



Quantitative Measures of Text Complexity



| Common Scale for Band Level Text Difficulty Ranges | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|------------|------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Common Core Bands: | Text Analyzer Tools | | | | | |
| | ATOS | DRP | FK | Lexile | SR | RM |
| 2nd-3rd | 2.75-5.14 | 42-54 | 1.98-5.34 | 420-820 | 0.05 – 2.48 | 3.53 - 6.13 |
| 4th-5th | 4.97-7.03 | 52-60 | 4.51-7.73 | 740-1010 | 0.84 – 5.75 | 5.42 - 7.92 |
| 6th-8th | 7.00-9.98 | 57-67 | 6.51-10.34 | 925-1185 | 4.11 – 10.66 | 7.04 - 9.57 |
| 9th-10th | 9.67-12.01 | 62-72 | 8.32-12.12 | 1050-1335 | 9.02 – 13.93 | 8.41 - 10.81 |
| 11th-CCR | 11.20-14.10 | 67-74 | 10.34-14.2 | 1185-1385 | 12.30 – 14.50 | 9.57 - 12 |

| Grade level | Fountas & Pinnell | CCSS Lexile levels – Appendix A |
|--------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 2 | J, K, L, M | 450-790 |
| 3 | N, O, P | |
| 4 | Q, R, S | 770-980 |
| 5 | T, U, V | |
| 6 | W, X, Y | 955-1155 |
| 7 | Z | |
| 8 | Z | |
| 9 | - | 1080-1305 |
| 10 | - | |
| 11 | - | 1215-1355 |
| 12 | - | |

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- *Test and validate quantitative measures of text complexity and difficulty (led by Chuck Perfetti, U of Pitt)
- *In particular, assessed the capabilities of six quantitative metrics to predict text difficulty for students on standardized tests:
 - o ATOS - ATOS[®] (Renaissance Learning)
 - o DRP - Degrees of Reading Power[®] (Questar)
 - o FK - Flesch Kincaid[®]
 - o Lexile - Lexile Framework[®] (MetaMetrics)
 - o SR - Source Rater[®] (Educational Testing Service)
 - o RM- Pearson Reading Maturity Metric[®] (Pearson Education)

Subscription Databases – Common Core Ready

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EBSCO History Reference Center features full text for more than 1,990 reference books, encyclopedias and non-fiction books from leading history publishers

EBSCO Science Reference Center A comprehensive research database that provides easy access to a multitude of full-text, science-oriented content. Designed to meet every student researchers needs, *Science Reference Center* contains full text for hundreds of science encyclopedias, reference books, periodicals and other sources.

CultureGrams Online Database is a leading reference for concise, reliable, and up-to-date cultural information on countries across the globe. It includes four editions: the World Edition (for junior high school and up) and the Kids, States, and Canadian Provinces editions

Student Resources in Context is a next-generation portal that reaches out to today's students with a Web-like user experience, which intuitively conveys needed information on all core subjects from Science to Literature to History by integrating a multitude of content, including:

- Reference articles from acclaimed publications like American Decades
- Periodical and newspaper articles from the "New York Times", "USA Today", and many others
- Primary sources
- Multimedia records, including charts, graphs, maps and tables
- Video and audio content from NBC, NPR and many other respected sources

SIRS Knowledge Source

| SIRS® Issues Researcher | SIRS® Government Reporter | SIRS® Renaissance | SIRS® WebSelect |
|--|---|--|---|
| Leading Issues | Country Profiles | Literary Corner | Featured Web Sites |
| Natural Disasters | Federal Agencies | Award Recipients | Astronomy and Space |
| Focus on Terrorism | Historic Documents | Glossary of the Arts | Criminal Justice |
| Today's News | National Archives Documents | Notable People | Dictionaries |
| Maps of the World | U.S. Congress | Recommended References | E-Books |
| World Almanac Excerpts | U.S. Presidents | Spotlight on... | U.S. Historic Documents |
| Spotlight on... | U.S. Supreme Court | Curriculum Pathfinders | HIV/AIDS |
| Curriculum Pathfinders | Spotlight on... | Humanities & Education | Maps |
| | Curriculum Pathfinders | | Notable People |
| | | | Curriculum Pathfinders |
| | | | Spotlight on... |
| | | | Substance Abuse |
| | | | Terrorism |
| | | | Using The Internet |

