

TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS OF *Esperanza Rising*

by Pam Munoz Ryan

Text Type: Literary

TEXT DESCRIPTION	PLACEMENT
<p>The story of a privileged young girl who is forced to leave the family ranch in Mexico after the tragic death of her father. Esperanza and her mother have no choice but to move to a camp for Mexican farm workers in California during the Great Depression. Esperanza is unprepared for the financial difficulties, hard labor and discrimination her family faces. The novel traces Esperanza's journey as she struggles to "start over" in the face of incredible adversity.</p>	<p>This text falls in the 4-5 band level. Despite its lower quantitative measure, the structure of the text, multiple themes, heavy use of metaphor and cultural and historical references make this text rich, complex and challenging for upper elementary students.</p>
QUANTITATIVE MEASURE	
<p>QUANTITATIVE MEASURE OF THE TEXT: 750L ASSOCIATED BAND LEVEL: 2-3</p>	
QUALITATIVE MEASURES	
<p>MEANING/PURPOSE: Very Complex This text contains multiple levels of meaning are often difficult to identify. Themes are subtle and require connections across the full text.</p> <p>TEXT STRUCTURE: Moderately Complex The plot is sequential, but spans two countries and includes large time shifts. Multiple complex characters develop and change throughout the story. Main characters react very differently to major events and present conflicting perspectives, offering a nuanced view of the issues raised by each character's experiences.</p> <p>LANGUAGE FEATURES: Moderately Complex The sentence structure consists primarily of simple and compound sentences, with some complex constructions and the vocabulary is generally easy to understand. However, the use of language in this text is quite complex. Metaphors, which are repeated and developed over the course of the novel, are used to convey themes.</p> <p>KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS: Moderately Complex This story is set in Mexico and rural California during the early 1930s and includes many historical references. The experiences portrayed are likely to be uncommon to many readers. The book also includes many words and aphorisms in Spanish which contribute to a deeper understanding of the text.</p>	
CONSIDERATIONS FOR READER AND TASK	
<p>Students may require some support in understanding the settings in the story, as well as many cultural aspects specific to the time and place in which the story takes place. Additional nonfiction texts are included in the module to build background knowledge and understanding. The larger social issues raised by the book are still current and complex and should be handled sensitively. Throughout the book, students are asked to consider multiple perspectives; work on respectful discourse will ensure that these discussions are comfortable and productive learning experiences.</p> <p>Specific supports for English Language Learners, students with special needs, and students who need enrichment are included in the module.</p>	

RATIONALE

This novel builds understanding and empathy as students explore the guiding question, “What are human rights, and how can they be threatened?”. The complex characters in the book offer the opportunity to examine how characters respond to challenges (RL.5.2) and to compare and contrast the main character in the novel (RL.5.3). Chapters in the story have meaningful titles and connections (RL.5.5) and several repeating metaphors used to develop the themes in the book offer opportunities to explore how the authors uses figurative language to create layers of meaning within the story (L.5.5, RL.5.4).

5M1.1 #1

TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS OF
The Most Beautiful Roof in the World:
Exploring the Rainforest Canopy

by Kathryn Lasky

Text Type: Informational

TEXT DESCRIPTION	PLACEMENT
The story of Dr. Meg Lowman, a scientist who studies the ecosystem in the rainforest in Belize. This book offers a richly detailed description of the living things in the rainforest, as well as a window into the life of a scientist working out in the field. The text is written in a narrative style, focused on the daily activities of Dr. Lowman and includes beautiful photographs of the plants and insects she studies high in the canopy of the rainforest.	Although this book is both quantitatively and qualitatively complex, repeated readings, graphic organizers and Close Reading Guides support students in navigating this complex text, placing it within the 4-5 band level.
QUANTITATIVE MEASURE	
QUANTITATIVE MEASURE OF THE TEXT: 1100 L ASSOCIATED BAND LEVEL: 6-8	
QUALITATIVE MEASURES	
<p>MEANING/PURPOSE: Moderately Complex The purpose of the sections of text selected is implied but fairly easy to identify based upon context and examples given.</p> <p>TEXT STRUCTURE: Moderately Complex The book is divided into three main sections. For the most part, the text is written a narrative structure, with some subsections in more typical expository structures. The organization is generally sequential, following Dr. Lowman through her day as she works. Photographs greatly enhance the reader’s understanding of setting and events. Because this is informational text, written in a narrative style, the connections between ideas must sometimes be inferred. Often the main idea of a section is developed through examples and experiences and does not become clear until the end of a paragraph or section.</p> <p>LANGUAGE FEATURES: Moderately Complex The language used is generally contemporary and familiar, but the book includes rich descriptions of the rainforest, which are often built on metaphors and similes. Some academic and domain specific vocabulary is used, but words are often defined in context. The text contains many long, complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words.</p> <p>KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS: Moderately Complex The book relies on some discipline-specific content knowledge and includes a mix of simple and more complicated ideas about the rainforest ecosystem.</p>	
CONSIDERATIONS FOR READER AND TASK	
<p>Students will need support in understanding how each section of this book relates to the whole. The language in the book is complex and at times can be hard to follow. Because of the descriptive and story-telling style of the book, students may need practice in pulling out the information presented. Repeated readings, graphic organizers and Close Reading Guides support students in navigating this complex text.</p> <p>Specific supports for English Language Learners, students with special needs, and students who need enrichment are included in the module.</p>	

