

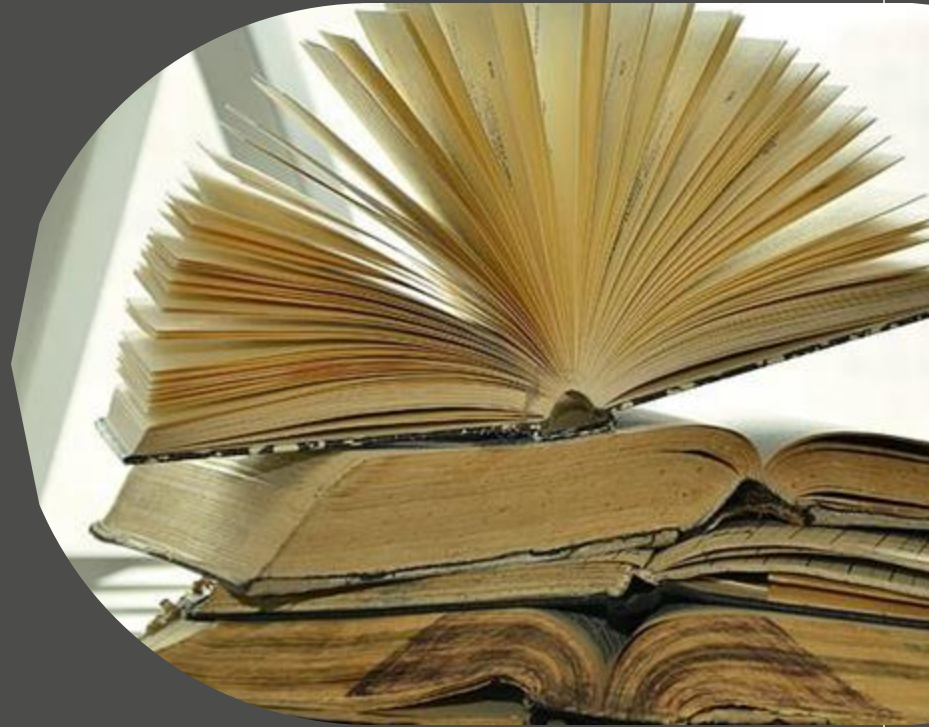
ACCESSING COMPLEX TEXTS IN GRADES 6-12



Link to slides



<https://bit.ly/2024ComplexTexts>



Ohio Literacy Academy
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A NOTE ABOUT MTSS

TIER 1: UNIVERSAL

All students receive engaging, evidence-based classroom instruction that includes differentiation and explicit instruction through the use of high-quality instructional materials. Students' needs are gauged through relevant assessments, and data is used to inform instruction.

TIER 2: SUPPLEMENTAL

In addition to tier 1 instruction, students whose assessments reveal a need for additional support should receive supplemental instruction in the form of evidence-based, small group interventions that target their specific area of need. Their progress is monitored to determine instructional and material effectiveness.

TIER 3: INTENSIVE

Students who are not making progress despite receiving effective tier 1 instruction and targeted tier 2 interventions may need intensive instruction to target specific skill deficits. Interventions can be intensified by increasing the time spent in intervention, decreasing the intervention group size, choosing more appropriate materials, etc.

SESSION AGENDA

01

**UNDERSTANDING WHY WE
USE SHOULD USE COMPLEX
TEXTS**

02

**UNDERSTANDING WHAT
MAKES A TEXT COMPLEX**

03

**ANTICIPATING BARRIERS
TO ACCESS AND PLANNING
ACCORDINGLY**

04

**USING BEFORE, DURING,
AND AFTER READING
STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE
ACCESS**

05

**BEFORE, DURING, AND
AFTER READING
STRATEGIES IN ACTION**

06

WORKSHOP

UNDERSTANDING WHY WE SHOULD USE COMPLEX TEXTS

01

Guiding Question:

1. Why should we use complex texts?



HOW AND HOW NOT TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE NEW TESTS

Timothy Shanahan

The curriculum director regarded me with skeptical abhorrence. She herself had invited me into the school district with the idea that I would help raise reading achievement—or, more exactly, she thought that I would support what she'd been doing to raise reading scores, and she hoped that my approval would convince teachers to cooperate with her.

