Our goal is to discuss:

✔ Selecting texts worth reading.
✔ Asking questions worth answering.
✔ Creating work worth doing.
Recap of the Three Key Advances Prompted by the CCR Standards

1. **Complexity**: Regular Practice With Complex Text (and Its Academic Language)

2. **Evidence**: Reading, Writing, and Speaking Grounded in Evidence From Text

3. **Knowledge**: Building Knowledge Through Content-Rich Nonfiction
Structure of the Literacy Standards

- Four Strands: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Language
- Anchor Standards for Each Strand: 10, 9, 6, and 6
- Standards Listed by Level: A (K-1), B (2-3), C (4-5), D (6-8), and E (9-12)
Name the Standards

• Reading Anchor 1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Close reading and evidence
Connecting CCR Standards to the Key Advances

• Reading Anchor 1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Choose a “corner.”
ELA/Literacy Advance One: Regular Practice With Complex Text (and Its Academic Language)
Implications for Instruction

- Standards have raised the bar for what students should read and understand at each level.
- Passages should be of high quality so that they are worthy of close reading.
- Text complexity and text quality share powerful links:
  - Only by reading a complex text is one able to increase reading proficiency.
  - CCR-aligned questions cannot be asked of passages lacking complexity and fully developed ideas.
What *Is* Complex Text, Exactly?

- Complex sentences
- Uncommon vocabulary
- Lack of words, sentences or paragraphs that review or pull things together for the student
- Lengthy paragraphs
- Text structure that is less narrative and/or mixes structures
What Is Complex Text (continued)

- Subtle and/or frequent transitions
- Multiple and/or subtle themes and purposes
- Dense information
- Unfamiliar settings, topics or events
- Lack of repetition, overlap, or similarity in words and sentences
Three Part System for Measuring Text:

1. Quantitative Scale
2. Qualitative Measures
3. Professional Judgment (of reader and task)
What Do These Parts Mean and How Do They Work Together?

1. Quantitative Scale: What a computer can “see” and measure

2. Qualitative Measures: Text features best judged by human evaluation (structure, language and knowledge demands, and purpose)

3. Professional Judgment: What the instructor does with this text to help students read and understand it
1. Quantitative Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCR Levels of Learning</th>
<th>ATOS</th>
<th>Degrees of Reading Power</th>
<th>Flesch-Kincaid</th>
<th>The Lexile Framework</th>
<th>Reading Maturity</th>
<th>SourceRater</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B (2nd – 3rd)</td>
<td>2.75 – 5.14</td>
<td>42 – 54</td>
<td>1.98 – 5.34</td>
<td>420 – 820</td>
<td>3.53 – 6.13</td>
<td>0.05 – 2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (4th – 5th)</td>
<td>4.97 – 7.03</td>
<td>52 – 60</td>
<td>4.51 – 7.73</td>
<td>740 – 1010</td>
<td>5.42 – 7.92</td>
<td>0.84 – 5.75</td>
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</table>
# 2. Qualitative Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Notes and comments on text, support for placement in this band</th>
<th>Where to place within the level?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beginning of Level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
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<td>Language Clarity and Conventions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge Demands</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Placement</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. Professional Judgment

“Students who struggle greatly to read texts within (or even below) their text complexity [level] must be given the support needed to enable them to read at an appropriate level of complexity. Even many students on course for college and career readiness are likely to need scaffolding as they master higher levels of text complexity.”

(From Appendix A, p.9, CCSS – ELA)
Determining Text Complexity

*General Rule*: Use the quantitative measures to place a text within a band, and qualitative measures to place the text at the top, middle, or bottom of the band.

[www.ccsso.org/Navigating_Text_Complexity.html](http://www.ccsso.org/Navigating_Text_Complexity.html)
Selecting (and Measuring) Texts Worth Reading

1. Read *Words We Live By*…
2. Using the Qualitative Analysis Rubric to determine text complexity. Provide evidence!
Why Text Complexity Is So Essential

- Academic vocabulary can only be learned from complex texts.
- Mature language skills needed for success can only be gained by working with demanding materials.
- Students won’t be prepared reading simplified texts that have restricted, limited, and/or thin meaning.
- There is no evidence that struggling readers catch up by gradually increasing the complexity of simpler texts.
ELA/Literacy Advance Two: Reading, Writing, and Speaking Grounded in Evidence From Text
Implications for Instruction

- Require students to follow the details of what is explicitly stated and make valid claims that square with text evidence.

- Ask questions that do not require information or evidence from outside the text.

- Include effective sequences of questions that build on one another so students stay focused on the text and learn fully from it.

