Middle School English Literature Selection Advisory Committee

2/26/20
Please sit with your reading group

Make sure you have signed in, picked up your red folder, and grabbed some dinner.
A copy of the agenda is in your folder.

The purpose of our work today:

- Revisit & deepen our understanding of text complexity
- Analyze revised PAUSD Lit Lists for holes
- Vet grade-level titles and/or explore new titles in Reading Groups

Approve or edit the agenda?
Revisiting Text Complexity
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CCSS and ELA/ELD Framework</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Text Complexity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Access and Support</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Diversity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Genre, Culture, and Time Periods</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Relevance and Engagement</strong></td>
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</table>
Three Main Shifts in ELA/Literacy

1. Regular practice with complex text and its academic language

2. Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text — both literary and informational

3. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction

Slide adapted from Achieve the Core
### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6th Grade</th>
<th>7th Grade</th>
<th>8th Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6--8 text complexity band</td>
<td>stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6--8 text complexity band</td>
<td>stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6--8 text complexity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
<td>proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</td>
<td>independently and proficiently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three Factors of Text Complexity

1. **Quantitative Scale**: What a computer can “see” and measure
2. **Qualitative Measures**: Text features best judged by human evaluation (structure, language and knowledge demands, and purpose)
3. **Reader and Task Considerations**: What the teacher does with this text to help students read and understand it
What IS Complex Text Exactly?

1. Dense information
2. Lack of words, sentences or paragraphs that review or connect ideas for the student. Subtle or infrequent transitions.
3. Lengthy paragraphs
4. Complex sentences
5. Text structure that is less narrative and/or mixes structures.
6. Multiple and/or subtle themes and purposes
7. Uncommon vocabulary
8. Unfamiliar settings, topics or events
9. Lack of repetition, overlap, or similarity in words and sentences

Slide adapted from Achieve the Core
## Quantitative Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Core Band</th>
<th>ATOS</th>
<th>Degrees of Reading Power®</th>
<th>Flesch-Kincaid²</th>
<th>The Lexile Framework®</th>
<th>Reading Maturity</th>
<th>Text Evaluator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Slide adapted from Achieve the Core
What makes a text qualitatively complex?

- Layers of meaning
- Purpose
- Concept complexity

- Vocabulary
- Sentence length and structure
- Figurative language
- Regional/historical usage (dialects)

- Text features
- Genre
- Organization

- Content knowledge
- Disciplinary knowledge
- Intertextuality
- Background & experiences

Slide adapted from Achieve the Core
### Qualitative Measures

#### Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Exceedingly Complex</th>
<th>Very Complex</th>
<th>Moderately Complex</th>
<th>Slightly Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose: Subtle, implied, difficult to determine; intricate, theoretical elements</td>
<td>Purpose: Implied, but fairly easy to infer; more theoretical than concrete</td>
<td>Purpose: Implied, but easy to identify based upon context or source</td>
<td>Purpose: Explicitly stated; clear, concrete with a narrow focus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Text Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEXT STRUCTURE</th>
<th>Exceedingly Complex</th>
<th>Very Complex</th>
<th>Moderately Complex</th>
<th>Slightly Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between an extensive range of ideas or events are deep, intricate and often implicit or subtle; organization of the text is intricate or specialized for a particular discipline</td>
<td>Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between some ideas or events are implicit or subtle; organization may contain multiple pathways and may exhibit traits common to a specific discipline</td>
<td>Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between ideas, processes or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict</td>
<td>Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between ideas, processes or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Language Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE FEATURES</th>
<th>Exceedingly Complex</th>
<th>Very Complex</th>
<th>Moderately Complex</th>
<th>Slightly Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conventionality: Dense and complex; contains abstract, figurative, and/or figurative language</td>
<td>Conventionality: Complex; contains abstract, figurative, and/or figurative language</td>
<td>Conventionality: Largely explicit and easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning</td>
<td>Conventionality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary: Generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading</td>
<td>Vocabulary: Generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading</td>
<td>Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic</td>
<td>Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences often containing multiple concepts</td>
<td>Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences often containing multiple concepts</td>
<td>Sentence Structure: Simple and compound sentences, with some more complex constructions</td>
<td>Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Knowledge Demands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS</th>
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<th>Very Complex</th>
<th>Moderately Complex</th>
<th>Slightly Complex</th>
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<tr>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: Extensive, perhaps specialized or even theoretical; range of challenging abstract and theoretical concepts</td>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: Moderate levels of discipline-specific content knowledge; some theoretical knowledge may enhance understanding; range of recognizable ideas and challenging abstract concepts</td>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday practical knowledge and some discipline-specific content knowledge; both simple and more complicated, abstract ideas</td>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday practical knowledge and some discipline-specific content knowledge; both simple and more complicated, abstract ideas</td>
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Slide adapted from Achieve the Core
Reader and Task Considerations

