ELA/Literacy – Interpreting the Standards

**Getting to the Core: Florida College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education**



**Workshop Guide (Revised 2018)**

Institute for the Professional Development of Adult Educators

ELA/Literacy – Interpreting the STandards

**Getting to the Core: Florida College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education**

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**Activity**

1

# **The Ideal Graduate and Academic Success**

* What academic knowledge and skills do you hope all of your graduates possess?
* After three years, what do you want a graduate to say was the most important thing he/she learned in your program?
* How could you use this activity to create a shared vision of what you want to achieve as a campus/department?
	+ How does your program currently create a shared vision for academic success?
	+ Is your vision learner oriented?

**Activity**

2

# **Guiding Questions**

* Do you believe your students are academically/workplace ready upon completing your ABE Program?
	+ Are they able to communicate effectively both orally and in writing?
	+ Are they marketable?
* What has worked? What has not worked?
* How does your program create a shared vision for academic success?
* Is your vision learner oriented?
* How could you use this activity to create a shared vision of what you want to achieve as a campus/department?

**Activity**

3

# **Exploring a Language Standard**

*Review Language Arts Standard (SA) CCR.LA.ABE.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.*

Discuss the following questions with your table. Be prepared to report your ideas to the group.

* As you reviewed the anchor standard regarding demonstrating command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking, did you have any surprises? Any concerns?
* Is there a continuum to teaching these skills?
* Are your programs teaching grammar and usage through a contextualized approach?
* Are your materials teaching these skills at the appropriate levels?
* Are some of these skills taught in your GED® Preparation programs? Is this an appropriate place for teaching these skills? Why or why not?

**Activity**

4

# **Standards Need Analysis Template**

## **Associations – Assets – Abilities**

**(A Method to Determine Professional Development Needs)**

|  |
| --- |
| **Content Area:** |
| **Standards** | **Connection to Teaching? (Associations)** | **Resources?****(Assets)** | **Content Training? (Abilities)** | **Methods Training? (Abilities)** |
|  | *Is this standard new to you or are you already teaching it?* | *What do you need to teach this standard? Do you have what you need?* | *Is content training for this standard needed? (Include percentage of staff requiring this training.)* | *Do you need instructional methods training for this standard? (Include percentage of staff requiring this training.)* |

**Activity**

5

**Key Advances (Shifts) for ELA/Literacy**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Regular practice with complex text and its academic language
 | Rather than focusing solely on the skills of reading and writing, the Standards highlight the growing complexity of the texts students must read to be ready for the demands of college and careers. The Standards build a staircase of text complexity so that all students are ready for the demands of college- and career-level reading no later than at the end of the ASE level. Closely related to text complexity—and inextricably connected to reading comprehension—is a focus on academic vocabulary: words that appear in a variety of content areas (such as *ignite* and *commit*). |
| 1. Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational
 | The Standards place a premium on students writing to sources, i.e., using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information. Rather than asking students questions they can answer solely from their prior knowledge or experience, the Standards expect students to answer questions that depend on their having read the text or texts closely. The Standards also require the cultivation of narrative writing throughout the grades, and in later grades a command of sequence and detail will be essential for effective argumentative and informational writing. Likewise, the reading standards focus on students’ ability to read carefully and grasp information, arguments, ideas and details based on text evidence. Students should be able to answer a range of *text-dependent* questions, questions in which the answers require inferences based on careful attention to the text. |
| 1. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction
 | Building knowledge through content rich non-fiction plays an essential role in literacy and in the Standards. In ABE 1 and 2, fulfilling the standards requires a 50-50 balance between informational and literary reading.  Informational reading primarily includes content rich non-fiction in history/social studies, science and the arts; the ABE 1 and 2 Standards strongly recommend that students build coherent general knowledge.  In ABE 3 and 4 and ASE, ELA classes should place much greater attention to a specific category of informational text—literary nonfiction—than has been traditional. In ABE 3 and 4 and ASE, the Standards for literacy in history/social studies, science and technical subjects ensure that students can independently build knowledge in these disciplines through reading and writing.  |

**Activity**

6

# **What is complex text?**

Brainstorm for a moment your ideas on complex text. What is it? What are its traits?

**Activity**

7

# **Determining Text Complexity**

# ***Sample Text***

**Joy Hakim – A History of US, Excerpt from Book 4, Chapter 3 – “The Parties Begin”**

Those two opposites—Jefferson and Hamilton—had ideas that needed balancing. They helped found the country’s first political parties. They respected, but didn’t understand, each other.

“Mr. Jefferson,” wrote Hamilton, “is at the head of a faction decidedly hostile to me and…dangerous to the union, peace, and the happiness of the country.”

Jefferson replied that Hamilton’s ideas “flowed from principles adverse to liberty, and…calculated to undermine and demolish the Republic.”

