

Supporting All Learners with Complex Text

Before Reading

- Pre-expose students to the selected text with support (audio recording, read-aloud, peer tutor etc.)
- Provide a student-friendly glossary of key vocabulary (may include words &/or illustrations)
- Have students read a simple article, watch a video, or read student-friendly explanations of key information to help build background knowledge that will aid in comprehension
- Reformat the text itself to include visuals or definitions of key vocabulary
- Annotate text with a defined purpose for reading it (what they will learn from the reading)
- Number lines whenever possible to support students in referencing evidence from the text

During Initial Reading

- Make sure students experience (hear/read) the entire selection uninterrupted (except for supplying brief definitions essential for understanding). This gives students a sense of the whole text and supports comprehension and motivation
- Teacher conducts a read-aloud with students following along to help build fluency (grades 2 +)
Note- if reading aloud, students should have ample opportunities to follow along while listening and revisit the text independently
- Provide summaries of sections to help students build comprehension more quickly
- Have students annotate the text for key ideas while reading and/or model annotation for students
- Allow students time to discuss/write about the text following the first read:
 - using sentence starters or prompts as needed (Example: I wonder, I heard, I think)
 - by jotting or discussing the "gist" or "big idea" of the text as a whole
 - by working with partners to ensure all students are participating

During Subsequent Readings

- Ask a series of pre-planned, scaffolded text-dependent questions that build comprehension of the central idea of the text
- Chunk the text. Provide text-dependent questions by chunk, to be answered before moving to the next portion of the text

After/Between Readings (discussing or writing about text)

- Have scaffolded questions ready to support students in moving from concrete to more abstract reasoning
- Provide oral or written sentence frames
- Provide picture cues with text-dependent questions
- Provide “hint cards” to direct students toward sections of the text as needed
- Include text cues such as paragraph number, section, heading, etc. in wording of questions
- Provide oral rehearsal time (with buddies, small group, or a teacher) prior to writing, and/or provide writing/thinking time prior to oral presentations
- Make time for guided re-reading

Other Suggestions

- Build Vocabulary:
Academic Word Finder on achievethecore.org—identifies the grade-level tier two vocabulary words in any text: achievethecore.org/academic-word-finder
Wordsmyth widget—provides student-friendly definitions of any word:
<http://www.wordsmyth.net/?mode=widget>
- Include and review visuals to support comprehension (pictures, videos)
- Systematically order texts from less to more complex, by topic, to build background knowledge. Text sets on achievethecore.org and newsela.com are resources
- Provide “hint cards” to direct students toward sections of the text as needed
- Use volunteers or assistants to support small groups and individuals in reading, rereading and discussing texts and ideas

**Note - These supports are intended to support struggling readers in accessing complex grade-level text. This list does not address the likely reading needs such as decoding or fluency that are preventing students from becoming grade-level readers.*