

## Text Complexity Analysis Template

Text complexity analysis			
Created by:	Nicolette Monarca	Event/Date:	July 29, 2014
Text and Author	<i>Henry's Freedom Box</i> By: Ellen Levine & Kadir Nelson	Where to Access Text	Hard copy via library or Amazon
Text Description			
<p><b>Realistic fictional story based on the life of Henry, a slave. Henry grows up in slavery and faces the challenges of being sold, having a family, having his family sold, and trying to escape to freedom using the underground railroad. The text includes emotions of the characters, new meanings for common words, and the passing of time in the life of one individual.</b></p>			
Quantitative			
Lexile and Grade Level	Grade Equivalent 1.9, 380L, Level P	Text Length	40 pages, medium/small font
Qualitative			
Meaning/Central Ideas		Text Structure/Organization	
<p>The central meaning of this text is slavery. The idea of growing up and living the life of a slave. The trials and tribulations of having other people leading your life. Another central meaning of the text is freedom. The main character compares freedom to a bird in the sky and imagines freedom and living a life without slavery. Lastly, there is a central meaning of perseverance in the most desperate of situations. The main character takes the risk of mailing himself into a place of freedom.</p>		<p>The structure of the text is exceedingly complex because the story follows the life of the main character from childhood to adulthood where he is taken from his mother, marries another slave, has children, his family is sold, etc. The story is also told in the point of view of the main character, includes multiple characters, storylines, and details. Furthermore, the graphics are very complex because they support and extend the emotions of the characters and their situation in life.</p>	
Prior Knowledge Demands		Language Features	
<p>Students need to have an understanding of the underground railroad, slavery, freedom, and making difficult decisions. Students also need to have knowledge of phrases used to show the passing of time as the main character grows. Additionally, students need to know that this text is realistic fiction, which is based on a true story and then retold by another person.</p>		<p>The conventionality of the language in the text is very complex. It includes abstract ideas for young students such as selling another human being or giving a human away. Also, the vocabulary is very complex because it includes many subject-specific words such as master, tobacco, and mistress. Some vocabulary is unfamiliar such as beckoned.</p>	
Potential Reader/Task Challenges			
<p>The subject of the text is very unfathomable for students so young. The idea of being sold and taken away from your family will be unfamiliar for most children. Also, the emotions Henry goes through in the story may be uncommon to students. Nonetheless, students will be able to connect with the fact that the main character is young like them and they can try to develop an idea of what he goes through by putting themselves in his shoes. This will make the book emotionally challenging for students to understand and relate. Lastly, students will have to think very abstractly to understand the main idea of the text because many of them have not been faced with as dire situations and the need to make tough decisions.</p>			
Big Takeaway			
<p>Sometimes you need to make tough decisions to survive and for what you believe is "right." The central message is seen when Henry knows that slavery is wrong and he will not be able to live in slavery any longer. For example, when Henry decided he could not live in slavery any longer he sought out help. He found a white man who would help him and said, "I will mail myself to a place where there are no slaves!!" Even though this was an extremely difficult and scary situation to be in Henry chose to risk his life and mail himself in order to be free. Students will need to see the tough decisions Henry made to find the central message of the story. This big takeaway relates to the CCSS RL.1.2, which asks for first graders to determine the central message of the text. Students can use supporting evidence from the above-mentioned quote as well as from the pages during Henry's journey to freedom. For instance, Henry lives in the box as it is tossed around and finally placed upside down where his blood rushes to his head. This is only a piece of the long journey he chooses to take in order to survive.</p>			

## 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)
<b>Words that can be determined in context</b>	<p>Allowed (Tier 1)                      Beckoned (Tier 3)                      Owner (Tier 3)                      Ill (Tier 1)                      Obey (Tier 1)                      Nodded (Tier 1)                      Swirled (Tier 1)                      Agreed (Tier 1)                      Married (Tier 1)                      Bandaged (Tier 1)                      Begged (Tier 1)                      Baggage (Tier 1)</p>	<p>Climbed (Tier 2)                      Staircase (Tier 2)                      Free (Tier 3)                      Freed (Tier 3)                      Mistake (Tier 1)                      Yelled (Tier 1)                      Poked (Tier 1)                      Lonely (Tier 1)                      Shopping (Tier 1)                      Another (Tier 1)                      Together (Tier 1)                      Worried (Tier 1)                      Sell (Tier 3)                      Whispered (Tier 1)                      Twisted (Tier 1)                      Disappear (Tier 1)                      Carrying (Tier 1)</p>
<b>Words that cannot be determined in context</b>	<p>Quilt (Tier 3)                      Hummed (Tier 1)                      Answer (Tier 1)                      Warehouse (Tier 1)                      Philadelphia (Tier 1)                      Pennsylvania (Tier 1)                      Vitriol (Tier 3)                      Arranged (Tier 1)                      Burst (Tier 1)</p>	<p>Master (Tier 3)                      Slave (Tier 3)                      Factory (Tier 3)                      Tobacco (Tier 3)                      Master (Tier 3)                      Crate (Tier 3)                      Steamboat (Tier 2)                      Suddenly (Tier 3)</p>