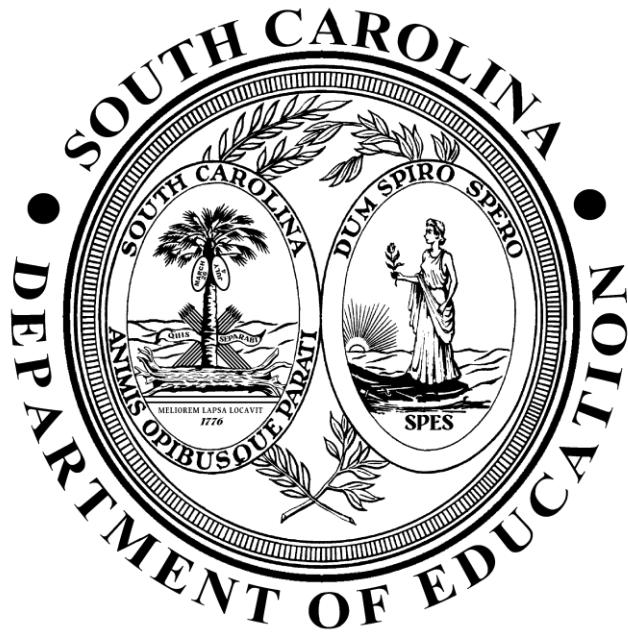


**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
ELLEN WEAVER**

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION



**Text Complexity Resources to Support the 2024
*SC College- and Career-Ready ELA Standards***

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Text Complexity Resources

The Complexity of Text Considerations for Instruction

- Consider the appropriateness of complexity when selecting texts for whole and small-group instruction.
- Be deliberate when selecting texts that fit the scope/sequence of academic standards. When introducing a skill, consider using less complex text. Increase the complexity of text when a skill is being practiced or mastered.
- Integrate texts from other content areas when possible and appropriate.
- Select developmentally appropriate and progressively complex texts to help students build stamina.
- In small groups, differentiate for struggling readers by varying Qualitative and Reader/Task but keeping Lexile level the same or close to grade level expectation.
- Consider diverse texts that reflect students' cultures and ethnicities.

Frequently Asked Questions Around Text Complexity

Q: What if I have a wide range of readers in class? What should I do?

A: When working with a wide range of readers, it is important to remember to support their reading growth through small group instruction that matches students' instructional reading levels. Teachers should develop a multilevel classroom library for students to use in the classroom. This library might include a variety of levels of complex texts but also a variety of text formats including audiobooks, podcasts, wordless picture books, etc. for independent student practice and skill mastery.

Q: How do I support students with IEPs and multilingual learners (MLL) with text complexity as it relates to reading abilities and limited background knowledge?

A: Several things can be done to support students with IEPs and MLLs:

Select texts based on the student's decoding ability. If the text has phonic patterns that the student has not been taught or mastered, students will struggle to comprehend what they cannot decode. If you are not sure if decoding is the reason for the difficulty, read the passage aloud. If the student can answer all the questions accurately when read aloud, then decoding is likely the primary reason for the difficulties.

Review content and carefully select books that the student may have background knowledge on or develop a plan to build background knowledge quickly and easily prior to reading. This may be accomplished by finding books on current social studies or science topics or by showing video clips.

Preview the book to identify unfamiliar vocabulary. Teach those words using an explicit vocabulary routine with a focus on not just defining the word but exploring how the word can be used and applied across different contexts. Explicit vocabulary routines might include

calling attention to the word's pronunciation and spelling, giving a student-friendly definition, using the word in a variety of sentences, and having students use the word.

Review the book for syntactic complexity. Both MLLs and students with IEPs are likely to struggle with syntactically complex sentences (sentences with many clauses).

Providing direct instruction in recognizing and understanding how groups of words work together to create meaning is a powerful way to improve comprehension. This can be accomplished through sentence expansion and sentence combining activities.

Scaffold the skill of visualization by modeling how readers visualize or create "mental movies" while they read.

Q: How do teachers use and select controversial texts?

A: Most South Carolina school districts have policies regarding controversial texts. Contact your district for more guidance on the policies.

Q: How does this fit into students choosing their own texts for Independent Reading?

A: Student choice is vital in fostering engagement and enjoyment for the instructional component of Independent Reading. Regarding text complexity, it is important that the "reader and task" aspect be considered when students are choosing their own texts for independent reading. When addressing student choice for Independent Reading teachers should know their readers, understand the complexity of the texts offered, and be able to offer a range of instructional approaches as students explore a variety of texts with varying complexities.

