



DISCIPLINARY INTERACTIONS
WITH COMPLEX TEXT
in Elementary Classrooms

EPF for teaching

Disciplinary Interactions with Complex Text Teaching Frame

1

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- What do we mean by *Disciplinary Interactions with Complex Text*, and why is it important?
- What factors affect the complexity of a text?
- What do teachers need to understand about the reading process to be able to support student interactions with complex texts?

SOAR Teaching Frames®

The High-Impact Practice of *Disciplinary Interactions with Complex Text* focuses on structuring, strengthening, and supporting student interaction with complex text to develop academic language and disciplinary literacy. It is one of six High-Impact Practices (see pages 13-14) our work has identified as having significant potential to drive student learning as articulated in the CCSS ELA and Anchor Literacy Standards.

Each of the High-Impact Practices works in conjunction with three Cross-Cutting Practices and one Foundational Practice to form a Teaching Frame. These frames, and their associated rubrics, provide a lens for teachers to look through as they plan, teach, reflect on, and elevate their teaching practice. The *Disciplinary Interactions with Complex Text Teaching Frame* can be found on page 15-16.

Text Complexity: What Is It and Why Is It important?

A complex text can be any written, visual, audio, or multimedia message that conveys information or ideas. This expanded notion of what a text can be is particularly important when we embrace the fact that using complex texts is not just the responsibility of ELA or ELD teachers. All teachers across all disciplines are being asked to help students comprehend complex literary or informational texts independently and proficiently. This shift within the CCSS also emphasizes less pre-reading instruction, more close reading, and a greater focus on evidence from text in student answers. So, whether the complex text is a novel or a lab report, a sheet of music or a work of art, we must be able to create the kind of environment that students need in order to develop complex academic language and disciplinary literacy.

Lilly Wong Fillmore ¹ believes that creating such environments in school is critical because the best – and for some students, the only – place they will encounter these structures and language is in the materials they read in school. “Complex texts provide school-age learners reliable access to this language and interacting with such texts allows them to discover how academic language works.” The importance of these school environments is also supported by research that indicates that students learn, and perhaps learn more, when they are taught with challenging texts. ^{2,3}

In order to create these environments, teachers must understand the components of text complexity. An appendix to the CCSS contains a three-part model for defining it:

- Quantitative factors such as word length and frequency, and sentence length and structure;
- Qualitative factors such as levels of meaning, purpose and clarity of text, and difficulty of language;
- Reader/Task factors such as motivation and background knowledge as well as learning purpose and the complexity of the task assigned.

Another way to think about text complexity is through the lens of the grammatical and rhetorical features of text. Dependent and independent clauses, simple and complex sentences, and passive and active voice are just some of the features that contribute to complexity. Fortunately, while an understanding of grammatical and rhetorical terminology is helpful, it is not necessary. According to Wong Fillmore,⁴ what teachers need to know about language can be summed up in the following:

- They should be able to find the subject and predicate of a sentence.
- They need to be aware of where phrases and clauses begin and end.
- They should be able to determine what each part of a sentence communicates.

Whatever criteria one uses to determine complexity, teachers must realize that a text may be complex for some students but not complex for others. This depends in part on the exposure students have had to the wide range of ways authors use text structure, syntax, and vocabulary to communicate their message. It also depends on the extent to which students have mastered the reading process.

Understanding the Reading Process

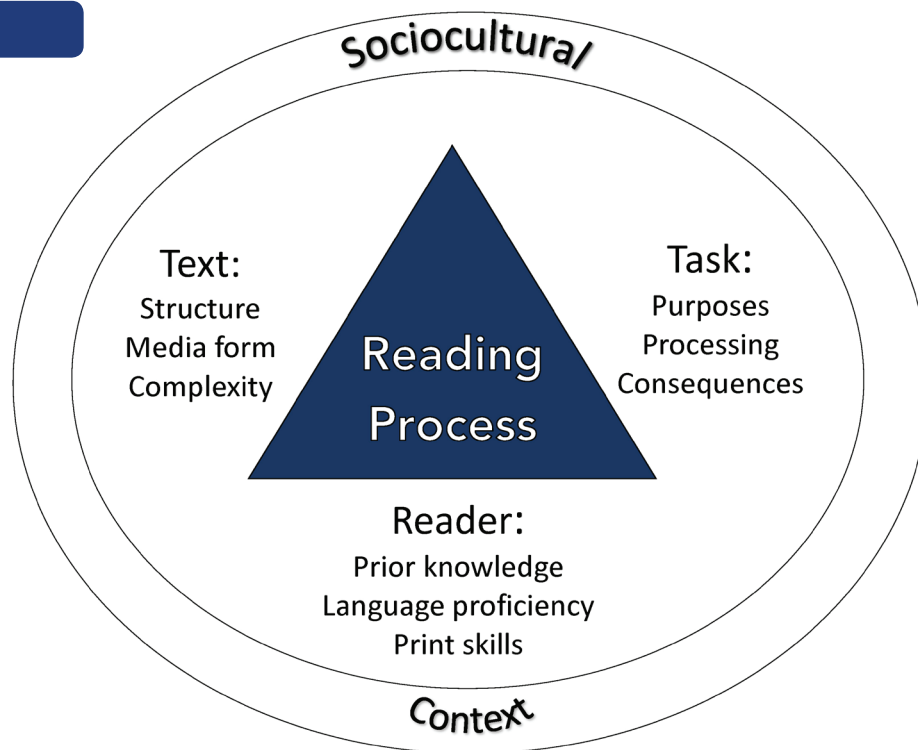
Understanding the reading process is a key to supporting students' language and literacy development as well as their interactions with complex text. The consensus about basic reading processes is that the ultimate goal of reading is comprehension. However, the entire process is likely to break down unless the reader controls the skills involved in individual word recognition. For instance, to read the word *cat* one must be able to connect the letters *c-a-t* with the sounds /k/ /a/ /t/ and understand that the word *cat* refers to the concept of a furry, household pet who purrs and meows. In this way word recognition works in conjunction with vocabulary development.