Whew! Those are strong words. “Dangerous,” “hostile,” “adverse to liberty”—did they really mean it? These were men who had built the country together. What was going on?

To put it simply: they disagreed about power and who ought to have it. It was that old conflict that had kept everyone arguing when the Constitution was being written. Jefferson and Hamilton were both concerned about liberty and about power. How do you balance the two? How do you guarantee freedom? How do you create a government that can keep order and make sure that government doesn’t oppress people? How strong should the government be?

Hamilton believed the government should be strong. If the government was to work for all the people, instead of just those with the loudest voices, it needed to be powerful. Hamilton thought that government should be run by aristocratic leaders, that is, by the prosperous, well-educated citizens who he thought had the time and talents to best run a country. He feared the masses. He said they sometimes acted like sheep, mindlessly following a leader.

But Hamilton was also wary of the rich. He thought they often acted out of self-interest—that means they did what was good for themselves. Hamilton knew the government needed checks and balances so no group could gain control.

“Give all power to the many,” wrote Hamilton, “and they will oppress the few. Give all power to the few, they will oppress the many. Both therefore ought to have power, that each may defend itself against the other.”

Thomas Jefferson feared powerful government. It was justice and liberty for the individual that concerned him. He saw a strong, centralized government as an enemy of individual liberty. Jefferson had been in Europe and had seen kings in action: he hated monarchies. He feared a king-like president.

Jefferson had faith in ordinary people. He thought they could govern themselves—if they were educated. And so he wrote a plan for public schools and colleges. He wanted an amendment to the Constitution that would provide for free education.

Because of the differences in ideas, it became clear that political parties were needed. Hamilton’s followers formed the “Federalist Party.” Jefferson’s followers were called “Democratic-Republicans,” or sometimes just Republicans.

# **Reading Excerpts**

### ***Excerpt 1***

**St. George, Judith. *So You Want to Be President?* Illustrated by David Small. New York: Philomel, 2000. (2000)**

Every single President has taken this oath: “I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.”

Only thirty-five words! But it’s a big order if you’re President of this country. Abraham Lincoln was tops at filling that order. “I know very well that many others might in this matter or as in others, do better than I can,” he said. “But…I am here. I must do the best I can, and bear the responsibility of taking the course which I feel I ought to take.”

That’s the bottom line. Tall, short, fat, thin, talkative, quiet, vain, humble, lawyer, teacher, or soldier—this is what most of our Presidents have tried to do, each in his own way. Some succeeded. Some failed. If you want to be President— a good President—pattern your self after the best. Our best have asked more of themselves than they thought they could give. They have had the courage, spirit, and will to do what they knew was right. Most of all, their first priority has always been the people and the country they served.

### ***Excerpt 2***

**Gibbs, W. Wayt. “Untangling the Roots of Cancer.” *Scientific American Special Edition* June 2008**

Recent evidence challenges long-held theories of how cells turn malignant—and suggests new ways to stop tumors before they spread.

What causes cancer? Tobacco smoke, most people would say. Probably too much alcohol, sunshine or grilled meat; infection with cervical papillomaviruses; asbestos. All have strong links to cancer, certainly. But they cannot be root causes. Much of the population is exposed to these carcinogens, yet only a tiny minority suffers dangerous tumors as a consequence.

A cause, by definition, leads invariably to its effect. The immediate cause of cancer must be some combination of insults and accidents that induces normal cells in a healthy human body to turn malignant, growing like weeds and sprouting in unnatural places.

At this level, the cause of cancer is not entirely a mystery. In fact, a decade ago many geneticists were confident that science was homing in on a final answer: cancer is the result of cumulative mutations that alter specific locations in a cell’s DNA and thus change the particular proteins encoded by cancer-related genes at those spots. The mutations affect two kinds of cancer genes. The first are called tumor suppressors. They normally restrain cells’ ability to divide, and mutations permanently disable the genes. The second variety, known as oncogenes, stimulate growth—in other words, cell division. Mutations lock oncogenes into an active state. Some researchers still take it as axiomatic that such growth-promoting changes to a small number of cancer genes are the initial event and root cause of every human cancer.

### ***Excerpt 3***

 **“Wind Power.” *National Geographic Young Explorers* November/December 2009.**

Wind is air on the move.

See what wind can do.

Wind can whip up some fun!

Wind starts with the sun.

The sun warms land and water.

The air above warms up too.

Warm air rises.

Cooler air rushes in.

That moving air is wind.

Wind is energy.

It can push a sailboat.

Look at the windmills spin!

They turn wind energy into electricity.

What else can wind do?

*Copyright © 2009 National Geographic*

### ***Excerpt 4***

**Hakim, Joy. *A History of US*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. From Book 1: The First Americans, Prehistory to 1600; Chapter 7: “The Show-Offs”**

In case you forgot, you’re still in that time-and-space capsule, but you’re not a baby anymore. You’re 10 years old and able to work the controls yourself. So get going; we want to head northwest, to the very edge of the land, to the region that will be the states of Washington and Oregon.