- Check textbooks and substitute text-dependent questions for non-text-dependent questions.
Defining Text-Dependent and Text-Specific Questions

- Text-dependent questions push students to rely solely on the text for insight and analysis; they must be traceable “back to the text.”
- Answering these questions requires focused reliance on the language and mechanics of the text itself, rather than personal experience or opinion.
- The questions probe the specifics of the text and avoid “canned” questions that could be asked of any text.
- Simply put, text-dependent questions identify the text as the “expert” in the room.
In “Casey at the Bat,” Casey strikes out. Describe a time when you failed at something.

In “Letter From a Birmingham Jail,” Dr. King discusses nonviolent protest. Discuss a time when you wanted to fight against something that you felt was unfair.

From “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,” have students identify the different methods of removing warts that Tom and Huck talk about. Ask students to devise their own charm to remove warts. Are there cultural ideas or artifacts from the current time that could be used in the charm?

What makes Casey’s experiences at bat humorous?

What can you infer from King’s letter about the letter that he received?

Why does Tom hesitate to allow Ben to paint the fence? How does Twain construct his sentences to reflect that hesitation? What effect do Tom’s hesitations have on Ben?
Identifying Questions Worth Answering

1. Would a student have to read the essay to answer this question?
2. Does a reader have to dig deep to answer this question?
3. Does the question ask about a vocabulary word in the essay?
4. Is this a question worth answering?

What is (and isn’t) the meaning of “popular sovereignty”?
Identifying Questions Worth Answering

Who were the most famous and important of the founding fathers?

1. Would a student have to read the essay to answer this question?
2. Does a reader have to dig **deep** to answer this question?
3. Does the question ask about a vocabulary word in the essay?
4. Is this a question worth answering?
Identifying Questions Worth Answering

Why does Monk claim that popular sovereignty is the form of government in America?

1. Would a student have to read the essay to answer this question?
2. Does a reader have to dig deep to answer this question?
3. Does the question ask about a vocabulary word in the essay?
4. Is this a question worth answering?
Identifying Questions Worth Answering

Why does Marshall think the founding fathers could not have imagined a female or black Supreme Court Justice?

1. Would a student have to read the essay to answer this question?
2. Does a reader have to dig deep to answer this question?
3. Does the question ask about a vocabulary word in the essay?
4. Is this a question worth answering?
Identifying Questions Worth Answering

What does Thurgood Marshall’s presence on the Supreme Court show?

1. Would a student have to read the essay to answer this question?
2. Does a reader have to dig **deep** to answer this question?
3. Does the question ask about a vocabulary word in the essay?
4. Is this a question worth answering?
How to Construct a Strong Question Set

- Investigate the qualitative features of the text.
- Identify the key ideas of the text.
- Start small to build confidence and check understanding.
- Target vocabulary and text/sentence structure.
- Tackle tough sections head-on.
- Create coherent sequences of text-dependent questions.
- Identify the standards that are being addressed.
- Create a culminating assessment by referring back to the core understanding or key ideas.
Possible Next Steps

- When reading, require that students follow the details of what is explicitly stated and make valid claims that square with text evidence.
- Check textbooks and substitute text-dependent questions for non-text-dependent questions.
- Include effective sequences of questions that build on one another so students stay focused on the text and learn fully from it.
ELA/Literacy Advance Three:
Building Knowledge Through Content-Rich Nonfiction
Implications for Instruction

- Focus on content-rich informational texts—texts worth reading and rereading—in curriculum.
- Provide coherent selections of strategically sequenced texts so that students can build knowledge about a topic.
- Gear writing toward informational, procedural or argumentative tasks rather than personal narration.
- *Always* demand evidence in student writing.
- Include conducting short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources.
Draft Criteria for High-Quality Writing Prompts

- Is the question worth asking?
- Does it provide students with an opportunity to explore what they have learned from texts?
- Does it ask students to include evidence from the text in their response?
- Does the prompt use the language of the CCR standard where appropriate?
- Is the prompt reasonable for the time and energy allotted?
Identifying Questions Worth Answering

Sample Prompts:

#1 The Constitution of the United States is one of the best-known documents about the rights of humans ever written. Yet it was written by men who themselves denied others the same rights they were protecting in the Constitution. Write an essay where you explore the irony of this fact. Draw on the writing we studied, other parts of the Constitution, or other sources to write your essay.

#2 Consider the claims made about the purpose of the Constitution and the source of its legitimacy traced in Linda R. Monk’s excerpt from The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution. How does Thurgood Marshall’s presence on the Supreme Court illustrate the evolution of the Constitution? Use evidence from the excerpt to develop your answer.
Three Advances in CCR
ELA/Literacy Boil Down to. . .

✓ Texts worth reading!

✓ Questions worth answering!

✓ Work worth doing!