ETS Proficiency Profile Level Definitions

Reading/Critical Thinking

Level 1

Students who are proficient can:

- recognize factual material explicitly presented in a reading passage
- understand the meaning of particular words or phrases in the context of a reading passage

Level 2

Students who are proficient can:

- synthesize material from different sections of a passage
- recognize valid inferences derived from material in the passage
- identify accurate summaries of a passage or of significant sections of the passage
- understand and interpret figurative language
- discern the main idea, purpose or focus of a passage or a significant portion of the passage

Level 3/Critical Thinking

Students who are proficient can:

- evaluate competing causal explanations
- evaluate hypotheses for consistency with known facts
- determine the relevance of information for evaluating an argument or conclusion
- determine whether an artistic interpretation is supported by evidence contained in a work
- recognize the salient features or themes in a work of art
- evaluate the appropriateness of procedures for investigating a question of causation
- evaluate data for consistency with known facts, hypotheses or methods
- recognize flaws and inconsistencies in an argument

Writing Skills

Level 1

Students who are proficient can:

- recognize agreement among basic grammatical elements (e.g., nouns, verbs, pronouns and conjunctions)
- recognize appropriate transition words
- recognize incorrect word choice
- order sentences in a paragraph
- order elements in an outline

Level 2

Students who are proficient can:

- incorporate new material into a passage
- recognize agreement among basic grammatical elements (e.g., nouns, verbs, pronouns and conjunctions) when these elements are complicated by intervening words or phrases
- combine simple clauses into single, more complex combinations
- recast existing sentences into new syntactic combinations

Level 3

Students who are proficient can:

- discriminate between appropriate and inappropriate use of parallelism
- discriminate between appropriate and inappropriate use of idiomatic language
- recognize redundancy
- discriminate between correct and incorrect constructions
- recognize the most effective revision of a sentence

Mathematics

Level 1

Students who are proficient can:

- solve word problems that would most likely be solved by arithmetic and do not involve conversion of units or proportionality. These problems can be multistep if the steps are repeated rather than embedded
- solve problems involving the informal properties of numbers and operations, often involving the Number Line, including positive and negative numbers, whole numbers and fractions (including conversions of common fractions to percent, such as converting "1/4" to 25%)
- solve problems requiring a general understanding of square roots and the squares of numbers
- solve a simple equation or substitute numbers into an algebraic expression
- find information from a graph. This task may involve finding a specified piece of information in a graph that also contains other information

Level 2

Students who are proficient can:

- solve arithmetic problems with some complications, such as complex wording, maximizing or minimizing, and embedded ratios. These problems include algebra problems that can be solved by arithmetic (the answer choices are numeric)
- simplify algebraic expressions, perform basic translations, and draw conclusions from algebraic equations and inequalities. These tasks are more complicated than solving a simple equation, though they may be approached arithmetically by substituting numbers
- interpret a trend represented in a graph, or choose a graph that reflects a trend
- solve problems involving sets; problems have numeric answer choices

Level 3

Students who are proficient can:

- solve word problems that would be unlikely to be solved by arithmetic; the answer choices are either algebraic expressions or numbers that do not lend themselves to back-solving
- solve problems involving difficult arithmetic concepts, such as exponents and roots other than squares and square roots, and percent of increase or decrease
- generalize about numbers (e.g., identify the values of (x) for which an expression increases as (x) increases)
- solve problems requiring an understanding of the properties of integers, rational numbers, etc.
- interpret a graph in which the trends are to be expressed algebraically or one of the following is involved: exponents and roots other than squares and square roots, percent of increase or decrease
- solve problems requiring insight or logical reasoning

PLNU Freshmen Compared with Freshmen at Master's Comprehensive Schools
2011-12

	Proficient	Marginal	Not Proficient
Reading Level 1			
PLNU	73%	16%	11%
Master's Comprehensive	47%	24%	28%
Reading Level 2			
PLNU	40%	21%	40%
Master's Comprehensive	22%	16%	62%
Reading Level 3/ Critical Thinking			
PLNU	3%	23%	74%
Master's Comprehensive	3%	10%	88%
Writing Level 1			
PLNU	73%	22%	5%
Master's Comprehensive	48%	17%	20%
Writing Level 2			
PLNU	21%	37%	42%
Master's Comprehensive	11%	29%	59%
Writing Level 3			
PLNU	7%	27%	66%
Master's Comprehensive	4%	32%	78%
Mathematics Level 1			
PLNU	68%	22%	10%
Master's Comprehensive	40%	28%	33%
Mathematics Level 2			
PLNU	41%	27%	32%
Master's Comprehensive	18%	21%	61%
Mathematics Level 3			
PLNU	14%	23%	63%
Master's Comprehensive	4%	11%	86%

PLNU Seniors Compared with Seniors at Master's Comprehensive Schools
2011-12

	Proficient	Marginal	Not Proficient
Reading Level 1			
PLNU	84%	9%	7%
Master's Comprehensive	69%	18%	13%
Reading Level 2			
PLNU	62%	14%	24%
Master's Comprehensive	40%	19%	41%
Reading Level 3/ Critical Thinking			
PLNU	20%	31%	49%
Master's Comprehensive	8%	19%	73%
Writing Level 1			
PLNU	82%	14%	3%
Master's Comprehensive	65%	25%	10%
Writing Level 2			
PLNU	43%	37%	20%
Master's Comprehensive	22%	37%	42%
Writing Level 3			
PLNU	23%	38%	39%
Master's Comprehensive	9%	28%	64%
Mathematics Level 1			
PLNU	71%	19%	10%
Master's Comprehensive	56%	23%	20%
Mathematics Level 2			
PLNU	42%	28%	30%
Master's Comprehensive	30%	25%	44%
Mathematics Level 3			
PLNU	15%	24%	61%
Master's Comprehensive	8%	17%	74%

PLNU Freshmen and Seniors Combined Compared with Peer Institutions
2011-12

	Proficient	Marginal	Not Proficient
Reading Level 1			
PLNU	79%	12%	9%
Peer Group	68%	18%	14%
Reading Level 2			
PLNU	52%	17%	31%
Peer Group	39%	19%	42%
Reading Level 3/ Critical Thinking			
PLNU	12%	28%	60%
Peer Group	8%	19%	73%
Writing Level 1			
PLNU	78%	18%	4%
Peer Group	67%	23%	9%
Writing Level 2			
PLNU	34%	37%	29%
Peer Group	25%	35%	40%
Writing Level 3			
PLNU	16%	34%	51%
Peer Group	10%	31%	59%
Mathematics Level 1			
PLNU	70%	20%	10%
Peer Group	61%	22%	17%
Mathematics Level 2			
PLNU	42%	28%	31%
Peer Group	34%	26%	40%
Mathematics Level 3			
PLNU	15%	24%	62%
Peer Group	11%	18%	71%

Schools:
Ableine Christian University*
Anderson University*
Asbury University*
Dordt College
Eastern Mennonite College
George Fox University*
Mount Vernon Nazarene University
Palm Beach Atlantic University*
Taylor University (IN)*
Trevecca Nazarene University

* denotes schools on PLNU's official comparator list
10 schools were required to run a peer list so other similar institutions were selected