EQAO tests having a greater proportion of items that examine language and textual elements. The EQAO tests include 70% multiple choice questions and weight all constructed responses equally, whereas the PIRLS test includes 50% multiple choice questions and assigns 1-3 points to constructed responses, depending on the depth of understanding required.

## Content Analysis

The following report details the results of the content analysis, beginning with the constructs of reading that underpin the two reading assessments, followed by assessments of the reading processes/skills assessed, of the item formats, and of the reading levels and content of the reading passages. The report ends with a comparison of the PIRLS benchmarks and the EQAO performance levels.

### *Constructs of Reading*

#### *Similarities*

The EQAO and PIRLS reading assessments place high value on language (EQAO) and reading literacy (PIRLS) as a “foundation for learning across all subjects” (*PIRLS Assessment Framework and Specifications 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, 2006, p. 1) and for “acquiring knowledge of the world and themselves” (p. 3). Language and literacy are viewed as “social practices that take place in and are influenced by the social and cultural contexts (including gender, race, class, age, and other identities and power relationships)” (*EQAO Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics Framework*, 2006, p. 6). Reading is viewed in both the provincial and international contexts as an intentional practice where individuals use reading to accomplish three specific purposes: to learn, for enjoyment, and to participate in society. Social constructivism is the theoretical underpinning of the EQAO reading assessments. The PIRLS reading literacy assessment has similar theoretical underpinnings, describing the reader as one who “construct[s] text meaning in a variety of contexts” (*PIRLS Assessment Framework and Specifications*, 2006, p. 4).

Also in common are test development considerations. Test developers consider the interaction between the length and complexity (ie., syntactic complexity, abstractness of ideas and organizational structure) of the text and the sophistication of the comprehension processes required.

#### *Differences*

The *PIRLS Assessment Framework and Specifications* uses the term “comprehension processes” whereas the *EQAO Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics Framework* uses the term “reading skills.” The outcome of reading is primary in the PIRLS construct of reading literacy; defined as “the ability to understand and use those written language forms required by society and/or valued by the individual” (*PIRLS Assessment Framework and Specifications*, 2006, p. 3). The definition of reading in the two *EQAO Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics Framework* documents emphasizes the strategies that are involved, defining reading as “a complex process that involves the application of many strategies before, during, and after reading.” Reading involves the use of cueing systems, together with comprehension strategies that include: “analyzing, synthesizing, making connections, evaluating, and using other critical and creative thinking skills to achieve a deeper understanding of the material they have read” (*EQAO Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics Framework*, 2006, p. 5).

Whereas the EQAO definition of reading is clearly centered on the Ontario curriculum expectations for all subjects, the PIRLS reading literacy definition has no intentional connections to the Ontario curriculum and, instead, identifies purposes of the written language forms. Reading is defined in the grade 3 and grade 6 *EQAO Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics Framework* documents as “the process of actively making meaning across a variety of fiction and non-fiction written texts that students are expected to understand according to the expectations of The Ontario Curriculum across all subjects to the end of either grade 3 or grade 6” (2006, p. 5). The EQAO tests’ close ties to the Ontario curriculum and the more general societal literacy goals of the PIRLS test

influence the types of topics that are addressed in the reading passages and the reading skills, processes and knowledge that are assessed in the test items.

Both assessments recognize that understanding when reading is influenced “by factors inside and outside the reader (experience, social and cultural identities, what the reader knows about language, print and the world, readers’ interests, motivation, strategies, purpose, perspectives and repertoire of reading skills, as well as text organization and format, vocabulary and topic, and social and physical environment)” (*EQAO Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics Framework*, 2006, p. 6). The PIRLS assessment framework identifies theoretical connections to Louise Rosenblatt’s Reader Response Theory with its emphasis on the interaction between the text and the reader, yet neither its items, nor the scoring guides explicitly take into consideration the influence of students’ background knowledge and experience on their responses to the items. The only reference to the reader’s influence on meaning is found in the PIRLS Scoring Guide general statement about the scoring, where it identifies “accommodat[ing] a range of responses within each scoring level” as a critical goal in developing the scoring guide. The document elaborates by saying, “Because students will respond to each question in a variety of ways, it would be inappropriate in most cases to identify a specific answer that must be provided by students to receive a particular score” (*PIRLS Scoring Guide*, 2006, unpagued). This is an important difference between the two tests, as every open-response item in the two EQAO tests instructs students to “use information from the text and your own ideas in your answer.”

The EQAO test assesses reading and writing separately, valuing each as important literacy processes. The *EQAO Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics Framework* identifies the two as complementary processes that “involve making meaning for particular social purposes” (2006, p. 5). The PIRLS assessment assesses only reading literacy and there is no mention of the role of writing in children’s literacy development.

Because the EQAO tests assess the level at which students meet curriculum expectations in the Ontario reading, writing and mathematics curriculum, the results, disaggregated by gender, special needs status and by mother tongue (whether English or English as a second language), can be used to inform classroom instruction and to improve student achievement. The yearly test results are compared by school and school board and across time at the provincial level. Given its international nature, the PIRLS test, on the other hand, reports results in terms of the reading purpose, type of reading process and the overall reading literacy achievement in each country.

### *Aspects of Reading Measured*

For more information about the following report of the analysis of the aspects of reading that are measured, please consult Appendix A for the analysis of the EQAO grades 3 and 6 reading skills and Appendix B for the analysis of the PIRLS reading comprehension processes.

### *Similarities*

Both the PIRLS and the EQAO reading assessments recognize the ability to understand/focus on/retrieve explicitly stated information as a less demanding and sophisticated skill/process, and assign less weight to it in terms of the percentage of questions that address it, (PIRLS - 20% according to the PIRLS Framework document for 2006 but 25% according to the analyses of the professional advisor and three Ontario teachers, and EQAO – 21.4% of the items across the two booklets at each grade level according to the professional advisor’s analysis).

On the EQAO tests, explicit understanding is measured through analyzing the text to find specific information, identifying the topic of a passage, identifying points of comparison in a simile, and identifying characters’ feelings and motivations that are explicitly stated in the passage. These tasks correspond to Ontario *Language* curriculum expectations for primary and junior grades, such as:

- demonstrates an understanding of a variety of literary, graphic, and informational texts

- identifies a variety of purposes for reading
- demonstrates understanding by identifying important ideas and supporting details
- demonstrates understanding by summarizing and explaining important ideas

Similarly, the PIRLS test examines students' abilities to focus on and retrieve explicitly stated information where the information is drawn from sentences or phrases. There is an assumption that readers understand the information and how the information is related to the information sought. Items require students to look for specific information, identify information relevant to reading goal, search for definitions, identify setting, and find the topic sentence/main idea when it is explicitly stated.

Eighty-percent of the PIRLS test assesses students' abilities to infer, interpret and integrate ideas and information, and to examine and evaluate content, language and textual elements. Similarly, over half of the EQAO items (64.3% according to the professional advisor's analysis) examine these reading processes/skills.

On the EQAO tests, students' understanding of implicitly stated information and ideas is measured through inferring the main idea or purpose of a text, inferring the purpose of particular punctuation, inferring word meanings from context, inferring the genre of a passage and inferring characters' intentions. These tasks correspond to curriculum expectations from the grades 3 and 6 *Language* curriculum documents such as:

- make inferences
- identify point of view presented in texts
- describe characteristics of variety of text forms
- recognize organization patterns in texts of different types
- identify text features
- identify elements of style
- predict meanings of unfamiliar words using different types of cues

The PIRLS reading assessment separates this ability to understand implicitly stated information into three processes: making straightforward inferences, where the focus is on more than sentence; the meaning may be in part of text or whole of text. Readers fill in the gaps in meaning by connecting ideas that are stated, but the connection between them must be inferred. Thirty percent of the questions on the PIRLS test examine students' ability to make straightforward inferences, including questions that require students to: infer that one event caused another, conclude the main point made by a series of arguments; determine a pronoun referent, identify generalizations in the text, and describe relationships between two characters.

The second reading comprehension process, also weighted at 30% of the PIRLS test, is the ability to interpret and integrate ideas and information. These questions, focusing on global or local meanings beyond the sentence level, require readers to draw on their understandings of the world, as connections are not only implicit but also open to interpretation based on reader's perspective. Typical of these types of questions are those that require readers to: discern the overall message/theme; consider alternative actions for characters; compare and contrast text information; interpret real-world applications of text information; construct mental images of information conveyed; and infer a character's underlying motive.

### *Differences*

In the PIRLS reading literacy assessments, passages classified as informational are accompanied by questions about information in the passages and those classified as literary will have questions addressing theme, plot events, characters, and setting. Three aspects of reading literacy are the focus of the PIRLS test: processes of comprehension, purposes of reading, and reading behaviors and attitudes.

The PIRLS test assesses four reading comprehension processes, whereas the EQAO tests assess three reading skills. Although the terminology suggests that the EQAO test views reading as the application of a set of discrete skills whereas the PIRLS assessment views reading as a series of continuous actions and cognitive processes, the types of questions that are asked require students to infer, interpret, identify, examine, and evaluate.

A third reading comprehension process involves examining and evaluating content, language, and textual elements. Questions addressing this comprehension process ask students to: critically consider the text, reflecting on text elements such as structure and language; examine how meaning is presented – rejecting or accepting claims or comparing/contrasting the ideas with those from other texts, and judging author’s accuracy, perspective and craft. Students must draw on their knowledge of genres and language conventions, as well as their knowledge about the world, to respond to these questions, which are weighted at 20% of the test (though the analyses of the professional advisor and three Ontario teachers determined this percentage to be 15%). The EQAO reading assessments do not differentiate text and language analysis as a separate reading process, but a large percentage of items is devoted to text analysis. These include: inferring the author’s purpose for using punctuation (5 items in grade 3 and 2 items in grade 6), inferring the purpose of particular types of texts and identifying the features of genres (2 items in grade 3 and 5 items in grade 6), and inferring word meanings (4 items in grade 3 and 4 items in grade 6). As such, there is a greater emphasis on examining and evaluating language and textual elements in the EQAO reading assessments (approximately 25%), with this reading process being integrated into the reading skills of understanding implicitly stated information and ideas (making inferences) and responding to reading by making connections between the text and personal knowledge and experience.

