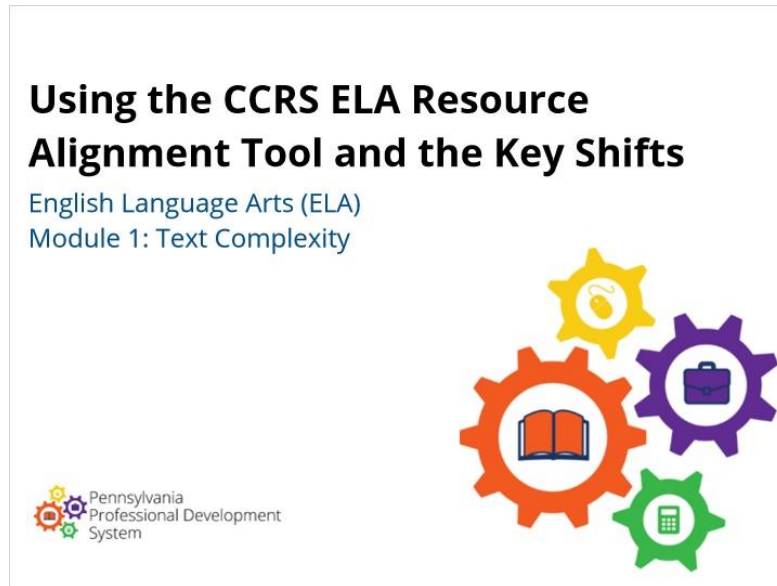


CCRS ELA Module 1 – Analyzing for Text Complexity

Welcome

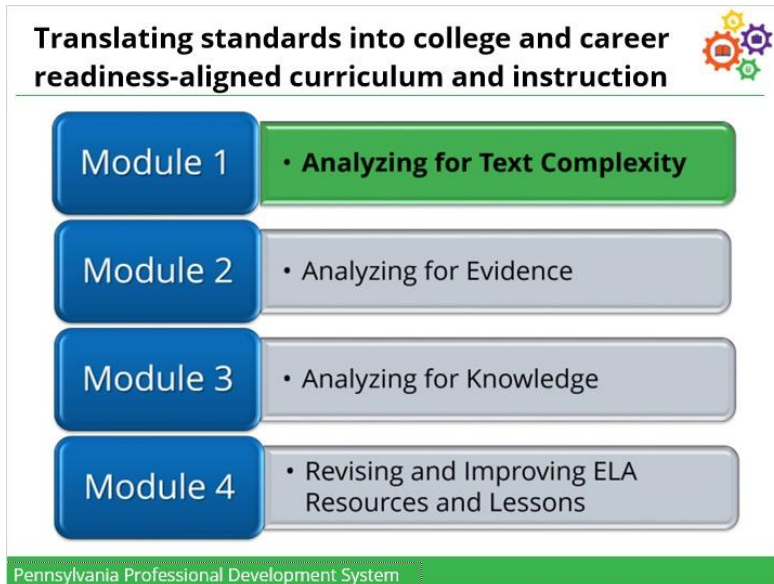


Notes:

Welcome to the first of 4 training modules in which you will learn the process for analyzing the alignment of a curriculum resource to the college and career readiness standards. These modules have been designed to help you determine if the curriculum resources you are using in your classroom are aligned to the three key shifts in the College and Career Readiness ELA Standards.

The first three modules will take you through a structured process of analysis where you will take three intentional passes through your curriculum resource. With each pass you will learn something new about the resource you are analyzing. At the completion of each module you may have different feelings about the resources you are using. It is important to know at the outset of this training that it is important to refrain from making complete judgments, either good or bad, about the resource you have chosen until you have completed the first three training modules.

Translating standards into college and career readiness-aligned curriculum and instruction



Notes:

During the course of the next 4 modules, you will learn how to analyze a published resource or a teacher designed lesson plan for alignment to the CCRS.

In Module 1 we will examine the key shift of text complexity. In this module you will determine if the curricular resource you are using provides regular practice with complex text and its academic language. We will also be determining the level of the text.

In Module 2 we will determine if the curricular resource provides reading, writing, and speaking activities that require a student to use evidence from both literary and informational text.

In Module 3 we will determine if a text helps students to build knowledge around a topic. We will also be looking to see if the text encourages cross-disciplinary activities.


After completing the analysis process and identifying the gaps between our current

curriculum resources and the level demands of the CCRS standards, module 4 will take you through a structured process for aligning curriculum to the standards.

Throughout the process you will become more familiar with the actual demands of the CCRS and will be more prepared to provide instruction to the level-specific demands of the standards.

The CCR Standards ELA Key Shifts

Key shifts



- 1. Text Complexity:** Does the resource provide regular practice with complex text and its academic language?
- 2. Evidence:** Does the resource provide reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text?
- 3. Knowledge:** Does the resource build knowledge through content-rich nonfiction?

