NYS Next Generation Learning Standards: Leading Advanced Literacies Instruction For the 21st Century

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Backdrop for Today's Session

- A MULTI-YEAR PARTNERSHIP WITH NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- OUR LATEST COLLABORATION:

  WHAT DOES A NEW SET OF STANDARDS IN THE CONTEXT OF TODAY'S LITERACY DEMANDS MEAN FOR INSTRUCTION?

Backdrop for Today's Session: Map of the Brief Series

<u>Academic language</u> is the oral and written language used primarily in school, civic, and professional settings—the language of text, academic success, and of power and influence. It is distinct from everyday conversational language.

This Morning's Session

1. Today's Literacy Context
2. A Primer on Reading Comprehension
3. Advanced Literacies for Academic Success
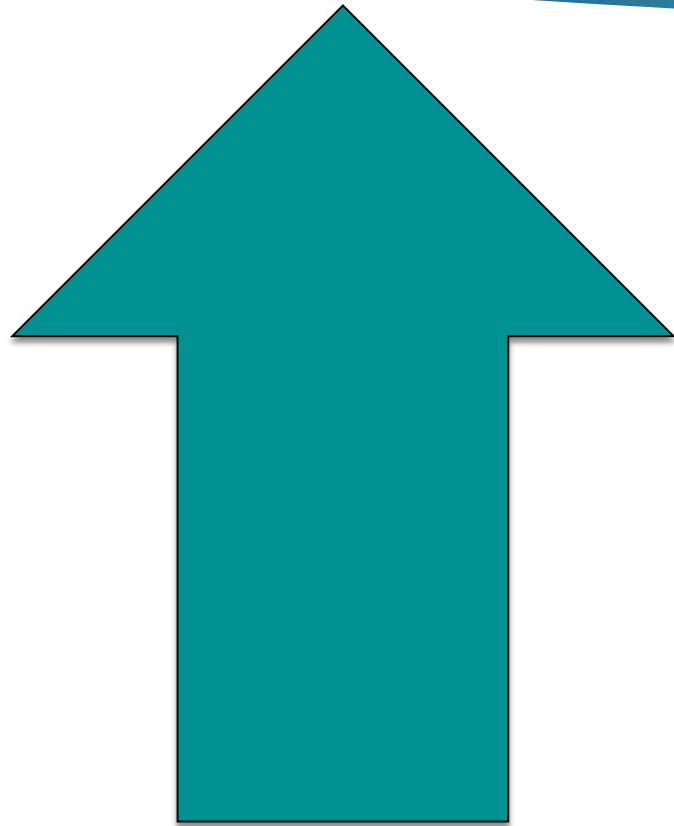4. Fostering Advanced Literacies in Today's Classrooms
5. Q&A

Today's Literacy Context
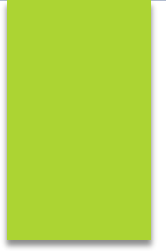
Today's Literacy Context
Rethinking "literacy"

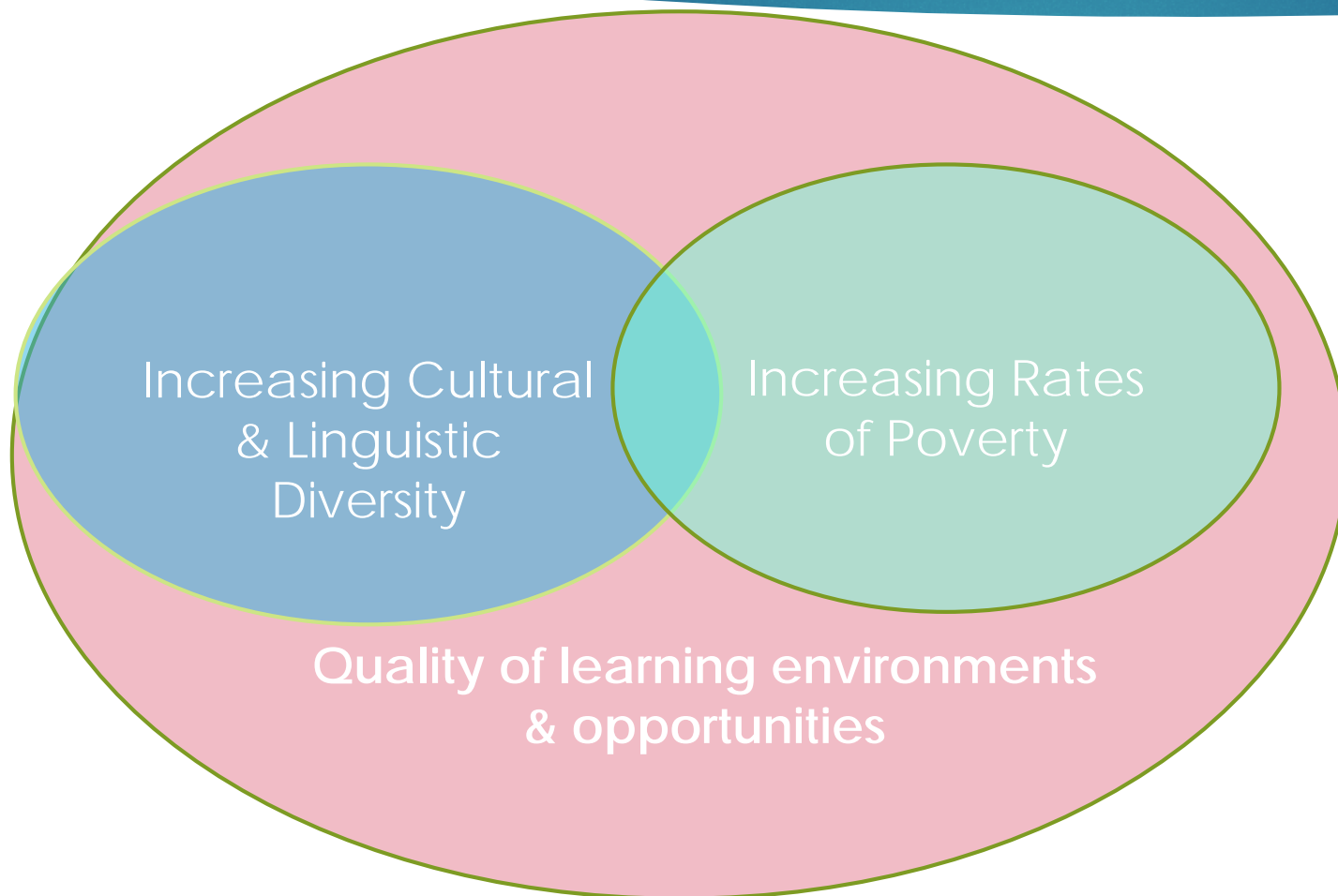**Increasingly sophisticated literacy skills needed to thrive day-to-day**

