Appendix E
FCAT Reading Glossary

The following glossary is a reference list provided for item writers and is not intended to comprise a comprehensive vocabulary list for students. The terms defined in this glossary pertain to the Standards in reading and language arts for Grades 3–10 and the content assessed on FCAT Reading. Boldfaced words or phrases within a definition are defined separately in this glossary.

Affix—A word part that cannot stand alone (morpheme) and that changes the meaning or function of a **base word** to which it is attached, such as the prefix *ad-* and the suffix *-ing* in *adjoining*.

Alliteration—The repetition of the same sound, usually of a consonant, at the beginning of two or more words immediately succeeding each other or at short intervals. Example: The repetition of *f* and *g* in *fields ever fresh, groves ever green*.

Allusion—A reference to a statement, well-known person, place, or event from literature, history, mythology, politics, sports, science, or the arts. Allusions usually come from a body of information that the author presumes the reader will know.

Analyze—To analyze a literary work, parts are examined to understand how they work together to create meaning as a whole. Examples of analysis are to compare, to **contrast**, to deduce, or to categorize.

Antonym—A word having a meaning opposite to that of another word.

Argument/support—A **text structure/organizational pattern** that uses reason to try to lead a reader to think or act in a certain way. Argument begins with a statement of an idea or opinion, which is then supported with **facts** and logical reasoning to achieve its purpose. Argument may be found in a single text or paired texts in which opposing views are expressed.

Author's perspective—The viewpoint that an author brings to a piece of writing. Sometimes the author's perspective is recognizable through the **tone** of a piece.

Author's purpose—An author's purpose is his or her reason for creating a particular work. The purpose may be to entertain, to explain or to inform, to express an opinion, or to persuade readers to do or believe something. An author may have more than one purpose for writing, but usually one is the most important.

Base word—A complete word that can stand alone. Other words or word parts (**affixes**) can be added to base words to form new words (e.g., *teach* in *reteach* or *teaching*).

Cause and effect—Two events are related as cause and effect when one event brings about the other. The following statement shows a cause-and-effect relationship: *Because of my broken arm, the doctor said I couldn't play baseball*. Cause and effect is also a **text structure/ organizational pattern** that presents relationships between ideas in a text. In this method of development, the writer **analyzes** the reason(s) for an action, event, or decision, or **analyzes** resulting consequences to support a point.

Character development—The method(s) a writer uses to create and develop characters. To develop a character, (a) a writer may describe a character's physical appearance; (b) the speech, thoughts, feelings, or actions of a character may be used to reveal the character's nature; (c) the speech, thoughts, and feelings, or actions of other characters may be used to develop a character; or (d) the narrator may make direct comments about a character.

Character point of view—An important aspect within **character development** is character point of view. The viewpoint or voice of a character is developed by a writer and enables readers to better understand the events of a text through a character's thoughts, feelings, beliefs, motives, or actions.

Chronological order—The order in which events happen in time (sequence of events). A writer may use clue words or signal words to alert the reader to these events, such as *first, next, then, finally*, etc. Chronological order (sequence) is also a **text structure/organizational pattern** in which ideas are grouped on the basis of order or time.

Compare/contrast—Writing that examines the similarities and differences between two or more subjects. The writer uses **transitions** to signal similarities and differences, such as *like, likewise, in contrast, similarly,* and *in the same way*. As a **text structure/organizational pattern**, compare/contrast writing may end with a conclusion that explains a decision or provides new understanding of the subjects.

Comparison—The process of pointing out what two or more things have in common.

Conflict—In literary text, the struggle between the opposing forces that moves the **plot** forward. Conflict can be internal, occurring within a character, or external, occurring between characters or between a character and an abstraction, such as nature or fate.

Consumer documents—Printed materials that accompany products and services. They are intended for the buyers or users of the products or services and usually provide information about use, care, operation, or assembly. Some common consumer documents are applications, contracts, warranties, manuals, instructions, package inserts, labels, brochures, and schedules.

Context clues—Unfamiliar words are often surrounded by words or phrases called context clues that help readers understand their meanings. A context clue may be a definition, a **synonym**, an example, a **comparison** or a **contrast**, or any other expression that enables readers to infer the word's meaning. When readers meet unfamiliar words, context clues narrow the possible **word choices**, thereby making word identification more accurate.

