

📚 [**ELA Unit**](https://sites.google.com/philasd.org/ela-4-12/home) **Planning Pathways**

This tool, created in partnership with [**Student Achievement Partners**](https://achievethecore.org/), provides teachers flexible pathways

to **deeply understand and analyze the text** in order to support students in **rigorous and meaningful text analysis**.

| **Before using this tool:**   * I have read the anchor novel for this unit. * I have reviewed the📍Unit Overview[[1]](#footnote-0) for this unit.   **How I might use this tool:**   * Select priority pathways with my team and engage in shared reading and reflection together as Part 1 of the PL cycle pre-unit launch. * Revisit these conversations/notes as part of my daily lesson planning, making more explicit connections between this unit preparation and the daily lesson guides. |
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**Choose your pathway(s):**

*Select the pathways below (click on the hyperlinked title) that best suit your needs. You will be taken to questions, prompts, and resources to consider.*

| [**UNIT CONTENT & ANCHOR TEXT COMPLEXITY**](#kix.z3qtc8y5rwsa)  ***What do I need to know about this unit’s content and anchor text?*** |
| --- |

| [**IDENTITY & RELEVANCE**](#kix.7e9idrnv6smu)  ***What do I bring to this text, what do my students bring, and how can I use this to prepare for instruction?*** |
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| [**CRITICALITY & CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS**](#kix.pyv7tfshd8eb)  ***How will I support my students to use their literary skills to understand, interrogate, and address oppression, power, and justice?*** |
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**UNIT CONTENT & ANCHOR TEXT COMPLEXITY**

*What do I need to know about this unit’s content and anchor text?*

| **📍Contextual Knowledge (Historical, Social, Cultural Context)** | |
| --- | --- |
| *Guiding Questions for Teachers* | *Additional PLC Discussion Activities and Thought Stems for Unit Processing* |
| *What do I* ***need to know more about*** *before engaging more deeply with this text?*  *What do I* ***need to work through*** *in order to understand and teach this text?*  *Which***📍*Contextual Knowledge is most crucial*** *for understanding the* **📍***Big Ideas? Consider also supplementing for student interests or connections to the events of today.* | | **When I think of the content/topic of this text, what first comes to mind is** |  | | --- | --- | | **This means I have biases and/or potential knowledge gaps about** |  | | **My next step is** |  |   Select**📍**Contextual Knowledge topics from the Unit Overview and links to resources that will support your teaching of this topic:   | **Topic**  **(📍Content Knowledge from Unit Overview)** | **Knowledge-Building Resources**  **(For Teachers)** | | --- | --- | |  |  | |  |  | |  |  |  | **Based on building my own understanding about this unit, I need to keep in mind that my students may need:** | | | --- | --- | |  | | |
| **Anchor Text** | |
| *Which elements of this text are* ***most complex****: structure demands, language demands, meaning/purpose and/or knowledge demands?* ***See the rubric on the next page to evaluate this text.***  *How might the* ***identity/ perspective of this author*** *influence the way in which they wrote this text?*  *Which* ***parts (chapters, passages, excerpts) of the text*** *are:*   * *Particularly challenging?* * *Less challenging?* * *Most aligned to the****📍****Big Ideas/Essential Questions?* | Use the qualitative complexity rubrics on the [next pages](#cobl7klq76zg) (literary or informational) to evaluate this text.   | **This text is complex because of:** | | | | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | * **Structure** | * **Language** | * **Meaning/Purpose** | * **Knowledge** |  | **I will support students by** |  | | --- | --- |   ***RESOURCES:***   * [***Supports to Access Complex Text Across Disciplines (Grades 6-12)***](https://achievethecore.org/page/3324/quarter-turns-supports-to-access-complex-text-across-disciplines) * [***Supporting All Learners with Complex Texts (K-12)***](https://achievethecore.org/page/3251/supporting-all-learners-with-complex-text)  | **When I researched the author, I learned that** |  | | --- | --- | | **I will consider this when I teach this text by** |  |  | **I am flagging these chapters/passages/excerpts** |  | | --- | --- | | **because they set the stage for** |  | |

***Literary Text Qualitative Analysis[[2]](#footnote-1)***

*Use the rubric below by highlighting levels of complexity for this text for each qualitative category (structure, language, meaning, and knowledge).*

*Take care to* ***note specific examples from the text*** *that support your determinations in each section.*

|  | **EXCEEDINGLY COMPLEX** | **VERY COMPLEX** | **MODERATELY COMPLEX** | **SLIGHTLY COMPLEX** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***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*** | **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*** | 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 | 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 | Multiple levels of meaning 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 |
| ***KNOWLEDGE*** | **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\* |

***Informational Text Qualitative Analysis[[3]](#footnote-2)***

*Use the rubric below by highlighting levels of complexity for this text for each qualitative category (structure, language, purpose, and knowledge).*

