

# Objectives: Understanding the Standards and the Shifts

- Build familiarity with the Louisiana Student ELA Anchor Standards
- Understand the basis for the ELA Instructional Shifts
- Build and share knowledge of vetted tools and resources available to address the Instructional Shifts



# Three Shifts Demanded by the Louisiana Student Standards for ELA/Literacy



1. **Complexity:** Regular practice with complex text and its academic language



2. **Evidence:** Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational



3. **Knowledge:** Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction

# Structure of the ELA/Literacy Standards

- Four Strands: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Language
- Anchor Standards for Each Strand: 10, 10, 6, and 6
- Standards Listed by Grade: K,1, 2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 9-10 band and 11-12 band



**Strand**

**Anchor  
Standard**

**Grade-Specific  
Standards**

# Louisiana Student Standards:

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<http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/academic-standards>  
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Activity: Name the Standards

## Name the Standards: Directions

- On the handout, assign a one- to five-word “name” for each anchor standard in the strand assigned to your table.
- Feel free to be creative! Name each anchor standard using an alliteration, use #hashtags, or connect the names to a common theme.

## Name the Standards: Discussion

- Which standards were most difficult to name?
- How did this activity impact your understanding of the Standards?

# Three Shifts Demanded by the Louisiana Student Standards for ELA/Literacy



1. **Complexity:** Regular practice with complex text and its academic language



2. **Evidence:** Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational



3. **Knowledge:** Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction

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Activity: Connecting the Standards to the Shifts

# Connecting the Standards to the Shifts: Directions

- Read your card/sticky note
- Select the Standard you believe the Shift best illustrates or exemplifies
- Discuss your findings with others
- Move to a different Standard, if appropriate

# Connecting the Standards to the Shifts: Discussion

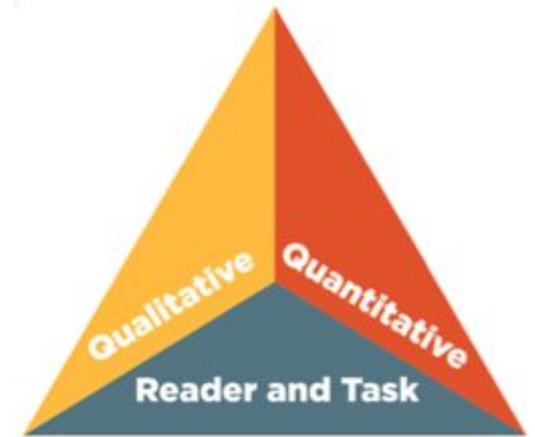
- Why did you relate your Standard to its particular instructional Shift?
- Did you notice any trends or relationships with the colors of the cards?

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Part 2: Complexity's central role –  
Texts worth reading

# Objectives: Complexity's Central Role

- Understand why and how complexity is prioritized in the Louisiana State Standards for ELA & Literacy
- Practice evaluating text complexity and grade band placement

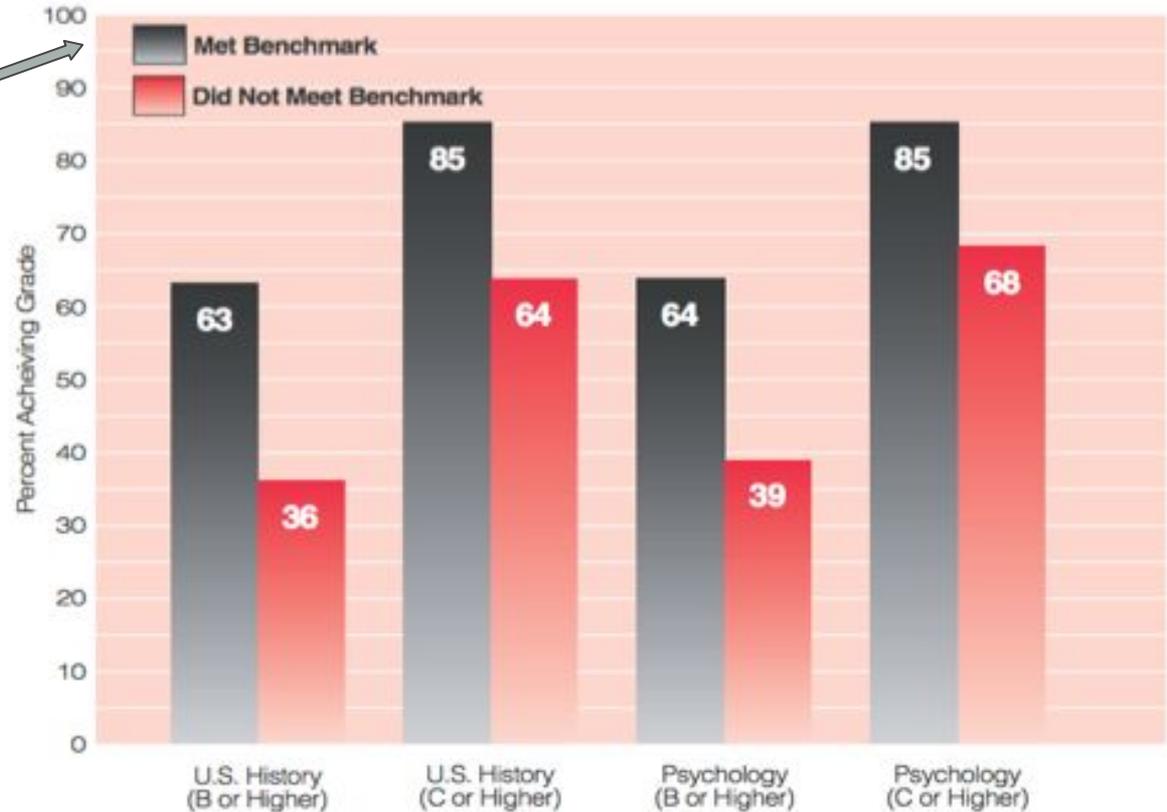


Category	Notes and Comments on the Characteristics the Text, (Support For Placement in This Band)	How Complex is it for this level?			
		Slightly Complex	Moderately Complex	Very Complex	Exceedingly Complex
Structure					
Language Clarity and Conventions					
Knowledge Demands					
Purpose					
Overall Placement					



