



## The Thompson TDA Model

# Module 4: Selecting Complex Texts for Analysis

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## Warm-Up: Reflection Journal (page 2)

*How do you select a text for the purpose of analysis?*

*How do you know if it is at the “right” level of complexity?*



# Measures of Complexity

## Quantitative Measures

- Lexile

## Qualitative Measures

- Knowledge Demands
- Meaning or Purpose
- Text Structure
- Language Features
- Visual Supports

## Reader and Task

- Struggling Readers
- Comprehension and/or Analysis





## Quantitative Measures: Reflection Journal (page 3)

*What is the meaning of quantitative measures, and more specifically, what do you think is the meaning of a Lexile measure?*



# Text Complexity Grade Bands and Lexile Ranges

## Lexile Scores

- Surface features of text
  - Word length
  - Word frequency
  - Number of syllables
  - Sentence length

Text Complexity Grade Band	Suggested Lexile Range
Grades 2-3	450L - 790L
Grades 4-5	770L - 980L
Grades 6-8	955L - 1155L



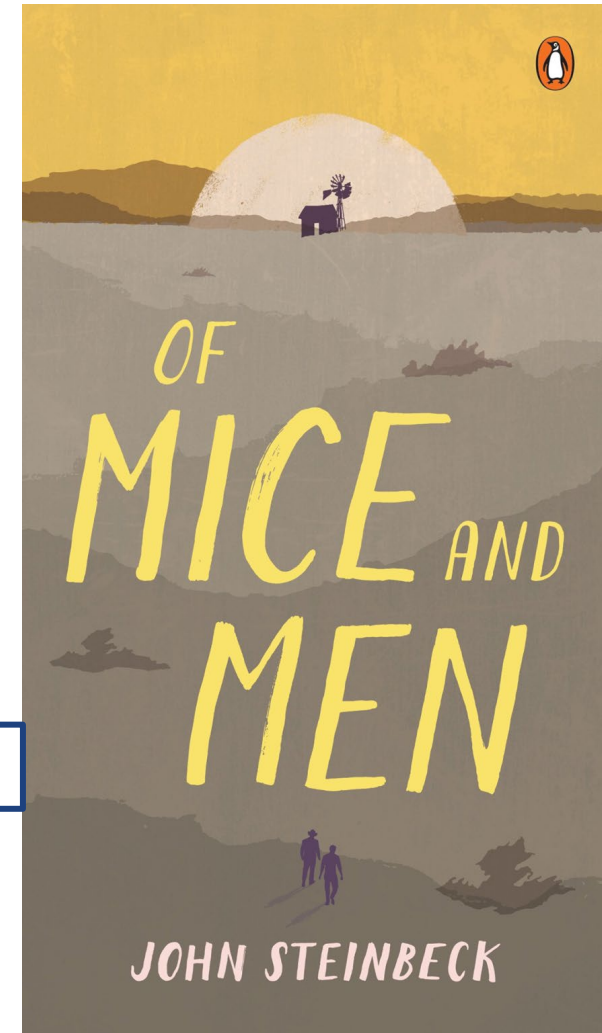
# Lexile Scores Example 1

*Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck

Lexile: 630L

- Prior knowledge: migrant workers during the Great Depression
- Themes related to innocence, race, age, gender, disabilities, money

Text Complexity Grade Band	Suggested Lexile Range
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Grades 4-5	770L - 980L
Grades 6-8	955L - 1155L







