WHAT IS SO COMPLEX ABOUT TEXT COMPLEXITY?

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Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Kathy Galvin
ELA Consultant
Cardinal Stritch University
WSRA
Back Channeling

- Type [http://todaysmeet.com/](http://todaysmeet.com/) into the url
- Type your name
- Click join
- Participate in discussion
  - Respond to questions
  - Ask questions
  - Post resources
  - Post comments
- Refer back to TodaysMeet
Wisconsin Learning On Demand

• Find “Just In Time” information and resources on Twitter
  – @WisDPICCSS
  – @WisDPIMath
  – @WisDPILit
  – @WisDPIITech

• More professional learning opportunities
  – http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=270532
Portrait of a Literate Student

**Students in Wisconsin...**

1. Demonstrate independence.
2. Build strong content and knowledge.
3. Respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose and discipline.
4. Comprehend as well as critique.
5. Value evidence.
6. Use technology and digital media strategically and capably.
7. Come to understand other perspectives and cultures.
Topics

Texts, Text Types, and Range of Texts

Measures of Text Complexity

Quantitative Measures

Qualitative Measures

Student and Task Considerations
Topics

Texts, Text Types, and Range of Texts

Measures of Text Complexity

Quantitative Measures
Qualitative Measures
Student and Task Considerations
Texts

- Write 5 titles, one on each Post-it Note, of texts your students are reading this year.
\[ x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a} \]
Wind Speed
m/s

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Index</th>
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Last Updated 9:19pm EST
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literary Texts</th>
<th>Informational Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stories</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dramas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes the subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, and graphic novels</td>
<td>Includes one-act and multi-act plays, both in written and film form</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fiction**

**Nonfiction**
### Literary Nonfiction

**Definition:**
Texts that blend literature and nonfiction, allowing the writer both to narrate facts and to search for truth.

**Examples:**
- *The Tipping Point, Blink, Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell
- *Into Thin Air, Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer
- *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot
- “Letter from Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King, Jr.
- “Hope, Despair and Memory” by Elie Wiesel

**Characteristics:**
- Presents factual information as well as insight about that information
- Emphasizes precise and skilled use of words and tone
- Lures reader into the subject with the character of the writing
- Uses literary style and technique
- Shares passion for a topic

**Nonexamples:**
- *Sold* by Patricia McCormick
- Front page news
- “Functional” texts

**A.K.A.:**
Creative Nonfiction, New Journalism, Literary Journalism
Text Types

- Sort your titles into their text types.
- What do you notice? Record your thoughts on TodaysMeet.
To measure students’ growth toward college and career readiness, assessments aligned with the CCSS should adhere to the distribution of texts across grades cited in the NAEP framework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Literary</th>
<th>Informational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Topics

Texts, Text Types, and Range of Texts

Measures of Text Complexity

Quantitative Measures
Qualitative Measures
Student and Task Considerations
Anchor Standard:  
R.CCR.10 Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Example Grade-level Standard:  
RI.6.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
Text Complexity: Why is this important?

– Complexity of texts students are expected to read is below what is required to achieve college and career readiness:
  • High school textbooks have declined in all subject areas over the last several decades.
  • Average length of sentences in K-8 textbooks has declined from 20 to 14 words.
  • Vocabulary demands have declined since the 1960s:
    – 8th grade textbooks = former 5th grade texts
    – 12th grade anthologies = former 7th grade texts

– Complexity of college and career texts has remained steady or increased, resulting in a gap

Adopted from the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Center
At which grade level, if any, would you use these titles?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Estimated Grade Level</th>
<th>Reason for Your Choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>Stargirl</em> by Jerry Spinelli</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. <em>To Kill a Mockingbird</em> by Harper Lee</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. <em>Hatchet</em> by Gary Paulsen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <em>Hamlet</em> by William Shakespeare</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. <em>Fahrenheit 451</em> by Ray Bradbury</td>
<td>890L</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>820L</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>4. <em>The Outsiders</em> by S.E. Hinton</td>
<td>750L</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>600L</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Text Complexity

- Levels of meaning
- Structure
- Language conventionality and clarity
- Knowledge demands

- Word frequency
- Sentence length
- Text cohesion

- Motivation
- Knowledge/experiences
- Purpose
- Task complexity
# Quantitative Measures

## Reader and Task

### Common Core Band | ATOS | Degrees of Reading Power® | Flesch-Kincaid® | The Lexile Framework® | Reading Maturity | SourceRater
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
2nd – 3rd | 2.75 – 5.14 | 42 – 54 | 1.98 – 5.34 | 420 – 820 | 3.53 – 6.13 | 0.05 – 2.48
4th – 5th | 4.97 – 7.03 | 52 – 60 | 4.51 – 7.73 | 740 – 1010 | 5.42 – 7.92 | 0.84 – 5.75

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**Readability index calculator**

Paste your sample text in the field below. A longer text provides a more accurate measurement. Select measurement method and click 'Calculate score' to see the score for your text. The result is displayed below the form.

