Text Complexity
&
The KY Core Academic Standards for ELA and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science & Technical Subjects
Who is participating today?

A. Elementary teacher
B. Middle grades teacher
C. High school teacher
D. Library/Media Specialist
E. Administrator/other
Advantages to Common Core Standards

- A focus on college and career readiness
- Inclusion of the four strands of English Language Arts:
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Listening and speaking
  - Language
- The benefits of an integrated literacy approach – all KY educators have a shared responsibility for literacy instruction, regardless of discipline or content area.
- A focus on results rather than means – (“the Standards leave room for teachers, curriculum developers, and states to determine how those goals should be reached and what additional topics should be addressed” (p. 4).)
- Efficiencies of scale – common standards allow for greater collaboration among states in the areas of
  - Professional development
  - Resource development
  - Teaching tools
How familiar are you with text complexity in Common Core Standards for ELA & Literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects?

A. Not very familiar; I’ve not read the appendices section on text complexity

B. Somewhat Familiar; I’ve read the appendices section on text complexity

C. Familiar; I’ve read and discussed text complexity with others

D. Very familiar; I could be conducting this webinar on text complexity in the Common Core Standards.
What are the big “take-aways” from the *Standards* and Exemplar Texts?

• More emphasis on informational texts in the curriculum

• More grade-level challenging texts ("stretch texts")

• Appropriate scaffolding for students to access and understand more challenging texts
Text Complexity

Included within the Standards is an enhanced focus on text complexity.
Specifically, within reading standard #10:

Anchor Standard:

R.CCR.10 Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Example Grade-level Standard (6th grade):

RI.6.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
WHY: Rationale for Text Complexity

The complexity of K-12 texts decreased

The complexity of reading demands in college/career increased
Guiding Questions

So...

What do the KY Core Academic Standards mean by text complexity?

What is a text complexity band?

and

How do we ensure the texts our students are reading are in the appropriate text complexity band?
Text complexity is defined by

1. **Qualitative measures** – levels of meaning, structure, language conventionality and clarity, and knowledge demands often best measured by an attentive human reader.

2. **Quantitative measures** – readability and other scores of text complexity often best measured by computer software.

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.
How do we determine the grade-level complexity of a text?

**Quantitative**
Readability measures--Lexile, Frye, etc.

**Qualitative**
- Levels of Meaning
- Language Convenionality & Clarity
- Structure
- Knowledge Demands

**Reader & Task**
Teacher judgment based on knowledge of students
## Quantitative Measures Ranges for Text Complexity Grade Bands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Core Band</th>
<th>ATOS</th>
<th>Degrees of Reading Power®</th>
<th>Flesch-Kincaid®</th>
<th>The Lexile Framework®</th>
<th>Reading Maturity</th>
<th>SourceRater</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd – 3rd</td>
<td>2.75 – 5.14</td>
<td>42 – 54</td>
<td>1.98 – 5.34</td>
<td>420 – 820</td>
<td>3.53 – 6.13</td>
<td>0.05 – 2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th – 5th</td>
<td>4.97 – 7.03</td>
<td>52 – 60</td>
<td>4.51 – 7.73</td>
<td>740 – 1010</td>
<td>5.42 – 7.92</td>
<td>0.84 – 5.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Band</th>
<th>Old Lexile Ranges</th>
<th>CCR Lexile Ranges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>450-725</td>
<td>420-820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>645-845</td>
<td>740-1010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>860-1010</td>
<td>925-1185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>960-1115</td>
<td>1050-1335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-CCR</td>
<td>1070-1220</td>
<td>1185-1385</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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. Other readability measures (e.g., Frye, Accelerated Reader)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Band</th>
<th>Old Lexile Ranges</th>
<th>CCR Lexile Ranges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>450-725</td>
<td>420-820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>645-845</td>
<td>740-1010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>860-1010</td>
<td>925-1185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>960-1115</td>
<td>1050-1335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-CCR</td>
<td>1070-1220</td>
<td>1185-1385</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 other measures.