The problem was that I didn't know the script. I thought she was asking for my professional opinion, but she wanted affirmation. She laid out her logical test-score improvement plan and I respectfully disagreed. I wasn't trying to be difficult, but her path to test-score nirvana wasn't sensible, and I told her as

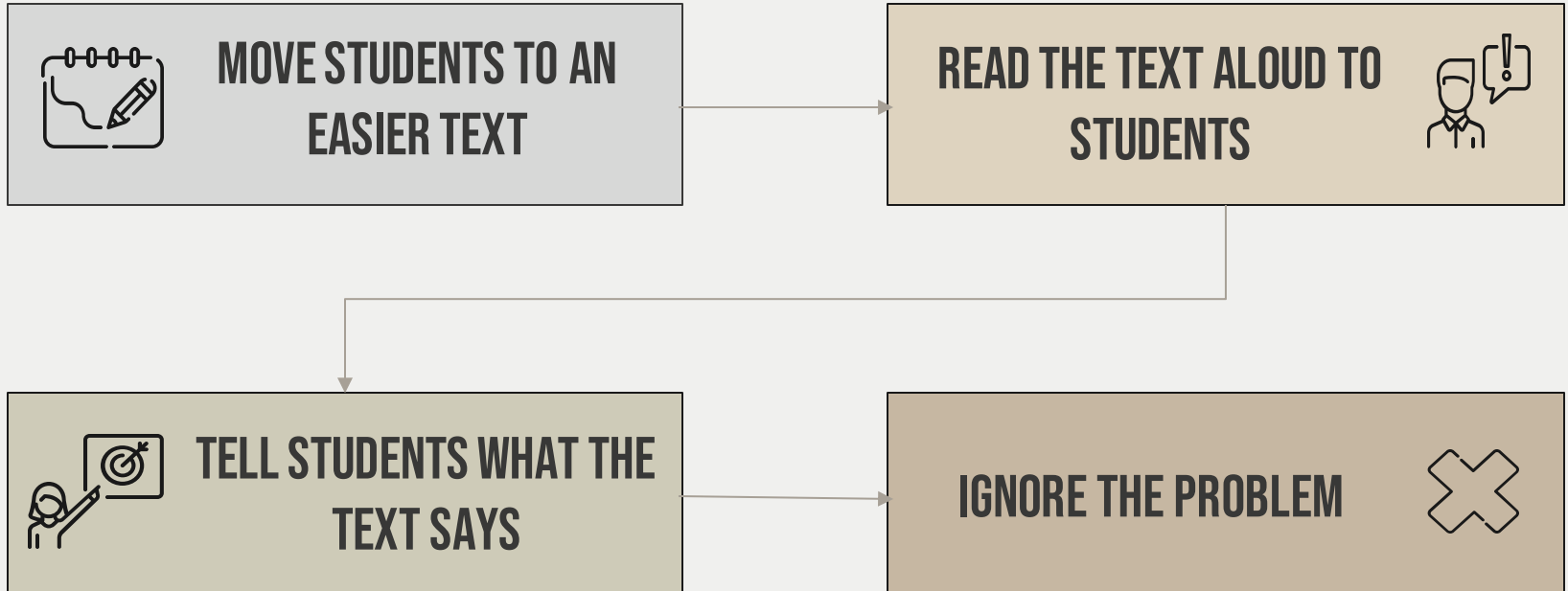
A perfectly reasonable way to use test data is to identify which students are struggling with reading, then provide them with additional instruction of some kind. But data-driven reforms often encourage educators to go further than this. They champion the idea that item analysis of standardized tests will allow teachers to know not only who may be having trouble but also which skills these students lack.

That would mean educators could use test data to figure out which standards are being learned and which are not. Then, teachers could give kids specific instruction in their areas of weakness—making them better readers and improving their test scores to boot.

HOW AND HOW NOT TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE NEW TESTS

- Read the excerpt.
- Annotations are encouraged.
- Mark (underline, highlight, star) a **golden line** (a line that stands out to you for any reason).
- Find a partner and read your golden line and explain why you chose it.

FOUR COMMON CLASSROOM RESPONSES TO TEXT COMPLEXITY



SHOULD WE MOVE TO AN EASIER TEXT IF STUDENTS ARE STRUGGLING?

Recent research indicates that students actually learn more from **reading texts that are considered too difficult for them**—in other words, those with more than a handful of words and concepts a student doesn't understand. What struggling students need is **guidance from a teacher** in how to make sense of texts designed for kids at their respective grade levels—the kinds of texts those kids may otherwise see only on standardized tests, when they have to grapple with them on their own.

Shanahan, 2018

SHOULD WE MOVE TO AN EASIER TEXT IF STUDENTS ARE STRUGGLING?