The time? We were in the 13th century; let’s try the 14th century for this visit.

Life is easy for the Indians here in the Northwest near the great ocean. They are affluent (AF-flew-ent –it means “wealthy”) Americans. For them the world is bountiful: the rivers hold salmon and sturgeon; the ocean is full of seals, whales, fish, and shellfish; the woods are swarming with game animals. And there are berries and nuts and wild roots to be gathered. They are not farmers. They don’t need to farm. Those Americans go to sea in giant canoes; some are 60 feet long. (How long is your bedroom? Your schoolroom?)

Using stone tools and fire, Indians of the Northwest cut down gigantic fir trees and hollow out the logs to make their boats. The trees tower 200 feet and are 10 feet across at the base. There are so many of them, so close together, with a tangle of undergrowth, that it is sometimes hard for hunters to get through the forest. Tall as these trees are, there are not as big as the redwoods that grow in a vast forest to the south (in the land that will become California).

### ***Excerpt 5***

***Martin Luther King, Jr. -* April 16, 1963 – “Letter from the Birmingham Jail”**

My Dear Fellow Clergymen,

While confined here in the Birmingham City Jail, I came across your recent statement calling our present activities “unwise and untimely.” Seldom, if ever, do I pause to answer criticism of my work and ideas … But since I feel that you are men of genuine good will and your criticisms are sincerely set forth, I would like to answer your statement in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms.

I think I should give the reason for my being in Birmingham, since you have been influenced by the argument of “outsiders coming in.” I have the honor of serving as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization operating in every Southern state with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. We have some 85 affiliate organizations all across the South … Several months ago our local affiliate here in Birmingham invited us to be on call to engage in a nonviolent direct action program if such were deemed necessary. We readily consented.

In any nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: 1) collection of the facts to determine whether injustices are alive; 2) negotiation; 3) self-purification; and 4) direct action. We have gone through all of these steps in Birmingham … Birmingham is probably the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States. Its ugly record of police brutality is known in every section of the country. Its unjust treatment of Negroes in the courts is a notorious reality. There have been more unsolved bombings of Negro homes and churches in Birmingham than in any city in this nation. These are the hard, brutal, and unbelievable facts. On the basis of these conditions Negro leaders sought to negotiate with the city fathers. But the political leaders consistently refused to engage in good faith negotiation.

Then came the opportunity last September to talk with some of the leaders of the economic community. In these negotiating sessions certain promises were made by the merchants—such as the promise to remove the humiliating racial signs from the stores. On the basis of these promises Reverend Shuttlesworth and the leaders of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights agreed to call a moratorium on any type of demonstrations. As the weeks and months unfolded we realized that we were the victims of a broken promise. The signs remained. As in so many experiences in the past, we were confronted with blasted hopes, and the dark shadow of a deep disappointment settled upon us. So we had no alternative except that of preparing for direct action, whereby we would present our very bodies as a means of laying our case before the conscience of the local and national community. We were not unmindful of the difficulties involved. So we decided to go through the process of self-purification. We started having workshops on nonviolence and repeatedly asked ourselves the questions, “are you able to accept the blows without retaliating?” “Are you able to endure the ordeals of jail?”

You may well ask, “Why direct action? Why sit-ins, marches, etc.? Isn’t negotiation a better path?” You are exactly right in your call for negotiation. Indeed, this is the purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue.

My friends, I must say to you that we have not made a single gain in civil rights without legal and nonviolent pressure. History is the long and tragic story of the fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. Individuals may see the moral light and give up their unjust posture; but as Reinhold Niebuhr has reminded us, groups are more immoral than individuals.

### ***Excerpt 6***

**“Space Probe.” *Astronomy & Space: From the Big Bang to the Big Crunch*. Edited by Phillis Engelbert. Farmington**

**Hills, Mich.: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009. (2009)**

A space probe is an unpiloted spacecraft that leaves Earth’s orbit to explore the Moon, planets, asteroids, comets, or other objects in outer space as directed by onboard computers and/or instructions send from Earth. The purpose of such missions is to make scientific observations, such as taking pictures, measuring atmospheric conditions, and collecting soil samples, and to bring or report the data back to Earth.

Numerous space probes have been launched since the former Soviet Union first fired Luna 1 toward the Moon in 1959. Probes have now visited each of the eight planets in the solar system.

