Text Dependent Analysis (TDA) Professional Learning Series:

Script for Module 4 - Selecting Complex Texts for Analysis

Slide	Script
1	Welcome to the Text Dependent Analysis Module #4: Selecting Complex Texts for Analysis. Module 4 answers the key question: *How do I select texts complex enough for analysis?* This module is part of a comprehensive series of TDA modules created by the Center for Assessment and Pennsylvania Department of Education. There is an Introduction Module to the TDA Professional Learning Series that explains the purpose, organization, and intended use of the modules and should be watched first, if you have not already done so.
2	As a warm-up to this module, we ask you to consider the following questions: 1) *How do you select a text for the purpose of analysis?* and 2) *How do you know if it is at the "right" level of complexity?* Please pause the video and respond to these questions in your journal (page 2) then discuss with colleagues. After your reflection, resume playing the video.
3	Text dependent analysis prompts can be developed and used for classroom instruction and classroom assessment. However, not every text supports a TDA prompt which allows students to analyze the reading elements or structure. There are three measures that should be examined when selecting text for the purpose of analysis: quantitative complexity, qualitative complexity, and reader and task. Additionally, there are multiple features and considerations that should be reviewed for each of these measures when selecting text for the purpose of analysis.
4	What is the meaning of quantitative measures, and more specifically, what do you think is the meaning of a Lexile measure?

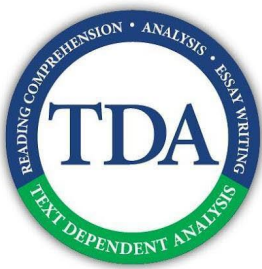|	
	<mark>Please pause the video and respond</mark> to this question in your journal (page 3) then discuss with colleagues. After your reflection, resume playing the video.
5	First, let's start by defining quantitative measures. Lexile scores are one type of quantitative measure, which represents a text's difficulty level. Often Lexile scores are what educators think about when asked about text complexity. Lexile scores measure surface features of a text, such as word length, word frequency, number of syllables, and sentence length. The table on this slide identifies the suggested Lexile ranges for each identified grade band. As you can imagine, students are able to read and comprehend text within this range depending on the topic and type of text used. A lower-level Lexile score means it will be easier to comprehend. For example, a score of 500L is easier for a reader to comprehend than a text with a Lexile measure of 900L.
6	However, because Lexile scores do not provide information about the content or the way in which the ideas are described in the text, they alone do not provide enough information to determine a text's complexity, and its appropriateness for analysis in a specific grade level. Let's look at a couple of examples. If you look at the quantitative measure for John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, you will find that it has a Lexile score of 630L. When referring to the suggested Lexile range for each grade band, you will see that the surface features of the text make it appropriate for students in grades 2-3. However, before you begin changing the texts used in your class, grade level, or in your school, let's consider the content of this text! This text expects students to know something about migrant workers during the Great Depression and deals with themes related to innocence, race, age, gender, disabilities, and money. While the author used simple vocabulary and short sentences which supported the low Lexile score, the subtle ideas expressed in the text extend beyond the appropriateness for students in

	grades 2-3.
7	A second example is the text *Chicken Sunday* by Patricia Polacco. This text has a Lexile score of 650L, and in this case, the themes relate to trust, friendship, and acceptance. Consequently, the Lexile score indicates that it is appropriate for students in grades 2-3 and the themes confirm its appropriateness.
8	We identified that quantitative measures such as Lexile scores are not the only measure that should be considered when determining text complexity. Qualitative measures examine the quality of the text and should also be used to determine the complexity and its appropriateness for use with students in a specific grade level. Qualitative features include knowledge demands, meaning or purpose, text structure, language features, and visual supports. Please pause the video and respond to the question in your journal (page 4) then discuss with colleagues. After your reflection, resume playing the video.
9	Unlike identifying a Lexile score, which is determined through a Lexile Analyzer, the qualitative complexity must be determined by educators making informed judgments based on clear descriptions. There are multiple tools available for educators to use to help make these judgments, some of which are linked on this slide. While these tools have some differences, they generally focus on the same factors. We'll examine each of these factors one at a time.
10	The knowledge demands of a text focus on a readers' life experiences and the depth of their cultural/literary and content/discipline knowledge. Texts which make few assumptions about students' prior knowledge and consequently provide a great deal of background knowledge within the text are considered to be less complex than texts that make many assumptions and do not fill in the background knowledge. Additionally, low complexity texts include subject matter which is common or familiar to most students with few, if any allusions or references to other texts or ideas. On the other hand, highly complex texts include subject matter that is uncommon or unfamiliar to most readers, relying on

