

SEVEN ACTIONS THAT TEACHERS CAN TAKE RIGHT NOW: TEXT COMPLEXITY

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Standard #10 of the Common Core State Standards: English/Language Arts

- By the time they complete high school, students must be able to read and comprehend independently and proficiently the kinds of complex texts commonly found in college and careers.

Focus of Today's Session

- The whys, hows, and whats of text complexity

***** MIDDLE PART*****

- 7 actions that teachers can take to ensure students' capacity with complex text

Why? Assumption 1:

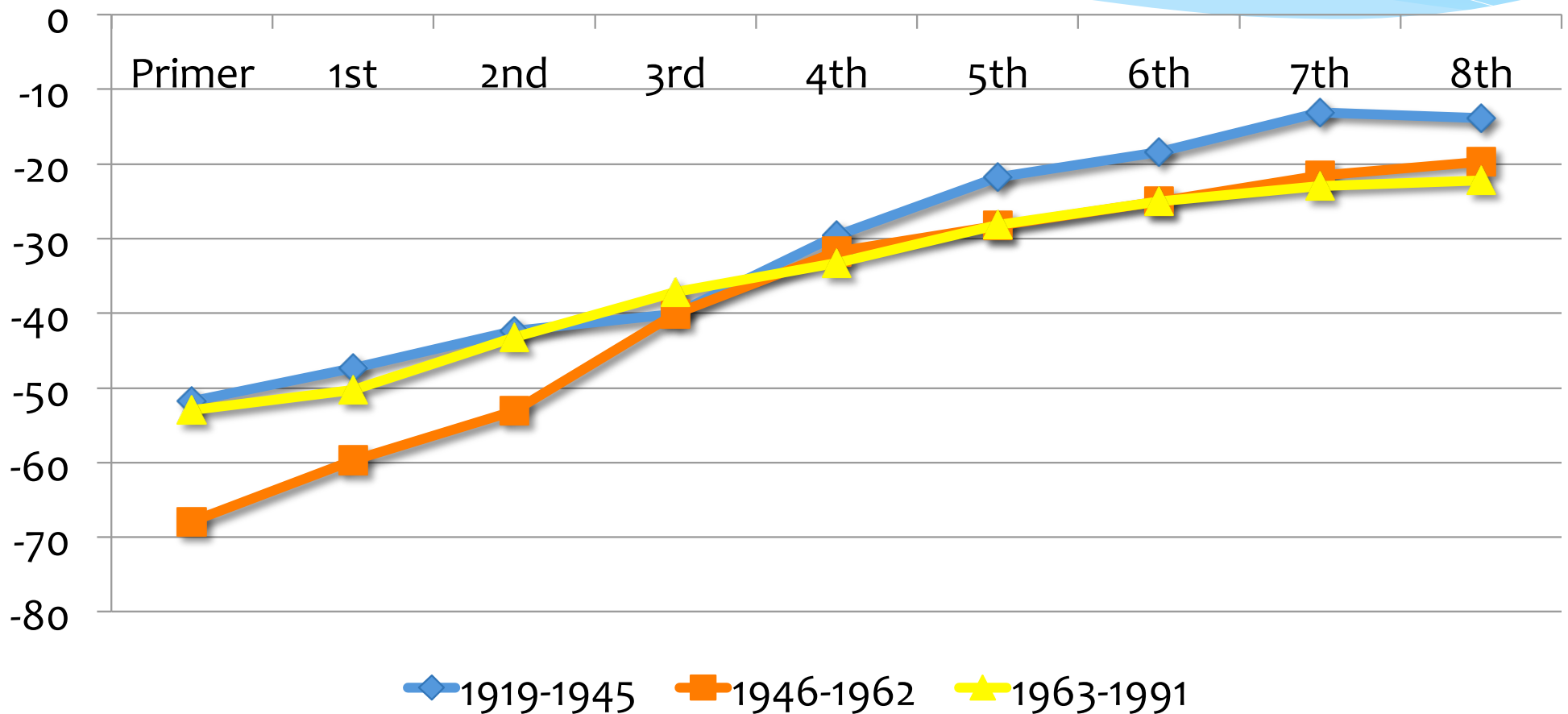
- Reading demands have increased in the digital-global age.

Why? Assumption 2:

- “K–12 reading texts have actually trended downward in difficulty in the last half century.”
 - Common Core State Standards, Appendix A, page 3

1996: Analysis of Declining Text Difficulty

LEX Mean



Reading Between the Lines

What the ACT Reveals
About College Readiness
in Reading



ACT®

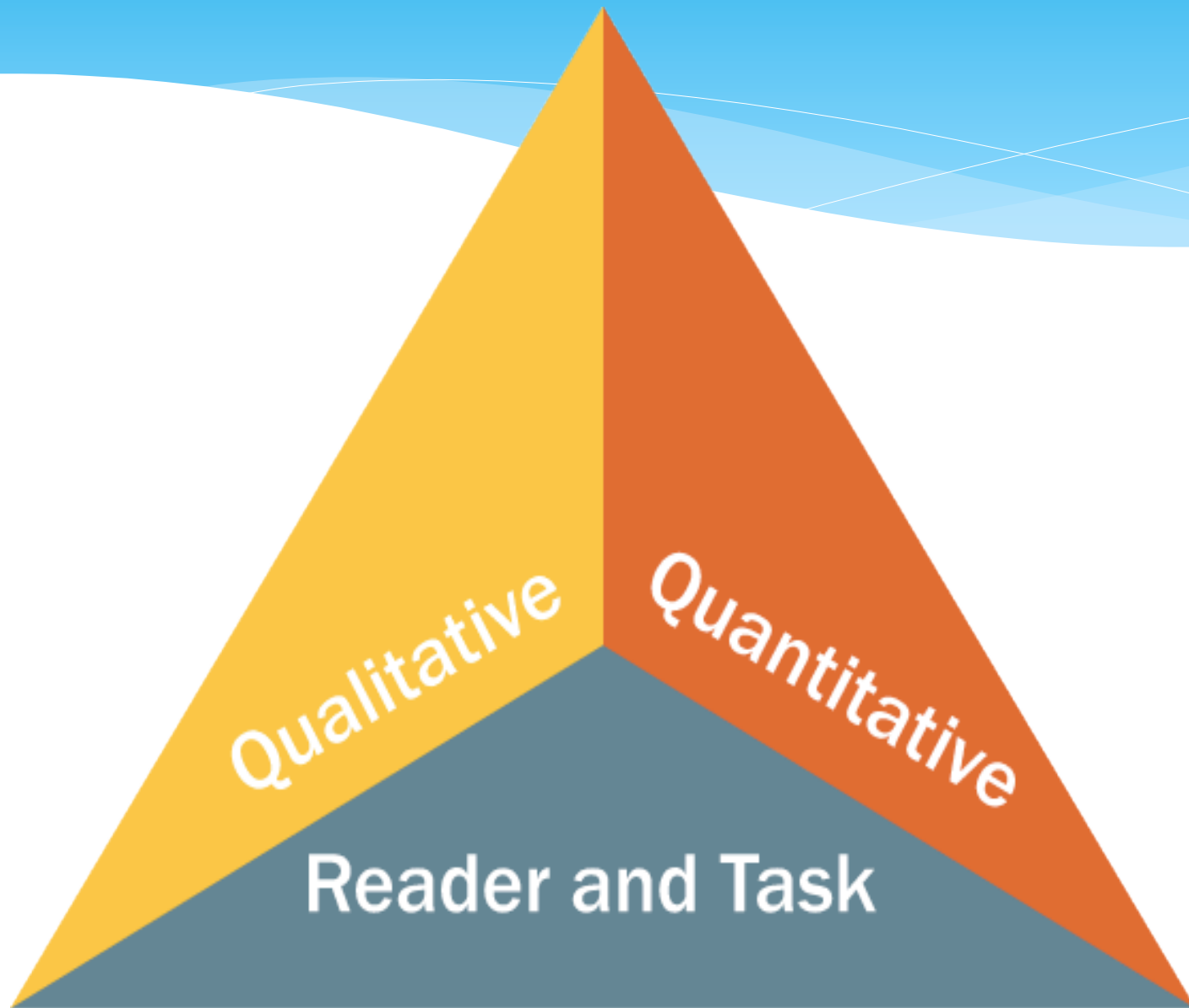
2006: *Reading Between the Lines*

Only 51 percent of 2005 ACT-tested high school graduates are ready for college-level reading—and, what's worse, more students are on track to being ready for college-level reading in eighth and tenth grade than are actually ready by the time they reach twelfth grade.

