DC-CAS: PERFORMANCE LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Reading Grade 5

The DC-CAS is a standards-based assessment. Based on performance, each student is classified as performing at one of four performance levels: advanced, proficient, basic, or below basic. The descriptions below provide a brief summary of typical performance for each level. The skills identified in each descriptor represent, but are not all-inclusive of, the skills a student is able to demonstrate at each performance level.

Below Basic
Students are able to use vocabulary skills, such as identifying the meanings of words with multiple meanings in a simple text. Students are able to read some fifth grade informational and literary texts and can match pictures to corresponding text; complete a simple outline of key events; identify sources of information on a topic; identify cause/effect, main ideas, important details, and author's purpose in a simple text; make simple predictions based on text; and identify changes in characters in a story.

Basic
Students are able to use vocabulary skills, such as using context clues to determine meanings of multiple-meaning words and simple idiomatic expressions. Students are able to read some fifth grade informational and literary texts and can identify topic and main ideas, determine author's purpose for writing a simple persuasive text, explain minimally a conflict in a narrative, and interpret simple figurative language.

Proficient
Students are able to use vocabulary skills, such as using context clues and examples to determine implied meanings of words and identifying synonyms, antonyms, and homophones for words in context. Students are able to read fifth grade informational and literary texts and can restate key points, determine an author's purpose and position and then extend understanding beyond text, determine most important and implied main ideas, paraphrase key ideas, explain implied comparisons, identify components of a narrative, analyze characters and their relationships with each other, interpret comparisons and some figurative language, summarize events, and analyze the effects of sounds and words to uncover meaning in poems.

Advanced
Students are able to use vocabulary skills, such as using stated or implied examples to determine meanings of words, applying meanings of words to characters, identifying antonyms, and identifying meanings of common Greek and Latin roots and affixes to determine meanings of new words. Students are able to read fifth grade informational and literary texts and can identify the effect and purpose of descriptive details, paraphrase key points of a persuasive text, and explain fully with details from a text the important events of the narrative and how a conflict is resolved.

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Mathematics Grade 5

The DC-CAS is a standards-based assessment. Based on performance, each student is classified as performing at one of four performance levels: advanced, proficient, basic, or below basic. The descriptions below provide a brief summary of typical performance for each level. The skills identified in each descriptor represent, but are not all-inclusive of, the skills a student is able to demonstrate at each performance level.

Below Basic

Students may be able to perform computations with whole numbers and fractions, perform appropriate numeric operations, not always in correct sequence, and partially solve real world problems; may be able to identify simple patterns; may be able to identify different types of angles, use scale drawings to represent data and use tools to determine measurements; may be able to determine lowest common multiples and greatest common factors; and may be able to extend a given pattern.

Basic

Students perform computations with whole numbers and fractions, perform appropriate numeric operations in correct sequence, and use strategies to solve real world problems; identify and extend simple patterns, evaluate simple expressions; identify and measure different types of angles; know the total measurement of the angles inside a triangle, and a quadrilateral; be able to find the mean (average) of a given set of numbers; use scale drawings to represent data and solve measurement problems in one or two dimensions for which the solution is easily recognized and straight forward; and use mathematical language to communicate their thinking and solutions in a clear manner.

Proficient

Students perform computations with whole numbers, fractions, and decimals (involving money); perform operations on numbers in correct sequence, create and use simple expressions to solve real world problems; identify and extend patterns, and solve simple one-step equations; use properties of lines, triangles, and rectangles to identify and determine angles in figures not drawn to scale, use scale drawings, and histograms to represent data and solve simple measurement problems; and use mathematical language to communicate their thinking and solutions in a clear manner.

Advanced

Students perform computations with whole numbers, fractions, and decimals (involving money); perform operations on numbers and parenthetical expressions in correct sequence, create and use simple expressions to model real world problems; identify and extend patterns, and solve one-step equations; use ordered pairs of numbers to graph, locate and identify points and describe a location on a grid; compute elapsed time; carry out simple conversions within a system of measurement; compare and analyze features of two- and three-dimensional shapes; list and count the number of possible combinations of objects from a given set; predict the outcomes of simple experiments; solve problems involving proportional relationships; and use mathematical language to communicate their thinking and solutions in a clear manner.