Do you have a readability formula for a different language? Please [post an article comment](#) and I'll add it here.

**Text:**

**Method:** Flesch-Kincaid (English)

[Calculate score](#)
Text Complexity

- Levels of meaning
- Structure
- Language conventionality and clarity
- Knowledge demands

- Word frequency
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- Motivation
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- Purpose
- Task complexity
Qualitative Measures

- Literary Texts
  - Meaning / Purpose
  - Text Structure
- Informational Texts
  - Language Features
  - Knowledge Demands

Reader and Task

Qualitative

Quantitative
R.L.7.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

R.L.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
## Literary Texts: Meaning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceedingly Complex</th>
<th>Very Complex</th>
<th>Moderately Complex</th>
<th>Slightly Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meaning: Several levels and competing elements of meaning that are difficult to identify, separate, and interpret; theme is implicit or subtle, often ambiguous and revealed over the entirety of the text</td>
<td>Meaning: Several levels of meaning that may be difficult to identify or separate; theme is implicit or subtle and may be revealed over the entirety of the text</td>
<td>Meaning: More than one level of meaning with levels clearly distinguished from each other; theme is clear but may be conveyed with some subtlety</td>
<td>Meaning: One level of meaning; theme is obvious and revealed early in the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R.L.7.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
## Literary Texts: Text Structure

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<td><strong>Organization:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization is intricate with regard to elements such as narrative viewpoint, time shifts, multiple characters, storylines and detail</td>
<td>Organization may include subplots, time shifts and more complex characters</td>
<td>Organization may have two or more storylines and occasionally difficult to predict</td>
<td>Organization of text is clear, chronological or easy to predict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Use of Visual Features: If used, extensive, intricate, essential integrated print and text features enhance meaning of text; provide information not otherwise conveyed through print alone.</td>
<td>* Use of Visual Features: If used, essential integrated print and text features enrich meaning of the text; may provide information not otherwise conveyed through print alone.</td>
<td>* Use of Visual Features: If used, print and text features expand the meaning of the text; provide support in locating information and interpreting the text.</td>
<td>* Use of Visual Features: If used, print and text features represent the meaning of the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RL.7.5** Analyze how a drama’s or poem’s form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.
Literary Text Structure

- Rising Action for Plot:
- Climax:
- Falling Action:
- Rising Action for Subplot/s:
- Resolution:
  - Theme/s:

Exposition:
- Setting:
- Characters:
- Conflict/s:
- Point of View:
## Literary Texts: Language Features

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L.7.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
## Literary Texts: Language Features

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</table>

L.7.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
Sentence Structure

Simple
• He eats his cake.

Compound
• He eats his cake, but he doesn’t eat his pie.

Complex
• He eats his cake while he ignores the pie on his plate.

Compound–Complex
• While he ignores the pie on his plate, he eats his cake, and he drinks his milk.
# Sentence Structure

## Types of Sentences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Sentences</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple</td>
<td>A sentence with only one independent clause; sometimes referred to as a main clause.</td>
<td>&quot;Expect nothing. Live frugally on surprise.&quot; - Alice Walker</td>
<td>To clearly state an idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound</td>
<td>A sentence that contains at least two independent clauses. Compound sentences can be formed in three ways: (1) using coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet); (2) using the semicolon, either with or without conjunctive adverb (accordingly, afterward, also, anyhow, anyway, as a result, at last, at the same time, besides, certainly, consequently); (3) on occasion, using the colon.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;A man may die, nations may rise and fall, but an idea lives on.&quot; - John F. Kennedy</td>
<td></td>
<td>To show the link between two or more ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex</td>
<td>A sentence that contains an independent clause and at least one dependent clause. Dependent clauses include adverb clauses - begins with a subordinating conjunction (if, when, because, or although), adjective clauses - usually begins with usually begins with a relative pronoun (which, that, who, whom, whose) or a relative adverb (where, when, why), and noun clauses - commonly begins with that - clause and wh- clause.</td>
<td>&quot;Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.&quot; - Philo</td>
<td>To provide more information about an idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound-Complex</td>
<td>A sentence with two or more independent clauses and at least one dependent clause.</td>
<td>&quot;For in the end, freedom is a personal and lonely battle; and one faces down fears of today so that those of tomorrow might be engaged.&quot; - Alice Walker</td>
<td>To provide more information about two or more ideas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
They race. They race in the rain and they race in the snow. Although they race side by side, they are actually racing away from each other, sifting themselves apart. I am fast. You are slow. I win. You lose.
- Jerry Spinelli  
*Maniac Magee*