For illustrative purposes, let’s choose Harper Lee’s novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. 
Find a Book KY

The Lexile® Framework for Reading
Matching readers with texts

Find the right BOOK for YOU!

Enter your Lexile measure, select your interests, and find books you’d like to read! Whether you’re reading for school or for pleasure, you can use this site to build a custom reading list on the subjects that interest you the most. (For more information, see the user guide)

My Lexile measure is

Please enter either a Lexile measure or range.

Measure: _____ L

OR

Range: _____ L to _____ L

Continue

I don't know my Lexile measure

Please enter your grade level and check one of the options below.

My current grade is: 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.

Continue
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

Additional Resources for Lexile Measures:

- Overview video

- “What Does the Lexile Measure Mean?”

- “Lexile Measures and the Common Core State Standards”

- KDE Lexile Resource Page
  [http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Literacy/Lexile+for+Reading/Lexile+Information+for+Schools+and+Families.htm](http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Literacy/Lexile+for+Reading/Lexile+Information+for+Schools+and+Families.htm)

- KY Lexile Map
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Texts</th>
<th>Examples of Text Complexity</th>
<th>Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1700L</td>
<td>Discourse on the Method and Meditations on First Philosophy</td>
<td>To such a class of things pertains corporeal nature in general, and its extension, the figure of extended things, their quantity or magnitude and number, as also the place in which they are, the time which measures their duration, and so on. That is possibly why our reasoning is not upset when we conclude from this that Physics, Astronomy, Medicine and all other sciences which have as their end the consideration of composite things, are very dubious and uncertain; but that Arithmetic, Geometry and other sciences of that kind which only treat of things that are simple and very general, without taking great trouble to ascertain whether they are actually existent or not, contain some measure of certainty and an element of the indubitable. (René Descartes, author © 2016 by Xerox Publishing Co.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600L</td>
<td>Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals</td>
<td>In fact, it is absolutely impossible to make out by experience a complete certainty a single case in which the maxim of an action, however right in itself, rested simply on moral grounds and on the conception of duty. Sometimes it happens that with the simplest self-examination we can find nothing beside the moral principle of duty which could have been powerful enough to move us to this or that action and so great a sacrifice yet we cannot from this infer with certainty that it was not really some secret impulse of self-love, under the false appearance of duty, that was the actual determining cause of the will. (Immanuel Kant, author © 2014 by Kaisler Publishing Company.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1500L | On Ancient Medicine | And as to him who had been accustomed to dinner, since, as soon as the body required food, and when the former meal was consumed, and he wanted refreshment, no supply was furnished to him, he wasted and starved and wasted. For all the symptoms which I describe as belonging to this man I refer to want of food. And I also say that all men who, when in a state of health, remain for two or three days without food, experience the same unpleasant symptoms as those which I described in the case of him who had omitted to take dinner. (Hippocrates, author © 2014 by Kaisler Publishing Company.) | 1440L Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT)*
1430L Certified Public Accountant Examination (CPA)*
1430L Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)* |
| 1400L | The Scarlet Letter | But the point which drew all eyes, and, as it were, transfixed the wearer—so that both men and women who had been familiarly acquainted with Hester Prynne were now impressed as if they beheld her for the first time—was that SCARLET LETTER, so fantastically embroidered and illuminated upon her bosom. It was the effect of a spell, taking her out of the ordinary relations with humanity, and enclosing her in a sphere by herself. “She hath good skill at her needle, that’s certain,” remarked one of her female companions “but did ever a woman, before this frozen hue, contrive such a way of showing it? Why, goodness, what is it but to laugh in the faces of our godly magistrates, and make a prize out of what they, worthy gentlemen, mean for a punishment?” (Nathaniel Hawthorne, author © 1984 by Barcineer Books, Inc.) | 1380L Graduate Record Examination (GRE)*
1380L Medical College Admission Test (MCAT)* |
| 1300L | Brown vs. Board of Education 1954 | Under that doctrine, equality of treatment is accorded when the races are provided substantially equal facilities, even though these facilities be separate. In the Delaware case, the Supreme Court of Delaware adhered to that doctrine, but ordered that the plaintiffs be admitted to the white schools because of their superior quality to the Negro schools. The plaintiffs contend that segregated public schools are not “equal” and cannot be made “equal,” and that hence they are deprived of the equal protection of the laws. Because of the obvious importance of the question presented, the Court took jurisdiction. Argument was heard in the 1953. | 1230L Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)*
1210L American College Testing Program (ACT)* |
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

