

# **7 Actions That Teachers Can Take Right Now:**

Getting Ready For The New  
Assessments

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TextProject &

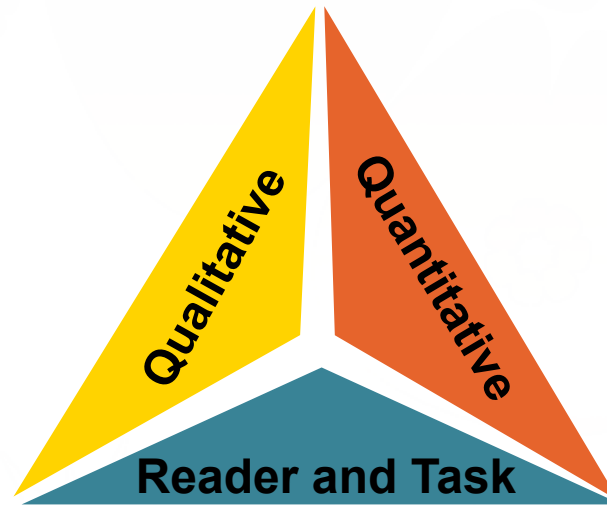
University of California, Santa Cruz

# Standard 10: Range, Quality, & Complexity of Student Reading

| Grade 6 students:                                                                                                                                                                                               | Grade 7 students:                                                                                                                                                                                               | Grade 8 students:                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. | 10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. | 10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently. |

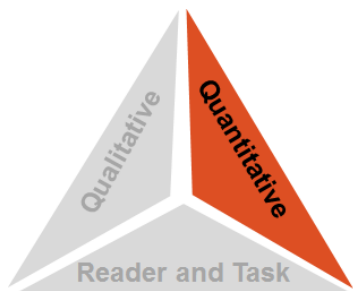
# Measuring Text Complexity

Text features  
measured by an  
attentive human  
reader



Quantitative  
features typically  
measured by  
computer software

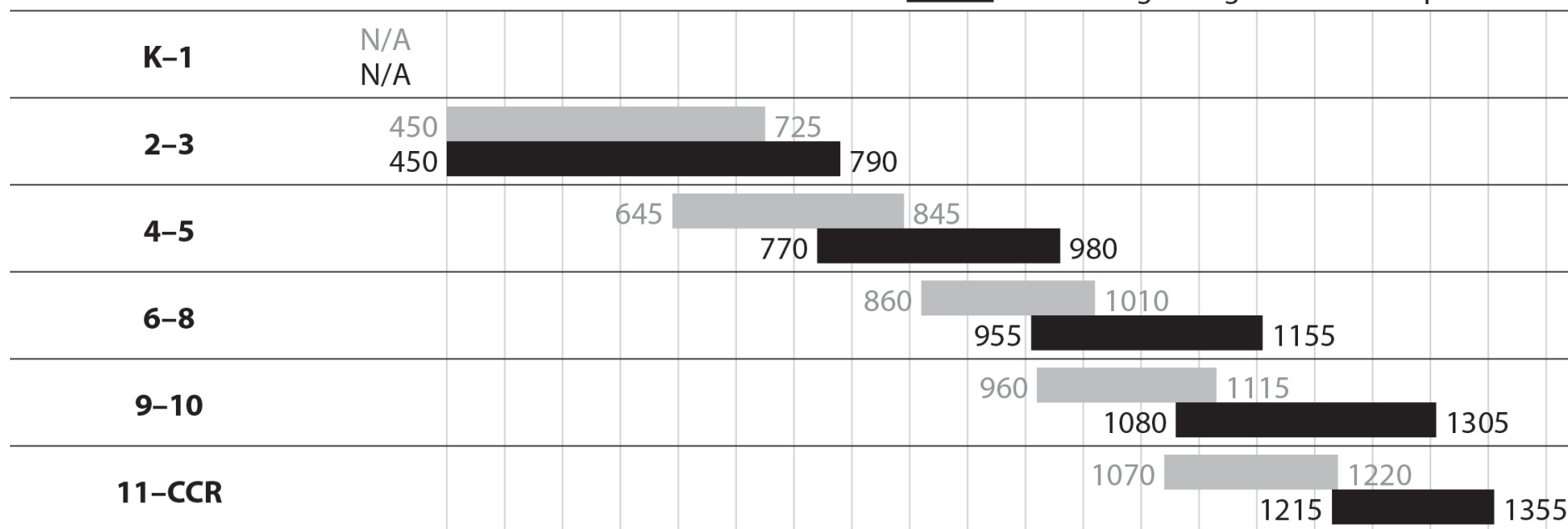
Such assessments are best made by  
teachers employing their  
professional knowledge of their  
students and the subject.