"Giving children easier texts when they're weaker readers serves to deny them the very language and information they need to catch up and move on."

- Marilyn Jager Adams

THE BRAIN GROWS THROUGH SAFE CHALLENGE AND STRETCH.

Hammond, 2015



UNDERSTANDING WHAT MAKES A TEXT COMPLEX

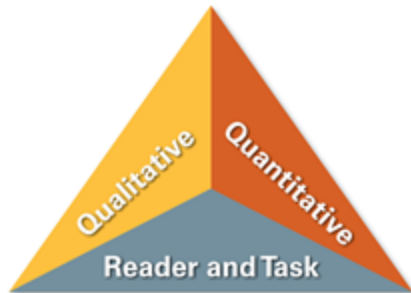
02

Guiding Questions:

1. What makes this text complex?



TEXT COMPLEXITY



Qualitative evaluation of the text:

Levels of meaning, structure, language conventionality and clarity, and knowledge demands

Quantitative evaluation of the text:

Readability measures and other scores of text complexity

Matching reader to text and task: Reader variables (such as motivation, knowledge, and experiences) and task variables (such as purpose and the complexity generated by the task assigned and the questions posed)

LITERARY TEXTS TEND TO BE MORE COMPLEX IF THEY HAVE...

- Multiple layers of meaning
- Subtle themes subject to interpretation
- Several narrators, speakers, or points of view
- Unfamiliar or archaic vocabulary
- Varied sentence structure
- No predictable pattern
- Numerous shifts in time and place
- Characters using ambiguous, subtle, or ironic language
- Reliance on background knowledge of literary genres
- Many unexplained allusions
- Reliance on knowledge of cultural experiences and situations unfamiliar to most 21st-century children or young adults

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS TEND TO BE MORE COMPLEX IF THEY HAVE...

- Several abstract ideas and concepts
- Complicated connections among ideas, processes, or events
- Several organizing structures (e.g., sequential, cause and effect, problem and solution)
- Reasoning hard to follow due to dense, ambiguous, or inconsistent ideas
- Illustrations and other graphics containing essential information
- Dense and academic vocabulary
- Many compound-complex sentences
- Many references to other texts or ideas
- Reliance on knowledge of historical, scientific, technical, or artistic content unfamiliar to most 21st century children or young adults

ANTICIPATING BARRIERS TO ACCESS AND PLANNING ACCORDINGLY

03



Guiding Question:

1. What specifically will make this text difficult for my students?

INSTRUCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON TEACHING & LEARNING

Two very different questions:

1. What is it about this student that makes the student unable to learn?
2. What is it about this instruction that makes the student unable to learn?

Four score and seven years ago our forefathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.

Discussion:

What would your students need to access this text?

THE MANY STRANDS THAT ARE WOVEN INTO SKILLED READING

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE
(facts, concepts, etc.)

VOCABULARY
(breadth, precision, links, etc.)

LANGUAGE STRUCTURES
(syntax, semantics, etc.)

VERBAL REASONING
(inference, metaphor, etc.)

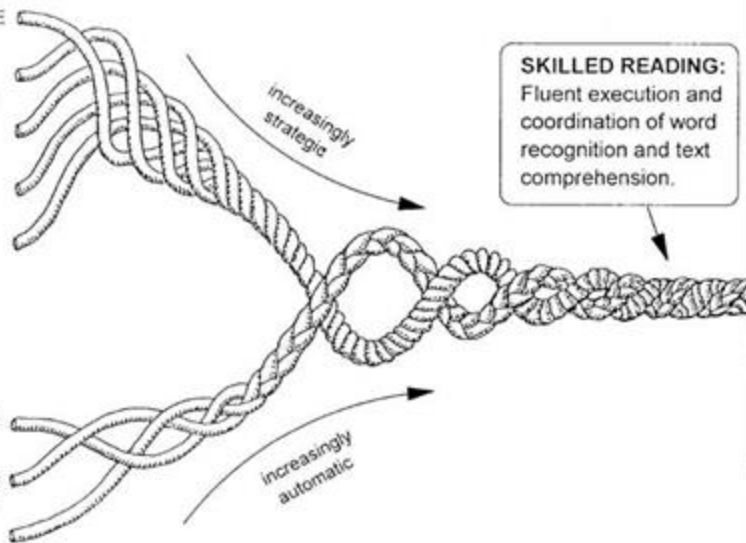
LITERACY KNOWLEDGE
(print concepts, genres, etc.)

WORD RECOGNITION

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS
(syllables, phonemes, etc.)