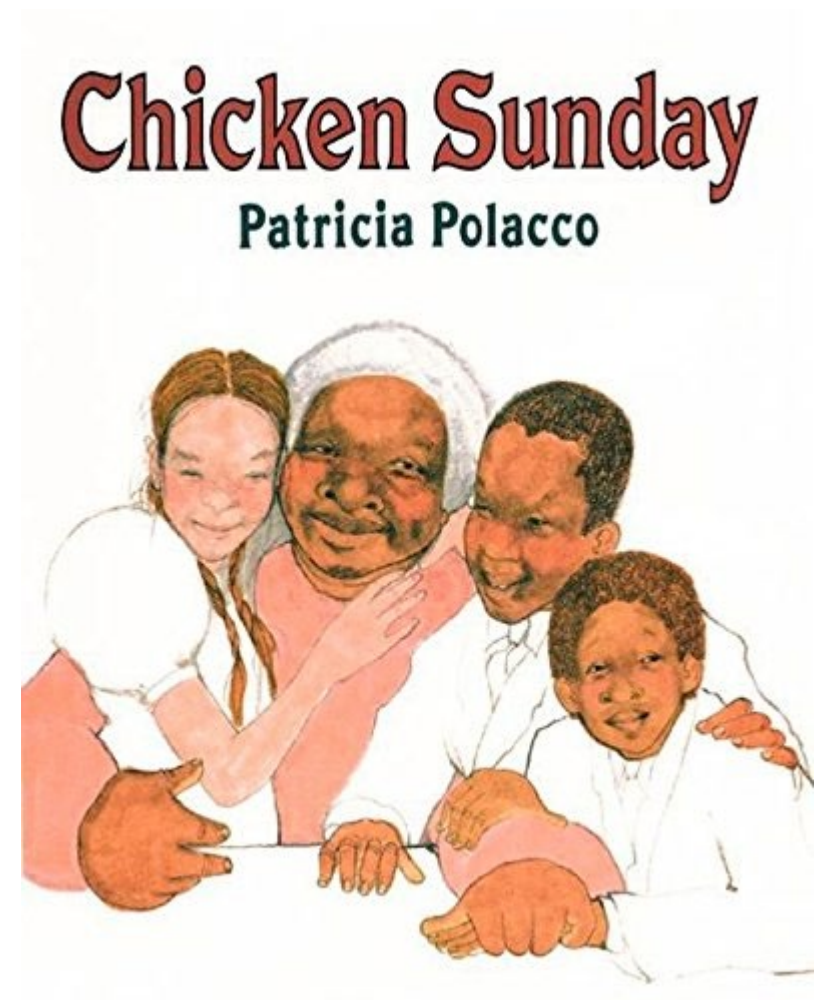
## Lexile Scores Example 2

*Chicken Sunday* by Patricia Polacco

Lexile: 650L

- Themes related to trust, love, friendship, and acceptance

Text Complexity Grade Band	Suggested Lexile Range
Grades 2-3	450L - 790L
Grades 4-5	770L - 980L
Grades 6-8	955L - 1155L





## Qualitative Measure: *Reflection Journal* (page 4)

*What do you think each of the qualitative features mean?*

- *Knowledge demands*
- *Meaning or purpose*
- *Text structure*
- *Language features*
- *Visual supports*





# Qualitative Measures

- [Achieve the Core – text complexity rubric for literature](#)
- [Achieve the Core – text-complexity rubric for informational text](#)
- [PARCC-text complexity analysis worksheet for literary text](#)



## TEXT COMPLEXITY: QUALITATIVE MEASURES RUBRIC LITERARY TEXT



Text Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Text Author: \_\_\_\_\_

MEANING			
High	Middle High	Middle Low	Low
<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple levels/layers of complex meaning	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple levels/layers of meaning	<input type="checkbox"/> Single level/layer of complex meaning	<input type="checkbox"/> Single level/layer of simple meaning
STRUCTURE			
High	Middle High	Middle Low	Low
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Narrative Structure:</b> complex, implicit, and unconventional	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Narrative Structure:</b> some complexities, more implicit than explicit, some unconventional	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Narrative Structure:</b> largely simple structure, more explicit than implicit, largely conventional	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Narrative Structure:</b> simple, explicit, conventional
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Narration:</b> many shifts in point of view	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Narration:</b> occasional shifts in point of view	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Narration:</b> few, if any, shifts in point of view	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Narration:</b> no shifts in point of view
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Order of Events:</b> frequent manipulations of time and sequence (not in chronological order)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Order of Events:</b> several major shifts in time, use of flashback	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Order of Events:</b> occasional use of flashback, no major shifts in time	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Order of Events:</b> chronological
LANGUAGE			
High	Middle High	Middle Low	Low
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Conventionality:</b> heavy use of abstract and/or figurative language or irony	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Conventionality:</b> contains abstract and/or figurative language or irony	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Conventionality:</b> subtle use of figurative language or irony	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Conventionality:</b> little or no use of figurative language or irony
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Clarity:</b> generally unfamiliar, archaic, domain-specific, and/or academic language; dense and complex; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Clarity:</b> somewhat complex language that is occasionally unfamiliar, archaic, domain-specific, or overly academic	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Clarity:</b> largely contemporary, familiar, conversational language that is explicit and literal; rarely unfamiliar, archaic, domain-specific, or overly academic	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Clarity:</b> contemporary, familiar, conversational language that is explicit and literal; easy-to-understand
KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS			
High	Middle High	Middle Low	Low
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Life Experiences:</b> explores multiple complex, sophisticated themes; multiple perspectives presented; experiences portrayed are not fantasy but are distinctly different to the common reader	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Life Experiences:</b> explores multiple themes of varying levels of complexity; experiences portrayed are not fantasy but are uncommon to most readers	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Life Experiences:</b> explores a single complex theme; experiences portrayed are common to many readers or are clearly fantasy	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Life Experiences:</b> explores a single theme; single perspective presented and everyday experiences are portrayed that are common to most readers or experiences are clearly fantasy
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cultural/Literary Knowledge:</b> requires an extensive depth of literary/cultural knowledge; many references/allusions to other texts and/or cultural elements	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cultural/Literary Knowledge:</b> requires moderate levels of cultural/literary knowledge; some references/allusions to other texts and/or cultural elements	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cultural/Literary Knowledge:</b> requires some cultural/literary knowledge; few references/allusions to other texts and/or cultural elements	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cultural/Literary Knowledge:</b> requires only common, everyday cultural/literary knowledge; no references/allusions to other texts and/or cultural elements