The EQAO reading assessments explicitly invite students to use their background knowledge and experience to answer questions and the scoring guides show an expectation that students will draw on their personal knowledge and experience. The PIRLS reading assessment items and the benchmarks do not explicitly recognize students’ use of background knowledge and experience, although the theoretical framework and definition of reading literacy clearly do. According to the professional advisor’s analysis, 14.3% of the questions in the two EQAO assessments require students to make connections between text information and personal knowledge and experience. Students’ abilities to respond to reading by making connections between the text and personal knowledge and experience are measured through questions requiring explanations of how a text makes a process understandable, evaluations and opinions about characters’ actions and personalities, and descriptions of personal feelings about the passage topic. These tasks correspond to curriculum expectations from the primary and junior Ontario *Language* curriculum documents such as:

- express personal opinions about ideas in texts
- connect ideas to own knowledge and experience

There is no comparable reading process or skill in the PIRLS assessment.

#### *Item Format Differences*

A more detailed analysis of the items in the grades 3 and 6 EQAO reading assessments can be found in Appendix C and of the PIRLS reading literacy assessment in Appendix D.

The EQAO reading assessments take the form of two student booklets; each with some reading passages and items that are used for operational purposes and some field-test items. Students complete both booklets in two sittings. One student booklet contains two passages with each followed by five multiple choice and two open response items. The ratio of multiple choice to constructed response questions is the same in the grade 3 and grade 6 EQAO reading assessments: 70% of the questions are multiple choice and 30% are open response questions. This corresponds to 61% of the total points per block generated by open response questions and 39% of points that are generated by multiple choice questions. In the EQAO test booklets there are no more than four questions per page, with either all

multiple choice or one or two of each type of question per page. The first question following a passage is a multiple choice question. The long reading selection for each grade is followed by 10 multiple choice and two open-response questions. The short reading selections are each followed by four multiple choice and two open-response questions.

Taking a different approach, the PIRLS test booklets use a matrix sampling technique using 10 blocks. A block consists of a passage and accompanied by 12 questions, with half of the passages designated as literary and half as informational. These blocks are divided into 13 booklets so that each block appears in 3 booklets. Four of the 10 blocks were retained from PIRLS 2001 to provide a foundation for comparisons across time. Each booklet contains 2 blocks, with each estimated to take 40 minutes for students to complete. Some booklets contain one of each type of text and others contain two of one type of text. There are 12 questions for each block and 15 points per block. There is a range of 4 to 9 multiple choice items per block with an average of 7 multiple choice questions. Unlike the EQAO assessment, constructed response questions in the PIRLS assessment are worth 1-3 points depending on the depth of understanding required. In some cases, students are answering two questions in their constructed responses. Each type of question assesses any of the comprehension processes, though CR questions are more appropriate for making complex interpretations and evaluations and providing support for their responses. Each page of the student booklet has three questions with some pages having all multiple choice questions, and others having combinations of multiple choice and constructed response questions. The multiple choice questions are worth 50% of the total points per block and the constructed-response questions are worth 50% of the total points per block. Like the multiple choice questions of the EQAO assessment, the multiple choice questions in the PIRLS assessment are worth one point. At the beginning of each PIRLS student booklet are samples of each type of question.

Unlike the PIRLS test, which contains only operational items, each EQAO test has 36 total operational items and 12 or 6 field test items divided in this way: either 26 operational items matched with 10 or 4 field test items, or 10 operational items matched with 2 field-test open-response items. Field test items are used to ensure that the items are fair to all students and to equate the assessments with those of previous years. This allows the EQAO to compare results from year to year. Only operational items are used to determine student, school, board and provincial results.

### *Reading Passages*

A more detailed analysis of the EQAO reading passages is found in Appendix E and of the PIRLS reading passages in Appendix F.

### *Similarities*

The appropriateness and readability of the PIRLS and EQAO tests are determined by educators and curriculum specialists, and by using the Fry Readability Index. The context for each test influences the text selection, as the PIRLS test designers consider texts that can be readily translated without meaning loss. Both the EQAO and PIRLS test designers also must select texts that are as culturally unbiased as possible, so they engage students across cultures. Accordingly, passage selection criteria include: topic and theme appropriateness for grade level, fairness and sensitivity to gender, racial, ethnic, and religious considerations, linguistic features, and density of information.

In the Ontario and international tests, texts are defined broadly as multi-modal forms, including “books, magazines, documents, and newspapers” as well as “electronic presentations such as on the Internet, email and text messaging” and “text included as part of various video, film and television media, advertisements, and labeling” (*PIRLS Assessment Framework and Specifications*, 2006, p. 4). The EQAO and PIRLS reading assessments strive to present a wide range of text types typical of those available to students in and out of school so students have, as much as possible, “authentic reading experiences they may have in other contexts” (*PIRLS Assessment Framework and Specifications*, 2006,

p. 18). The PIRLS reading literacy assessment contains non-continuous forms such as a pamphlet with maps for hiking trails and information about plants and animals along the trails and a procedural piece with directions for activities with insects that includes diagrams. The EQAO grade 3 reading assessment includes a poster advertising a school event and the grade 6 reading assessment includes a classroom calendar for the month of June. The narrative and information passages are formatted in paragraphs with occasional drawings of objects mentioned in the passages. The biographical passage in the grade 6 student booklet 2 has insets with “Fast Facts” so students have to be able to gather information from the continuous and discontinuous text. The poems have short lines and are organized in stanzas.

Both the Ontario and the international tests include hybrid texts, such as an informational text about sharks accompanied by photographs with captions and a diagram of a shark with body parts identified and explained, and an informational passage on Antarctica with a letter from a scientist working in Antarctica (PIRLS). The EQAO reading passages are less elaborate hybrid texts, with two “Fast Fact” insets in a biographical passage about Canadian poet, Dorothy Livesay.

### *Differences*

The passages in the PIRLS reading literacy assessment are categorized in terms of the reader’s purpose for reading them, either to gain a literary experience or to acquire and use information. The former purpose is achieved through narrative fiction that allows readers “to experience vicariously and reflect upon situations that, although they may be fantasy, illuminate those of real life” (*PIRLS Assessment Framework and Specifications*, 2006, p. 19). Passages for acquiring and using information allow readers to engage with “aspects of the real universe.” Five literary and five informational passages are used across 13 test booklets. The EQAO reading assessments use not only narrative and informational passages, but also poetry.

Topics in the grades 3 and 6 EQAO reading passages reflect the daily lives of most Ontario children: school events in the two non-continuous texts, a poster advertising a school talent show and a calendar of classroom events taking place during one month. In narratives found in the grade 3 test, the topics are the relationship between a mother and her disorganized son, and staying with neighbours while waiting for a baby sibling to be born. Informational and poetry passages in the grades 3 and 6 student booklets are drawn from social studies and science topics within the primary curriculum. The following table summarizes the genres within the reading passages.

Genres	Number of Passages		
	Grade 3 EQAO	Grade 6 EQAO	PIRLS
Poster	1		
Calendar		1	
Biography		1	1
Realistic Fiction	2	1	2
Explanation of a process	1	1	1
Essay with photographs			2
Fantasy – includes anthropomorphized lump of clay and anthropomorphized wolves			3
Poem	1	1	
Pamphlet			1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>

The PIRLS reading passages differ from the EQAO reading passage in not being so closely tied to a particular curriculum. They are written by “successful authors who understand writing for a young audience” because these “are more likely to engage students’ interests, and to yield assessment questions that will elicit a range of responses to text that are similar to those elicited in authentic reading experience” (*PIRLS Assessment Framework and Specifications*, 2006, p. 41) whereas all but one of the EQAO test passages have been written for testing purposes and have not been previously published as trade literature. In addition, the PIRLS *Reader* and its *Questions for the PIRLS 2006 Reader* booklet are designed to present a more “natural, authentic setting” (PIRLS, p. 39). The passages in the *PIRLS Reader* have a glossy color magazine-type format, for example, and passages in the other student booklets include original drawings, photographs, and maps of the trade books and other texts from which they originate.

The literary genres in the PIRLS reading literacy assessment include two realistic fiction pieces, one about generational differences and another about a family that adopts an eagle and raises it alongside the family’s chickens. Many Ontario children likely have elderly relatives or neighbours in their lives. Raising chickens will be a shared experience with some Ontario children, but there will be many others to whom it is unfamiliar. Other literary texts include a fantasy story about animals not found in Canada emerging from magazine pages, a tale told from the perspective of an anthropomorphized lump of clay, and the tale of anthropomorphized wolves, all suspenseful, engaging stories that would appeal to fourth grade children even if the animals are not likely to be well known to them except through vicarious experience. Ontario students may be able to empathize with the feelings of loneliness and being left out as the lump of clay did. The informational passages include a biography of Leonardo da Vinci that highlights his many inventions, and essays on the topics of sharks and Antarctica. These topics are removed from Ontario children’s lives, but most children would have a superficial knowledge of the topics and are likely to have a natural curiosity about them. The topics of the PIRLS reading literacy assessment lean toward the natural world to the greatest degree, whereas the topics of the EQAO reading assessments lead to the human world, being set in schools and urban communities. The following table summarizes the topics in the reading passages found in the student booklets for each reading assessment.

Topics	Number of Topics		
	Grade 3 EQAO	Grade 6 EQAO	PIRLS
School events	1	1	
Historical times	1		
Family relationships	1		
Awaiting the birth of a sibling	1		
Popcorn		1	
Poets		1	
Seasons		1	
School chums		1	
Life changes			1
Animals	1		4
Fantasizing			1
Art class			1
Inventors			1
Geography			1
Leisure activities			1

The EQAO reading assessments at grades 3 and 6 include one non-continuous text, one poem, a short narrative (200-250 words for grade 3 and 300-350 words for grade 6), an information passage, and either a long narrative (450-500 words for gr. 3) or a biography (650-700 words for gr. 6). The PIRLS reading passages are much longer than the EQAO passages; texts are up to 1000 words, although the length varies because of other factors within the text that affect reading rate. The average number of sentences in the grade 3 EQAO reading passages is 13.6 simple sentences and 8.6 complex and compound sentences. The range is 6-17 simple sentences and 0-16 complex sentences across all five passages. The average number of sentences is 10.75 simple sentences and 11.75 compound and complex sentences in the grade 6 reading passages. The range is 9-15 simple sentences and 5-20 compound and complex sentences. The continuous PIRLS passages are considerably longer with an average of 28 compound and complex sentences and 33 simple sentences. In all but two of the passages there were more complex sentences than simple sentences. The range is 10-44 complex sentences and 13-68 simple sentences. The grade 3 passages range from no paragraphs in the non-continuous text to 10 paragraphs. The grade 6 passages range from no paragraphs in the non-continuous text to 15 paragraphs. Excluding the two non-continuous passages, the eight PIRLS passages range from seven paragraphs in the essay on sharks to 34 paragraphs in the narrative, “Shiny Straw”. The average number of paragraphs is 17. In some respects, the demand placed on readers is greater because there are many different types of texts that must be interpreted, but in other respects, students may find it easier to gather information from the photographs and diagrams than from continuous texts because the information is organized in smaller chunks and has visual components.