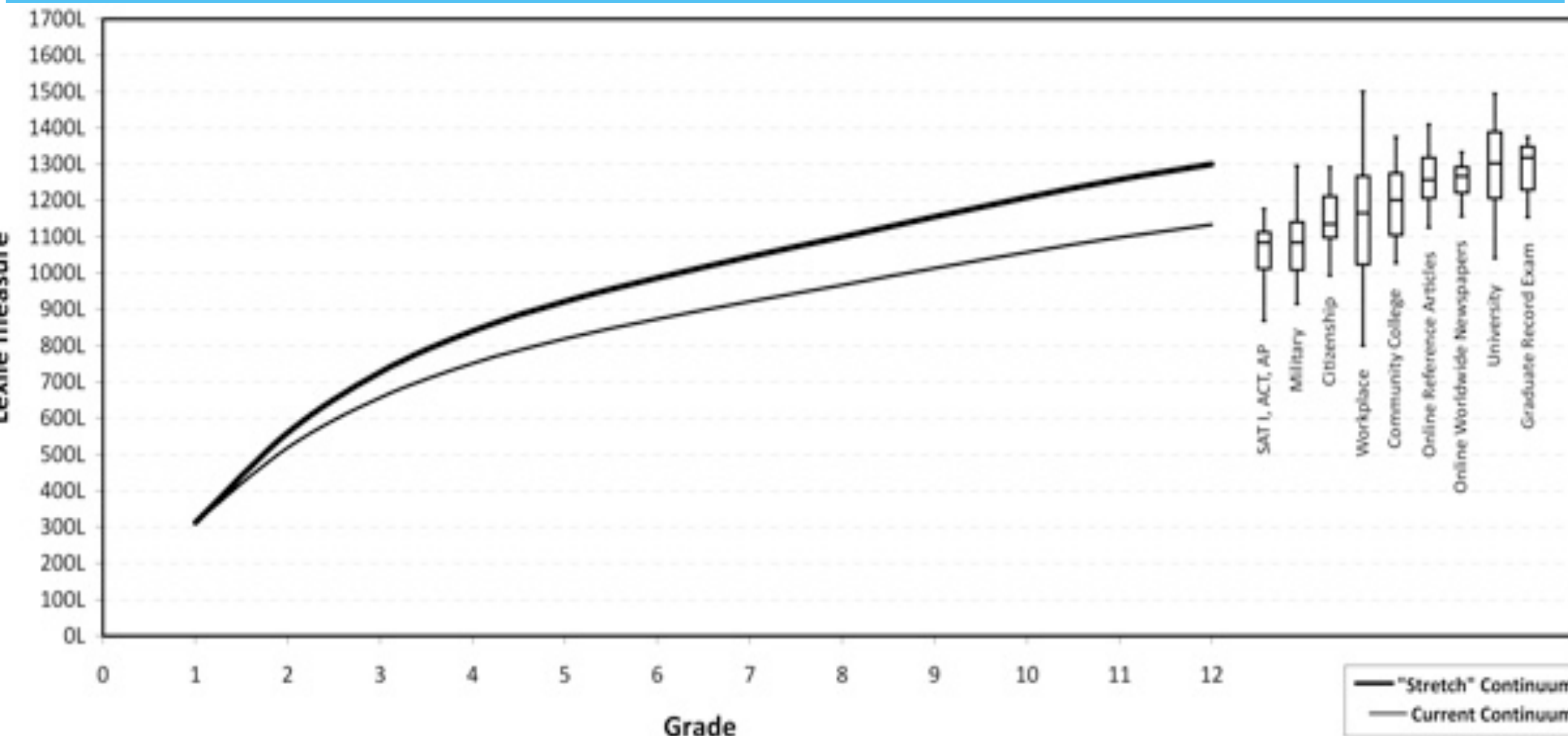
What is Complex text?

- The complexity of a text is a function of the reader's proficiency. There are complex beginning reading texts, there are complex middle-grade texts, etc.
- Numerous features can make a text complex.
- Typically: Complex texts have complex ideas and, usually, complex ideas are conveyed with rare and infrequent vocabulary.

Text Complexity within the Common Core State Standards: Answer 1



... with an emphasis on Quantitative measurement



Stenner, A. J., Koons, H., & Swartz, C. W. (2010). *Text complexity and developing expertise in reading*. Chapel Hill, NC: MetaMetrics, Inc.

The Staircase of Text Complexity

	450-600	600-750	750-900	900-1,050	1050-1200	1200-1350
2-3	Blue		Red			
4-5		Blue	Blue	Red		
6-8				Blue	Blue	Red
9-10					Blue	Blue
11-CCR						Blue

Blue	Old Metrics recommendations
Red	CCSS Recommendations

Where are American students on the staircase of text complexity?

Sample Text from 4th Grade NAEP (2007)

“I must get help,” said Rosa to herself. But how? I don't know anyone. **Mama** told me not to speak to strangers. **Besides**, I don't know how to ask in English.

Rosa had an idea. She **rushed** back to the street, walked to the **traffic** light, then **raced** around the corner and back to the school yard.

Sample Text from 4th Grade NAEP (2009)

Were these his own footprints? Yes! He could follow them back to the path. Hooray! Willy shouted. Then he remembered the nuts. I'll come back for them. But, no, on second thought he didn't really want to come here again.

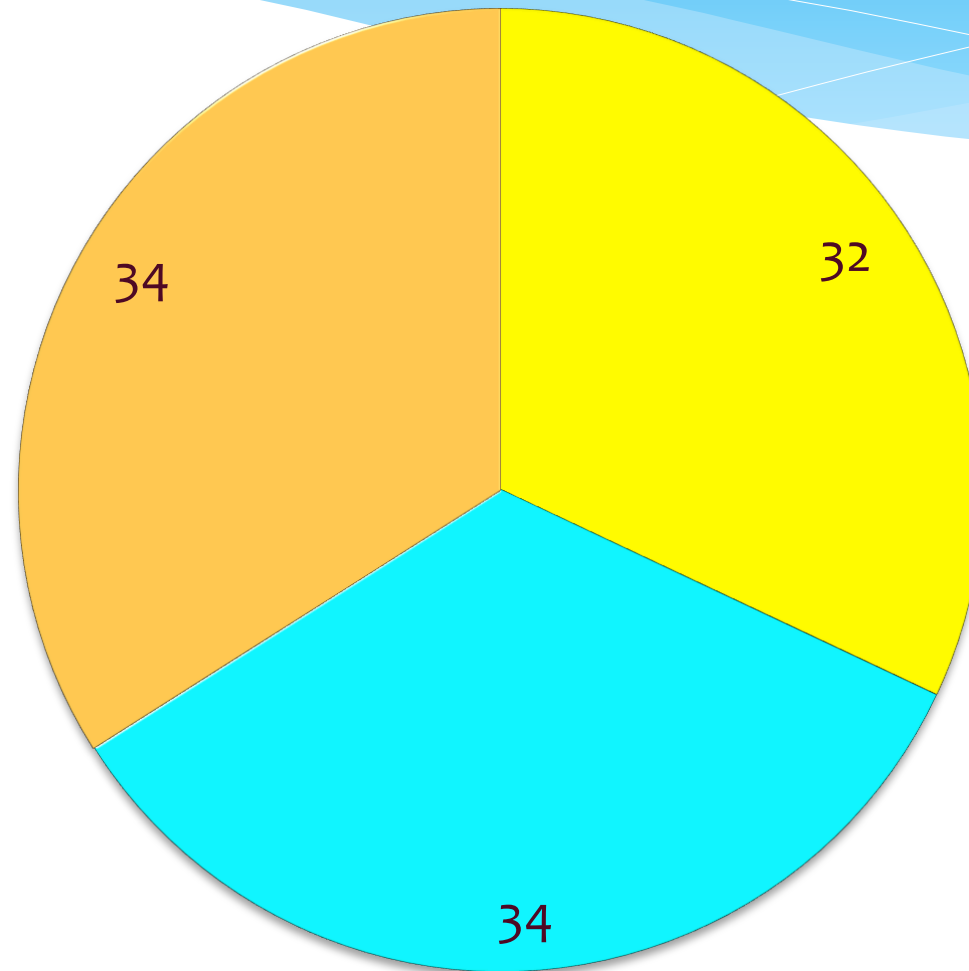
On the Staircase of Text Complexity: Approximately Last Trimester of Grade 3

	450-600	600-750	750-900	900-1,050	1050-1200	1200-1350
2-3	Blue		Red			
4-5		Blue	Blue	Red		
6-8				Blue	Blue	Red
9-10					Blue	Blue
11-CCR						Blue

Blue	Old Metrics recommendations
Red	CCSS Recommendations

National Assessment of Educational Progress (2011)

