

Introduction to the Anthology Alignment Project (AAP) – Sets of Revised Materials.

You are reading the collected work of hundreds of educators who volunteered to revise the questions, tasks, and directions for your reading anthology. This set of questions, the vocabulary words selected for you to discuss with your students, and the new writing supports that accompany the culminating tasks for each text selection have all been carefully aligned to the Common Core State Standards for ELA (CCSS).

This work is still in progress, so more texts will be available throughout this school year and into the next. As the writing teams and reviewers learn more about what works best, we will also offer suggestions and corrections through the Edmodo group (enter code pkx4sp to join). You can sign up to be notified when changes are posted.

Because different district teams worked on different texts, you will notice there is not 100% consistency in the approaches and styles of these materials, even though they might look uniform. This was the nature of the cooperative project and cultivated by design, as we felt teachers who used these materials would learn more if they saw a variety of approaches. Nor are these materials perfect by any means! We all did this work while we did all our other work. We all learned from and taught each other, argued and conceded points as we worked hard. These materials are solid. They are materials better matched to the CCSS—a bridge to let you and your students use your existing materials while new materials are developed. While they are not perfect, they are better, and they will allow you and your district to be selective when you judge your next purchases of materials. AAP is designed to be a temporary solution, not a permanent one.

We all agreed that doing this work was the richest professional development we could have possibly received on the shifts the Common Core ELA standards need us to make. We encourage you to use these as “before and after” experiences with your colleagues, too, and to study the standards for the grades you work with to see why these revised units are better aligned than your existing materials. Then, use the training templates and support materials to do revisions as professional development in your own setting.

We are hosting these materials on Edmodo (enter code pkx4sp to join) . They are yours to take and modify. But we do want you to come back and tell us and each other about the changes you made. Please feel free to form subgroups and communicate right here on the Edmodo site to discuss these materials and what it means to teach your students this way.

One thing that has not changed with the CCSS is that students need to work with ideas in a variety of active ways. This is even truer when those ideas are expressed in complex or unfamiliar text. Students need to read, hear the text read aloud, reread sections themselves, think about things, and discuss them in pairs or small and large groups. They need to write, write, and write about their ideas to discover what they really think and where the evidence is

really leading them. We *already* feel that we did not emphasize enough the variety of tools and approaches you should employ with these texts and in having your students work with these questions. Good teaching is still good teaching, so don't abandon the excellent techniques you already use while you make these shifts your own.

That said, you will notice several major differences in approach in these aligned materials. These are driven by the shifts in instruction called for by the CCSS:

- *The questions and tasks all focus on the text itself, not on having students make personal connections or respond personally to the text.* The reading and learning students gather from the text are the focus. This increased focus on how much the text has to offer means much more of your class time will be spent discussing the text and not students' personal experiences. This also means you will *always* have to read the text and these revised question sets carefully as you prepare to teach the material...
- *The questions demand that students provide evidence from their reading to support their answers.* To do this well, your students will have to reread the text several times, sometimes with you, sometimes alone, sometimes in small groups or pairs.
- *It is critical that students have a solid command of the evidence they provide in support of their answer.* This means that the evidence is accurate, relevant, and complete. These revisions offer guidance for the evidence students should provide for each question or task.
- *There is not much emphasis on pre-reading activities.* Because they are rereading and focusing on the text, students will understand what they read better for themselves. There will be little need to preview the texts before students start to read. Knowing your students, you will have to judge when to lend them a helping hand or provide needed background. But you should read each text carefully in advance to see what a reader can extract from the text itself.
- *The text has only one set of questions and one set of vocabulary for all your students.* This means you will need to support your readers in a variety of ways: by encouraging them in the rereading process, framing the questions in a different way, modeling the writing expectations and the use of academic language, and occasionally reading aloud to them. When reading aloud, it is critically important your students always follow in the text. This will support fluency for all students and keep them focused on the text. You can also use small groups, guided reading or intervention time to provide additional supports or challenges as needed by particular students.
- *The questions are not built around a specific strategy; strategies are not the focus of instruction.* The questions are built around the text and the Standards. Students will use strategies to find evidence for their answers to the questions, but what strategies they use will depend on what reading challenge they face. They will need modeling and discussion to learn these habits of reading and how to connect the right strategy to various challenges.
- *There is an intensive focus on students learning more about rich words and language.* Each revised unit contains a vocabulary quadrant immediately after the new set of

questions. The writing teams worked very hard to identify the rich academic words and specific content words the text contained. Then, they thought long and hard about whether or not there was enough support for students to learn the words from context. You need to insist that your students seek meaning from context habitually. For all students to succeed with the level of rigor of the CCSS, all students must grow their vocabulary. This means they must improve their ability to learn words in context and must have an understanding of far more abstract and rich words than they do now. There is more on vocabulary below.

This next section offers a brief rationale for the approach taken in these revised materials.