The approximate reading level of three of the grade 3 passages, according to the Fry Readability Formula, is grade 3. The longer narrative is at a grade 4 level and the non-continuous text was not rated because it did not have 100 words. The approximate reading level of two of the grade 6 passages is grade 6. The poem and the short narrative are at a grade 4 level and the biography is at a grade 7 level, according to the Fry Readability Formula. Similarly, the literary passages in the PIRLS reading literacy assessment are at lower grade levels than the informational passages, with two literary passages at approximately the grade 3 level, two at the grade 4 level and one at the grade 5 level. When using the Fry Readability Formula, one informational passage was found to be at the grade 4 level, two at the grade 5 level and two at the grade 7 levels. In this respect, the PIRLS passages present a higher demand on the fourth-grade students who read them than do the EQAO passages on their third- and sixth-grade student readers.

The non-continuous formats and narratives in the grades 3 and 6 EQAO reading assessments use everyday language with which most students of the respective grades would be familiar. Specific domain-related language appears in the information passages and many are either explained in the passage or their meanings can be readily inferred from the context. Few words contain more than two syllables in the grade 3 passages. The grade 6 passage about poet Dorothy Livesay has the most challenging vocabulary with titles of her publications and the formal names of groups to which she belonged. There are many more examples of challenging vocabulary in all of the PIRLS passages, but particularly in the informational texts where students are introduced to words such *electroreceptors* (in the *Sharks* passage) and *adhesive* (in the *Searching for Food* passage). There are many sources of visual information to help students make sense of these words, however.

#### *Benchmarks and Performance Levels*

A more detailed analysis of the scoring guides for the grades 3 and 6 EQAO reading assessments can be found in Appendix G and of the PIRLS Benchmarks and scoring guide in Appendix H.

#### *Similarities*

The PIRLS and EQAO reading tests are designed to assess students’ understanding of texts. Although the constructed response questions involve writing, the scoring criteria focus on reading

comprehension, rather than on writing ability. Scorers are asked not to evaluate students' writing ability and to overlook difficulties in students' use of writing conventions or organization of ideas. They attend only to the accuracy of students' interpretations of the text, and the specificity and extent of their support for their inferences, predictions, assessments, and explanations. Indeed, the *PIRLS Scoring Guide* explains that "some students receiving the highest score for comprehension on a particular question will provide written answers that contain awkward sentences, misspellings, and poor word choices" (2006, unpagged).

At both the Ontario and international levels, students must address the elements required by the question when writing constructed responses. This is explicitly stated in the *PIRLS Scoring Guide*: "It is important to adhere to the scoring guidelines and not give credit for interesting, even insightful, responses that do not address the question" (2006, unpagged). Similarly, a constructed response that does not answer the question or is off topic is assigned an *I* in the EQAO tests and not scored.

The constructed response items in the EQAO Language tests for grades 3 and 6 are scored on a four point scale in multiples of ten from 10 to 40. All constructed responses are weighted equally. In contrast, constructed response questions in the *PIRLS* are worth 1-3 points, depending on the depth of understanding required. For the most part, questions requiring the retrieval of explicitly stated information are assigned 1 point and those requiring interpretations and evaluations are assigned 3 points. The criteria for assessing the 3-point questions closely resemble those of the EQAO scoring criteria because a 4-point scale is used to evaluate them.

Constructed responses that demonstrate the top level of performance in the EQAO and *PIRLS* reading assessments directly address the questions and are elaborated with specific, relevant supporting details drawn to the greatest extent from text information, but showing that the student is not text bound and draws on personal experience and knowledge. The EQAO scoring guides are more explicit in recognizing the influence of the readers' background, however. Consistent with the instructions to students to "use information from the text and your own ideas to support your answer," responses that elicit high level scores require a wider perspective on the question than is possible if the reader is grounded in literal interpretations of the texts. Students are expected to draw on background knowledge about content curriculum topics, such as pioneer life, as well as language and text features such as idioms, fiction and non-fiction characteristics, and the purpose of titles. Full scores are assigned to constructed responses in the *PIRLS* reading literacy test when students demonstrate comprehension of the aspect of text addressed in the question, providing appropriate inferences, interpretations or evaluations and elaborating using accurate information from the text. In this respect, the expectations for top level responses are consistent across the *PIRLS* and EQAO tests. The EQAO top level scores are assigned a code of 40 whereas the top level scores for the *PIRLS* responses are given either 1, 2, or 3 points depending on the weight given to the item. If the item is scored out of 1, a full-point response is considered "acceptable." If the full score is 2, the response is considered to have demonstrated "complete comprehension" and if the full score is 3, the response has demonstrated "extensive comprehension."

Constructed responses assigned a code of 30 in the EQAO scoring guides demonstrate understanding of the text and the question and provide some support from the text and background knowledge and experience. The level of specificity of the support and elaboration of the response separates the 30 point from the 40 point response. A parallel perspective is taken when scoring the *PIRLS* reading literacy test's constructed responses. "Satisfactory comprehension" is demonstrated in constructed responses that include all of the elements required by the question and show some evidence of moving beyond a literal understanding, but may not have conclusive support from the text. Accuracy of text support, the level of abstractness of the interpretation and the elaboration with all elements required by the question distinguish the 3-point from the 2-point response for questions that have a total of 3 points.

Constructed responses that demonstrate achievement at the middle levels in the EQAO scoring guides address the question, with a code of 20 assigned to responses showing “limited understanding” of the text and “limited support” for inferences, opinions, or assessments by making “vague reference” to the text or to personal experience. In a similar manner, the PIRLS 2-point and 3-point items assign a score of 1 for 2-point items (this demonstrates “partial comprehension”) and a score of 1 for 3-point items (this demonstrates “minimal comprehension”) to constructed responses that demonstrate partial understanding of the aspect of the text addressed in the question, often showing literal understandings when asked for more abstract inferences and interpretations. Such responses provide some textual support and often do not fully answer the question.

Constructed responses assigned the lowest score of 10 in the EQAO reading assessments are characterized as demonstrating the student’s misunderstanding of the text or an exceedingly narrow or inaccurate interpretation of the question. In many cases, responses assigned a code of 10 provide isolated details from the text that circle around the question’s purpose. Similarly, the lowest scores in the PIRLS reading literacy assessments (deemed to be “unsatisfactory” for 1-point items, showing “no comprehension” for 2-point items and “unacceptable responses” for 3-point items) show a misinterpretation of the aspect of the text addressed in the question and are vague or unrelated to the question.

Constructed responses that are crossed out, erased, off task, illegible, drawings or doodles, blank, are ininterpretable, or not administered for a reason beyond the student’s control are not scored. The EQAO and PIRLS test administrators have assigned particular codes to each of these conditions.

The student’s scores on the individual multiple-choice and open-response questions in the two EQAO tests are converted into an overall score using a standard psychometric process. Statistical equating procedures are used to identify the minimum score required for each performance level, and each student’s score is converted into a performance level. The level of skill and knowledge required for a student to be at the provincial standard is the same each year, allowing for a comparison of results from year to year.

The results of the PIRLS reading literacy assessments are reported in terms of students’ overall achievement on reading tasks carried out in a particular student booklet. Four benchmarks are outlined according to the purpose of the text, whether literary or informational. The Low International Benchmark is characterized by students’ successful performance on tasks requiring the identification of an explicitly stated piece of information and a straightforward inference based on information in one part of a literary or informational text. Each subsequent benchmark builds on this performance in terms of bringing increasingly complex information together from various parts of the text, drawing on background knowledge about textual elements, and successfully carrying out more of the four processes of comprehension (e.g., focus on and retrieve explicitly stated information; make straightforward inferences; interpret and integrate ideas and information; and examine and evaluate content, language, and textual elements). Benchmarks for literary texts refer to narrative elements, such as plot, central events, relationships between characters, and characters’ intentions. Informational benchmarks are distinguished from narrative benchmarks by their focus on information, organizational features and formatting. In both cases, figurative language and point of view are examined.

## Appendix A: Analysis of Reading Skills in the EQAO Grades 3 & 6 Student Booklets Language 1 & 2

### Grade 3

Reading Passages	Understanding explicitly stated information and ideas  21.4%	Understanding implicitly stated information and ideas (making inferences)  64.3%	Responding to reading by making connections between the text and personal knowledge and experience)  14.3%
<b>Book 1 - Talent Show; pp. 5-7</b>	#3) analyzing the text to find specific information (found in one of the circles)	#2) determining a new title – inferring the purpose of the poster #4) inferring the purpose of the poster (explicitly requested to use background knowledge and text information) #5) inferring the author’s purpose for using punctuation #6) inferring word meanings from context #7) inferring meanings of words	#8) Giving opinion about the use of the money for library books (explicitly requested to use text and personal ideas—there’s little information in the poster except that it’s a “great cause”)
<b>Book 1 – Making Clothing pp. 9-11</b>	#9) identifying the topic of the article from the title, text and pictures #12) finding the process described in one sentence – bringing together a number of pieces of information	#10) inferring word meanings from the context #11) inferring the importance of sheep to pioneers (explicitly requested to use background knowledge and text information) #13) inferring by applying information from the text to a new concept—that pioneers had few clothes #14) inferring word meanings from context	#15) Using background knowledge about fiction and non-fiction to label the article. No request for support is made, but the inference is that students will provide support from the article. (explicitly requested to use background knowledge and text information)