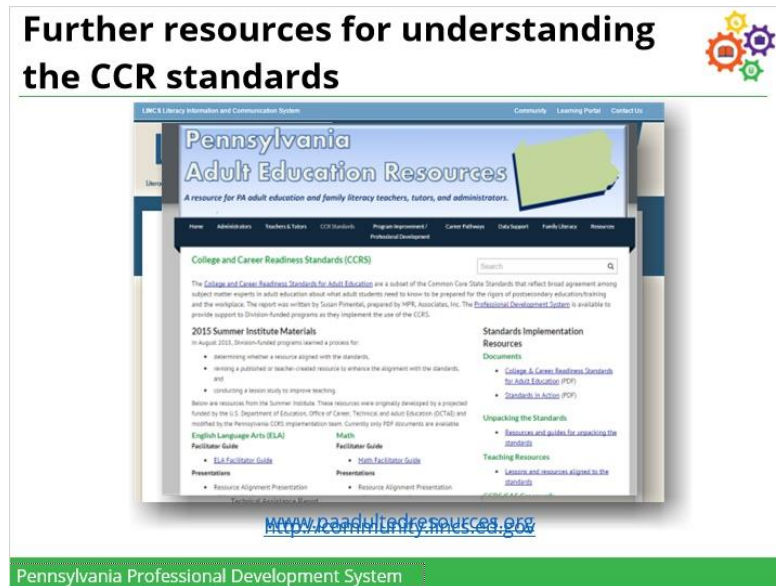
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Notes:

As you are aware, there are three key shifts or key advances inherent in the College and Career Readiness Standards. The three key shifts or key advances for the English Language Arts CCRS standards are Text Complexity...Evidence...and Knowledge. Through this alignment process we will be digging deeper into the applied meaning of each of these three shifts.

Throughout the course of these trainings you will hear us refer to Text Complexity, Evidence, and Knowledge as key shifts or key advances of the CCRS. We will be using the key shift or key advances of Text Complexity, Evidence, and Knowledge as the **Criterion** for analysis of your chosen curricular resource.

Further Resources for Understanding the CCR Standards



Notes:

As we begin this learning process, it is important to know that these modules have been designed as a brief introduction on how to align curricular resources to the CCRS.

For further information and useful resources relating to the College and Career Readiness Standards you may refer to the PA Adult Education Resources page or join the LINCS community of learning. LINCS is a national leadership initiative of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). The purpose of this site is to expand evidence-based practice in the field of adult education. These resources are free and accessible. You may also wish to contact your lead consultant if you are interested in further instruction or coaching relating to this topic.

Why are we doing this work?

Why are we doing this work?





Are the resources we are using tightly aligned to our CCR standards?



How can we modify curriculum resources in use to more tightly align to the standards?



How can we modify our teaching practices to achieve the necessary alignment?

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Notes:

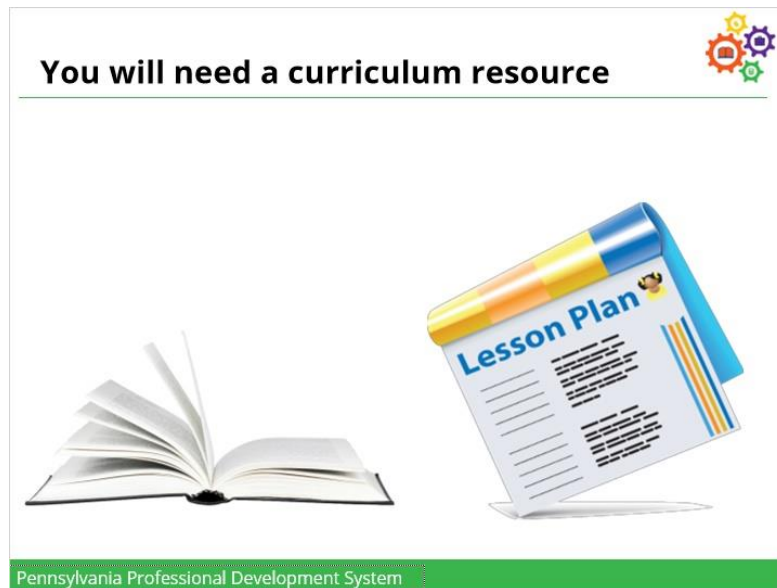
There are important overarching reasons to begin this work at your agency. An important question to ask is, why are we doing this work?

The following modules have been designed to help you better understand the intent of the CCR standards and to help Adult education teachers to adapt, create, and shape curricula that will teach the content of the CCR standards to students.

This work is important because it will help you focus on *closing the gap* between the CCR standards and classroom instruction. It will also help you focus on *closing the gap* between what students are learning and what they need to learn to meet college and career demands. As you move through this structured process of curriculum analysis you will build your capacity to evaluate teaching materials for alignment to standards and you will deepen your understanding of CCR standards and the key shifts.

In other words, you will learn the intents of the standards and what knowledge and skills should be taught and learned. These modules will help you build curriculum that will teach the content of the CCR standards to students, at the appropriate level.

Materials Needed



Notes:

For the purpose of these four training modules, you will need to have a curriculum resource to analyze.


A curricular resource can be a published resource that you've been using in your classroom. Examples of published resources might be the McGraw Hill Common Core or Steck Vaughn series, the Change Agent, or the Kaplan Big Book. A curricular resource is also teacher designed units and lessons. The process of analyzing curricular resources is the same for both published and teacher-designed materials.

For your first attempt at analyzing a resource, we suggest using a published resource you are familiar with.

As we guide you through the next 4 modules, you will be using the same curricular resource. If you do not have a resource ready we suggest you pause the training now and choose a curricular resource to analyze.

Module 1: Text Complexity

Module 1



Analyzing the Alignment of
Resources to the College and Career
Readiness Standards

Criterion 1: Text Complexity
Analyzing for complex text
and academic language

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Notes:

O.k. Let's get started!