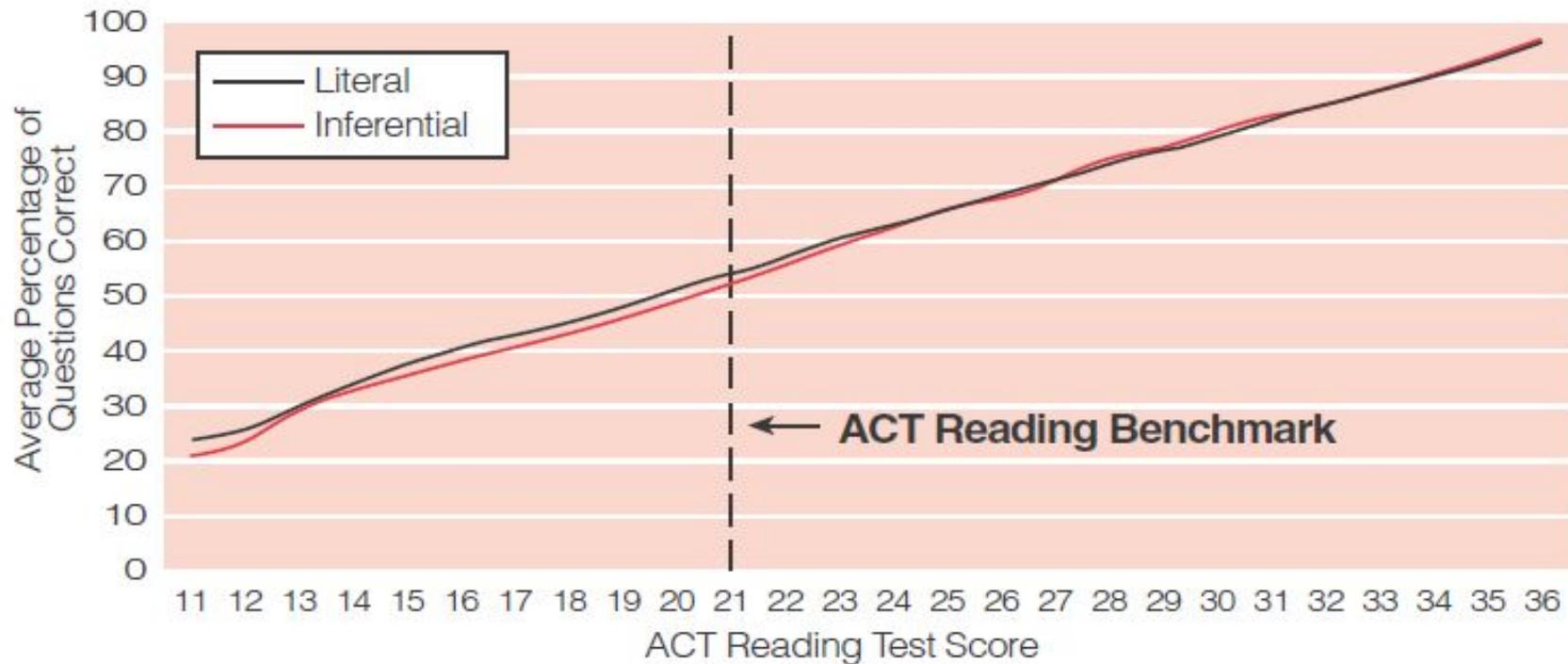
# ACT Report (2006): *Reading Between the Lines*

“College readiness” defined meeting benchmark ACT reading score



*Figure 7: ACT-tested High School Graduates Meeting and Not Meeting ACT's College Readiness Benchmark for Reading Who Achieved Specific Grades in Selected First-year College Social-Sciences Courses<sup>6</sup>*

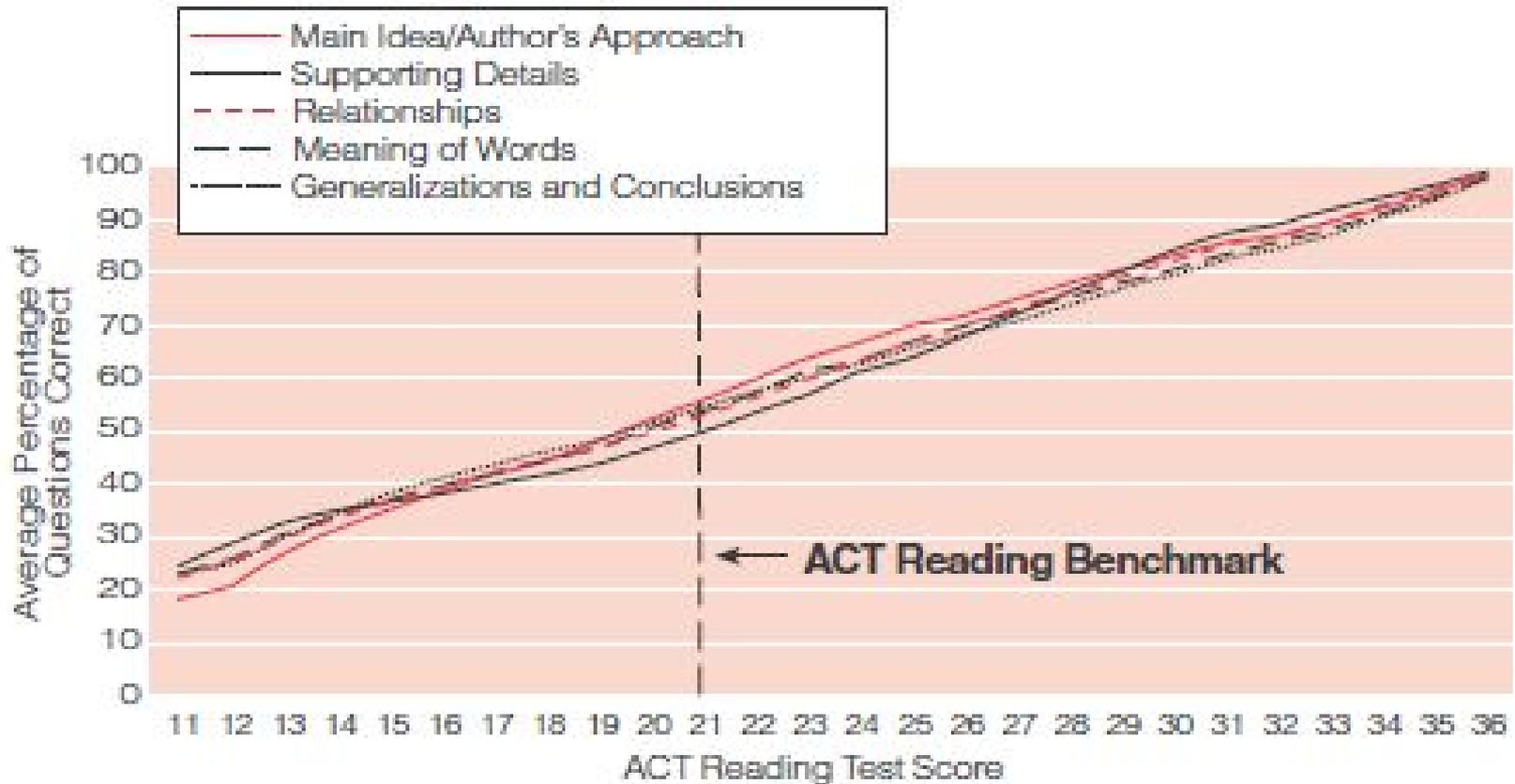
# Literal vs. Inferential Reading



*Figure 10: Performance on the ACT Reading Test by Comprehension Level (Averaged across Seven Forms)<sup>9</sup>*

Conclusion: Students who can read literally can read inferentially!

