

LITERARY TEXT COMPLEXITY

Uncomplicated

More Challenging

Moderately Complex

Very Complex

Meaning

One meaning explicitly stated and revealed early; theme is explicit

Two or more easily distinguishable meanings; theme is clear but may be revealed subtly over the entirety of the text

Several levels of meaning that may be difficult to identify or separate; revealed subtly over the entirety of the text; theme is implicit

Multiple levels of meaning and multiple themes; subtle; difficult to identify and separate; often ambiguous; revealed over the entirety of the text

Knowledge Demands

Life experiences are common and familiar to most readers
 No intertextuality (references or allusions to other sources) or need for specific cultural knowledge

Life experiences are common and familiar to many readers
 Limited intertextuality or need for specific cultural knowledge

Life experiences have varying levels of complexity and may be unfamiliar to most readers
 Some intertextuality or need for specific cultural knowledge

Life experiences are complex, sophisticated, and/or distinctly different from most readers
 High intertextuality or need for specific cultural knowledge

Language Features

Language is straightforward and very easy to understand
 Vocabulary is familiar, conventional, conversational
 Sentence structure is mostly simple

Language is mostly explicit and easy to understand
 Vocabulary is mostly familiar, some complex meanings
 Sentence structure is mostly simple, with some compound and complex sentences

Language is complex; some ironic, figurative, and/or abstract language; multiple meanings
 Vocabulary is somewhat unfamiliar; some ambiguous, academic, or unconventional language
 Sentence structure is mostly complex sentences with subordinating clauses

Language is dense and complex; much of the language is ironic and/or figurative; multiple meanings some language is purposely misleading or ambiguous
 Vocabulary is mostly unfamiliar, ambiguous, archaic, overly academic, and unconventional
 Sentence structure is mainly complex, often contain multiple concepts

Structure

Structure is clear, predictable, and in chronological order
 One point of view

Structure may have multiple storylines; may not be readily predictable; may not be chronological
 Few shifts in point of view

Structure has complexities and unconventionalities in terms of elements; may not be chronological
 Shifts in point of view

Structure contains intricate elements and unconventionalities
 Many shifts in point of view

Layout

Extensive illustrations that directly support the understanding the text

Many illustrations that support the understanding of the text

Few if any illustrations that support the understanding of the text

Minimal, if any , illustrations

INFORMATIONAL TEXT COMPLEXITY

Uncomplicated	More Challenging	Moderately Complex	Very Complex
Purpose			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One purpose explicitly stated; concrete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More than purpose more or less explicitly stated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Several purposes that may be difficult to identify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple purposes that are implied, subtle, and difficult to determine
Knowledge Demands			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Common, everyday, and practical world knowledge that is familiar to most readers ○ No intertextuality (references or allusions to other sources) or need for specific cultural knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Common, everyday, and practical world knowledge that is familiar to many readers ○ Limited intertextuality or need for specific cultural knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Moderate levels of domain-specific knowledge and some theoretical world knowledge may be unfamiliar to most readers ○ Some intertextuality or need for specific cultural knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extensive domain-specific and theoretical world knowledge ○ High intertextuality or need for specific cultural knowledge
Language Features			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language is straight forward and easy to understand ○ Vocabulary is familiar, conventional, conversational ○ New vocabulary is explicitly introduced ○ Sentence structure is mostly simple 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language is mostly explicit and easy to understand ○ Vocabulary is mostly familiar, some complex meanings ○ New vocabulary more or less explicitly introduced ○ Sentence structure is mostly simple, with some compound and complex sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language is complex; some ironic, figurative, and/or abstract language ○ Vocabulary is somewhat unfamiliar; some ambiguous, academic, and unconventional language; ○ New vocabulary may be difficult to discern ○ Sentence structure is mostly complex sentences with subordinating clauses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language is dense and complex; much of the language ironic, and/or figurative ○ Vocabulary is mostly unfamiliar, ambiguous, archaic, overly academic, and unconventional ○ New vocabulary is implicitly introduced ○ Sentence structure is mainly complex, often contain multiple concepts
Structure			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One main idea, supporting ideas, and details are explicitly and sequentially stated ○ The organization of the text is consistent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The elements may be more complex, but are explicitly and sequentially stated ○ The organization of the text is mostly consistent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The elements are complex, but are, for the most part, explicitly and sequentially stated; may contain domain-specific traits ○ The organization of the text changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The elements are highly complex and must be inferred; contains domain-specific traits ○ The organization of the text changes frequently
Layout			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extensive simple graphs that directly support the understanding the text and are proximate to the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Many simple graphs that support the understanding of the text and are proximate to the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Few, if any, sophisticated graphs that support the understanding of the text and may not be proximate to the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Minimal, if any, sophisticated graphs and may not be proximate to the text; may contain information not directly stated in the text

READER AND TEXT CONSIDERATIONS

Reader

Task

Does the reader have:

Reading Skills

- Adequate decoding skills
- Adequate fluency
- Adequate language skills
- Adequate world/domain-specific knowledge/experience
- Adequate strategic reading skills
- Adequate inference-making skills

Cognitive Capabilities

- Necessary reasoning/analytic skills
- Necessary attention
- Necessary working memory

Reader Traits

- Appropriate motivation
- Interest in topic
- Appropriate maturity level
- Self-resiliency

What is the purpose for reading?

- Pleasure
- Practice
- Instruction
- Independent Learning

What is the assigned task?

- Discussion
- Oral summary/retelling
- Answering questions at varying levels of complexity
- Written summary
- Evaluating or Comparing/contrasting to other texts

Text

Text Recommendation	
Qualitative	Quantitative
Meaning/Purpose:	Lexile (Band):
	ATOS:
Knowledge Demands:	Reader Considerations:
Language Features:	
Structure:	
Layout:	Recommendation: