Text Complexity and the Kansas Common Core Standards

Members of the KSDE Text Complexity Team
Materials

Electronic copies of all of today’s materials, including the handouts and PowerPoint, are available at the following URL:

Activity #1

Ripe Figs

As a small group, read “Ripe Figs” and answer the three questions provided at the bottom of the page...

Ripe Figs

Maman-Naïnaise said that when the figs were ripe Babette might go to visit her cousins down on Bayou-Lafourche, where the sugar cane grows. Not that the ripening of figs had the least thing to do with it, but that is the way Maman-Naïnaise was.

It seemed to Babette a very long time to wait for the leaves upon the trees were tender yet, and the figs were like little hard, green marbles. But warm rains came along and plenty of strong sunshine, and though Maman-Naïnaise was as patient as the statue of la Madonna, and Babette as restless as a humming-bird, the first thing they both knew it was hot summer-time. Every day Babette danced out to where the figs were in a long line against the fence. She walked slowly beneath them, carefully peering between the gnarled, spreading branches. But each time she came disconsolate away again. What she saw there finally was something that made her sing and dance the whole day long.

When Maman-Naïnaise sat down in her stately way to breakfast, the following morning, her muslin cap standing like an aureole about her white, placid face, Babette approached. She bore a dainty porcelain plate, which she set down before her godmother. It contained a dozen purple figs, fringed around with their rich green leaves.

“Ah,” said Maman-Naïnaise, arching her eyebrows, “how early the figs have ripened this year!”

“Oh,” said Babette, “I think they have ripened very late.”

“Babette,” continued Maman-Naïnaise, as she peeled the very plumpest figs with her pointed silver fruit-knife, “you will carry my love to them all down on Bayou-Lafourche. And tell your Tante Frosine I shall look for her at Toussaint—when the chrysanthemums are in bloom.”

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the overall complexity of this text?

What features of this text support your rating of its complexity?

At what grade level might this text be appropriate for instruction? Why?
Discussion

• On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the overall complexity of this text?
• What features of this text support your rating of its complexity?
• At what grade level might this text be appropriate for instruction? Why?
Text complexity is defined by:

1. **Quantitative measures** – readability and other scores of text complexity often best measured by computer software.
2. **Qualitative measures** – levels of meaning, structure, language conventionality and clarity, and knowledge demands often best measured by an attentive human reader.
3. **Reader and Task considerations** – background knowledge of reader, motivation, interests, and complexity generated by tasks assigned often best made by educators employing their professional judgment.
# CCSS Text Complexity Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Complexity Grade Bands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-CCR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Areas of Emphasis for Instruction

1. **Building knowledge** through a balance of literary and informational texts
2. Reading, writing, and discussion grounded in evidence from text
3. Regular practice ("productive struggle") with complex text and its academic vocabulary
How Do We Address This Gap?

A Visual Representation of the Range and Complexity of Text in the Existing Core Compared to the Common Core

Gary L. Williamson (2006) found a 250 Lexile gap between the difficulty of end-of-high school and college texts—a gap equivalent to 1 standard deviation and more than the Lexile difference between grade 4 and grade 8 texts (Common Core, Appendix A, p. 2).

Levels of range and complexity not expected of high school students before.

Lexile Bands (Existing Core)
- 11th – CCR
  - 1070 – 1220
- 9th – 10th
  - 960 – 1113
- 8th – 9th
  - 860 – 1010
- 7th
  - 760 – 845
- 6th
  - 645 – 845
- 5th
  - 545 – 645
- 4th
  - 450 – 725

Range of Complexity in Existing Core

Lexile "Stretch" Bands (Common Core)
- 11th – CCR
  - 1215 – 1355
- 9th – 10th
  - 1080 – 1305
- 8th – 9th
  - 935 – 1155
- 7th
  - 770 – 980
- 6th – 7th
  - 645 – 725
- 5th
  - 545 – 725

Range of Complexity in Common Core

Note that the increase in complexity is intended to begin in 2nd grade.

