

Professional Development Monthly Advisor and Planner (PD MAP)

Theme: Understanding Text Complexity

May 2014

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Welcome to the May Professional Development MAP!

Spring signals a change of season from the harsh, cold winter to the warm summer. A recent change for the AEFLA grant is the name change of the sponsoring federal office from OVAE – the Office of Vocational and Adult Education – to OCTAE – the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education. Last April, OVAE, now OCTAE, released the *College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education*. This PD MAP focuses on one of the key components of those standards – text complexity.

ABE/ASE teachers who attended the Making the Shifts trainings this March were trained to understand and use the three-part Standards Model of Text Complexity. This PD MAP contains resources that support that training so that teachers can extend and deepen their knowledge of the concept and implementation of text complexity in instruction.

Because the K-12 system has a 5-year head start on using the Common Core State Standards, most of the resources on text complexity originate from leaders and researchers in the public school context. Although the texts to which they apply the principles and practices of text complexity might not be appropriate for our adult learners, the basic understandings and lessons learned from implementation are. Our learning can be informed by their experience and reflection.

The resources are organized as follows: general resources that overview and explain the concept of text complexity, resources for each of the three components of the Standards Model of Text Complexity, and resources for teachers to use with learners during instruction.



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Self-Study:

[About Text Complexity](#)

College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education

Pimentel, S., MPR Associates, Inc., for the US Dept. of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 2013

<http://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/CCRStandardsAdultEd.pdf>

CCR Anchor Standard #10 reads: *Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently*. Text complexity is addressed in the CCRS on page 9, where the three key shifts in the standards for English Language Arts and Literacy are described and in Appendix D where the three-part Standards Model of Text Complexity is explained. A chart with six quantitative measures and their score ranges associated with CCR bands (grade levels) is found on page 21.

A Beginner's Guide to Text Complexity

AUSSIE, NYC DOE Secondary Literacy Pilot

<http://www.mecdc.org/Downloads/BeginnerGuideTextComplexity.pdf>

This brief document includes the definition of text complexity from the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and explains the three-part Standards Model for Text Complexity. Two examples are included showing how the qualitative measures of text complexity were assessed for a literary text and an informational text.

Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards

Common Core State Standards, 2010

http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_A.pdf

This appendix to the CCSS explains why text complexity matters, explains the necessity for increasing the complexity of texts and tasks in order to prepare learners for college / careers / citizenship, describes the recent decline in complexity of texts used in public schooling, describes the three-part Standards Model of Text Complexity, and provides three examples of texts (memoir, fiction, and informational) with annotations regarding their complexity.

Aspects of Text Complexity Project: Why Complex Text Matters

Liben, D., Palm Beach Schools, 2007

<http://www.palmbeachschools.org/sc/documents/LiteracyConveningWhyTextComplexityMatters.pdf>

This article explains the decline of text complexity in US school materials and the consequences that impact American students today. Topics explored are: reading demands in K-12, reading demands in college, reading pedagogy of past decades and reading instruction reform.

Staircase of Text Complexity – Common Core in ELA/Literacy, Shift 3

<http://www.engageny.org/resource/common-core-in-ela-literacy-shift-3-staircase-of-complexity>

Engage NY

This video shows an interview with David Coleman, contributing author to the CCSS, and John B. King, Jr., NY State commissioner of Education. They discuss text complexity and its implication for instruction in K-12 and beyond. The discussants share challenges from teachers' perspectives and explain the benefits to all learners of wrestling with complex texts.

Text Complexity

Fisher, D., and Frey, N., Principal Leadership, January 2012

<http://kckliteracycurriculum.wikispaces.com/file/view/Doug%20Fisher%20on%20Text%20Complexity%20.pdf/396719956/Doug%20Fisher%20on%20Text%20Complexity%20.pdf>

The authors, two experts on text complexity, explain the new definition of text complexity and guide teachers in what to teach related to text complexity. The authors explain the role of three key factors in text complexity – background knowledge, vocabulary, and text structures and coherence.

Navigating Text Complexity

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

http://www.ccsso.org/Navigating_Text_Complexity/Showroom_Models.html

This excellent website is a wealth of information, videos, and tools for calculating text complexity. The main page, "Showroom Models," contains completed "roadmaps" for sample literary and informational texts at six grade bands, K-1 through 11-12. The roadmap template can be downloaded as an interactive PDF or Word doc for teachers to use with texts they have chosen. The main page also includes sample sets of texts on a common theme for each grade band. The page "Take the Bridge to Instruction" contains models of text-dependent questions, a page of text-dependent question types and a text-dependent question worksheet. The "Accelerate with Additional Resources" page has over a dozen additional resources on text complexity.

KCK Literacy Curriculum – Text Complexity

<http://kckliteracycurriculum.wikispaces.com/Text+Complexity+Resources>

This site is a rich repository of tools and research articles about text complexity.

Achieve the Core: Text Complexity Collection

Student Achievement Partners

<http://www.achievethecore.org/page/642/text-complexity-collection>

This site contains numerous links to quantitative tools, qualitative tools, and several research articles on text complexity.

Resources for Quantitative Measures

Below are websites into which teachers can upload texts to obtain a quantitative measure of text complexity. Each site produces its own score, score range, or set of scores for various components of the given text. These sites are free, though some require teachers to register with a log-in and password.

The Lexile Framework® MetaMetrix

<http://www.lexile.com/analyzer/>

TextEvaluator™ ETS®

<https://texteval-pilot.ets.org/TextEvaluator/>

Reading Maturity Metric Pearson Knowledge Technologies

<http://www.readingmaturity.com> (Beta site)

Coh-Metrix Easability Tool

University of Memphis (Beta site) (For Flesch-Kincaid measure)

<http://141.225.42.101/cohmetrixgates/Home.aspx?Login=1>

ATOS Analyzer Renaissance Learning

<http://www.renaissance.com/products/accelerated-reader/atos-analyzer>

Degrees of Reading Power® Questar

<http://itemwriting.questarai.com/getdrp/>

Resources for Qualitative Measures**Gradients in Complexity: Text Complexity Rubric for Informational Texts****Gradients in Complexity: Text Complexity Rubric for Literary Texts**

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, 2011

http://www.ccebos.org/gpa_tools/Tool11_Gradients_in_Complexity_Informational.pdf

http://www.ccebos.org/gpa_tools/Tool12_Gradients_in_Complexity_Literary.pdf

This is one pair of rubrics that teachers can use to assess the qualitative measures of text complexity of a chosen text. These rubrics were used by participants in the CDE/AEFL Making the Shifts English Language Arts training in 2014.

Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubrics for Informational and Literary Texts

ASCD webinar handout #3, 2012

http://groups.ascd.org/resource/documents/122463-CCSS_Text_Complexity_webinar_handout_3.pdf

Originally from www.achievethecore.org

This site contains another pair of rubrics that teachers can use to assess the qualitative measures of text complexity of a chosen text.

Resources for Reader and Task Considerations

Questions for Professional Reflection on Reader and Task Considerations

<http://www.education.nh.gov/spotlight/ccss/documents/reader-task-considerations.pdf> or
http://education.ky.gov/curriculum/lit/Documents/CCS_Text_Complexity_Reader_Task_Considerations.pdf

This two-page brief provides questions teachers can use to reflect on reader considerations such as cognitive capabilities, reading skills, motivation, prior knowledge/experience, content and theme, and complexity of associated tasks.

Classroom Resources

Seven Actions That Teachers Can Take Right Now: Text Complexity

Hiebert, E., TEXT Project & the University of California, Santa Cruz, 2000-2014

<http://textproject.org/professional-development/text-matters/7-actions-that-teachers-can-take-right-now-text-complexity>

This article highlights seven actions teachers can take to develop learners' ability to read complex text independently and proficiently. For adult education teachers, the article's value lies in noting the seven headings and skimming the basic explanatory text (the examples all focus on K-5 instruction).

Up Front

The New York Times & Scholastic magazine, (low-cost subscription required)

<http://upfront.scholastic.com/>

This nonfiction magazine for classroom use arrives biweekly in hard copy. Also included are reproducible worksheets and sometimes maps or posters. For 10 or more subscriptions it includes online access, an extra desk copy, and a teacher's guide. Articles in the hard copy are written at the 9-10 grade reading level, but online, a reader can adjust each article either down to a 8-9 or up to a 11-12 reading level. This allows a greater number of students to access the same content, at individually appropriate levels, to support class discussions.

NEWSLA

<http://www.newsela.com>

This site contains current events articles and discussion questions arranged by topic (war & peace, science, money, law, health, kids, and arts). With a simple click, every article's Lexile can be selected for a lower or higher grade level band. The site has an archive of more than 500 non-fiction articles, organized by category and reading standard. Subscribers also receive daily "articles of the day" emails.

Understanding Primary and Secondary Sources

The Lexile® Framework for Reading

<http://www.lexile.com/primary-sources/>

This site focuses on primary sources applicable to the GED 2014 Social Studies test. Links in the left panel go to articles about teaching with primary and secondary sources. The link in the middle panel provides a list of two dozen primary sources with their Lexile measures, which gives teachers a start on determining text complexity.

Collaboration with Colleagues:

Locally facilitated staff discussion

To conduct a 60-90 minute staff discussion of any articles in the Self-Study strand, use the following resource:

Guidelines for Facilitating Discussion Groups

<http://www.calpro-online.org/pubs/DiscussionGuidelineforResearchPublications.pdf>

Data: Helping Students Interpret Numeric Information

World Education **Course dates: May 5 – June 6, 2014** (fee applies)

To Register: <http://elearningpd.worlded.org/data/>

Course overview and schedule: <http://elearningpd.worlded.org/files/2013/12/DataOverJun14.pdf>

The online, facilitated course looks at some common uses (and misuses) of data. Participants learn about the measures of central tendency, graphs, and probability. Through the course readings, activities, and discussions, participants review basic concepts and explore strategies for introducing and teaching these concepts to adult students. Participants determine the math skills necessary for adult students to describe, analyze, and represent data in various formats; adapt sample activities for use with adult students; and evaluate results and plan for improvements.