- Demands communication (orally and in writing) in diverse ways and with diverse audiences
- Requires a need to understand and use print for a variety of purposes
- Is much more than decoding and understanding print

New role of language and literacy skills in society— in our neighborhoods and in the global world

What counts as "literate" on the rise

Today's Literacy Context
Rethinking "literacy"

Increasing Cultural & Linguistic Diversity

Increasing Rates of Poverty

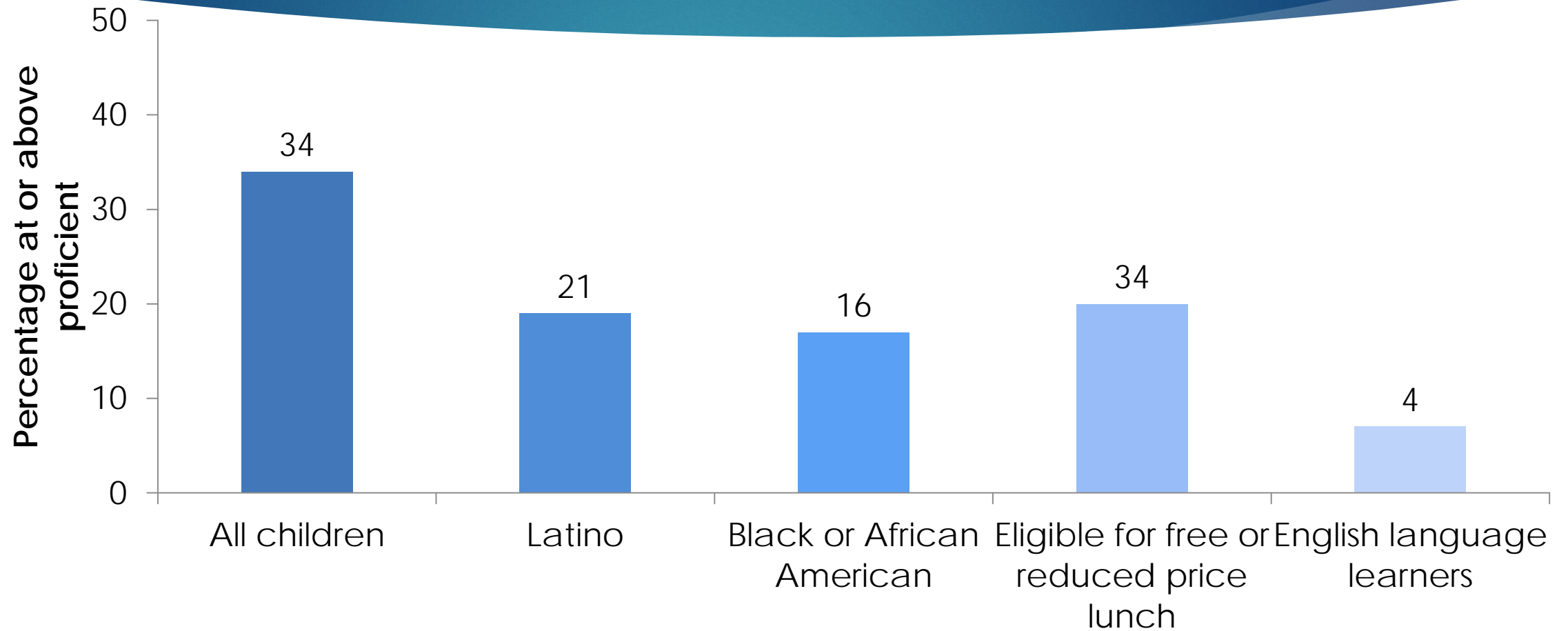Quality of learning environments & opportunities