In fact, two probes—Voyager 1 and Voyager 2—are approaching the edge of the solar system, for their eventual trip into the interstellar medium. By January 2008 Voyager 1 was about 9.4 billion miles (15.2 billion kilometers) from the Sun and in May 2008 it entered the heliosheath (the boundary where the solar wind is thought to end), which is the area that roughly divides the solar system from interstellar space. Voyager 2 is not quite as far as its sister probe. Voyager 1 is expected to be the first human space probe to leave the solar system. Both Voyager probes are still transmitting signals back to Earth. They are expected to help gather further information as to the true boundary of the solar system. The earliest probes traveled to the closest extraterrestrial target, the Moon. The former Soviet Union launched a series of Luna probes that provided humans with first pictures of the far side of the Moon. In 1966, Luna 9 made the first successful landing on the Moon and sent back television footage from the Moon’s surface.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) initially made several unsuccessful attempts to send a probe to the Moon. Not until 1964 did a Ranger probe reach its mark and send back thousands of pictures. Then, a few months after Luna 9, NASA landed Surveyor on the Moon.

In the meantime, NASA was moving ahead with the first series of planetary probes, called Mariner. Mariner 2 first reached the planet Venus in 1962. Later Mariner spacecrafts flew by Mars in 1964 and 1969, providing detailed images of that planet. In 1971, Mariner 9 became the first spacecraft to orbit Mars. During its year in orbit, Mariner 9’s two television cameras transmitted footage of an intense Martian dust storm, as well as images of 90 percent of the planet’s surface and the two Martian natural satellites (moons).

Encounters were also made with Mars in 1976 by the U.S. probes Viking 1 and Viking 2. Each Viking spacecraft consisted of both an orbiter and a lander. Viking 1 made the first successful soft landing on Mars on July 20, 1976. Soon after, Viking 2 landed on the opposite side of the planet. The Viking orbiters made reports on the Martian weather and photographed almost the entire surface of the planet.

**Activity**

8

# **The Necessity of Text Complexity: Implications for the ABE/ASE Classroom**

Why is text complexity so essential in the ABE/ASE classroom?

What are the implications for instruction when using complex, nonfiction text in the ABE/ASE classroom?

**Activity**

9

# **Online Readability Calculators**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of Readability Calculator** | **Overview** | **URL** |
| Coh-Metrix Text Easability Assessor | Provides percentile scores on five characteristics of text, including Narrativity, Syntactic Simplicity, Word Concreteness, Referential Cohesion, and Deep Cohesion. The Text Easability Assessor allows educators to enter a short passage (of fewer than 1000 words) and view a profile of the passage.  | <http://tea.cohmetrix.com/> |
| Okapi Readability Calculator  | Calculates grade levels of passages with the Spache for grades 1-3 and the Dale-Chall for grades 4 and up. Also marks words not in the Dale Familiar Word List. Copy and paste text and run the readability calculator.  | <http://www.lefthandlogic.com/htmdocs/tools/okapi/okapi.php> |
| The Lexile Framework for Reading | The idea behind The Lexile Framework for Reading is simple: if we know how well a student can read and how hard a text is to comprehend, we can predict how well that student will likely understand the text. Lexile measures help a reader find books and articles at an appropriate level of difficulty and determine how well that reader will likely comprehend a text. | <https://www.lexile.com/> |
| ATOS Analyzer | ATOS for Text is used to calculate the readability level for shorter text passages such as magazine and newspaper articles, test items, and other classroom materials. The resulting ATOS level does not include any adjustment for overall length (word count) and is expressed as *ATOS Level*. Results that you will receive from this analysis include: *ATOS Level, Word Count, Average Word Length, and Average Sentence Length.* | <http://www.renaissance.com/products/accelerated-reader/atos-> |
| Text Evaluator (formerly Sourcerater) | TextEvaluator℠ is a fully-automated technology for obtaining valid and reliable feedback about the complexity characteristics of reading passages selected for use in instruction and assessment. There is some wait time for the results. | <https://texteval-pilot.ets.org/TextEvaluator/> |

**Activity**

10

# **Progression of Text-Dependent Questions**

Whole

Part

*Across texts*

*Entire texts*

*Segments*

*Paragraph*

*Sentence*

*Word*

Source: Frey, N. & Fisher, D. Common core language arts in a PLC at work. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

**Activity**

11

# **Text-Dependent Question Types**

There are numerous tools to assist instructors in developing different text-dependent question types – from charts like the following to guides to assessment tools. Different tools are available in the resource section of the Florida IPDAE website.



# **Guide to Creating Text-Dependent Questions**

**Text-Dependent Questions: What Are They?**

The reading standards of the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for Adult Education strongly focus on students gathering evidence, knowledge, and insight from what they read. Indeed, nearly all of the Reading Standards in each grade *require* text-dependent analysis; accordingly, aligned curriculum materials should have a similar percentage of text-dependent questions.

As the name suggests, a text-dependent question specifically asks a question that can only be answered by referring explicitly back to the text being read. It does not rely on any particular background information extraneous to the text nor depend on students having other experiences or knowledge; instead it privileges the text itself and what students can extract from what is before them.