DECODING (alphabetic principle,
spelling-sound correspondences)

SIGHT RECOGNITION
(of familiar words)



Four score and seven years ago our forefathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.

ELA II RELEASED TEST PASSAGES- SPRING 2019

Passage 1: 1941 State of the Union Address ("Four Freedoms")

by Franklin D. Roosevelt

1 Just as our national policy in internal affairs has been based upon a decent respect for the rights and the dignity of all our fellow men within our gates, so our national policy in foreign affairs has been based on a decent respect for the rights and dignity of all nations, large and small. And the justice of morality must and will win in the end.

2 Our national policy is this:

3 First, by an impressive expression of the public will and without regard to partisanship, we are committed to all-inclusive national defense.

4 Second, by an impressive expression of the public will and without regard to partisanship, we are committed to full support of all those resolute peoples, everywhere, who are resisting aggression and are thereby keeping war away from our Hemisphere. By this support, we express our determination that the democratic cause shall prevail; and we strengthen the defense and the security of our own nation.

5 Third, by an impressive expression of the public will and without regard to partisanship, we are committed to the proposition that principles of morality and considerations for our own security will never permit us to acquiesce in a peace dictated by aggressors and sponsored by appeasers. We know that enduring peace cannot be bought at the cost of other people's freedom.

Passage 2: Remarks upon Signing the Civil Rights Bill

by Lyndon B. Johnson

9 My fellow Americans:

10 I am about to sign into law the Civil Rights Act of 1964. I want to take this occasion to talk to you about what that law means to every American.

11 One hundred and eighty-eight years ago this week a small band of valiant men began a long struggle for freedom. They pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor not only to found a nation, but to forge an ideal of freedom—not only for political independence, but for personal liberty—not only to eliminate foreign rule, but to establish the rule of justice in the affairs of men.

12 That struggle was a turning point in our history. Today in far corners of distant continents, the ideals of those American patriots still shape the struggles of men who hunger for freedom.

13 This is a proud triumph. Yet those who founded our country knew that freedom would be secure only if each generation fought to renew and enlarge its meaning. From the minutemen at Concord to the soldiers in Viet-Nam, each generation has been equal to that trust.

- 2 historical passages
- Limited background information provided

ELA II RELEASED TEST QUESTION- SPRING 2019

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

Introduction of a third text!

Read these sentences from President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, delivered in November 1863.

Four score and seven years ago, our forefathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.

Which of Johnson's statements in Passage 2 echoes the theme in the above sentences?

- (A) "I am about to sign into law the Civil Rights Act of 1964." (paragraph 10)
- (B) "One hundred and eighty-eight years ago this week a small band of valiant men began a long struggle for freedom." (paragraph 11)
- (C) "Today in far corners of distant continents, the ideals of those American patriots still shape the struggles of men who hunger for freedom." (paragraph 12)
- (D) "Now our generation of Americans has been called on to continue the unending search for justice within our own borders." (paragraph 14)

LITERARY TEXTS TEND TO BE MORE COMPLEX IF THEY HAVE...

- Multiple layers of meaning
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From *The Odyssey*. BOOK ONE: A
GODDESS INTERVENES (Fitzgerald translation)

Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story
of that man skilled in all ways of contending,
the wanderer, harried for years on end,
after he plundered the stronghold
on the proud height of Troy.

He saw the townlands
and learned the minds of many distant men,
and weathered many bitter nights and days
in his deep heart at sea, while he fought only
to save his life, to bring his shipmates home.
But not by will nor valor could he save them,
for their own recklessness destroyed them all—



USING BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER READING STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ACCESS

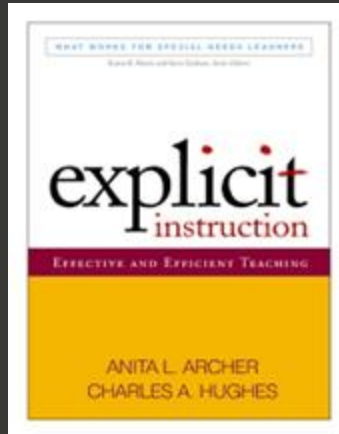
04

Guiding Questions:

1. How can I tailor my instruction to make this text more accessible to my students?
2. How can I increase opportunities for my students to engage with the text and one another?



A FEW IMPORTANT NOTES....



All of the before, during, and after strategies that you use should be explicitly taught and modeled.

Directions:

- Look over the handout titled “Elements of Explicit Instruction.”
- Identify and mark an area of strength and an area for growth or an area of interest.
- Talk to a partner about the area of interest/area for growth.