*The scale used here is solely an example.
Why Should We Worry about This Gap?
Where Do We Find Texts in the Appropriate Text Complexity Band?

We could....

Choose an excerpt of text from Appendix B:

Use available resources to determine the text complexity of other materials on our own.
Determining Text Complexity

A Four-step Process:

1. Determine the quantitative measures of the text.
2. Analyze the qualitative measures of the text.
3. Reflect upon the reader and task considerations.
4. Recommend placement in the appropriate text complexity band.
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

Measures such as:
- Word length
- Word frequency
- Word difficulty
- Sentence length
- Text length
- Text cohesion
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

The Quantitative Measures Ranges for Text Complexity: This document outlines the suggested ranges for each of the text complexity bands using:

1. Lexile Text Measures

   ---or---

2. ATOS Book Levels (Accelerated Reader)
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

Resources for Accessing Quantitative Measures of Text

Quick handout documenting the availability of resources. Including:

- Lexile
- ATOS book level
- Additional measures
- Readability formulas

Additional Resources for Accessing Quantitative Measures of Text
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

Let’s imagine we want to see where a text falls on the quantitative measures “leg” of the text complexity triangle, using either the Lexile text measures or the ATOS book level (or both).

For illustrative purposes, let’s choose Harper Lee’s 1960 novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. 
Step 1: Quantitative Measures


**The Lexile® Framework for Reading**

### Step 1: Enter Lexile Measure or Grade

- **Lexile Measure:**
  - **Lexile Measure:** [ ]
  - **Lexile Range:** [ ] to [ ]

- **Or**
  - **Kindergarten:**
    - I find the books I read for school difficult.
    - I find the books I read for school just right.
    - I find the books I read for school easy.
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

The Lexile® Framework for Reading

Find the Right Book for You!
Enter your Lexile measure, select your interests, and find books you'd like to read!
Looking for Spanish books?
Pledge to read some great books this summer!
Submit your Summer Reading Pledge

Step 1: Enter Lexile Measure or Grade

My Lexile measure is

Lexile Measure:

Lexile Range:

Or

I don't know my Lexile measure

My Current Grade is:

I find the books I read for school difficult.
I find the books I read for school just right.
I find the books I read for school easy.
Step 1: Quantitative Measures
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

For texts not in the Lexile database, consider using the Lexile Analyzer: http://www.lexile.com/analyzer/

- Registration is required (free) http://www.lexile.com/account/register/
- Allows user to receive an “estimated” Lexile score
- Accommodates texts up to 1000 words in length
- Texts of any length can be evaluated using the Professional Lexile Analyzer—educators can upgrade to this tool for free by requesting access http://www.lexile.com/account/profile/access/
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

Step 1: Quantitative Measures
Step 1: Quantitative Measures
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

For texts not in the AR Bookfinder database, consider using The ATOS Analyzer: http://www.renlearn.com/ar/overview/atos/

- No registration is required (however, you must provide an email address to receive results)
- Three methods of analysis are available:
  1. ATOS for Books – for submitting complete text of a book
  2. ATOS for Books with Estimated Word Count – does not require full text, just three 150-word passages
  3. ATOS for Text – works well for short, full-text submissions (short stories, magazine/newspaper articles, etc.)
Lexile Text Measure: **870L**

ATOS Book Level: **5.6**

In which of the text complexity bands would this novel fall?
# Kansas Common Core Standards

## Quantitative Measures Ranges for Text Complexity Grade Bands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Complexity Grade Bands</th>
<th>Suggested Lexile(^2) Range</th>
<th>Suggested ATOS(^3) Book Level Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-1</td>
<td>100(L) – 500(L)</td>
<td>1.0 – 2.75(^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>450(L) – 790(L)</td>
<td>2.75 – 5.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>770(L) – 980(L)</td>
<td>4.97 – 7.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>955(L) – 1155(L)</td>
<td>7.00 – 9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>1080(L) – 1305(L)</td>
<td>9.67 – 12.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-CCR</td>
<td>1215(L) – 1355(L)</td>
<td>11.20 – 14.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) The K-1 suggested ranges were not identified by the Common Core State Standards and were added by Kansas.