Pre-reading Activities and Extension Activities

Your series contains extensive pre-reading activities and frequent extension activities connected to each text selection. Pre-reading and other activities take time, a precious resource for teachers and students. Since working with the aligned questions and tasks will take considerably more time, you are going to have to be choosier about what you decide to include and what you decide to ignore in this area.

Dr. Tim Shanahan recently noted that pre-reading “has run amok in America’s classrooms” (<http://www.shanahanonliteracy.com/search/label/pre-reading>). We recommend you think carefully about whether your students really need the pre-reading and side activities provided and consider eliminating them entirely or thinning them considerably. Keep in mind that students will now be doing multiple readings of the central text. Ask yourself two related questions:

- Is this pre-reading *absolutely* essential to understand the text?
- Can careful reading and questioning support students to figure out much of the same information the pre-reading provides?

The information we often believe students need before reading a text can be provided *during* the questioning process. The benefit here is this: the same information can be provided if it is needed, but *after* students have had the opportunity to read the sections of text for themselves. That way, you and they can see what they could make of it through calling up the information from their own background or by inferring the information they needed through careful reading.

After all, if we want students to be able to read and learn for themselves eventually, we have to offer them regular opportunities to learn how to be self-sufficient learners at all levels of their education. Learning to read independently and proficiently even when text is challenging is key to that self-sufficiency.

The revised questions, activities, and writing tasks will take longer and use time differently than you may be accustomed to... So, you need to consider the needs of your students carefully and

allow yourself to be very selective about what side trips you make to the wide variety of extension activities the anthology—and even these revisions—offer. We offer some concrete recommendations later.

Anthologies are enormous. Nobody has students read the whole tome. Everyone picks and chooses what to read and what to set aside. So too did we in selecting what texts to revise for each edition. We chose based on criteria closely linked to the instructional shifts asked for by the CCSS.

- As much as possible, we supported proportionately more literary non-fiction in the form of essays, journalism, and other forms of expository writing. This is in keeping with the CCSS demand for broader range of text.
- In general, we supported more complex texts so teachers would be confident that, when using these revised sets of questions, their students would be reading grade level complex text.
- A third, practical driver of our selection criteria was to support texts that appear in a lot of anthologies. In this way, we could offer more revisions than the Anthology Alignment Project might have been able to accomplish otherwise.

Vocabulary:

The ability to determine a word's meaning from context is essential to comprehending the increasingly complex text called for by the Standards. Only by developing the ability to learn words from context will students develop the vocabulary they need to be successful readers. We considered the following when selecting words on which to spend time:

- *Words that need to be taught directly:* Words that are essential to understanding the text but hard to determine from the context need to be provided directly to students.
- *You also need to spend time on words that are powerful academic (Tier 2) words* likely to appear in their future reading *even if they are not* essential to understanding the text. In addition, words that are part of a semantic word family (base, basic, basically; or send, resend, sender) offer a bigger “bang for the buck,” as they provide a two or three to one payback. Most students will ignore these words unless you insist they develop the habit of noticing words and seeing what they add to the text.
- *Which words should be learned in context (often with the guidance of working in groups or with you, but sometimes students working on their own)?* Identifying these words is a challenge and worth time discussing specific words with colleagues and studying how they are placed in the text. Many of the liveliest discussions during our revision process were about whether or not the words selected could be figured out from context. The question is whether or not there is support in the text for getting a sense of how a word is being used and then whether or not your students should be expected to find and use that support. We did our best to point out these words and encourage this habit in your students by making questions that would send students back to gather the context clues and figure out a word's meaning. But you will need to get good at this, too, and work with your students so they develop this skill more.

- *Which words should command more time and which less?* Abstract words (manage, incredible, fate, directly) require more time and attention than concrete words, even unusual ones (currents, docks, attaché case, souvenirs). Abstract words have a variety of related meanings (it was an *incredible* game, his excuse was *incredible*, he is very direct, go directly to the office, she ignored a direct order) and, therefore, are likely to appear in a variety of contexts. They are also more complicated to explain and harder to grasp.
- *How should these words be taught?* Students need opportunities to use the words, to think about how the different meanings are in fact related, to wonder why an author chose this word and not another, to wonder how the text might be different with a different word, how the word differs from synonyms (how *incredible* is different from *unbelievable* or *amazing*). In sum, they need to think actively about the word and to hear and see it more than once before the meaning and nuances will stick. It is important to keep in mind that the appearance of the word in the text is the beginning of this learning. Because the student has been thinking about the text, it is likely that the strongest avenue to this learning will be the discussion of how the word is used *here in this text*.

There will be times when vocabulary is directly integrated into a question or task. But we couldn't do it for all the words worth your students' time and consideration. We have identified many words worth students' attention. They are worth all the time you can spend on them and more.

Each aligned set of replacement questions and tasks includes four boxes for vocabulary. The questions are sorted according to whether they can be learned in context, as well as how much time they will likely take to teach.

Syntax (Sentence Structures):

Just as difficult and important as vocabulary is sentence structure (syntax). Syntax and vocabulary are the two features of text that most predict student difficulty (Nelson, Perfetti, Liben & Liben, 2012).

Hardly any of us have been taught to attend carefully to syntax with our students. But we have to, since that is the source of much of their struggle. The anthologies are sometimes silent on sentence structure, sometimes sold. We have created questions and activities to address syntax in the revised question sets. But, just as we could not point out all the *words* that were worth time and attention, we could not point out every *sentence* in every text selection that was worth close study.

You will need to do more when you work with your students on the text passage. Find those sections of the text that have the longest or most complicated/confusing sentences. If we did not provide a question that focuses attention here already, ask one yourself. Or ask your

students to paraphrase the meaning of that sentence. At other times, you can ask your students to pull apart a long sentence and to revise it as two or three shorter sentences. Or you can take short, choppy sentences and have students combine them into one long sentence. These activities can all be done orally or in writing.

Another possibility is to ask what role that sentence plays in the paragraph or the whole passage: What would be different if that sentence were gone? As with vocabulary, the more time you can spend with these 'juicy sentences' (Lilly Wong Fillmore), the better off students will be as readers, writers, and speakers. While this is most true and important for your struggling readers and English learners, *all* your students will benefit from this work.

Fluency

As you know, struggling readers often need more work to achieve fluency. Their comprehension suffers greatly from their lack of fluency. Fluency improves best with repeated readings of grade-level text. It improves second best with students following along while they hear a fluent reader say the words and sentences they are seeing. This is part of the reason why we are so adamant about students returning to the section of the text where they found evidence for an answer and reading that section aloud to the group. This social learning is vital for adolescents and the repeated readings of key parts of the text accomplishes two goals. It helps with fluency. But it also models how to find and identify text evidence for students who may not yet be good at doing that.

Culminating Writing Assignments

Writing about a text after doing a close read provides an important opportunity for students to synthesize their knowledge about that text. The Standards place a premium on students writing to sources, i.e. using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information. Rather than asking students questions they can answer solely from their prior knowledge or experience, the Standards expect students to answer questions that depend on their having read the text with care.

Many of the culminating writing tasks in the anthologies were in need of careful revision to be aligned to this shift in the CCSS. Your students will need lots of practice and modeling in how to gather evidence from what they read to support what they believe to be true about the subject or text being studied. Think of it as asking them to read like a detective and write like a reporter, and prepare to focus a lot of time and effort into these culminating writing assignments. We have tried to make them well worth that time and energy.

All of the writing tasks created for this project are highly guided and scaffolded. Students are actually gathering the raw material for their final essay all during the close reading, and this is an important feature of the design of these aligned materials. It is also worth pointing this out to students so they understand why the work is worth doing in practical terms. However, the

materials provided are meant to introduce a process that students (and teachers!) will eventually make their own. As you and your students become more comfortable with text-based writing, be sure to modify your process to encourage independence. With careful instruction, much practice, and gradual release of responsibility, all of your students will enrich and improve, not only their writing, but the way they think about and interact with what they read.

What else we did *not* do in the Anthology Alignment Project:

As we mentioned earlier, anthologies contain far more than text passages and questions: many include grammar, word study, authors' bios, and more. This project did not address any of these; it is up to each district or school to determine which of these features to include in instruction. This, of course, is nothing new. Very few schools or teachers were ever able to do everything in the anthology.

Note on leveled texts: Leveled readers have been central in many classrooms. We believe they still have an important role to play, but in a Common Core aligned classroom they cannot be the main tool of reading instruction. This is because of Standard Ten, which requires that *all* students be able to read and understand grade level complex text (with scaffolding as necessary). Leveled books for weaker readers are not generally at grade level, so they cannot be all students are exposed to in the classroom.

But as we noted just above, your students will need plenty of access to a wide range of texts of all types and difficulty in order to provide them with the volume of reading they need. So, leveled readers can be a great source to fill this need.

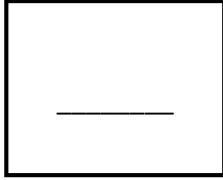
We also could not fully address the new balance of informational and literary text called for in the CCSS. In high school, the Standards call for a balance of 70% informational text and 30% literary text across the full curriculum. Literature remains the core of the work of 6-12 ELA teachers, with greater attention to literary nonfiction than has been traditional. Many of the anthologies provide sources of literary nonfiction. We have paid special attention to revising the questions for a number of pieces of literary nonfiction to support teachers in striving towards the balance called for in the CCSS. However, you may also need to work with colleagues in your school and district to find additional sources of literary nonfiction to supplement your anthology.