However, we must avoid falling into the trap of believing that, if students can read words with fluency and accuracy, they can read well enough to handle the conceptual demands of complex texts. Many students simply pronounce the words in a passage with little or no understanding of their meaning. Thus, there is widespread agreement that the strength of one's reading ability depends on the strategic integration of word recognition, vocabulary development, and comprehension strategies.^{5,6}

As students move through the grades, they are asked to apply the reading process to a variety of tasks that have different purposes, require different processing, and result in different consequences. As a result, it is possible to adjust the difficulty of a text and students' ability to comprehend it by altering the task. How well students comprehend the text and perform the task also depend on their proficiency in the language of the text, prior knowledge of the topic, level of motivation for and interest in the task, and their perceptions of themselves as readers. Thus, the reader, text, and task interact to determine the quality of comprehension experienced by the reader.

Finally, as **Figure 1** illustrates, the reading process occurs in dynamic sociocultural contexts that shape and are shaped by the reader. This means that language and literacy development are closely linked to the culture and society in which they are used. Consequently, a reader's comprehension can be influenced by variables such as race, ethnicity, gender, social class, and sexual orientation, which must be taken into consideration by teachers.

FIGURE 1



The importance of these components of the reading process and their relationship to text complexity is explained by Shelia Valencia.⁷

We must never think about text complexity in isolation from the reading task, the reader, and the context. Exhorting students to try harder or to read more closely as they encounter the new, more challenging texts is unlikely to improve comprehension. Instruction must take into account the various ways in which the text, the task, and the reader come together. Teachers can address all of these factors during instruction and they can facilitate learning by manipulating text-task scenarios to accommodate students' needs.

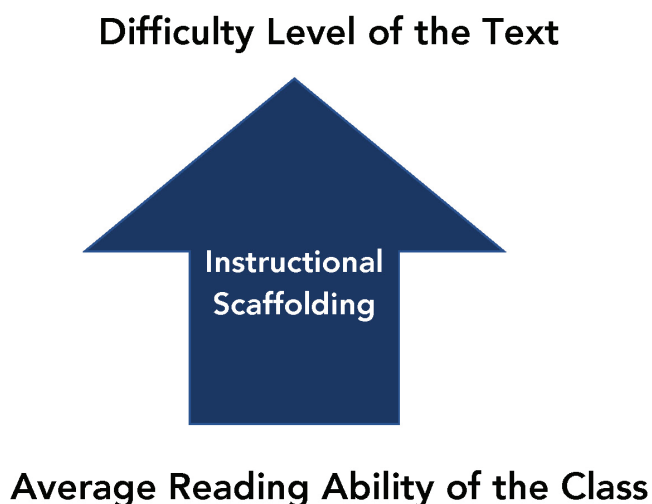
Supporting Student Interactions with Complex Text

The question many teachers ask themselves when it comes to complex texts is: How can I help my students handle materials that are more complex and demanding than what is already too difficult for many of them? Another way to think about this challenge as it relates to written text is: How can I bridge the gap between the difficulty level of the text and the reading abilities of my students?

Students who cannot yet read grade level texts independently need instruction and practice with material at their specific instructional levels, especially as they develop foundational reading skills. Nevertheless, engagement with grade level materials is essential for all students to support development of sentence structure, text organization, vocabulary, and content knowledge. If students are unable to read grade level materials independently, additional scaffolds are required for them to benefit from interacting with grade level texts. (See **Figure 2**.) Otherwise, for less proficient readers the experience results – not in productive struggle as called for in the CCSS – but in destructive frustration.