# The CCSS Staircase of Text Complexity

Text Complexity Grade  
Band in the Standards

Old Lexile Ranges  
Lexile Ranges Aligned to CCR Expectations

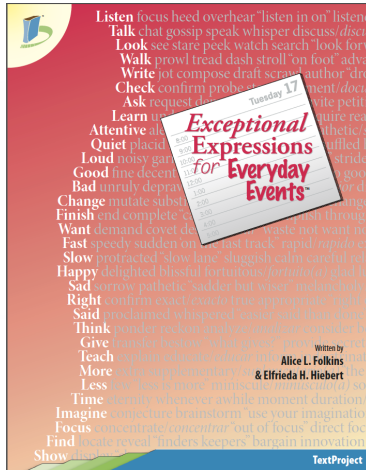


Hiebert, E.H. (October, 2010). *Anchoring Text Difficulty for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Comparison of the Exemplars from the National Assessment of Educational Assessment and the Common Core State Standards* (Reading Research Report 10.02). Santa Cruz, CA: TextProject, Inc.

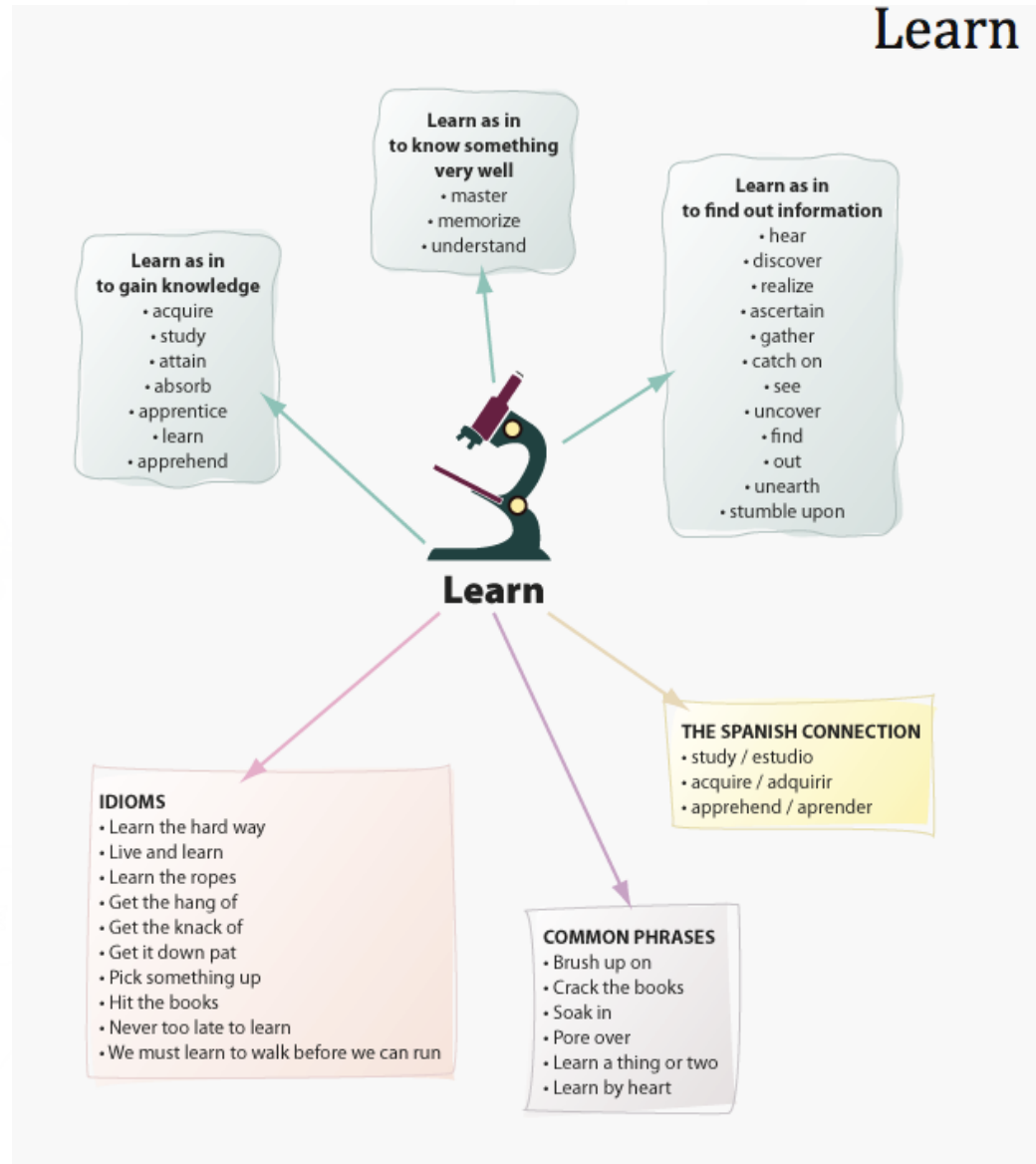
# 1. Give Students' Responsibility for Reading Texts