In module 1, we will examine the key shift of text complexity. We will determine if the text in the curricular resource you are using is of high-quality. We will be examining the text to determine if it is worth reading, and if it is at the appropriate level of complexity, as defined by the CCR standards.

Now let's begin by analyzing our curricular resource for Text Complexity.

Criterion 1: Text Complexity



Criterion 1: Text Complexity


Does the resource provide regular practice with complex text and its academic language?

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Notes:

The objective of analyzing for Criterion 1, Text Complexity, is to answer the question, "Does the resource provide regular practice with complex text and its academic language?"

Criterion 1: Text complexity



Criterion 1: Text complexity



Materials our students need to be successful

FOUR YEAR GAP

Materials we are giving to our students

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Notes:

Research tells us that the ability to read complex text is the best predictor of post-secondary and workplace success - and that we can better prepare students for the rigors of college- and career-level reading by providing them access to more complex texts on a regular basis.

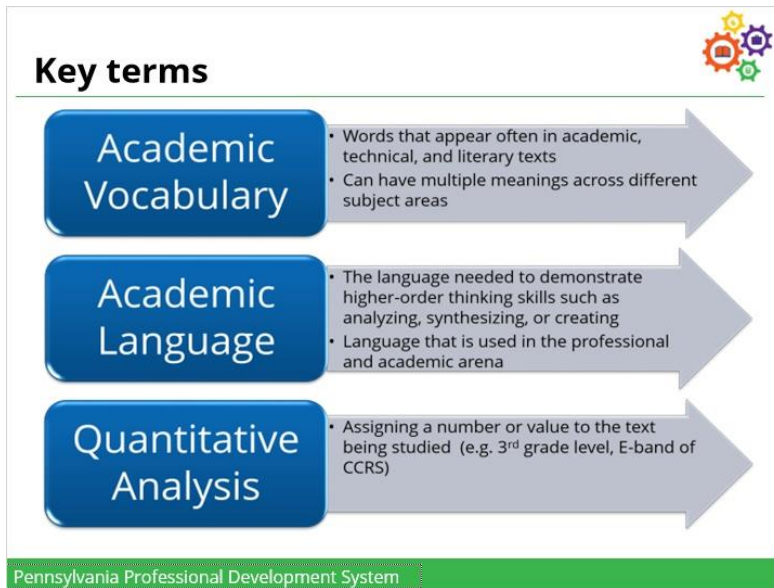
Most instructors believe that they are giving their students complex texts...but the research doesn't back up that claim.

Researchers tell us that many teachers have a subconscious fear or bias against challenging lower-level learners. Perhaps we don't want to discourage them by giving them a difficult text... or subconsciously we don't think they can handle a rigorous text. Or perhaps we look at a resource that says "GED®" on the cover and assume that it's rigorous, complex, and-or aligned.

The curricular challenges faced in Adult Education are the same challenges that are found in the k-12 system. There is a four-year-gap in the materials we use...and the materials we need. 12th grade classrooms nationwide are using 8th grade level textbooks. A review of student assessments shows that we are assessing students at a much lower level than we should...and that gap widens for students living in poverty. One agency's research showed that the average student arrives having completed 10th grade - but the average entry reading level is just 6th grade.

The research suggests that in order to meet the rigors of career and college entrance requirements we must shift from a sole focus on "reading strategies" and ensure that students are encounter complex text at their appropriate level. The new challenge is to use and teach reading strategies in conjunction with the use of complex texts. The exposure to complex texts is vitally important for adult students. Our students need intentional exposure to complex texts and for those texts to be similar to the type of text they will encounter in the workplace or in their post-secondary training.

Key terms



Notes:

Now let's talk about some key terms you'll need to understand as we move through module one.


The first term, **Academic Vocabulary** is defined as vocabulary that students will see in multiple subject areas throughout their studies. The words often have multiple meanings, connotations, or variations, depending on the context and subject area. Another way to think of Academic vocabulary is as cross-curricular terms. For example, the term *"justify"* and *"predict"* frequently appear in Science, Social Studies, and English texts. We call these words "high-value" because when we teach them, we are providing access to texts in multiple genres and subjects.

The second key term is related to the first. **Academic Language** refers to the words we use in our careers and in college, this is the language that is found in text books, technical writing, and should be found in our lessons, assignments and tests. Academic language is the mortar that holds academic vocabulary together in complex text. It is the language that changes meaning of words by creating the syntax, phrasing, and meaning depending on the discipline or purpose of the text. Our students need to understand academic language to be able to practice their higher order thinking skills at the DOK 2 and DOK 3 levels. We know that most of the questions students are responding to on the GED ask students to perform tasks at

these higher DOK levels. Finally, being fluent with high level academic vocabulary and language increases our student's ability to express knowledge. A focus on both academic vocabulary and language enables our adult students to differentiate between social language and the language that is used in work or college settings.

Finally, **Quantitative Analysis** is assigning a number or value to a text being studied. For example, a text may be at a 8th grade level...or may fall within the "C" band for complexity on the College and Career Readiness Standards. This is different than a QUALitative analysis where we evaluate a resource or text against a subjective set of criteria.

Teacher friendly tools needed



Teacher friendly tools needed

- English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy Resource Alignment Tool [\[#1\]](#)
- Access to Quantitative Analysis [\[#2\]](#)
- Quantitative Analysis Chart for Determining Text Complexity [\[#3\]](#)

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Notes:

Now let's talk about tools you will need to complete your curricular analysis.