FIGURE 2

Bridging the Gap Between the Text and the Reader



Thus, the ability of a student to navigate a complex text depends largely on how the teacher plans instruction to support the student. One way to do this is to choose engaging text whether fiction or informational. Another is strategically planning the sequence of the tasks or strategies to build students' confidence and skill levels. Using mentor texts to highlight and model how to navigate through a complex text is very powerful in giving students insights into the reading process. Providing students with graphic organizers helps them identify parts of the text or capture ideas from the text by guiding them through it. Adjusting the amount of time given to students to discuss and reread the text is yet another consideration. Finally, building students' background knowledge of the topic and clearly stating the purpose of the task can also increase their ability to access the text. As teachers, we do not want to limit students to low level text nor have them struggle without support with difficult text. When we provide the scaffolding described above, we help build literacy skills and develop students' ability to read complex text.

The next section of this chapter explains the elements of the High-Impact Practice of *Disciplinary Interactions with Complex Text* as well as how targeting it impacts on student learning. It also provides classroom vignettes which demonstrate how the practice can be implemented in authentic classroom settings.

What Is Disciplinary Interactions with Complex Text and Why Does It Matter?

What it is

- This practice focuses on structuring, strengthening, and supporting student interaction with complex text to develop academic language and disciplinary literacy. This practice develops students' abilities to understand the academic language and structure of complex text, which strengthens comprehension, content knowledge, and disciplinary language.

Why it matters

- The use of *Disciplinary Interactions with Complex Text* promotes critical thinking, inquiry, and reflection.
- It also engages the key thinking skills that facilitate the learning of disciplinary content (e.g., compare and contrast, argue, persuade, reason, justify, synthesize).
- A focus on complex text helps students understand how experts in a field of study approach reading, writing, and speaking about their discipline.
- It also gives students, especially English learners (ELs), the opportunity to discover how academic language works.

Elements

This practice may be broken down into two important elements. As you review these elements, think about what they might look like in practice in the classroom.

- Engage students in analysis of text to examine how language, text features, and/or literary devices are used to convey meaning and/or purpose.
- Provide and support extended opportunities for students to interact with complex text to build academic language and disciplinary literacy.

Step Inside the Classroom

Read either the second or sixth grade vignette that follows. Using the language of the practice and its elements as a guide, underline any evidence that indicates how the teacher addresses this practice. When you have finished, compare what you have underlined to the highlighted evidence you see on pages 17 - 22.

Second Grade Vignette

Mr. Alvarez's class has been reading Dr. Seuss books all week to celebrate Read Across America Day. He also has been working with his students on having peer-to-peer discussions about the books. The students have identified four different learning partners based on different Dr. Seuss characters (Lorax, Horton, Thing One and Two, and Grinch) that they work with on different days. After each book was read, he had students work in pairs to ask and answer the questions who, what, where, when, why, and how, using prompts and responses. He then created a large class size matrix for each book, had the class come to consensus regarding the answers to those questions, and posted them.

The standards this unit is addressing are:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.6
Identify the main purpose of a text, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1
Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1
Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

Mr. Alvarez begins the day by saying, "We have read a lot of Dr. Seuss books. You have identified the key details in each of the books with your learning partners. I want you to turn to your Horton partner and explain which book is your favorite and why? Remember your prompts and responses? Let's reread them. 'What is your favorite book? My favorite book is.... Why is it your favorite? It is my favorite because.... Can you tell me more?' Remember we have been working on building off of each other's ideas. So, ask questions to clarify and fortify your partner's ideas." Mr. Alvarez walks around the room monitoring students' responses. "Wow, I am so impressed with your ideas and great thinking! You are really having good discussions and building off of each other's ideas. I heard Francisca ask George, 'What was your favorite part of the book?' And then she asked him why it was his favorite." The teacher and students create a bar graph displaying their favorites.

"Today we are going to read a biography of Dr. Seuss. We have read other biographies this year. Turn to your Horton partner and together work on a definition of a biography and give one example of one we have read." He calls on a few students to give examples and a definition. Together they agree that the definition of a biography is an account of a person's life and achievements. He asks his students what they think will be some of Dr. Seuss' achievements that will be mentioned in this book.

He shows the students the cover and reads the title, *Dr. Seuss, the Great Doodler*. He asks the students to turn to their Horton partner and discuss what a doodler is, using any clues they might get from the cover. He distributes the books. He does a picture walk with his students as an opportunity to introduce any vocabulary they might have difficulty with and for them to get a sense of the storyline. He also notes that this book is not divided into chapters and covers a lot of information.

He explains to the students, "Boys and girls, we know this book is a biography and typically biographies are divided into chapters to make it easier to categorize the information. So, we are going to make chapters using our sticky notes to make it easier for us. Pages 4-5 are the Introduction. Put a sticky note on page 6. Write 'Childhood' on it." He continues to help the students divide the book into sections.

"Ok, now we are going to start reading each chapter. I want you and your partner to read the section individually, discuss what you read, and then answer the questions who, what, where, when, why, and how. While you are reading, be thinking about those questions. Maybe not all of the questions will be answered. So, you need to look back at the text and decide. That is what good readers do. They go back to the text to look for the answers."