Text Complexity Examples

This section provides support to various areas of text complexity, including elementary, middle, and secondary level examples of text complexity and answers to frequently asked questions regarding text complexity. These passages are provided to educators in South Carolina as examples, but educators are encouraged to use the Text Complexity Process within the 2024 SC CCR ELA Standards to evaluate the text complexity of other texts used in instruction.

Elementary

Passage	Text Complexity Analysis
<u>My Pet Happy</u> <u>Annotated “My Pet Happy”</u>	<p>Quantitative: 10L-200 Midlevel complexity for K-1 grade Low level complexity for 2 grade</p> <p>Qualitative: Low Level Complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Literally stated• Author’s purpose is clear• Text organization is clear• Uses common vocabulary <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students are asked to read the passage and answer DOK 1 or 2 level questions.• Students have some background knowledge about pets. <p>Midlevel Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students are asked what makes a cat a good or bad pet.• Students may have some background knowledge about pets. <p>High Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students are asked whether the girl will be a good pet owner, based on the information in the passage• Students do not have any background knowledge about pets. <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in the context of rubric analysis.</p>

Passage	Text Complexity Analysis
<p><u>My Pet Happy: 2</u></p> <p><u>Annotated “My Pet Happy 2”</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 210-400L Midlevel complexity for K-1 grade Low level complexity for 2-3 grade</p> <p>Qualitative: Mid Level Complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literally told story • Author’s purpose is clear • Text organization is clear • Uses mostly common vocabulary • Some simple use of figurative language: similes and alliteration • May use illustrations to determine unknown words and vocabulary <p>Reader and Task:</p> <p>Low Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to read the passage and answer DOK 1 or 2 level questions. • Students have some background knowledge about pets. <p>Midlevel Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked what makes a dog a good or bad pet. • Students may have some background knowledge about pets. <p>High Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked what the best pet would be, based on the information in the passage. • Students do not have any background knowledge about pets. <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in the context of rubric analysis.</p>

Passage	Text Complexity Analysis
<p><u>Possible Pets</u></p> <p><u>Annotated</u></p> <p><u>“Possible Pets” Sample</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 610-800L Midlevel complexity for 2-3 grade Low level complexity for 4-5 grade</p> <p>Qualitative: Low Level Complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literally stated facts • Author’s purpose is clear • Text organization is clear • Uses common vocabulary • Uses bullets as a text feature but are a simple listing <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to read the passage and answer DOK 1 or 2 level questions. • Students have some background knowledge about pets. <p>Midlevel Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked what makes a dog a good or bad pet. • Students may have some background knowledge about pets. <p>High Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked what the best pet would be, based on the information in the passage. • Students do not have any background knowledge about pets. <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in the context of rubric analysis.</p>

Passage	Text Complexity Analysis
<p><u>Panning for Gold</u></p> <p><u>Annotated “Panning for Gold”</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 610-800L Midlevel complexity for 2-3 grade Low level complexity for 4-5 grade</p> <p>Qualitative: Midlevel Complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some use of figurative language; meaning is obvious (“glittering, gleaming gold”) • Author’s purpose to entertain is clear • Text organization is clear • Some use of vocabulary related to panning for gold </p> <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to read the passage and answer DOK 1 or 2 level questions. • Students have some background knowledge about panning for gold. Midlevel Complexity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked what the theme of the passage might be. • Students may have some background knowledge about panning for gold. High Level Complexity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked how Ben changes in the story based on the plot. • Students do not have any background knowledge about panning for gold. </p> <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in the context of rubric analysis.</p>

Passage	Text Complexity Analysis
<p><u>Preparing a Happy Home: A Kitten's Journal</u></p> <p>Annotated “Preparing a Happy Home: A Kitten's Journal”</p> <p><u>Page 1</u></p> <p><u>Page 2</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 610-800L Midlevel complexity for 2-3 grade Low level complexity for 4-5 grade</p> <p>Qualitative: High Level Complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some use of figurative language; meaning is less obvious (“I hissed at the veterinarian.”) • Author’s purpose is somewhat clear. • Text organization is a letter to the audience. • Some use of vocabulary related to owning a pet <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to read the passage and answer DOK 1 or 2 level questions. • Students have some background knowledge about owning a pet kitten. <p>Midlevel Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked why Fluffy included the list of ways to prepare to bring a kitten home. • Students may have some background knowledge about owning a pet kitten. <p>High Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked why the author wrote the passage from the perspective of the kitten. • Students do not have any background knowledge about owning a pet kitten. <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in the context of rubric analysis.</p>

