Simplifying Text Complexity

KNOW YOUR READER
KNOW YOUR TASK
KNOW YOUR TEXT
PLAN FOR SUPPORT

A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF READER AND TASK

The reader is the arbiter of the text, who in turn is shaped by the tasks that accompany the text.

READER
Characteristics of the reader utilizing the text.

TASK
What the reader is tasked with doing with the text.

QUANTITATIVE MEASURE
Computer-generated number (e.g., Lexile).

READABILITY
Syntax, sentence length, vocabulary, rare words.

QUALITATIVE MEASURE
Determined by teacher, multifaceted.

QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE MEASURES

IN ORDER TO DETERMINE

PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

Consider a text’s quantitative measure and determine its general readability. Conduct a qualitative analysis of its complexity (levels of meaning and purpose; intricacy of text structure; density and level of language and syntax; demands on knowledge and experience).

Examine the complexity of the task required of the reader who is engaging with the text. Is the balance between task and text appropriate for the reader?

Consult KSDE’s Supporting Students with Complex Texts for critical questions and considerations to aid in planning for scaffolding and support with the complex text.

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1. Advancement
2. Choice
3. Success
4. Collaboration
5. Thematic units

Key variables:
Attention and memory.

1. Do they possess the information and the skill set to access it?
2. Do they know how to use that knowledge to learn something new? (Pair the known with the unknown.)