Contrast—To emphasize the dissimilarities and differences of things, qualities, events, or **problems**.

Descriptive language—Language intended to create a **mood**, person, place, thing, event, emotion, or experience. Descriptive language uses images that appeal to the reader's senses, helping the reader to imagine how a subject looks, sounds, smells, tastes, or feels. Descriptive language is used in **fiction**, **nonfiction**, drama, and poetry. Some examples of descriptive language include **imagery**, **alliteration**, and **mood**.

Diction—A writer's or speaker's choice of words and way of arranging the words in sentences. Diction can be broadly characterized as formal or informal. It can also be described as technical or common, abstract or concrete, and literal or figurative. For example, a writer for *Scientific American* would use a more formal, more technical, and possibly more abstract diction than a writer for the science section of a local newspaper.

Drawing conclusions—A special kind of **inference** that involves not reading between the lines but reading beyond the lines. The reader combines what he or she already knows with information from the text. Readers can draw a conclusion from stated **facts** or facts they infer and then combine all the facts to support their conclusion.

Evaluate—To form opinions about what is read. Through this process readers may develop their own ideas about characters and events.

Excerpt—A passage or segment taken from a text. The length of the excerpt may be a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, or an entire chapter.

Exposition—In **fiction**, the structure of the **plot** normally begins with exposition. In the early part of the story, the exposition sets the **tone**, establishes the **setting**, introduces the characters, and gives the reader important background information.

Fact—Knowledge or information that can be verified.

Falling action—In the **plot** of a story, the action that occurs after the climax. During the falling action, **conflicts** are resolved and mysteries are solved.

Fiction—Imaginative works of prose, primarily the novel and the short story. Although fiction may draw on actual events and real people, it springs mainly from the imagination of the writer. The purpose is to entertain as well as enlighten the reader.

Figurative language—Language that involves the use of words and/or phrases that describe one thing in terms of another and that is not meant to be understood on a literal level. Figurative language always involves some sort of imaginative **comparison** between seemingly unlike things. The most common are **simile** (*My heart is like a singing bird*), **metaphor** (*My soul is an enchanted boat*), and **personification** (*The wind stood up and gave a shout*).

Flashback—An interruption in the action of a **plot** to tell what happened at an earlier time. A flashback breaks the usual movement of the narrative by going back in time. Flashback usually gives background information that helps the reader understand the present situation.

Foreshadowing—A writer's use of hints or clues to suggest events that will occur later in the **plot**. Foreshadowing creates suspense and prepares the reader for what is to come.

Functional materials—A form of informational text (e.g., websites, how-to articles, brochures, fliers) encountered in real-world situations. Functional materials also include **consumer documents** and **workplace documents**.

Hyperbole—A figure of speech in which the truth is exaggerated for emphasis or for humorous effect. Writers often use hyperbole to intensify a description or to emphasize the essential nature of something. For example, if a writer says that a limousine is as long as an ocean liner, he/she is using hyperbole.

Imagery—Language that appeals to the senses. It is used in all types of writing, but especially in poetry. Imagery consists of descriptive words and phrases that re-create sensory experiences for the reader. Imagery usually appeals to one or more of the five senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch—to help the reader imagine exactly what is being described.

Inference—The act or process of deriving logical conclusions from premises known or assumed to be true; the conclusions drawn from this process.

Informational nonfiction—Writing that provides factual information and that often explains ideas or teaches processes. See examples given in the table on page 4.

Interpret—To translate, **analyze**, or give examples drawn from a text. This process involves inferring beyond the literal meaning of a text in order to determine meaning.

Irony—A **contrast** between what is expected and what actually exists or happens. Irony involves the tension that arises from the discrepancy, either between what one says and what one means (verbal irony), between what a character believes and what a reader knows (dramatic irony), or between what occurs and what one expects to occur (situational irony). Exaggeration, **sarcasm**, and understatement are techniques writers use to express irony.

Literary device—A literary technique used to achieve a particular effect, such as **descriptive language** and **figurative language**.

Literary elements—Refers to the particular elements common to all literary and narrative forms. Some examples of literary elements are **theme**, **setting**, **conflict**, and **point of view**.

Literary nonfiction—**Nonfiction** that is recognized as being of artistic value or that is about literature. Autobiographies, essays, memoirs, letters, and eloquent speeches typically fall into this category. See examples given in the table on page 4.