We are taking a clear stand on what work is most important. Working with these aligned questions and tasks will mean you will spend much more time with the central text each week than you probably did before. Again, you will have to work with your district and school curriculum teams and with colleagues to decide what other activities can be lessened or eliminated.

What Makes this Text Complex?

1. Quantitative Measure

Go to <http://www.lexile.com/> and enter the title of your text in the Quick Book Search in the upper right of home page. Most texts will have a Lexile measure in this database.



2-3 band	420-820L
4-5 band	740-1010L
6-8 band	925-1185L
9-10 band	1050-1335L
11-CCR band	1185-1385L

2. Qualitative Features

Consider the four dimensions of text complexity below. For each dimension*, note specific examples from the text that make it more or less complex.

Meaning/Purpose	Structure
Language	Knowledge Demands

3. Reader and Task Considerations

What will challenge my students most in this text? What supports can I provide?

How will this text help my students build knowledge about the world?

4. Grade level

What grade does this book best belong in?

*For more information on the qualitative dimensions of text complexity, visit [http://www.achievethecore.org/content/upload/Companion to Qualitative Scale Features Explained.pdf](http://www.achievethecore.org/content/upload/Companion%20to%20Qualitative%20Scale%20Features%20Explained.pdf)

Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

Text Title_____

Text Author_____

	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Purpose: Subtle, implied, difficult to determine; intricate, theoretical elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Purpose: Implied, but fairly easy to infer; more theoretical than concrete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Purpose: Implied, but easy to identify based upon context or source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Purpose: Explicitly stated; clear, concrete with a narrow focus
TEXT STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between an extensive range of ideas or events are deep, intricate and often implicit or subtle; organization of the 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between an expanded range ideas, processes or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle; organization may contain multiple pathways and may exhibit traits common to a specific 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 the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization of Main Ideas: 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 mostly supplementary to understanding of the text, such as indexes, glossaries; graphs, pictures, tables, and charts directly support the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization of Main Ideas: 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, simple graphics, unnecessary to understanding the text but directly support and assist in interpreting the written text
LANGUAGE FEATURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conventionality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand ○ Vocabulary: Contemporary, familiar, conversational language ○ Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences
KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday, practical knowledge; simple, concrete ideas ○ Intertextuality: No references or allusions to other texts, or outside ideas, theories, etc.

Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric

LITERARY TEXTS

Text Title _____

Text Author _____

	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
MEANING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meaning: Several levels 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meaning: Several 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meaning: More than one level of meaning with levels clearly distinguished from each other; theme is clear but may be conveyed with some subtlety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meaning: One level of meaning; theme is obvious and revealed early in the text.
TEXT STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization: Organization is intricate with regard to elements such as narrative viewpoint, time shifts, multiple characters, storylines and detail ○ Use of Graphics: If used, minimal illustrations that support the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization: Organization may include subplots, time shifts and more complex characters ○ Use of Graphics: If used, a few illustrations that support the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization: Organization may have two or more storylines and occasionally difficult to predict ○ Use of Graphics: If used, a range of illustrations that support selected parts of the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization: Organization of text is clear, chronological or easy to predict ○ Use of Graphics: If used, extensive illustrations that directly support and assist in interpreting the written text
LANGUAGE FEATURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conventionality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand ○ Vocabulary: Contemporary, familiar, conversational language ○ Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences
KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Life Experiences: Explores complex, sophisticated themes; experiences are distinctly different from the common reader ○ Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Life Experiences: Explores themes of varying levels of complexity; experiences portrayed are uncommon to most readers ○ Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Life Experiences: Explores a single theme; experiences portrayed are common to many readers ○ Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: A few references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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

Common Core Standards
Qualitative Features of Text Complexity Explained
Companion to the Qualitative Dimensions Scale

(To be consulted in filling out the rubric and in conjunction with anchor texts)

Structure (could be story structure and/or form of piece)

- Simple → Complex
- Explicit → Implicit
- Conventional → Unconventional
- Events related in chronological order → Events related out of chronological order (chiefly literary texts)
- Traits of a common genre or subgenre → Traits specific to a particular discipline (chiefly informational texts)
- Simple graphics → sophisticated graphics
- Graphics unnecessary or merely supplemental to understanding the text → Graphics essential to understanding the text and may provide information not elsewhere provided

Language Demands: Conventionality and Clarity

- Literal → Figurative or ironic
- Clear → Ambiguous or purposefully misleading
- Contemporary, familiar → Archaic or otherwise unfamiliar
- Conversational → General Academic and domain specific
- Light vocabulary load¹: few unfamiliar or academic words → Many words unfamiliar and high academic vocabulary present
- Sentence structure² straightforward → Complex and varied sentence structures

Knowledge Demands: Life Experience (literary texts)

- Simple theme → Complex or sophisticated themes
- Single theme → Multiple themes
- Common everyday experiences or clearly fantastical situations → Experiences distinctly different from one's own
- Single perspective → Multiple perspectives
- Perspective(s) like one's own → Perspective(s) unlike or in opposition to one's own