	specialized or discipline-specific content, including many references or allusions to other texts or ideas.
11	The meaning or purpose feature of qualitative measures refers to the extent to which the text makes the theme or central point clear, and the clarity of the language used to reveal the theme or central point. Texts with a single level of meaning revealed early in the text, using concrete, explicit language tend to be easier to read than texts with multiple levels of meaning in which the theme is revealed over the entirety of the text, using subtle or abstract language. The more obvious the information is using explicit language, the less complex the text.
12	Text structure refers to the organization of ideas, events, or plotlines. Additionally, text features should support the organizational structure used to reiterate, clarify, or add additional content. Less complex texts include simple, well-marked, and conventional text structures in which events are generally told in chronological order. On the other hand, more complex texts include an extensive range of ideas, events and/or plotlines in which there are narrative complexities, such as flashbacks, flash-forwards, multiple points of view, and other manipulations of time and sequence.
13	The complexity of language features refers to the vocabulary and the sentence structures. Texts that rely on literal, familiar vocabulary, which is contemporary and conversational, and employ the use of simple sentences are easier to read and consequently have low complexity. Texts that rely on figurative, ironic, archaic, or include other forms of unfamiliar language, as well as complex sentence structures are considered to have high complexity.
14	Visual support, as a means of determining a text's complexity, refers to both the illustrations and visual features, such as maps, graphs, charts, and diagrams, as well as the layout of the text. A less complex narrative text would include an extensive amount of illustrations or graphics and a less complex informational text requires minimal graphics for the reader to understand the text. A highly complex text includes minimal, if any, visual support and a highly complex informational text includes sophisticated visual components that are critical for the reader to make meaning of the text.
15	Similar to what was stated about the quantitative features, qualitative

	features alone do not provide enough information to determine a text's complexity, and its appropriateness for analysis for a specific grade level. 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? ==Please pause the video and respond== to the question in your journal (page 5) then discuss with colleagues. After your reflection, resume playing the video.
16	Let's look at an example text to illustrate how these two measures are used in conjunction with one another to determine whether a text could be used for analysis. ==Please pause the video to read over== the excerpt from the short text, *Eleven*, by Sandra Cisneros. You can download the text by going into the module folder.
17	This text has been identified as having a Lexile score of 960L, indicating that it would be appropriate for students in grades 4-8. However, this is a wide range of grades. Without examining the qualitative features of this text, it would be difficult to determine whether it is most appropriate for grade 4 or for grade 8, or somewhere in-between. And most importantly, for our purposes, whether it allows for text dependent analysis. ==Use one of the text complexity rubrics or worksheets from slide 9== to follow along with how we evaluate the qualitative complexity of the text *Eleven.* The text complexity rubric for literature can be found in the module folder.
18	The qualitative features of the text indicate that it is a relatively low to moderately complex text. Let's look at each feature and remember, the judgment of each feature is somewhat subjective. In other words, you may determine that the complexity of each qualitative feature is slightly different; however, the difference should not be significant. The complexity of the knowledge demands is relatively low. The subject matter deals with common experiences of adolescents caught between being a younger and older child. Students in grades 4-8 should have some

| | knowledge with this point of view and experiences.

The complexity of the meaning and purpose is moderately high. While the most prevalent theme that can be drawn from this text is related to the topic *Coming of Age*, the main character, Rachel, is dealing with a trial or hardship as she struggles with the journey of growing up which is repeated throughout the story. In this text, the theme is developed by illustrating that the child inside never leaves. There are additional layers of meaning focused primarily on the actions and words of a young girl who is struggling to find her voice.