In this module, in addition to your curricular resource, you'll need three teacher-friendly tools. The first is ELA Tool Number One - the Resource Alignment Tool. You'll also need ELA Tool Number Two - the Quantitative Analysis Tool, and Tool 3, the Chart for Determining Text Complexity.

Each of these tools can be found on the PA Adult Education Resources Website - or can be obtained from the in-house professional development specialist at your agency.

If you have not printed these tools you should go to the PA Adult Education Resources Website and download copies before moving forward with this training.

ELA Tool 1

ELA Tool 1

Criterion descriptor	Criterion #1—Text Complexity: Does the resource provide regular practice with complex text and its academic language?			Rating each dimension
Dimension 1.1	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet (Insufficient Evidence)	Evidence “look fors”
Text Complexity and Quality: Most of the texts included in the resource are at the appropriate level of complexity as defined by the CCR standards; all texts are worth reading. (Support documents: text complexity resources (#2 and #3))	Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publisher supplies list of all texts in the submission with their quantitative measures, and most texts are within the appropriate band of complexity for the level. Texts and other stimuli are published or of publishable quality. The texts are content-rich. They exhibit exceptional craft and thought and/or provide useful information. 			
Dimension 1.2	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet (Insufficient Evidence)	Suggested high-value actions to fill alignment gaps
Academic Vocabulary: The resource regularly focuses on understanding words and phrases, their relationships, and nuances, particularly general academic words and phrases.	Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions and tasks support students in unpacking the academic language (vocabulary and syntax) in passages. The vocabulary words selected for attention are primarily academic vocabulary. Those words are key to understanding the specific text. 			
Summary findings	Summary of strengths and weaknesses: High-value actions needed to fill the gaps (check all actions that apply): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask the publisher of the resource to provide information about the quantitative and qualitative complexity of the texts. <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct qualitative analyses of passages to differentiate between texts worth reading and those not worth reading. <input type="checkbox"/> If most of the passages you reviewed match a lower level of learning, recommend the resource be used for that level instead. <input type="checkbox"/> Identify high-value academic vocabulary that should be addressed in the lesson. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: 			

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Notes:

This is ELA Tool #1. Make sure you are on the front page of ELA Tool #1.

You'll notice the criterion descriptor at the top - in this case - Text Complexity. We will be analyzing your curricular resource based on the criterion of Text Complexity.

Moving down the page, on the left hand side you will see that there are two Dimension Descriptors. These descriptors provide a concrete description of what you will be looking for in the text.

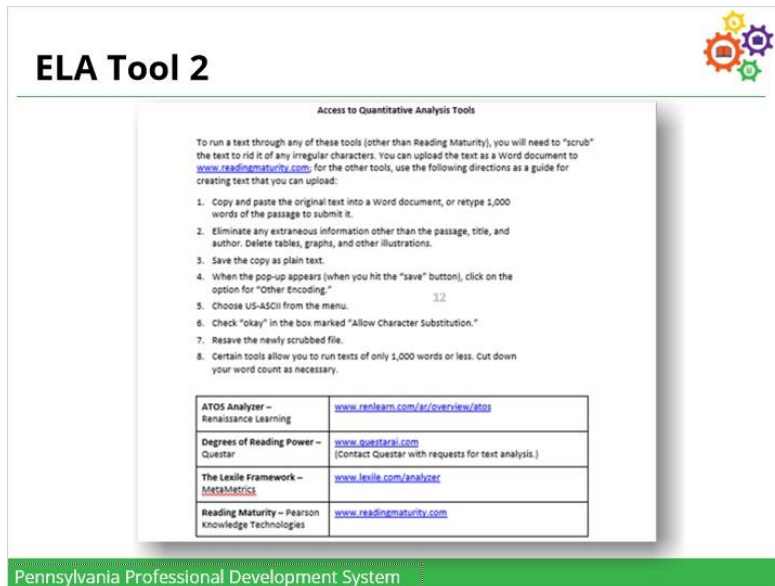
Following along the page to the right you will see a space marked evidence. Here you will find the “look-fors” or the evidence we need to decide whether a resource is well-aligned or not well-aligned..

To the right of each Dimension descriptor, you’ll see a place to rate each dimension. You will be asked to rate your curricular resource on it’s alignment to the Criterion Text Complexity. You will want to consider this rating bar to be a Likert scale. You may find that your resource is on the border between two ratings.

On the following page, you'll find a space to summarize the evidence you are using to justify your ratings.

Finally, at the bottom of the form you will see there is a place to list the high-value actions you would take to revise this resource for tighter alignment to the CCR standards. These high-value actions are things you might suggest to the publisher - or do yourself - to make the resource better aligned to the shifts. During the analysis process you will not be revising just analyzing.

ELA Tool 2



ELA Tool 2

Access to Quantitative Analysis Tools

To run a text through any of these tools (other than Reading Maturity), you will need to “scrub” the text to rid it of any irregular characters. You can upload the text as a Word document to www.readingmaturity.com. For the other tools, use the following directions as a guide for creating text that you can upload:

1. Copy and paste the original text into a Word document, or retype 1,000 words of the passage to submit it.
2. Eliminate any extraneous information other than the passage, title, and author. Delete tables, graphs, and other illustrations.
3. Save the copy as plain text.
4. When the pop-up appears (when you hit the “save” button), click on the option for “Other Encoding.”
5. Choose US-ASCII from the menu.
6. Check “okay” in the box marked “Allow Character Substitution.”
7. Resave the newly scrubbed file.
8. Certain tools allow you to run texts of only 1,000 words or less. Cut down your word count as necessary.