"I am going to give you highlighting tape to highlight the answers to the questions in the text. I am going to model it for you with Jose. Ok, Jose and I just finished reading. Using our prompts and responses, I ask Jose, 'Who is this about?' Jose responds, 'This is about Dr. Seuss who is also Ted Geisel. Do you agree?' 'Yes, I agree. Let's highlight that part of the text.' 'What is this section about?' 'It is about him winning the Pulitzer Prize. Do you agree?' 'Yes.' 'Ok, let's highlight that.'"

"Now, boys and girls, read the next section and discuss the answers to the questions and, when you agree, use the highlighting tape to mark it." Mr. Alvarez walks around monitoring the students' conversations. He interjects when students need prompting. "Erica, I notice you and Felipe have answered the who and when. Good job! Are you stuck on the rest? Do you think there is an answer to why? What about how? I agree with you. Those questions aren't answered. Let's think about the what. What did Ted do as a child? Yes, he doodled. Highlight that. Good thinking you two! Way to persevere and not give up!"

When the students have finished this section, he asks them to reflect on the activity and how they were able to answer the questions. "Thumbs up if you and your partner did ok, thumb sideways if you feel unsure of your answers, and thumbs down if you feel it was really hard." Most of the students respond with thumbs up. Based upon the work students did today and the length of the next section, Mr. Alvarez decides to have students read the section together and discuss it as a class. He will work with them to identify the answers to the questions by calling on students for their input and by doing a think aloud.

At the end of the week when students have finished the text and task, Mr. Alvarez asks them to turn to their Lorax partner and reflect on the question, "What was the author's main purpose for writing this book? Was she answering a question, explaining, or describing?" He points to the prompts and responses on the pocket chart, reminding the students to use them. Mr. Alvarez walks around monitoring the students' responses and uses of the prompts. He has students share out their responses.



Sixth Grade Vignette

RI.6.1. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL6.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

CCSS.ELA.RL6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

CCSS.ELA.RI.6.6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

CCSS.ELA.SL6.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Ms. Peck begins the day by explaining to her students that they are going to be reading a short text about a scientist. She reads the learning targets that are written in kid friendly “I Can” statements on the white board.

She begins by explaining who Richard Feynman was. “Richard Feynman was a physicist. Does anyone know what that type of scientist studies? Ben Franklin was the first American physicist when he characterized the two kinds of electric charge, positive and negative. Does anyone watch ‘The Big Bang Theory’? Well, Leonard and Sheldon are physicists.” A student responds, “String Theory, whatever that is, dark energy, and he is always doing equations on his whiteboard.”

Say/Do/Mean

Ms. Peck responds, “Physics is a very large field of study which encompasses the interactions of matter and energy. One way to think of it is physicists are interested in what makes the universe tick. This will be an important piece of information to think about as you read the text, ‘The Making of a Scientist’ by Richard Feynman. This is a memoir, a collection of memories from someone’s life. We are going to chunk the text as you read today. Let’s number the paragraphs and each paragraph will be a ‘chunk’. We are going to use the *Say/Do/Mean* strategy that we learned last week. We are also going to circle any word choices the author made that affected the tone or mood. I am going to model how you and your partner will chunk and discuss the text using the graphic organizer as our guide. Jesus, will you model with me? Ok, I’ll read the first paragraph/chunk while you follow along. So, I think this section is saying that his father believed he was going to be a scientist. What do you think?”

Directions: Use the Say/Do/Mean chart below to help you understand what the author is saying and doing in the text, and to understand the significance of the text.

1. Number the paragraphs.
2. Chunk the text.
3. Circle key words in the text.

¶	What is the author saying in the text? Here are some questions you should ask: What is this section about? What is the content? What did I learn from this?	What is the author doing in the text? Here are some examples of what authors do: Giving an example Interpreting data Sharing an anecdote Summarizing information Reflecting on a process	My interpretation or insights about the text. Here are some examples of insight: Analyze why the author used a certain technique. Relate it to something else you read. Relate it to a current issue. Relate it to your experience.

(Continue on the back or another page if necessary.)

"It is interesting that his dad said if it was a boy...I don't think people would be saying that today. I think he means that his father set him up to be a scientist by the activities he did with him. What do you think?" asks Ms. Peck.

"Yes, I think the idea of pushing down the dominos and seeing them fall is kind of like an experiment," comments Jesus.

"Ok, let's write these down on our graphic organizer," says Ms. Peck. "Ok, ladies and gentlemen, any questions? I'll be walking around listening to you and helping out if you have any questions."

Ms. Peck walks around the room listening to students discuss the memoir. She stops at one set of partners and hears the students saying, "In paragraph five, I think the author is saying that his father would take the information they were reading and make it real. What do you think? ... Yes, and he does that by citing an example with the T. Rex. I'm not sure what we need to say in the 'mean' column. Do you?" Ms. Peck says, "Think about what I said about physicists. They are interested in how the universe ticks. What is going on here with his father's examples?"

Students respond, "So this means his father is trying to help him visualize and think about it, not just words on a page but what they mean."

Ms. Peck responds, "I am very impressed how you thought more deeply about that passage to get that meaning. Nice thinking."