<b>Reading Passages</b>	<b>Understanding explicitly stated information and ideas</b>	<b>Understanding implicitly stated information and ideas (making inferences)</b>	<b>Responding to reading by making connections between the text and personal knowledge and experience)</b>
<b>Book 2 – Bobbie’s Big Toe pp. 2-3</b>	<p><b>36.7%</b></p> <p>#2) setting of story is stated            #5) time needed for mother to carry out her plan is stated            #6) identify 4 actions from story            #8) text states that there is lots of dirty clothing            #9) text states that Bobby is confused because he feels something pulling on his toe            #11) text connects the simile to what it describes</p>	<p><b>53.3%</b></p> <p>#1) infer main idea by identifying best title            #3) infer main idea            #4) infer word meaning from character’s actions            #7) infer why B’s mother tied the string around his toe            #10) infer Bobby’s feelings from his actions            #13) infer author’s reason for the choice of expressions            #14) infer reason for author’s use of punctuation            #15) predict what actions character will take next            #16) predict what actions character will take next</p>	<p><b>10%</b></p> <p>#12) provide personal assessment of what kind of person Bobby’s mother is</p>
<b>Going Batty pp. 10-11</b>	<p>#21) text states that bats scatter seeds            #26) points of comparison for simile are stated in text</p>	<p>#21) infer what details about bats mean            #22) infer reason for author’s use of apostrophe            #25) infer reason for author’s use of question mark</p>	<p>#24) Supporting opinion on appropriateness of title with text and own information            #27) Students’ feelings about bats are supported with text and own information</p>
<b>The Sleepover p. 19</b>	<p>#35) setting of Sultana’s neighbour’s home is explained in text            #36) time of father’s call is stated in text            #38) text has information about Sultana’s happiness</p>	<p>#33) infer pronoun reference            #34) infer word meaning from character’s actions            #37) infer reason for author’s use of question mark            #39) infer character’s feelings from her actions and background</p>	

**EQAO Grade 6 Student Booklets Language 1 & 2  
Analysis of Reading Skills**

<b>Reading Passages</b>	<b>Understanding explicitly stated information and ideas</b>	<b>Understanding implicitly stated information and ideas (making inferences)</b>	<b>Responding to reading by making connections between the text and personal knowledge and experience)</b>
<b>Book 1</b>	<b>21.4%</b>	<b>64.3%</b>	<b>14.3%</b>
<b>Passage: Grade 6 Calendar pp. 4-5</b>	#8) identify calendar information that determines what the fund raising events are for	#2) infer from text information about a student council meeting what the phrase means #3) infer from text information about a student council meeting what the word means #4) infer why author used apostrophe #6) infer how people will use the calendar #7) infer calendar's purpose	#5) use background knowledge about what summer safety will involve for a gr. 6 audience
<b>Passage: Popcorn under pressure p. 8</b>	#9) text states what is at centre of corn kernel #11) text states the other half of the story later in the paragraph	#10) infer purpose of colon #12) infer safety issue related to popping popcorn #14) infer main idea #15) infer purpose of text and where it would be published	#13) use own experience and knowledge to explain how the text makes a complicated process understandable

<b>Book 2 Reading Passages</b>	<b>Understanding explicitly stated information and ideas</b>	<b>Understanding implicitly stated information and ideas</b>	<b>Responding to reading by making connections between the text and personal knowledge and experience</b>
<b>Dorothy Livesay, Poet, pp. 2-3</b>	<p><b>36.7%</b></p> <p>#3) character's actions are stated in text            #4) character's actions are stated in text            #5) contributions to character's propensities are explained in text            #9) text states where D earned a diploma            #10) text explains who contributed to D's social activist work            #11) text explains what work earned the GG award            #16) titles are italicized</p>	<p><b>53.3%</b></p> <p>#1) infer main point of character's actions in an anecdote            #2) infer word meaning from context            #6) infer contributions of D's home environment on her passion for writing            #7) infer theme of a paragraph            #8) infer friends' reactions to D's writing            #12) infer why D had so many jobs            #13) infer from the number of universities she worked for how she spent her time            #14) infer effects of D's success on other writers</p>	<p><b>10%</b></p> <p>#15) use background experience about how individuals break ground for others through their successes (use some text info, too)</p>
<b>Flowers and Frost, pp. 10-11</b>	<p>#26) list 3 explicitly-stated ways King Frost is cruel</p>	<p>#21) infer meaning of expression from context            #22) infer meaning of expression from context            #23) infer meaning of expression from context            #24) infer the season from the description in the poem            #25) infer reason for author's choice of 3 stanzas</p>	<p>#27) Provide opinion about portrayal of King Frost with text and own support</p>
<b>Passage: The Secret, p. 18</b>	<p>#34) information in previous paragraphs explain character's actions</p>	<p>#33) infer character's intention from title and other information in text</p>	<p>#38) evaluating character's actions using background experience and text information</p>

	<b>#35)</b> relationship between characters is stated	<b>#36)</b> infer meaning from context <b>#37)</b> infer prior actions using background experience and text information <b>#39)</b> infer genre using background knowledge and text format	
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## Appendix B: Analysis of the PIRLS Reading Processes

Passages	Focus on and Retrieve Explicitly Stated Information <b>33/128 = 25%</b>	Make Straightforward Inferences <b>38/128 = 30%</b>	Interpret and Integrate Ideas and Information <b>38/128 = 30%</b>	Examine and Evaluate Content, Language, and Textual Elements <b>19/128 = 15%</b>
<b>Shiny Straw</b> <i>Booklets 2, 3, 11</i>	<b>#2)</b> “quicker”—answer given in text <b>#4)</b> “caught rabbits”—answer right in text <b>#6)</b> answer in text—“never took anything seriously” <b>#7)</b> answer provided in text—“want to see humans”	<b>#1)</b> infer “ray of gold” = fur <b>#3)</b> straightforward inference about being invisible to the ducks while hiding in the grass <b>#5)</b> infer why Shiny Straw wasn’t always successful at hunting <b>#8)</b> wolf is tied in a net but not stated by whom <b>#9)</b> infer that two of Blue Wolf’s actions helped Shiny Straw escape from the hunters’ net. <b>#11)</b> straightforward inference about zoos being collections of animals for humans as wolf finds himself in a zoo	<b>#10)</b> need reader’s own interpretation of Shiny Straw’s regret <b>#13)</b> interpret what Blue Wolf is like and integrate ideas from the text	<b>#12)</b> connect the word and a story event <b>#14)</b> evaluate the significance of the two protagonists to the story
<b>Little Lump of Clay</b> <i>Booklets 1, 8, 9</i>	<b>#1)</b> synthesizing & sequencing activity <b>#4)</b> text states that the little lump was the last one <b>#8)</b> use text information to determine why it was so wonderful	<b>#2)</b> inference for the lump of clay’s initial predicament <b>#3)</b> inference for the lump of clay’s feelings <b>#5)</b> put clay near window—infer that this was careless <b>#7)</b> “terrified”, not 1 of choices, but should be able to pick up “scared” meaning <b>#9)</b> infer which answer is best,	<b>#6)</b> integrate ideas to interpret the nature of the lump of clay’s danger <b>#10)</b> explain—need to know story & integrate own ideas--every reader will interpret different how feelings could change <b>#11)</b> reader’s own interpretation on how girl	<b>#12)</b> author communicates with reader—to be in author’s shoes

		based on facts	was important #13) needs reader's own interpretation of what main message is	
<b>An Unbelievable Night</b>  <i>In PIRLS Reader</i>	#1) First sign of unusual happening is stated, though it's not called a sign #4) Character's expectations are explicitly stated #7) Find details of crocodile's breaking the bedroom door #10) Naming one thing Anina had difficulty explaining	#2) Infer that the crocodile came from the magazine cover from the missing croc on the cover when he's in Anina's home #6) Infer character's reasons for her actions #8) Infer ways that the magazine helped Anina #9) Infer A's feelings toward flamingos	#5) Sequencing story events #11) Infer A's personality and give examples	#3) Evaluating the idiom #8) Providing evidence to show that the story was or was not a dream.
<b>Searching For Food</b>  <i>In PIRLS Reader</i>	#2) clearly stated—answer is found right on pg.1 #4) answer is found right in the box—"scent" word is obvious give away #6) answer is found in box—exact wording	#3) infer that the ants will make a new trail #5) infer why ants scurry #12) infer importance of putting layers of sand and soil in bottle #13) infer why it is important to put onion & potatoes on soil surface	#1) identify main purpose #8) interpret information about pill bugs sensing food with antennae #9) integrate information across the article #10) requires interpretation #11) synthesizing & sequencing activity	#7) depends on how reader reads picture #14) purpose of text boxes #15) integrate personal info. & express opinion on which project is most interesting
<b>Fly, Eagle, Fly</b>  Booklets 3, 4, 12	#1) search for calf—stated in text #2) on ledge of rock—right in text but needs to be careful w/ reading	#3) infer how the farmer was careful with the eagle chick #8) info. is there but reader needs to see through meaning to choose right	#5) interpret and integrate information across the passage #9) requires readers' understanding of text &	#7) explaining the farmer's meaning when using a common expression #10) choose all words relating to the beautiful sky

	<p>#4) trained to be a “chicken”—right in text</p> <p>#6) lift above his head—straight from text</p>	answer	<p>answer appropriately w/ supported details</p> <p>#11) requires students’ complete understanding of story to choose best answer</p> <p>#12) not easy to answer because students need to integrate facts &amp; personal opinions—requires higher order thinking</p>	
<p><b>Leonardo da Vinci</b></p> <p>Booklets: 5, 6, 10</p>	<p>#1) sculptor—answer right in text</p> <p>#3) answer right in text</p> <p>#9) straight forward--# is right in text</p>	<p>#5) infer what the idiom means</p> <p>#7) infer that Leonardo died before he built his inventions</p>	<p>#2) interpret how animal and insect behaviour inspired Leonardo’s inventions using information from the beginning and middle sections of the passage</p> <p>#4) integrate information about how work with Verrocchio helped in later life</p> <p>#6) interpret why book is useful/important</p> <p>#8) identify an example then add own ideas/interpretations</p> <p>#10) integrate information about Leonardo’s advanced thinking</p>	<p>#11) examine content to determine the best title</p> <p>#12) interpret what author thinks and find right facts to prove</p>
<p><b>Antarctica: Land of Ice</b></p> <p>Booklets: 4, 5, 9</p>	<p>#1) find explicitly stated location of Antarctica</p> <p>#3) find explicitly stated coldest location</p> <p>#6) read section re: penguins and wings</p> <p>#7) read section re:</p>	<p>#2) stated stats, but students need to infer what “record” means</p> <p>#5) the mug of boiling water becoming frozen illustrates how cold it really is</p>	<p>#4) interpreting and integrating information about why people avoid location between Apr &amp; Sept.</p> <p>#9) explain why, using the article &amp; letter info</p> <p>#8) find 2 pieces of</p>	<p>#10) examining sections of text for specific information</p> <p>#11) evaluate different “kinds” of info: article &amp; letter</p>