ATOS Analyzer – Renaissance Learning	www.renlearn.com/ato/overview/atos
Degrees of Reading Power – Questar	www.questar.com (Contact Questar with requests for text analysis.)
The Lexile Framework – MetaMetrics	www.lexile.com/analyzer
Reading Maturity – Pearson Knowledge Technologies	www.readingmaturity.com


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Notes:

ELA Tool Number 2 shows you multiple ways to complete a quantitative analysis on a text. On any of the websites listed, you can copy and paste a text and receive a quantitative analysis of the document. We'll examine how to do this more closely - and why you might want to do it - a bit later in the training.

ELA Tool 3

ELA Tool 3



Quantitative Analysis Chart for Determining Text Complexity¹

This research-based chart represents the “staircase” of text complexity that will allow students to reach levels of proficiency that will be used to deem them college- and career-ready once they exit Level E. For more information about this research, see *New Research on Text Complexity*.²

Reading levels have been bundled into five grade-level groupings—A (K–1), B (2–3), C (4–5), D (6–8), and E (9–12)—to more closely reflect adult education levels of learning: Beginning Adult Basic Education Literacy, Beginning Basic Education, Low Intermediate Basic Education, High Intermediate Basic Education, and Low Adult Secondary and High Adult Secondary Education.

CCR Levels of Learning	ATOS Analyzer	Degrees of Reading Power	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework	Reading Maturity
B (2 nd –3 rd)	2.75–3.14	42–54	1.98–3.34	420–820	5.53–6.13
C (4 th –5 th)	4.97–7.03	52–60	4.51–7.73	740–1010	5.42–7.92
D (6 th –8 th)	7.00–9.98	57–67	6.51–10.34	925–1185	7.04–9.57
E (9 th –10 th)	9.67–12.01	62–72	8.32–12.12	1050–1335	8.41–10.81
E (11 th –CCR)	11.20–14.10	67–74	10.34–14.2	1185–1385	9.57–12.00

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Notes:

Tool #3 allows you to compare the quantitative analyses you get from the online tools to the appropriate bands in the College and Career Readiness Standards. We'll examine this a bit closer later on, too.

Dimension 1.1: Text complexity

Dimension 1.1: Text complexity



Most of the texts included in the resource are at the appropriate level of complexity as defined by the CCR standards; **all** texts are worth reading.

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Notes:

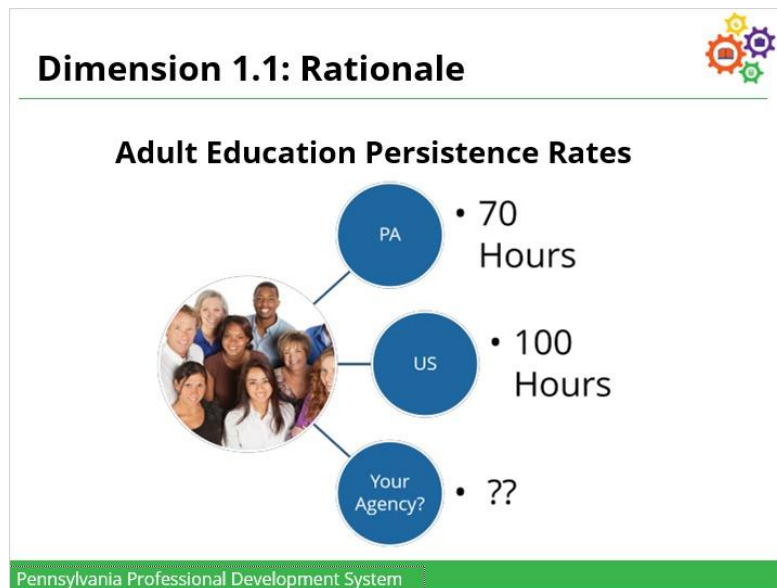
Now let's look at Dimension 1.1. Take a moment to read the dimension to yourself.

Because success in most work and college settings requires the ability to read and comprehend complex texts independently, the first dimension focuses on the quality of text. Research shows that reading high-quality text-text that is worth reading and content-rich-increases reading proficiency. Therefore, the expectation is that most of the texts in the resource are at the appropriate level of complexity and quality, as defined by the CCR standards.

You will notice that the words Most and all are highlighted. For the purpose of this work Most means that within a curricular published resource or a unit designed by a teacher, 80% of the text will be at the appropriate level of complexity as defined by ELA reading standard 10 in the CCR standards.

All means that all of the text are relevant, of high interest and are appropriately complex.

Dimension 1.1: Rationale



Notes:

Let's ask ourselves, "Why does all of the reading we assign to students need to be "worth reading"?"

Research conducted on reading comprehension rates shows us that students can increase their reading comprehension exponentially when they are supplied with complex text on a regular basis. We all know in the Adult educational setting we often have very little time with our students.

Do you know what the average persistence rate is at your agency? If you don't know the actual number, can you estimate the average number of hours your students persist in your classroom?