Middle

Passage	Text Complexity Analysis
<p><u>Self-Made Man</u></p> <p>Annotated “Self-Made Man”</p> <p><u>Page 1</u></p> <p><u>Page 2</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 810L - 1000L Midlevel complexity for 6-7 grade Low level complexity for 8th grade</p> <p>Qualitative: Low Level Complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple instances of implicit meanings throughout, but much of the text includes explicit and literally stated meaning. • Language in the text is mostly literal, with only one instance of figurative language. • Author’s purpose is obvious and clear. • Text organization is clear but includes some implicit connections. • No graphics included to enhance meaning. • Includes commonly used words <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to recall or summarize key details regarding Dave Thomas’s life. <p>Midlevel Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to select and analyze evidence that supports the inference that Dave Thomas’s upbringing influenced his decisions throughout his life. • Students are asked to determine the author’s purpose and to explain how that purpose is evident throughout the text. <p>High Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to analyze the significance of the title and to evaluate the evidence used to support the claim that Dave Thomas was a “self-made man.” <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in the context of rubric analysis.</p>

<p><u>The Other Side of the Camera</u></p> <p>Annotated “The Other Side of the Camera”</p> <p><u>Page 1</u></p> <p><u>Page 2</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 810L - 1000L Midlevel complexity for 6-7 grade Low level complexity for 8th grade</p> <p>Qualitative: Midlevel Complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit and implicit meaning in text • Author’s purpose is readily inferred from reading. • Text organization is clear but may contain isolated incidences of shifts in time/place, focus, or pacing. • Uses some domain specific or academic vocabulary </p> <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to read the passage and answer DOK 1 or 2 level questions. Midlevel Complexity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to discuss how the time setting (April Fool’s Day) impacts the development of the plot. • Students are asked to determine possible themes. • Students are asked to discuss how Gabe changes (or if he changes) over the course of the text. High Level Complexity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to analyze how the title of the text supports a theme that they identify. </p> <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in context of rubric analysis.</p>
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<p><u>A Starring Role</u></p> <p>Annotated “A Starring Role”</p> <p><u>Page 1</u></p> <p><u>Page 2</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 810L - 1000L Midlevel complexity for 6-7 grade Low level complexity for 8th grade</p> <p>Qualitative: Midlevel Complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit and implicit meaning in text • Figurative language is used to enhance what is literally stated. • Author’s purpose is readily inferred from reading. • Text organization is clear but may contain isolated incidences of shifts in time/place, focus, or pacing. • Uses some domain-specific or academic vocabulary </p> <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to read the passage and answer DOK 1 or 2 level questions. Midlevel Complexity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to determine possible themes • Students are asked to discuss how their perception of the narrator changes over the course of the text. • Students are asked to identify the main conflict and connect it to a theme. High Level Complexity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to analyze the title and how it could have multiple interpretations connected to various themes. • Students are asked to analyze the characterization of the narrator through her words, thoughts, and actions. • Students are asked to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of first-person POV in developing a theme (supplying them with a theme could move this to Midlevel Reader & Task). </p> <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in the context of rubric analysis.</p>
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Secondary

Passage	Text Complexity Analysis
<p><u>Teaching a Child to Ride a Bike</u></p> <p><u>Annotated “Teaching a Child to Ride a Bike”</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 1010L - 1200L High level complexity for 9-10 grade Midlevel complexity for 11-12 grade</p> <p>Qualitative: Low Level Complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit and implicit meaning in text • Author’s purpose is readily inferred from reading just the title • Text organization is clear and flows in logical sequential order • Uses some academic vocabulary • No use of graphics or unique text structures • 1st person narrator creates rapport with reader and aids in accessibility <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to identify the main idea. • Students are asked to identify topic sentences and supporting evidence. <p>Midlevel Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to consider supporting evidence to include or exclude in revising this passage. • Students are asked to develop a series of graphics to serve in lieu of this instructional essay. <p>High Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to revise this piece for a different audience or from a different perspective. <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in context of rubric analysis.</p>