	penguins, pull out info re: staying warm		information about food that student learned	
<b>Sharks</b> Booklets: 7, 8, 12	#1) read paragraphs re: teeth and pull info #4) find the text box which states the first sense used #5) read text box re: sight #6) information about what the test bite accomplishes is found at the sentence level	#3) read caption re: tiger shark and rephrase info to answer question #2) find shark's food info from passage, infer food as what they eat, depends on where and how they live #8) read text box re: electroreception and infer answer #11) students must determine meaning of "filter"	#7) compare shark info with human info #10) sequence info, & explain why #12) integrate information across the passage to complete the chart	#9) evaluate the effectiveness of diagram
<b>Discover the Fun Day Hiking</b> Booklets: 6, 7, 11	#2) explicitly stated in "See interesting new things!" sub heading #5) explicitly stated in the packing checklist #8) stated under "IMPORTANT"	#7) infer that getting tired is the same as saving energy #10) infer what people do at the Lookout Station	#1) interpret main message #3) read in "Planning your day hike"& "Pace yourself" #6) read: "Packing Checklist" & "IMPORTANT" #12) interpret and integrate information to determine a route and why would take that route	#4) Identify the section of the text that provides particular information #9) incorporate visuals and print information to take a route for a particular purpose #11) Use knowledge about what information map keys provide
<b>Flowers on the Roof</b> Booklets: 1, 2, 10	#2) match choice of picture with description in text #4) explicitly stated that people on the next farm is the answer #9) retrieve explicitly stated ideas about Granny's actions	#1) not explicitly stated, process of elimination #3) not explicitly stated #5) must infer homesickness #6) infers why Granny screamed #8) infer why Granny winked #10) infer Granny's feelings at the end of the story	#7) integrate ideas to interpret Granny's feelings about the mountains and sky #12) integrate ideas to interpret boy's feelings about Granny at beginning and end of story #13) message	#11) Must think about why the author ended the story with another problem. Allows the reader to think ahead, keeping them as active members of the story after it has finished



## Appendix C: Analysis of the Grades 3 and 6 EQAO Reading Assessment Item Formats

### Grade 3

	<b>Multiple Choice</b> 22/30 = 70%	<b>Open Response Items</b> 8/30 = 30%	<b>Order of Items</b>	<b>Number of passages in the booklet</b>
<b>Book 1 Talent Show: pp. 5-7</b>	5	2	2 MC then 1 OR on one page 3MC on one page and then 1 OR on following page	2
<b>Book 1 Making Clothing pp. 9-11</b>	5	2	2 MC then 1 OR on one page 3MC on one page and then 1 OR on following page	
<b>Book 2 – Bobbie’s Big Toe pp. 2-3</b>	12	4	4 MC on 1 page 1 MC then 2 OR on 1 page 3 MC on 1 page 1 MC then 1 OR then 1 MC on 1 page 2 MC then 1 OR on 1 page	3
<b>Going Batty pp. 10-11</b>	5	2	3 MC on 1 page then 1 OR and 2 MC on 1 page 1 OR on one page	
<b>The Sleepover p. 19</b>	5	2	2 MC on 1 page 1 OR then 1 MC on 1 page 2 MC then 1 OR on 1 page	

### Grade 6 EQAO Reading Assessment

	<b>Multiple Choice</b>	<b>Open Response Items</b>	<b>Order of Items</b>	<b>Number of passages in the booklet</b>
<b>Book 1: Passage: Grade 6 Calendar</b> pp. 4-5	5	2	4 MC on 1 page, 2MC and 2OR on 2 <sup>nd</sup> page	2
<b>Passage: Popcorn under pressure p. 8</b>	5	2	3MC on 1 page, 2OR and 1 MC on 2 <sup>nd</sup> page 1 MC on 3 <sup>rd</sup> page	
<b>Book 2: Passage: Dorothy Livesay, Poet, pp. 2-3</b>	12	4	4 MC on 1 page, 1MC, 1 OR, 1MC on 2 <sup>nd</sup> page 1OR, 3 MC on 3 <sup>rd</sup> page, 1 OR, 2MC on 4 <sup>th</sup> page, 1OR, 1MC on 5 <sup>th</sup> page	3
<b>Passage: Flowers and Frost, pp. 10-11</b>	5	2	4 MC on 1 page, 1MC then 2 OR on 2 <sup>nd</sup> page	
<b>Passage: The Secret, p. 18</b>	5	2	4 MC on 1 page, 2 OR and 2MC on 2 <sup>nd</sup> page	

### Appendix D: Analysis of the PIRLS Reading Literacy Assessment Item Format

Passages	Multiple Choice (MC)	Short Answer (SA) (1 point)	Extended Response (ER) (2 or 3 points)	Order of Items
<b>Shiny Straw</b>	9	4	3	1 <sup>st</sup> : 2 MC, 1 SA 2 <sup>nd</sup> : 3 MC 3 <sup>rd</sup> : 2 MC, 2 SA 4 <sup>th</sup> : 2 MC, 1 SA, 1 ER 5 <sup>th</sup> : 2 ER
<b>Little Lump of Clay</b>	7	3	3	1 <sup>st</sup> : 1 MC, 2 SA 2 <sup>nd</sup> : 2 MC, 1 SA 3 <sup>rd</sup> : 1 MC, 1 ER 4 <sup>th</sup> : 1 MC, 1 ER 5 <sup>th</sup> : 2 MC, 1 ER
<b>Unbelievable Night</b>	7	6	1 three pointer	3 MC on one page and 2 MC with 1 SA on 2 <sup>nd</sup> page, MC then 2 SA and 1MC on 3 <sup>rd</sup> page, and 1 SA and 1 ER on 4 <sup>th</sup> page with 2 SA on 5 <sup>th</sup> page
<b>Searching For Food</b>	8	4	3	1 <sup>st</sup> : 2 MC 2 <sup>nd</sup> : 2 MC, 1 SA 3 <sup>rd</sup> : 1 MC, 1 ER 4 <sup>th</sup> : 1 MC, 2 SA 5 <sup>th</sup> : 1 MC, 1 SA 6 <sup>th</sup> : 1 MC, 2 ER
<b>Fly, Eagle, Fly</b>	7	5	2	1 <sup>st</sup> : 3 MC 2 <sup>nd</sup> : 2 MC, 2 SA 3 <sup>rd</sup> : 1 MC, 2 SA, 1 ER 4 <sup>th</sup> : 1 MC, 1 SA, 1 ER
<b>Leonardo da Vinci</b>	6	2	4	1 <sup>st</sup> : 2 MC, 1 SA 2 <sup>nd</sup> : 1 MC, 1 ER, 1 SA 3 <sup>rd</sup> : 2 MC, 1 ER 4 <sup>th</sup> : 1 MC, 2 ER
<b>Antarctica:</b>	4	6	1	1 sa, 1mc, 1 sa 1 sa, 2 mc

<b>Land of Ice</b>				2 sa 1 er, 1mc 1 sa
<b>Sharks</b>	6	5	1	2 sa, 1 mc 1 mc, 1 sa, 1 mc 1 sa, 2 mc 1 er, 1 mc 1 sa
<b>Discover the Fun Day Hiking</b>	7	5	none	1 mc, 2sa 3 mc 1 mc, 1sa 2 mc 2 sa
<b>Flowers on the Roof</b>	7	4	2	3 mc 2 mc, 1 sa 1 er, 2 sa 1 sa, 1mc, 1er 1 mc

## Appendix E: Analysis of Reading Passages in Grades 3 and 6 EQAO Reading Assessments:

### Grade 3

Genre and Purpose	Topic – relationship to students’ lives	Pages, Paragraphs and Sentences SS = simple CS = complex and compound	Complexity And Approximate Grade Level using Fry Readability Graph	Most Challenging Vocabulary
<p><b>Book 1</b> <b>P. 4: Talent Show</b></p> <p><i>Poster</i> – to advertise an event</p>	<p>School talent show Raising funds – values artistic and athletic abilities (music, dance, drama) - assumes that library books are important enough to raise money for them</p>	<p>1-page 5 sentences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal print so less demanding</li> <li>• More demanding in terms of being able to read in non-linear fashion</li> </ul> <p><b>Reading Level: unable to assess because there are fewer than 100 words</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gymnastics – a word students may have encountered</li> <li>• Fundraiser – likely unfamiliar</li> <li>• Talent – could be part of most children’s school experience</li> </ul>
<p><b>Making Clothing the Pioneer Way pp. 8</b></p> <p><i>Article</i> explanation for creating clothing from wool</p>	<p>Children wear wool clothing—pioneer life will be more familiar to rural students than to urban students, though this is a topic on the grade 3 curriculum; children whose relatives knit with wool will have more experience to draw upon, as well</p>	<p>1 page 5 paragraphs of description and explanation SS = 9 CS = 5</p>	<p>All on one page; large font; Illustrations are closely linked to paragraph content except for 1<sup>st</sup> and last paragraphs. <b>Reading Level: Gr. 3 (average of 8.9 sentences and 119 syllables in two 100-word sample passages)</b></p>	<p>Many specific words related to shearing, carding, spinning of wool into skeins: sheared, carded, paddles, studded, burrs, fleece, fibres, drop spindle, skein, dye</p>
<p><b>Book 2 – Bobbie’s Big Toe pp. 2-3</b></p> <p>narrative</p>	<p>Mother-son relationship; everyday life problem of child not cleaning up his room. Mother solved problem in humorous way</p>	<p>2 pages Dialogue and narration SS = 15 CS = 18</p>	<p>2 pages, paragraphs can be read in linear fashion on page 2. Have to read around the illustration on page 1. Illustration is clearly connected to story line. <b>Reading Level: Gr. 4 (average of 8.6 sentences and</b></p>	<p>Mostly everyday words</p> <p>Characteristics Grubby</p>