\(^3\) ATOS analyzer: Renaissance Learning [www.renlearn.com/ar/overview/atos/](http://www.renlearn.com/ar/overview/atos/)
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

Remember, however, that the quantitative measures aspect is only the first of three “legs” of the text complexity triangle.

Our final recommendation may be validated, influenced, or even over-ruled by our examination of qualitative measures and the reader and task considerations.
Step 2: Qualitative Measures

Measures such as:
  • Levels of meaning
  • Levels of purpose
  • Structure
  • Organization
  • Language conventionality
  • Language clarity
  • Prior knowledge demands
Step 2: Qualitative Measures

The Qualitative Measures Rubrics for Literary and Informational Text:

The rubric for literary text and the rubric for informational text allow educators to evaluate the important elements of text that are often missed by computer software that tends to focus on more easily measured factors.
Step 2: Qualitative Measures

Because the factors for literary texts are different from information texts, these two rubrics contain different content. However, the formatting of each document is exactly the same. And because these factors represent continua rather than discrete stages or levels, numeric values are not associated with these rubrics. Instead, four points along each continuum are identified from slightly complex to very complex.
Questions to Consider in Planning for Instructional Scaffolding

On the back side of each rubric is a list of springboard questions to help educators begin thinking about the kinds of instructional scaffolding the text may also require.

- **Meaning:**
  - Would expanding the helping students understand the multiple layers/levels of meaning present in the text be appropriate?
  - Will students know it advance what they are expected to do with the information they gain from reading the text (e.g., summarize, gather and apply details, analyze, synthesis, create)?

- **Text Structure:**
  - Would graphic organizers or other aids be appropriate in making the structure of the text visible to students?
  - Would a partial outline, chart, or some other text-based aid be appropriate in designing the structure of the text?
  - Would previewing and discussing the graphics included with the text prior to reading be appropriate?

- **Language Features:**
  - Would an array of figurative, abstract, or ironic language and a modeling of how that type of language might be interpreted be appropriate?
  - Would glossing certain vocabulary (particularly multiple meaning words that extend across other subject matter content areas) be appropriate?

- **Knowledge Demands:**
  - What background knowledge needs to be introduced (or reintroduced) to facilitate reading success that will not exploit the oral information gained from the reading experience?
  - What explicit references and/or citations to other texts might require additional resources, opportunities for students to explore?

- **General:**
  - In what ways might collaborative groupings of students during the reading process be appropriate?
Step 2: Qualitative Measures

So...

How is the rubric used?

And how would *To Kill a Mockingbird* fare when analyzed through the lens of the Literary Text Rubric?
## Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric

### LITERARY TEXT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative</th>
<th>Very Complex</th>
<th>Slightly Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEANING</strong></td>
<td>![X] Meaning: Several levels/complexities 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.</td>
<td>![X] Meaning: More than one level/layer of meaning with levels clearly distinguished from each other. Themes is obvious and revealed early in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEXT STRUCTURE</strong></td>
<td>![X] Nomenclature: Complex and/or unconventional, many shifts in point of view and/or perspective. Order of Events: Not chronological order, heavy use of flashback. Use of Graphics: If used, minimal illustrations that support the text.</td>
<td>![X] Nomenclature: Long, convoluted, unconventional, few shifts in point of view and/or perspective. Order of Events: Flashback, no chronological order. Use of Graphics: If used, illustrations that support the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LANGUAGE FEATURES</strong></td>
<td>![X] Conventionality: Dense and complex language contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language. Vocabulary: Generally unfamiliar, archaic, sub-field-specific, or overly academic language, may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading. Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences often containing multiple concepts.</td>
<td>![X] Conventionality: Easy to understand and interpret for more complex text. Vocabulary: More familiar, concrete, or specific. Sentence Structure: Compound sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS</strong></td>
<td>![X] Life experiences: Explores many complex and sophisticated themes, experiences are distinctly different from the common reader. Interdisciplinary and Cultural Knowledge: Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements. Subject Matter Knowledge: Requires extensive, perhaps specialized prior content knowledge.</td>
<td>![X] Life experiences: Explores many themes of varying layers of complexity, experiences portrayed are uncommon to most readers. Interdisciplinary and Cultural Knowledge: Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements. Subject Matter Knowledge: Requires moderate amount of prior content knowledge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Text Title:**