Compromised opportunities to develop:

- Language and reading skills

- Strong emotional, social, and cognitive skills

High rates of special education placement and dropout

Today's Literacy Context: U.S. 8ᵗʰ Graders

Bar chart — Percentage at or above proficient:
- All children: 34
- Latino: 21
- Black or African American: 16
- Eligible for free or reduced price lunch: 34
- English language learners: 4

Changing Demands of Workforce Participation

Work tasks in the U.S. economy (1960-2009)

Murnane & Levy, 2013
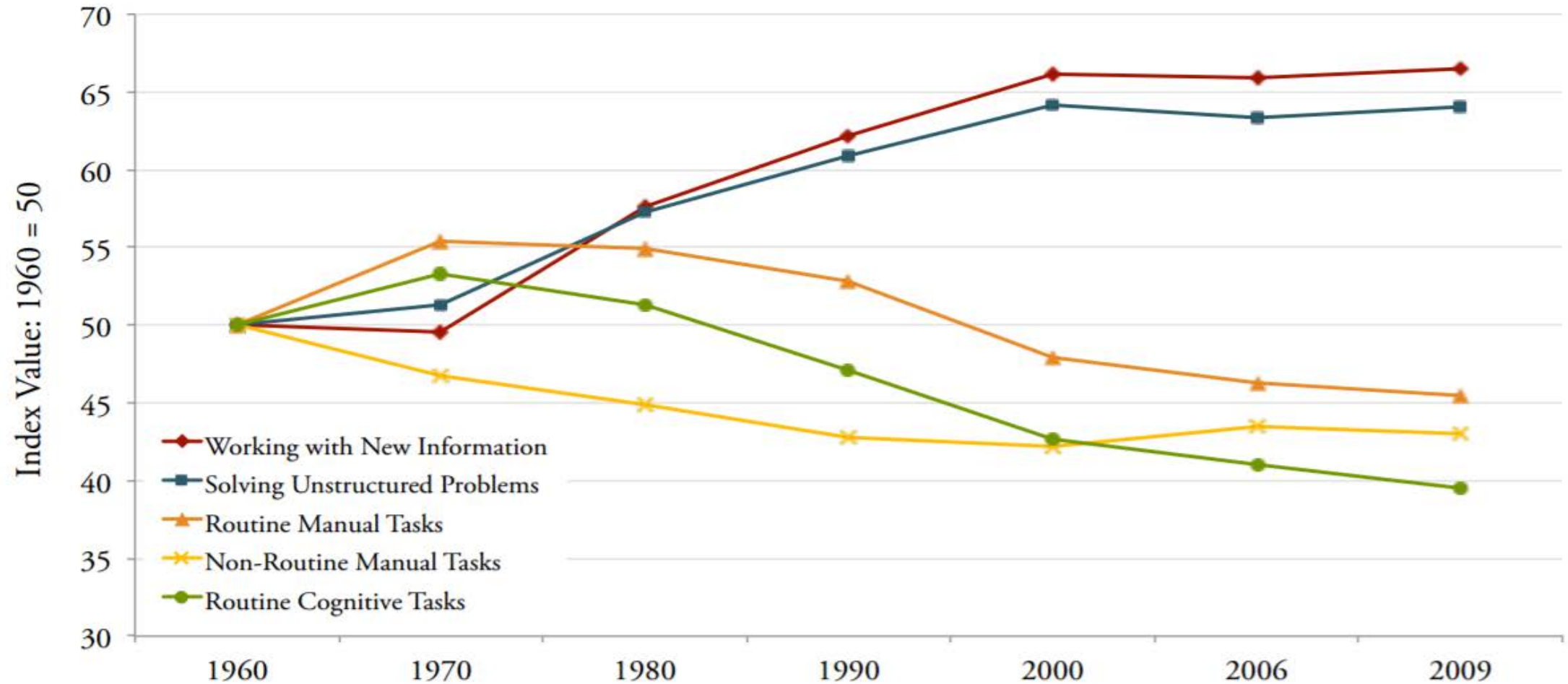
Changing Demands of Workforce Participation

"In order to prepare young people to do the jobs computers cannot do, we must re-focus our education system around one objective: **giving students the foundational skills in problem-solving and communication that computers don't have**."