The complexity of the text structure is relatively low. The organization of the text is mostly explicit and sequentially relays the events of the classroom situation, but also Rachel's subtle thoughts about her birthday. The short story is conveyed through Rachel's perspective.

The complexity of the language features is medium to low complexity. The author uses imagery (e.g., *"underneath the year that makes you eleven"*), figurative language including similes, such as *like an onion or like the rings inside a tree trunk or like my little wooden dolls that fit one inside the other*, and repetition throughout the text. The sentence structure is not always straightforward.

Finally, the complexity of the visual supports is relatively high as no visual supports are provided. In other words, students are required to rely strictly on the text to make meaning of it. |
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| 19 | 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.

<mark>Please pause the video and respond</mark> to the question in your journal (pages 6-7) then discuss with colleagues. After your reflection, resume playing the video. |
| 20 | While this text could potentially be used in grades 4-5, because of the |

	complexity of some of the qualitative features it may be better suited for students in grades 6-8. Notice that the Lexile score of 960L is at the lower end of the suggested Lexile range for grades 6-8, consequently, it is probably most appropriate for students in grade 6. The other question is whether the text is complex enough for students to analyze. This, of course, depends on which reading elements are predominant enough for students to analyze. Based on the complexity of the text, students should be able to analyze how Rachel's thoughts, actions, and feelings reveal a theme related to *Coming of Age*, or to analyze how the author's word choice, including figurative language and imagery, reveal Rachel's personality. If we think back to the considerations for creating a prompt identified in Module 3 (time of year, grade level of students, and opportunities to learn and practice) the teacher can determine whether this text and a corresponding TDA prompt should be scaffolded, used as a classroom instructional prompt or a classroom assessment prompt.
21	A final measure of complexity requires teachers to consider what their students bring to the text as readers, as well as the task that they are expecting students to be able to do with the text. The more complex the text and task, the more supports and scaffolds students will need, at least initially. In other words, selecting a text that is highly complex and using it with a complex task such as a TDA, may be overwhelming as they may struggle with comprehending the text, understanding the meaning of the reading elements using evidence from the complex text, as well as analyzing the reading elements. Subsequently, it is necessary to consider the "Goldilocks' Principle" by selecting a text that is not too hard, not too easy, but just right for the task of analysis. Additionally, it is important to remember that all students, even struggling readers, can analyze text and demonstrate the underlying components of text dependent analysis. The key is to select a text that is complex enough

	for analysis, even if it is a below grade-level text. Providing access and opportunity for all students to learn, practice, and demonstrate analysis of grade appropriate reading elements through close reading lessons with scaffolds and supports, will allow students to be successful. For example, the text, *Eleven*, was identified as appropriate for students in grade 6. However, a struggling 7th or 8th grade student would be able to access the text, and with the appropriate instruction, successfully analyze the characters and theme.
22	In conclusion, text complexity for analysis matters! 1) Texts that are low in complexity leave little for the reader to infer due to the explicit nature of the information, and consequently students are unable to analyze the text. 2) Matching readers to texts within their zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) provides opportunities for students to think and reason at the deepest levels and to gain knowledge of the world around them. 3) Teaching students to read and comprehend complex texts prepares students to be college and career ready (ACT, 2006, *Reading Between the Lines: What the ACT reveals about college readiness in reading,* page 1).
23	We believe that it is essential to take a few minutes to reflect upon what you just heard, organize it in your own mind, and to apply it to your professional practice. Pause to reflect and respond to the following questions in your reflection journal (pages 8-9): Examine a short text you use in your class to determine its qualitative complexity. 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?
24	If you are interested in further information about the content of this module, see the resource, *Selecting Complex Texts for Analysis*, in the module folder.
25	This module answered the key question: *How do I select texts complex enough for analysis?* This module is part of a comprehensive series of TDA modules created to help you go deeper and extend your learning about text dependent analysis.

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| 26 | Thank you for taking the time to engage in Module 4. |