We all know that time with our students is precious. Statewide, the average is 70 hours. Nationally, it's less than 100. With such little time with our students, EVERY text we provide must be "worth reading" - it must be complex, contain appropriate academic vocabulary and language, and be of high-interest - meaningful for their preparation for the workforce and/or post-secondary training.

In order to qualify as "worth reading" - a text should be short enough to read and

study carefully. As we shift to the College and Career Readiness Standards, we are moving away from covering multiple subjects in a surface way. It's a clear shift from teaching subjects a mile wide and an inch deep - to covering topics in much greater depth - an inch wide and a mile deep. We are shifting our thinking about texts in that way, too. We want a text that is short, but complex enough and of high interest so that the student wants and needs to keep coming back to text, digging deeper and being inspired to seek out independent reading.

Together, let's look for evidence

Together, let's look for evidence



Identify any evidence provided in the resource of text complexity appropriate for this level.

1. Scan the **whole text** (e.g., table of contents, appendix, and teacher resources, if provided).
2. Identify any information about text complexity in the lessons or accompanying material.

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Notes:

Now it is time to start looking at the resource you have chosen to analyze.

Step one is to look at the resource you're analyzing and examine if the publisher has provided any evidence of text complexity appropriate for the level. Start by scanning the whole text (including things like the table of contents, appendix, teacher guides, or supplemental online resources) to see if there is any indication of the level of the resource. If are analyzing a teacher designed resource look at the assigned readings from the lesson. If you're pulling a text out of a larger resource, you'll want to take the time to scan the entire resource. Take five minutes and scan the resource...

Determining Text Complexity

The screenshot shows the Pearson Reading Maturity Metric (RMM) beta website. The header is orange with 'PEARSON' on the left and 'ALWAYS LEARNING' on the right. Below the header, the page title is 'Reading Maturity Metric beta'. A navigation bar includes 'Welcome Back, Ken', 'ACCOUNT', 'LOG OUT', and 'HELP'. The main content area is titled 'Process Passage' and features a large text input box with the placeholder 'Type or paste your passage here'. To the right of the input box is a green button labeled 'RMM 0' and a blue button labeled 'Analyze'. Below the input box, it says 'Words left: 2500'. The footer contains contact information and a copyright notice: '© 2015 Pearson Education, Inc. or its affiliate(s). All rights reserved. beta 1.3'.

Notes:

Often you may not find anything listed. Or if you do...your professional judgment might lead you to not trust the information. (Remember when we said 12th grade textbooks tended to read at a 8th grade level?) How can you verify that the listed complexity is accurate?

On Tool Number two, there are several options to generate a quantitative analysis. One of them is a website called Reading Maturity-dot-com. This is what the website looks like. To complete a quantitative analysis, you can simply copy-and-paste a piece of text into the box and click on analyze. You must enter at least 1000 words to get an accurate measure.

How do you copy and paste out of a textbook? Many modern textbooks are available as online resources...or maybe your resource is a historical document or newspaper article. Many of those are available online, too. If so, you can copy from there. If not, many scanners and photocopiers have OCR software that will read the text on a page. Or you can dictate the passage into your smartphone.

Determining Text Complexity

PEARSON ALWAYS LEARNING

Reading Maturity Metric *beta* Welcome Back, Ken ACCOUNT LOG OUT HELP

←

After World War II ended, the ...

Words Count: 452 | Sentence Count: 28
After World War II ended, the capitalist and communist nations soon began engaging in a power struggle called the C...

RMM 8.8

Edit Passage

Overall RMM score: 8.8
Common Core Grade Band: 6 - 10

How does your score compare?

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level 9.7
Coleman-Liau Readability 12.2
Dale-Chall Readability 10.7
Automated Readability Index 10.5
Hide

Top maturity words

overt	capitalist
reliance	capitalism
upheld	vigilant
engaging	minorities
instantaneous	reform

Vocabulary in context

After World War II ended, the **capitalist** and communist nations soon began **engaging** in a power struggle called the Cold War. Leading the **capitalist**

Notes:

After you click analyze, you will see that it gives you a “Reading Maturity Metric” of 8.8 in the upper right corner. It also gives you other measures down the right hand side. It will also give you a list of, what they call, “maturity words”. This list might be a good start as you think about the academic vocabulary in the text.

This is not the only text analyzer you can use. Reading Maturity is the one we suggest, as it tends to be the most accurate... However, all of the other options listed on ELA tool number 2 work in very similar ways.

Materials to support your work

Materials to support your work					
CCR Levels of Learning	ATOS	Degrees of Reading Power	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework	Reading Maturity
B (2 nd – 3 rd)	2.75 – 5.14	42 – 54	1.98 – 5.34	420 – 820	3.53 – 6.13
C (4 th – 5 th)	4.97 – 7.03	52 – 80	4.51 – 7.73	740 – 1010	5.42 – 7.92
D (6 th – 8 th)	7.00 – 9.98	67 – 87	6.51 – 10.34	925 – 1185	7.04 – 9.57
E (9 th – 10 th)	9.67 – 12.01	62 – 72	8.32 – 12.12	1050 – 1335	8.41 – 10.81
E (11 th – CCR)	11.20 – 14.10	67 – 74	10.34 – 14.2	1185 – 1385	9.57 – 12.00

Notes:

If we take the “Reading Maturity Metric” of 8.8 and check it against ELA Tool Number 3, we can determine the College and Career Readiness level. Looking in the last column, labeled “Reading Maturity”, and finding the range where 8.8 fits...we can compare it to the CCR bands on the left hand side. In this case, our text is in the ‘E’ level...