Nation



■ Proficient & Above

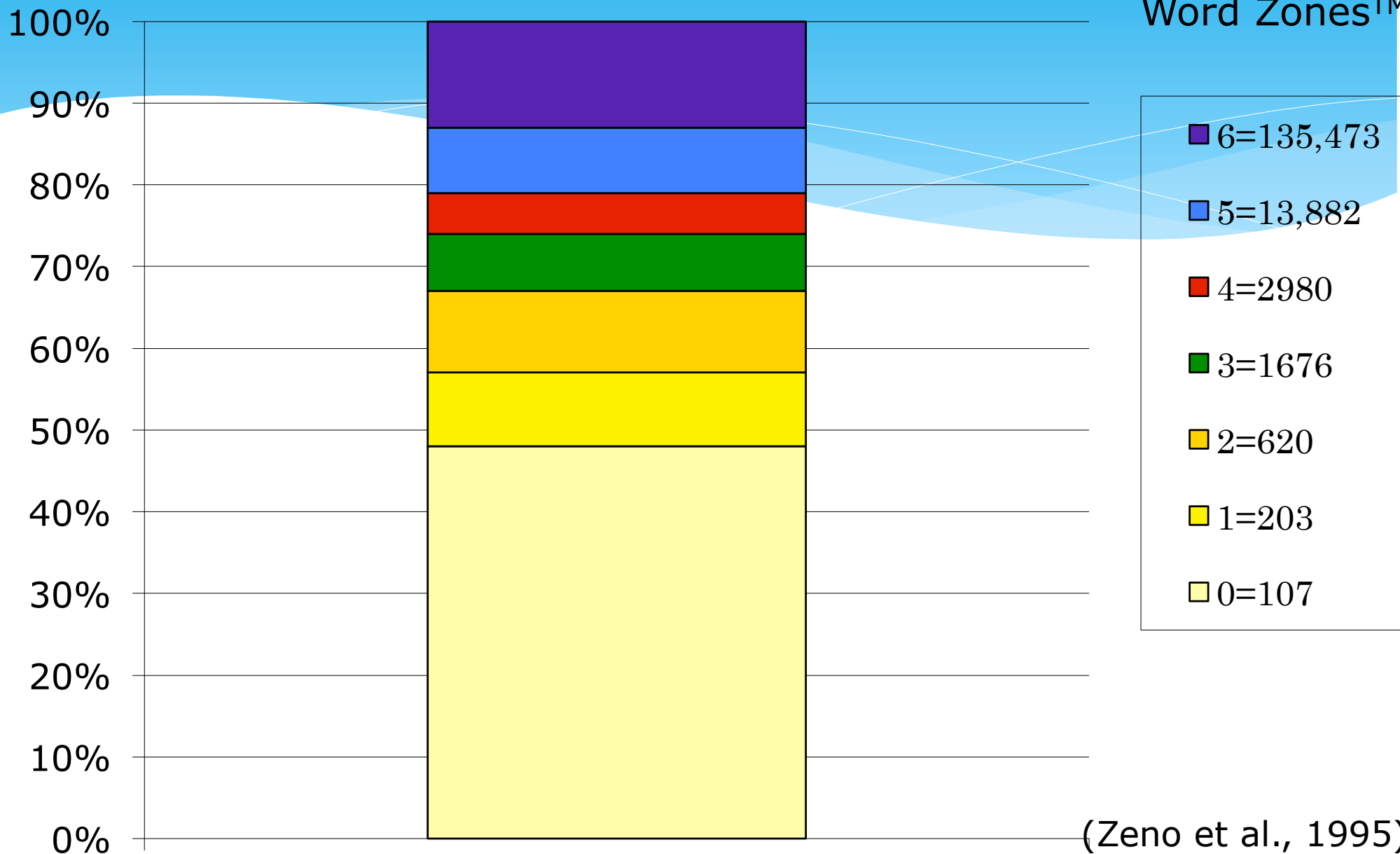
■ Basic

■ Below Basic

The Middle Part

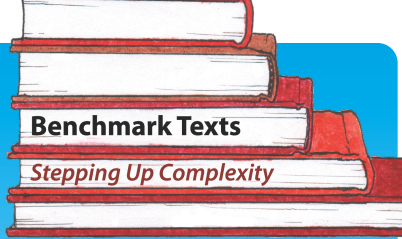
- If students are reading well by the end of third-grade, sustain the practices in the primary grades.
- And if they are not: The situation needs to be addressed immediately.

Core and Extended Vocabularies: Words in American Textbooks



% of 17.25 million words

Ensure that students are highly facile with the Core Vocabulary



5,500 most frequent words & words with ≤ 7 letters

3,000 most frequent words & words with ≤ 6 letters

1,000 most frequent words & words with ≤ 5 letters

500 most frequent words & words with ≤ 5 letters

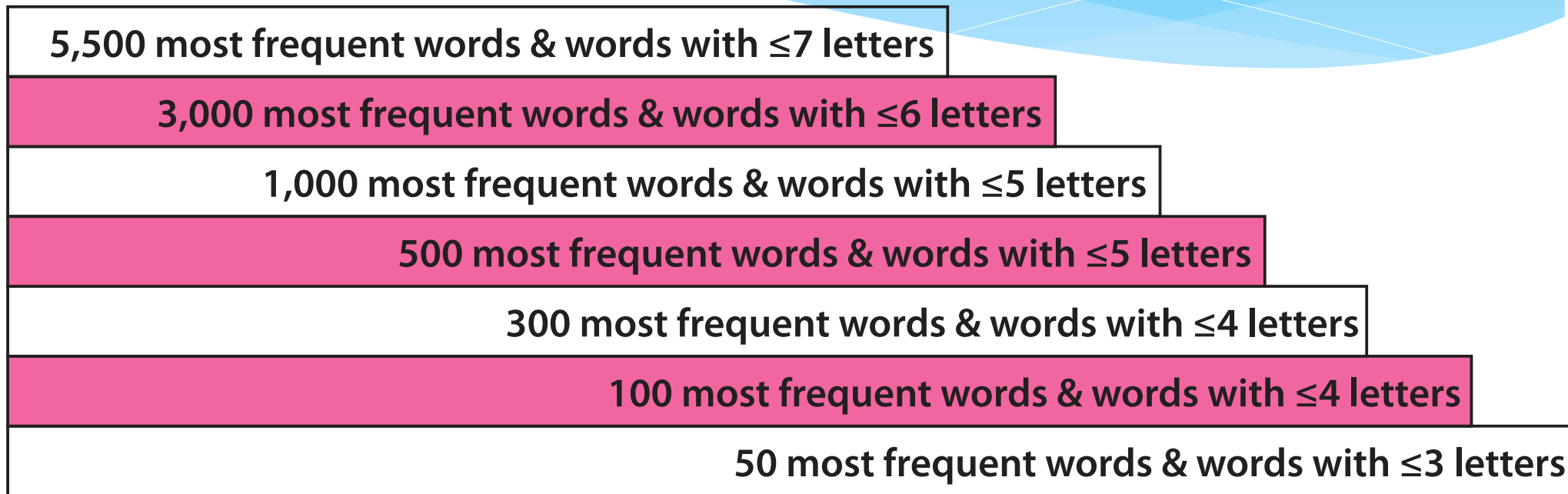
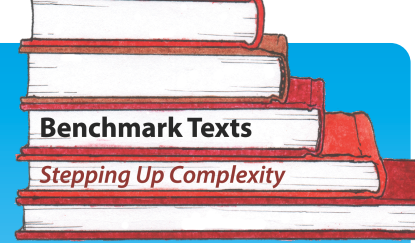
300 most frequent words & words with ≤ 4 letters

100 most frequent words & words with ≤ 4 letters

50 most frequent words & words with ≤ 3 letters

95+% of words in texts fall into these categories

Ensure that students are highly facile with the Core Vocabulary



95+% of words in texts fall into these categories

Step 2: 100 most frequent words & words with ≥ 4 letters



Level 2
Set 2
Book 3

Get the Ball



For more information about BeginningReads, visit www.textproject.org/beginningreads
v.1.0 © 2011 TextProject, Inc. Some rights reserved (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/us/>).

Can a cat be pink? No.
Can a cat be green? No.
Can a cat be black and white? Yes!

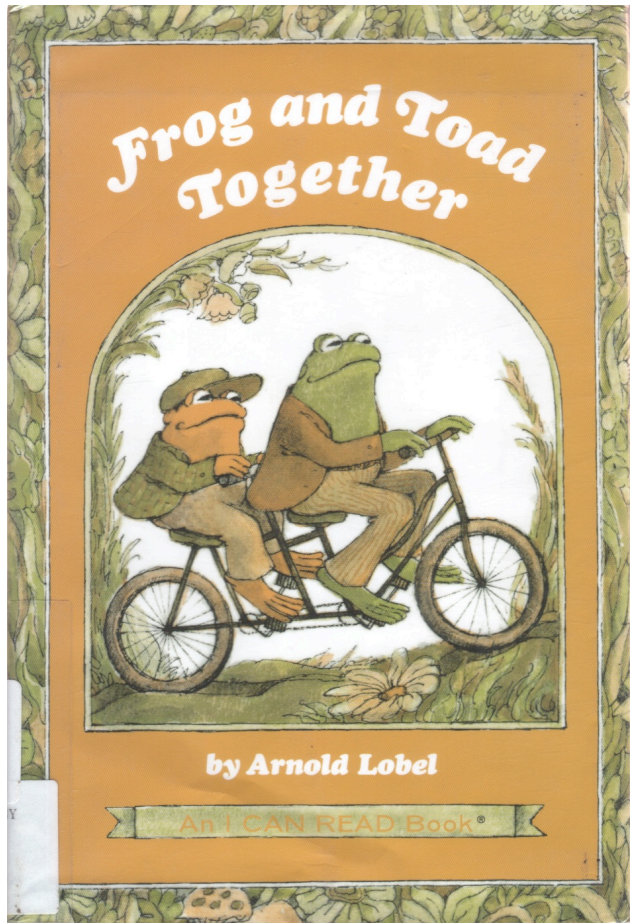
I play ball with my cat and dog.
Get the ball, cat. No, cat, no.
Get the ball, dog. Yes, dog, yes!

Dogs can run. They run and run.
Dogs can dig. They dig and dig.
Dogs cannot fly. Birds can fly and fly.