For example, in a close analytic reading of Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address,” the following would not be text-dependent questions:

* *Why did the North fight the Civil War?*
* *Have you ever been to a funeral or grave site?*
* *Lincoln says that the nation is dedicated to the proposition that “all men are created equal.” Why is equality an important value to promote?*

The overarching problem with these questions is that they require no familiarity at all with Lincoln’s speech in order to answer them. Responding to these sorts of questions instead requires students to go outside the text. Such questions can be tempting to ask because they are likely to get students talking, but they take students away from considering the actual point Lincoln is making. They seek to elicit a personal or general response that relies on individual experience and opinion, and answering them will not move students closer to understanding the text of the “Gettysburg Address.”

Good text-specific questions will often linger over specific phrases and sentences to ensure careful comprehension of the text—they help students see something worthwhile that they would not have seen on a more cursory reading. Typical text-dependent questions ask students to perform one or more of the following tasks:

* Analyze paragraphs on a sentence-by-sentence basis and sentences on a word-by-word basis to determine the role played by individual paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words
* Investigate how meaning can be altered by changing key words and why an author may have chosen one word over another
* Probe each argument in persuasive text, each idea in informational text, each key detail in literary text, and observe how these build to a whole
* Examine how shifts in the direction of an argument or explanation are achieved and the impact of those shifts
* Question why authors choose to begin and end when they do
* Note and assess patterns of writing and what they achieve
* Consider what the text leaves uncertain or unstated

**Creating Text-Dependent Questions for Close Analytic Reading of Texts**

An effective set of text-dependent questions delves systematically into a text to guide students toward extracting the key meanings or ideas found there. Text-dependent questions typically begin by exploring specific words, details, and arguments, and then move on to examine the impact of those specifics on the text as a whole. Along the way, they target academic vocabulary and specific sentence structures as critical focus points for gaining comprehension.

While there is no set process for generating a complete and coherent body of text-dependent questions for a text, the following process is a good guide that can serve to generate a core series of questions for close reading of any given text.

**Step One: Identify the Core Understandings and Key Ideas of the Text**

As in any good reverse engineering or “backwards design” process, teachers should start by reading and annotating the text, identifying the key insights they want students to understand from the text. Keeping one eye on the major points being made is crucial for fashioning an overarching set of successful questions and critical for creating an appropriate culminating assignment.

**Step Two: Start Small to Build Confidence**

The opening questions should be ones that help orient students to the text. They should also be specific enough so that students gain confidence to tackle more difficult questions later on.

**Step Three: Target Vocabulary and Text Structure**

Locate key text structures and the most powerful words in the text that are connected to the key ideas and understandings, and craft questions that draw students’ attention to these specifics so they can become aware of these connections. Vocabulary selected for focus should be academic words (“Tier Two”) that are abstract and likely to be encountered in future reading and studies.

**Step Four: Tackle Tough Sections Head-on**

Find the sections of the text that will present the greatest difficulty and craft questions that support students in mastering these sections (these could be sections with difficult syntax, particularly dense information, and tricky transitions or places that offer a variety of possible inferences).

**Step Five: Create Coherent Sequences of Text-dependent Questions**

Text-dependent questions should follow a coherent sequence to ensure that students stay focused on the text, so that they come to a gradual understanding of its meaning.

**Step Six: Identify the Standards That Are Being Addressed**

Take stock of what standards are being addressed in the series of questions and decide if any other standards are suited to being a focus for this text (forming additional questions that exercise those standards).

**Step Seven: Create the Culminating Assessment**

Develop a culminating activity around the key ideas or understandings identified earlier that (a) reflects mastery of one or more of the standards (b) involves writing, and (c) is structured to be completed by students independently.

# **Developing Text-Dependent Questions**

Review the excerpt from **“Untangling the Roots of Cancer”** on pages 9 and 10. In your groups, develop two text dependent questions for that text. Be prepared to share your questions with the rest of the group and discuss how the skills of developing text-dependent questions will be useful to ABE/ASE instructors.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
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# **Checklist for Evaluating Question Quality**