DC-CAS: PERFORMANCE LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Science Grade 5

The DC-CAS is a standards-based assessment. Based on performance, each student is classified as performing at one of four performance levels: advanced, proficient, basic, or below basic. The descriptions below provide a brief summary of typical performance for each level. The skills identified in each descriptor represent, but are not all-inclusive of, the skills a student is able to demonstrate at each performance level.

Below Basic
Students are able to use scientific thinking to recognize inconsistencies in methods or materials that may cause results of similar investigations to turn out differently, and follow simple step-by-step instructions to carry out investigations. Students are able to recognize common objects in the solar system and recognize that water on Earth cycles through different forms. Students are able to describe that some animals/plants are better able to survive than others in a given environment, and recognize that some changes to an organism's habitat are beneficial and some are harmful.

Basic
Students are able to use scientific thinking to recognize how results of similar investigations may be different due to inconsistencies in methods/materials/observations, write instructions others can follow to carry out a simple investigation, and identify examples of technology that enable scientists to observe things that are very small or very far away. Students are able to use knowledge of Earth science to recognize objects in the solar system and recognize that the day/night cycle and the apparent motion of the sun/moon/stars is caused by the movement of the Earth, recognize when liquid water evaporates it turns to gas and can reappear as liquid when cooled, and describe that clouds are made of tiny droplets of water/ice crystals. Students are able to use knowledge of physical science to recognize that all matter is made of particles too small to be seen and these particles may combine to form larger particles, and recognize that things on/near Earth are pulled toward Earth's center by the gravitational force exerted by Earth. Students are able to use knowledge of life science to recognize that some organisms consist of a single cell and others are made up of multiple cells, and describe that some characteristics of plants/animals are inherited, but others are affected by climate/environment.

Proficient
Students are able to use scientific thinking to describe how results of similar investigations may be different because of inconsistencies in methods/materials/observations, identify controlled variables and an independent variable in an investigation, and recognize that predictions may be more accurate if they are based on large collections of similar events. Students are able to use knowledge of Earth science to demonstrate how Earth orbits the sun in a year's time and how Earth rotates on its axis about once every 24 hours, causing day/night and the apparent movement of the sun/moon/stars across the sky; describe that when liquid water evaporates, it turns to gas within the air and can condense/reappear as liquid when cooled or as a solid if cooled below the freezing point of water; explain how water moves in air masses in the form of clouds/fog/invisible water vapor, and falls to Earth as rain/hail/sleet/snow; and recognize how global patterns, such as the jet stream/ocean currents, influence local weather/climate. Students are able to use knowledge of physical science to recognize that matter is made of atoms; describe how atoms may combine to form molecules/compounds; recognize that there are more than 100 different kinds of atoms, called elements, that are displayed on the periodic table of the elements; and describe that if forces on an object are balanced, the object will remain at rest if it was at rest or will maintain constant speed and direction if it was moving. Students are able to use knowledge of life science to identify characteristics of plants/animals that are fully inherited and those affected by climate/environmental conditions, and explain that organisms strong enough to survive in an environment are more likely to have offspring fit enough to survive/reproduce in that environment and these characteristics become predominant over time. Students are able to use knowledge of science and technology to describe multiple positive/negative impacts on society of a given advance in technology.

Advanced
Students are able to use scientific thinking to evaluate validity of claims based on amount/quality of evidence, and identify controlled variables and at least one independent variable in new investigations. Students are able to use knowledge of physical science to explain that matter is made up of an element, a compound, or mixtures of elements/compounds; explain types of heat transfer between objects; explain that if forces on an object are balanced, the object will remain at rest if it was at rest or will maintain constant speed and direction if it was moving. Students are able to use knowledge of life science to describe that some organisms are made up of a single cell and can identify the environmental needs of the cell, including that some single-celled organisms are anaerobes, and explain how organisms can cause changes in their environment to ensure survival and describe how these changes may affect the ecosystem.