

Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric¹

LITERATURE

Text Title _____

Text Author _____

	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
TEXT STRUCTURE	○ Organization: Is intricate with regard to such elements as point of view, time shifts, multiple characters, storylines and detail ○ Use of Graphics: If used, illustrations or graphics are essential for understanding the meaning of the text	○ Organization: May include subplots, time shifts and more complex characters ○ Use of Graphics: If used, illustrations or graphics support or extend the meaning of the text	○ Organization: May have two or more storylines and occasionally be difficult to predict ○ Use of Graphics: If used, a range of illustrations or graphics support selected parts of the text	○ Organization: Is clear, chronological or easy to predict ○ Use of Graphics: If used, either illustrations directly support and assist in interpreting the text or are not necessary to understanding the meaning of the text
LANGUAGE FEATURES	○ Conventionality: Dense and complex; contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language ○ Vocabulary: Complex, generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading ○ Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences with several subordinate clauses or phrases; sentences often contain multiple concepts	○ Conventionality: Fairly complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language ○ Vocabulary: Fairly complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic ○ Sentence Structure: Many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words	○ Conventionality: Largely explicit and easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning ○ Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic ○ Sentence Structure: Primarily simple and compound sentences, with some complex constructions	○ Conventionality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand ○ Vocabulary: Contemporary, familiar, conversational language ○ Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences
MEANING	○ Meaning: Multiple competing levels 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	○ Meaning: Multiple 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	○ Meaning: Multiple levels of meaning clearly distinguished from each other; theme is clear but may be conveyed with some subtlety	○ Meaning: One level of meaning; theme is obvious and revealed early in the text.
KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS	○ Life Experiences: Explores complex, sophisticated or abstract themes; experiences portrayed are distinctly different from the common reader ○ Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements	○ Life Experiences: Explores themes of varying levels of complexity or abstraction; experiences portrayed are uncommon to most readers ○ Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements	○ Life Experiences: Explores several themes; experiences portrayed are common to many readers ○ Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Few references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements	○ Life Experiences: Explores a single theme; experiences portrayed are everyday and common to most readers ○ Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: No references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements

¹ 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).