"Computerized work has ratcheted up the definition of foundational skills."

Murnane & Levy, 2013

Changing Demands of Workforce Participation

- Business leaders report a steady decline in workplace literacy skills

- Private sector spending approx. 3.1 billion a year on bolstering entry-level workers' literacy skills

  - 21st Century workers need to clearly communicate (in speech and writing) with a wide variety of audiences, and efficiently manage the abundant information that defines the digital age.

What about the Higher Education Context?

- Average college coursework requires 80 pages of independent reading per week

- Up to 60% of community college freshmen assigned to remedial reading courses

- 4-year colleges re-organizing freshman year curriculum offerings to provide reading and writing support

- Increasing emphasis on group projects, innovation challenges, "hack-a-thons," etc.

Mapping Workforce Demands to Curriculum Design

▶ Team-based, project-based approaches

▶ Emphasis on building up conceptual reasoning skills and background knowledge across subject areas

▶ Emphasis on oral and written communications meant to convey knowledge and reasoning to others

▶ Emphasis on solving unstructured problems

   ▶ i.e., several potential solutions, weighing trade-offs against priorities to arrive at "best" solution

Summary: Today's Literacy Context

1. The school-age population is increasingly linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse.

2. What counts as "literate" today is on the rise.

3. The design of literacy instruction today has not kept pace with this shift from the need for basic to advanced literacy.

4. A more systems-level, strategic approach is needed.

A Primer on Reading Comprehension

Brief 2: What Goes into Effective Reading Comprehension?

2 Anchor Briefs	4 Hallmark Briefs: Instructional Practices for Advanced Literacies		2 Spotlight Briefs
Brief 1: Advanced Literacies for Academic Success	Hallmark 1: Engaging Texts	Hallmark 2: Rich Discussion	Spotlight 1: Language Production Projects
Brief 2: What Goes into Reading Comprehension?	Hallmark 3: Frequent Writing	Hallmark 4: Academic Vocabulary and Language	Spotlight 2: Units of Study

Passage Analysis

Shark Facts: A 3rd Grade Text

There are almost 400 different kinds of sharks. Each kind of shark looks different, has a unique diet, and behaves differently. There are sharks in all four oceans of the world. Some sharks are longer than a school bus, while others are so small they can live in fish tanks. Sharks come in all kinds of colors. Most of the time, their skin color helps them blend in with their surroundings. But, some sharks that live in the deepest part of the ocean actually have parts that glow in the dark. Most sharks live in salt water, but some can live in fresh water. All sharks are unique, or have different qualities that make them so special.

Passage Analysis

Code-based skills

3 sounds, 1 word:
/sh/ /ar/ /k/

Spelling pattern:
there vs. their

~100 words correct per minute (grade 3)

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Meaning-based Skills

Cognitive strategies

Vocabulary

Relevant background knowledge

Understanding of language

Interest and motivation

Code-Based and Meaning-Based Skills: A Critical Distinction

Code-Based Skills

Concepts about print
The ability to hear and work out spoken sounds
Alphabet knowledge
Word reading

Meaning-Based Skills

Concepts about the world
Vocabulary
Strategies to unlock word meanings
Oral language skills

Reading

Spotlight: Second Grade Classroom

▶ Struggles because of underdeveloped word reading skills (i.e., code-based skills); she reads each word slowly and laboriously.

