



5 Things Every Teacher Should Be Doing to Meet the Common Core's Literacy Standards



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Eye On Education



Who's here?



What's your role in implementing the standards?



Overview of Today's Webinar



5 Things Every Teacher Should Do...

- Increase text complexity
- Lead high-level class discussions
- Teach argument over persuasion
- Focus on process, not just content
- Create authentic assignments



INCREASE TEXT COMPLEXITY

Why should we teach more complex texts?

Our students are not prepared for the types of reading they'll be asked to tackle in college and careers.

In fact, the average 11th and 12th grade textbooks are written at a Lexile of 1090.

BUT

Postsecondary textbooks for the first two years come in at a Lexile of 1355. Workplace materials are also significantly more complex than high school texts.

(source: Jason Turner, Metametrics).



INCREASE TEXT COMPLEXITY

What makes a text complex?

- unknown words
- complex sentences
- passive voice
- mix of text structures
- more subtle transitions (no “First,” “Second,” “Third”!)
- density of information

How do you measure text complexity?

- qualitative measures
- quantitative measures
- matching reader to text and task

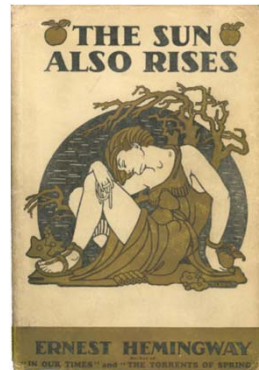


INCREASE TEXT COMPLEXITY

Where do the following books rank on the “stretched” Lexile scale?

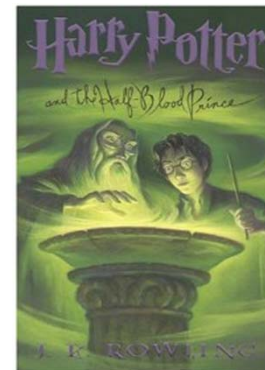
1. *The Sun Also Rises*

- Grade 10
- Grade 7
- Grade 2
- Grade 12



2. *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*

- Grade 10
- Grade 7
- Grade 12
- Grade 2





INCREASE TEXT COMPLEXITY

Where do you find leveled texts?

- **Lexile's Find a Book site (free)** <http://lexile.com/fab>
- **The Reading and Writing Project (free)**
<http://readingandwritingproject.com>
- **EBSCO Database (paid subscription)**
www.ebscohost.com/schools
- **The Common Core State Standards, Appendix B (free)**
http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf



INCREASE TEXT COMPLEXITY

How can you measure a student's reading level?

- **Use running records to assess readers.**
 - Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)
 - Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI)
 - Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System
 - Teachers College Reading and Writing Project
- **Do your own fluency check.** Have students read something at the high end of the CCSS recommendations, and then check for accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.

(Source: Calkins, Ehrenworth, Lehman, 45)



INCREASE TEXT COMPLEXITY

How can we help struggling readers tackle challenging texts?

Strategies:

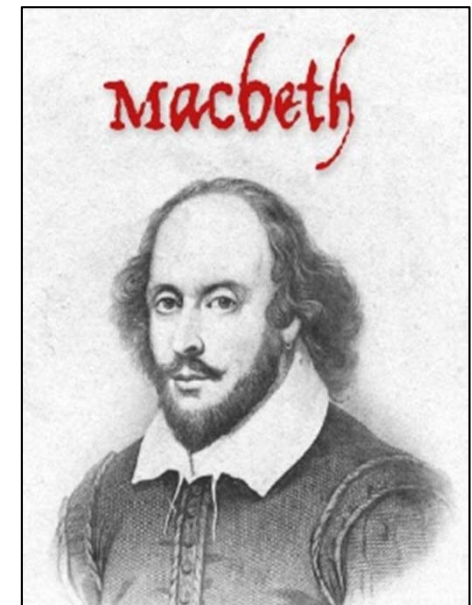
- **Model thinking aloud.**
- **Focus on syntax.** (Mark connective words, link the subject to the verb, consider punctuation.)
- **Have students annotate the text.**
- **Have students read small chunks at a time (and keep rereading them).**
- **Teach context clues (and when not to use them!).**
- **Use text sets.**
- **Make time for practice, practice! Allow for recreational reading, too.**
- **How much preading is okay?**



LEAD HIGH-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS

Which is higher level?