The Lexile® Framework for Reading
Matching readers with texts

Look up a Book
Search for books based on title, author, keywords, and more.

Title: to kill a mockingbird
Author:
Keywords:
ISBN:
Publisher:
Series:
Copyright:
Language: English

Refine your results
For more information see the user guide.

Move the sliders to adjust your search results by age-appropriateness and Lexile range.

Age(s): 0 to Adult

To Kill A Mockingbird
Author: Lee Harper
Summary: THE UNCONDITIONED AND UNCONDITIONAL WISDOM OF CHILDREN IS SHOWN TO BE SUREST IN THIS STORY OF...
870L
Pages: 281
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

Lexile Text Measure: 870L

Scholastic Grade Level Equivalent: 8.1

In which of the text complexity bands would this novel fall?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Core Band</th>
<th>ATOS</th>
<th>Degrees of Reading Power</th>
<th>Flesch-Kincaid</th>
<th>The Lexile Framework</th>
<th>Reading Maturity</th>
<th>SourceRater</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd – 3rd</td>
<td>2.75 – 5.14</td>
<td>42 – 54</td>
<td>1.98 – 5.34</td>
<td>420 – 820</td>
<td>3.53 – 6.13</td>
<td>0.05 – 2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th – 5th</td>
<td>4.97 – 7.03</td>
<td>52 – 60</td>
<td>4.51 – 7.73</td>
<td>740 – 1010</td>
<td>5.42 – 7.92</td>
<td>0.84 – 5.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Band</td>
<td>Old Lexile Ranges</td>
<td>CCR Lexile Ranges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>450-725</td>
<td>420-820</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>645-845</td>
<td>740-1010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>860-1010</td>
<td>925-1185</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>960-1115</td>
<td>1050-1335</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-CCR</td>
<td>1070-1220</td>
<td>1185-1385</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 1: Quantitative Measures

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

Our final recommendation may be validated, influenced, or even over-rulled 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:

Kansas has developed a rubric for literary text and a rubric for informational text that allows 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 rubric. Instead, four points along each continuum is identified: high, middle high, middle low, and low.
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 TEXTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVELS OF MEANING</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Middle High</th>
<th>Middle Low</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Levels of Complex Meaning</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Levels of Meaning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Middle High</th>
<th>Middle Low</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Structure: complex, implicit, and unconventional</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narration: many shifts in point of view</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order of Events: not in chronological order</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Graphics: sophisticated graphics, essential to understanding the text, may also provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE CONVENTIONALITY AND CLARITY</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Middle High</th>
<th>Middle Low</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meaning: implicit or inferred meaning, heavy use of figurative or ironic language, may be purposefully ambiguous or misleading at times</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register: generally unfamiliar, archaic, domain-specific, or overly academic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Middle High</th>
<th>Middle Low</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life Experiences: explores complex, sophisticated, multiple themes; experiences portrayed are not fantasy but are distinctly different from the common reader</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural/Literary Knowledge: many references/allusions to other texts (intertextuality) and cultural elements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: requires extensive, perhaps specialized content knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Experiences: explores multiple themes of varying levels of complexity; experiences portrayed are not fantasy but are uncommon to most readers</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural/Literary Knowledge: some references/allusions to other texts (intertextuality) and cultural elements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: requires moderate levels of content knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Experiences: explores complex theme; experiences portrayed are not fantasy but are uncommon to most readers; clearly fantasy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural/Literary Knowledge: few references/allusions to other texts (intertextuality) and cultural elements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: requires some content knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural/Literary Knowledge: no references/allusions to other texts (intertextuality) and cultural elements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Matter Knowledge: requires only everyday content knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 2: Qualitative Measures