# Knowledge Demands



- Life experiences
- Depth of cultural or literary knowledge
- Depth of content or discipline knowledge

Low Complexity	Moderate Complexity	High Complexity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Few assumptions about prior knowledge</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Makes assumptions about readers' prior knowledge</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Subject matter is common or familiar</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Subject matter is uncommon or unfamiliar</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Few, if any, allusions to other texts or ideas</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Many references or allusions to other texts or ideas</li></ul>



# Meaning or Purpose



- Clarity of theme or central point
- Clarity of language used

Low Complexity	Moderate Complexity	High Complexity
•Single level of meaning		•Multiple competing levels of meaning or purpose that are difficult to separate and interpret
•Concrete, explicit language		•Language that is subtle, intricate, and abstract



# Text Structure

- Organization
- Text features

Low Complexity	Moderate Complexity	High Complexity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Simple, well-marked, and conventional structures</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extensive range of ideas, events and/or plotlines</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Events told in chronological order</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Narrative complexities, such as flashbacks, flash-forwards, multiple points of view, and other manipulations of time and sequence</li></ul>



# Language Features



- Vocabulary
- Sentence Structures

Low Complexity	Moderate Complexity		High Complexity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Literal, contemporary, conversational, and familiar vocabulary</li></ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Abstract, figurative language, archaic, unfamiliar, or discipline-specific words</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Simple sentences</li></ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses.</li></ul>



# Visual Supports

- Illustrations and Visual Features (maps, graphs, charts, diagrams)
- Text Layout

Low Complexity	Moderate Complexity	High Complexity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Narrative text: extensive amounts of illustrations or graphics</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Narrative text: minimal amounts of illustrations or graphics</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Informational text: minimal graphics</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Informational text: extensive sophisticated graphics</li></ul>





## Quantitative and Qualitative Measures: Reflection Journal (page 5)

*How do you think educators should consider both the quantitative and qualitative measures of a text to make determinations about the complexity of the text?*



## Eleven by Sandra Cisneros



Eleven

By Sandra Cisneros

What they don't understand about birthdays and what they never tell you is that when you're eleven, you're also ten, and nine, and eight, and seven, and six, and five, and four, and three, and two, and one. And when you wake up on your eleventh birthday you expect to feel eleven, but you don't. You open your eyes and everything's just like yesterday, only it's today. And you don't feel eleven at all. You feel like you're still ten. And you are --underneath the year that makes you eleven.

Like some days you might say something stupid, and that's the part of you that's still ten. Or maybe some days you might need to sit on your mama's lap because you're scared, and that's the part of you that's five. And maybe one day when you're all grown up maybe you will need to cry like if you're three, and that's okay. That's what I tell Mama when she's sad and needs to cry. Maybe she's feeling three.

Because the way you grow old is kind of like an onion or like the rings inside a tree trunk or like my little wooden dolls that fit one inside the other, each year inside the next one. That's how being eleven years old is.

You don't feel eleven. Not right away. It takes a few days, weeks even, sometimes even months before you say Eleven when they ask you. And you don't feel smart eleven, not until you're almost twelve. That's the way it is.

Only today I wish I didn't have only eleven years rattling inside me like pennies in a tin Band-Aid box. Today I wish I was one hundred and two instead of eleven because if I was one hundred and two I'd have known what to say when Mrs. Price put the red sweater on my desk. I would've known how to tell her it wasn't mine instead of just sitting there with that look on my face and nothing coming out of my mouth.



## *Eleven* by Sandra Cisneros

Lexile: 960L

- Themes related to trust, love, friendship, and acceptance

- [Achieve the Core-text complexity rubric for literature](#)
- [Achieve the Core- text-complexity rubric for informational text](#)
- [PARCC-text complexity analysis worksheet for literary text](#)

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## Qualitative Features

<b>Knowledge Demands</b>	Relatively low complexity	Common experiences
<b>Meaning/Purpose</b>	Medium-high complexity	Coming of age theme, actions of a young girl who is struggling to find her voice
<b>Text Structure</b>	Relatively low complexity	Explicit and generally sequential
<b>Language Features</b>	Medium-low complexity	Imagery, similes, and repetition; sentence structure is not always straightforward
<b>Visual Supports</b>	Relatively high complexity	No visual supports are provided



## **Text Selection:** **Reflection Journal (pages 6-7)**

*How did your evaluation of the different qualitative features differ from ours?*

*Why do you think the levels of complexity were the same and/or different?*

*Which grade level(s) would you recommend using this text for text dependent analysis?  
Explain your thinking.*



## Eleven by Sandra Cisneros

Lexile: 960L

**Possible Prompt:** Authors can use characters to reveal a story's theme. Write an essay analyzing how *Rachel's thoughts, actions, and feelings* reveal a *theme about Coming of Age*. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.