**Text Under Review (include page #s**):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **✓if yes** | **Criteria:** | **Comments/Questions/Fixes (refer to specific questions!):** |
| **A. Text Dependent: These things must be true of every question in the set. When evaluating questions, discard all questions that get a “no” in Section A.** |
|  | Does the student have to read the text to answer each question?  |  |
|  | Is it always clear to students that answering each question requires that they must use evidence from the text to support their claims?  |  |
| **B. Important Considerations: These are design factors to keep in mind for the entire question and task set.** |
|  | Do students have an opportunity to practice speaking and listening while they work with these questions and tasks? |  |
|  | Do questions include appropriate scaffolding so all students can understand what is being asked? (Are the questions worded in such a way that all students can access them?) |  |
|  | At tricky or key points in the text are there check-in questions for students to answer so that teachers can check on students’ understanding and use these sections to enhance reading proficiency?  |  |
|  | Do questions provide an opportunity for students to determine the meaning of academic vocabulary in context? When possible, do some of these questions explore some aspect of the text as well as important vocabulary? |  |
|  | Does the mix of questions addressing syntax, vocabulary, structure and other inferences match the complexity of the text? |  |
| **C. Text Specific:** |
|  | Are the questions specific enough so they can only be answered by reference to this text? |  |
|  | Are the inferences students are asked to make grounded logically in the text? (Can they be answered with careful reading rather than background knowledge?)  |  |
| **D. Organization of the Questions:** |
|  | Do the early questions in the sequence focus on specific phrases and sentences to support basic comprehension of the text and develop student confidence before moving on to more challenging tasks?  |  |
|  | Are the questions coherently sequenced? Do they build toward gradual understanding of the text’s meaning?  |  |
|  | Do the questions stay focused on the text and only go beyond it to make other connections in extension activities *after* the text has been explored?  |  |
|  | If multiple texts/different media are under consideration, are students asked to examine each text closely before making connections among texts?  |  |
| **E. Culminating Activity or Writing Prompt:** |
|  | Does the culminating task call on the knowledge and understanding acquired through the questions? |  |
|  | Does the writing prompt in the culminating task demand that students write to the text and use evidence? |  |
|  | Are the instructions to teacher and student clear about what must be performed to achieve proficiency? |  |
|  | Is this a task worthy of the student and classroom time it will consume?   |  |

# **Beginning Frames for Developing Text-Based Questions**

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| **Key Ideas and Details** |
| CCR.RE.ABE.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. | CCR.RE.ABE.2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. | CCR.RE.ABE.3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. |
| * What are the key ideas in this text/story?
* What can you infer from the title, headings, and anecdotes in this text?
* Who was the most important character in the story?
* What makes that apparent?
* What key details and/or examples support the main idea of \_\_\_\_\_?
* What have you learned from this \_\_\_\_\_\_?
* Who, what, where, when, how questions.
* What conclusions can be drawn from the text? Cite specific evidence to support claims(s).
* Which evidence is most relevant to support claim(s)?
* Cite evidence to prove what is indirectly stated in the text.
* Cite evidence to show how . . .
 | * Retell the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* What is the story or article about?
* What is the theme or central idea of the text? Cite evidence from the text to support the theme/central idea.
* How is the theme developed over the course of the text?
* What is the author’s purpose?
* What message is the author trying to

share?* What could the main character have learned that I could also learn?
* What was a moral or lesson in the story?
* Summarize the text.
* Explain how the author shows the central idea. Cite evidence.
 | * What can be inferred about the plot based on the setting? Cite specific evidence to support claim.
* What can be inferred about the character based on the setting? Cite specific evidence to support claim.
* Identify characters, setting, & major events.
* Explain key details that support the author’s message.
* Compare and contrast (characters, setting, events, etc.).
* Explain how \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ interact.
* Describe how \_\_\_\_\_responds to \_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Explain how (name of character) changed in the story.
* Why does \_\_\_\_\_\_ think about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* How does \_\_\_\_\_\_\_feel about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* How does \_\_\_\_\_\_\_show persistence (or

other character trait) in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_?* How does this help the reader learn more about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s character?
* What can we infer about the characters

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_?* What do readers learn about the family’s

relationship from this section?* What does \_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s conversation with

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_reveal?* What event did the author include to show the reader \_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* Describe connections between \_\_\_\_\_.
* Explain relationships or interactions between 2 or more (individuals, events, ideas, concepts) in this text based on specific information in it.
* Explain the procedures described in this

article. |

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| **Craft and Structure** |
| CCR.R.ABE.4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone. | CCR.RE.ABE.5: Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole. | CCR.RE.ABE.6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text. |
| * What does (word or phrase from the text, figurative language, sensory word,) mean in this selection?
* Without changing the meaning of the sentence, what word can best be used to replace the underlined part?
* Describe how words and phrases (regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem or song.
* How does the author’s use of repetition of sounds impact the tone of the text?
* What can be inferred from the use of \_\_\_\_\_ (word/phrase)? Consider connotative meanings.
* What kind of text is this? (poem, drama,

prose, expository, etc.) What words tell you that?* Explain the meaning of (general academic vocabulary word).
* Explain what (domain/content specific word) means.
* Which words really call our attention here?
* What do we notice as we reread them?
* How does the author’s choice of words, the tone of the language, illuminate the author’s point of view on the topic?
 | * What was the (problem, solution)?
* How do (series of chapters, scenes, stanzas) fit together to provide overall structure in this text?
* What text structure did the author use in this text?
* What kind of text is this? (story, article, etc.)
* Look back at the text and see if you can

