

# IMMERSING STUDENTS IN **COMPLEX TEXT**



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**Integrate complex texts**

**Assess a text's complexity**

**Scaffold your instructional support**

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# Integrate complex texts

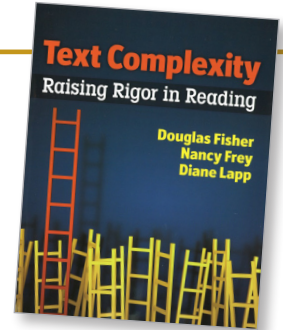
Track the emergence of text complexity.



## POIGNANT THOUGHT

Perhaps one of the mistakes in the past effort to improve reading achievement has been the removal of struggle. As a profession, we might have made reading tasks too easy. We do not suggest that we should plan students' failures but rather that students should be provided with opportunities to struggle and to learn about themselves as a reader when they struggle, persevere, and eventually succeed."

~ *TEXT COMPLEXITY: RAISING RIGOR IN READING*,  
D. Fisher, N. Frey, D. Lapp, p. 11



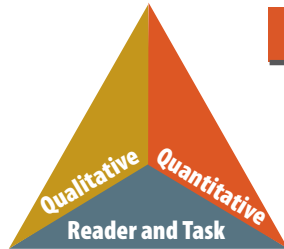
Provide *some* opportunities for a productive struggle.

Apply the marathon analogy, rather than the spin cycle.

Increase students' reading quantity, too.

# Assess a text's complexity

Juggle the three facets of text complexity.



**Quantitative Measures**

**Qualitative Measures**

**Reader & Task Considerations**

Broaden the definition of "text."

<b>Traditional Text</b>	▶	textbook		
<b>Primary Sources</b>	▶	documents, contracts photographs, artifacts	speeches, debates essays, sermons	transcripts journals, diaries, letters
<b>Periodicals</b>	▶	newspapers	magazines	published articles
<b>Printed Text</b>	▶	anthologies biographies	nonfiction picture books big books	nonfiction poems play/movie scripts
<b>Visual Text</b>	▶	maps , graphs, charts, tables diagrams, illustrations flowcharts, blueprints	spreadsheets, data posters, advertisements editorial cartoons	photographs, works of art wordless picture books hand signals/visible gestures
<b>Other Real-World Texts</b>	▶	manuals, instructions directions, recipes field guides	experiments, labs letters to the editor commentaries	advertisements, billboards greeting cards trading cards
<b>Multimodal/ Digital Texts</b>	▶	apps, websites, blogs webcasts, podcasts movies, videos, audio clips	music/music videos interviews, documentaries news feed crawler	text messages, tweets advertisements

# Scaffold your instructional support

When students are *independently* reading *slightly* more complex text...

<b>1</b>	Read aloud the first portion and discuss it with the small group.	
<b>2</b>	Establish same-book/ in-sync reading partners.	
<b>3</b>	Listen & follow along to an audio version of a complex text.	
<b>4</b>	Provide an introductory text to be read before the more complex one.	

When the *whole-class* is reading *significantly* more complex text...

<b>5</b>	Read Aloud and Think Aloud, letting kids get the <i>feel</i> of complex text.	
<b>6</b>	Require students to read the textbook— don't summarize it.	
<b>7</b>	Provide <i>multiple</i> introductory texts to be read before the more complex one.	
<b>8</b>	Incorporate opportunities for a close reading.	

**CAUTION:** Don't make reading too easy.

"Sharply curtail" traditional pre-reading strategies, including:

- Preview/Skim *the* text.
- Provide a gist/summary of *the* text.
- Read the text features within *the* text.
- Pre-teach vocabulary used in *the* text.

**CHALLENGE:** Build students' background knowledge without pre-reading *the* text.

# Discussion: Turn & Talk

Discuss how your definition or interpretation of “text complexity” has been confirmed or adjusted after viewing this PD training.

Assess the complexity of several texts within your current curriculum.

Discuss strategies that prepare students and build their background knowledge for your complex texts—without actually previewing or pre-reading them.

Immersing Students in Complex Text

## BUILD SUCCESSFUL READERS & WRITERS

Learn more simple and effective strategies for teaching reading and writing when you visit [www.SmekensEducation.com](http://www.SmekensEducation.com).

To find additional resources related to this session, search the Smekens Education website using these keywords:

- complex text
- close reading
- build background

## USE THE RIGHT TOOLS



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