**Text Author:**

---

**Image:**

*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

---

[Image of the book cover: A tree with a mockingbird on it against a red background.]

---

*Note: The image contains a book cover for "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee.*
Step 2: Qualitative Measures

From examining the quantitative measures, we knew:

Lexile Text Measure: 870L

ATOS Book Level: 5.6

But after reflecting upon the qualitative measures, we believed:
Our initial placement of *To Kill a Mockingbird* into a text complexity band changed when we examined the qualitative measures.

Remember, however, that we have completed only the first two legs of the text complexity triangle.

The **reader and task considerations** still remain.
Step 2: Qualitative Measures

Activity #2: Your Turn!

Using the rubric for literary text, analyze the qualitative measures of the following title:

• “Ripe Figs” (literary text)—1030L

Discuss your results as a small group.
You will be sharing your marked rubric with the larger group in the next activity!
Step 2: Qualitative Measures

Activity #3: Gallery Walk!

After displaying your marked rubrics for the larger group, tour the room and review the marked rubrics of other groups.

Place a sticky note near those rubrics that display very similar results to your own.
Step 3: Reader and Task Considerations

Considerations such as:

- Motivation
- Knowledge and experience
- Purpose for reading
- Complexity of task assigned regarding text
- Complexity of questions asked regarding text
Step 3: Reader and Task Considerations

Questions for Professional Reflection on Reader and Task Considerations:

The questions provided in this resource are meant to spur teacher thought and reflection upon the text, students, and any tasks associated with the text.

Cognitive Capabilities
- Does the reader possess the necessary attention to read and comprehend this specific text?
- Will the reader be able to remember and make connections among the various details presented in this specific text?
- Does the reader possess the necessary critical/analytic thinking skills to understand the relationships between the main idea, purpose, and/or theme of the text and the various details used to support that main idea, purpose, and/or theme?
- Will this specific text help to develop the attention, memory, and critical/analytic thinking skills necessary for future reading endeavors?

Reading Skills
- Does the reader possess the necessary inferencing skills to “read between the lines” and make connections among elements that may not be explicit in this specific text?
- Does the reader possess the necessary visualization skills to imagine what is occurring or what is being described in this specific text?
- Does the reader possess the necessary questioning skills to challenge the ideas being presented in this text and consider those ideas from multiple points of view?
- Does the reader possess the necessary comprehension strategies to manage the material in this specific text?
- Will this specific text help to develop the inferencing skills, visualization skills, questioning skills, and comprehension strategies necessary for future reading endeavors?

Motivation and Engagement with Task and Text
- Will the reader understand the purpose—which might shift over the course of the reading experience—for reading this specific text (i.e., skimming, studying to retain content, close reading for analysis, etc.)?
- Will the reader be interested in the content of this specific text?
Step 3: Reader and Task Considerations

The questions included here are largely open-ended questions without single, correct answers, but help educators to think through the implications of using a particular text in the classroom.
Step 3: Reader and Task Considerations

What aspects of the text will likely pose the most challenge for my students?

• Content or theme concerns or challenges?
• Text structure challenges?
• Language feature challenges?
• Knowledge and experience demands?
• Motivation for and interest in the text?
Step 3: Reader and Task Considerations

What Common Core State Standards should I focus on when teaching this text?

- What are natural areas of focus for this text?
- With what standards do my students need the most practice?

Will the complexity of any before, during and after reading tasks or the complexity of any questions asked about the text interfere with the reading experience?