divide it into parts. What parts does the author include?* Describe the story structure, including

beginning, middle, and ending.* Describe the (action, setting) in the story.
* Explain the (structure elements: verse,

rhythm, meter) of this poem.* Explain the (structure elements: cast of

characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) of this drama/play.* What might have happened if \_\_\_\_\_ hadn’t happened first?
* How did the author organize the ideas in the (article, book, etc.)?
* What text structure did the author use?
* Explain how you know that the author used a \_\_\_\_\_ text structure.
 | * From what point of view is this story told?
* Who is narrating the story? How do we

know?* Through whose eyes did you see this story?
* Cite relevant evidence that demonstrates the narrator’s point of view as reliable/unreliable.
* What is the author’s stand on the topic of the text? Cite evidence to support the claim.
* Read (two or more accounts of the same

event/topic). Analyze the information that the authors present.* What similarities and/or differences are there in (titles of two texts on similar topics)?
* How does the author feel about (topic)?
* How did the graphics help you understand the section about \_\_\_\_\_?
* Distinguish between information provided by pictures and words in the text.
* How does your own point of view compare to the author of \_\_\_\_\_?
* Locate a sentence, phrase, or paragraph that \_\_\_\_\_ (persuades, informs, entertains, or describes/explains) something. Cite evidence to explain how.
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| **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas** |
| CCR.RE.ABE.7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words. | CCR.RE.ABE.8: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence. | CCR.RE.ABE.9: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take. |
| * Describe (character, setting, event). Use

specific examples from the illustrations and/or words.* Describe the relationship of the graphics and the text.
* How does the meaning of the text change with the graphics?
* Use illustrations and words in print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of characters/setting/ plot.
* How did the author use illustrations to engage the reader in the events of the story?
* How do the (visual/multimedia elements) help the reader understand the author’s message?
* Use illustrations and details in a text to describe key ideas.
* What text features (headings, table of

contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) did the author include to help the reader?* How did search tools (key words, side bars, hyperlinks) help the reader?
* How do the pictures, etc. help convey the mood of the story?
 | * Identify the reasons an author gives to

support his key point(s).* Explain how the author uses evidence to

support the main idea of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Cite evidence to support claim.* Identify which evidence supports which

points.* What is the author’s point of view on the

topic? What in the text makes you say this?* Describe logical connections between specific sentences and paragraphs.
* Explain cause and effect relationships in the text.
* What was the tone of the text? Did the author exhibit bias?
* Prove with evidence if the text was relevant to the intended message.
* Does the evidence support the intended message with adequate information?
* What evidence does the author give that relates to the argument?
* Does the author support the intended message with adequate information? Cite evidence to support your opinion.
 | * Compare (characters, titles from the same genre, theme, topic, versions of the same story, etc.).
* Identify similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic.
* Describe the differences of evidence on how two different authors communicate information on the same topic. Cite evidence to support claim.
* Read several texts on the same topic. Write a speech using information from each of source.
* Compare the text to: a movie, webpage,

video game, piece of art or music, or other media. How does this selection connect to the theme of \_\_\_\_\_?* Integrate information from the texts to explain the key points and/or message.
* How does this selection connect to (other text we have read, content area, etc.)?
* How is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in paragraphs \_\_ and \_\_ like that same idea in paragraphs \_\_ through \_\_?
* How is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ shown in paragraphs \_\_ - \_\_\_?
* How do the texts address similar topics? Cite evidence that supports the similarities of the texts.
* What mood does the author create?
 |

Adapted from A Close Look at Close Reading, Beth Burke; Text Dependent Stems and Frames, Teacher 247, Teachers Pay Teachers; and Achieve the Core.

**Activity**

12

# **Reading Websites – Fiction and Non-Fiction**

The following are reading sites – both fiction and non-fiction. The sites are listed in alphabetical order. Although not inclusive, this list provides a beginning source for obtaining both fiction and non-fiction texts.

**Adult Learning Activities**. A California Distance Learning Project. Articles are written at an ABE readability level about different life skills. Some of the articles are about California or may be dated based on the type of news story used. <http://www.cdlponline.org/>

**An Online Library of Literature.** Reading books online that can be downloaded free from this online library. <http://www.literature.org/>

**Awesome Stories.**This site includes descriptions and primary source background materials on current popular movies, American history, religion, disasters, famous trials, biography, religion, inspiration and the law. The background materials come from the Library of Congress, National Archives, the British Museum and universities, libraries historical societies and museums from around the world. <http://www.awesomestories.com/>

**Detroit News.** Part of the Newspapers in the Classroom project, this site provides online articles, worksheets, editorial cartoons, and lessons already developed. <http://nieonline.com/detroit/>

**eReading.** This site provides reading worksheets, activities, and resources aligned with the Common Core States Standards. This website uses a skill-focused approach where each activity targets a specific set of skills. <http://www.ereadingworksheets.com/>