RATIONALE

This text is used throughout the module to build knowledge about the rainforest and analyze author's craft. In Unit 1, students build background knowledge on biodiversity in the rainforest as they follow Dr. Meg Lowman in her study of the rainforest. Students closely read excerpts of *The Most Beautiful Roof in the World* to identify text structure and practice summarizing the text (RI.5.1, RI.5.2, RI.5.5). In Unit 2, students explore how the author helps the reader to understand what it is like in the rainforest by analyzing the use of figurative, concrete, and sensory language (RI.5.4, L.5.5) With a deeper understanding of author's craft, in Unit 3 students write first person narratives, building out a scenario from *The Most Beautiful Roof in the World* using concrete and sensory language to describe the rainforest as though they were actually there (W.5.3, W.5.4).

5M2.1 #2

TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS OF *Bite at Night*

by EL Education

Text Type: Literary

TEXT DESCRIPTION	PLACEMENT
This narrative text is based on an incident briefly referred to in <i>The Most Beautiful Roof in the World</i> . In this story, scientist Meg Lowman, awakes in the night and thinks she has been bitten by a Gabon viper, one of West Africa's deadliest snakes. Luckily, she has just been bitten by army ants- painful, but not fatal experience.	Both the quantitative and qualitative complexity of this narrative falls solidly within a fifth grade level.
QUANTITATIVE MEASURE	
QUANTITATIVE MEASURE OF THE TEXT: 900L ASSOCIATED BAND LEVEL: 4-5	
QUALITATIVE MEASURES	
MEANING/PURPOSE: Slightly Complex The central message of the text is clear and can easily be inferred from the events of the story.	
TEXT STRUCTURE: Slightly Complex The storyline is clear, chronological and easy to predict.	
LANGUAGE FEATURES: Moderately Complex The language is easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning. The story contains some vocabulary, including domain specific words, that may be unfamiliar and uses figurative language. The sentence structure consists primarily of simple and compound sentences, with some complex constructions.	
KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS: Moderately Complex The experiences portrayed take place in a setting that will be unfamiliar to many readers and includes references specific to the rainforest and the work of a scientist in the field.	
CONSIDERATIONS FOR READER AND TASK	
Students analyze this story to build their understanding of key elements of narrative texts. Since the story is based on an event previously read in <i>The Most Beautiful Roof in the World</i> , the main character and setting will be familiar to students. This supports students in navigating the knowledge complexity of the text.	
Specific supports for English Language Learners, students with special needs, and students who need enrichment are included in the module.	
RATIONALE	
This text is used throughout the unit as an exemplar to build understanding of key elements of narrative writing, including the use of figurative language, rich description and point of view (RL.5.4, RL.5.6). Later in the unit, students choose a scenario from <i>The Most Beautiful Roof in the World</i> and write a first person narrative from the point of view of one of the people featured in the scenario (W.5.3).	

5M2.3 #3

TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS OF
Promises to Keep
How Jackie Robinson Changed America

by Sharon Robinson

Text Type: Informational

TEXT DESCRIPTION	PLACEMENT
A biography of the iconic baseball player Jackie Robinson, told from the perspective of his daughter, Sharon. The book details Robinson's accomplishments on the field as well as his extraordinary contributions to the civil rights movement. The book includes copies of photographs, newspaper clippings, posters and letters from the time. This intimate biography connects Jackie's experiences to the larger world in which he lived and explores the impact he has had on all Americans.	The high proportion of visual elements in the book, which include photographs, newspaper clippings, posters and letters, as well as the support given in reading each section, make this book comfortably accessible to fifth graders.