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# Reader and Task Considerations

Reader and Task	Note any “outside factors” that teachers should consider with regard to this particular text. Is it a good “match” to the student based on content, ability, interest, and understanding? Are the tasks associated with the text aligned with the purpose behind reading it? What skills should be particularly reinforced when reading this text to help readers when encountering similar texts in the future?	
Content Complexity	What challenges are posed to readers when the content or theme is considered? How can teachers anticipate these challenges and help students approach the content or theme respectfully and in a mature manner?	
Cognitive Capabilities	What challenges are posed to readers who lack the ability to focus their attention? How can teachers anticipate these challenges and help students make the necessary connections among the various details?	
Reading Skills	What challenges are posed to readers who lack visualization or inferential skills? How can teachers anticipate these challenges and help students ask the right questions to improve comprehension?	
Motivation & Engagement	What challenges are posed to readers who lack motivation as readers? How can teachers anticipate these challenges and help students become interested in the content?	
Prior Knowledge	What challenges are posed to readers with regards to assumed background knowledge? How can teachers anticipate these challenges and help students address them without front-loading the reading experience?	
Tasks & Assessment	What challenges are posed to readers when the tasks planned for assessment are considered? How can teachers anticipate these challenges and help students complete the tasks successfully?	



# Text Complexity for Analysis Matters!

1. Texts that are low in complexity leave little for the reader to infer or analyze.
2. Match readers to texts within their zone of proximal development ([Vygotsky, 1978](#)).
3. Preparation for students to be college ready ([ACT, 2006, \*Reading Between the Lines: What the ACT reveals about college readiness in reading\*, pg. 1](#)).



## **Practice Activity- Reflection Journal, pages 8-9**

Examine a short text you use in your class to determine its qualitative complexity:

- *Knowledge Demands*
- *Meaning/Purpose*
- *Text Structure*
- *Language Features*
- *Visual Supports*

What did you learn about the text by evaluating each of the qualitative features?

Is it complex enough for students to use for a TDA?



# For More Information...

Thompson, J. (2019). [Selecting Complex Texts for Text Dependent Analysis \(TDA\).](#)  
Center for Assessment ([www.nciea.org](http://www.nciea.org))

Or

[Pennsylvania Department of Education:  
Text Dependent Analysis \(TDA\) Toolkit](#)



## Selecting Complex Texts for Text Dependent Analysis (TDA)


The purpose of this resource is to assist educators with selecting appropriately complex text for use with a TDA prompt. The text and prompt can be used as part of a close reading lesson or as a classroom-based text dependent analysis assessment. Either way, it is important for educators to recognize that not every text can be used for the purposes of a text dependent analysis prompt and response.

### Quantitative Measures

Educators often think about a Lexile measure when they hear text complexity. Quantitative measures of complexity, including Lexile scores, measure surface features of a text, such as word length, word frequency, number of syllables, and sentence length. Quantitative measures do not provide information about the content or the way in which the ideas are coherent within the text. The table below identifies different grade spans and the Lexile Framework.

Table 1. Text Complexity Grade Bands and Lexile Ranges

Text Complexity Grade Band	Suggested Lexile Range
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Grades 6-8	955 L – 1155 L

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# Going Deeper with Text Dependent Analysis

<b>Introduction:</b>	Introduction to the TDA Professional Learning Series
<b>Module 1:</b>	Text Dependent Analysis: A need for curriculum and instructional shifts
<b>Module 2:</b>	Understanding Text Dependent Analysis
<b>Module 3:</b>	Anatomy of Text Dependent Analysis Prompts
<b>Module 4:</b>	Selecting Complex Texts for Analysis
<b>Module 5:</b>	The Difference Between Inference and Analysis
<b>Module 6:</b>	Purposeful Annotations
<b>Module 7:</b>	Close Reading Questions Leading to Analysis
<b>Module 8:</b>	Analyzing Reading Elements and Text Structures
<b>Module 9:</b>	Collaborative Discussions
<b>Module 10:</b>	Modeling a Text Dependent Analysis Response
<b>Module 11:</b>	The Purpose of Text Dependent Analysis Learning Progressions
<b>Module 12:</b>	Analyzing Text Dependent Analysis Responses
<b>Module 13:</b>	Developing Close Reading Lessons Leading to Analysis
<b>Module 14:</b>	Developing Replacement Units Leading to Analysis
<b>Module 15:</b>	Using the Grades K-8 Deconstructed Standards



# Thank You