- My area of interest:

9. Require FREQUENT RESPONSES.

| Oral responses | Oral responses | Action responses |
|--|--|--|
| Choral responses Partner responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think–Pair–Share • Think and Write–Pair and Write–Share • Pause procedure • Study–Tell–Help–Check | Individual oral responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners First • Question First • Whip Around or Pass | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touching/pointing • Acting out • Gestures and facial expressions • Hand signals |
| | Written responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response slates • Response cards | Alternative passage-reading procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Echo reading • Choral reading • Cloze reading • Augmented silent reading • Partner reading |
| Team responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbered Heads | | |

BEFORE READING STRATEGIES

Before reading strategies are **any instructional strategy** that teachers implement prior to reading a complex text that

- activates prior knowledge or builds background knowledge
- establishes a purpose or goals for reading
- examines the text's structure
- preteaches vocabulary
- addresses necessary sentence level instruction

Examples of before reading strategies:

KWL chart

Anticipation guide

Sentence chunking

Frustration model (vocabulary)

Anita Archer's explicit vocabulary routine

Quickwrite about topic

Gallery Walk about topic

Discussions about topic (turn & talk, trade & respond, spiderweb, snowball)

SENTENCE-LEVEL INSTRUCTION

Our father, dreaming
bitterly of Barbados,
despised and mocked by
his neighbors and ignored
by his sons, held down his
unspeakable factory job,
spread his black gospel in
bars on the weekend, and
drank his rum.

Baldwin, *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone*, p. 18

When structure and syntax may be a barrier...

- Length of sentences
- Number of phrases & clauses
- Sentence types
- Order of words and phrases
- Number of modifiers
- Repetition
- Syntactical devices- antithesis, parallel structure, anaphora, polysyndeton, etc.
- Passive voice
- Cohesive devices

Our father, dreaming
bitterly of Barbados,
despised and mocked by
his neighbors and ignored
by his sons, held down his
unspeakable factory job,
spread his black gospel in
bars on the weekend, and
drank his rum.

**Strategies to help students
access texts with complicated
structure and/or syntax...**

- Chunking
- Questioning
- Unscrambling
- Imitating

CHUNKING

Directions: Break the sentence into seven meaningful chunks. You can use the author's use of punctuation and conjunctions to guide you.

Our father, / dreaming bitterly of Barbados,
despised / and mocked by his neighbors
and ignored / by his sons, held down / his
unspeakable factory job, spread his / black
gospel in bars on the weekend, and drank /
his rum.

QUESTIONING

Our father, dreaming bitterly of Barbados, despised and mocked by his neighbors and ignored by his sons, held down his unspeakable factory job, spread his black gospel in bars on the weekend, and drank his rum.

Directions: Consider the following questions:

- Who is the subject of this sentence?
- Circle all the words that look like verbs
- Which chunks of the sentence describe the father and which chunks of the sentence are actions the father takes?

| Describes the father | Actions the father takes |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| dreaming bitterly of Barbados | held down his unspeakable factory job |
| despised and mocked by his neighbors | spread his black gospel in bars on the weekend |
| ignored by his sons | and drank his rum. |

UNSCRAMBLING

Directions: Place the following chunks in an order that mimics our sentence structure.

Our father, dreaming bitterly of Barbados, despised and mocked by his neighbors and ignored by his sons, held down his unspeakable factory job, spread his black gospel in bars on the weekend, and drank his rum.

- a. wanting desperately to forge a winning season
- b. scheduled practices before the sunrise
- c. our coach
- d. and tormented by the parents
- e. analyzed hours of game day film
- f. misunderstood and disliked by his players
- g. and ignored any complaints that came his way.

ANSWER: C, A, F, D, B, E, G

Killgallon & Killgallon, 2023

IMITATING

Directions: Compose your own sentence that mimics our sentence's structure.

Our father, dreaming bitterly of Barbados, despised and mocked by his neighbors and ignored by his sons, held down his unspeakable factory job, spread his black gospel in bars on the weekend, and drank his rum.

TURN & TALK



KWL chart
Anticipation guide
Frayer model (vocabulary)
Anita Archer's explicit vocabulary routine
Quickwrite about topic
Gallery Walk about topic
Discussions about topic (turn & talk, trade & respond, spiderweb, snowball)

What are some successful before reading strategies that you have used in your classroom?

Which example strategies are you interested in learning more about?

