Selecting Supplemental Texts for Classroom Instruction

> *Selecting materials requires in-depth knowledge: not just of students' backgrounds and learning experiences, but also of their abilities and interests; not just of educational objectives, but of the best practices and range and quality of materials for meeting them; not just of the particular work being considered, but of its place within the medium, genre, epoch, etc., it represents. In short, responsible selection demands not only the experience and education needed to make sound choices but also the ability to defend the choices made. . . . This level of expertise can be found in the English language arts professional.* —NCTE Guidelines for Selection of Materials in English Language Arts Programs

While parents can decide which texts are appropriate for their children, we must select materials to meet course objectives, state or local standards, and our students' needs. Having a formal text selection policy makes clear to all stakeholders how texts are selected and who is responsible for various aspects of the procedure. Having and following a formal text selection policy can make a big difference in your favor should one of your selected texts be challenged.

Authentic Reading Materials

CCSS-aligned instructional materials include authentic reading materials. Authentic reading materials include published works typically encountered by students in daily life, such as magazines, books, or newspapers. Using authentic reading material may mean that some material is emotionally charged or may use language outside of a student's cultural experience.

Central to the heart of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts & Literacy is reading, writing, speaking, and listening grounded in text. CCSS-aligned assessment and instruction require texts to be of quality—that is, worth reading and re-reading, and capable of supporting rigorous questions grounded in evidence from the text. Inherent in the standards is the need to engage students in texts of appropriate complexity for their grade level and to direct student attention to the complexity of the texts. This document guides RJUHSD educators in selecting texts that can support CCSS-aligned instruction and assessment, and provides some resources to find these texts.

Guidance for selection: Quality and Opportunity for CCSS-aligned instruction and assessment

Texts that support CCSS must contain the specific characteristics necessary to measure different standards. According to the standards, literary and informational texts are the two kinds of texts that should be used in CCSS-aligned instruction and assessments.

Literary Texts:

Stories

- For 6-12: includes subgenres of adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, and graphic novels.

Dramas

- For 6-12: includes one-act and multi-act plays, both in written form and on film.

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Poetry

- For 6-12: the subgenres of narrative poems, lyrical poems, free verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads, and epics

Informational Texts:

Literary Nonfiction

- For 6-12: includes the subgenres of exposition, argument, and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism, and historical, scientific, technical, or economic accounts (including digital sources) written for a broad audience.

Guidance for selection: Complexity

When choosing texts for instruction and assessment at any grade level, educators should consider three dimensions of text complexity:

1. Use of *quantitative measures* to assign a text to a grade band.
2. Use of *qualitative measures* to locate a text within a specific grade band.
3. Use *professional judgment* to decide how suited a text is for a specific instructional purpose with a particular set of students.

Several resources are available to help with selecting K-12 passages that are appropriately complex according to these multiple measures and can support CCSS-level questioning and assessment. Note that the resources listed below are in varying stages of development and completion, and that this resource list will be updated periodically.

Student Achievement Partners has developed a group of tools that address the essential qualitative, quantitative, and matching-reader-to-task considerations when selecting texts. As described in the Common Core and Appendix A, all three should be considered when selecting texts.

http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools/text-complexity

Selecting Text Exemplars is supported through corestandards.org. They have provided text samples primarily to exemplify the complexity and quality that the CCSS requires all students in a given grade band to engage with. Additionally, they suggest the breadth of texts students should encounter in the text types required by the Standards. The choices should serve as useful guideposts in helping RJUHSD educators select texts of similar complexity, quality, and range for their classrooms. They expressly do not represent a partial or complete reading list. The link provided concentrates on exemplar suggestions for grades 9-12, only in *Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks.*

Resources for locating potential texts:

District libraries and librarians are also great resources. Educators are encouraged to utilize these important individuals who serve as vital resources in RJUHSD:

Roseville Joint Union High School District

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Megan Blue
District Librarian at GBHS, OHS, and WHS
Granite Bay High School Library Website
Oakmont High School Library Website
Woodcreek High School Library Website
mblue@rjuhsd.us

Zenia Treto
District Librarian at AnHS, RHS, Pathways, and WPHS
Antelope High School Library Website
Roseville High School Library Website
West Park High School Library Website
ztreto@rjuhsd.us

The Text Project provides teacher resources and trade books aligned to CCSS measures of complexity. The site has a section on Common Core and text complexity.

http://textproject.org

The **Library of Congress** has a database for searching classroom materials by CCSS and grade level.

http://www.loc.gov/teachers/

Roseville Joint Union High School District's Mission is to:

- **Ignite** innovative and meaningful learning
- **Inspire** powerful impact in our communities
- **Prepare all students** for multiple paths to success