			<b>127 syllables in three 100-word sample passages)</b>	
<b>Going Batty</b> <b>pp. 10-11</b> <b>poem</b>	Lives of bats – what they eat, where they live, their benefits to humans – not common knowledge to all children, especially since bats roost during the day	Poem on 2 pages SS = 5 CS = 14	1 page with only print – poem divided into stanzas so can read in linear fashion 2 <sup>nd</sup> page has illustration at the end – simple with not much information to add to the meaning-making of the poem Tone is informative and persuasive – here’s why you should appreciate bats  <b>Reading Level: Gr. 3</b> <b>(average of 10.1 sentences and 119 syllables in one 100-word sample passages)</b>	Roost Take flight Mammal – though is in the science curriculum
<b>The Sleepover</b> <b>p. 19</b>	Common experience of staying with relatives or friends while waiting for baby sibling to be born	Narration and dialogue on 1 page SS = 14 CS = 8	Linear reading of text with no illustrations to provide information Ability to read dialogue  <b>Reading Level: Gr. 3</b> <b>(average of 11.4 sentences and 128.5 syllables in two 100-word sample passages)</b>	Everyday language except for protagonist’s name - Sultana

### Grade 6 EQAO Reading Assessment

Genre and Purpose	Topic – relationship to students’ lives	Page, paragraphs and sentences SS = simple CS = complex & compound	Complexity/Demand on the Reader	Most Challenging Vocabulary and Expressions
<b>Book 1:</b> <b>Passage:</b> <b>Grade 6 Calendar</b> pp. 4-5	Events in a grade 6 class – common to all Ontario students	2 pages, no paragraphs 11 on first page and 6 on 2 <sup>nd</sup> page All simple sentences	Genre is familiar to gr. 6 students from everyday classroom life Students have to be able to pick the date and event to get desired information Sentences written as notes; some events have no verbs; pizza lunches have graphic beside them, as does graduation day and the month  <b>Readability level: Grade 6 (149 syllables in 11 sentences)</b>	Postponed, professional activity approximately  Everyday school language, though teachers’ names may be difficult to decode
<b>Passage:</b> <b>Popcorn under pressure</b> p. 8	Explains how popcorn pops	1 page 5 paragraphs SS = 13 CS = 11	Linear progression of paragraphs - no additional demand  <b>Readability level: Grade 6 (average of 133 syllables in 8.4 sentences)</b>	Endosperm – explained in the text Starch Other words are typical words for explaining a process
<b>Book 2:</b> <b>Passage:</b> <b>Dorothy Livesay, Poet,</b> pp. 2-3	Biography excerpt starting with anecdotes of Dorothy’s youth and moving to a summary of her professional accomplishments and personal life	2 pages 12 paragraphs SS = 15 CS = 22	Students have to be able to follow the flow of text around the fast facts and gather information from the fast fact insets  <b>Readability level: Grade 7 (average of 146 syllables in 7.8 sentences)</b>	Quivered, Summoned Officially Journalists Stashing Clutching Office of the Order of Canada Communist Party and Progressive Arts Club

<p><b>Passage: Flowers and Frost, pp. 10- 11</b></p>	<p>Flowers may not be a motivational topic for many gr. 6 students, but they are familiar with the seasonal changes to plants as Ontario residents</p>	<p>2 pages 3 stanzas SS = 4 CS = 7</p>	<p>Readers must be able to follow the flow of ideas in poem format, where sentences are not stretched across a page, as well as the syntax of poetry – not the usual syntax of spoken language or prose</p> <p><b>Readability level: Grade 4 (122 syllables in 8 sentences)</b></p>	<p>Foxglove, Reigns Curling fronds Language is mostly everyday language – it’s the syntax that may be tricky</p>
<p><b>Passage: The Secret, p. 18</b></p>	<p>Narrative of an everyday encounter between 2 young people with a new twist- finding a fossil</p>	<p>1 page 15 paragraphs including much dialogue SS = 19 CS = 9</p>	<p>No unusual demands except for ability to read a narrative with dialogue</p> <p><b>Readability level: Grade 4 (average of 125 syllables in 8.6 sentences)</b></p>	<p>Everyday language</p>

## Appendix F: Analysis of Reading Passages in PIRLS Reading Literacy Assessment

Passages	Genre and Purpose	Topic – relationship to students’ lives	Lengths of pages and paragraphs *SS—simple sentence *CS—complex and compound	Complexity/Demand on the Reader And Readability according to the Fry Graph	Most Challenging Vocabulary
<b>Shiny Straw</b>	-literary experience  -story about wolf family	-not related to students’ lives at all...unless a good reader can pick up that it’s a moral story  -farm/rural setting	*4 pages total 34 paragraphs, SS = 68 CS = 19 #1) 4 para: backgrounds of wolf family and members *18 sentences total SS = 16 CS = 2 #2) 12 para: a few conversations *22 sentences total SS = 18 CS = 4 #3) 12 para: events & conversations *33 sentences total SS = 23 CS = 10 #4) 6 para: conversations & events *14 sentences total SS = 11 CS = 3	pg. 1—photos shows 7 cubs—mentioned in text *photo is part of text—reader needs to read around a rectangular photo  pg.2—photo shows shiny straw catching a bird—good action shot to show text *photo is part of text—reader needs to read around a rectangular photo <hr/> pg.3—text only—no breaks for reader -lots of short sentences describing events. pg.4—text on top, photo on bottom—easier to read. Photo is a scary & lonely one, directly related to content <b>Readability: Grade 3 (average of of 130 syllables in 12 sentences)</b>	-crinkle -muzzle -feats -shrieking -firelight -gnashing -pandemonium  idiom—“a human being is a collector”
<b>Little Lump of Clay</b>	-literary experience  -fictional story  -assign human	-if school doesn’t have kiln & children never touch clay, hard to get concept	*4 pages total 26 paragraphs, SS = 58 CS = 10 #1) picture only #2) 8 para., describing setting &	*4 pages total # of characters = 5 # of central = 6 pg. 1 describes setting of pg.1 (full picture but doesn’t illustrates main character	-kiln -plopped -seep -“her fingers felt heavenly” -“her hands

	<p>characteristics to a lump of clay</p> <p>-classroom setting - an art room,</p>	<p>unless use “playdough” to explain</p> <p>-relate to kids because it talks about kids in school &amp; doing work and being messy—natural for kids</p>	<p>beginning of climax *31 sentences total SS = 27 CS = 4</p> <p>#3) 12 para. w/ short sentences for conversations *24 sentences total SS = 20 CS = 4</p> <p>#4) 6 para: short conversations *13 sentences total SS = 11 CS = 2</p>	<p>pg. 2—full page of text pg.3—2 pictures—needs to read around text but two good sketches to significantly illustrates the contents pg.4—short &amp; simple conversations between two characters -text &amp; picture are related</p> <p><b>Readability: Grade 4 (average of 126 syllables in 9 sentences)</b></p>	<p>moved with purpose”</p>
<p><b>An Unbelievable Night</b></p>	<p>Literary experience – fantasy story</p>	<p>Fantasy— animals come out of their pictures on a magazine and terrorize a young girl – crocodiles and flamingos are far from ON students’ experiences</p>	<p>* 5 pages total 14 paragraphs SS = 22 CS = 35</p> <p>#1) 2 para SS = 7 CS = 2</p> <p>#2) 1 para SS = 1 CS = 4</p> <p>#3) 7 paras SS = 14 CS = 13</p> <p>#4) 3 para SS = 5 CS = 9</p> <p>#5) 1 para SS = 0 CS = 2</p>	<p>4 pages 2 of 4 pages have color paintings. Narrative is arranged around the illustration. One page has all text and final page has a small paragraph</p> <p><b>Readability: Grade 5 (average of 130 syllables in 7.9 sentences)</b></p>	<p>Lots of house words Unusual words: drenched – though context is quite clear with illustrations and previous reference Barricade – context might not help Splintered door – the croc’s actions provide a context</p>

<p><b>Searching For Food</b></p>	<p>-procedural writing; step by step teaching how to make</p> <p>-non-fiction</p> <p>-narrative</p> <p>-make students aware of insects' lives</p>	<p>-interesting to students because it's real, especially those who love insects</p> <p>-attract students in engaging in projects because they're simple and easy to make</p>	<p>*5 pages total</p> <p><b>#1)</b> 8 short para: 1 intro. para, 1 heading, 3 para. in boxes, 3 short instructions, 3 arrows pointing to pictures</p> <p>*12 sentences total</p> <p>SS = 8</p> <p>CS = 4</p> <p><b>#2)</b> 7 short para: 1 heading, 1 intro. para, 3 step-by-step instructions, 2 para. in a box</p> <p>*15 sentences total</p> <p>SS = 11</p> <p>CS = 4</p> <p><b>#3)</b> 7 short para: 1 heading, 1 intro. para, 3 step-by-step instructions, 2 para. in a box, 4 arrows pointing to picture</p> <p>*13 sentences total</p> <p>SS = 10</p> <p>CS = 3</p> <p><b>#4)</b> 7 longer para: 1 heading, 1 long intro. para, 5 instructional para. 1 long list of "to need"</p> <p>*16 sentences total</p> <p>SS = 7</p> <p>CS = 9</p> <p><b>#5)</b> 2 short para: 2 para. in a box. 5 arrows pointing to picture</p> <p>*2 sentences total</p> <p>SS = 1</p> <p>CS = 1</p>	<p>-drawings &amp; explanations are relevant to one another, necessary to understand text &amp; follow instructions on how to make</p> <p>-subtitles are critical to a procedural writing piece</p> <p>-arrows explaining pictures are very helpful to readers</p> <p><b>Reading Level: Grade 4 (average of 115 syllables in 7 sentences)</b></p>	<p>-scent</p> <p>-chemical</p> <p>-antennae</p> <p>-adhesive tape</p> <p>-tunneling</p> <p><i>(depends on students' exposure at home/school by this age)</i></p>
<p><b>Fly, Eagle, Fly</b></p>	<p>-an African tale, a legend</p>	<p>-animals—kids who like animals will</p>	<p>*5 pages total,</p> <p>SS = 49</p> <p>CS = 27</p>	<p>-each drawing is related to text &amp; helpful to understanding of text</p>	<p>-riverbed</p> <p>-reluctantly</p> <p>-ridiculous</p>