When 10-year old **Amelia** Mary **Earhart** saw her first plane at a state fair, she was not impressed. "It was a thing of **rusty** wire and wood and looked not at all interesting," she said. It wasn't until **Earhart** attended a **stunt** flying **exhibition**, almost a decade later, that she became seriously interested in **aviation**.

## 2. Implement a Deliberate Vocabulary Program



Learn



### 3. Increase Reading Volume

(Un)Homework: Reading popular but thematically related books

|                 | Genre/<br>Theme        | Shared Text                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Third<br>Grade  | American<br>Tall Tales | <i>American Tall Tales</i><br>(Mary Pope Osbourne) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Casey Jones: The story of a brave engineer</i> (G. Rounds)</li><li>• <i>The Morning the Sun Refused to Rise: An original Paul Bunyan Tale</i> (G. Rounds)</li><li>• <i>Baloney</i> (J. Scieszka)</li><li>• <i>I was Born about 10,000 Years Ago: A tall tale</i> (S. Kellogg)</li><li>• <i>John Henry: An American legend</i> (E.J. Keats)</li><li>• <i>Sally Ann Thunder Ann Whirlwind Crockett</i> (S. Kellogg)</li><li>• <i>Dona Flor: A tall tale about a giant woman with a great big heart</i> (P. Mora)</li><li>• <i>Thunder Rose</i> (J. Nolan)</li></ul> |
| Second<br>Grade | Discovering<br>Nature  | <i>The Raft</i><br>(Jim LaMarche)                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Fireflies</i> (J. Brinckloe)</li><li>• <i>Owl Moon</i> (J. Yolen)</li><li>• <i>Come on, Rain!</i> (K. Hesse)</li><li>• <i>When I Was Young In The Mountains</i> (C. Rylant)</li><li>• <i>Night in the Country</i> (C. Rylant)</li><li>• <i>Crab Moon</i> (R. Horowitz)</li><li>• <i>The Seashore Book</i> (C. Zolotow)</li><li>• <i>Whose Tracks are these?</i> (J. Nail)</li><li>• <i>Over in the Forest</i> (M. Berkes)</li><li>• <i>A Drop of Water</i> (W. Wick)</li><li>• <i>Water Dance</i> (T. Locker)</li></ul>                                           |