Cats are big. Dogs are big.
Cats are little. Dogs are little.
Dogs can run with balls. Cats cannot run with balls.

My pet is not a dog. It is not a cat.
My pet can fly. It is green.
I see my pet! It is a bird!

Step 4: 500 most frequent words & words with ≥5 letters



Toad came walking by.

"What a fine garden you have, Frog," he said.

"Yes," said Frog. "It's very nice, but it was hard work."

"I wish I had a garden," said Toad.

"Here are some flower seeds.

Plant them in the ground," said Frog, and soon you will have a garden."

"How soon?" asked Toad.

"Quite soon," said Frog.

Toad ran home.

He planted the flower seeds.

"Now seeds," said Toad, "start growing."

Toad walked up and down a few times.

The seeds did not start to grow.

Toad put his head close to the ground and said loudly,

"Now seeds, start growing!"

Step 6: 3,000 most frequent words & words with ≥ 6 letters

Talking
Points

For
Kids

Talking Points for Kids

Music in Schools



Written by Andrew Funk

What Our Leaders Say About: Music in Schools

Sometimes, schools cut music programs when there is a shortage of money. The members of school boards are faced with hard choices when money is limited. One choice might be between music programs or larger classes. In situations like this, it is difficult for school board members to know which choice provides the greatest benefit for the greatest number of people.

Music programs can be costly. Violins, trumpets, and pianos are expensive to buy. They are also expensive to repair. In addition, music classes are usually taught by music teachers. This means hiring one or more music teachers when schools can barely pay for school supplies. Further, only a small percentage of students in a school choose to take music classes. When faced with the choice of larger classes or music programs, school leaders will often choose to decrease class sizes.

Most school board members and taxpayers agree that music is good for students and their learning. But many leaders and taxpayers will argue that music is something that can be done in after-school programs or outside of school.

Leaders in some communities argue that this means that their children do not get to learn to play an instrument. Many families cannot afford the cost of music lessons and musical instruments. If there are no free after-school programs, students in these communities do not have the chance to develop their skills in music.



Photo: Students from the Paul Green School of Rock Music performing at the 2009 Fremont Fair, Seattle, Washington. June, 2009.
©2009 by Joe Mabel in en.wikimedia. Some rights reserved
(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>).

For more information about Talking Points for Kids (© Elfrieda H. Hiebert), visit www.textproject.org. Some rights reserved (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-cd/3.0/us/>).



Photo: Rain falls on a field in Germany during a storm in 2006.
Released into the public domain by Creative Commons Wiki Media.

Introduction

Thunderstorms

For many people around the world, summer brings thunderstorms. Warm wet air and strong winds help to create thunderstorms. But thunderstorms don't happen in every part of the United States. The states along the Pacific Ocean don't get as many thunderstorms as the states along the Gulf of Mexico. Some areas of Florida have thunderstorms once a day for most of the summer!

The best place to be during a thunderstorm is inside a building. Lightning from a thunderstorm can be very dangerous. Just before a thunderstorm, the air may feel like there is electricity in it. When people start feeling electricity in the air, they know a thunderstorm is on the way. People start heading inside buildings so they can be safe during a thunderstorm.

So how are thunderstorms created? You can read about it here without getting wet!

Part 2: The 7 Actions for Text Complexity

1. Knowledge
2. Connections
3. Passion
4. Vocabulary
5. Volume
6. Stamina
7. Keeping the Goal in Sight

1. Knowledge

Reading is where vocabularies and concepts are extended & developed

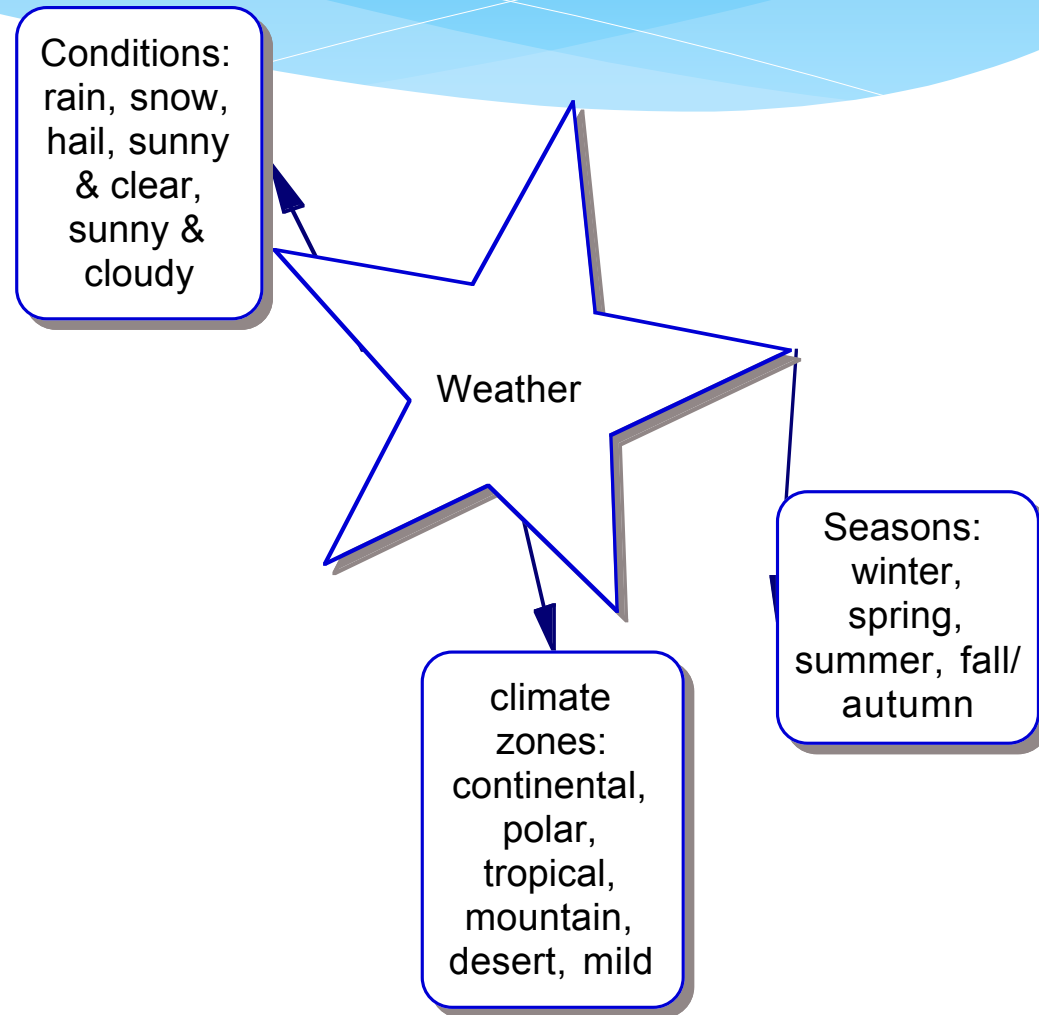
Comparison of Spoken & Written Language

(from Hayes & Ahrens, 1988)

Popular Magazines	65.7
Children's Books	30.9
Popular adult shows	22.7
College graduates to friends	17.3