# Textual Elements

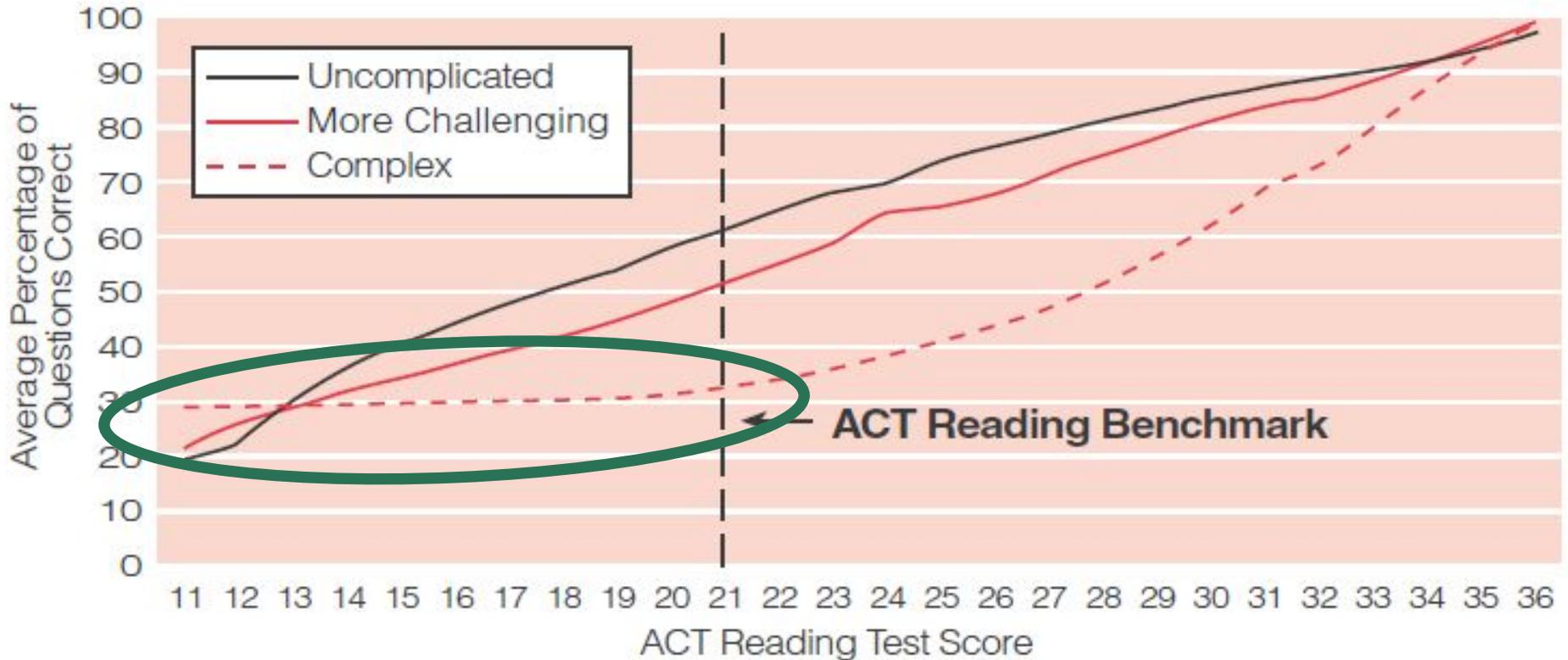


*Figure 11: Performance on the ACT Reading Test by Textual Element  
(Averaged across Seven Forms)*

Conclusion: Students who are successfully analyzing one textual element are successful with them all.