- In Macbeth's soliloquy, what effect does the repetition of "tomorrow" and "day" have on the tone?
- Today, we're going to read about Macbeth's feelings that life is futile. Describe a time you've felt frustrated with life.





LEAD HIGH-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS

So what *are* effective discussion questions, according to the Common Core?

An effective set of discussion questions might begin with relatively simple questions requiring attention to specific words, details, and arguments and then move on to explore the impact of those specifics on the text as a whole. Good questions will often linger over specific phrases and sentences to ensure careful comprehension and also promote deep thinking and substantive analysis of the text. (Coleman and Pimentel, p. 7)



LEAD HIGH-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS

Strategies for teaching discussion skills:



- Model speaking and listening
- Have students set goals and assess themselves
- Keep a map of students' talk turns
- Record class discussions
- Use a variety of group formats
- Begin with shorter texts



TEACH ARGUMENT, NOT PERSUASION

Argument has a “special place” in the standards.
How is it different from persuasion?

Genre	Definition	Common Features
Persuasive Writing	Appeals to the emotions of the audience	Uses techniques such as bandwagon, plain folks, glittering generalities, name calling, and snob appeal
Argument	Appeals to logic and reason	Consists of a thesis/claim, evidence, concession/refutation, and a more formal style



TEACH ARGUMENT, NOT PERSUASION

- Teach logos, ethos, and pathos.
- Teach concession-refutation.
- Help students identify common logical errors.
- Use sentence frames.
- Have students analyze mentor texts.
- Provide consistent feedback and create rubrics *with* students.
- Teach students to write in both formal and informal styles.
- Teach students how to gather and use evidence.



TEACH ARGUMENT, NOT PERSUASION

Talking to your
friends on a
basketball court

Texting a classmate
about where to meet
after school

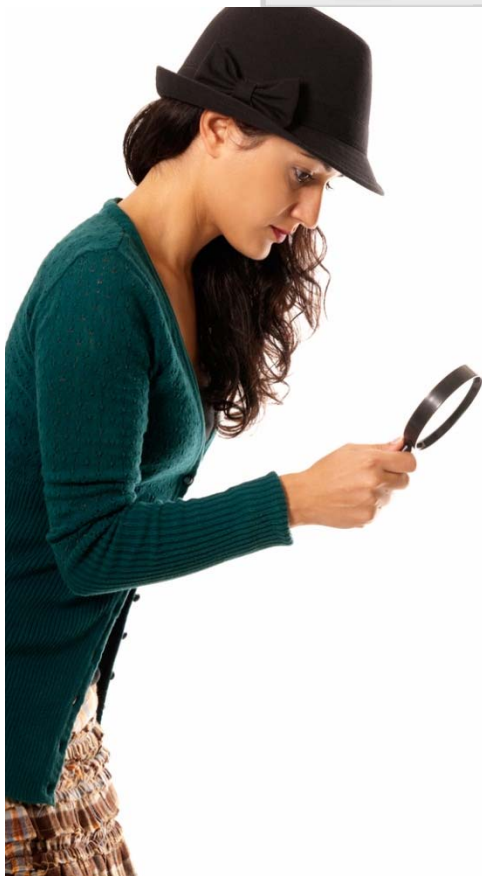
Writing a speech
to present to
the school board