Knowledge Demands: Cultural/Literary Knowledge (chiefly literary texts)

- Everyday knowledge and familiarity with genre conventions required → Cultural and literary knowledge useful
- Low intertextuality (few if any references/allusions to other texts) → High intertextuality (many references/allusions to other texts)

Knowledge Demands: Content/Discipline Knowledge (chiefly informational texts)

- Everyday knowledge and familiarity with genre conventions required → Extensive, perhaps specialized discipline-specific content knowledge required
- Low intertextuality (few if any references to/citations of other texts) → High intertextuality (many references to/citations of other texts)

Levels of Meaning (chiefly literary texts) or Purpose (chiefly informational texts)

- Single level of meaning → Multiple levels of meaning
- Explicitly stated purpose → Implicit purpose, may be hidden or obscure

¹ Though vocabulary can be measured by quantifiable means, it is still a feature for careful consideration when selecting texts

² Though sentence length is measured by quantifiable means, sentence complexity is still a feature for careful consideration when selecting texts





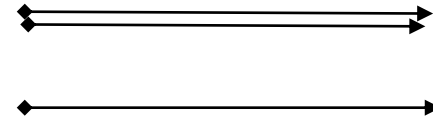
Qualitative Dimensions of Text Complexity Chart

9th - 10th Grade Band

Reviewer: _____

Name of Text: _____

Narrative/Poetry/Hybrid/Informational/other: _____

Category	Notes and comments on text, support for placement in this band	Where to place within the band?				
		Early - Mid 9	End 9- early 10	Early - Mid 10	End 3	NOT suited to band
Structure: (both story structure or form of piece)						
Language Clarity and Conventions (including vocabulary load)						
Knowledge Demands (life, content, cultural/literary)						
Levels of Meaning/ Purpose						
Overall placement:	Justification (what trumped) <div style="text-align: right;">Instructional level:</div> <div style="text-align: right;">Independent/assessment level:</div>					

Qualitative Dimensions of Text Complexity Chart

9th - 10th Grade Band

Reviewer: _____

Name of Text: _____

Narrative/Poetry/Hybrid/Informational/other: _____

Creating Questions for Close Analytic Reading Exemplars: A Brief Guide

1. Think about what you think is the most important learning to be drawn from the text. Note this as raw material for the culminating assignment and the focus point for other activities to build toward.
2. Determine the key ideas of the text. Create a series of questions structured to bring the reader to an understanding of these.
3. Locate the most powerful academic words in the text and integrate questions and discussions that explore their role into the set of questions above.
4. Take stock of what standards are being addressed in the series of questions above. Then decide if any other standards are suited to being a focus for this text. If so, form questions that exercise those standards.
5. Consider if there are any other academic words that students would profit from focusing on. Build discussion planning or additional questions to focus attention on them.
6. Find the sections of the text that will present the greatest difficulty and craft questions that support students in mastering these sections. These could be sections with difficult syntax, particularly dense information, and tricky transitions or places that offer a variety of possible inferences.
7. Develop a culminating activity around the idea or learning identified in #1. A good task should reflect mastery of one or more of the standards, involve writing, and be structured to be done by students independently.

A Guide to Creating Text Dependent and Specific Questions for Close Analytic Reading

Text Dependent Questions: What Are They?

The Common Core State Standards for reading strongly focus on students gathering evidence, knowledge, and insight from what they read. Indeed, eighty to ninety percent of the Reading Standards in each grade *require* text dependent analysis; accordingly, aligned curriculum materials should have a similar percentage of text dependent questions.

As the name suggests, a text dependent question specifically asks a question that can only be answered by referring explicitly back to the text being read. It does not rely on any particular background information extraneous to the text nor depend on students having other experiences or knowledge; instead it privileges the text itself and what students can extract from what is before them.

For example, in a close analytic reading of Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," the following would not be text dependent questions:

- *Why did the North fight the civil war?*
- *Have you ever been to a funeral or gravesite?*
- *Lincoln says that the nation is dedicated to the proposition that "all men are created equal." Why is equality an important value to promote?*

The overarching problem with these questions is that they require no familiarity at all with Lincoln's speech in order to answer them. Responding to these sorts of questions instead requires students to go outside the text. Such questions can be tempting to ask because they are likely to get students talking, but they take students away from considering the actual point Lincoln is making. They seek to elicit a personal or general response that relies on individual experience and opinion, and answering them will not move students closer to understanding the text of the "Gettysburg Address."

