

Text Complexity Analysis Template

Text complexity analysis			
Created by:	Harriett Canty	Event/Date:	TeachFest CT Summer Academy 2014
Text and Author	“Mexico’s President Asks for Tax on Soft Drinks to Cut Down on Obesity” by McClatchy Washington Bureau	Where to Access Text	https://newsela.com/articles/mexico-soda/id/1081/
Text Description			
<p>President Enrique Peña Nieto proposed a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages. After the introduction, the author describes the proposed law and the reasoning behind it. This text indicates that Nieto’s goal is to lower the public’s consumption of soft drinks and hopefully decrease the number of citizens considered obese in Mexico. The following sections show that this concept is not new; other countries have attempted to improve their citizens’ health using similar methods. Lawmakers or healthcare experts may insist on including additional taxes or limiting the serving size of soft drinks in restaurants.</p>			
Quantitative			
Lexile and Grade Level	1110L/Grade 8	Text Length	588 words
Qualitative			
Meaning/Central Ideas		Text Structure/Organization	
<p>Public officials are developing laws that may limit consumers’ choices, but improve their health at the same time. On the international level, there has been a growing concern over the public’s health and how it relates to the excessive consumption of sugary or flavored beverages. Health officials who have studied this issue were able to pinpoint a correlation between the proposed tax and improving the health conditions that exist. Relevant political figures are also mentioned. There are comparisons made with other countries that have implemented similar regulations on soft drinks.</p>		<p>Below the title there is a photo inserted on the first page with a brief caption directly underneath. The introductory paragraph starts from Nieto’s announcement to the obesity rate in Mexico, and how it compares to the U.S.</p> <p>After the introductory paragraph the article is divided up into three sections that have their own subheadings. The first subsection, “A 10 Percent Tax On Soda”, starts with a supporter of the tax and the amount of Coca-Cola products that are actually consumed by people in Mexico. The second one, “Healthy State or Nanny State”, points out that other countries have actually started similar regulations on the selling/purchasing of sugary substances. In the last paragraph, “A Soft Drink Link to Obesity”, there is a healthcare expert who states positive outcomes for this new tax, and that the government should explain to the public how this additional revenue will be used. The structure of this article is simple and consistent, but the author does not include any opponents of this additional tax on soft drinks.</p>	
Prior Knowledge Demands		Language Features	
<p>Since the U.S., Mexico and other countries are mentioned in the article, it may be helpful to have students locate these countries on the map. Vocabulary can be explained at the beginning or utilized in an opening activity. Some students may not be familiar with medical terms such as “type II diabetes”, “cardiovascular disease” and “gout”. Another aspect that could be presented prior to reading would be to ask students if they heard about Mayor Bloomberg’s</p>		<p>The language of this text is literal and contemporary. The author also introduces the term “nanny state”, which is a relatively new along with some medical terminology.</p>	

proposal in New York concerning size limits on sugary beverages served in restaurants.

Potential Reader/Task Challenges

Students may struggle with some of the medical terms such as: “obesity”, “gout”, “type II diabetes” and “cardiovascular disease”. These medical conditions generally occur later in life so they might lack personal knowledge of these conditions. There are some other vocabulary words that can prevent students from understanding the entire article such as “revenue”, “assessments” and “nanny state”.

Big Takeaway

The overall goal is to have students develop knowledge and opinions on a current and controversial issue. The major objective in the Spanish curriculum is for students to use the target language for 90% of the class time and each unit introduces a cultural element. After reading this article, the students will participate in a discussion on this issue as they learn about culture and they will also be able to describe the beverages and foods in the target language. This will help them strengthen their vocabulary recognition skills in Spanish.

In addition, students will be able to analyze the text along with its structure as they make connections (RI.8.3). I would like for them to be able to discover the author’s motive for writing this text (RI.8.6), and compare and contrast this information with other newsworthy stories or topics discussed in other subject areas.

Another skill I would like students to develop would be to evaluate the claims made by the author (RI.8.8). The article only gives a limited amount of information, especially with the statements made by medical experts mentioned in this text. As a class, we could identify the claims the author makes and evaluate whether there is sufficient evidence provided in the article to support them. As an extension, I would have students find other media or additional data that would help to support some of the conclusions made in this article regarding the health benefits of additional taxes or size limits on soft drinks.

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"> • Public health concern (tier 2) • Cardiovascular disease (tier 3) • Tax (tier 2) • Type 2 diabetes (tier 3) • Transparent (tier 2) • Overhaul (tier 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumption (tier 2) • Rate (tier 2)
Words that cannot be determined in context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obesity (tier 2) • Obese (tier 2) • Congress (tier 2) • Gout (type 2) • Concentrates (type 3) • Impose (tier 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenues (tier 2) • Propose (tier 2) • Proposal (tier 2) • Assessments (tier 2)