Students continue to work on the text until the end of the period. Ms. Peck asks students to talk with their partner about the central idea of the article and four major examples the author used to illustrate it. She walks about the room monitoring student responses and prompting with questions as necessary. She then adds, "Now take a moment and reflect on your reading and discussion with your partner today. What worked? What could you do better tomorrow? Write it on a sticky note and leave it on your paper as a reminder tomorrow."

The next day Ms. Peck has students take out the memoir. She asks students to look back at the vocabulary they identified and discuss them with their partner. How did it affect tone or meaning of the text? She asks students to share the vocabulary they identified and a working definition.

She then points out the use of flashbacks the author used. She asks, "What is a flashback? Look at our anchor chart" "Yes, a flashback is an event or scene that is taking place at an earlier time. Work with your partner and identify the flashbacks. Once you have identified them, talk with your partner about why the author chose to use them. How did the flashbacks convey the main idea or theme of this memoir?"

Students share out their ideas. She then asks, "If I say I know about hurricanes or know about the water cycle...What does it mean to really know something? Talk with your partner again and decide using our conversation skills, what does it mean to really know something? Is it just being able to give a definition? Talk." Ms. Peck walks around listening to the students' lively conversations and appreciates their enthusiasm.

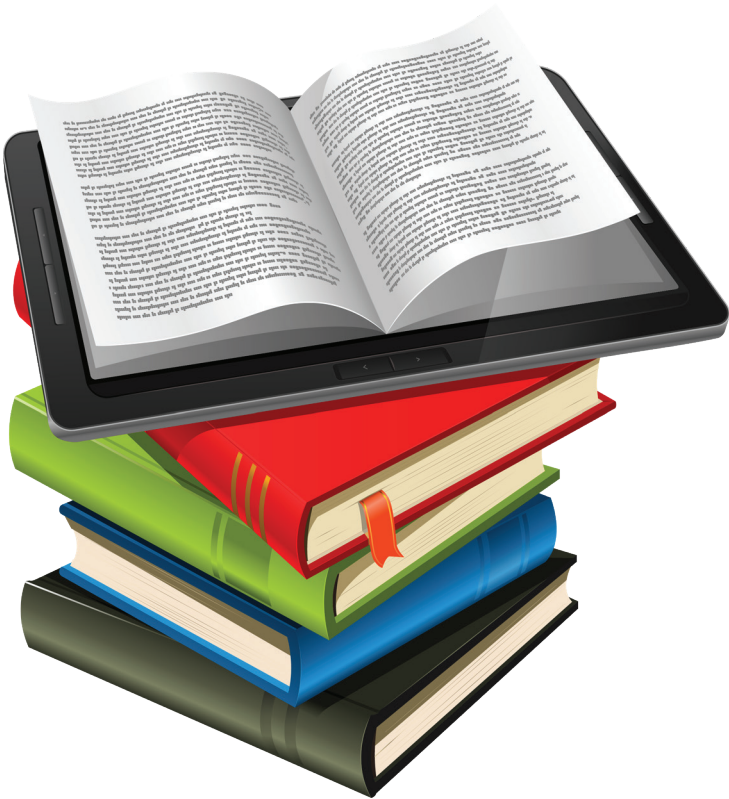
She brings the class back together to continue delving into the topic. She then asks, "What do you think Dr. Feynman's father's definition would be?" She then asks, "Why did Dr. Feynman write this memoir?"

She ends the lesson with a quote from Dr. Feynman, "I learned very early the difference between knowing the name of something and knowing something."

Chapter 1 - Footnotes

1. L. Wong Fillmore, 2012, Supporting access to the language & content of complex texts for EL & LM students. Retrieved from http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity?Domain/25/ELA_retreatWong-%20Filmorepart2.pdf
2. A. Morgan, B. Wilcox, & J. Eldredge, "Effect of Difficulty Levels of Second-Grade Delayed Readers Using Dyad Reading," *The Journal of Education Research*, November 2000, 94(2): 113-119.
3. R. O'Connor, H. Swanson, & C. Geraghty, "Improvement in Reading Rate Under Independent and Difficult Text Levels: Influences on Word and Comprehension Skills," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 2010, 102(1), 1-19.
4. L. Wong Fillmore, 2012, Supporting access to the language & content of complex texts for EL & LM students. Retrieved from http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity?Domain/25/ELA_retreatWong-%20Filmorepart2.pdf
5. P. Afflerbach & B. Cho, "Identifying and Describing Constructively Responsive Comprehension Strategies in New and Traditional Forms of Reading," in S. Israel & G. Duffy (eds.), *Handbook of Research on Comprehension* (New York: Routledge, 2009).
6. C. Brantmeier, "Beyond Linguistic Knowledge: Individual Differences in Second Language Reading," *Foreign Language Annals*, December 2008, 36(1), doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-2003.tb01930.x
7. S. Valencia, K. Wixson, & P. Pearson, "Putting Text Complexity in Context: Refocusing on Comprehension of Complex Text," *The Elementary School Journal*, December 2014, 115(2), 270-289.