*Take care to* ***note specific examples from the text*** *that support your determinations in each section.*

|  | **EXCEEDINGLY COMPLEX** | **VERY COMPLEX** | **MODERATELY COMPLEX** | **SLIGHTLY COMPLEX** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***STRUCTURE*** | **Organizations:** Connections between an extensive range of ideas or events are deep, intricate, and often implicit or subtle; organization of text is intricate or specialized for a particular discipline  **Text Features:** If used, are essential in understanding content  **Use of Graphics:** If used, extensive, intricate, essential integrated graphics, tables, charts, etc., necessary to make meaning of text; also may provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text | **Organization:** 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 particular discipline  **Text Features:** If used, greatly enhance the reader’s understanding of content  **Use of Graphics:** If used, essential, integrated graphics, tables, charts, etc., may occasionally be essential to understanding text | **Organization:** Connections between some ideas or events are implicit or subtle; organization is evident and generally sequential  **Text Features:** If used, enhance the reader’s understanding of content  **Use of Graphics:** If used, graphics are mostly supplementary to understanding of text, such as indexes, glossaries, graphs, pictures, tables, and charts directly support the text | **Organization:** Connections between ideas, processes, or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict  **Text Features:** If used, help the reader navigate and understand content but are not essential  **Use of Graphics:** If used, graphics are simple, unnecessary to understanding text but directly support and assist in interpreting written text |
| ***LANGUAGE*** | **Conventionality:** Dense and complex; contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language  **Vocabulary:** Generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading\*  **Sentence Structure:** Mainly complex sentences often containing multiple concepts | **Conventionality**: Complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language  **Vocabulary:** Somewhat 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:** Simple and compound sentences, with some more complex constructions | **Conventionality:** Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand\*  **Vocabulary:** Contemporary, familiar, conversational language\*  **Sentence Structure:** Mainly simple sentences |
| ***PURPOSE*** | Subtle, implied, difficult to determine; intricate, theoretical elements | Implied but fairly easy to infer; more theoretical than concrete | Implied but easy to identify based upon context or source | Explicitly stated; clear, concrete with a narrow focus |
| ***KNOWLEDGE*** | **Subject Matter Knowledge:** Extensive, perhaps specialized\*, or even theoretical discipline-specific content knowledge; range of challenging abstract and theoretical concepts  **Intertextuality:** Many references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. | **Subject Matter Knowledge:** Moderate levels of discipline-specific content knowledge; some theoretical knowledge may enhance understanding; range of recognizable ideas and challenging abstract concepts  **Intertextuality:** Some references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. | **Subject Matter Knowledge:** Everyday practical knowledge\* and some discipline-specific content knowledge; both simple and more complicated abstract ideas  **Intertextuality:** A few references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. | **Subject Matter Knowledge:** Everyday, practical knowledge\*; simple, concrete ideas  **Intertextuality:** No references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. |

**IDENTITY & RELEVANCE**

*What do I bring to this text, what do my students bring, and how can I use this to prepare for instruction?*

| **My Identity** | |
| --- | --- |
| *Guiding Questions for Teachers* | *Additional PLC Discussion Activities and Thought Stems for Unit Processing* |
| *How will* ***my identities,[[4]](#footnote-3) lived experiences, and perspectives*** *impact my instruction of these texts?*  *What* ***biases*** *do I hold related to this text’s/unit’s content? How can I continuously reflect on and work against those biases?* | | **I am a(n)** |  | **person** | | --- | --- | --- | | **teaching about** |  | | | **I must attend to this while teaching this unit by** |  | |  | **I hold biases about** |  | | --- | --- | | **and will work against these by** |  | |
| **Students’ Identities** | |
| *What do I know about* ***students' identities, lived experiences, and perspectives*** *related to this text? What* ***do I NOT know*** *(or am assuming)?*  *How might I use this unit as an opportunity to use what I know about students as an* ***asset*** *to discussion/analysis OR to* ***deepen my knowledge*** *and understanding of students?* | | **To attend to students who self-identify as** |  | | --- | --- | | **I will** |  | | **My students bring to our understanding**  **of the text the assets of** |  | |
| **Making It Relevant** | |
| *What is happening in* ***students'*** *other classes, neighborhoods, communities, and worlds right now that could* ***enhance their connection to this text?***  *What are my* ***assumptions and/or potential concerns*** *about how this text might land with my students? How will I delve into these potential concerns?*  *How might this text connect to experiences that lead students to* ***take action*** *in their lives and communities?* | | **I think my students may be able to relate to this text by connecting with** |  | | --- | --- | | **I want to be sensitive to my students’ reaction to the text when it references** |  | |