DURING READING STRATEGIES

During reading strategies are **any instructional strategy** that teachers implement while reading a text that helps students to

- make connections
- monitor their own understanding
- develop and answer text-dependent questions
- stay focused on the text

Examples of during reading strategies:

Double-entry journals

Annotation

Jigsaw

Sentence structure analysis

Graphic organizers

Quickwrite about text

Paragraph shrinking

Discussions about text (speed dating, Socratic seminar, conver-stations, fishbowl)

TURN & TALK



Double-entry journals
Annotation
Jigsaw
Sentence structure analysis
Graphic organizers
Quickwrite about text
Paragraph shrinking
Discussions about text (speed dating, Socratic seminar, conver-stations, fishbowl)

What are some successful during reading strategies that you have used in your classroom?

Which example strategies are you interested in learning more about?

AFTER READING STRATEGIES

After reading strategies are **any instructional strategy** that teachers implement after reading a text that provides an opportunity for the student to

- summarize the text
- question the text
- reflect on the text
- discuss the text
- respond to the text

Examples of after reading strategies:

Graphic organizers

Reciprocal teaching

Quickwrite about text

Get the gist

Discussions about text (They Say/ I Say, Think-Pair-Square, Conversation Cafe)

TURN & TALK



Graphic organizers
Reciprocal teaching
Quickwrite about text
Get the gist
Discussions about text (They Say/ I Say, Think-
Pair-Square, Conversation Cafe)

What are some successful after reading strategies that you have used in your classroom?

Which example strategies are you interested in learning more about?

IN EVERY CLASS, EVERYDAY



**READING
COMPLEX TEXTS**



**WRITING ABOUT
COMPLEX TEXTS**



**DISCUSSION
BASED ON
COMPLEX TEXTS**

**SPECIFIC
STRATEGIES FOR
SCAFFOLDING
COMPLEX TEXTS
IN ACTION**

05



GLENWOOD TIGERS- LINDA WOODRING

Linda grew up in rolling hills of Appalachian Ohio. After teaching in Florida and Tennessee, she, along with her family, relocated to Vietnam where she spent 12 years teaching English as a second language in the local community and in international schools. Her latest adventure is in ELA with 8th and 9th grade students at Glenwood High School.



GLENWOOD TIGERS- 8TH GRADE

Glenwood High School is one of Ohio's smallest districts. The thirty students in the 8th grade are split into two sections where they can receive small group and individual attention on a regular basis. A large percentage of the student population faces one or more risk factors. The small numbers and committed teachers make Glenwood a great place to learn.

Ohio's Report Card indicates that 64% of these students tested proficient or higher on their 2023 ELA test.

PLANNING FOR THE LESSON

Anticipated Barriers for “The Myth of Daedalus & Icarus”

- Lexile: 1180
- Character names
- Setting
- Constellations

Backward Planning:

- Summative assessment asked about theme, foreshadowing, protagonist, conflict, and tragedy



THE LESSON

BEFORE READING



- Quickwrite
- Character names
- Constellations
- Map
- Literary terms

DURING READING



- Annotations (teacher)
- Annotations (student)

AFTER READING



- Snowball discussion
- Whole class discussion
- Quiz

Mrs. Woodring's 8th Grade

WORKSHOP 06



WORKSHOP TIME

You can use this time to explore the before, during, and after strategies mentioned on slides 19, 21, & 23 that you are unfamiliar with; *however*, these are only examples, so your text may need different strategies!

[KWL chart](#)

[Anticipation guide](#)

[Frayer model \(vocabulary\)](#)

[Explicit vocabulary routine](#)

[Quickwrite](#)

[Gallery walk](#)

[Turn & talk](#)

[Spiderweb](#)

[Snowball](#)

[Double-entry journals](#)

[Jigsaw](#)

[Paragraph shrinking](#)

[Speed dating](#)

[Socratic seminar](#)

[Conver-stations](#)

[Fishbowl](#)

[Reciprocal teaching](#)

[Get the gist](#)

[They Say / I Say](#)

[Think-Pair-Square](#)

[Conversation cafe](#)

| Accessing Complex Texts- Workshop | | |
|--|--|---|
| Text title: | | |
| What makes this text complex? | What barriers to access are present, or in other words, what specifically will make this text difficult for my students? | |
| What before reading strategy or strategies will address these barriers and make the text accessible? | What during reading strategy or strategies will address these barriers and make the text accessible? | What after reading strategy or strategies will address these barriers and make the text accessible? |

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THANKS

Do you have any questions?

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