TOOL 7

GRADIENTS IN COMPLEXITY:
Text Complexity Rubric for (Informational) Texts

Informational Text Analyzed (author, date):

Overall Complexity Rating: Notes:

	Simple Text [1]	Somewhat Complex Text [2]	Complex Text [3]	Very Complex Text [4]
Format Layout	Consistent placement of text, regular word and line spacing, often large plain font Graphics, captioned photos, labeled diagrams that directly support and help interpret the written text Simple indexes, short glossaries Supportive signposting and/or enhancements	May have longer passages of uninterrupted text, often plain font Graphs, photos, tables, charts, diagrams directly support the text Indexes, glossaries, occasional quotes, references Reduced signposting and enhancements	Longer passages, uninterrupted text may include columns or other variations in layout, often smaller more elaborate font Essential integrated graphics, tables, charts, formulas (necessary to make meaning of text) Embedded quotes, concluding appendices, indexes, glossaries, bibliography Minimal signposting and/or enhancements	Very long passages, uninterrupted text that may include columns or other variations in layout, often small densely packed print Extensive/complex, intricate, essential integrated tables, charts, formulas necessary to make connections or synthesize concepts presented Abstracts, footnotes, citations and/or detailed indexes, appendices, bibliography Integrated signposting conforming to disciplinary formats. No enhancements
Purpose and Meaning	A single or simple purpose conveying clear or factual information Meaning is clear, concrete with a narrow focus	Purpose involves conveying a range of ideas with more detailed information or examples Meaning is more involved with a broader focus	Purpose includes explaining or interpreting information, not just presenting it Meaning includes more complex concepts and a higher level of detail	Purpose may include examining/evaluating complex, sometimes theoretical and contested information Meaning is intricate, with abstract theoretical elements
Structure & Discourse	Discourse style & organization of the text is clear or chronological and/or easy to predict Connections between ideas, processes, or events are explicit and clear One primary text structure is evident (e.g., sequence, description)	Organization of the text may include a thesis or reasoned explanation in addition to facts Connections between some ideas, processes, or events are implicit or subtle Includes a main text structure with 1-2 embedded structures	Organization of the text may contain multiple pathways, more than one thesis and/or several genres Connections between an expanded range ideas, processes, or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle Includes different text structure types of varying complexity	Organization of the text is intricate or specialized for a particular discipline or genre Connections between an extensive range ideas, processes, or events are deep, intricate and often implicit or subtle Includes sustained complex text structure types and/or specialized, hybrid text types, including digital texts
Language Features	Mainly simple sentences Simple language style, sometimes with narrative elements Vocabulary is mostly familiar or defined in text	Simple and compound sentences with some more complex constructions Increased objective style and passive constructions with higher factual content Includes some unfamiliar, context-dependent or multiple meaning words	Many complex sentences with increased subordinate phrases and clauses or transition words Objective/passive style with higher conceptual content and increasing nominalization Includes much academic (nuanced) vocabulary and/or some domain specific (content) vocabulary	Mainly complex sentences, often containing multiple concepts Specialized disciplinary style with dense conceptual content and high nominalization Includes extensive academic (nuanced, precise) and/or domain specific (content) vocabulary
Bk Knowledge Demands	General topic is familiar, with some details known by reader Simple, concrete ideas	General topic is familiar, with some details new to reader (cultural, historical, literary, political, legal, etc.) Both simple and more complicated, abstract ideas	General topic is somewhat familiar but with many details unknown to reader (cultural, historical, literary, political, legal, etc.) A range of recognizable ideas and challenging abstract concepts	General topic is mostly unfamiliar with most details unknown to reader (cultural, historical, literary, political, legal, etc.) Many new ideas, perspectives and/or complex, challenging, abstract and theoretical concepts

GRADIENTS IN COMPLEXITY:
Text Complexity Rubric for (Literary) Texts

TOOL 8

Literary Text Analyzed (author, date):