QUANTITATIVE MEASURE

QUANTITATIVE MEASURE OF THE TEXT: 1030L
ASSOCIATED BAND LEVEL: 6-8

QUALITATIVE MEASURES

MEANING/PURPOSE: Moderately Complex

The purpose of the text is implied but easy to identify based upon content and chapter headings.

TEXT STRUCTURE: Slightly Complex

After a general Introduction, the biography is primarily chronological, beginning before Robinson's birth and ending shortly after his death. Connections between larger ideas and the events in Jackie's life are explicit and often reflected in chapter titles. Text features, including clear descriptive headings, captions and historical sidebars, help the reader navigate and understand the content of the text. Photographs, timelines, newspaper clippings, posters and letters from the time period strongly support comprehension.

LANGUAGE FEATURES: Moderately Complex

The language is largely explicit, but offers some occasions for more complex meaning. The text contains many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words. The vocabulary is mostly contemporary and familiar, but does include many academic and domain specific words and phrases.

KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS: Moderately Complex

The text includes a mix of simple and more complicated, abstract ideas and relies on some discipline-specific content knowledge about sports and the Civil Rights movement. Most of the context needed is available through the many visual elements included in the text.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR READER AND TASK

Visual elements strongly support each section of the text and are used, along with close readings of selected sections to support comprehension. A general understanding of baseball is helpful, but not necessary, in understanding Jackie Robinson's accomplishments.

Specific supports for English Language Learners, students with special needs, and students who need enrichment are included in the module.

RATIONALE

Promises to Keep anchors an exploration of factors that have contributed to the success of professional athletes as leaders of social change. This study begins with Jackie Robinson and then expands to student research on other athletes who have had an impact on society. Students first determine the main ideas of each section and identify key details, using these to summarize chapters of the book (RI.5.1, RI.5.2). They also think about the relationship between people and events in the text as they gather information on the factors that led to Jackie Robinson's success in leading social change (RI.5.6). Students examine related texts and videos, describing each author's opinion on the factor that led to Jackie's success and comparing these points of view (RI.5.6). Finally, they synthesize their thinking in an opinion essay on which factor they think was most important in Jackie Robinson's success in leading social change (W.5.1, W.5.9).

5M3.2 #4

TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS OF THE *Eight Days: A Story of Haiti*

by Edwidge Danticat

Text Type: Literary

TEXT DESCRIPTION	PLACEMENT
<p>This short picture book tells the fictional story of a young boy trapped under rubble for eight days after an earthquake in Haiti. While waiting to be rescued, Junior, plays “in his mind”, focusing each day on a memory of his life in Haiti before the earthquake. Although the book addresses some sensitive issues, like the death of Junior’s friend Oscar, the text is hopeful. Both words and illustrations emphasize human resilience, the beauty of Haiti and the power of imagination.</p>	<p>This text falls solidly in the 4-5 band level. The length of the book, word choice, illustrations and sequential plot are relatively simple to understand, but the theme, layers of meaning and the subtle connection of Junior’s imaginings to the realities of the aftermath of an earthquake offer opportunities to analyze and interpret the text on a variety of levels.</p>
QUANTITATIVE MEASURE	
<p>QUANTITATIVE MEASURE OF THE TEXT: MEASUREMENT NOT AVAILABLE ASSOCIATED BAND LEVEL: N/A</p>	
QUALITATIVE MEASURES	
<p>MEANING/PURPOSE: Moderately Complex The basic story line is easy to follow, and the general message of hope is clear. However, on closer reading, the story offers deeper messages about resilience, the power of imagination and a vision of restoration that are nuanced and complex. With analysis, Junior’s imaginings can also be tied to real events that may occur after an earthquake- wind, rain, darkness, fire and shouting all play a part in the activities Junior imagines while under the rubble. This text presents multiple layers of meaning to be interpreted.</p> <p>TEXT STRUCTURE: Slightly Complex The text begins at the end-with Junior’s rescue- and it is important that the reader understand that the events of each day are happening in Junior’s imagination as he waits to be found. Otherwise, the plot is organized sequentially with clear temporal transitions at the top of each page (On the first day...).</p> <p>LANGUAGE FEATURES: Moderately Complex The text is largely written in the plain language of a child, but does contain names of people, places and other words and phrases likely to be unfamiliar to most American students (“Alarive!”, “recited our lessons”). The meaning of these unfamiliar words can usually be determined using context or illustrations. The text also contains words and phrases that have figurative or nuanced meanings (“He never woke up.” “...in the entire country, in the entire world”) that are important to understanding the deeper meaning of the text.</p> <p>KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS: Slightly Complex This text relies primarily on knowledge of common childhood activities like playing soccer and riding bikes. Some context on the effects of an earthquake and on the country of Haiti would be helpful, but in most cases, this understanding can be built from context, illustrations and the “Note from the Author” at the end of the book.</p>	
CONSIDERATIONS FOR READER AND TASK	
<p>This text is introduced after students have learned about, and done research on, various natural disasters. They have also read specifically about the earthquake in Haiti in 2010 that inspired the story. A Close Reading Guide will highlight the challenging literary features of the text. Some of the activities Junior imagines are old fashioned (playing marbles) or more common in rural areas (flying kites) and may require a brief explanation depending on the needs of your student population. Illustrations can be used as a strong support throughout the book.</p> <p>Specific supports for English Language Learners, students with special needs, and students who need enrichment are included in the module.</p>	