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# Text Complexity

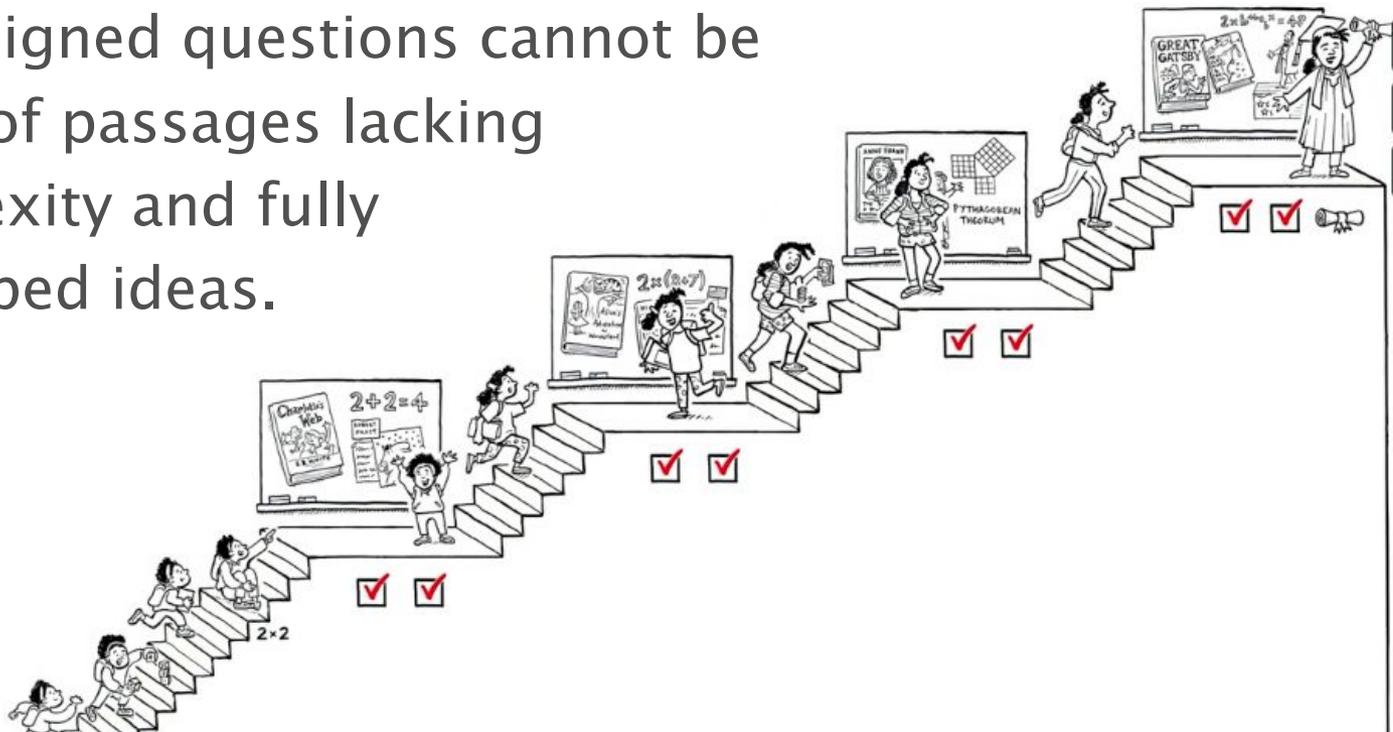


*Figure 12: Performance on the ACT Reading Test by Degree of Text Complexity  
(Averaged across Seven Forms)*

Ability to read complex text is what differentiates college-ready readers.  
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# Quality and Complexity: A Powerful Connection

- By reading a high quality, complex text, students increase reading proficiency that carries over to the next reading experience.
- LASS-aligned questions cannot be asked of passages lacking complexity and fully developed ideas.



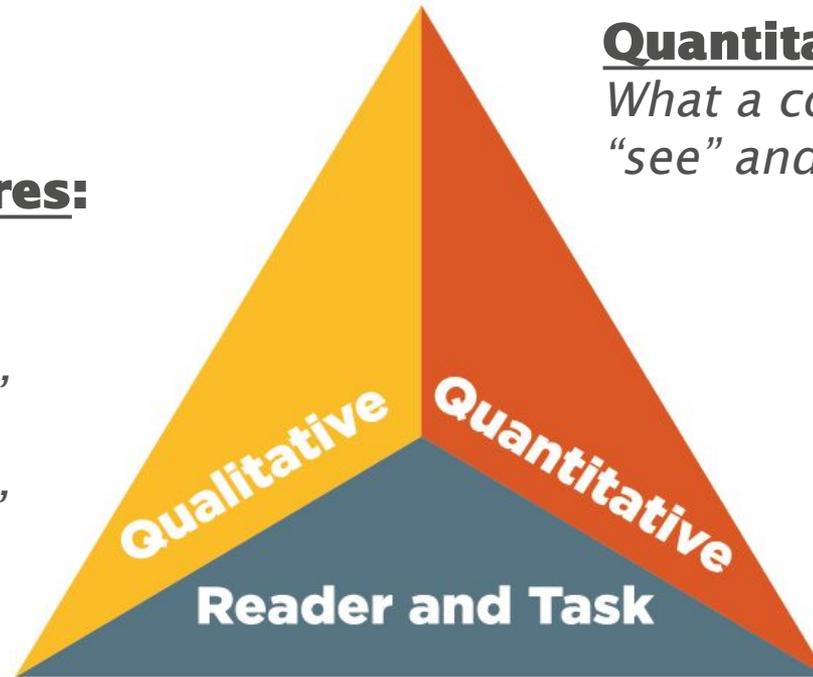
# Complex Text: Key Features

1. Dense information
2. Lack of words, sentences or paragraphs that review or pull things together for the student
3. Lengthy paragraphs
4. Complex sentences
5. Text structure that is less narrative and/or mixes structures
6. Subtle and/or frequent transitions
7. Multiple and/or subtle themes and purposes
8. Uncommon vocabulary
9. Unfamiliar settings, topics or events
10. Lack of repetition, overlap, or similarity in words and sentences

# Three Factors of Text Complexity

## **Qualitative Measures:**

*Text features best judged by human evaluation (structure, language and knowledge demands, and purpose)*



## **Quantitative Scale:**

*What a computer can “see” and measure*

**Reader and Task – Professional Judgment:** *What the instructor does with this text to help students read and understand it*

# Quantitative Scale

CCSS GRADE BANDS	ATOS	Degrees of Reading Power	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework	Reading Maturity
(2 <sup>nd</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> )	2.75 – 5.14	42 – 54	1.98 – 5.34	420 – 820	3.53 – 6.13
(4 <sup>th</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> )	4.97 – 7.03	52 – 60	4.51 – 7.73	740 – 1010	5.42 – 7.92
(6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> )	7.00 – 9.98	57 – 67	6.51 – 10.34	925 – 1185	7.04 – 9.57
(9 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> )	9.67 – 12.01	62 – 72	8.32 – 12.12	1050 – 1335	8.41 – 10.81
(11 <sup>th</sup> – CCSS)	11.20 – 14.10	67 – 74	10.34 – 14.2	1185 – 1385	9.57 – 12.00

# Rubric for Qualitative Measures

Read over the Qualitative Measures Rubric for both Literary and Informational Text.

Annotate the rubric by noting:

- how are the two sides alike?
- how are they different?
- how do the ideas in the rubric collectively contribute to a measure of complexity?

In what ways would measuring a text using this rubric better prepare a teacher to engage students in the text?

## Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric<sup>1</sup>

### LITERATURE

Text Title \_\_\_\_\_

Text Author \_\_\_\_\_

	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
TEXT STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Organization:</b> Is intricate with regard to such elements as point of view, time shifts, multiple characters, storylines and detail</li> <li>○ <b>Use of Graphics:</b> If used, illustrations or graphics are essential for understanding the meaning of the text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Organization:</b> May include subplots, time shifts and more complex characters</li> <li>○ <b>Use of Graphics:</b> If used, illustrations or graphics support or extend the meaning of the text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Organization:</b> May have two or more storylines and occasionally be difficult to predict</li> <li>○ <b>Use of Graphics:</b> If used, a range of illustrations or graphics support selected parts of the text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Organization:</b> Is clear, chronological or easy to predict</li> <li>○ <b>Use of Graphics:</b> If used, either illustrations directly support and assist in interpreting the text or are not necessary to understanding the meaning of the text</li> </ul>
LANGUAGE FEATURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Conventionality:</b> Dense and complex; contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language</li> <li>○ <b>Vocabulary:</b> Complex, generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading</li> <li>○ <b>Sentence Structure:</b> Mainly complex sentences with several subordinate clauses or phrases; sentences often contain multiple concepts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Conventionality:</b> Fairly complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language</li> <li>○ <b>Vocabulary:</b> Fairly complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic</li> <li>○ <b>Sentence Structure:</b> Many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Conventionality:</b> Largely explicit and easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning</li> <li>○ <b>Vocabulary:</b> Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic</li> <li>○ <b>Sentence Structure:</b> Primarily simple and compound sentences, with some complex constructions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Conventionality:</b> Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand</li> <li>○ <b>Vocabulary:</b> Contemporary, familiar, conversational language</li> <li>○ <b>Sentence Structure:</b> Mainly simple sentences</li> </ul>
MEANING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Meaning:</b> Multiple competing levels of meaning that are difficult to identify, separate, and interpret; theme is implicit or subtle, often ambiguous and revealed over the entirety of the text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Meaning:</b> Multiple levels of meaning that may be difficult to identify or separate; theme is implicit or subtle and may be revealed over the entirety of the text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Meaning:</b> Multiple levels of meaning clearly distinguished from each other; theme is clear but may be conveyed with some subtlety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Meaning:</b> One level of meaning; theme is obvious and revealed early in the text.</li> </ul>
KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Life Experiences:</b> Explores complex, sophisticated or abstract themes; experiences portrayed are distinctly different from the common reader</li> <li>○ <b>Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge:</b> Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Life Experiences:</b> Explores themes of varying levels of complexity or abstraction; experiences portrayed are uncommon to most readers</li> <li>○ <b>Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge:</b> Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Life Experiences:</b> Explores several themes; experiences portrayed are common to many readers</li> <li>○ <b>Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge:</b> Few references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Life Experiences:</b> Explores a single theme; experiences portrayed are every day and common to most readers</li> <li>○ <b>Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge:</b> No references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards, Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies and Science and Technical Subjects (2010).

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT PARTNERS

# Qualitative Measures

## Worksheet: Qualitative Analysis of Text

**Name of Text:**

**Lexile:**

**ATOS:**

**Type of Text (Literary/Informational):**

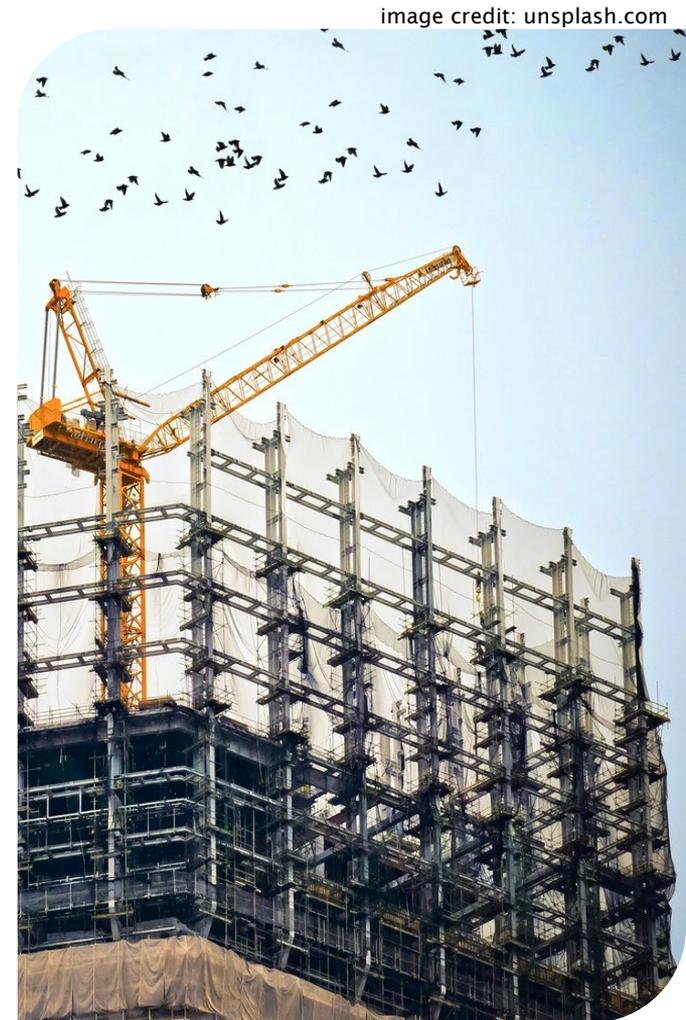
Category	Notes and Comments on the Characteristics the Text (Support For Placement in This Band)	How Complex is it for this level?			
		Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
<b>Structure</b>					
<b>Language Clarity and Conventions</b>					
<b>Knowledge Demands</b>					
<b>Purpose</b>					

# Reader and Task Considerations

“Students who struggle greatly to read texts within (or even below) their text complexity grade band must be given the support needed to enable them to read at a grade-appropriate level of complexity.

*Even many students on course for college and career readiness are likely to need scaffolding as they master higher levels of text complexity.”*

(Appendix A, p.9, *CCSS – ELA*)



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Activity: Selecting Texts Worth Reading

# Selecting Texts Worth Reading: Directions

Locate the excerpt: *The Words We Live By*

In your table groups,

1. Note the Quantitative Evaluation
2. Perform a Qualitative Evaluation, capturing evidence for your measure of complexity in each category
3. Consider Reader and Task – Professional Judgment
  - a. What challenges do you expect students would encounter in accessing this text independently?
  - b. What scaffolding and supports would students need to successfully access this complex text?

Be prepared to share your group's thinking.

# Selecting Texts Worth Reading: Discussion

- How did the process with this sample text increase your understanding of the importance of text complexity?
- Which components of the process resulted in the most agreement across your table?
- Which components of the process resulted in the most disagreement across your table?
- What were some of the scaffolds/supports discussed at your table?

# Forms of Support

- Extra time (for students and teachers)
- Read aloud by a proficient reader
- Multiple readings
- Chunking the text
- Annotation
- Fluency work

image credit: unsplash.com



- **Supports should be based in a belief that students are capable of being successful.**

## Text complexity for ALL students is essential

- Accessing complex ideas and knowledge requires deciphering complex text.
- Students won't be prepared for college and careers by reading simplified texts that have restricted, limited, and/or thin meaning.
- **There is no evidence that struggling readers catch up by reading from simpler texts.**

## Reflect and Discuss

- How do the three factors of text complexity help teachers design and prepare lessons that result in deep learning for all students?
- What are the implications for your own practice?

## Standard Next Steps: Directions

- Review or reread *The Words We Live By*
- Review the qualitative features of *The Words We Live By*
- Complete “What Makes this Text Complex?”
- Based on your work and discussion, how confident are you that this text is appropriate for use with students?