Good text specific questions will often linger over specific phrases and sentences to ensure careful comprehension of the text—they help students see something worthwhile that they would not have seen on a more cursory reading. Typical text dependent questions ask students to perform one or more of the following tasks:

- Analyze paragraphs on a sentence by sentence basis and sentences on a word by word basis to determine the role played by individual paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words
- Investigate how meaning can be altered by changing key words and why an author may have chosen one word over another
- Probe each argument in persuasive text, each idea in informational text, each key detail in literary text, and observe how these build to a whole
- Examine how shifts in the direction of an argument or explanation are achieved and the impact of those shifts
- Question why authors choose to begin and end when they do
- Note and assess patterns of writing and what they achieve
- Consider what the text leaves uncertain or unstated

Creating Text-Specific Questions for Close Analytic Reading of Texts

An effective set of text dependent questions delves systematically into a text to guide students in extracting the key meanings or ideas found there. They typically begin by exploring specific words,

details, and arguments and then moves on to examine the impact of those specifics on the text as a whole. Along the way they target academic vocabulary and specific sentence structures as critical focus points for gaining comprehension.

While there is no set process for generating a complete and coherent body of text dependent questions for a text, the following process is a good guide that can serve to generate a core series of questions for close reading of any given text.

Step One: Identify the Core Understandings and Key Ideas of the Text

As in any good reverse engineering or “backwards design” process, teachers should start by identifying the key insights they want students to understand from the text—keeping one eye on the major points being made is crucial for fashioning an overarching set of successful questions and critical for creating an appropriate culminating assignment.

Step Two: Start Small to Build Confidence

The opening questions should be ones that help orientate students to the text and be sufficiently specific enough for them to answer so that they gain confidence to tackle more difficult questions later on.

Step Three: Target Vocabulary and Text Structure

Locate key text structures and the most powerful words in the text that are connected to the key ideas and understandings, and craft questions that draw students’ attention to these specifics so they can become aware of these connections. Vocabulary selected for focus should be academic words “(Tier Two”) that are abstract and likely to be encountered in future reading and studies.

Step Four: Tackle Tough Sections Head-on

Find the sections of the text that will present the greatest difficulty and craft questions that support students in mastering these sections (these could be sections with difficult syntax, particularly dense information, and tricky transitions or places that offer a variety of possible inferences).

Step Five: Create Coherent Sequences of Text Dependent Questions

The sequence of questions should not be random but should build toward more coherent understanding and analysis to ensure that students learn to stay focused on the text to bring them to a gradual understanding of its meaning.

Step Six: Identify the Standards That Are Being Addressed

Take stock of what standards are being addressed in the series of questions and decide if any other standards are suited to being a focus for this text (forming additional questions that exercise those standards).

Step Seven: Create the Culminating Assessment

Develop a culminating activity around the key ideas or understandings identified earlier that reflects (a) mastery of one or more of the standards, (b) involves writing, and (c) is structured to be completed by students independently.

Anthology Alignment Project
Criteria for Evaluating a Set of Questions/Each Question in a Set

Text being reviewed (include page #s): _____

Anthology Publisher/Series/Copyright year: _____

✓if yes	Criteria:	Comments/Questions/Fixes (refer to specific questions!):
A. Text Dependent: These things must be true of every question in the set. When evaluating questions, discard all questions that get a “no” in Section A		
	A1. Does the student have to read the text to answer each question?	
	A2. Is it always clear to students that answering each question requires that they must use evidence from the text to support their claims? (Standard One should always be in play!)	
B. Important Considerations: These are design factors to keep in mind for the entire question and task set.		
	B1. Do students have an opportunity to practice speaking and listening while they work with these questions and tasks?	
	B2. Do questions include appropriate scaffolding so all students can understand what is being asked (Are the questions worded in such a way that all students can access them)?	
	B3. At tricky or key points in the text are there check-in questions for students to answer so that teachers can check on students’ understanding and use these sections to enhance reading proficiency?	
	B4. Do questions provide an opportunity for students to determine the meaning of academic vocabulary in context? When possible, do some of these questions explore some aspect of the text as well as important vocabulary?	
	B5. Does the mix of questions addressing syntax, vocabulary, structure and other inferences match the complexity of the text?	

C. Text Specific:		
	C1. Are the questions specific enough so they can only be answered by reference to this text?	
	C2. Are the inferences students are asked to make grounded logically in the text (Can they be answered with careful reading rather than background knowledge)?	
D. Organization of the Questions:		
	D1. Do the early questions in the sequence focus on specific phrases and sentences to support basic comprehension of the text and develop student confidence before moving on to more challenging tasks?	
	D2. Are the questions coherently sequenced? Do they build toward gradual understanding of the text's meaning?	
	D3. Do the questions stay focused on the text and only go beyond it to make other connections in extension activities <i>after</i> the text has been explored?	
	D4. If multiple texts/different media are under consideration, are students asked to examine each text closely before making connections among texts?	
E. Culminating Activity or Writing Prompt:		
	E1. Does the culminating task call on the knowledge and understanding acquired through the questions?	
	E2. Does the writing prompt in the culminating task demand that students write to the text and use evidence?	
	E3. Are the instructions to teacher and student clear about what must be performed to achieve proficiency?	
	E4. Is this a task worthy of the student and classroom time it will consume?	

