Figure I.2.34 provides descriptions of the nature of the reading skills, knowledge and understanding required at each level of the scale for the *non-continuous texts* aspect of reading, with the percentage of students across OECD countries who performed at this level in PISA 2009. The right-hand column lists examples of released *non-continuous texts* questions. Figures I.2.40 to I.2.46 describe these questions and provide commentary on what they show.

■ Figure I.2.34 ■
Summary descriptions of the seven proficiency levels on the reading subscale
non-continuous texts

Level	Percentage of students able to perform tasks at each level or above (OECD average)	Characteristics of tasks	Examples of released *non-continuous texts* questions
6	1.0% of students across the OECD can perform tasks at least at Level 6	Identify and combine information from different parts of a complex document that has unfamiliar content, sometimes drawing on features that are external to the display, such as footnotes, labels and other organisers. Demonstrate a full understanding of the text structure and its implications.	
5	8.0% of students across the OECD can perform tasks at least at Level 5	Identify patterns among many pieces of information presented in a display that may be long and detailed, sometimes by referring to information that is in an unexpected place in the text or outside the text.	
4	28.5% of students across the OECD can perform tasks at least at Level 4	Scan a long, detailed text in order to find relevant information, often with little or no assistance from organisers such as labels or special formatting, to locate several pieces of information to be compared or combined.	*MOBILE PHONE SAFETY* – Question 11 (604) *BALLOON* – Question 3.2 (595) *MOBILE PHONE SAFETY* – Question 2 (561)
3	57.3% of students across the OECD can perform tasks at least at Level 3	Consider one display in the light of a second, separate document or display, possibly in a different format, or draw conclusions by combining several pieces of graphical, verbal and numeric information.	*MOBILE PHONE SAFETY* – Question 6 (526) *BALLOON* – Question 4 (510) *BALLOON* – Question 3.1 (449) *MOBILE PHONE SAFETY* – Question 9 (488)
2	80.9% of students across the OECD can perform tasks at least at Level 2	Demonstrate a grasp of the underlying structure of a visual display such as a simple tree diagram or table, or combine two pieces of information from a graph or table.	*BALLOON* – Question 6 (411)
1a	93.7% of student across the OECD can perform tasks at least at Level 1a	Focus on discrete pieces of information, usually within a single display such as a simple map, a line graph or bar graph that presents only a small amount of information in a straightforward way, and in which most of the verbal text is limited to a small number of words or phrases.	*BALLOON* – Question 8 (370)
1b	98.5% of student across the OECD can perform tasks at least at Level 1b	Identify information in a short text with a simple list structure and a familiar format.	

Figure I.2.35 shows the percentage of students at each proficiency level on the *non-continuous texts* subscale. Details of performance by gender on this subscale are also provided in Table I.2.18.

Mean performance across OECD countries is the same on the *non-continuous texts* subscale as on the overall reading scale (493 points), but is slightly more dispersed (a standard deviation of 95 compared with 93). For almost half of the participating countries, including most OECD countries, the modal level is Level 3. The exceptions are in the OECD countries Finland, Korea and New Zealand, all of which have a modal level of Level 4, as well as in the partner countries and economies Shanghai-China and Singapore. Among the OECD countries, Chile, Mexico and Turkey are also exceptions, with more students performing at Level 2 than at any other level.