

Text Complexity Analysis Template

Text complexity analysis			
Created by:	Danielle Muir & Katie St. John	Event/Date:	TeachFest Connecticut Summer Academy, July '14
Text and Author	"Shrewd Todie & Lyzer the Miser By Isaac Bashevis Singer	Where to Access Text	Utilize Google to find full text or can be located in McDougal-Littel Language of Literature Gr.6
Text Description			
Lyzer the Miser learns a valuable lesson as he is easily tricked by Shrewd Todie. "Shrewd Todie and Lyzer the Miser" is a story that takes place in a Jewish village in Ukraine.			
Quantitative			
Lexile and Grade Level	840, Gr. 5/6	Text Length	5 pages
Qualitative			
Meaning/Central Ideas		Text Structure/Organization	
<p>The purpose of reading this story is to infer the theme of facing the consequences for ones' actions. The theme is not explicitly stated in the text. Readers will infer the theme based on the main characters' actions throughout the story. By using textual evidence, students will examine theme and ways it can apply to their own lives.</p>		<p>A typical narrative text structure is followed. In the McDougal-Littel Language of Literature, new vocabulary words are defined throughout the story in text boxes. Pictures and graphics lend themselves to a deeper discovery of the text and student discussion.</p>	
Prior Knowledge Demands		Language Features	
<p>Students will encounter unfamiliar vocabulary as they read the text. It will be important for the teacher to provide background knowledge. Readings on the historical context will assist students in learning about Yiddish culture during this time period. A description of roles of villagers in the Ukraine will be also beneficial. The author's experiences have had a direct impact on this story. Familiarization of his own background will lend itself to a better comprehension of this text. Providing this information will facilitate analysis and discussion of how an author's experience may impact his writing.</p>		<p>Shrewd Todie and Lyzer the Miser utilizes language typical of Jewish peasants in the villages of Eastern Europe in early twentieth century. Student understanding of the text will be dependent upon comprehension of key words and Yiddish phrases. Characters are named based on the time period and culture. The reader will examine connotative usage of words and phrases. Students will make inferences based on the author's word choice and characters' actions. For example, "Lyzer was sitting on a box eating borscht and dry bread." The reader must infer that Lyzer is cognizant of his spending based on his life choices.</p>	
Potential Reader/Task Challenges			
<p>Cultural references and vocabulary choices made by the author potentially may interfere with students' comprehension during their first independent read of the text. Prior knowledge demands must be met in order to curb frustration.</p>			

Big Takeaway

In life, we all face consequences for our actions. This theme is developed as Lyzer the Miser had to face the consequences when he foolishly fell for Shrewd Todie's trick. As a result of his greed, his valuables were lost and his reputation was scarred. The rabbi said, "If you accept nonsense when it brings you profit, you must also accept nonsense when it brings you loss." Students will examine how in life we often make choices which at times may lead to negative consequences.

Vocabulary Analysis Template

	Words that demand less teaching time (i.e. the definition is singular and concrete)	Words that demand more teaching time (i.e. words with multiple meanings and/or that are part of a word family)
Words that can be determined in context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upholstery (Tier 2) • Hue and Cry (Tier 2) • Strongbox (Tier 2) • Apprentice (Tier 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miser (Tier 2) • Shrewd (Tier 2) • Reproach (Tier 2) • Retort (Tier 2) • Admonish (Tier 2) • Trade (Tier 2)
Words that cannot be determined in context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cutlery (Tier 2) • Stingy (Tier 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borscht (Tier 2) • Passover (Tier 3)