RATIONALE

This text was chosen as an accessible vehicle for introducing students to the broader idea that natural disasters have more than just a physical effect on people and places. The text offers a message of hope and resilience, an important counter balance to the devastating effects of natural disasters students have heard and read about. Although the story at first seems simple, there are many deeper layers of meaning to uncover. The narrator of the book is a young person, and the theme, setting, character and events of the story all pivot on his unique point of view. These strong connections between the plot and the narrator's point of view, as well as the book's rich illustrations are used to teach CCSS RL.5.6: *Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.* and CCSS RL.5.7: *Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text.* Students later apply this initial understanding to a varied and complex set of poems about how individuals have been affected by natural disasters. This book was also chosen because it is written in a variety of English that is familiar to most students, providing a point of contrast in subsequent lessons to the more formal and less formal varieties of English used in the poems that follow (CCSS L.5.3b).

5M4.2 #5

TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS OF “O’ Beautiful Storm”

by Gian Smith

Text Type: Literary

TEXT DESCRIPTION	PLACEMENT
In this beautiful poem, Gian Smith reflects on the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina, which caused severe devastation along the Gulf coast of the United States in 2005, with some of the most significant devastation in New Orleans, Louisiana. The poem is accompanied by a multimedia presentation.	Although this poem is quantitatively quite complex, the support given and the visuals in the multimedia presentation make the text appropriate for fifth graders.
QUANTITATIVE MEASURE	
QUANTITATIVE MEASURE OF THE TEXT*: NP (POEM) ASSOCIATED BAND LEVEL: N/A	
QUALITATIVE MEASURES	
<p>MEANING/PURPOSE: Very Complex Multiple levels of meaning in the poem can be difficult to identify. The theme is subtle and requires an understanding of the point of view of the speaker.</p> <p>TEXT STRUCTURE: Slightly Complex The poem is written in free verse. The multimedia presentation supports students in understanding the poem .</p> <p>LANGUAGE FEATURES: Very Complex The language is fairly complex and the meaning of the poem rests on imagery, figurative language and personification. Some vocabulary may be unfamiliar</p> <p>KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS: Moderately Complex The experiences portrayed will be likely be unfamiliar to most readers. Some context on the effects of Hurricane Katrina would be helpful, only a general understanding of the effects of hurricanes is necessary to understanding the poem.</p>	
CONSIDERATIONS FOR READER AND TASK	
<p>Students work in triads to analyze this poem. The visuals in the multimedia presentation support comprehension. The images accompanying the first stanza poem are video footage of the damage taken after the event. Be sure to preview the video before showing it to students and determine if any students need to be prepared in advance to watch this video, for example students who have experienced a natural disaster.</p> <p>Specific supports for English Language Learners, students with special needs, and students who need enrichment are included in the module.</p>	
RATIONALE	
As part of their study about the effects of natural disasters, students work with an excerpt of this poem and its accompanying multimedia presentation. Students answer text-dependent questions in order to dig deeper into the human impact of a natural disaster, including how the speaker in the poem reflects on the topic (RL.5.1, RL.5.2). Students also analyze the visuals in the video, noting how they contribute to the meaning, tone, and beauty of the text. They then complete a quick write to explain their ideas (RI.5.7).	

5M4.2 #6