

Text Complexity Analysis Template

Text complexity analysis			
Created by:	Caitlin Eichler	Event/Date:	Tuesday, July 29, 2014
Text and Author	"The Scarlet Ibis" by James Hurst	Where to Access Text	http://whs.wsd.wednet.edu/Faculty/Zobel/documents/TheScarletIbisText.pdf
Text Description			
<p>This first-person narrative tells the tale of two brothers. The narrator, referred to as "Brother," is a grown man who reveals his memories of his younger brother, Doodle, who was born with severe health issues when the narrator was six years old. Not expected to live long, Doodle beats the odds even though his health conditions impede his physical strength. Due to Doodle's differences, the narrator is ashamed of his brother and even attempts to suffocate him. As time goes on, however, the narrator begins to tolerate his brother and attempts to teach him how to walk so Doodle does not appear too different from others. As Doodle approaches the time to enter school, the narrator then tries to teach him how to be athletic which does not go as planned. The Saturday before school begins, the two boys find a scarlet ibis, a tropical bird, which later symbolizes the demise of Doodle.</p>			
Quantitative			
Lexile/ Grade Level	Lexile- 1070	Text Length	4976 words
Qualitative			
Meaning/Central Ideas		Text Structure/Organization	
<p>Throughout the short story, it is clear that the narrator is grappling with feelings of guilt since his brother's death could have been avoided. A variety of additional topics are woven throughout the short story including, loss of innocence, brotherly love, blame, pride, and acceptance.</p>		<p>The "Scarlet Ibis" is written as a frame story, a story within a story. The story begins with the narrator, Brother, stating that he is telling the memory of his brother, Doodle. The literal frame of the story is the scarlet ibis. The title of the short story references the scarlet ibis and is mentioned in the first sentence of the story as well as the last sentence of the story.</p>	
Prior Knowledge Demands		Language Features	
<p>There are many references to specific birds, trees, flowers, and insects. Reviewing the following will help students understand the references in the text: Bird: Scarlet Ibis Trees: Bleeding tree, myrtle tree Flowers/Plants: Water lilies, violets, honeysuckle, jasmine Insects: Doodlebug</p> <p>Students should be familiar with figurative language techniques in writing such as similes, metaphors, and personification in order to fully comprehend the complexity of language in the text. Students should also be familiar with theme, symbolism, and irony in order to reach the big takeaway.</p>		<p>Figurative language is woven throughout the short story, so it may be necessary to pull out examples of the sentences and ask students to closely examine the meaning behind them and how they help shape the text. There are also some tier two words that ninth graders may be unfamiliar with; therefore, pre-teaching/reinforcement may be beneficial.</p>	

Potential Reader/Task Challenges

In order for students to understand the deeper meanings in the text, it may be helpful to ask students to chart the different topics throughout the text in order to create and analyze themes by the conclusion of the text. Students can also chart symbols throughout the text and determine what they symbolize as well as note examples of foreshadowing while reading and make inferences as to what the author is foreshadowing (the death of Doodle). It may be helpful to chunk the text for some classes and complete deeper-readings of the text in sections.

Big Takeaway

After closely reading the short story, students should be able to analyze and evaluate the symbols, irony, and elements of foreshadowing in the text to create a theme or central idea in “The Scarlet Ibis” and analyze, in detail, its development over the course of the short story. Students should cite evidence from the text to support their theme and reasoning (Literacy.RL.9-10.1 and Literacy.RL.9-10.2). Some of these themes may revolve around the topics: guilt, loss of innocence, brotherly love, blame, pride, and acceptance.

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	<p>Untenanted Clove Descended Armada</p>	<p>Barring Rank Invalid</p>
Words that cannot be determined in context	<p>Prim Billowed Loll Bedeck Sullenly Vortex Careened Iridescent Infallibility Skiff Brogans Naught Evanesced Vermilion Heresy Caul Piazza Imminent</p>	<p>Enfolding Entrails Doggedness Precariously</p>