

Text Complexity Analysis Template

Text complexity analysis			
Created by:	Kristen Keska	Event/Date:	TeachFest Connecticut: Summer Academy, July '14
Text and Author	"Resignation Speech August 8, 1974" Richard Nixon	Where to Access Text	Open this text using the following link: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/spc/character/links/nixon_speech.html
Text Description			
After months of scandal and public pressure, President Nixon became the first president to resign. In his speech he emphasizes that he is not normally a quitter and that the nation needed to heal. In addition, he discusses the positive actions he has performed as president.			
Quantitative			
Lexile/ Grade Level	Using only 636 of 1802 words of the text: 1230L Grade 11/12	Text Length	1802 words
Qualitative			
Meaning/Central Ideas		Text Structure/Organization	
<p>Purpose: To address the nation and explain his resignation as President of the United States</p> <p>The following are the big ideas stated explicitly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nixon is not a quitter, but he resigning is in the nation's best interest - The Nation needs to focus on issues abroad and economic problems - He is leaving the nation in good hands (Ford) but the healing will take time and patience - Achievements of the country during the 5 ½ years: ending the Vietnam War, opening communications with China, reducing nuclear weapons, and improving the relationship with Soviet Union <p>The following are the big ideas that are not easily inferred:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - He admits to some faults but states that they were done in the best interest of the country - He claims he has a lot of enemies (Congress, "others" working in what they think is in the country's best interests, etc) - He does not apologize or say what people think he did wrong 		<p>The text is organized as a speech to the American people. This is the audience Nixon feels the need to connect with the most to ease the tension that has been building due to the drawn out Watergate scandal. He is aiming for mass appeal. He mentions the American public as the subject of this speech many times. What he does not state is why he is aiming the speech towards them and not to Congress, but it is implied by his dropping public opinion poll numbers near his resignation. The text can also be viewed and listen to by the students on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzXL7C0JQDM (2:58).</p>	
Prior Knowledge Demands		Language Features	
<p>Background information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Watergate - Why Ford was Vice President (non-elected) - Nixon going to China - Nixon opening up communications with Middle East and Soviet Union 		<p>The speech is straight forward and easy to follow. The students will have to spend some time covering the events he states he did for the country. In this speech, Nixon refutes his opponents. He even praises them in part of his speech, stating that "all of us in the final analysis have been concerned with the good of the country however our judgments might differ." He also quotes Theodore Roosevelt in his speech.</p>	

- Nixon trying to limit nuclear arms

Potential Reader/Task Challenges

There are multiple historical events he mentions in this speech. So, teachers should aim to make sure that students understand the following major Nixon period achievements:

- 1) Ending Vietnam War
- 2) Visiting to China and lifting trade restrictions
- 3) Issues in the Middle East with Israel v. Arab nations
- 4) How Ford became Vice President- What happened to Spiro Agnew?

There are quite a few terms that students may not know before the speech, but strong context clues help define the terms.

Big Takeaway

President Nixon made this speech to announce his resignation while defending his record as president. He also encouraged the country to move forward and heal.

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"> • justify (Tier 2) • unanimously (Tier 2) • instinct (Tier 2) • abundant (Tier 2) • legacy (Tier 2) • kinship (Tier 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vindication (Tier 2) • striving (Tier 2) • turbulent (Tier 2) • sacred (Tier 2) • marred (Tier 3)
Words that cannot be determined in context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • destabilizing (Tier 3) • cradle (Tier 3) • valiantly (Tier 2) • consecrate (Tier 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • persevere (Tier 2) • precedent (Tier 2) • inflation (Tier 3)