From examining the quantitative measures, we knew:

Lexile Text Measure: 870L
Scholastic Grade Level Equivalent: 8.1

But after reflecting upon the qualitative measures, we believe:
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 3: Reader and Task

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, developed by Kansas teachers and DOE, are meant to spur teacher thought and reflection upon the text, students, and any tasks associated with the text.
Step 3: Reader and Task Considerations

The questions provided in this resource 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

Reflecting upon the questions posed for Reader and Task Considerations and considering both the quantitative and qualitative measures already discussed, we have the following information to make a decision:

Lexile Text Measure: 870L

Scholastic Grade Level Equivalent: 8.1
Step 4: Recommended Placement

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

<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>
Step 4: Recommended Placement

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades 9-10 Text Exemplars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stories</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Homer. *The Odyssey* .......................................................... 101
- Ovid. *Metamorphoses* .............................................................. 101
- Gogol, Nikolai. “The Nose.” ...................................................... 102
- De Voltaire, F. A. M. *Candide, Or The Optimist* ....................... 103
- Turgenev, Ivan. *Fathers and Sons* ........................................... 104
- Henry, O. “The Gift of the Magi.” ............................................. 104
- Kafka, Franz. *The Metamorphosis* ............................................ 105
- Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath* ....................................... 105
- Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451* ................................................ 106
- Olsen, Tillie. “I Stand Here Ironing.” ........................................ 106
- Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart* ........................................... 107
- Shaara, Michael. *The Killer Angels* .......................................... 108
- Tan, Amy. *The Joy Luck Club* .................................................... 108
- Álvarez, Julia. *In the Time of the Butterflies* ............................ 108
- Zusak, Marcus. *The Book Thief* .................................................. 109
Step 4: Recommended Placement


This 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

Qualitative Measures

- Levels of Meaning/Purpose

- Structure

Quantitative Measures

- Reader-Task Considerations

Language Conventionality and Clarity

Knowledge Demands

Recommended Placement
Text Complexity Analysis of *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

### Qualitative Measures

**Levels of Meaning/Purpose:**
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.

**Structure:**
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; flashback is 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 Conventionality and Clarity:**
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:**
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 Measures

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.

### Reader-Task Considerations

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.

Here in Kansas, 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

*To Kill a Mockingbird* is a Pulitzer prize winner. It is a classic, and many teaching resources are available online at various websites. 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.
Poll: I can explain the 3 legs of text complexity to someone.

1. Yes
2. No
Additional Resources for Text Complexity

Text Complexity Bookmarks

Additional Examples of Completed Final Recommendations

- Diamond Willow
- Hunger Games
- How to Steal a Dog
- Countdown
After participating in this webinar, I know where to locate resources to assist me in choosing texts at an appropriate levels for my students.

1. Not really. I still need more information.
2. Somewhat. I can locate resources.
3. Yes. I know where to locate resources and will use them to plan instruction.
Many thanks to our colleagues at the Kansas Department of Education and their teachers for sharing the text complexity resources they developed.

For more information:

The May 2011 *Literacy Link* focuses on text complexity

http://www.education.ky.gov/KDE/Instructional+Resources/High+School/English+Language+Arts/Writing/Literacy+Link+Newsletter.htm

Cindy Parker
Rebecca Woosley
Renee Boss
Carol Franks
April Pieper

Saundra Hamon
Pam Wininger
Linda Holbrook
Kim Willhoite
Kathy Mansfield

Kentucky Department of Education
Office of Next Generation Learners
500 Mero Street
Frankfort KY 40601
Phone: (502) 564-2106
E-mail: first.last name@education.ky.gov