“He came to the river. The river was there.”
- Ernest Hemingway  
"Big Two-Hearted River"

"Expect nothing. Live frugally on surprise.”
- Alice Walker

“You had me at ‘hello.’”
- Dorothy Boyd  
*Jerry McGuire*
Compound Sentences

"Bricks are crumbling in places, and the front door is so swollen you have to push hard to get in” (4).
-Sandra Cisneros
_The House on Mango Street_

"I could have screamed, but I didn't. I could have fought, but I didn't” (1).
-Maggie Stiefvater
_Shiver_

“Eyes may be the window to the soul, but shoes are the gateway to the psyche.”
— Linda O'Keeffe

"A man may die, nations may rise and fall, but an idea lives on.“
- John F. Kennedy
**Complex Sentences**

"As writers, we learn most of what we know just by watching the pros, don't we?"
- John R. Trimble

"If I hadn't gone outside, I don't know if I would have heard the scream“ (38).
- Maggie Stiefvater
  *Shiver*

"If you build it, he will come."
- Shoeless Joe Jackson
  *Field of Dreams*

"As if a magician's wand had touched him, the garland of roses transformed him into a vision of Oriental beauty“ (150).
- Kate Chopin
  *The Awakening*
“These were the lovely bones that had grown around my absence: the connections - sometimes tenuous, sometimes made at great cost, but often magnificent - that happened after I was gone” (320).
-Alice Sebold
_The Lovely Bones:

“Summer romances begin for all kinds of reasons, but when all is said and done, they have one thing in common."
- Allie
_The Notebook
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L.7.1.b Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.
## Literary Texts: Knowledge Demands

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life Experiences: Explores complex, sophisticated themes; experiences are distinctly different from the common reader</td>
<td>Life Experiences: Explores themes of varying levels of complexity; experiences portrayed are uncommon to most readers</td>
<td>Life Experiences: Explores a single theme; experiences portrayed are common to many readers</td>
<td>Life Experiences: Explores a single theme; experiences portrayed are everyday and common to most readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements</td>
<td>Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements</td>
<td>Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: A few references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements</td>
<td>Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: No references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R.7.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text. RL.7.7&9
Qualitative Measures

- Literary Texts
  - Meaning / Purpose
  - Text Structure

- Informational Texts
  - Language Features
  - Knowledge Demands
R.I.7.2 Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
# Informational Texts: Purpose

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: Subtle, implied, difficult to determine; intricate, theoretical elements</td>
<td>Purpose: Implied, but fairly easy to infer; more theoretical than concrete</td>
<td>Purpose: Implied, but easy to identify based upon context or source</td>
<td>Purpose: Explicitly stated; clear, concrete with a narrow focus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RI.7.6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.
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<th>Slightly Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Organization of Main Ideas: Connections**
 between an extensive range of ideas or events are deep, intricate and often implicit or subtle; organization of the text is intricate or specialized for a particular discipline

* Use of Visual Features: If used, extensive, intricate, essential integrated print and text features enhance meaning of text; provide information not otherwise conveyed through print alone. | **Organization of Main Ideas: Connections**
 between an expanded range ideas, processes or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle; organization may contain multiple pathways and may exhibit traits common to a specific discipline

* Use of Visual Features: If used, essential integrated print and text features enrich meaning of the text; may provide information not otherwise conveyed through print alone. | **Organization of Main Ideas: Connections**
 between some ideas or events are implicit or subtle; organization is evident and generally sequential

* Use of Visual Features: If used, print and text features expand the meaning of the text; provide support in locating information and interpreting the text. | **Organization of Main Ideas: Connections**
 between ideas, processes or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict

* Use of Visual Features: If used, provide support in locating information and interpreting the text. |