Reviewer: _____ District Affiliation: _____

Date: _____ Approved as completed (Initials and Date): _____

Anthology Alignment Project

Checklist for Completing the Template

v	Check each step as it is completed.
	1. Read the Main Selection text closely.
	2. Conduct a qualitative analysis of the Main Selection.
	3. Write the Synopsis and clearly state the Big Ideas/Key Understandings on the template.
	4. Carefully re-read the Main Selection, and create Text Dependent Questions.
	5. Identify and categorize vocabulary using the Vocabulary Quadrant in the template (this can be done <i>while</i> creating text dependent questions, or while re-reading the text solely for vocabulary).
	6. Create Culminating Tasks and Additional Tasks. Include appropriate sample answers for both. THIS MEANS REVISION TEAMS WILL BE WRITING A SAMPLE ESSAY (AFTER STEP 10)! Add a Note to Teacher if necessary.
	7. Refer to the Common Core State Standards and insert those used in the lesson on the template.
	8. Name the file with the following naming convention: <u>Publisher/Series/Edition/Grade/Main Selection Title/Version</u> (Ex: <i>Prentice Hall Literature 10 On Summer v1</i>)
	9. Email your revision to your district point person with any comments or questions you have about the revision.
	10. The district point person will send the revision to Farren Liben (fliben@studentsachieve.net). After review, it will get sent back to you with comments and suggestions through your point person. You will need to make any necessary changes and submit a new version (v2).
	11. Revisions generally go through 3 versions before the reviewer deems the revision to be final and ready for Edmodo.

Tier II Academic Vocabulary

	These words merit less time and attention (They are concrete or describe events/ processes/ideas/concepts/experiences that are familiar to students)	These words merit more time and attention (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, and/or are a part of a word family)
Meaning can be learned from context	Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word]	Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word]
Meaning needs to be provided	Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word]	Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word]

Unit x/Week x

Title:

Suggested Time: # days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: [ex. RL.6.1, RL.6.2, RL.6.7, W.6.2, W.6.4, W.6.10, SL.6.1, SL.6.3, L.6.1, L.6.2, L.6.4, L.6.5]

Teacher Instructions

Preparing for Teaching

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis. Please do **not** read this to the students. This is a description for teachers about the big ideas and key understanding that students should take away **after** completing this task.

Big Ideas and Key Understandings

Synopsis

2. Read the entire selection, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.
3. Re-read the text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Tier II/academic vocabulary.

During Teaching

1. Students read the entire selection independently.

2. Teacher reads the text aloud while students follow along or students take turns reading aloud to each other. Depending on the text length and student need, the teacher may choose to read the full text or a passage aloud. For a particularly complex text, the teacher may choose to reverse the order of steps 1 and 2.
3. Students and teacher re-read the text while stopping to respond to and discuss the questions, continually returning to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and discussion (i.e., whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.)

Text Dependent Questions

Text-dependent Questions	Evidence-based Answers
In the first paragraph on page 656, Hansberry provides an overview of her feelings on each of the seasons. Summarize how she feels about each.	Hansberry refers to the winter and fall seasons as emotional states of being. To her, the winter is cold and aloof, often dull and muted in contrast to the vividness of summer. And the fall is “melancholy” and “despondent”. Her feelings about the first two seasons appear to be favorable, contradicting her negative feelings about the summer. She even goes as far as to “worship” the winter and express passionate commitment to fall in her adolescent years. Inversely, she states, “ <i>summer</i> was a mistake.”
On page 656, Hansberry says, “nature had got inexcusably carried away on the summer question and let the whole thing get to be rather much.” What textual evidence can you find to explain what she means by this?	She supports her belief that nature got carried by referencing the length of a summer day and how “pronounced” and in sharp focus everything appeared and sounded. Specifically, she states that the “duration” of the day “seemed maddingly excessive”, objects were in “too sharp relief”, “shadows too pronounced”, and “light too blinding”, and sound came to the ear “without the muting influence” found in winter. In other words, it was too much for the senses--an overload.

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[illegible]

Tier II/Academic Vocabulary

	These words require less time to learn (They are concrete or describe an object/event/ process/characteristic that is familiar to students)	These words require more time to learn (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, are a part of a word family, or are likely to appear again in future texts)
Meaning can be learned from context	Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word]	Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word]
Meaning needs to be provided	Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word]	Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word] Page [number] - [word]

Culminating Writing Task

- Prompt

[Insert text-based writing prompt here in italics. The following is an example prompt: *At the end of Lorraine Hansberry's essay, *On Summer*, she declares that summer is "the noblest of the seasons." How does her perspective on summer change throughout the essay, and how does summer come to represent "the noblest of the seasons" by the end of the text? Compose an argument that is one page in length. Support your claims with valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence from the text, including direct quotes and page numbers.*

- Teacher Instructions

[Insert specific teacher instructions here. The following is a basic outline of appropriate instructions. This should be altered as necessary. Please note, the evidence chart should always remain a component of the instructions and should be completed by the revising team as an example for teachers.

