

Knowledge Building with a Model Lesson

Why build knowledge with model lessons?

Lessons that exemplify high-quality literacy instruction are anchored in complex grade-level text. A high-leverage, evidence-based strategy to support students in accessing complex text is to anchor that text in a conceptually coherent set of resources that build needed knowledge and vocabulary. This work is particularly critical for students not yet reading at grade level.

What is included in a knowledge-building model lesson?

Each knowledge-building model lesson includes a close-reading model lesson paired with a short set of knowledge-building resources and tasks. Educators can engage in knowledge building with any close-reading lesson, so long as this lesson is centered on a complex grade-level text and series of text-specific oral and/or written tasks.

The knowledge-building resources follow similar guidance for more extensive text sets, but on a much smaller scale. The selection of resources follow a quad text set model developed by Comprehensive Reading Solutions and based on the article by Sarah Lupo and colleagues, "Building Background Knowledge Through Reading: Rethinking Text Sets." In a quad text set model, three to five texts are selected that help students develop knowledge critical to the complex text at the center of the close-reading lesson. Each of these supplemental texts is paired with a lightweight text-dependent task to support students' comprehension and knowledge-building work.

How might a teacher use a knowledge-building model lesson?

Educators can use the knowledge-building resources in the order indicated in the "Quad Text Set with Text-Dependent Tasks" table to help build knowledge and vocabulary when engaging with a close-reading model lesson. Implementing these knowledge-building texts and tasks can be done in a variety of ways; they are lightweight enough to be done either during short portions of class or as homework. For example:

- If completed as homework, the partner portion of each task can be completed in class.
- If the whole class (or majority of students) has little to no knowledge of the topic under study, the text set could be used in whole-class instruction.
- If there are just a few students who have little to no knowledge of the topic of study, the text set could be used in small groups with teacher guidance.

This list is not meant to be exhaustive. Educators should use their judgement about student needs to determine how best to use the resources.

Building Knowledge with a Close-Reading Lesson *1984*

This set of resources is designed to build knowledge in support of the close-reading lesson on *1984* by George Orwell©, available on achievethecore.org.

I. Anchor Text

Excerpt from *1984*

Lexile: 1050L

Grade: 8

II. Anchor Text Knowledge and Language Demands

- The knowledge demands of this text are high, as the context of a dystopian society and totalitarian regimes in Spain and the USSR is uncommon.
- The language of the text is complex because it consistently uses paradox, irony, and symbolism (e.g., big brother, the glass paperweight).

III. Quad Text Set with Text-Dependent Tasks

The table below details the knowledge-building resources to use in support of the close-reading lesson: what text to use, in what order to use it, details about the text, and a text-dependent task to support knowledge building. The resources are listed below in their suggested order for use. Task directions have been written in student-facing language and teacher notes added in italics when necessary. Links to full task descriptions have been provided when possible.

Title	Resource Type	Lexile Level	Summary	Task
<p><u>"Dystopias: Definition and Characteristics"</u></p> <p>paired with</p> <p><u>"Dystopia"</u></p>	Informational text and photographs	n/a	This article provides students with an understanding of the term "dystopia." The images offer a visual of a	<p>Independently read the dystopian definition handout.</p> <p>Write a definition of dystopia in your own words.</p> <p>Share your definition with a partner.</p> <p>Make connections to other texts, movies, TV series, etc., that you have experienced that fall into this genre.</p>

			dystopian society.	<p>Then share your list with your partner. As you share, explain why the text fits into the genre of dystopias.</p> <p>With your partner, analyze the dystopian images. Answer the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss what makes each image dystopian. What key features of the image support the idea of dystopia? 2. What mood do these images represent? Use evidence from the images to support your response. <p>Be prepared to discuss your responses in a whole-class discussion. During the class discussion, add to the class list of key features of dystopian texts.</p>
<u>"Harrison Bergeron"</u>	Short Story	810L	This dystopian fiction is based on a society whose government attempts to achieve perfection, but it goes horribly wrong.	<p><i>Teacher preparation: For the Text-Dependent Questions portion of this task, be sure to assign student groups only one of the three listed questions to answer.</i></p> <p><u>Annotating Text</u> and Text-Dependent Questions Read and annotate the text.</p> <p>With your small group, summarize the short story.</p> <p>Then, compose a response to your group's assigned question. Be prepared to share your group's response in a whole-class discussion.</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Characterize Harrison Bergeron. Use text evidence to support your characterization. 2. What mood is evoked throughout this short story? Use text evidence to support your response. 3. Where does the author most strongly develop the idea of totalitarianism, or complete government

				control? Use evidence from the text to support your response.
"1984 - Introduction & Analysis (2+2=5)"	Video (1:18)	n/a	This video introduces students to the idea of complete government control.	<p>Pay close attention as you watch the video.</p> <p>As you watch, list three ways this video connects to the earlier handout, "Dystopias: Definitions and Characteristics."</p> <p>Then, characterize the woman in the video.</p> <p>After watching the video, share your findings with your partner.</p> <p>With your partner, discuss the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think "A Big Brother approved" substitute means? 2. What does it sound like in a dystopian context? 3. What is the role of the teacher, and what does the teacher represent in a dystopian context? 4. What are the implications of teaching 2+2=5? What are the implications of teaching "Ignorance is Strength" or "Freedom is Slavery"? <p>Be prepared to share insights from your partner during a whole-class discussion.</p>
<i>1984</i>	Anchor Text	1090L	In this excerpt from <i>1984</i> , the government uses propaganda and fear to influence its citizens.	See the text and sequence of tasks provided in the close-reading model lesson here .