Main idea (stated/implied)—The main idea is the most important idea expressed in a piece of writing. It may be the central idea of an entire work or a thought expressed in the **topic** sentence of a paragraph. (The term *main idea* is used in the discussions of informational articles and some **nonfiction**.) The implied main idea is the main idea of a passage or an article that is not directly stated but formed from what is suggested by an author from the supporting details.

Metaphor—A **comparison** of two things that have some quality in common. Unlike a **simile**, a metaphor does not contain an explicit word of **comparison**, such as *like* or *as* (e.g., *in the evening of life*).

Mood—The feeling or atmosphere that a writer creates for the reader. The use of connotation, details, **imagery**, **figurative language**, **foreshadowing**, **setting**, and rhythm can help establish mood.

Moral—A lesson taught in a literary work, such as a fable. For example, the moral *Do not count your chickens before they are hatched* teaches that one should not count on one's fortunes or blessings until they appear. A moral of a literary work should not be confused with a **theme**.

Multiple meanings—The particular meaning of a word that is dependent upon how it is used in a sentence.

Myth—A traditional story usually of unknown authorship that deals with basic questions about the universe. Heroes and gods often figure prominently in myths, which may attempt to explain such things as the origin of the world, mysteries of nature, or social customs.

Nonfiction—Writing about real people, places, and events. Unlike **fiction**, nonfiction is largely concerned with factual information, although the writer shapes the information according to his or her purpose and viewpoint. Newspaper articles, magazine articles, editorials, and encyclopedia articles are examples of nonfiction.

Onomatopoeia—The use of words whose sounds suggest their meanings (e.g., *meow, buzz, splash*).

Organizational patterns—**Text structures** found in all types of **nonfiction** (and even some **fiction**); the building blocks that serve every writing purpose—informative, expository, argumentative, or persuasive. Common types of organizational patterns include **chronological order** (sequence of events), **compare/contrast**, and **cause and effect**.

Paraphrasing—Helps readers to clarify meaning by restating information in their own words.

Personification—A figure of speech in which a nonhuman thing or quality is written about as if it were human. In the phrase *the blue stars shiver*, human attributes are given to stars. *Rocks lie on their backs* and *the rock has an open wound* are other examples.

Perspective—A position from which something is considered or **evaluated**; standpoint.

Plot/plot development—The action or sequence of events in a story. Plot is usually a series of related incidents that builds and grows as the story develops. There are five basic elements in a plot line: (a) **exposition**; (b) **rising action**; (c) climax; (d) **falling action**; and (e) **resolution** or denouement.

Point of view—The vantage point from which a writer tells a story. The three main points of view in literary texts are omniscient, third-person limited, and first-person.

Primary source—Materials written by people who were present at events, either as participants or as observers. Letters, diaries, autobiographies, speeches, and photographs are examples of primary sources.

Problem/solution—A **text structure** in which the **main ideas** are organized into two parts: a problem and a subsequent solution that responds to the problem, or a question and an answer that responds to the question.

Pun—Play on the **multiple meanings** of a word or on two words that sound alike but have different meanings. Example: *I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it hit me.*

Relevant details—A **fact** revealed by an author or speaker that supports an attitude or **tone** in a piece of poetry or prose. In informational text, relevant details provide information that supports the author's main point.

Resolution—The portion of a play or story where the central **problem** is solved. The resolution comes after the climax and **falling action** and is intended to bring the story to a satisfactory end. An insight or a change as a result of the **conflict** is shown in the resolution.

Rising action—The events in a story that move the **plot** forward. Rising action involves **conflicts** and complications and builds toward the climax of the story.

Root word—In the English language, many roots are derived from ancient Greek and Latin languages. A root is a word part that cannot stand by itself but must be combined with other word parts, such as prefixes and suffixes, in order to convey core meaning. Knowing the meaning of a word's root can help you determine the word's meaning.

Sarcasm—A form of verbal **irony**, usually harsh. It is often used as an insult.

Satire—Type of writing that ridicules human weakness, vice, or folly in order to bring about social reform. Satires often try to persuade the reader to do or believe something by showing the opposite view as absurd or even as vicious and inhumane. One of the favorite techniques of the satirists is exaggeration, overstating something to make it look worse than it is. For example, George Orwell's novel, *Animal Farm*, uses barnyard animals to mock the way people abuse political power.