	-a literary experience	<p>like story</p> <p>-gives a sense of suspense &amp; wanting to know what will happen to eagle</p> <p>-farm—rural setting</p> <p>-kids who live in city would not understand as much about village life</p>	<p>(10 are conversations)</p> <p>-short paragraphs from 1-8 sentences</p> <p><b>#1)</b> 6 para: narrative text—intro. to story, last sentence is a conversation *13 sentences total SS = 8 CS = 5</p> <p><b>#2)</b> 2 short para., 1 is a conversation *3 sentences total SS = 1 CS = 2</p> <p><b>#3)</b> 8 short para, mostly conversations on this page creating short sentences *19 sentences total SS = 12 CS = 7</p> <p><b>#4)</b> 12 para, mostly one sentence conversations with a few descriptive texts *32 sentences total SS = 23 CS = 9</p> <p><b>#5)</b> 2 slightly long para, descriptive sentences *9 sentences total SS = 5 CS = 4</p>	<p>-drawing on pg.3 showing eagle combined with chickens is quite amusing</p> <p>-pictures are rectangular &amp; are separated from texts—no need to read around pictures</p> <p><b>Reading Level: Grade 4 (average of 124 syllables in 8 sentences)</b></p>	<p>-crept</p> <p>-brilliance</p> <p>-crevices</p> <p>-reigns</p> <p>-ablaze</p> <p>-majestically</p> <p>-clutched</p> <p>-updraft</p>
<b>Leonardo da Vinci</b>	<p>-biography</p> <p>-provides useful &amp; concrete facts on Leonardo</p>	<p>-historical—not someone a child hears of on TV so story may not draw</p>	<p>*3 pages total SS = 11 CS = 19</p> <p><b>#1)</b> 5 para: biography &amp; facts about him</p>	<p>-drawings &amp; explanations are relevant to one another, necessary to understand text</p> <p>-1 line description to each page is critical to understanding each</p>	<p>-knowledge</p> <p>-idioms not easy to understand</p>

		<p>them</p> <p>-locations (Italy) are foreign to a majority of children</p>	<p>*12 sentences total SS = 6 CS = 6</p> <p>#2) 3 long para.: life as a student &amp; work examples *15 sentences total SS = 7 CS = 8</p> <p>#3) 3 para.: another work example *8 sentences total SS = 3 CS = 5</p>	<p>picture</p> <p>-parachute drawing (last picture) emphasized that he was a genius even 300 years before—he had good imaginations **could be slightly challenging for reader to read around pictures but integrating pictures beside the texts help reader understand texts better along the way</p> <p><b>Reading level: Grade 7 (average of 144 syllables in 6.5 sentences)</b></p>	<p>1) “hungry for knowledge”</p> <p>2) “a man ahead of his time”</p>
<b>Antarctica: Land of Ice</b>	<p>acquire and use information Non-fiction/letter</p>	<p>-Animal adaptations -Weather stats -Exotic/remote location -Survival hardships</p>	<p>*3 pages total 10 paragraphs in text, + letter (6 parts) = 37 sentences in total</p> <p>#1) 4 para: main title, sub title, headings, labels, photo, map &amp; facts in text. *10 sentences total SS = 4 CS = 6</p> <p>#2) 5 para: weather &amp; penguins, 2 photos, 2 headings *14 sentences total SS = 4 CS = 10</p> <p>#3) 1 para: scientist, 1 subtitle, 1 photo, &amp; letter *13 sentences total SS = 5 CS = 8 Total = 13 SS, 24 CS</p>	<p>-paragraphs of text, subtitle and illustrations for each subtopic, including the letter</p> <p>- 4 central events based on the subtitles</p> <p>-photos -map -letter with reference notation</p> <p>-paragraphs move around pictures</p> <p>-titles &amp; subtitles</p> <p><b>Readability: Gr. 7 (average of 139 syllables in 6.8 sentences)</b></p>	<p>Continent Plunged Superb Waddle Antarctica Surface Constant Celsius Average Samples</p>
<b>Sharks</b>	Non-fiction with	-natural	*5 pages total	-read around photos	Alerting

	<p>photographs and captions</p> <p>Acquire and use information</p>	<p>curiosity about sharks</p> <p>-fear &amp; potential danger sharks pose</p>	<p>14 paragraphs in total, 7 paragraphs in text, 58 sentences</p> <p><b>#1)</b> 2 para: facts, title, 2 photos, 1 photo caption</p> <p>*14 sentences total</p> <p>SS = 2</p> <p>CS = 12</p> <p><b>#2 &amp; 3)</b> 1 short para: introducing senses, sub title, 2 page diagram of a shark, 6 text boxes, labels &amp; lines connecting labels and boxes to locations on diagram</p> <p>*24 sentences total</p> <p>SS = 8</p> <p>CS = 16</p> <p><b>#4)</b> 3 para: shark profiles, 2 headings, 2 photos</p> <p>*14 sentences total</p> <p>SS = 3</p> <p>CS = 11</p> <p><b>#5)</b> 1 para: shark profile, 1 headings, 1 photos</p> <p>*6 sentences total</p> <p>SS = 1</p> <p>CS = 5</p> <p>Total 14 SS, 44 CS</p>	<p>-read the diagram and follow labels to text boxes</p> <p>-read labels without text boxes</p> <p>-distinguish different fonts and sizes</p> <p>-thickness of labels</p> <p>-read subtitles</p> <p>-11 events</p> <p><b>Readability: Gr. 5 (average of 118 syllables in 6.4 sentences)</b></p>	<p>Sensitive</p> <p>Low frequency</p> <p>Thrashing</p> <p>Analyze</p> <p>Potential</p> <p>Reject</p> <p>Detect</p> <p>Plankton</p> <p>Electroreceptors</p> <p>Electroreception</p> <p>Dorsal</p> <p>Caudal</p>
<p><b>Discover the Fun Day Hiking</b></p>	<p>-leaflet, including map, key and symbols</p> <p>-acquire information</p> <p>-adventure</p>	<p>-hiking is a form of exercise</p> <p>-having fun with friends and family</p> <p>-learn about/see new plants and animals</p>	<p>*2 page pamphlet</p> <p>5 conventional paragraphs in total + many other features outlined below = 53 sentences</p> <p><b>#1)</b> 1 para: title, sub title, headings, sub headings, 1 photo with caption, 3 small illustrations, 2 sets of instructions with vertical</p>	<p>-read a map, key (chart)</p> <p>-read symbols</p> <p>-different lines = different routes</p> <p>-compass rose</p> <p>-read titles and subtitles</p> <p>-pictures that illustrate text</p> <p>-pictures that frame titles</p> <p>-bold print</p> <p>-8 events</p>	<p>Equipment</p> <p>Appreciate</p> <p>Identify</p> <p>Unpredictable</p> <p>Protective</p> <p>Territory</p> <p>Forecast</p> <p>Repellant</p> <p>Assistance</p>

		-create own adventure choosing a route on map	footprint bullets, 1 checklist with boxed bullets, horizontal footprints to separate info, info about hiking in 3 column format * sentences total SS = 9 CS = 20 <b>#2)</b> 4 para: titles with small illustrations, sub titles, headings, sub headings, labeled map with illustrations, map key * sentences total SS = 9 CS = 15 Total = 18 SS, 35 CS	<b>Readability level: Grade 5 (average of 135 syllables in 8.7 sentences)</b>	Stroll Spectacular Remote Remains
<b>Flowers on the Roof</b>	Fiction/nonsensical Literary experience	- elderly people & their strange habits - people loving their animals - living with or close to old people	*4 pages total 30 paragraphs in total, 78 sentences <b>#1)</b> 3 para, illustration *9 sentences total SS = 3 CS = 6 <b>#2)</b> 7 para: 2 illustrations *20 sentences total SS = 7 CS = 13 <b>#3)</b> 24 para: mostly dialogue, 3 illustrations *30 sentences total SS = 14 CS = 16 <b>#4)</b> 6 para: 1 illustration *19 sentences total SS = 9 CS = 10 Total= 33 SS, 45 CS	-reading around the pictures -pictures add a lot more detail to story, setting, character descriptions -granny, kid, doctor, animals = 4 characters (including animals as one) -ill, moving, getting animals, lawn = 4 central events <b>Reading level: Gr. 3 (average of 120 syllables in 9.3 sentences)</b>	Dreadful Cackling Grin Squint Sighed Turf

## Appendix G: Analysis of Grades 3 and 6 EQAO Scoring Guides Grade 3

B – blank

I - illegible or not written in English, irrelevant (doesn't answer question or comments on the task or includes drawings), off topic

### Book 1

Passage	10	20	30	40
<b>Talent Show</b> #4	Misunderstanding of purpose but uses some information from the poster – remains explicit	Infers the purpose with little or no support from text	Infers purpose with little information from text	Infers purpose with many specific details from text  (ideal response is very text based. Quantity of specific details makes difference between 30 and 40)
#8	General reason (e.g., buying stuff) or doesn't address the library books	Reason is related to library books but very general (no background information provided)	Some elaboration of a general reason for buying library books	More specific elaboration with unique reasons that show experience with library books (ideal response is very reader-oriented because the text doesn't provide information – having lots of book experience helps in providing specifics and novel responses)
<b>Making Clothing</b> #11	Talks about sheep and farmers but doesn't address the question (bound by the text)	Provides reason from text with minimal support	Provides reason with some details from text	Provides more than one reason or elaborates on the clothing idea that's stated in the text (will need to go beyond text; thus need some background knowledge on topic of pioneers)
#15	Inaccurate assessment of the text as fiction or restates something in the text (very text-oriented)	Accurate assessment and one non-elaborated reason which defines non-fiction or takes one	Accurate assessment with 2 details from the text or from personal knowledge about fiction	Accurate assessment with more than 2 details drawn from personal experience about fiction and non-fiction, or with elaborated details from

		detail from text	and non-fiction to support	the text (personal experience with fiction/non-fiction is important in order to identify features of non-fiction that are present and of fiction that are not present)
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### Grade 3 Book 2