Again, no matter what online analyzer you use, the process remains the same.

Rating Dimension 1.1 Text Complexity

Dimension 1.1: Text complexity rating

Focus on the text **in your selected lesson or unit** to evaluate the text quality and determine if it is appropriately complex for the determined level.

Apply the evidence for Dimension 1.1 to the resource:

1. Has the publisher supplied a list of quantitative measures of the text? And are they within the appropriate band for the level?
2. Are the texts previously published or of publishable quality? Are they content-rich?
3. Do they exhibit exceptional craft and thought, and/or provide useful information?

Rate this dimension.

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Notes:

Now, let's focus on the text in one lesson from the published resource or teacher designed lesson you are analyzing. As you are considering the text in the lesson you are considering all of the text. This would include sidebars, graphs, cartoons, charts, maps, questions and etcetera.

You will need to answer the following questions to determine the rating for this dimension. It is important to be objective when you answering these questions. Take the questions at face value. You may think, "I think the teacher or publisher meant to do this?" If the information is not present you must rate the Dimension at the lower level. For example in question 1, if the publisher or author of the lesson did not include this information in the resource you must rate the consider this question as earning a "Does Not Meet" rating. Further if the curricular resource is used for student in the E band but the qualitative analysis shows the text is actually written at the C level then this would also indicate a "Does Not Meet".

For question number two it is important to know what publishable quality and content-rich means. You can assume that a published resource has been through some sort of an editing process. This means there are little to no grammatical mistakes and it has been vetted by an outside source. Content-rich means that this is a text "worth reading" A text that is worth reading requires the reader to return to

the text to learn more things on a deeper level.

For Question 2 and 3 you may should consider the intended student demographic when making a judgement of the overall rating of this dimension.

In general the process involves looking for the evidence listed in Dimension 1.1 -if you find it, it meets. If you only find some of the evidence, it partially meets. If you find none (or very little), it does not meet.

Remember that you can treat the rating as a “likert scale” of sorts. You are not limited to just the three options. You may choose to rate something on the higher end of “partially meets”, for example...or on the line between “partially meets” and “does not meet”. Be sure you are taking notes so that you are able to defend your position within your PLCs at your agency.

Take a few minutes now and rate your dimension.

Dimension 1.2: Academic vocabulary

Dimension 1.2: Academic vocabulary



The resource **regularly** focuses on understanding words and phrases, their relationships, and nuances, as well as on acquiring new vocabulary, particularly general academic (Tier 2) words and phrases.

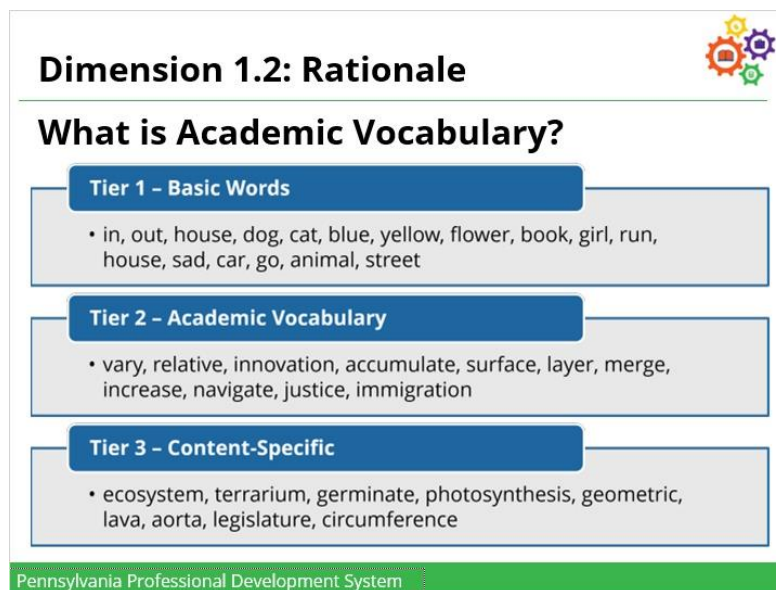
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Notes:

Now we move onto the second dimension in Text complexity. This dimension explores the important role that academic vocabulary, or Tier 2 words, play in understanding complex text. Research shows that vocabulary is central in reading and listening comprehension - and that academic vocabulary and academic language can be *the* major obstacle to student access and success with the text. Therefore, the expectation is that the resource regularly focuses on asking students if they understand words and phrases (particularly general academic words and phrases) as well as the relationships and nuances of the vocabulary.

Again, notice that the word regularly is highlighted. For this dimension you will be examining the questions in your lesson's student assignments to determine if they focus the student on the academic vocabulary and academic language of the lesson. You will be analyzing the text to see if the student questions and assignments point the student to the academic vocabulary about 80% of the time.

Dimension 1.2: Rationale



Dimension 1.2: Rationale

What is Academic Vocabulary?