# 4. Increase Students' Exposure to Magazine Articles

## Bird Nests

volume 1  
issue 1



Most birds build nests, but all nests are not alike. The most common bird nest is the kind made by robins. Robins build nests that look like cups. They make a frame of twigs and sticks and cover it with mud. When this is done, robins line their nest with fine moss, feathers, and hair they find on the ground.

Barn swallows build nests of mud.

They make them in barns, close to the roof where it is safe. Sometimes several swallows build nests near one another.

Some birds build their nests in unusual ways. All birds use their beaks to help make their nests, but Tailorbirds use their beak as a needle to sew leaves together. Tailorbirds use threads they gather from the cotton in cotton plants.

Some birds don't build nests at all. Some lay their eggs right on the ground or on a rocky cliff. Auks are birds that lay their eggs on rocky cliffs near the sea.

Auks' eggs are pointed at one end. This shape lets the eggs roll in a circle if another animal tries to move them or if the wind blows hard. Because the eggs can roll in a circle, they do not roll off the cliff.

King penguins also do not build nests. Instead, they tuck their eggs into the folds of skin on their lower belly. The eggs rest on their feet and stay warm in the cold arctic winds.

Some bird species also lay their eggs in the nests of other birds. Cuckoos get other birds to keep their eggs safe and to feed their babies.

Most birds build a new nest each year. Some use the same nest for several years but clean the nest a little each year. Eagles build huge platform nests that they use for several years. However different they are, though, birds build nests that are just right for their families.



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# Putting Two Words Together

volume 3  
issue 2



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A lot of sports that people play use balls. In basketball, players try to get a ball through a hoop. In baseball, players use a bat to hit a ball. In football, players throw a ball to get it close to the goal.

There are other words with “ball” that describe things that are round. But they are not balls with which you play a game. Meatballs are not used in any sport. But

they are great with spaghetti.

Eyeballs help in playing sports. But there isn’t a sport called eyeball where teams throw and catch eyeballs. You wouldn’t want to be in a game that uses fireballs. If you would ever see a fireball, you should get as far away as fast as you can. Then call 911 right away. You should also watch out if a cannonball is going to be fired. It is round but you don’t want to play with a cannonball. You especially do not want to catch a cannonball!

There are some words, though, that have ball in them but it has nothing to do with round. Ballpoint pens make

writing a lot easier. It’s easy to see how the “point” got into ballpoint pen. But why the ball? That part is in the name because of the tip of a pen is round. There are also rooms that are called ballrooms. People hold balls in ballrooms but they aren’t the round kind.

Other words with ball have nothing to do with round. In these words, the “ball” part of the word is not even said the same as ball in baseball or meatball. Ballerina is not ball with “erina.” Ballerinas are dancers and the word has nothing to do with ball. A ballot is used by people to vote but it is not round. You don’t even say “ball” when you say the word ballot.

Whenever you see ball as part of a word, look carefully. Usually, the word has something to do with games and sports. But remember eyeballs, fireballs, and cannonballs. These balls may be round but they aren’t used in sports! Ballerina and ballot show that some words with “ball” have nothing to do with being round.