Reader and Task Considerations for Text Complexity

| Cognitive Capabilities | Discussion/Comments |
|--|---------------------|
| <p>To what degree . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> do the readers possess the attention span necessary to read and comprehend the text? will the readers be able to remember and make connections among the various details presented in the text? do readers possess the critical/analytical thinking skills necessary to understand the relationships between and among the various parts of the text? can the text be sufficiently scaffolded to overcome any deficits in cognitive capabilities? | |
| Reading Skills | |
| <p>To what degree . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> do the readers possess the necessary reading skills (foundational skills, inferencing, questioning, comprehension strategies) to understand and make connections in the text? can the text be sufficiently scaffolded to overcome any deficits in reading skills? | |
| Motivation and Engagement with Task and Text | |
| <p>To what degree . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> will the readers be interested in the content of the text? will the readers be interested in and engaged with the style of writing and/or the presentation of ideas within the text? will the readers be able to understand the purpose for reading the text, which might shift over the course of the reading experience (i.e., skimming, studying to retain content, close reading, etc.)? can sufficient motivation be developed to increase the reader's enthusiasm and engagement with the task and text? | |
| Prior Knowledge and Experience | |
| <p>To what degree . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> do the readers possess adequate prior knowledge of and/or experience with the topic, the vocabulary, the genre, the language (i.e., syntax, diction, rhetoric) of the text? can connections be made between the content of the text and other learning experiences? can deficits in prior knowledge of and/or experience with the topic, the vocabulary, the genre, and/or the language be overcome with minimal instructional time? | |
| Content and/or Theme Considerations | |
| <p>To what degree . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does the text contain sensitive issues or topics (e.g., gender-bias, cultural stereotypes, age-bias, sexuality, outdated perceptions, etc.) that some readers may find inappropriate? does the text contribute to a balance of diversity throughout the course or grade level reading selections? do the readers possess the maturity to respond appropriately to any potentially sensitive issues or topics? can potentially sensitive topics or issues be addressed through the creation of a safe classroom environment and open communication with students and parents? | |
| Associated Tasks | |
| <p>To what degree . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> will the characteristics of any tasks and/or questions (complexity, length, relevance, etc.) associated with the text interfere with the reading experience? do all the tasks and/or questions require the reader to stay grounded in the text? | |

Qualitative Dimensions of Text Complexity*

Informational Text**

| Text Structure | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complex/implicit/unconventional informational structures <input type="checkbox"/> If present, illustrations/graphics/text features are sophisticated, essential to understanding, and provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Some complexities and unconventionality; more implicit than explicit <input type="checkbox"/> If present, illustrations/graphics/text features are sophisticated, may be essential to understanding, and provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily simple and conventional; more explicit than implicit <input type="checkbox"/> If present, illustrations/graphics/text features enhance reader's understanding and supplement understanding of the text | <p style="text-align: center;">Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Simple/explicit/conventional informational text structures <input type="checkbox"/> If present, illustrations/graphics/text features are unnecessary or supplementary to understanding the text |
| Language Conventinality and Clarity | | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complex sentence structures <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly employs the use of irony, abstract, and/or figurative language <input type="checkbox"/> Complex language (generally unfamiliar, archaic, ambiguous, and/or purposefully misleading) <input type="checkbox"/> Sophisticated use of vocabulary that is multi-meaning, connotative, conceptual, academic, and domain-specific | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily complex sentence structures <input type="checkbox"/> Employs the use of irony, abstract, and/or figurative language <input type="checkbox"/> Moderately complex language (generally unfamiliar, archaic, ambiguous, and/or purposefully misleading) <input type="checkbox"/> Some sophisticated vocabulary that is multi-meaning, connotative, conceptual, academic, and domain-specific | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily simple sentence structures with modest use of complex structures <input type="checkbox"/> Predominantly literal language with moderate use of figurative language and/or irony <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily clear, contemporary, familiar, and/or conversational language <input type="checkbox"/> Largely simple vocabulary with moderate use of vocabulary that is multi-meaning, connotative, conceptual, academic, and/or domain-specific | <p style="text-align: center;">Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Simple sentence structures. <input type="checkbox"/> Literal language <input type="checkbox"/> Clear, contemporary, familiar, and/or conversational language <input type="checkbox"/> Simple vocabulary |
| Levels of Meaning or Purpose | | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Subtle, implied, difficult to determine theme and/or purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Sophisticated, multiple themes and perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Perspectives and experiences distinctly different from the common reader <input type="checkbox"/> High inter-textuality (many references to/citations of other texts) | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Implied but fairly easy to infer theme and/or purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple themes and perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Perspectives and experiences uncommon to most readers <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-textuality (some references to/citations of other texts) | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Implied but easy to identify theme and/or purpose based upon context <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily single themes and perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Perspectives and experiences common to many readers <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate inter-textuality (few references to/citations of other texts) | <p style="text-align: center;">Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explicitly stated theme and/or purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Single themes and perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Familiar perspectives and common everyday experiences <input type="checkbox"/> No inter-textuality (no references to/citations of other texts) |
| Knowledge Demands | | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Requires extensive and specialized experiences and knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Requires a depth of discipline-specific content knowledge | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Requires specialized experiences and knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Requires some discipline-specific content knowledge | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Requires everyday knowledge with modest experiences <input type="checkbox"/> Requires some discipline-specific content knowledge | <p style="text-align: center;">Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Requires everyday knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Requires familiarity with genre conventions |