Writing a
letter to a
grandparent

Filling out a
job or college
application



FOCUS ON PROCESS, NOT JUST CONTENT

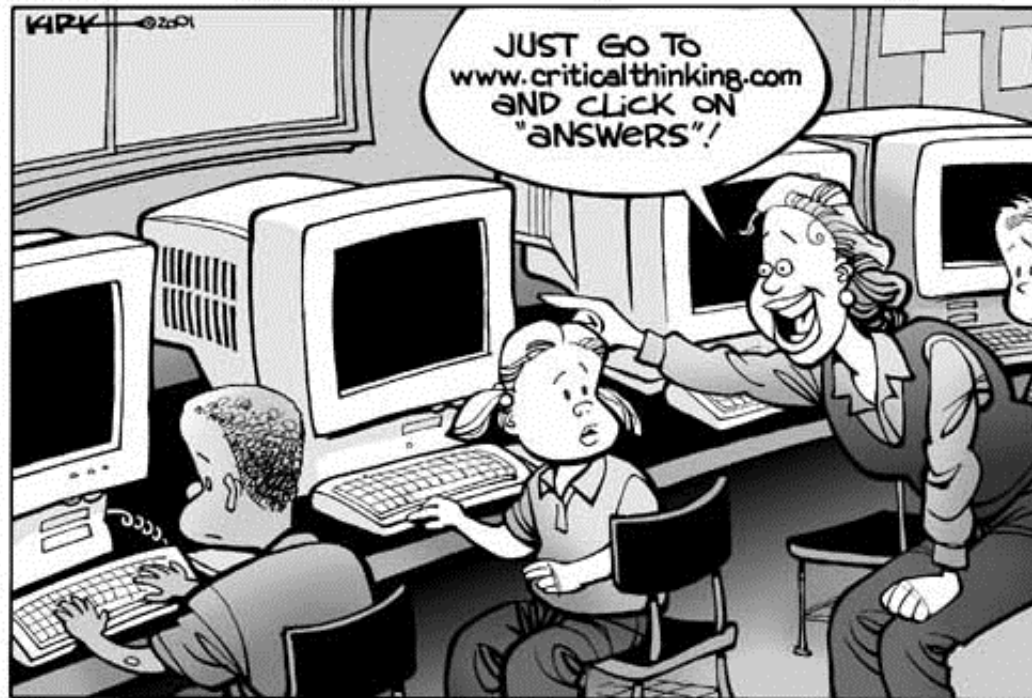


Why is it important to focus on process?

**The standards ask you to “read like a detective and write like a reporter.”
—David Coleman**



FOCUS ON PROCESS, NOT JUST CONTENT





FOCUS ON PROCESS, NOT JUST CONTENT

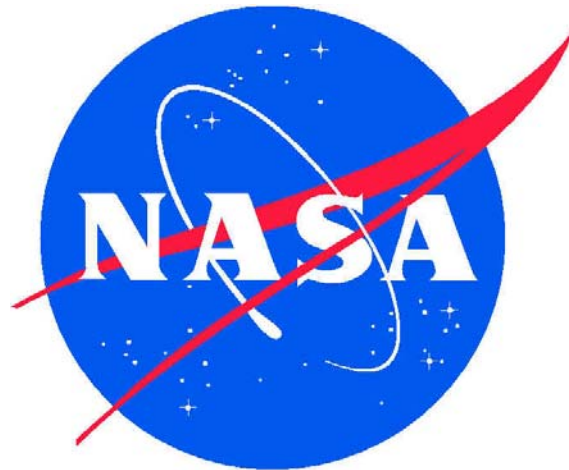
What does it look like in the classroom?

- Do discovery-based vocab lessons
- Give students extensive practice with research
- Try project-based learning www.edutopia.org/project-based-learning-guide
- Try problem-based learning <http://pbln.imsa.edu>



CREATE AUTHENTIC ASSIGNMENTS

What makes something authentic?



Strategies

- Assignments shouldn't just be for the teacher
- Consider a variety of real-world audiences and purposes
- Have students submit/present their work to those audiences
- Use technology to reach wider audiences



Now You Try It!

Spend a couple minutes thinking of an authentic, interdisciplinary project that you could assign.





Every teacher should help students think deeply and critically. Students should learn how to learn, and they should be taught to see the world from a wider perspective.

Q & A

Submit your questions in chat!

Thanks for participating in today's webinar!