

TEXT COMPLEXITY: QUALITATIVE MEASURES RUBRIC

Literary

Text title: _____ Text author: _____ Final rating: _____

Meaning	COMPLEX	MODERATELY COMPLEX	SLIGHT MODERATE	SLIGHTLY
Meaning	○ Several levels/layers 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.	○ Several levels/layers 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.	○ More than one level/layer of meaning with levels clearly distinguished from each other ○ Theme is clear but may be conveyed with some subtlety.	○ One level of meaning. ○ Theme is obvious and revealed early in the text.
Text Structure	COMPLEX	MODERATELY COMPLEX	SLIGHT MODERATE	SLIGHTLY
Narration	○ Complex and/or unconventional. ○ Many shifts in point of view and/or perspective.	○ Some complexities and/or unconventionality. ○ Occasional shifts in point of view and/or perspective.	○ Largely simple and/or conventional. ○ Few, if any, shifts in point of view and/or perspective.	○ Simple and conventional. ○ No shifts in point of view or perspective.
Order of Events	○ Not in chronological order. ○ Heavy use of flashback.	○ Several major shifts in time. ○ Use of flashback.	○ No major shifts in time. ○ Occasional use of flashback.	○ Strictly chronological. ○ No use of flashback.
Use of Graphics	○ If used, minimal illustrations that support the text.	○ If used, a few illustrations support the text.	○ If used, a range of illustrations or graphics support selected parts of the text.	○ If used, extensive illustrations that directly support and assist in interpreting the written text.
Language Features	COMPLEX	MODERATELY COMPLEX	SLIGHT MODERATE	SLIGHTLY
Conventionality	○ Dense and complex. ○ Contains abstract, ironic and/or figurative language.	○ Complex ○ Contains some abstract, ironic and/or figurative language.	○ Largely explicit and easy to understand. ○ Some occasions for more complex meaning.	○ Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand.
Vocabulary	○ Generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific or overly academic language. ○ May be ambiguous or purposefully misleading.	○ Some use of unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific or overly academic language.	○ Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational language. ○ Rarely unfamiliar or overly academic language.	○ Contemporary, familiar, conversational language.
Sentence Structure	○ Mainly complex sentences often containing multiple concepts.	○ Many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words.	○ Simple and compound sentences, with some more complex constructions.	○ Mainly simple sentences.
Knowledge Demands	COMPLEX	MODERATELY COMPLEX	SLIGHT MODERATE	SLIGHTLY
Life Experiences	○ Explores complex and sophisticated themes. ○ Experiences portrayed are distinctly different from the common reader.	○ Explores themes of varying levels of complexity. ○ Experiences portrayed are uncommon to most readers.	○ Explores few themes. ○ Experiences portrayed are common to many readers.	○ Explores a single theme. ○ Experiences portrayed are every day and common to most readers.
Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge	○ Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements.	○ Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements.	○ Few references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements.	○ No references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements.
Subject Matter Knowledge	○ Requires extensive, perhaps specialized, prior content knowledge.	○ Requires moderate amount of prior content knowledge.	○ Requires some prior content knowledge.	○ Requires only everyday content knowledge.

Adapted from Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards, Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies and Science and Technical Subjects (2010).

Nov. 10, 2022