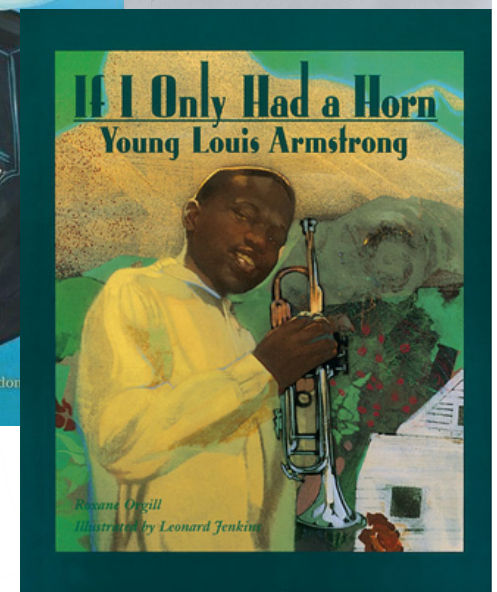
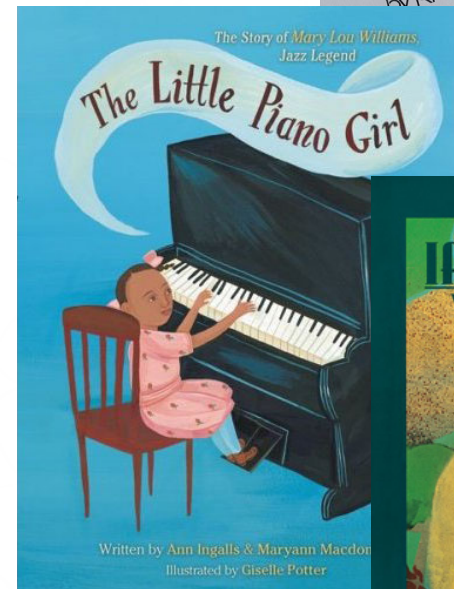
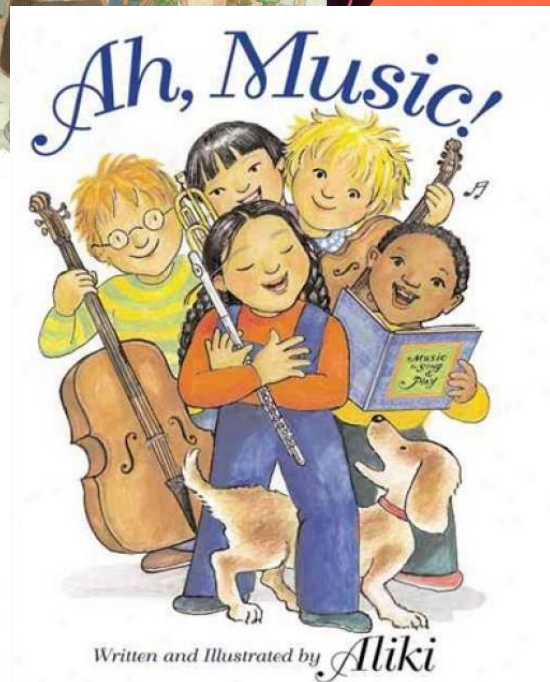
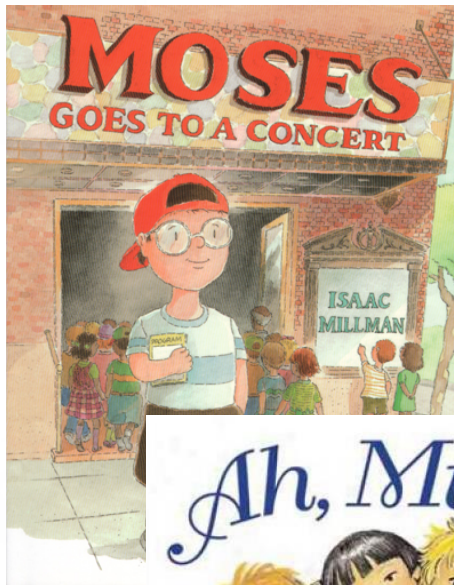