**CRITICALITY & CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS**

*How will I support my students in using their literary skills to understand, interrogate, and address oppression, power, and justice?*

| **Connections to Big Ideas & Criticality[[5]](#footnote-4) 📍** | |
| --- | --- |
| *Guiding Questions for Teachers* | *Additional PLC Discussion Activities and Thought Stems for Unit Processing* |
| *What do I/my* ***students already know, think, and believe*** *about the* **📍***Big Ideas in this text?*  *What* ***assumptions*** *am I making about the realities and experiences that impact the people/events in this text? How will I uncover the assumptions students might be making?*  *What opportunities exist in the text for relevance and connection to* ***power, privilege, social justice, and oppression*** *and their impacts on communities and society?*  *What are the connections to these* **📍***Big Ideas from* ***multiple perspectives****, including culture, identities, beliefs, and values?* | Consider both the Big Ideas and Criticality Objectives for this unit as you reflect on the Guiding Questions:   | **📍Big Ideas from**  **the Unit Overview:** |  | | --- | --- | | **📍Criticality Connection from**  **the Unit Overview:** |  |  | **My students already know, think, and believe that** |  | | --- | --- | | **As a class, we need to be careful about making the assumption(s) that** |  |  | **This text provides an opportunity for oral and written discourse on how society is impacted by:** | | | | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | * **Power** | * **Privilege** | * **Social Justice** | * **Oppression** | | **For example:** | | | | |  | | | | |
| **Difficult Topics and Disrupting Oppression** | |
| *Which part(s) of the text* ***connects to what I believe and value****?*  *Which part(s) of the text reflects* ***how we view injustice*** *in our communities and society at large?*  *What* ***cautions exist*** *in the text that include harmful content (including language and images), stereotypes, or misinformation? How will I respond to these cautions in the text?*  *Are there any* ***students who might be STRONGLY affected*** *by the topic? Who? What are the necessary conditions to prevent isolating or tokenizing the student(s)?* | | **In the text, I read** |  | | --- | --- | | **which connects to my belief/value of** |  | |  | | | **In the text, I read** |  | | **which pushes against my belief/value of** |  |  | **Note any key areas of the text that may require considerations to navigate heavy, difficult, or “hot button” topics. (e.g., death, harassment, racism, religion, sexuality, violence).** | | | --- | --- | | **Sensitive Topic** | **Text Passage** | |  |  | |  |  | |  |  |   ***RESOURCE:***   * [***Facilitating Critical Conversations from Let's Talk! - A Learning for Justice Guide***](https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/LFJ-2111-Lets-Talk-November-2021-11172021.pdf#page=18) |

| **ADDITIONAL NOTES/ACTION STEPS**  *As you reflect independently and/or with your team, identify some actions you want to take in preparing for instruction and adapting the unit/lesson guidance.* | |
| --- | --- |
| *For example:*  📘 Prioritize/deprioritize [section(s) of the text] for classroom instruction/small group support/independent reading/homework...  👋 Reach out to [colleague, student, family or community member, etc.]...  🪞 Reflect more on… / 🧠 Learn more about…  🔃 Adjust the [pacing/activities/support/ Big Ideas/Essential Questions] by… | **My Notes:** |

1. The 📍symbol is used throughout to note connections to the Unit Overview. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. Original rubric: [Literary and Informational Text Qualitative Rubrics](http://navigatingtextcomplexity.kaulfussec.com/files/QualitativeRubricsforLiteraryandInformationalText.pdf) from the State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS)

   \* In making these determinations, consider the students in the room. For whom is language conversational? From whom would it be “easy-to-understand”? How much do you know about students’ cultural/literary knowledge related to the content in this text? Whose cultural/literary knowledge are you considering as you think about what will be “common”? How does this allow you, or not allow you, to center historically and/or currently marginalized students? [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. Original rubric: [Literary and Informational Text Qualitative Rubrics](http://navigatingtextcomplexity.kaulfussec.com/files/QualitativeRubricsforLiteraryandInformationalText.pdf) from the State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS)

   \* In making these determinations, consider the students in the room. For whom is language conversational? From whom would it be “easy-to-understand”? How much do you know about students’ cultural/literary knowledge related to the content in this text? Whose cultural/literary knowledge are you considering as you think about what will be “common”? How does this allow you, or not allow you, to center historically and/or currently marginalized students? [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. In considering identity, you might think about any of the following: ability, age, body type, ethnicity, gender, home language, immigration status, socio-economic status, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or other considerations important to you. For more, see [Let’s Talk, Facilitating Critical Conversations with Students, Learning for Justice](https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/TT-Let-s-Talk-Publication-January-2020.pdf#page=8), p. 6 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. From Dr. Gholdy Muhammad’s *Five Learning Pursuits*. Read more [here](https://magazine.achieve3000.com/issue/volume-1-issue-4/cultivating-genius/). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)