**Activity # 5: Putting It All Together, Text Complexity Handout**

During this activity, you will be watching a classroom of students discussing an excerpt from *Man’s Search for Meaning* by Viktor Frankl. The analysis below corresponds to that text excerpt.

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. For more information on other valid quantitative measures, click [here](https://achievethecore.org/page/2725/text-complexity).

Use this chart for quick reference:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 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 |

1000-1100L

1. **Qualitative Features**

Consider the four dimensions of text complexity below. For each dimension, note some examples from the text that make it more or less complex. For more information on these four dimensions, click [here](https://achievethecore.org/content/upload/Companion_to_Qualitative_Scale_Features_Explained.pdf).

**Moderately Complex**

Easy to infer – the author states in first and second paragraph, “salvation” in a camp was a prisoner’s finding “a future goal to which he could look forward”. Some portions are more theoretical than concrete (“…it is a peculiarity of man that he can only live by looking to the future.”).

**Moderately Complex**

Connections between claims about human experience and personal experience in camps are subtle (“…this is his salvation in the most difficult moments…”), but text cues for these connections are provided (“I remember a personal experience….”, “I became disgusted…”, “Suddenly…”, “By this method…”).

Events are remembered in sequence, however include a complex perspective shift with a future goal the author imagined while he was in the camp (“I forced my thoughts to turn…”).

**Text Structure**

**Meaning/Purpose**

**Knowledge Demands**

**Language Features**

**Very Complex**

Vocabulary includes some academic terms (ration, objective). Conventionality includes figurative language: (long column of men, bitter winds, inner strength). The sentence structure is complex (“I became disgusted with the state of affairs which compelled me, daily and hourly, to think of only such trivial things.”, “By this method I succeeded somehow in rising above the situation, above the sufferings of the moment, and I observed them as if they were already of the past.”).

**Very Complex**

References to outside ideas/texts (Spinoza in Ethics and the abstract idea of how the human psyche survives through sufferable conditions, “Emotion, which is suffering, ceases to be suffering as soon as we form a clear and precise picture of it.“) There are consistent references to subject-specific content of WWII German Nazi concentration camps (Capo, forced labor “work site”, rations). Some of this can be understood through context.

1. **Reader and Task Considerations**

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

Students may struggle with some of the language features, especially the complex sentence structures. Students may also be challenged to recognize the fantasizing of a future existence imposed on reality lived (in the past). A support could be questions and tasks about the meaning of figurative terms and phrases and the the author’s use of perspective and time.

Prior to reading this text, students might need to read a less complex text on WWII German concentration camps to some general background knowledge.

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

This text will help students develop a better understanding of a perspective on the human condition and its survival during suffering. It will also provide insight into the experience of a WWII German Nazi concentration camp survivor.