**RI.7.5 Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.**
# Text Structures

Text structures refer to the way authors organize information in text. Recognizing the underlying structure of texts can help students focus attention on key concepts and relationships, anticipate what is to come, and monitor their comprehension as they read.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Structure</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Graphic Organizer</th>
<th>Transitions</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Narrative               | Narrates an event/story with characters, setting, conflict, point of view, and plot | ![Diagram]        | • Descriptive language                           | • Who is the narrative about?  
• Where is it set?  
• What is the conflict?  
• Who is telling the narrative?  
• What is happening? |
| Chronological, Process, or Sequence | Present ideas or events in the order in which they happen | ![Diagram]        | • First, second, third...  
• later  
• next  
• before  
• then  
• finally  
• after/later  
• when  
• since  
• now/formerly  
• actual use of dates | • What items, events, or steps are listed?  
• Do they have to/always happen in this order?  
• What sequence of events is being described?  
• What are the major incidents that occur?  
• How is this structure revealed in the text? |
| Cause and Effect         | Provide explanations or reasons for phenomena             | ![Diagram]        | • if/then  
• reasons why  
• as a result  
• therefore  
• because  
• consequently  
• since  
• so that  
• for  
• due to | • What happened?  
• Why did it happen?  
• What caused it to happen? |
| Problem/Solution         | Identify problems and pose solutions                      | ![Diagram]        | • problem is  
• dilemma is  
• if/then  
• because  
• so that  
• question/answer  
• puzzle is solved | • What is the problem?  
• Why is this a problem?  
• Is anything being done to try to solve the problem?  
• What can be done to solve the problem? |
| Compare and Contrast     | Discuss two ideas, events, or phenomena, showing how they are different and how they are similar | ![Diagram]        | • However/yet  
• nevertheless  
• on the other hand  
• but/whereas  
• similarly  
• although  
• also/likewise  
• in contrast/comparison  
• different  
• either/or  
• in the same way/just as | • What items are being compared?  
• In what ways are they similar? Different?  
• What conclusion does the author reach about these items?  
• What conclusion does the author reach about these items? |
| Definition or Description | Describes a topic by listing characteristics, features, attributes, and examples | ![Diagram]        | • for example  
• characteristics  
• for instance  
• such as  
• including  
• to illustrate | • What are the most important characteristics?  
• How is it being described (what does it look like, how does it work, etc.)?  
• What is important to remember about it? |

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## Summary Frames

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Structure</th>
<th>Sentence Frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>___________________________ is a kind of ___________________________ that...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problem/Solution</strong></td>
<td>___________________________ wanted..., but..., so...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sequence</strong></td>
<td>___________________________ begins with..., continues with..., and ends with...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compare/Contrast</strong></td>
<td>___________________________ and ___________________________ are similar in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that they are both..., but ___________________________ ..., while</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>___________________________ ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cause/Effect</strong></td>
<td>___________________________ happens because... OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>___________________________ causes ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Informational Texts: Text Structure

## Exceedingly Complex
- **Organization of Main Ideas: Connections**
  - Connections between an extensive range of ideas or events are deep, intricate and often implicit or subtle; organization of the text is intricate or specialized for a particular discipline

* Use of Visual Features: If used, extensive, intricate, essential integrated print and text features enhance meaning of text; provide information not otherwise conveyed through print alone.

## Very Complex
- **Organization of Main Ideas: Connections**
  - Connections between an expanded range of ideas, processes or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle; organization may contain multiple pathways and may exhibit traits common to a specific discipline

* Use of Visual Features: If used, essential integrated print and text features enrich meaning of the text; may provide information not otherwise conveyed through print alone.

## Moderately Complex
- **Organization of Main Ideas: Connections**
  - Connections between some ideas or events are implicit or subtle; organization is evident and generally sequential

* Use of Visual Features: If used, print and text features expand the meaning of the text; provide support in locating information and interpreting the text.

## Slightly Complex
- **Organization of Main Ideas: Connections**
  - Connections between ideas, processes or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict

* Use of Visual Features: If used, print and text features represent the meaning of the text; provide support and assist in locating information and understanding the text.

RI.7.5 Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.
## Text Features

Text features assist readers. Knowing the purpose of the text feature helps readers decide at which text feature to look when they want to understand the text better. Organized by purpose, the chart identifies text features and how they help the reader.

### Purposes: To Draw the Reader’s Attention to the Text and Expand the Meaning of the Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Helps the Reader...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bold Print</td>
<td>Identify important information and/or expand one’s understanding of the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored Print</td>
<td>Identify important information and/or expand one’s understanding of the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italics</td>
<td>Identify important information and/or expand one’s understanding of the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underline</td>
<td>Identify important information and/or expand one’s understanding of the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in Font Size</td>
<td>Identify important information and/or expand one’s understanding of the text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Purpose: To Expand the Meaning of the Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Helps the Reader...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>Understand ideas in more depth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlays</td>
<td>Understand additional information in relation to other information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captions</td>
<td>Understand an illustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labels</td>
<td>Identify an illustration and/or its parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface / introduction</td>
<td>Set a purpose for reading; have an overview of the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidebars/Textbox</td>
<td>Gather additional or explanatory information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author’s Note</td>
<td>Understand the author’s perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>Understand for whom the text is written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source Notes</td>
<td>Understand the resources the author used to write the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>Understand the resources the author used to write the text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Purpose: To Understand Words and Vocabulary Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Helps the Reader...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>Define words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation Guide</td>
<td>Say the words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Purpose: To Locate Key Ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Helps the Reader...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Framed Text</td>
<td>Locate key ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>Locate topics in the book and the order they are presented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>Locate key ideas in the text with an alphabetical list with page numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titles</td>
<td>Understand what the text is about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headings</td>
<td>Identify topics within the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subheadings</td>
<td>Identify topics within a larger topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullets</td>
<td>Identify key ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textual Cues/Transition Words</td>
<td>Understand the development of the ideas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Informational Texts: Text Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceedingly Complex</th>
<th>Very Complex</th>
<th>Moderately Complex</th>
<th>Slightly Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between an extensive range of ideas or events are deep, intricate and often implicit or subtle; organization of the text is intricate or specialized for a particular discipline.</td>
<td>Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between an expanded range ideas, processes or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle; organization may contain multiple pathways and may exhibit traits common to a specific discipline.</td>
<td>Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between some ideas or events are implicit or subtle; organization is evident and generally sequential.</td>
<td>Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between ideas, processes or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Use of Visual Features: If used, extensive, intricate, essential integrated print and text features enhance meaning of text; provide information not otherwise conveyed through print alone. |

* Use of Visual Features: If used, essential integrated print and text features enrich meaning of the text; may provide information not otherwise conveyed through print alone. |

* Use of Visual Features: If used, print and text features expand the meaning of the text; provide support in locating information and interpreting the text. |

* Use of Visual Features: If used, information is presented in a clear and logical manner. |

RI.7.5 Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.
### Informational Texts: Language Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceedingly Complex</th>
<th>Very Complex</th>
<th>Moderately Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventionality:</strong> Dense and complex; contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language</td>
<td><strong>Conventionality:</strong> Complex; contains some abstract, ironic and/or figurative language</td>
<td><strong>Conventionality:</strong> Largely explicit and easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary:</strong> Generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposely misleading</td>
<td><strong>Vocabulary:</strong> Somewhat complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic</td>
<td><strong>Vocabulary:</strong> Contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence Structure:</strong> Mostly complex sentences often containing multiple concepts</td>
<td><strong>Sentence Structure:</strong> Many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words</td>
<td><strong>Sentence Structure:</strong> Mainly simple sentences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

L.7.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

L.7.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

L.7.1.b Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.
## Informational Texts: Knowledge Demands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceedingly Complex</th>
<th>Very Complex</th>
<th>Moderately Complex</th>
<th>Slightly Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: Extensive, perhaps specialized or even theoretical discipline-specific content knowledge; range of challenging abstract and theoretical concepts</td>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: Moderate levels of discipline-specific content knowledge; some theoretical knowledge may enhance understanding; range of recognizable ideas and challenging abstract concepts</td>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday practical knowledge and some discipline-specific content knowledge; both simple and more complicated, abstract ideas</td>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday, practical knowledge; simple, concrete ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intertextuality: Many references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.</td>
<td>Intertextuality: Some references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.</td>
<td>Intertextuality: A few references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.</td>
<td>Intertextuality: No references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RI.7.2** Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text. RI.7.7&9
Text Complexity

- Levels of meaning
- Structure
- Language conventionality and clarity
- Knowledge demands

- Word frequency
- Sentence length
- Text cohesion

- Motivation
- Knowledge/experiences
- Purpose
- Task complexity
Reader and Task Considerations

Will the complexity of any before, during, and after reading tasks or the complexity of any questions asked about the text interfere with the reading experience?

What aspects of the text will likely pose the most challenge for my students?
  - What are natural areas of focus for this text?
  - With what standards do my students need the most practice?