What supports do I need to provide so that all of my students (even those who are struggling readers) can access the text?
How Should Instruction Address Text Complexity?

RA! RA! RA! Reading!

Teacher Scaffolding

**Read Aloud**
- Modeling of decoding and fluency
- Heavy scaffolding for vocabulary and comprehension

**Read Along**
- Some scaffolding, as needed, for decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension

**Read Alone**
- Independent, autonomous reading
- Little to no scaffolding

Gradual Release of Responsibility *(I do, we do, you do)*...
Based upon our examination of the Reader and Task Considerations, we have completed the third leg of the text complexity model and are now ready to recommend a final placement within a text complexity band.
Step 4: Recommended Placement

After reflecting upon all three legs of the text complexity model we can make a final recommendation of placement within a text and begin to document our thinking for future reference.
Step 4: Recommended Placement

Lexile Text Measure: **870L**

ATOS Book Level: **5.6**
Step 4: Recommended Placement

Based upon all the information—all three legs of the model—the final recommendation for *To Kill a Mockingbird*...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Complexity</th>
<th>Grade Bands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9-10</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-CCR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this instance, Appendix B confirms our evaluation of the novel. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is placed within the grade 9-10 text complexity band.

---

**Step 4: Recommended Placement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades 9-10 Text Exemplars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homer. <em>The Odyssey</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ovid. <em>Metamorphoses</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gogol, Nikolai. “The Nose.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Voltaire, F. A. M. <em>Candide, Or The Optimist</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turgenev, Ivan. <em>Fathers and Sons</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry, O. “The Gift of the Magi.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kafka, Franz. <em>The Metamorphosis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steinbeck, John. <em>The Grapes of Wrath</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradbury, Ray. <em>Fahrenheit 451</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olsen, Tillie. “I Stand Here Ironing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achebe, Chinua. <em>Things Fall Apart</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaara, Michael. <em>The Killer Angels</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tan, Amy. <em>The Joy Luck Club</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Álvarez, Julia. <em>In the Time of the Butterflies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zusak, Marcus. <em>The Book Thief</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 4: Recommended Placement

Template for Text Complexity Analysis and Recommended Placement Form:

The one-page template provides an opportunity to record the thinking involved in recommending the placement of a specific text into a text complexity band.

Keeping a record of such analysis and thinking might be useful documentation in the case that any questions arise in the future.
# Text Complexity Analysis of

**Title:**

**Author:**

**Recommended Complexity Band:**

## Qualitative Measures

### Meaning/Purpose:
Briefly explain the levels of meaning (Literary Text) or purpose (Informational text).

### Text Structure:
Briefly describe the structure, organization, and other features of the text.

### Language Features:
Briefly describe the conventions and clarity of the language used in the text, including the complexity of the vocabulary and sentence structures.

### Knowledge Demands:
Briefly describe the knowledge demands the text requires of students.

## Quantitative Measure

### Complexity Band Level (provide range):

### Lexile or Other Quantitative Measure of the Text:

## Considerations for Reader and Task

Below are factors to consider with respect to the reader and task (See attached guiding questions to assist each teacher in filling out this section for his or her own class):

### Potential Challenges this Text Poses:

### Major Instructional Areas of Focus (3-4 CCS Standards) for this Text:

### Differentiation/Supports for Students:

## Recommended Placement

Briefly explain the recommended placement of the text in a particular grade band.
Text Complexity Analysis of

To Kill a Mockingbird

by Harper Lee

Recommended Complexity Band: 9-10

Text Description

Briefly describe the text:
To Kill a Mockingbird is a Pulitzer Prize winning novel set in Alabama in the 1930s; the novel explores racial injustice, moral integrity, and the destruction of innocence.

Qualitative Measures

Meaning/Purpose: (Briefly explain the levels of meaning (Literary Text) or purpose (Informational text).
The book has multiple levels of meaning. Set in Alabama, the female main character Scout Finch struggles to understand issues of race and prejudice when her lawyer father defends a black man accused of raping a white woman.