Consider:

- Challenging aspects of the text
- Engagement and motivation
- Ensuring productive struggle and appropriate scaffolds for students

Reader and task considerations are teacher judgment calls
Practice Determining Text Complexity

Handouts are in your folder.

1. Organize yourselves in groups of 3.
2. Read *The Great Fire* by Jim Murphy.
3. Together, answer #1 and #2 on the “What Makes This Text Complex?” sheet. You will need to use your Informational Text Rubric for question #2.
4. Be ready to discuss answers.

Activity & Resources adapted from Achieve the Core
Middle Low
The purpose (that the construction and organization of Chicago made the Great Fire so devastating) is not explicitly stated, but is easy to identify, ("The Great Fire of Chicago is considered the largest disaster of the 1800s.", "Chicago in 1871 was a city ready to burn.")

Low
The organization of the text is mostly a series of topics on the urban planning mistakes that caused the Great Fire disaster. Connections between topics are explicit, ("The situation was worst in...", "Wealthier districts were by no mean free of hazards.", "Fires were common in all cities..."). The first and final paragraph are not part of this structure, instead providing a description of the start of the fire at the O’Leary’s.

Meaning/Purpose

Text Structure

Language Features

Middle Low
The vocabulary is mostly familiar with some academic language included, ("engulfed", "proclaimed", "highly combustible knot", "indicate"). The sentences are mostly simple, ("It was also a common practice to disguise wood as another kind of building material."), with some complex constructions "Because both Patrick and Catherine O’Leary worked, they were able to put a large addition on their cottage despite a lot size of just 25 by 100 feet.").

Knowledge Demands

Low
The passage contains simple, concrete ideas with little outside knowledge demanded by the text. The text fully describes the Great Fire and its main causes, ("The trouble was that about two-thirds of all these structures were made entirely of wood.", "Lot sizes were small, and owners usually filled them up with cottages, barns, sheds, and outhouses—all made of fast-burning wood, naturally.", "What made Sunday the eighth different and particularly dangerous was the steady wind blowing in from the southwest.").
Analyzing our pared-down PAUSD lists
Where Are Our Gaps?

With your group, look at your “Revised PAUSD Lit List” in TeachingBooks.

Spend some time filtering your remaining titles. Be ready to report on any holes you are finding.

Also, let Karen know if any titles need to be taken off/added to the TeachingBooks list.
10-Minute Break
Work in Reading Groups
Reminder: Resources for Finding New Titles

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS – Summer reading recommendations from PAUSD Teachers & Staff

AWARDS LISTS, BOOK LISTS, & MORE – From the CDE, edited by our Teacher-Librarian

TITLEWAVE.COM – Book reviews and more

TEACHINGBOOKS.COM – Browse by various categories
Once You’ve Found a Possible New Title

2. Read reviews on the book (Titlewave)
3. Put your new title through our vetting tool
4. Record your new title in our spreadsheet (under “Xth GRADE NEW TITLES”)
Goals for Work Period: Now - 6:45

1. Finish vetting books on the PAUSD Literature List (*if necessary*)
2. Make sure your group is clear about your Action Plan for new titles
3. Continue vetting new titles
Wrapping Up: “State of the Group”

Reading groups, select a speaker to tell us:

- What progress you made tonight
- What you plan to accomplish next time
- Any ideas or questions that might help others
Agenda Items for Next Meeting

March 25, 2020, from 4:00–7:00

● Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction
● Access and support (report on CDE meeting)
● Work Time: Reading groups vet new titles
● Other?
Thank you and good night!

Please return your folders.

You are welcome to take any handouts you would like. Otherwise, they will just stay in your folder for you for next time.