What supports do I need to provide so all of my students (even those who are struggling readers) can access the text?
### Collection of Texts

Multiple print and digital texts in diverse media, formats, and lengths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Texts</th>
<th>Independent Texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade-level texts</td>
<td>Independent-level texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tight focus on the standards</td>
<td>Apply learning over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build knowledge</td>
<td>Promote joy of reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary merit, culturally responsive, and rich in content</td>
<td>High-interest texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommended Placement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Information</th>
<th>Qualitative Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Modalities: Complex, Competent, and Common Abstracts and Texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Contextual: Larger, explicit, and easily understood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Type</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author's Background</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protagonists Background</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Qualitative Measures**

- **Purpose**: Clearly stated, inclusive, and easy to understand
- **Concepts**: Easy to interpret, and clear concepts
- **Vocabulary**: Larger, explicit, and easily understood
- **Language Features**: Larger, explicit, and easily understood
- **Sentence Structure**: Larger, explicit, and easily understood
- **Text Structure**: Larger, explicit, and easily understood

*The description has been modified to explore the complexity of visual features when printed and text features are used together to enhance the meaning.*
### Qualitative Measures

**Meaning/Purpose:** (Briefly explain the levels of meaning (Literary Text) or purpose (Informational Text.))
The book has multiple levels of meaning. Set in Alabama, the female main character Scout Finch struggles to understand issues of race and prejudice when her lawyer father defends a black man accused of raping a white woman.

**Text Structure:** (Briefly describe the structure, organization, and other features of the text.)
Although the story has a largely simple structure with a straightforward writing style, several issues complicate the narration and structure. Scout’s narration is as an adult reflecting back on a few pivotal years of her childhood; flashback is used throughout. And at several points it seems as though the narration is from the point of view of a less-reliable Scout still in her childhood.

**Language Features:** (Briefly describe the conventions and clarity of the language used in the text, including the complexity of the vocabulary and sentence structures.)
The characters speak in easily readable, conversational language. Some slang is indicative of the time period in which the novel is set, and there is some dialect.

**Knowledge Demands:** (Briefly describe the knowledge demands the text requires of students.)
Higher level themes of justice, prejudice, and civil rights are implied. Thinking at deeper levels is required to contemplate the personal, moral, and ethical struggles of the characters as set against the culture and society of the time period.

### Quantitative Measure

**Lexile or Other Quantitative Measure of the Text:**
The ATOS formula (used with the Accelerated Reader program) identifies this title as having a book level of 5.6. A Lexile measure for this novel is 870L. Although the Lexile and ATOS levels fall in the 4th-5th grade text complexity band, the complexity of the book’s theme, the issue of rape, and the length of the book would indicate that higher level reading skills are necessary, along with a consideration for the maturity level of the reader regarding the book’s subject matter.

### Considerations for Reader and Task

**Potential Challenges this Text Poses:**
These are to be determined locally with reference to such variables as a student’s motivation, knowledge, and experiences as well as purpose and the complexity of the task assigned and the question posed. However, the complexity of the book’s theme, the issue of rape, and the length of the book would indicate that higher level reading skills are necessary, along with a consideration for the maturity level of the reader regarding the book’s subject matter.

**Major Instructional Areas of Focus (3-4 CCS Standards) for this Text:**
RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.5, RL.9-10.7

**Differentiation/Supports for Students:**
Educators might want to examine the following elements or issues: social and historical events of the late 50s, early 60s, and issues surrounding racial stereotyping and prejudice in the Deep South at this same time period.

### Recommended Placement

Briefly explain the recommended placement of the text in a particular grade band.
Although the quantitative measures suggest placement in the 4th-5th grade level text complexity band, the qualitative measures and reader and task considerations suggest that the novel is best placed at the 9th-10th grade complexity band. The Common Core Standards Text Exemplars also places the novel in the 9th-10th grade complexity band.
Text Complexity

- Levels of meaning
- Structure
- Language conventionality and clarity
- Knowledge demands

- Word frequency
- Sentence length
- Text cohesion

- Motivation
- Knowledge/experiences
- Purpose
- Task complexity
Topics

Texts, Text Types, and Range of Texts

Measures of Text Complexity

Quantitative Measures
Qualitative Measures
Student and Task Considerations
Think – Pair - Share

What are the implications of *all* students reading complex texts?
Contact Information
And Resources

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English Language Arts Consultant
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