Passage	10	20	30	40
<b>Bobbie's Big Toe</b> #6	Misunderstanding of story – bring together story details that don't answer the question or bring in background knowledge to infer his personality, rather than giving text details	Minimal text support	Less than 4 specific ideas – all are accurate	4 specific details  (responses are very text based, as the question demands)
#7	Misunderstanding of text information – brings in background knowledge about sore toes	Reason is plausible (taken from text), but not elaborated	Inference is accurate – brings together understanding of mother's intentions with text information, but without elaboration	Inference is accurate – brings together understanding of mother's intentions with text information with elaboration using text details  (accuracy of inference plus specific details – the details come from text and the inference is from students' background experience)
#12	Bound by text information – identifies mother's actions but no inferences about her	General descriptive words showing plausible inference (e.g., good, nice) with minimal	Goes beyond the text to describe mother's personality and uses some text information to	Goes beyond the text to describe mother's personality in specific terms or uses general

	personality or identifies her intentions but not her personality	support from text.	support assessment	terms and many specific details from text to support assessment (ideal response uses personal experience supported by text specifics – elaboration important)
#16	Bound by text details of the physical actions	Prediction accurately infers intended outcome of the toe incident and gives plausible future action with minimal elaboration	Prediction accurately infers intended outcome of the toe incident and gives plausible future actions with some elaboration – goes beyond the text to some degree	Prediction accurately infers intended outcome of the toe incident and gives plausible future actions with some elaboration – goes beyond the text to some degree with many details
<b>Going Batty</b> #24	Reason doesn't relate to purpose of text – simply focuses on the sound of the words	Simple reason recognizing what titles do (uses background information)	Simple reason recognizing what titles do (uses background information) with some elaboration	Recognizes what titles do and what the colloquial expression means (ideal response requires background experience with idioms and purpose of titles)
#27	Seizes on one detail from text or gives general feelings (either text bound or too general)	Vague reference to details from text or provides some general information about feelings	General feeling with some elaboration from text	More specific feelings with many specific details from the text (ideal response is text based in many respects, even though students' feelings are the focus)
<b>The Sleepover</b> #35	Doesn't address the question – provides other details from the text	Addresses the question with no elaboration or details not related to the setting	Addresses the question with some elaboration related to the setting	Provides many details about the setting

#39	Provides details from the story about how Sultana feels, but doesn't address how she feels about being a big sister	Addresses the question with minimal elaboration	Addresses the question with some elaboration from text and background experience	Addresses the question with many specific details from text and background experience elaborating on assessment of feelings (ideal response goes beyond the text information when providing support for inference about Sultana's feelings)
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What levels mean:

Level 1 - achievement "falls much below the provincial standard, while still reflecting a passing grade"

Level 2 - achievement approaches the standard

Level 3 – achievement is at the standard for the grade

Level 4 – achievement that surpasses the standard – not beyond those specified for a particular grade, but instead "has achieved all or almost all of the expectations for that grade and demonstrates the ability to use the knowledge and skills specified for that grade in more sophisticated ways than a student achieving at level 3" (EQAO p. 14).

## Grade 6 EQAO Scoring Guides

B – blank

I - illegible or not written in English, irrelevant (doesn't answer question or comments on the task or includes drawings), off topic

### Book 1

Passage	10	20	30	40
<b>Grade 6 Calendar</b> #7	Refers to calendar but doesn't give a reason; or inaccurately interprets calendar	Addresses question with vague reference to text or minimal explanation from own experience	Addresses question with some details from text	Addresses question with specific, relevant supporting details from text (ideal response makes accurate inference about a school calendar's purpose and provides support from text)
#8	General use of funds for school needs – no reference to calendar	Addresses question and gives one event from calendar	Addresses question and gives numerous events from calendar with no explanation	Addresses question and gives numerous events from calendar with explanations on how the events would use the funds (ideal response is text based from a number of places in the text, with support from personal experience on how the funds would be used for each event)
<b>Popcorn under Pressure</b> #12	Describes what one should do when popping popcorn but doesn't identify the safety issue; or identifies a safety issue not related to	Addresses question of safety when popping popcorn with minimal elaboration	Provides personal experience highlighting one safety issue with some elaboration	Provides personal experience with 2 safety issues and some elaboration  (ideal response is

	popcorn popping			entirely experience based; elaboration is needed and more than one safety issue is needed – though question asks for 2 safety issue)
#13	Misunderstands question though gives information that goes beyond the text	Limited explanation that addresses the question with vague reference to text	Understands concept of simplifying process in the explanation – gives one example from text	Gives more than one type of simplification and examples from the text for each (ideal response shows personal understanding of simplifying text and draws directly from the text to support the types of simplifications)

### Grade 6 Book 2

Passage	10	20	30	40
<b>Dorothy Livesay</b> #6	Misunderstands question or text information	Addresses question and uses 1 relevant detail from text or a vague reference to it	Understands the accepted notion that children’s parents’ passions influence children’s passions with specific reference to text	Understands the accepted notion that children’s parents’ passions influence children’s passions – elaborates on this and with specific references to text (ideal response requires understanding of handing down/being absorbed in parents’ passions and some support with specific

				information from text)
#8	Grounded in specific details of the text and doesn't extrapolate to make an inference	Addresses question with vague reference to details from text to support or 1 detail from text	Accurately infers the reason with some support from text	Accurately infers the reason with elaborated support from text (ideal response requires inference about teen motivations and picking out specifics from text to support inference)
#12	Addresses question with implausible reason drawn from text or shows misunderstanding of text	Infers plausible reason with minimal support from text	Infers plausible reason with some support from text	Infers plausible reason with elaborated support from text (ideal response is more closely tied to text for support – students who extrapolated widely using their own experience and didn't refer back to the text so closely did not get 40)
#15	Misunderstanding of text and grounded in details that don't provide enough information to address the question	Plausible reason with no elaboration or vague response showing partial understanding	Shows understanding of the concept of breaking ground with minimal support from background experience and text information	Shows understanding of the concept of breaking ground with elaboration from experience/text
<b>Flowers and Frost</b> #26	Doesn't address question or shows lack of understanding of concept	Describes ways King is cruel with no quotes from the text	Describes fewer than 3 ways	Describes 3 ways with quotes from text
#27	Gives opinion only or doesn't give an opinion – just reiterates one point from text	Gives opinion with minimal/vague support	Gives opinion with some support from experience and text	Gives opinion with elaborated support from experience and text (ideal response gives opinion with elaborated

				experience and reference to text)
<b>The Secret</b>  #38	Doesn't address question (e.g., predicts event after, rather than before, or talks about the creation of the fossil)	Previous event is related to the question but not elaborated or support is irrelevant to purpose of the question	Narrates a possible happening with some reference to story events	Narrates a possible specific event with some reference to text information (ideal response draws heavily on previous experience but some reference to text information is required)
#39	Misunderstanding of text information	Provides an opinion with vague/irrelevant/minimal support	Some specific support for opinions that draws on background experience	Elaborated support for opinion that draws on background experience

## Appendix H: Analysis of PIRLS Benchmarks and Scoring Guide

### PIRLS Benchmarks

The benchmarks are for the overall performance on all reading tasks, rather than for performance on specific short answer/extended responses. Background experience and knowledge are not sought. The higher levels require understanding of literary language and structure

<b>Low International Benchmark</b>	<b>Intermediate International Benchmark</b>	<b>High International Benchmark</b>	<b>Advanced International Benchmark</b>
<p><b>Literary:</b> recognize explicitly stated detail (e.g., MC question asking for a causal event)</p> <p>Locate specified part of story and make the needed inference (e.g., MC question asking for inference about character's feelings about another in the story)</p>	<p><b>Literary:</b> identify central events, plot sequence, and relevant story details (e.g., in sequencing activity with events listed)</p> <p>Make straightforward inferences about attributes, feelings and motivations of main characters (e.g., in constructed response asking about a character's wish)</p>	<p><b>Literary:</b> Locate relevant episodes and distinguish significant details embedded across text</p> <p>Make inferences to explain relationships between intentions, actions, events, and feelings and give text-based support (e.g., multiple choice questions about author's intentions)</p> <p>Recognize use of textual features</p> <p>Begin to interpret and integrate story events and character actions across the text (e.g., identifying the 2 ways requested in constructed response questions)</p>	<p><b>Literary:</b> Integrate ideas across a text to interpret character's traits, intentions, and feelings and provide full text-based support (e.g., interpret feelings from beginning to end of story and give reasons why they change– with support from text - in constructed response question; interpret character's personality from actions, giving 2 examples from story)</p> <p>Interpret figurative language</p> <p>Begin to examine and evaluate story structure</p>

<p><b>Informational:</b> locate and reproduce explicitly stated information (e.g., MC question asking for one piece of information)</p> <p>Provide straightforward inference clearly suggested by text (e.g., give part of the requested information in SA question asking for 2 reasons for actions)</p>	<p><b>Informational:</b> Locate and reproduce one or two pieces of information from the text (e.g., in CR students provide some of the requested information drawn from various parts of the text)</p> <p>Make straightforward inferences from a single part of the text (e.g., in MC question about why something should be done)</p> <p>Use subheadings, textboxes and illustrations to locate information</p>	<p><b>Informational:</b> Recognize and use a variety of organizational features to locate and distinguish relevant information (e.g., identifying sections that provide particular information in MC question)</p> <p>Make inferences based on abstract or embedded information (e.g., SA question asking for prediction about hypothetical situation using text information)</p> <p>Integrate information across a text to recognize main ideas and provide explanations</p> <p>Compare and evaluate parts of a text to identify preferences and provide reasons</p> <p>Begin to understand textual elements, such as simple metaphors and author's point of view</p>	<p><b>Informational:</b> Distinguish and interpret complex information from different parts of text and provide full text-based support (e.g., explain reason for a procedure in ER question)</p> <p>Understand the function of organizational features (e.g., explain what information picture adds to following the experimental procedure in ER question)</p> <p>Integrate information across a text to sequence activities and fully justify preferences</p>

## PIRLS Scoring Guides

Crossed Out/Erased/Off Task/Illegible/Drawings and Doodles

\* uninterpretable response – crossed-out and erased attempts

Blank – response space is completely blank or contains marks unrelated to the text (assign a code of 9)

Not Administered – question is misprinted, page is missing or other reason out of student’s control (assign a code of 8)

<b>Unsatisfactory/No Comprehension/Unacceptable Response (Score = 0)</b>	<b>Partial Comprehension/Minimal Comprehension (Score = 1)</b>	<b>Satisfactory Comprehension (Score = 2)</b>	<b>Acceptable Response/Complete Comprehension/Extensive Comprehension (Full score, whether it is 1, 2 or 3 points)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not demonstrate comprehension of the aspect of text addressed in the question</li> <li>• too vague or unrelated to the question</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrates partial comprehension of the aspect of the text addressed in the question</li> <li>• includes some, but not all, of the elements required by the question</li> <li>• demonstrates only a literal understanding when asked for an interpretation, inference or more abstract concept</li> <li>• may lack adequate textual support, or provide only unrelated or vague information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate satisfactory comprehension,</li> <li>• includes all of the elements required by the question, but does not provide evidence of understanding text ideas or more complex/abstract information</li> <li>• shows some evidence of moving beyond a literal understanding but textual support may not be conclusive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrates comprehension of the aspect of text addressed in the question</li> <li>• includes all elements required by the question</li> <li>• accurate based on ideas or information in the text</li> <li>• provides appropriate interpretations, inferences or evaluations that are consistent with the text</li> </ul>