# Resources on Achieve the Core to support this work

- [Text Complexity evaluation tools](#)
- [Lesson exemplars](#) – grades K-12
- [Instructional Practices Guides](#)

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# Criteria for High-Quality Writing Prompts

- Is the question worth asking?
- Does it provide students with an opportunity to explore the central ideas of the text under study?
- Does it ask students to include evidence from the text in their response?
- Is the prompt reasonable for the time allotted?
- Is it a question to check whether students simply *read* or whether they *understood what they read*?

# Defining Text-Dependent Questions

- Push students to rely solely on the text for insight and analysis; they must be traceable “back to the text.”
- Require reliance on the language and mechanics of the text itself, rather than personal experience or opinion.
- Simply put, text-dependent questions identify the text as the “expert” in the room.

# Defining Text-Specific Questions

- Text-specific questions are a *subset of* text-dependent questions.
- The questions probe the specifics of the text and avoid “canned” questions that could be asked of any text.
- These questions can only be applied to one specific text.

## Text-Dependent

What is the author's message in the text?

What is the main idea of the passage?

What details can you find that support the main idea?

## Text-Specific

Why does Monk ask this question, "Which 'We the People' has 'troubled the nation'"?

Why does Monk claim that popular sovereignty is the form of government in America?

What evidence is there in paragraph three regarding Marshall's claim about the "evolving nature of the constitution"?

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Activity:

Analyzing Prompts for Text-Dependency

# Analyzing Prompts for Text-Dependency: Directions

- Working in pairs at your table, take the next 10 minutes to analyze the writing prompts on the handout for the activity.
- Check the appropriate box
  - text-dependent,
  - not text-dependent,
  - unsure.
- Passages not provided (on purpose! 😊)

# Analyzing Prompts for Text-Dependency: Discussion

- Which prompts were most difficult to name? Why?
- How were you able to make determinations without the associated passages?
- How does this activity add clarity about text-dependent questions?
- Who do you want to share these ideas with? Why?

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Activity: Questions Worth Asking

# Questions Worth Asking: Directions

- Consider the questions and tasks for *The Words We Live By*
  - Could a student find **evidence** in the essay to answer this question?
  - Does a reader have to dig **deep** to answer this question?
  - Does the question ask about a **vocabulary** word in the essay?
  - Is this a question worth asking? If not, could you revise it to make it worth asking?

# Questions Worth Asking: Discussion

- Which questions did you identify as “worth asking?”
- Of those that weren’t, which (if any) were you able to revise? What did you think consider as you wrote the revisions?
- Were there any that you weren’t able to salvage into questions worth asking? Why or why not?

# How to Construct a Strong Question Set

- Review pages 2-3 of the handout: Guide to Creating Text-Dependent Questions
- Discuss at your table:
  - Which step resonated with you as an important part of planning?
  - Which step surprised you?
  - How do these steps support teachers and students?

# Culminating Writing Tasks

- A well-constructed and sequenced series of text-dependent questions prepare students to be able to respond to a good culminating task
- Culminating task addresses big idea of the text

Use a learnzillion/PARCC writing task example here.



# Implications for Instruction

- Require evidence.
- Intentionally sequence questions *ahead of time*.
- Give students *regular* opportunities to speak and write about the text.
- Have students write about content-rich informational texts and new knowledge.

# Resources on Achieve the Core to support this work

- Creating strong [text-dependent question guides](#)
- Vetted [lessons](#) complete with text-dependent question sets, with scaffolded text-dependent writing prompts
- Scaffolded writing [lessons](#)
- [Research Pacs](#) for K-5
- [In Common](#) resources

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# Building Knowledge and Vocabulary

- Understand research relating reading comprehension to knowledge and vocabulary
- Describe the guidance given in Louisiana Student Standards for building knowledge and vocabulary
- Practice choosing and classifying vocabulary for instruction

# Question: Which is harder?

- Question 1: Literal Meaning
  - “Restate this sentence in your own words.”
  - Low on Bloom’s Taxonomy
- Question 2: Synthesis
  - “Read the passage, then write a letter to the editor defending the moral values the main character displays with regard to animals.”
  - High on Bloom’s Taxonomy

Question 1: Restate this sentence in your own words.

“The former render possible *theoretical* cognition according to principles *a priori*; the latter in respect of this theoretical cognition only supplies in itself a negative principle (that of mere contrast), but on the other hand it furnishes fundamental propositions which extend the sphere of the determination of the will and are therefore called practical.”

Question 2: Read the passage, then write a letter to the editor defending the moral values the main character displays with regard to animals.

"Where's Papa going with that ax?" said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast.

"Out to the hog house," replied Mrs. Arable. "Some pigs were born last night."

"I don't see why he needs an ax," continued Fern, who was only eight.

"Well," said her mother, "one of the pigs is a runt. It's very small and weak, and it will never amount to anything. So your father has decided to do away with it."

"Do away with it?" shrieked Fern. "You mean kill it? Just because it's smaller than the others?"

## Question: Which is harder?

- Which question was harder? Why?
- Would a lesson (or a whole week of lessons) on *finding main idea* or *making inferences* help you to answer question 1?

# The Importance of Knowledge

## From the Standards:

- “...texts within and across grade levels need to be selected from topics and themes that systematically develop the knowledge base of students”
- “Within a grade level there should be an adequate number of titles on a single topic that would allow students to study that topic for a sustained period.”

# Research about Knowledge: The Baseball Study (Recht & Leslie, 1988)



# Research about Knowledge: The Baseball Study

- Compared reading comprehension for four categories of students:

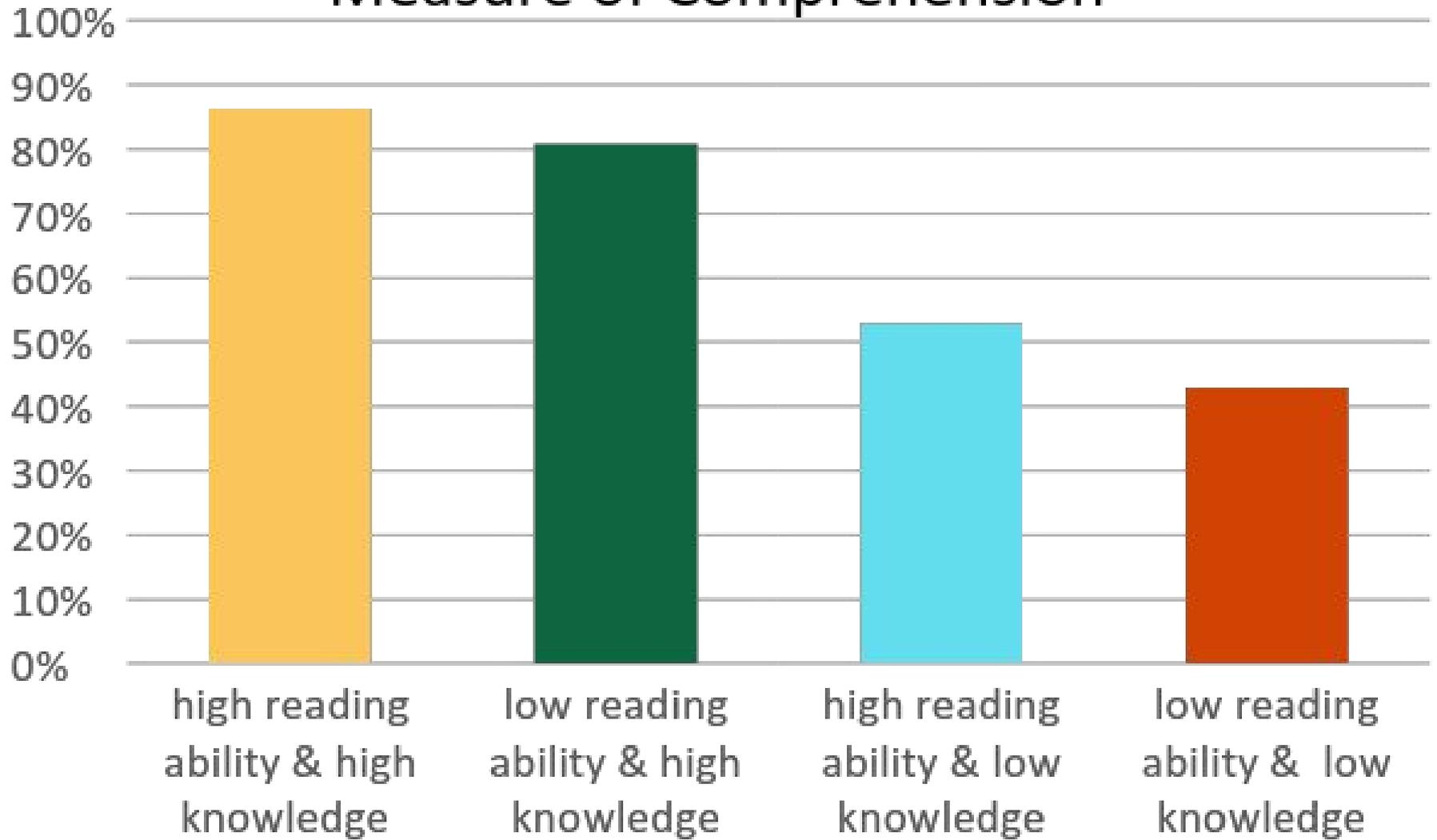
High reading ability  
High knowledge of  
baseball

High reading ability  
Low knowledge of  
baseball

Low reading ability  
High knowledge of  
baseball

Low reading ability  
Low knowledge of  
baseball

# Measure of Comprehension



# Research about Knowledge: The Baseball Study

## Findings

- Knowledge of the topic had a MUCH bigger impact on comprehension than generalized reading ability did.
- With sufficient prior knowledge “low ability” students performed similarly to higher ability students. The difference in their performance was *not statistically significant*.

## So What?

- A student doesn't have **one level** of constant reading ability.
- Each student has **many levels** depending on the topic and what knowledge she can bring to bear on it.
- What are the implications of this study on your own classroom practice? How does this challenge or support what you do or have done?

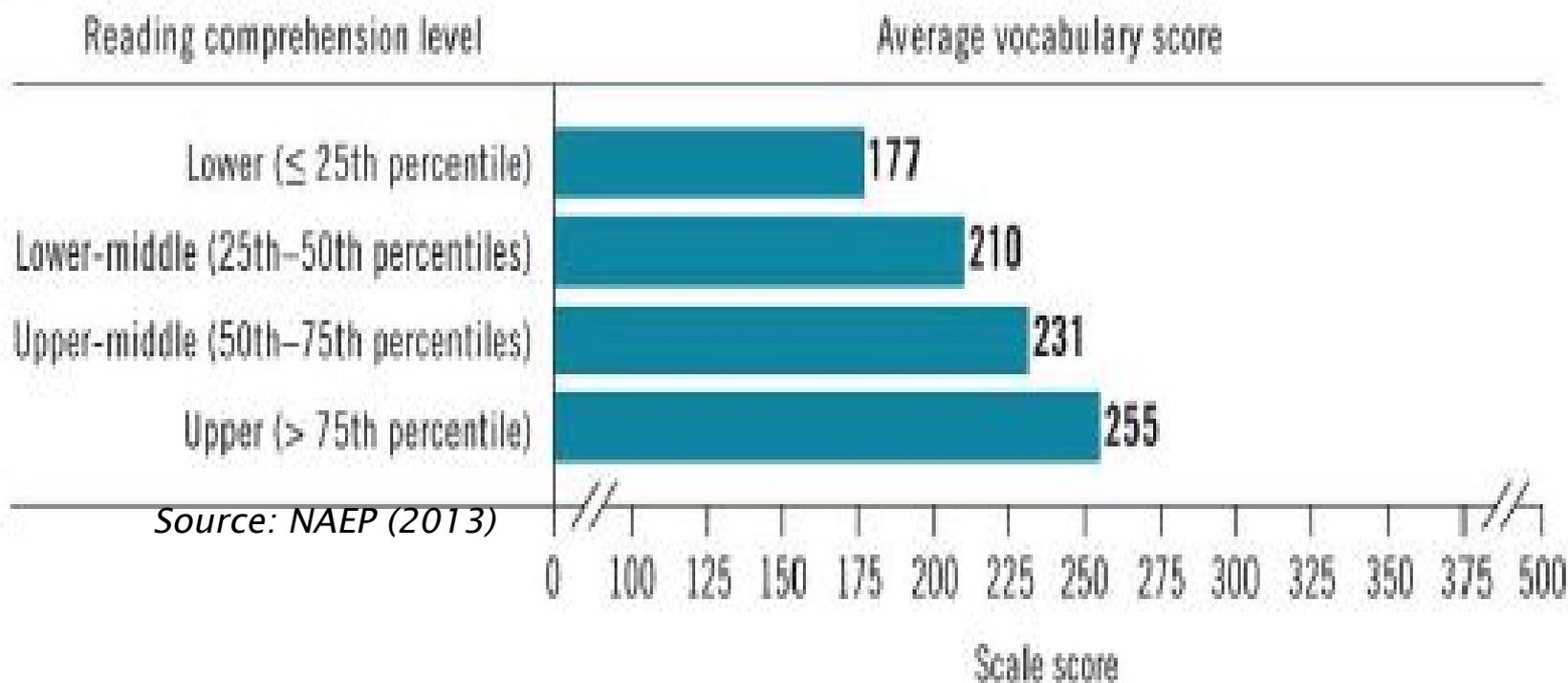
# Importance of Vocabulary

- Nearly a century of research identifies vocabulary as crucial to comprehension.
- Vocabulary is the feature of complex text that likely causes greatest difficulty.
- “30 Million Word Gap” – students from disadvantaged families enter school with dramatically lower vocabularies
- After much research...  
... Reading has a lot to do with words!

