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.