Chapter 1 - Resources



California National Parks Learning Partners



Your partner's name



Your partner's name

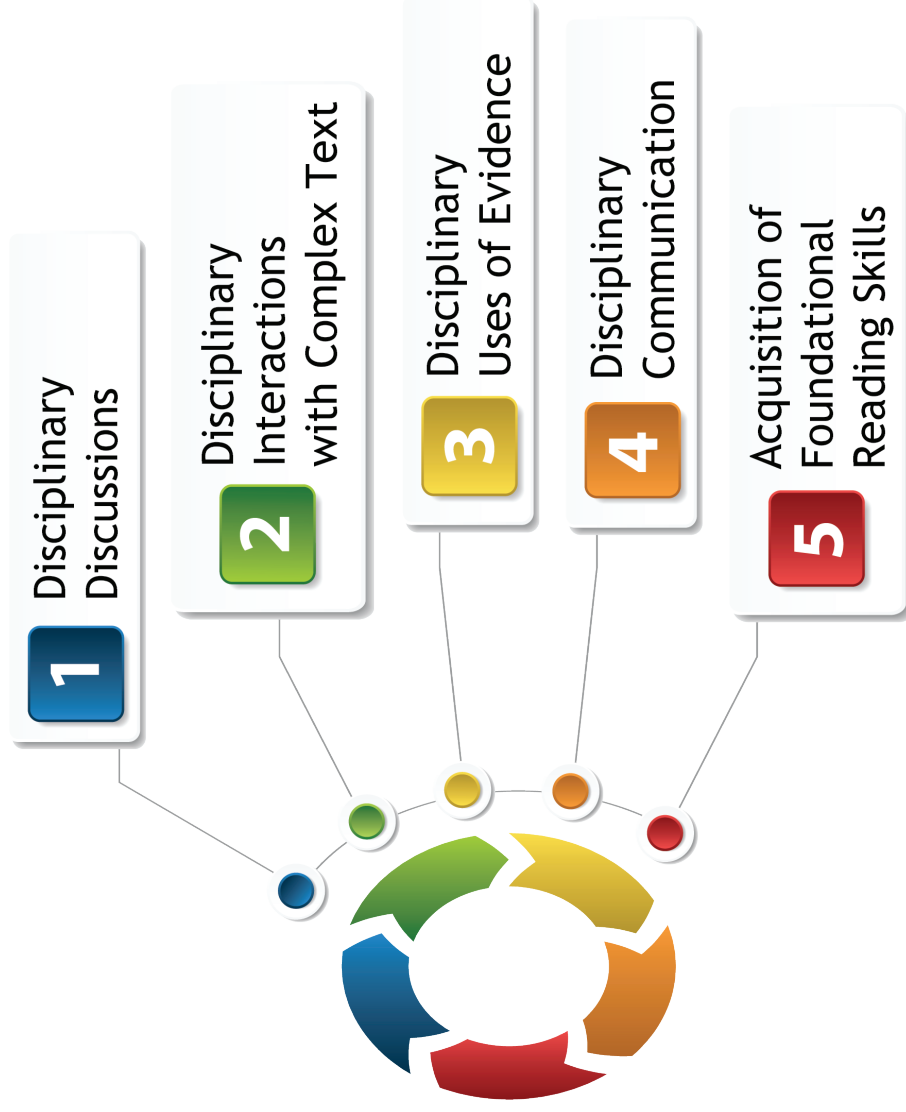


Your partner's name



Your partner's name

SOAR® High-Impact Practices Literacy TK-2



SOAR® High-Impact Practices Literacy 3-12



Disciplinary Interactions with Complex Text: Literacy TK-2

<p>HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage students in an analysis of text to examine how its language, text features and/or literary devices work together to convey meaning and/or purpose Provide supported and guided opportunities for students to interact with complex text to build academic language and disciplinary literacy 		
<p>CROSS-CUTTING PRACTICES</p>	<p>Facilitating Acquisition of Academic Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce and/or refer to academic language demands of texts and tasks Provide extended, guided, and supported opportunities for students to acquire and use the features of academic language 	<p>Fostering Metacognition for Disciplinary Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visibly enact metacognitive processes and/or strategies students are expected to use in support of disciplinary learning Deconstruct metacognitive processes and/or strategies that support disciplinary learning 	<p>Monitoring and Guiding Disciplinary Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor learning and adjust instruction, supports, and disciplinary tasks to meet student needs Provide written and/or oral feedback during lessons to promote disciplinary learning
<p>FOUNDATIONAL PRACTICE</p>	<p>Designing Instruction for Disciplinary Thinking and Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set disciplinary learning targets that are aligned with ELA/Literacy CCSS and the target high-impact practice Structure and connect tasks that support the learning targets Establish high expectations that support the learning targets and maintain the intellectual rigor of classroom activities and tasks 		