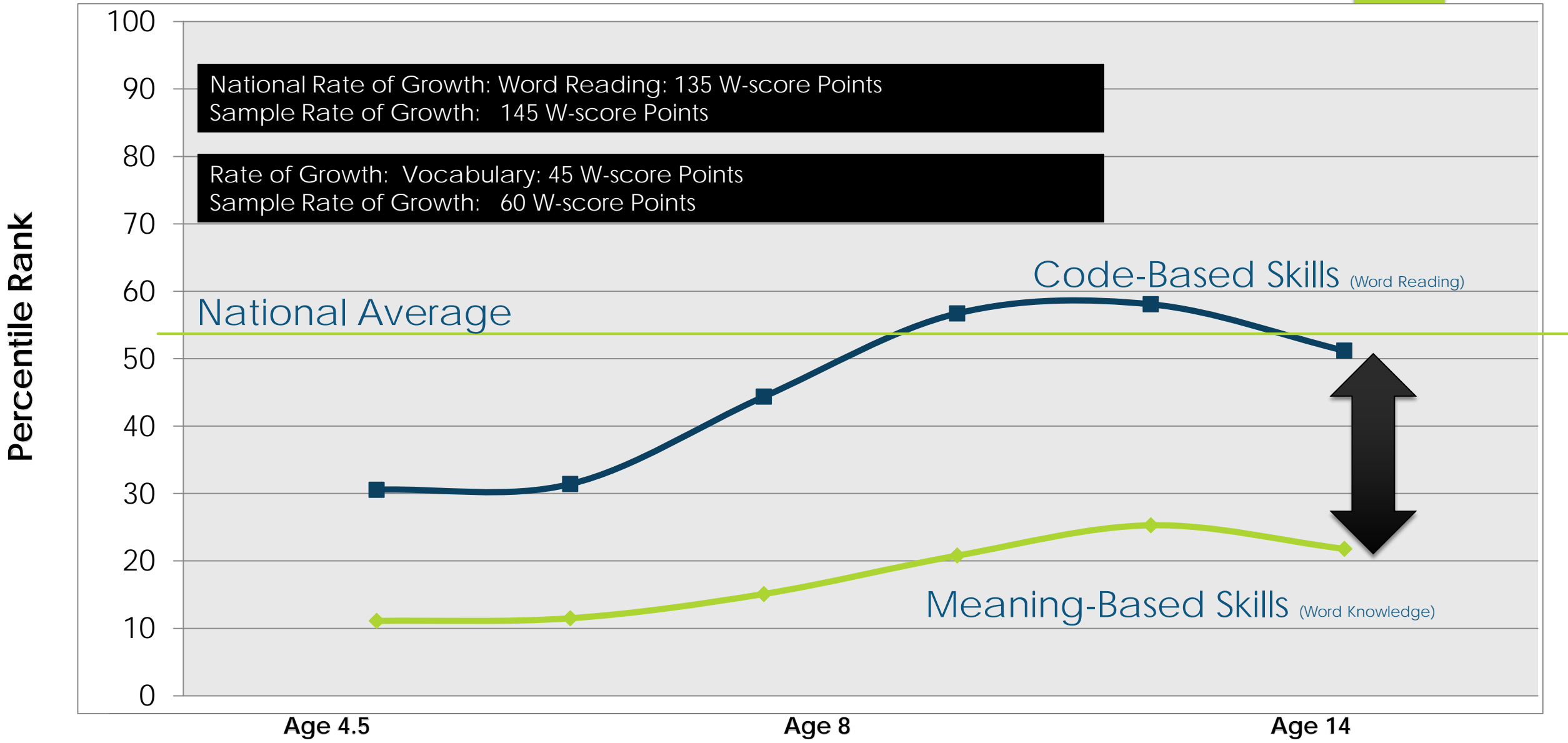"The tr-a-ai-n is low to the g-rou-nd... The train is low to the ground."
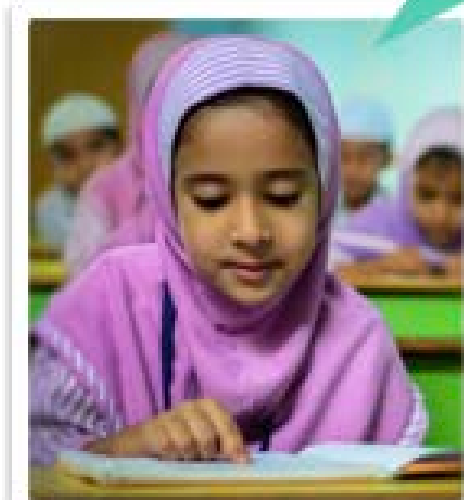
"These... trains provided... the first passenger service."

▶ Struggles because of underdeveloped vocabulary knowledge as it relates to the passage (i.e., meaning-based skills); he pauses as he tries to understand the text despite the unfamiliar words.

AN EMERGING PROFILE: THE CODE-MEANING GAP

Percentile Rank

National Rate of Growth: Word Reading: 135 W-score Points
Sample Rate of Growth: 145 W-score Points

Rate of Growth: Vocabulary: 45 W-score Points
Sample Rate of Growth: 60 W-score Points

Code-Based Skills (Word Reading)

National Average

Meaning-Based Skills (Word Knowledge)

Age 4.5   Age 8   Age 14

Code-Based and Meaning-Based Skills: A Critical Distinction

	Code	Meaning
Developmental Processes	• Typically mastered by 3rd grade • Constrained, i.e., mastery-oriented	• Develops from infancy through adulthood • Unconstrained, i.e., not mastered
Instructional Implications	Highly susceptible to instruction in relatively brief period of time	Requires sustained instruction, beginning in early childhood through adolescence

Advanced Literacies for Academic Success

Advanced Literacies for Academic Success

► The skills and competencies that enable communication in increasingly diverse ways and promote the understanding and use of text for a variety of purposes