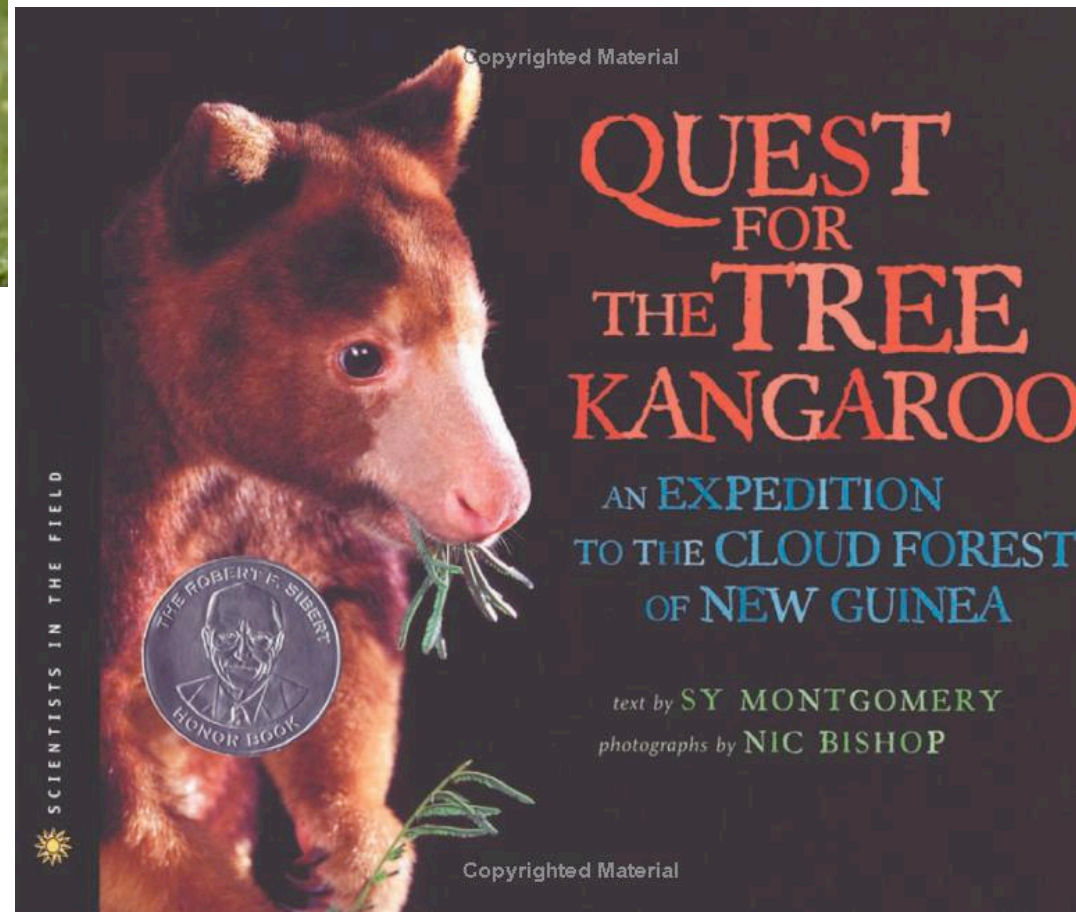
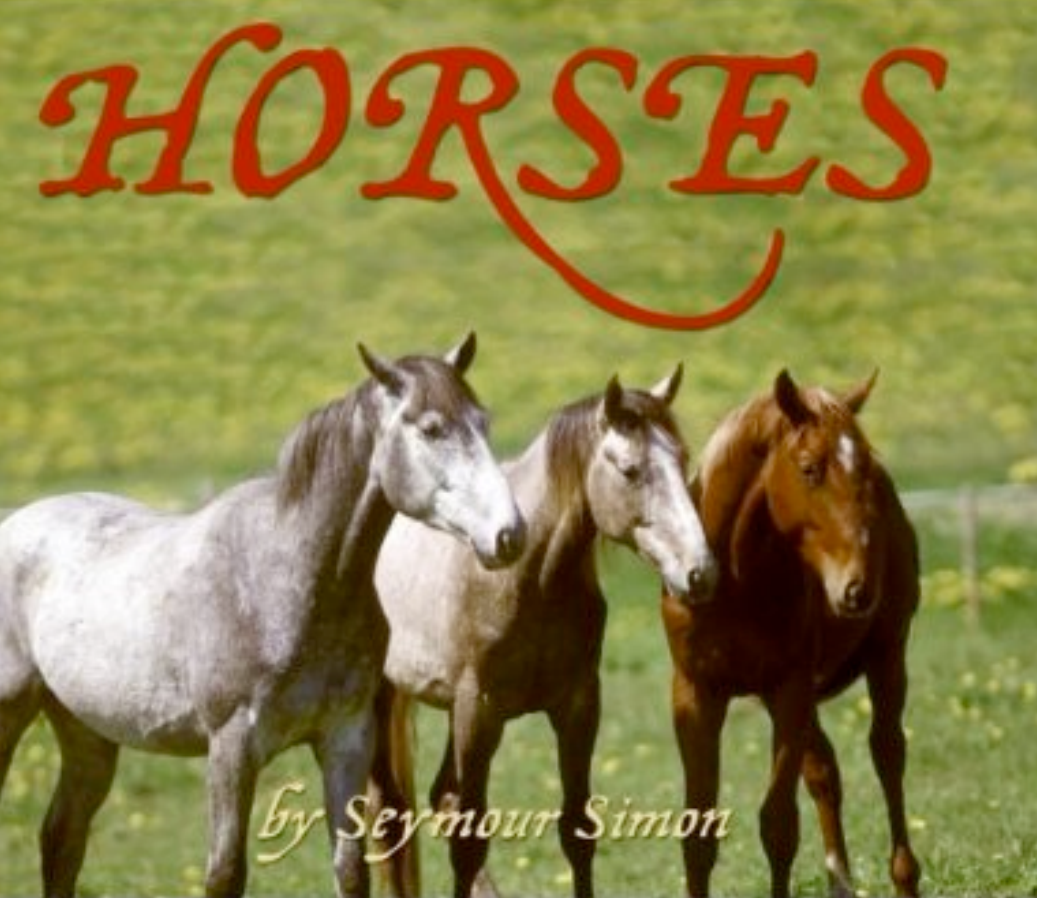
Particular funds of knowledge are acquired solely through academic presentations (texts, lessons, selected media)

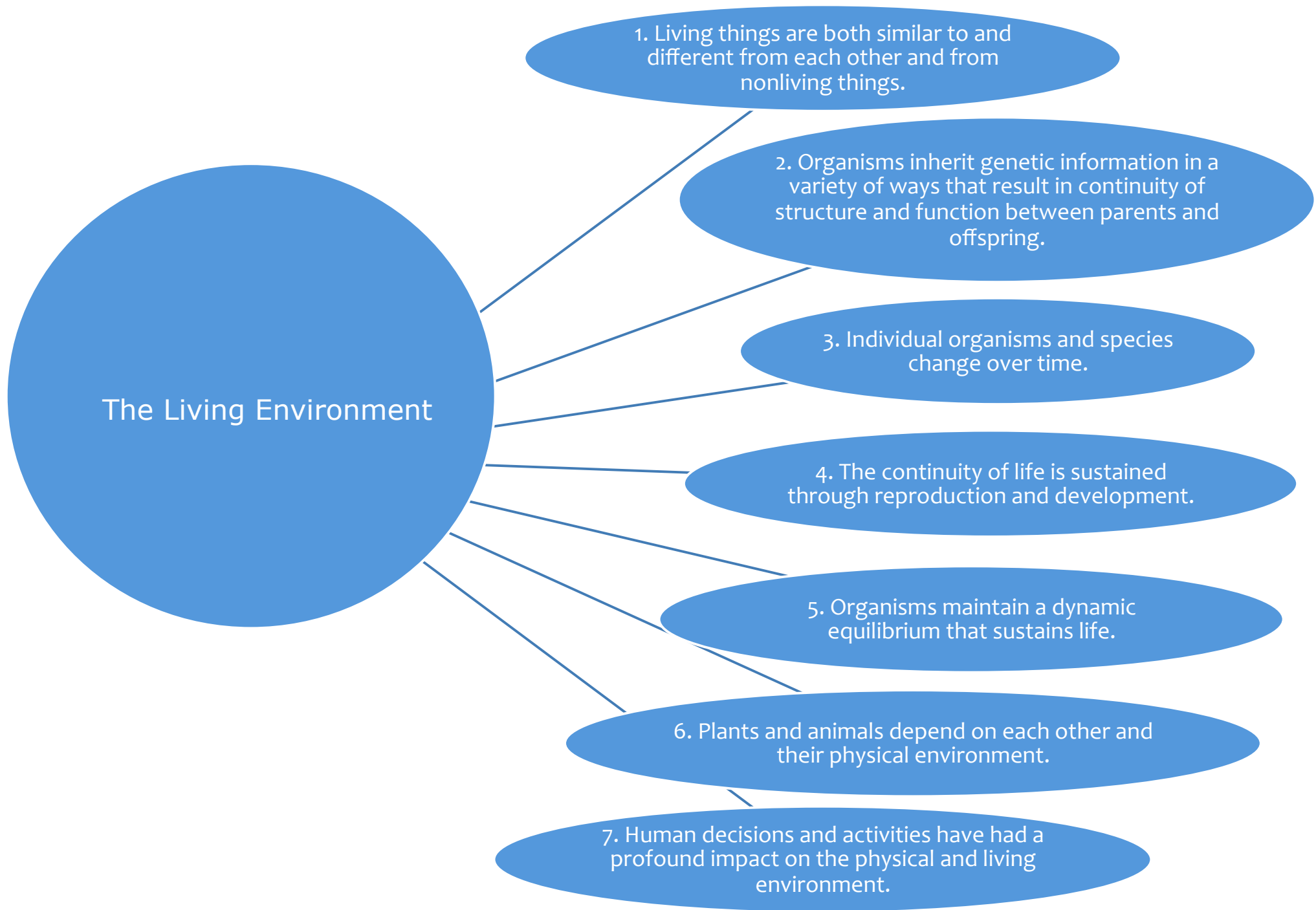
- Representational forms of government
- Photosynthesis
- Atom-splitting