Disciplinary Interactions with Complex Text: Literacy 3-12

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Mr. Alvarez begins the day by saying, "We have read a lot of Dr. Seuss books. You have identified the key details in each of the books with your learning partners. ^{DICT} I want you to turn to your Horton partner and explain which book is your favorite and why? Remember your prompts and responses? Let's reread them. 'What is your favorite book? My favorite book is.... Why is it your favorite? It is my favorite because.... Can you tell me more?' Remember we have been working on building off of each other's ideas. So, ask questions to clarify and fortify your partner's ideas." Mr. Alvarez walks around the room monitoring students' responses. "Wow, I am so impressed with your ideas and great thinking! You are really having good discussions and building off of each other's ideas. I heard Francisca ask George, 'What was your favorite part of the book?' And then she asked him why it was his favorite." The teacher and students create a bar graph displaying their favorites. ^{MGDL}

"Today we are going to read a biography of Dr. Seuss. We have read other biographies this year. ^{DI} Turn to your Horton partner and together work on a definition of a biography and give one example of one we have read." He calls on a few students to give examples and a definition. ^{FAAL} Together they agree that the definition of a biography is an account of a person's life and achievements. ^{FAAL} He asks his students what they think will be some of Dr. Seuss' achievements that will be mentioned in this book. ^{DICT}

He shows the students the cover and reads the title, *Dr. Seuss, the Great Doodler*. He asks the students to turn to their Horton partner and discuss what a doodler is, using any clues you might get from the cover. ^{FAAL} He distributes the books. He does a picture walk with his students as an opportunity to introduce any vocabulary they might have difficulty with and for them to get a sense of the storyline. ^{FAAL} He also notes that this book is not divided into chapters and covers a lot of information. He explains to the students, "Boys and girls, we know this book is a biography and typically biographies are divided into chapters to make it easier to categorize the information. So, we are going to make chapters using our sticky notes to make it easier for us. Pages 4-5 are the Introduction. Put a sticky note on page 6. Write 'Childhood' on it." He continues to help the students divide the book into sections. ^{DICT}

"Ok, now we are going to start reading each chapter. ^{DI} I want you and your partner to read the section individually, discuss what you read, and then answer the questions who, what, where, when, why, and how. While you are reading, be thinking about those questions. Maybe not all of the questions will be answered. So, you need to look back at the text and decide. ^{DICT&DI} That is what good readers do. They go back to the text to look for the answers." ^{FMDL}

"I am going to give you highlighting tape to highlight the answers to the questions in the text. I am going to model it for you with Jose. Ok, Jose and I just finished reading. Using our prompts and responses, I ask Jose, 'Who is this about?' Jose responds, 'This is about Dr. Seuss who is also Ted Geisel. Do you agree?' 'Yes, I agree. Let's highlight that part of the text.' 'What is this section about?' 'It is about him winning the Pulitzer Prize. Do you agree?' 'Yes.' 'Ok, let's highlight that.'" ^{FMDL}

"Now, boys and girls, read the next section and discuss the answers to the questions, and when you agree, use the highlighting tape to mark it." ^{DICT & DI} Mr. Alvarez walks around monitoring the students' conversations. He interjects when students need prompting. "Erica, I notice you and Felipe have answered the who and when. Good job! Are you stuck on the rest? Do you think there is an answer to why? What about how? I agree with you. Those questions aren't answered. Let's think about the what. What did Ted do as a child? Yes, he doodled. Highlight that. Good thinking you two! Way to persevere and not give up!" ^{MGDL}

respond with thumbs up. Based upon the work students did today and the length of the next section, Mr. Alvarez decides to have students read the section together and discuss it as a class. He will work with them to identify the answers to the questions by calling on students for their input^{MGDL} and by doing a think aloud.^{FMDL}

At the end of the week when students have finished the text and task, Mr. Alvarez asks them to turn to their Lorax partner and reflect on the question, "What was the author's main purpose for writing this book? Was she answering a question, explaining, or describing?"^{DICT} He points to the prompts and responses on the pocket chart, reminding the students to use them. Mr. Alvarez walks around monitoring the students' responses and uses of the prompts.^{MGDL} He has students share out their responses.

Sixth Grade Vignette Highlighted Version

RI.6.1. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.6.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

CCSS.ELA.RL.6.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

CCSS.ELA.RI.6.6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

CCSS.ELA.SL.6.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. ^{DI}

Ms. Peck begins the day by explaining to her students that they are going to be reading a short text about a scientist. She reads the learning targets that are written in kid friendly “I Can” Statements on the white board. ^{DI}

She begins by explaining who Richard Feynman was. “Richard Feynman was a Physicist. Does anyone know what that type of scientist studies? Ben Franklin was the first American physicist when he characterized the two kinds of electric charge, positive and negative. Does anyone watch ‘The Big Bang Theory’? Well, Leonard and Sheldon are physicists.” A student responds, “String Theory, whatever that is, dark energy, and he is always doing equations on his whiteboard.” ^{DICT}

Ms. Peck responds, “Physics is a very large field of study which encompasses the interactions of matter and energy. One way to think of it is physicists are interested in what makes the universe tick. ^{FAAL} This will be an important piece of information to think about as you read the text, ‘The Making of a Scientist’ by Richard Feynman. ^{DICT & DI} This is a memoir, a collection of memories from someone’s life. ^{FAAL} We are going to chunk the text as you read today. Let’s number the paragraphs and each paragraph will be a ‘chunk’.