<p><u>Chasing Crickets</u></p> <p>Annotated “Chasing Crickets”</p> <p><u>Page 1</u></p> <p><u>Page 2</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 1010L - 1200L High level complexity for 9-10 grade Midlevel complexity for 11-12 grade</p> <p>Qualitative: Midlevel Complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit and implicit meaning in text • Figurative language is used to enhance what is literally stated throughout the text • Author’s purpose is readily inferred from reading • Text organization is clear, but may contain isolated incidences of shifts in time/place, focus, or pacing (dashes) • Uses some domain-specific or academic vocabulary used <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have background knowledge of the topic (understanding of animals’ behavior), but it may not be needed to understand the text. • Students are asked to understand developmentally appropriate themes and ideas in a text. <p>Midlevel Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may or may not have background knowledge of the topic, but having it enhances the reader’s understanding of the animals’ behaviors throughout the text. • Student’s comprehension is dependent on the use of some comprehension strategies. • Students are asked to follow the cat’s progression as it chases the cricket to understand how it enhances plot progression throughout the passage. Students must ask themselves multi-step questions during this process. <p>High Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student’s understanding of themes and ideas is at the upper level. • Students are asked to analyze how the author uses the animals’ behaviors to help develop the themes and ideas of the text. • Students analyze how the author uses dashes to show subtle shifts in mood and pacing throughout the text. <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in context of rubric analysis.</p>
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<p><u>Misplaced Drama</u></p> <p>Annotated Misplaced Drama</p> <p><u>Page 1</u></p> <p><u>Page 2</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 810L - 1000L Low level complexity for 9-10 grade Low level complexity for 11-12 grade</p> <p>Qualitative: Midlevel complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit and implicit meaning in text, infer and use context for understanding the theatrical inclusion • Figurative language is used to enhance what is stated with intentional pun in title • Author's purpose is readily inferred from reading • Text organization is clear, but may contain isolated incidences of shifts in time/place, focus, or pacing • Dialogue between the characters adds a layer of complexity • Uses some domain specific or academic vocabulary <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to answer DOK Level 1 and 2 questions. <p>Midlevel Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having some background knowledge of theater productions would make this easier for students but is not necessarily required. • Students are asked to identify possible themes for the passage. <p>High Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to analyze how conflict (internal/external) develops theme. • Students are asked to analyze how the title contributes to thematic development. • Students are asked to analyze the characterization of Ashley through her words, thoughts, and actions. <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader and task in context of rubric analysis.</p>
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<p><u>International Relations</u></p> <p>Annotated International Relations</p> <p><u>Page 1</u></p> <p><u>Page 2</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 810L - 1000L Low level complexity for 9-10 grade Low level complexity for 11-12 grade</p> <p>Qualitative: High level complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple levels of meaning in text, often with intentional ambiguity • Figurative language is used throughout, multiple interpretations possible • Author's purpose is obscure and open to interpretation • Text organization is initially ambiguous but supports reader growth through practice. • Consistently uses domain specific or academic vocabulary • Requires reading stamina <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to answer DOK Level 1 and 2 questions, but even these might be difficult for many readers due to the dense nature of this speech and the background knowledge of history/international commerce, etc. that would be needed to navigate it. <p>Midlevel Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are supplied with McKinley's claim and asked to analyze how he develops it through rhetorical techniques. <p>High Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to identify McKinley's claim and asked to analyze how he develops it through rhetorical techniques, including an evaluation/critique of those techniques. <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in the context of rubric analysis.</p>
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<p><u>Celebrating the Sweet Potato</u></p> <p><u>Annotated Celebrating the Sweet Potato</u></p>	<p>Quantitative: 1210L - 1400L High level complexity for 9-10 grade Midlevel complexity for 11-12 grade</p> <p>Qualitative: High level complexity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literal and explicitly stated meaning in text • Language of the text is literal • Author's purpose is obvious and clear • Text organization is clear • Graphics are simple, but pictures support understanding • Uses commonly used words, some science terminology <p>Reader and Task: Low Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to answer DOK Level 1 and 2 questions. <p>Midlevel Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to analyze how the author used subheadings to develop his/her claim. • Students are asked to infer an intended audience for this text and support their idea with details from the text. <p>High Level Complexity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are asked to critique the way the author develops the claim in this text. <p>Overall Text Complexity: Determined by considering grade level, reader, and task in context of rubric analysis.</p>
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