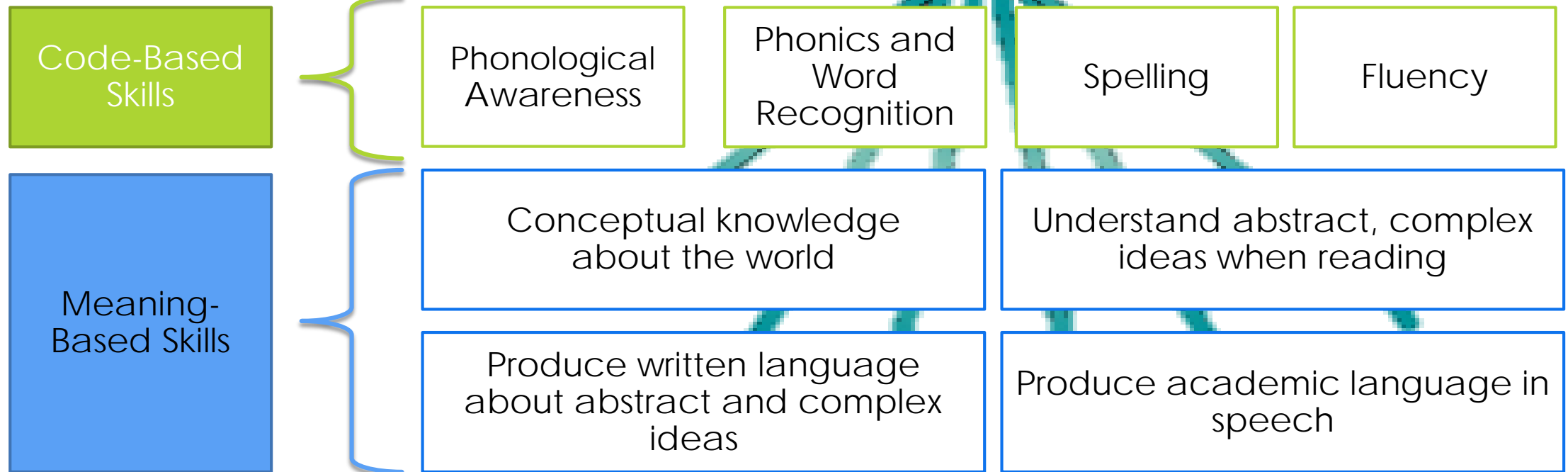| COMMUNICATE	UNDERSTAND	ACCESS
Communicate (orally and in writing) in increasingly diverse ways and with increasingly diverse audiences.	Understand and use print for a variety of purposes.	Access and participate in academic, civic, and professional communities, where knowledge is shared and generated.

Code-Based and Meaning-Based Skills:
A Critical Distinction

Code-Based Skills

- Phonological Awareness
- Phonics and Word Recognition
- Spelling
- Fluency

Meaning-Based Skills

- Conceptual knowledge about the world
- Understand abstract, complex ideas when reading
- Produce written language about abstract and complex ideas
- Produce academic language in speech

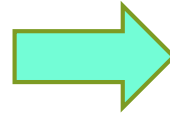# What does advanced literacy instruction look like across the school years?

Pre-K

Vocabulary, Meta-Linguistic Awareness, Cross-Linguistic Facility
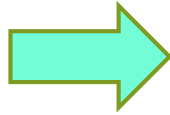
Grade 3

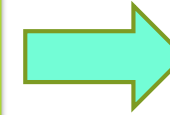Academic Vocabulary in the Context of Conceptual Reasoning

Grade 8

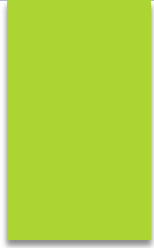Reading Multiple Sources, Written Argumentation

Grade 12

Conducting Research, Preparing for a Debate, Technical Writing

Fostering Advanced Literacies in Today's Classrooms

HOW CAN WE PROVIDE ALL LEARNERS WITH ENHANCED OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE SKILLS AND DEEPEN THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF ABSTRACT CONCEPTS AND IDEAS?
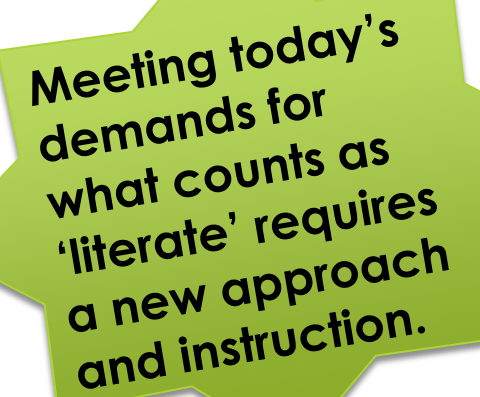
Promoting Literacy: Today's Realities

Reality: The school-age population is linguistically diverse. There are 400+ native languages in the U.S., and by 2030, 40% of the school-age population will speak a language other than English at home.

Reality: In many classrooms, the literacy strengths and needs of English learners and their English-only peers are more similar than they are different. Learning academic English, oral and written, should be an instructional priority for all.

Reality: In many settings, the instructional core needs to be updated to match today's literacy demands.

Meeting today's demands for what counts as 'literate' requires a new approach and instruction.

Four Hallmarks of Advanced Literacies

2 Anchor Briefs	4 Hallmark Briefs: Instructional Practices for Advanced Literacies		2 Spotlight Briefs
Brief 1: Advanced Literacies for Academic Success	Hallmark 1: Engaging Texts	Hallmark 2: Rich Discussion	Spotlight 1: Language Production Projects
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How do we foster advanced literacies in today's classrooms?