^{DICT} We are going to use the *Say/Do/Mean* strategy that we learned last week. ^{DI} We are also going to circle any word choices the author made that affected the tone or mood. ^{FAAL & DICT} I am going to model how you and your partner will chunk and discuss the text using the graphic organizer as our guide. Jesus, will you model with me? Ok, I’ll read the first paragraph/chunk while you follow along. So, I think this section is saying that his father believed he was going to be a scientist. What do you think?”

“I agree with you. Under the ‘do’ on the graphic organizer, the author is giving an example of how his

Say/Do/Mean

Directions: Use the Say/Do/Mean chart below to help you understand what the author is saying and doing in the text, and to understand the significance of the text.

1. Number the paragraphs.
2. Chunk the text.
3. Circle key words in the text.

¶	What is the author saying in the text? Here are some questions you should ask: What is this section about? What is the content? What did I learn from this?	What is the author doing in the text? Here are some examples of what authors do: Giving an example Interpreting data Sharing an anecdote Summarizing information Reflecting on a process	My interpretation or insights about the text. Here are some examples of insight: Analyze why the author used a certain technique. Relate it to something else you read. Relate it to a current issue. Relate it to your experience.

(Continue on the back or another page if necessary.)

father did this by playing with the tiles like dominoes,” responds Jesus.

“It is interesting that his dad said if it was a boy...I don’t think people would be saying that today. I think he means that his father set him up to be a scientist by the activities he did with him. What do you think?” asks Ms. Peck.

“Yes, I think the idea of pushing them down and seeing them fall is kind of like an experiment,” comments Jesus.

“Ok, let’s write these down on our graphic organizer,” says Ms. Peck. “Ok, ladies and gentlemen, any questions? I’ll be walking around listening to you and helping out if you have any questions.”

FMDL

Ms. Peck walks around the room listening to students discuss the memoir. She stops at one set of partners and hears the students saying, “In paragraph five, I think the author is saying that his father would take the information they were reading and make it real. What do you think? Yes, and he does that by citing an example with the T Rex. I’m not sure what we need to say in the mean column. Do you?” Ms. Peck says, “Think about what I said about physicists. They are interested in how the universe ticks. What is going on here with his father’s examples?”

Students respond, “So this means his father is trying to help him visualize and think about it, not just words on a page but what they mean.”

Ms. Peck responds, “I am very impressed how you thought more deeply about that passage to get that meaning. Nice thinking.” MGD

Students continue to work on the text until the end of the period. Ms. Peck asks students to talk with their partner about the central idea of the article and four major examples the author used to illustrate it. DICT & DI She walks about the room monitoring student responses and prompting with questions as necessary. MGD She then adds, “Now take a moment and reflect on your reading and discussion with your partner today. What worked? What could you do better tomorrow? Write it on a sticky note and leave it on your paper as a reminder tomorrow.” FMDL

The next day Ms. Peck has students take out the memoir. She asks students to look back at the vocabulary they identified and discuss them with their partner. FAAL How did it affect tone or meaning of the text? DICT & DI She asks students to share the vocabulary they identified and a working definition. FAAL

She then points out the use of flashbacks the author used. She asks, “What is a flashback? Look at our anchor chart” “Yes, a flashback is an event or scene that is taking place at an earlier time. Work with your partner and identify the flashbacks. Once you have identified them, talk with your partner about why the author chose to use them. How did the flashbacks convey the main idea or theme of this memoir?” DICT

She then points out the use of flashbacks the author used. She asks, “What is a flashback? Look at our anchor chart” “Yes, a flashback is an event or scene that is taking place at an earlier time. Work with your partner and identify the flashbacks. Once you have identified them, talk with your

partner about why the author chose to use them. How did the flashbacks convey the main idea or theme of this memoir?^{DI}

Students share out their ideas. She then asks, “If I say I know about hurricanes or know about the water cycle...What does it mean to really know something? Talk with your partner again and decide using our conversation skills, what does it mean to really know something? Is it just being able to give a definition? Talk.” Ms. Peck walks around listening to the students’ lively conversations and appreciates their enthusiasm.^{MGDL}

She brings the class back together to continue delving into the topic. She then asks, “What do you think Dr. Feynman’s father’s definition would be?” She then asks, “Why did Dr. Feynman write this memoir?”^{DICT & DI}

She ends the lesson with a quote from Dr. Feynman, “I learned very early the difference between knowing the name of something and knowing something.”

The Making of a Scientist by Richard Feynman can be found at <https://www.tes.com/lessons/q1qF0RjqrAMfuA/the-making-of-a-scientist-a-close-reading>