1. Students identify their writing task from the prompt provided.
2. Students complete an evidence chart as a pre-writing activity. Teachers should guide students in gathering and using any relevant notes they compiled while reading and answering the text-dependent questions earlier. Some students will need a good deal of help gathering this evidence, especially when this process is new and/or the text is challenging!

<i>Evidence Quote or paraphrase</i>	<i>Page number</i>	<i>Elaboration / explanation of how this evidence supports ideas or argument</i>
"...my earliest memory of anything at all is of waking up in a darkened room where I had been put to bed for a nap on a summer's afternoon, and feeling very, very hot. I acutely disliked the feeling then and retained the bias for years."	656	At the beginning of the essay, Hansberry is direct and explicit regarding her reasons for disliking summer. She begins, here, with her earliest of all memories, which happens to be realizing her strong distaste for the effects of the summer heat.

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3. Once students have completed the evidence chart, they should look back at the writing prompt in order to remind themselves what kind of response they are writing (i.e. expository, analytical, argumentative) and think about the evidence they found. (Depending on the grade level, teachers may want to review students' evidence charts in some way to ensure accuracy.) From here, students should develop a specific thesis statement. This could be done independently, with a partner, small group, or the entire class. Consider directing students to the following sites to learn more about thesis statements: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/> OR http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/thesis_statement.shtml.
4. Students compose a rough draft. With regard to grade level and student ability, teachers should decide how much scaffolding they will provide during this process (i.e. modeling, showing example pieces, sharing work as students go).
5. Students complete final draft.

- Sample Answer

[Provide a sample response here. This response should include examples of evidence (with page numbers) and the kind of elaboration and reasoning that you would expect students to use in their responses. An example follows:]

In her essay, *On Summer*, Lorraine Hansberry's perspective on summer drastically shifts from one of disdain to one of sheer admiration, as she begins to see the ways in which summer presents poignant opportunities to experience life to its fullest rather than an oppressive overstatement brought about as nature's cruel joke.

Hansberry begins her essay by establishing her feelings on the seasons as a young girl. She sets the stage by declaring that her earliest of all memories was of "waking up in a darkened room" after a summer's nap and "feeling very, very hot." Beyond "acutely dislik[ing]" the feelings of the oppressive heat, she felt as though "nature had got inexcusably carried away" by making summer days so long and its images and sounds so sharp, especially in comparison to the muted and dull winter (656). These descriptions are in sharp contrast to the ways in which she views the other seasons. From these early recollections, Hansberry solidifies a strong foundation for her feelings on summer; they are strong, vibrant, and unequivocally negative.

As the essay continues, the reader starts to catch glimpses of a shift in Hansberry's attitude, with these negative feelings starting to grow more positive in nature. These fleeting moments start with Hansberry's detailing of her childhood summers in Chicago. The days were filled with "street games" and nights with "those really very special summertime sounds" of slamming screen doors and "the best stories" shared on park blankets under the stars (657-658). It is these special sounds and stories that start to illuminate the shift in Hansberry's representation of the season. Her opinions have seemed to soften, and she is willing to at least acknowledge small ways in which one can enjoy summer.

From here, Hansberry includes details of the short yet memorable time she spent with her maternal grandmother in Tennessee and then moves to describing the turning point in her view on summer: the experiences she shared with a woman from Maine who was dying from cancer. Hansberry describes the woman as "...one of those people who energetically

believe that the world can be changed for the better and spend their lives trying to do just that" (660). She admired the woman's spirit, fight, and "delightfully ribald anger" when it came to dealing with her terminal fight. It is through this woman's eyes that Hansberry is able to see clearly for the first time. It is not a "frivolous spring...full of too many false promises" or a "pretentious melancholy" seen in autumn or an "austere and silent winter" that this woman needed, but rather a season with "its stark and intimate assertion of neither birth nor death but life at the apex; with the gentlest nights and, above all, the longest days" (661). And this could only be brought on by summer, which Hansberry now understands as "the noblest of the seasons." Yet, it was only through meeting this woman and seeing life through her eyes that Hansberry is able to come to this confident assertion.

Additional Tasks

[Revising teams should include at least 1 or more additional tasks with answers. Since these additional activities are meant to be completed after the text has been totally unpacked and the culminating writing assignment completed, these tasks can be text-inspired rather than text-based.]

- [Insert prompt here. in italics.]

Answer: [Insert at least 1-2 sentences outlining the key details each answer should include.]

- [Insert prompt here in italics.]

Answer: [Insert at least 1-2 sentences outlining the key details each answer should include.]

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Note to Teacher

- [Insert any helpful, relevant instructional suggestions here.]