Hallmark 1: Work with engaging texts that feature big ideas and rich content

Hallmark 2: Talk/discuss to build both conversational and academic language and knowledge

Supported by school-wide protocols

Hallmark 3: Write to build language and knowledge

Hallmark 4: Study a small set of high-utility vocabulary words and academic language structures to build breadth and depth of knowledge

Hallmark 1 of Advanced Literacies Instruction: Engaging, Content-Rich Texts

Traditional Instructional Practices

▶ Texts used with strugglers are extremely challenging because they are at or above grade-level OR are below grade-level, offering little engaging content and compromising learning activities.
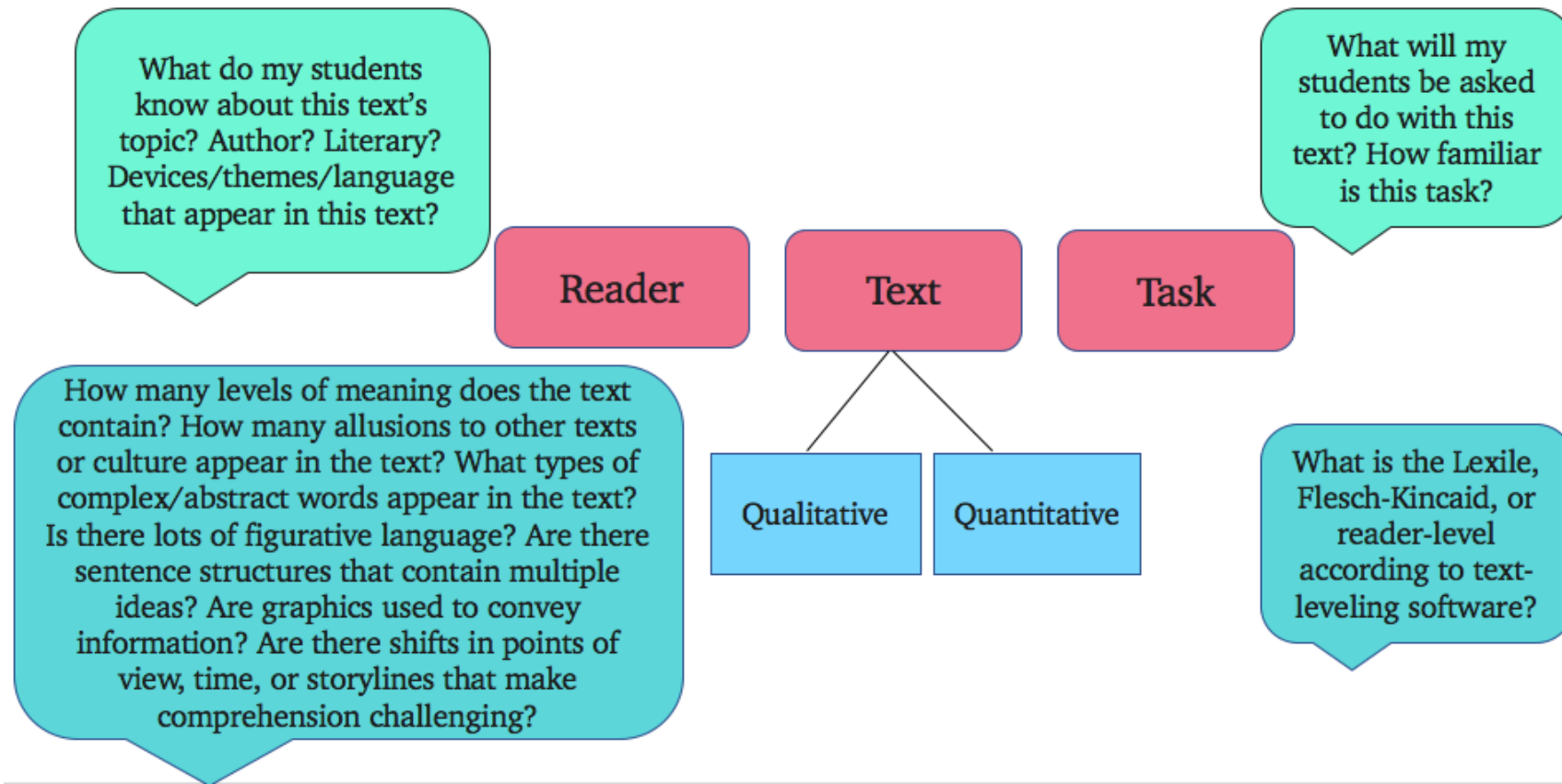
21st Century Instructional Practices

▶ Multiple texts—text sets—at different levels are used and read to support a rich understanding of a topic and to develop students' reading comprehension skills.