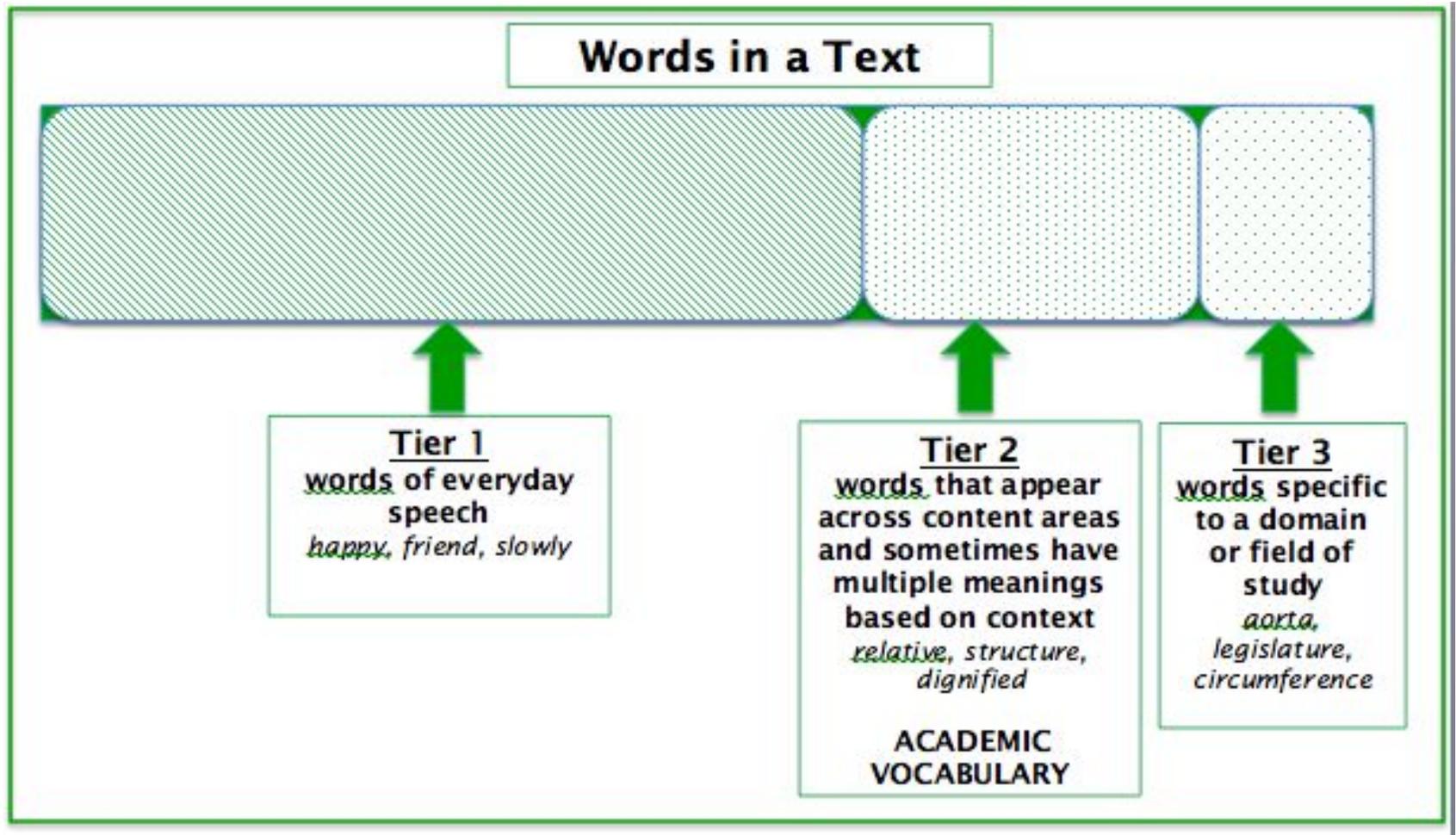
## Vocabulary and comprehension correlate

**Figure 3. Average scores in NAEP vocabulary at grades 4, 8, and 12, by reading comprehension level: 2009 and 2011**

### Grade 4



# Three Tiers of Vocabulary



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Activity: Which words do I teach?

## Which words do I teach: Directions

1. Read the two passages (one informational, one literary)
2. Highlight tier 2 words you would teach for each passage in one color
3. Highlight tier 3 words you would teach for each passage in another color
4. Note which words would require more time and attention for students to learn, and include a few thoughts about why

## Which words do I teach: Discussion

- Were there areas of agreement or disagreement at your table about words chosen?
- How was this exercise in choosing words for instruction helpful?
- Based on this activity, what are the implications for instruction?

# What To Do About Vocabulary and Knowledge

“Building knowledge systematically in English language arts is like giving children various pieces of a puzzle in each grade that, over time, will form one big picture...”

# What To Do About Vocabulary and Knowledge

- ✓ Students cannot build knowledge and vocabulary without a high **volume** of reading.
- ✓ Most words are learned through reading or being read to.
- ✓ Building knowledge helps level the playing field for students.

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## LA Believes Resources

<b>Close Reading</b>	<b>Volume of Reading</b>
Fewer pages	More pages
Grade-level complex text	Text at different levels of complexity
All students same text	Student or teacher choice of text
Teaches students to attend to text and to words	<b>Rapidly builds knowledge &amp; vocab</b>

<b>Close Reading</b>	<b>Volume of Reading</b>
Heavy support	Light support
Solely instructional	Guided or Independent
Exposes students to higher-level content	Builds knowledge of words, and the world
Gives all students access	Builds love of reading

# What To Do About Vocabulary and Knowledge

- High volume reading
- Regular study of vocabulary in context
- Content-rich informational texts
- Text Sets
- Cross-curricular collaboration (science, social studies)

# Resources on Achieve the Core to support this work

- [Academic Word Finder](#)
- [Text Set Project Resources](#)
- [Materials Adaptation Project](#): Adapted lessons for Journeys 2014

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Free, ready-to-use classroom resources designed to help educators understand and implement the Common Core and other college and career ready standards