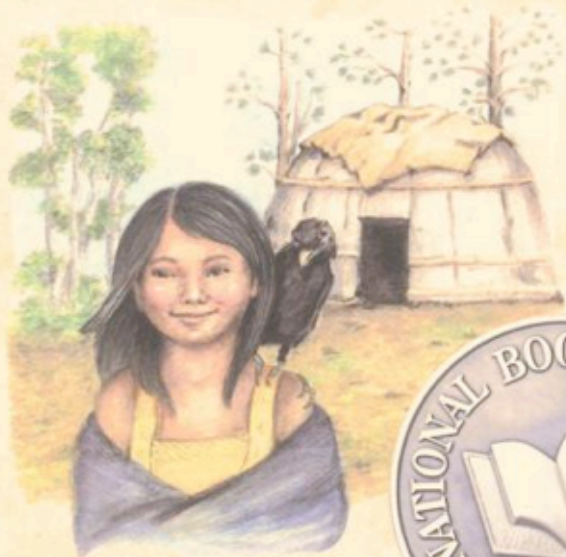
2. Connections

1. To students' existing knowledge
2. To overall purposes
3. Across texts and experiences

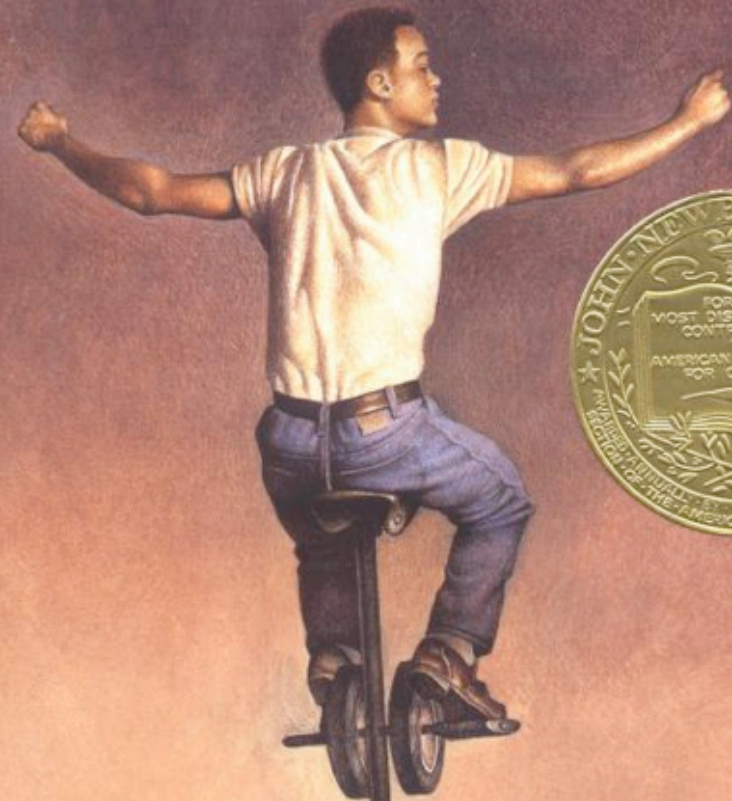




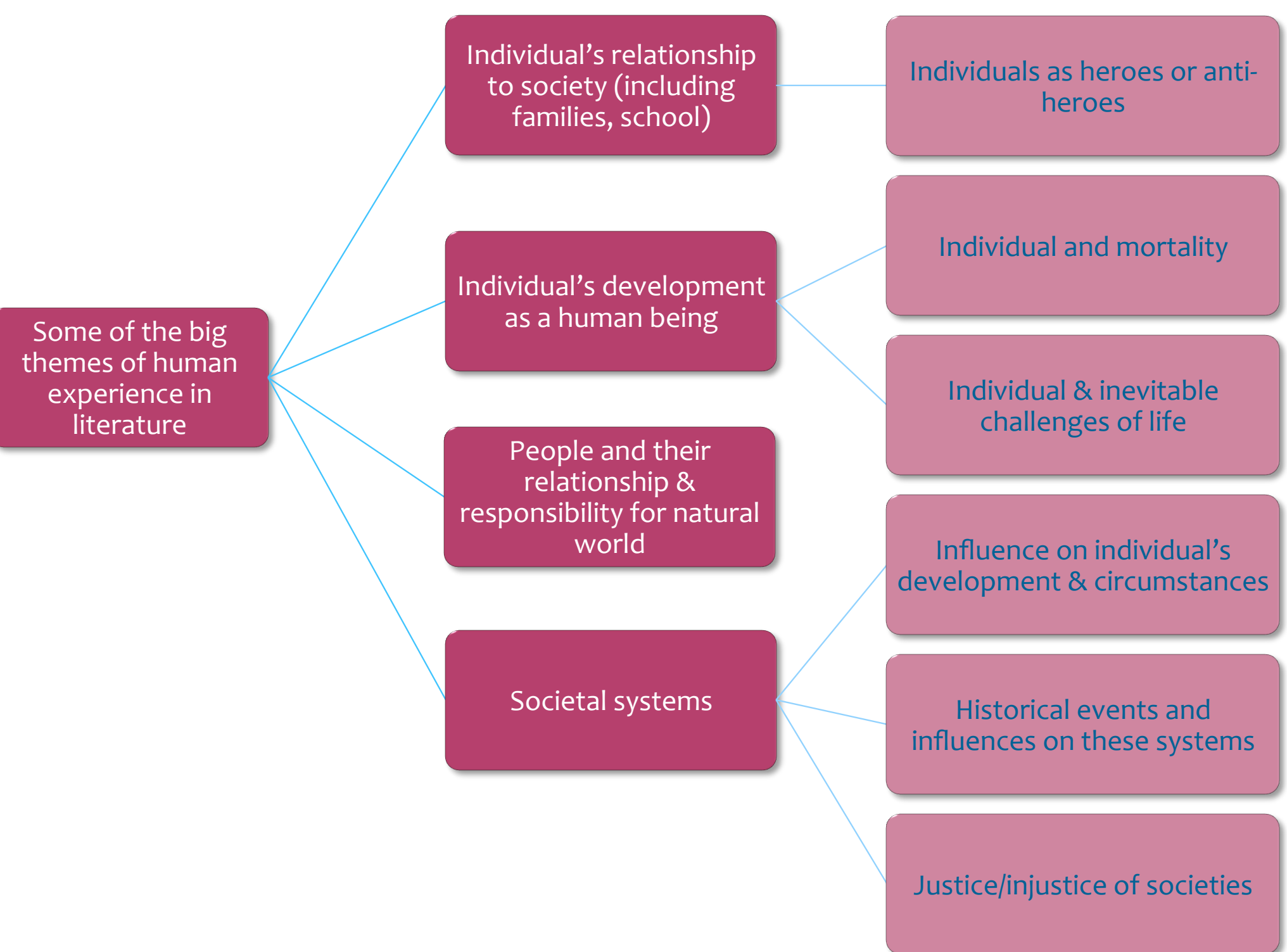
LOUISE ERDRICH
THE
BIRCHBARK
HOUSE



VIRGINIA HAMILTON



M. C. Higgins,
the Great



Focus Texts: Gettysburg Address

Speeches:

JK Rowlings'
Commencement address at
Harvard, 2008

Cesar Chavez,
Commonwealth Club, 1984

Lou Gehrig's Farewell
speech, 1939

Steve Jobs,
Commencement address at
Stanford, 2005

Memorials: Ground Zero:

*"We have some planes:
(Chapter 1) The 9/11
Commission Report:
President Obama's speech
at the Concert of Hope,
9/11/11*

Former president G.W.
Bush's speech at
dedication of Flight 93
memorial, 9/11/11

September 11 Personal
Stories of Transformation:
[http://www.tributewtc.org/
programs/toolkit.html](http://www.tributewtc.org/programs/toolkit.html)

Gettysburg: Battles and Dedication

Journals of Minnesota
(Company K):
[http://www.wininahistory.org/
company/K/](http://www.wininahistory.org/company/K/)

Diary of a Tar Heel Confederate
Soldier:
[http://docsmith.unc.edu/fpn/leon/
summary.html](http://docsmith.unc.edu/fpn/leon/summary.html)

Edward Everett's speech:
[http://www.civilwarhome.com/
everettgettysburg.htm](http://www.civilwarhome.com/everettgettysburg.htm)

Memorials: 9/11

Unit 1: Rebuilding a School Community

ADA DOLCH

Rebuilding from tragic loss through civic engagement



A principal of a high school facing the World Trade Center led her students out of danger and encouraged them to give back to the neighborhood when they returned downtown months later. One year later, she helped build a school in Afghanistan in honor of her sister who was one of those killed on 9/11.

Unit 2: A Survivor Helps Others Heal

MARY LEE HANNELL

Healing through honest discussion of 9/11 trauma



An employee of The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey describes her escape from the 67th floor of the WTC. She describes the impact of 9/11 on her three young children who didn't know if she had survived, and healing through honest discussion.

Unit 3: Creating a 9/11 Learning Center

LEE IELPI

Honoring the memory by creating a center for learning about September 11th



A retired firefighter worked on the recovery at the World Trade Center site for 9 months searching for his firefighter son and other victims. Motivated by the need to let people around the world know what happened on 9/11, he created a learning center.

Unit 4: Uniformed Services: Loss and Recovery

NORMA HARDY

The dedication of police officers and firefighters who suffered great losses



A Port Authority police officer arrived at the WTC site just after the towers collapsed. After the recovery period, she was assigned to the site to boost the morale of the people working in the emotionally draining environment and she continues to support others.

Unit 5: Empowering Women Globally

SUSAN RETIK

Promoting cross-cultural understanding



A widow from Boston lost her husband on American Airlines Flight 11. She and another September 11th widow started an organization to aid widows in Afghanistan.

Unit 6: Being Muslim in New York after 9/11

MOHAMMAD RAZVI

Helping a community to advocate for itself



After September 11th, many Arab, South Asian and Muslim communities in America felt under attack. This community organizer worked to help them.