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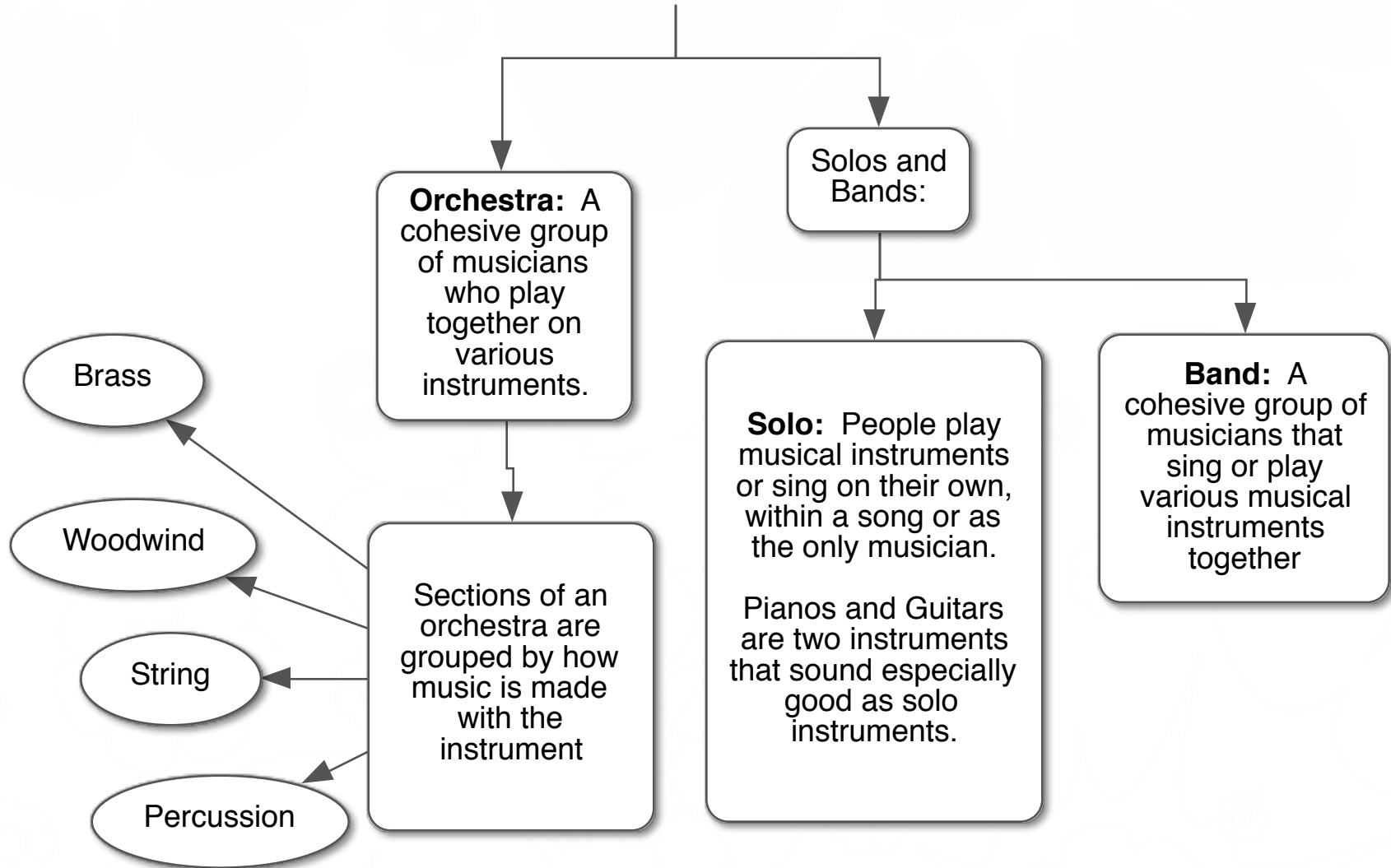
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## 5. Support Background Knowledge Through Planful Read-Alouds





## Musical Instruments



## 6. Increase Students' Stamina by Reading Silently

Goal: Increase the amount of “deliberate reading” (reading of instructionally appropriate texts) in classrooms by 10% per trimester of the school year.