***This tool should be used for all instructional text in grades 3 and above and for read-alouds only in PreK through Grade 2.**

****Informational text in the Common Core includes literary non-fiction.**

Qualitative Dimensions of Text Complexity*

Literature

| Text Structure | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complex/implicit/unconventional literary structures <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent manipulations of time and sequence <input type="checkbox"/> Many shifts in point of view | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Some complexities and unconventionality; more implicit than explicit <input type="checkbox"/> Several major shift in time/use of flashback <input type="checkbox"/> Occasional shifts in point of view | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily simple and conventional; more explicit than implicit <input type="checkbox"/> No major shift in time; may use minor flashback, but primarily chronological <input type="checkbox"/> Few, if any, shifts in point of view | <p style="text-align: center;">Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Simple/explicit/conventional literary text structures <input type="checkbox"/> Chronological sequence <input type="checkbox"/> No shifts in point of view |
| Language Conventionality and Clarity | | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complex sentence structures <input type="checkbox"/> Sophisticated use of figurative language, irony, allegory, and/or abstract language <input type="checkbox"/> Unfamiliar, archaic, ambiguous, and/or purposefully misleading language usage <input type="checkbox"/> Sophisticated use of vocabulary that is multi-meaning, connotative, conceptual, academic, and domain-specific | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily complex sentence structures <input type="checkbox"/> Use of figurative language, irony, allegory, and/or abstract language <input type="checkbox"/> Use of unfamiliar, archaic, ambiguous, and/or purposefully misleading language usage <input type="checkbox"/> Some sophisticated vocabulary that is multi-meaning, connotative, conceptual, academic, and domain-specific | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly simple sentence structures with modest use of complex structures <input type="checkbox"/> Predominantly literal language with moderate use of figurative language and/or irony <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly contemporary, familiar, and conversational language <input type="checkbox"/> Largely simple vocabulary with moderate use of vocabulary that is multi-meaning, connotative, conceptual, academic, and/or domain-specific | <p style="text-align: center;">Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Simple sentence structures <input type="checkbox"/> Literal language <input type="checkbox"/> Contemporary, familiar, and/or conversational language <input type="checkbox"/> Simple vocabulary |
| Levels of Meaning | | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Subtle, implied, difficult to determine theme and/or purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Sophisticated, multiple themes and perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple, unfamiliar, opposing perspectives and/or experiences <input type="checkbox"/> Sophisticated references/allusions, essential to understanding | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Implied but fairly easy to infer theme and/or purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple themes and perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Some unfamiliar, opposing perspectives and/or experiences <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent references/allusions, enhance understanding | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Implied but easy to identify theme and/or purpose based upon context <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily single themes and perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Primarily common experiences and/or moderate use of fantastical situations <input type="checkbox"/> References/allusions, if used are commonly known | <p style="text-align: center;">Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explicitly stated theme and/or purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Single themes and perspectives <input type="checkbox"/> Familiar common everyday experiences or clearly fantastical situations <input type="checkbox"/> No references/allusions |
| Knowledge Demands | | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Extensive depth of cultural and literary knowledge promotes understanding <input type="checkbox"/> If present, illustrations are sophisticated, essential to understanding, and provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Depth of cultural and literary knowledge enhances understanding <input type="checkbox"/> If present, illustrations are sophisticated, may be essential to understanding, and provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text | <p style="text-align: center;">Mostly Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A modest knowledge of cultures and genres enhances understanding <input type="checkbox"/> If present, illustrations enhance reader's understanding and supplement understanding of the text | <p style="text-align: center;">Simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Requires only everyday knowledge and familiar genres <input type="checkbox"/> If present, illustrations/graphics/text features are unnecessary to understanding the text |

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