Unit 7: Globalizing Peace

TSUGIO ITO & MASAHIRO SASAKI

Victims of violence often advocate for peace



Tsugio Ito lost his brother in the bombing of Hiroshima and his son on 9/11 at the World Trade Center. Masahiro Sasaki donated one of the origami cranes folded in 1955 by his sister, the legendary Sadako, to the Tribute WTC Visitor Center as a wish for global peace.

Unit 8: Building National Memorials

JIM LAYCHAK & GORDON FELT

Building a memorial that acknowledges the attacks on the nation and commemorates individual victims



Jim and Gordon lost their brothers, one in the attack on the Pentagon and one on Flight 93. Each took leadership roles in building memorials that pay tribute to the attacks on the nation and the lives lost.

UNIT 7: GLOBALIZING PEACE



MR. TSUGIO ITO grew up in Hiroshima, Japan. His older brother was killed when the United States dropped an atomic bomb on August 6, 1945 in an effort to end World War II. Fifty-six years later, Mr. Ito's son, Kazushige, died when the South Tower of the World Trade Center collapsed on September 11, 2001. Mr. Ito believes that the events of September 11th reconfirm his belief that we should all work towards global peace.

MR. MASAHIRO SASAKI is the older brother of Sadako Sasaki. Both were children when an atomic bomb hit their city of Hiroshima, Japan during World War II. Sadako developed leukemia as a result of the exposure to radiation. As a wish for good health, she folded more than a thousand origami cranes. After her death, Sadako's classmates advocated for peace by helping to raise funds for a memorial to the children who died from the atomic bomb.

3. TRADITIONAL JAPANESE STORYTELLING – KAMISHIBAI CARDS:

Below is a sample of the kamishibai cards developed by the Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE). Kamishibai is a traditional method of Japanese storytelling in which a storyteller uses sturdy story cards that feature an image on one side and the story text on the reverse. SPICE has developed full color, illustrated 11"x17" kamishibai cards with English and Japanese text that tell the story of Sadako Sasaki and her origami cranes.

Contact SPICE at <http://spice.stanford.edu> to order a set of kamishibai cards for classroom use.



5

Sadako began folding 1000 paper cranes using the wrapping paper from gifts she received from friends. She would put the paper underneath her mattress to flatten out the wrinkles. When she ran out of paper, she also used the wrappers from medicine bottles. Some of the special red cranes she folded were made from the wrappers of a new medicine that was donated from the United States.

さだ こ とも だち おく おく もの がみ つか せん ぼ づる お
禎子は友達から送られた贈り物のつつみ紙などを使って千羽鶴を折りはじめました。

Examples of Speeches

- * JK Rowlings, Harvard Commencement, 2008: *The Fringe Benefits of Failure, and the Importance of Imagination*
 - * You might never fail on the scale I did, but some failure in life is inevitable. It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all – in which case, you fail by default.



Cesar Chavez's speech to the Commonwealth Club

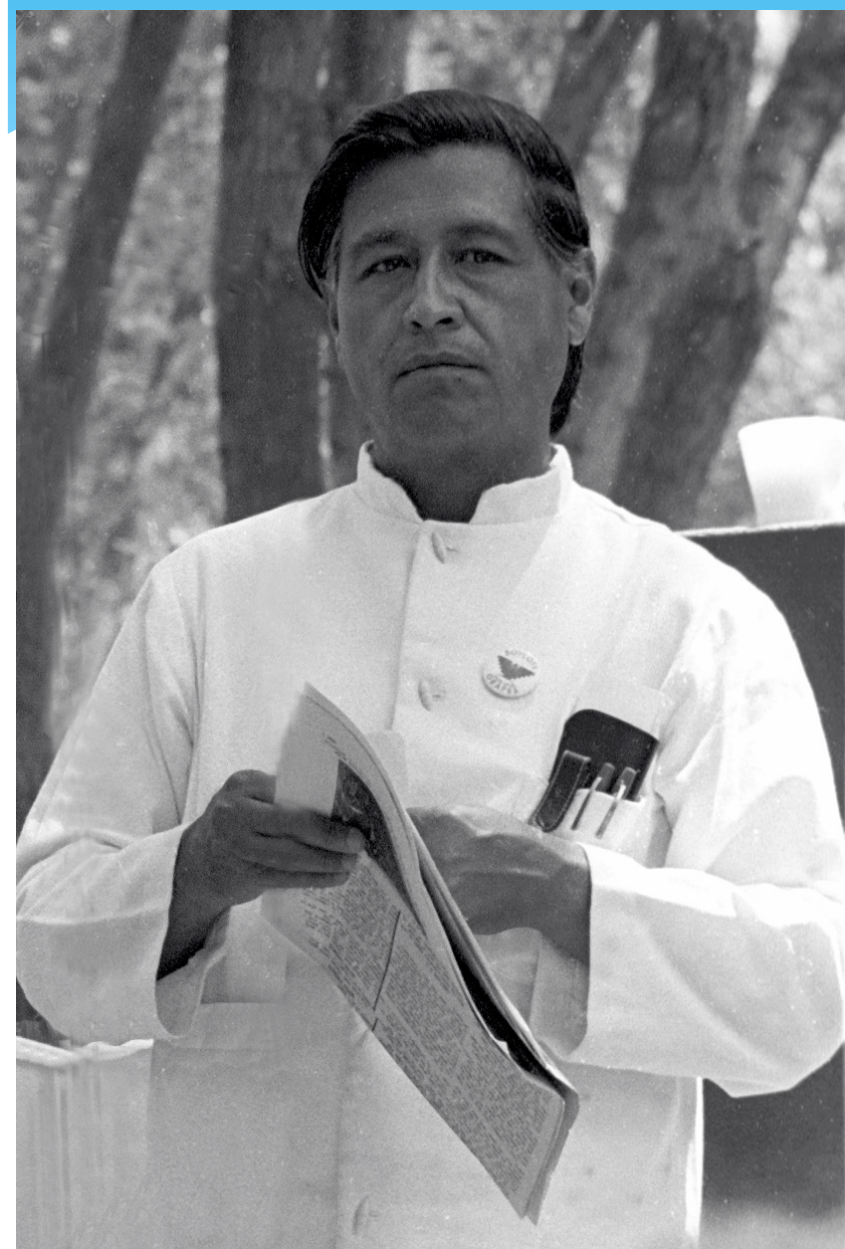
<http://esl-bits.net/listening/Media/CesarChavez/default.html>

Twenty-one years ago last September, on a lonely stretch of railroad track paralleling U.S. Highway 101 near Salinas, 32 Bracero farm workers lost their lives in a tragic accident.

The Braceros had been imported from Mexico to work on California farms. They died when their bus, which was converted from a flatbed truck, drove in front of a freight train.

Conversion of the bus had not been approved by any government agency. The driver had "tunnel" vision.

Most of the bodies lay unidentified for days. No one, including the grower who employed the workers, even knew their names.



Steve Jobs

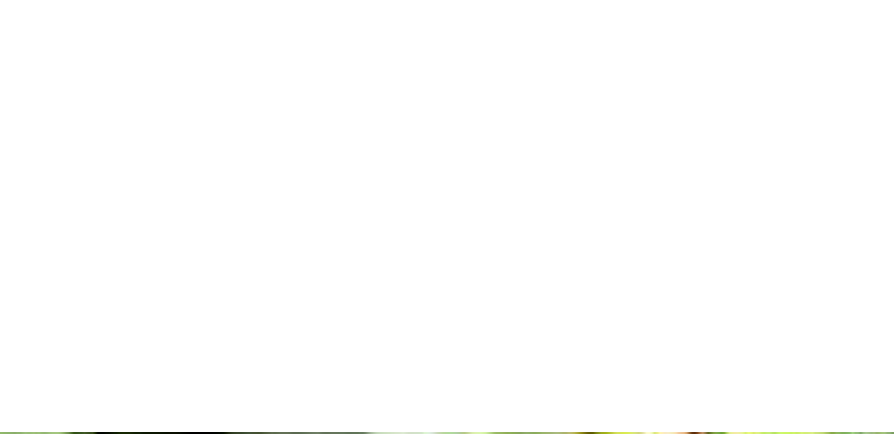


Commencement address to
Stanford class of 2005:

[http://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=D1R-jKKp3NA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D1R-jKKp3NA)

“Beneath it were the words: "Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish." It was their farewell message as they signed off. Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish. And I have always wished that for myself. And now, as you graduate to begin anew, I wish that for you.”