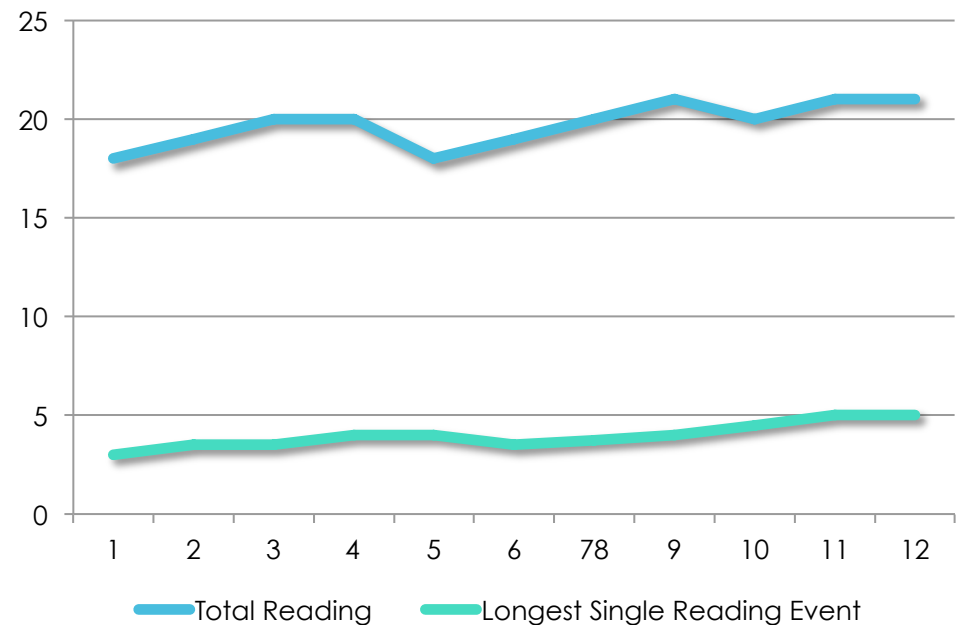
Step 1: Get baseline data:

- Establish the length of time that students are reading: 20 minutes daily
- Establish the length of the “average” silent reading event: 4 minutes

Step 2: Set the goal (explicitly with students in grades 3 and above; implicitly with students in grades 2 and below)

- Goal for trimester: 22 minutes reading a day, with the single event: 5 minutes

Step 3: Always keep a record of what you've learned from reading



Record of what I learned from reading:

- Fibonacci patterns (I read *Blockhead* and *Patterns of Nature*)
- Musicians (*John's Secret Dreams*; *Lives of the Musicians*)

## 7. Have “on our own” reading sessions

- <http://education.ky.gov/AA/items/Documents/K-PREP%20Sampler%202012%20RD%20gr4.pdf>
- <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/common-core-sample-questions/ela-grade-4.pdf>

# **7 Actions That Teachers Can Take Right Now:**

## **Getting Ready For The New Assessments**

1. Give students' responsibility for reading texts
2. Implement a deliberate vocabulary program
3. Increase reading volume
4. Increase students' exposure to magazine articles
5. Support background knowledge through playful read-alouds
6. Increase students' stamina by reading silently
7. Have "on our own" reading sessions



# www.textproject.org



## TextProject

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TextProject aims to bring beginning and struggling readers to high levels of literacy through a variety of strategies and tools, particularly the texts used for reading instruction.

### TextProject Topics



Common Core State Standards

[More topics](#)

### FYI for Kids! New from TextProject

A collection of engaging magazine articles designed to enhance the Common Core classroom's reading repertoire. Take a look at topics offered in *FYI for Kids!*

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"Read to learn" while learning to read



Increase meaningful, text-based discussions



A magazine based reading program

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TextProject helps teachers with evidence-based lessons and lists. Free downloads.



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Use pictures to teach complex words

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