The Topic Scales, which are based on the Common Core State Standards, provide our Des Moines Public Schools fourth grade teachers and students with clear learning progressions and goals. In hopes of providing a clearer understanding about what students will be learning and doing during the fourth grade year in the area of literacy, we are providing this explanatory document. This document should also be helpful when navigating report cards, as each student will receive scores that represent proficiency toward each of the topic scales. (If a topic scale has not yet been taught, no score will be assigned.)

What the Literacy Topics Expect Students to Know and Be Able to Do

Topic: Questioning, Inference, & Interpretation	
• Students explain the events of the story or what the poem says based on details and examples from the text. They provide specific examples from the text when making inferences. (Literature)	• Students explain what the text is about, providing specific details and examples from the text. Provide specific examples from the text when making inferences. (Informational Text)

Topic: Themes & Central Ideas	
• After establishing the text's explicit meaning, students identify a theme. They examine how an author introduces and develops this theme through details. • Students summarize the text. (Literature)	• After establishing the text's explicit meaning, students identify the main idea. They examine how an author introduces and develops this idea through key details. • Students summarize the text. (Informational Text)

Topic: Story Elements	
• Students reading for the elements use specific details from the text, such as a character's thoughts or words or actions, and descriptions of place to describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama. (Literature)	

Topic: Making Connections within a Text	
	• Students reading for information in historical, scientific, or technical texts use specific information directly from the text to recount what happened and why as they explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts. (Informational Text)

Topic: Text Structures & Features	
• Students break down the structure of a text to explain the major differences between poems, drama, and prose. Students use specific terms to differentiate (poetry-verse, rhythm, meter; drama-casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) between texts. (Literature)	• Students break down the structure of a text to explain events, ideas, concepts, or information in at text; noting patterns such as chronology, cause/effect, or problem/solution. (Informational Text)

Topic: Point of View/Purpose

• Identify the point of view of the narration of different stories in order to compare and contrast them. Students determine if narration is first person or third person and how this affects point of view. (Literature)	• Identify the differences between a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event in order to compare and contrast them, noticing the differences in focus and information that is provided in the texts. (Informational Text)

Topic: Sources of Information

• Students make connections between reading a story or drama and listening to or watching the same text on audio, video, or performed live. They notice when descriptions from the story or directions from a drama are used verbatim. (Literature)	• Students interpret information gained by listening to or watching the same text on audio or video or performed live, or through quantitative means – charts, graphs, diagrams, timelines, animations, or interactive elements on webpages. Students notice and explain how this visual information helps them understand the text in which it appears. (Informational Text)

Topic: Reasons & Evidence

	• Students examine how an author uses reasons and evidence to support key points in written text. (Informational Text)

Topic: Literary Comparisons

• Students read various stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures, comparing and contrasting how themes and topics – such as the opposition of good versus evil – and the pattern of events – for example, the quest or hero journey – are treated in the text. (Literature)	

Topic: Working with Multiple Sources

	• Students examine two texts on the same topic in order to integrate the information and apply it in written or spoken form to demonstrate knowledge. (Informational Text)

Topic: Reading Comprehension & Fluency

Students demonstrate they have the ability to read text at the 760-854 Lexile Level (Proficient)

- Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
- By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grades 4-5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. (Literature)
- By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 4-5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. (Informational Text)

*Adapted from *The Common Core Companion: The Standards Decoded, Grades 3-5* by Leslie Bauman and Jim Burke (2014).