**Izzit.org.** This site provides a variety of articles from various sources. Articles are based on current topics of interest. The site also includes videos for use in the classroom. <http://www.izzit.org/>

**Learn About the United States.** U.S. Citizenship. Although written for individuals who wish to study for the citizenship test, this pdf file provides short excerpts on various areas of government and U.S. history. http://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/PDFs/M-638\_red.pdf

**The Learning Edge**. An interactive, on-line newspaper for adult learners. It’s interesting, topical stories are plainly written for a range of learners. Each story is read out loud slowly by a pleasant voice, and is accompanied by learning activities such as games, puzzles, interactive quizzes and writing contests. [www.thewclc.ca/edge](http://www.thewclc.ca/edge)

**The Learning Resources**. Western Pacific LINCS/Cable News Network, Inc. provides web-delivered instruction with full text of newspaper story and activities to test comprehension and assist teachers in using authentic texts with different levels of learners. Each module includes the text of the story, activities, and a short video clip. <http://literacynet.org/cnnsf/home.html>

**Library of Congress.** Searchable database of primary source documents with references to CCSS and lesson ideas from lowest grade levels through high school.

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/>

**Newsela**. This site provides an innovative way to guild reading comprehension with nonfiction text that’s always relevant. Each article is available in 4-5 different Lexile Levels with many of them providing a quiz that is aligned to a specific anchor standard. It is necessary to sign up for the free account to see the different level of articles. <https://newsela.com/>

**Newspaper Map.** Provides access to the front page of hundreds of newspapers, worldwide.<http://www.newspapermap.com>

**ProCon.org.** This site provides articles/documents/visual texts that provide both the pro and con side of the issue. Context on an issue is provided with plenty of sources on each side. Provides great resources to support critical thinking skills, as well as videos. <http://www.procon.org/>

**ReadWorks.org.**Although written for the K-12 program, many of these nonfiction texts and lessons are usable in the adult basic education program. Each article is between 3/4th of a page to about 2 pages in length. Common Core aligned skills units are also provided on the site, including paired text units**.** <http://www.readworks.org/>

**ReadWriteThink**. This is a terrific resource for teachers for many activities, lessons and games. <http://www.readwritethink.org/>

**The Reading Matrix.** The website includes 50 reading passage. Students can pull their results which provide not only the percent correct and incorrect, but also an explanation for why a selection was incorrect. <http://www.wadsworth.com/devenglish_d/templates/stripped_features/devreadingquizzes.html>

**Reading Skills for Today’s Adults.** This site provides original texts written by instructors for Marshall Adult Education. Each article can be used as a timed reading, as well as a source for reading comprehension. Articles are written at a 0.7 to 8.9 GE. <http://resources.marshalladulteducation.org/reading_skills_home.htm>

**StoryBytes**. Short, original stories about life’s experiences. Please note that the stories should be assessed prior to using in the classroom. Although many of the stories are very appropriate for use in the adult education classroom, such as the short story. <http://www.storybytes.com/>

**ThinkCERCA.** Similar to Newsela, this site has a mix of nonfiction articles that include an audio feature that reads each article aloud to students, an option of inputting Extended Response/Short Answer questions, and an embedded dictionary within each article. <http://www.thinkcerca.com/>

**TV 411.** The Adult Literacy Media Alliance. Audio clips and slide shows on assorted topics, including reading. This site is also available in Spanish. <http://www.tv411.org/>

**Tween Tribune.** Daily news sites, including text, photos, graphics, and audio and/or video materials prepared by the Smithsonian about current events, history, art, culture, and science. <http://tweentribune.com/>

**Understanding Science**. Science articles for reading at different levels.

<http://undsci.berkeley.edu/article/intro_01>

**US History.org**. This site provides access to numerous types of historic documents and nonfiction articles on U.S. history, ancient civilizations, and American Government. <http://www.ushistory.org/>

**Wonderopolis.** Articles, videos and other resources searchable by topic and grade level are provided by the National Center for families Learning (NCFL). The articles are appropriate for adult education classrooms. <http://wonderopolis.org/>

**Activity**

13

# **Processing the Shifts: Reflection on Actions to Implement the College and Career Readiness Standards for ELA/Literacy in ABE Programs**

When planning for the implementation of the Florida College and Career Readiness Standards for ELA/Literacy in ABE Programs, this framework can help guide your work.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *What it looks like/sounds like when it is happening* | *Challenges to getting our program there* | *Opportunities that we have that lay a good foundation* | *Early action – steps that we can take right away* |
| 1. Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic vocabulary**
 |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in **evidence from text**, both fiction and non-fiction
 |  |  |  |  |
| 1. **Building knowledge** through **content-rich nonfiction**
 |  |  |  |  |

**NOTES**