Text Structure: (Briefly describe the structure, organization, and other features of the text.)
Although the story has a largely simple structure with a straightforward writing style, several issues complicate the narration and structure. Scout's narration is as an adult reflecting back on a few pivotal years of her childhood; flashbacks are used throughout. And at several points it seems as though the narration is from the point of view of a less-reliable Scout still in her childhood.

Language Features: (Briefly describe the conventions and clarity of the language used in the text, including the complexity of the vocabulary and sentence structures.)
The characters speak in easily readable, conversational language. Some slang is indicative of the time period in which the novel is set, and there is some dialect.

Knowledge Demands: (Briefly describe the knowledge demands the text requires of students.)
Higher level themes of justice, prejudice, and civil rights are implied. Thinking at deeper levels is required to contemplate the personal, moral, and ethical struggles of the characters as set against the culture and society of the time period.

Quantitative Measure

Lexile or Other Quantitative Measure of the Text:
The ATOS formula (used with the Accelerated Reader program) identifies this title as having a book level of 5.6. A Lexile measure for this novel is 870L. Although the Lexile and ATOS levels fall in the 4th-5th grade text complexity band, the complexity of the book's theme, the issue of rape, and the length of the book would indicate that higher level reading skills are necessary, along with a consideration for the maturity level of the reader regarding the book's subject matter.

Considerations for Reader and Task

Potential Challenges this Text Poses:
These are to be determined locally with reference to such variables as a student's motivation, knowledge, and experiences as well as purpose and the complexity of the task assigned and the question posed. However, the complexity of the book's theme, the issue of rape, and the length of the book would indicate that higher level reading skills are necessary, along with a consideration for the maturity level of the reader regarding the book's subject matter.

Major Instructional Areas of Focus (3-4 CCS Standards) for this Text:
RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.5, RL.9-10.7

Differentiation/Supports for Students:
Educators might want to examine the following elements or issues: social and historical events of the late 50s, early 60s, and issues surrounding racial stereotyping and prejudice in the Deep South at this same time period.

Recommended Placement

Briefly explain the recommended placement of the text in a particular grade band.
Although the quantitative measures suggest placement in the 4th-5th grade level text complexity band, the qualitative measures and reader and task considerations suggest that the novel is best placed at the 9th-10th grade complexity band. The Common Core Standards Text Exemplars also places the novel in the 9th-10th grade complexity band.

Created by Julie Aikins, Chanute (KS) USD 413, aikins@usd413.org
Reviewed by __________________________ (name, state, e-mail, date)
Activity #4: Your Turn!

As a small group...

• Begin documenting a rationale for the recommended placement of “Ripe Figs” on the recommended placement template.

You will be sharing your recommended placement form with the larger group in the next activity!
Step 4: Recommended Placement

Activity #5: Discussion!

As a small group...

• How might classroom teachers make use of the recommended placement forms?
• How might school librarians make use of the recommended placement forms?
• How can I apply this model in the work that I do and encourage others I work with to embrace the model as well?

Be prepared to share your thoughts...
Additional Resources

• Text complexity bookmark
• “Beginner’s Guide to Text Complexity” from New York City Dept. of Education
• “Staircase to Complexity” video (15 minutes): Common Core in ELA/Literacy: Shift 3 – Staircase of Complexity
• Example final recommendation forms:
  • The Hunger Games
  • How to Steal a Dog
  • The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate
  • A Separate Peace
  • Diamond Willow
  • Extraordinary Mark Twain
  • Candy Bomber
  • Where Things Come Back
  • Why We Broke Up
  • Moon Over Manifest
  • Zora and Me
KSDE Text Complexity Team

Matt Copeland  
mcopeland@ksde.org

Jackie Lakin  
jlakin@ksde.org

Kris Shaw  
kshaw@ksde.org

Julie Aikins  
aikinsj@usd413.org

Barbara Bahm  
BBahm@tong464.org

Beverley Buller  
librarylady4299@sbcglobal.net

Bev Nye  
bev.nye@mcpherson.com