Secondary source—Records of events that were created some time after the events occurred; the writers were not directly involved or were not present when the events took place. Encyclopedias, textbooks, biographies, most newspaper and magazine articles, and books and articles that **interpret** or review research are examples.

Setting—The time and place of the action in a story, play, or poem. Elements of setting may include geographic location, historical period (past, present, or future), season of the year, time of day, and the beliefs, customs, and standards of a society. Setting can function in several ways in a text: it can provide atmosphere, **conflict**, or reveal character.

Shades of meaning—Shades of meaning are small, subtle differences in meaning between similar words and phrases. Example: *glance, glare,* and *peek* all refer to the concept of looking but have a different meaning. **Context clues** help resolve which shade of meaning is intended.

Simile—A **comparison** of two things that have some quality in common. In a simile, the **comparison** is conveyed by means of the word *like* or *as* (e.g., *She stood in front of the altar, shaking like a freshly caught trout*. —Maya Angelou).

Summary statement—A general statement that presents the main points or **facts** in condensed form, omitting unimportant details and information.

Symbolism—The use of something concrete (e.g., an object, a **setting**, an event, an animal, or a person) that functions in a text to represent something more than itself. A symbol must be something tangible or visible, while the idea it symbolizes must be something abstract or universal. For example, a dark forest has often been used as a symbol of being lost and confused in life. In James Hurst's "The Scarlet Ibis," the fragile ibis functions as a symbol of the frail little boy and his unusual nature.

Synonym—A word that has the same or almost the same meaning as another word (e.g., *rob/steal, parcel/package, occasionally/sometimes*).

Synthesize—A systematic process that involves identifying the relationships among two or more ideas. When synthesizing, the reader combines or puts together information from two or more places or sources. The reader might also read information under pictures and on maps and charts, combining information from all areas to draw conclusions. At times, the reader may be asked to look at how ideas or information in one text is presented similarly to or different from that found in another text.

Text box/Sidebar—A distinct section of a page that amplifies or highlights information found in the main text.

Text features—Design elements that include the organizational structure of a text and help make the key ideas and supporting information understandable. Text features include headings, text boxes, subheadings, titles, subtitles, boldface type, italic type, bulleted or numbered lists, sidebars, and graphic aids, such as charts, tables, timelines, illustrations, and photographs.

Text structure—The temporal and spatial arrangement of elements in a written, oral, or visual text. For example, the text structure of a narrative film might involve moving back and forth among different time periods in recounting events; or the text structure of an argumentative essay might involve a linear arrangement of definitions, arguments, evidence, counterarguments, and rebuttal. Common forms of text structure or **organizational patterns** found in written texts include **compare/contrast**, cause/effect, **chronological order**, and **argument/support**.

Theme—A theme is not the same as a **moral**, which is a rule of conduct, nor should it be reduced to a familiar saying or cliché, such as *Crime doesn't pay*. A theme may give us insight into the writer's view of the world or human nature. A theme is a much more complex and original revelation about life that is usually unstated, yet it is vital. When the theme of a work is implied, readers must think about what the work suggests about people or life and must infer the writer's view from details and events. One way of figuring out a theme is to apply the lessons learned by the main characters to life.

Tone—An expression of a writer's attitude toward a subject. Unlike **mood**, which is intended to shape the reader's emotional response, tone reflects the feelings of the writer. Tone can be serious, humorous, sarcastic, playful, ironic, bitter, or objective.

Topic—The general category or class of ideas, often stated in a word or phrase, to which the ideas of a text as a whole belong (e.g., subject matter or main idea of a conversation, discussion, or a piece of writing).

Transition words/phrases/expressions—Words and phrases that indicate relationships between ideas in a paragraph or composition.

Validity/reliability—A systematic process that involves evaluating whether or not information in a text is valid (correct or sound) and reliable (dependable). The reader engages in this process by checking specific information found in a text for its accuracy and dependability, evaluating and applying that information, and verifying the best supporting evidence based on correct and logical conclusions.

Word relationships—**Synonyms**, **antonyms**, homonyms, and homophones.

Workplace document—Materials that are produced or used within a work **setting**, usually to aid in the functioning of the workplace. They include job applications, office memos, training manuals, job descriptions, and sales reports.