Overall Complexity Rating: Notes:

	Simple Text [1]	Somewhat Complex Text [2]	Complex Text [3]	Very Complex Text [4]
Format Layout	Consistent placement of text, regular word and line spacing, often large plain font Numerous illustrations that directly support and help interpret the written text Supportive signposting (e.g., chapter heading) and enhancements	May have longer passages of uninterrupted text, often plain font A range of illustrations that support selected parts of the text Reduced signposting and enhancements	Longer passages of uninterrupted text may include columns or other variations in layout, often smaller more elaborate font A few illustrations that support the text OR includes images that require some interpretation Minimal signposting or enhancements	Very long passages of uninterrupted text that may include columns or other variations in layout, often small densely packed print Minimal or no illustrations that support the text OR includes images/text layout that require deeper interpretation (e.g., symbolism or recursive reading) Integrated signposting conforming to literary devices. No enhancements
Purpose and Meaning	Purpose usually stated explicitly in the title or in the beginning of the text (this is a story about...) One intended level of meaning or lesson Theme is obvious and revealed early in the text Common themes	Purpose tends to be revealed early in the text, but may be conveyed with some subtlety More than one level of meaning, with levels clearly distinguished from each other Theme is clear and revealed early in the text, but may be conveyed with some subtlety More than one possible theme	Purpose is implicit and may be revealed over the entirety of the text Several levels of meaning that may be difficult to identify/separate Theme(s) may be implicit or subtle, is sometimes ambiguous and may be revealed over the entirety of the text Universal themes or archetypes (e.g., the hero's journey)	Purpose implicit or subtle, is sometimes ambiguous and revealed over the entirety of the text Several levels and competing elements of meaning that are difficult to identify/separate and interpret Theme(s) implicit or subtle, often ambiguous, and revealed over the entirety of the text Universal themes or competing archetypes (e.g., warrior vs. hero)
Structure & Discourse	Discourse style & organization of the text is clear, chronological and/or easy to predict or follow Connections between events or ideas are explicit and clear One primary text structure is evident (e.g., chronology)	Organization of text may have two or more storylines/ additional characters and is occasionally difficult to predict Connections among events or ideas are sometimes implicit or subtle Includes a main text structure with 1-2 embedded structures	Organization of text may include, subplots, time shifts and more complex characters Connections among events or ideas are often implicit or subtle (e.g., flashback establishes chronology) Includes different text types (diary entry or news story within narrative) of varying complexity	Organization of text is intricate with regard to elements (e.g., narrative viewpoint, time shifts, multiple characters, storylines/subplots, detail) Connections among events or ideas are implicit or subtle throughout the text Includes sustained complex text types and hybrid or non-linear texts (story within a story)
Language Features	Mainly short, simple sentences Simple, literal language; predictable Vocabulary is mostly familiar for grade level; frequently appearing words	Simple and compound sentences with some more complex constructions Mainly literal, common-use language Some unfamiliar or context-dependent, multiple meaning or precise words	Many complex sentences with increased subordinate phrases and clauses Some figurative language or literary devices Includes much academic vocabulary and some domain specific (content) vocabulary, precise language	Many complex sentences, often containing nuanced details or concepts Much figurative language or use of literary devices (metaphor, analogy, connotative language literary allusion, etc.) Includes extensive academic and domain specific (content) vocabulary, and possibly archaic language
Bk Knowledge Demands	Minimal assumed personal experience or background knowledge needed Simple, straightforward ideas	Some assumed personal experience and/or knowledge (e.g., cultural or historical) ideas Both simple and more complex ideas	Much assumed personal experience and/or explicit references to cultural, historical, literary, or political knowledge A range of recognizable ideas and challenging concepts or themes	Extensive, demanding, assumed personal experience and implied cultural, historical, literary, or political knowledge Many new ideas, perspectives, and/or complex, challenging concepts