Transitioning to the CCSS: Making Your Efforts Effective Through a Focus on Text Complexity Demands

Liben, D., ASCD, Student Achievement Partners Archived webinar (1 hour)

Recorded May 9, 2012,

<http://www.ascd.org/professional-development/webinars/liben-webinar.aspx>

This webinar looks at various aspects of text complexity. Topics covered include: the rationale for a focus on text complexity, features of complex text, complexity vs difficulty, vocabulary and syntax, and close reading. The website contains handouts and webinar slides to accompany the webinar. The webinar could be viewed together by an adult education instructional staff, followed by discussion.

What is Text Complexity?

Grisham, D., DeVere Wolsey, T., and Hiebert, E., Text Project: Teacher Development Series, Instructor Edition, Module 1 of 5, 2011

<http://textproject.org/assets/tds/text-complexity-and-the-ccss/module-1/Module%201-What%20is%20Text%20Complexity-Instructor.pdf>

This professional development module contains readings, reflections, analysis, and application activities for use by a teaching staff. This module serves as the facilitator guide, with step-by-step instructions on delivering the module to teachers.

Courses for Credit:**EDU 131 Introduction to Adult Education**

Front Range Community College, www.frontrange.edu, start date May 31, 2014

EDU 132 Planning, Organizing, and Delivering Adult Education Instruction

Colorado Mountain College, www.coloradomtn.edu, start date May 27, 2014

Front Range Community College, www.frontrange.edu, start date June 3, 2014

Red Rocks Community College, www.rrcc.edu, start date July 26, 2014

EDU 133 Adult Basic Education (ABE) Adult Secondary Education (ASE/GED)

Colorado Mountain College, www.coloradomtn.edu, start date May 27, 2014

EDU 134 Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) to Adult Learners

Colorado Mountain College, www.coloradomtn.edu, start date July 14, 2014

EDAE 590-801 Teaching English as a Second Language to Adult Learners

Colorado State University, www.colostate.edu, start date June 16, 2014

Reading Between the Lines: What the ACT Reveals about College Readiness in Reading

ACT, 2006

<http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/reports/reading.html> (Full Report)

http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/reading_summary.pdf (Executive Summary)

This is the report that initially alerted the nation to the hazardous decline in reading skills among America’s high school graduates, based on the results of 2005 ACT test-takers. The report explores the data from the ACT test showing that almost half of US high school graduates are not prepared for college-level reading. This report identified a student’s ability to read and comprehend complex texts as the key indicator of college readiness.

CDE/AEFL Professional Development Hours

All professional development options listed on this PD MAP earn CDE/AEFL PD Hours as described in the *Guide to Professional Development Reporting* at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/GuidetoPDReporting10-13.pdf>

For annual AEFLA reporting, teachers completing Self-Study or Collaboration with Colleagues options simply confer with their program director and record the number of PD Hours earned on their *Teacher’s Annual Professional Development Activity Record*. Teachers completing workshops, training, or courses for credit receive certificates with PD Hours or transcripts.

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/cdeadult/download/pdf/annualpdactivityrecordfy09v3.pdf>

The PD options listed under the Self-Study strand are not acceptable for the Portfolio training hours or for renewing an Authorization in Adult Basic Education. <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/LIAIndex.htm>

Follow-up to This Month’s Professional Development

The CDE/AEFL office is hosting two 1-hour discussions on Thursday, May 22, 3:00 - 4:00pm and Friday, May 23, 9:00 - 10:00am to follow-up with teachers and directors who complete any of the PD options listed in this month’s PD MAP. The conference call allows adult educators across the state to connect with each other to ask and answer questions about this month’s theme of *Understanding Text Complexity*, to share successful strategies and ask for advice regarding challenges. Teachers who participate in the conference call earn 1 additional PD Hour. Please register online by Tuesday, May 20 for one of the two discussions at <http://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?formkey=dFlnem5sQUlaVHU3UTNsajNpWVN6eHc6MA>

PD Advisory Group Mission Statement

To create an integrated, accessible, and flexible system of professional development for adult education teachers in Colorado.

Text Complexity is:

“The inherent difficulty of reading and comprehending a text combined with consideration of reader and task variables: in the Standards, a three-part assessment of text difficulty that pairs qualitative and quantitative measures with reader-task considerations.”

Common Core State Standards, Appendix A, 2010

June 2014 PD Monthly Advisor & Planner

Theme: Workplace Readiness - Integrating Soft Skills in Instruction

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