Hallmark 1 of Advanced Literacies Instruction: Engaging, Content-Rich Texts

How to estimate a text's complexity for a reader

What do my students know about this text's topic? Author? Literary? Devices/themes/language that appear in this text?

What will my students be asked to do with this text? How familiar is this task?

Reader — **Text** — **Task**

Qualitative   Quantitative

How many levels of meaning does the text contain? How many allusions to other texts or culture appear in the text? What types of complex/abstract words appear in the text? Is there lots of figurative language? Are there sentence structures that contain multiple ideas? Are graphics used to convey information? Are there shifts in points of view, time, or storylines that make comprehension challenging?

What is the Lexile, Flesch-Kincaid, or reader-level according to text-leveling software?

Hallmark 2 of Advanced Literacies Instruction: Classroom Discussion

From…

To…

From…		To…
Infrequent classroom discussion and talk	→	Frequent use of formats that promote classroom talk – think-pair-share, jigsaw, debates, and small group work
Using discussion and talk as strategies for processing new content	→	Also using discussion and talk as a method for demonstrating thinking and learning
Using discussion and talk as a stand-alone strategy for learning	→	Using discussion and talk to support reading and writing instruction, and vice versa

Hallmark 3 of Advanced Literacies Instruction: Building Written Language

Traditional Instructional Practices

▶ Many writing assignments are brief writing "exercises" — on-demand writing, often in response to a prompt, and drawing on personal experience and opinion.

▶ Structured, content-based approach to writing assignments and tasks, e.g. text questions, projects, or narratives.

21st Century Instructional Practices

▶ Students need to have studied the material to be processed and written about.

▶ Students need supports and scaffolds to plan, discuss, and organize their ideas and develop an argument long before they put pen to paper.

Hallmark 3 of Advanced Literacies Instruction: Building Written Language

From...   **To...**

Teaching writing in isolation from reading, speaking, and knowledge-building instruction.	Teaching writing within content-based units that involve reading, writing, and dialogue.
Using writing as a method for demonstrating knowledge gaining in a unit.	Using writing as a method for sharpening thinking about the ideas presented in a unit.
Writing about topics disconnected from a unit of study using a constrained set of text types.	Writing about the content presented in the unit using a host of text types.

Hallmark 3 of Advanced Literacies Instruction: Building Written Language

- **What types of writing fuel content mastery?**

- <u>**Four**</u> types of writing activities have been linked with improved content knowledge and mastery:
  - Extended writing
  - Summary writing
  - Note-taking to produce a research paper or presentation
  - Generating and answering questions

Hallmark 4 of Advanced Literacies Instruction: Academic Vocabulary and Language

From...		To...
Approaching vocabulary instruction as stand-alone strategy	→	Organizing vocabulary instruction within content-based units of study that involve reading, writing, and dialogue
Starting with long lists of words	→	Selecting a small set of useful and complex words, then complementing this instruction with word-learning strategies
Teaching words through a series of memorization and spelling activities and independent worksheets	→	Studying words and concepts using multiple methods and formats, including collaboration
Relying on wide reading to build word knowledge	→	Reading a small set of thematically-related texts deeply to build knowledge of words and concepts

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Spotlight 1: Language Production Projects

Spotlight 2: Units of Study

Spotlight: Language Production Projects

APPLY ADVANCED LITERACY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

CONSOLIDATE CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

FOSTER ACADEMIC MOTIVATION

Spotlight on Language Production Projects

Designing Effective Language Production Projects

▶ 1. What is the (juicy) question or topic?

▶ 2. What compelling issue will students focus on?

▶ 3. What research will students need to undertake?

▶ 4. What product will they generate?

Spotlight: Instructional Units of Study

▶ Units of study are a key mechanism for creating the conditions for knowledge-building literacy instruction

DEPTH OF LEARNING

Place a concept, word, or theme at the center to deepen understanding.

LEARNING AS A PROCESS

Facilitate learning such that students can grapple with ideas and learn from mistakes.

INTERACTIVE LEARNING

Support meaningful interactions among teachers and peers.

Spotlight: Instructional Units of Study

1. Craft 'Big' Questions and Subquestions to Motivate the Unit's Inquiry

2. Select a Range of Texts

3. Select a Core Set of Academic Vocabulary Terms to Teach Across the Unit

4. Identify and Repeat Core Learning Tasks from Unit-to-Unit

5. Provide Instructional Tools that Aid Content Mastery and Support Academic Language Production

Implications for School Reform Efforts

What happens in schools that effectively implement the hallmarks?

▶ Growth in the language and literacy skills of all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs)

▶ Common set of instructional practices

▶ Shared language for discussing instruction amongst educators and school leaders.

▶ Similar instructional approaches and strategies to achieve goals

▶ Lessons routinely feature rich texts, discussions, writing and instruction in high-utility vocabulary

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1. The school-age population is increasingly linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse

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Q&A

Thank You

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Spotlight 1: Language Production Projects

Spotlight 2: Units of Study