



## Qualitative Features of Text Complexity Explained for Literature

Accessible Features	Complex Features
<b>Background Knowledge</b>	
How much background knowledge is necessary to understand the text? <i>(Consider cultural familiarity and literary knowledge necessary to understand allusions to other works)</i>	
<input type="radio"/> Common everyday experiences or clearly fantastical situations	<input type="radio"/> Experiences distinctly different from one's own
<input type="radio"/> Everyday knowledge and familiarity with genre conventions required	<input type="radio"/> Cultural and literary knowledge useful
<input type="radio"/> Low intertextuality (few if any references/allusions to other texts)	<input type="radio"/> High intertextuality (many references/allusions to other texts)
<b>Levels of Meaning</b>	
Does the text have a single level of meaning or are there multiple/hidden levels of meaning? <i>(Consider the clarity of the theme(s))</i>	
<input type="radio"/> Simple theme	<input type="radio"/> Complex or sophisticated theme(s)
<input type="radio"/> Single theme	<input type="radio"/> Multiple themes
<input type="radio"/> Single level of meaning	<input type="radio"/> Multiple levels of meaning
<input type="radio"/> Single Perspective	<input type="radio"/> Multiple perspectives
<b>Text Structure</b>	
How is the text structured? <i>(Consider if the structure is conventional or unconventional, if there is a single narrator or multiple narrators, if events are related in chronological order or if there are flashbacks and other manipulations of time)</i>	
<input type="radio"/> Simple	<input type="radio"/> Complex
<input type="radio"/> Explicit	<input type="radio"/> Implicit
<input type="radio"/> Conventional	<input type="radio"/> Unconventional
<input type="radio"/> Events related in chronological order	<input type="radio"/> Events related out of chronological order
<b>Language Features (continued on next page)</b>	
What are the language features of the text? <i>(Consider if the language used is mostly literal or figurative, clear or abstract, familiar/contemporary or archaic/jargon)</i>	
<input type="radio"/> Literal	<input type="radio"/> Figurative or ironic
<input type="radio"/> Clear	<input type="radio"/> Ambiguous or purposefully misleading
<input type="radio"/> Contemporary, familiar	<input type="radio"/> Archaic or otherwise unfamiliar

<input type="radio"/> Conversational	<input type="radio"/> General academic or domain specific vocabulary
<input type="radio"/> Light vocabulary load, few unfamiliar or academic words <sup>1</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Many words unfamiliar and high academic vocabulary present
<input type="radio"/> Sentence structure straightforward <sup>2</sup>	<input type="radio"/> Complex and varied sentence structures
<b>Illustrations/graphics</b>	
How are illustrations/graphics (if included) used? (Consider if they add clarification or add to the complexity)	
<input type="radio"/> Simple graphics	<input type="radio"/> Sophisticated graphics
<input type="radio"/> Graphics unnecessary or merely supplemental to understanding	<input type="radio"/> Graphics essential to understanding the text and may provide information not elsewhere provided

## Quantitative Measures

Grade Band	ATOS	Degrees of Power®	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework®	Reading Maturity	Text Evaluator
2 <sup>nd</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup>	2.75-5.14	42-54	1.98-5.34	420-820	3.53-6.13	100-590
4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup>	4.97-7.03	52-60	4.51-7.73	740-1010	5.42-7.92	405-720
6 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	7.00-9.98	57-67	6.51-10.34	925-1185	7.04-9.57	550-940
9 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup>	9.67-12.01	62-72	8.32-12.12	1050-1335	8.41-10.81	750-1125
11 <sup>th</sup> -CCR	11.20-14.10	67-74	10.34-14.2	1185-1385	9.57-12.00	890-1360

For grade \_\_\_\_\_, holistically, this text should be considered:

- \_\_\_\_\_ ACCESSIBLE
- \_\_\_\_\_ MODERATELY COMPLEX
- \_\_\_\_\_ HIGHLY COMPLEX

Adapted from Achieve the Core, *Qualitative Features of Text Complexity*

Explained: [http://achievethecore.org/content/upload/Companion to Qualitative Scale Features Explained.pdf](http://achievethecore.org/content/upload/Companion%20to%20Qualitative%20Scale%20Features%20Explained.pdf)

[http://achievethecore.org/content/upload/CCSS Grade Bands and Quantitative Measures%20updated%202015.pdf](http://achievethecore.org/content/upload/CCSS%20Grade%20Bands%20and%20Quantitative%20Measures%20updated%202015.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> While vocabulary can be measured by quantifiable means, it is still a feature for careful consideration when selecting texts. A helpful tool for evaluating academic vocabulary is located here: <http://achievethecore.org/academic-word-finder/>

<sup>2</sup> While sentence length is measured by quantifiable means, sentence complexity is still a features for careful consideration when selecting texts.