- Tier 1 – Basic Words**
 - in, out, house, dog, cat, blue, yellow, flower, book, girl, run, house, sad, car, go, animal, street
- Tier 2 – Academic Vocabulary**
 - vary, relative, innovation, accumulate, surface, layer, merge, increase, navigate, justice, immigration
- Tier 3 – Content-Specific**
 - ecosystem, terrarium, germinate, photosynthesis, geometric, lava, aorta, legislature, circumference

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Notes:

As you begin to analyze for Dimension 1.2 it is important to have a clear understanding of vocabulary tiers. There are a distinct difference among Basic site words, Academic Vocabulary and Content Specific words. In general we see a greater emphasis on Tier 3 or Content Specific words in published texts.


Tier one words are what you might call sight words...words that have concrete definitions and that students have little trouble accessing.

Tier three words are words that are specific to a content area or topic. Think of scientific words, like photosynthesis, for example, that have little use outside of botany.

Tier two words are key for students to master and understand deeply. Why? Because academic words such as *justify*, *expand*, *maximum*, and *barren* are found in many content area texts such as social studies, Science, Mathematics, English, and History texts. Understanding these terms greatly increases comprehension of academic texts. Too frequently, vocabulary lists are unnecessarily long. That leads to just-in-time cramming and promptly forgetting the words following the quiz or test. There isn't enough time in the day for teachers to teach all words with the same amount of emphasis. Multiple exposures and practice with tier two vocabulary is vital.

Together, let's look for evidence

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Step 1

Look for evidence in **your selected lesson** that attention is being paid to vocabulary, especially academic vocabulary.

Scan supporting documents and instructions that accompany a lesson for Dimension 1.2:

1. Is there any attention on vocabulary?
2. Are any of the words identified academic vocabulary words (as opposed to words that are domain-specific)?
3. Are questions asked about vocabulary and the author's word choice?

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Notes:

Now that we have reviewed the definition of Academic vocabulary it is your turn to review you a selected lesson in your curricular resource. Scan your selected lesson


to see if there is appropriate attention being paid to academic vocabulary.

You will be looking to see if the text identifies vocabulary that teachers and students should focus on? You will be determining whether or not the vocabulary is truly tier-two academic vocabulary, or is it specific to the topic at hand? Pay attention to see if there are questions that ask a student to decode or understand the purpose for the author's choice of words and phrases? Questions such as this are asking the student to do work at the DOK three level.

Take a few minutes now and review your lesson.

Rating Dimension 1.2 Academic Vocabulary

Dimension 1.2:
Academic vocabulary rating



Step 2

Scan **up to 20% of your resource** for evidence of
Dimension 1.2:

1. How is vocabulary handled in the resource?
2. Are academic vocabulary words targeted?
3. Are they central to understanding the text?

Rate this dimension.

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Notes:

Now that you've reviewed your lesson, it's time to review the unit (or up to 20% of the entire resource) for evidence of Dimension 1.2.


Using the evidence statements provided on ELA Tool Number one, record the strengths and weakness of the resource - and rate the dimension.

Are the vocabulary words selected primarily academic vocabulary? Do the questions and tasks support the students in understanding that vocabulary and language?

Take few minutes, review a larger portion of the resource...and rate the dimension.

Criterion 1: Summary

Criterion 1: Summary



Stop and Think:

- What were some of your key findings?
- What was the general consensus about text quality and complexity?
- Was academic vocabulary featured in the lessons and questions?
- How did you rate these dimensions?
- What questions do you still have about the importance of text complexity and quality?

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Notes:

Now that we've covered both dimensions of Text Complexity - it's time to summarize our finding about the criterion as a whole - and get a sense of what we think about the quality and complexity of the texts in the resource - as well as the resource's focus on academic vocabulary.

Using your notes, and the questions on this slide as a guide, summarize the strengths and weakness of the resource in regards to text complexity.

Take five minutes and write down your thoughts at the top of Page 3 of ELA Tool number 1.

Criterion 1: High-value actions

Criterion 1: High-value actions



- Ask the publisher of the resource to provide information about the quantitative and qualitative complexity of the texts.
- Conduct qualitative analyses of passages to differentiate between texts worth reading and those not worth reading.
- If most of the passages you reviewed match a lower level of learning, recommend the resource be used for that level instead.
- Identify high-value academic vocabulary words that should be addressed in the lesson

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Notes:

Now it's time to consider what actions need to be taken in order to improve the alignment of the resource to Criterion1 - Text Complexity.

These “high-value actions” may be things that you ask the publisher to do in subsequent editions of the text... Or they may be things that you will do yourself when you revise the resource in the fourth module in this series. Depending on your findings, this could mean providing information about the quantitative and qualitative complexity of its texts. Another possible action is conducting qualitative analyses of the passages to differentiate between texts that are worth reading and those that are not. In addition, if high-value academic vocabulary words are not included in the lesson, choose an action that will identify those words that should be addressed.

Take a few moments and select the high-value actions needed to better align this resource in terms of text complexity.

Congratulations!

**Congratulations!**

You have completed Module 1

**Analyzing the Alignment of
Resources to the College and Career
Readiness Standards**

Criterion 1: Text Complexity
Analyzing for complex text
and academic language

**You have successfully completed this module.
Please download any resources before exiting the lesson.**

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Notes:

Congratulations you have completed Module 1 and have analyzed a resource for its level of text complexity.

The next module will take you through the process of analysis for alignment to the key shift of evidence.

Remember you may have different feelings about how well aligned your resource is to the CCR standards at the completion of each module. It is important to refrain from making complete judgments, either good or bad, about the resource you have chosen until you have completed the entire analysis process.