3. Passion



Stories about heroes		• <i>Joan of Arc</i> (Diane Stanley) • <i>Martin Luther King, Jr.</i> (Rosemary L. Bray) • <i>Seven Brave Women</i> (Betsy Hearne) • <i>She's wearing a dead bird on her head!</i> (Kathryn Lasky)
Music		• <i>I like music</i> (Leah Komaiko) • <i>The Philharmonic gets dressed</i> (Karla Kuskin) • <i>Moses goes to a concert</i> (Isaac Millman)
Tales: New & Old		• <i>The Huckabuck Family & and how they raised popcorn in Nebraska and quit and came back</i> (Carl Sandburg) • <i>The people could fly: American black folktales</i> (Virginia Hamilton) • <i>Rapunzel</i> (Paul O. Zelinsky)
Math		• <i>Math Curse</i> (Jon Scieszka) • <i>The Adventures of Penrose the Mathematical Cat</i> (Theoni Pappas) • <i>The Joy of Mathematics: Discovering Mathematics All Around You</i> (Theoni Pappas)
Animals in the Wild		• <i>Starlight Animal Rescue: Wild Cat</i> (Dandi Daley Mackall) • <i>Animals and the Seasons</i> (Susanne Riha) • <i>Amazing X-Rays: Wild Animals</i> (Jacquelin A. Ball)
History & Geography		• <i>Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes</i> (Eleanor Coerr) • <i>The Scrambled States of America</i> (Laurie Keller) • <i>Shaka: King of the Zulus</i> (Diane Stanley)
How People Live	Fashion	• <i>I want to be a fashion designer</i> (Stephan Maze) • <i>My wonderful world of Fashion: A book for drawing, creating, and dreaming</i> (Nina Chakarabarti) • <i>Frankly, Frannie: Fashion Frenzy</i> (AJ Stine)
	Sports	• <i>The World's greatest soccer players</i> (Matt Doeden) • <i>The Wild Soccer Bunch: Kevin the Star Striker</i> (Joachim Masannek) • <i>A Beautiful Game: The World's Greatest Players and How Soccer Changed Their Lives</i> (Tom Watt)

The Funds of Knowledge Initiative

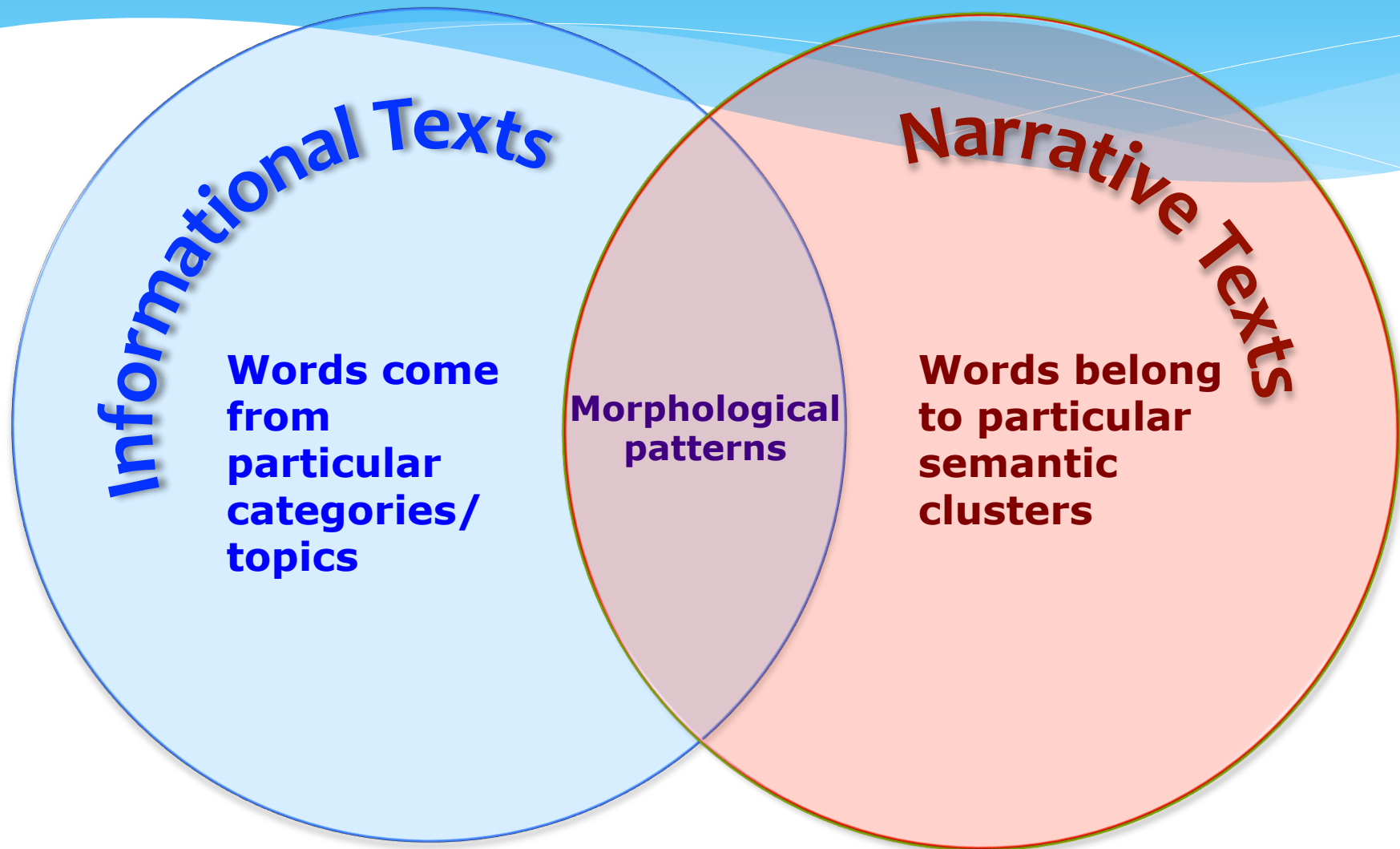
Stories about Heroes	Music	Tales: New & Old	Math
Animals in the Wild	History & Geography	How People Live	Your Choice!

The Funds of Knowledge Initiative

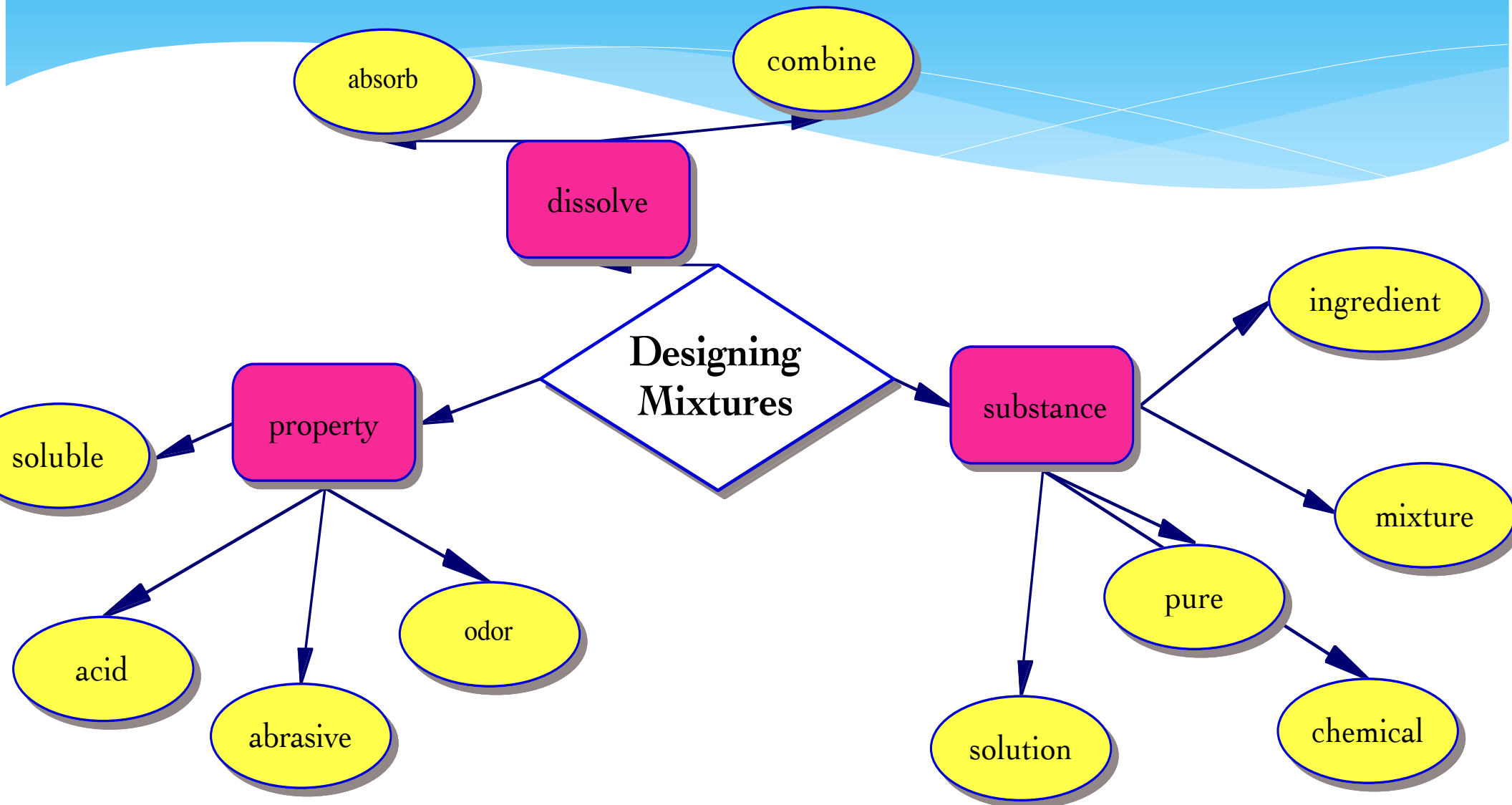
Stories 		Tales: New & Old	Math
Animals in the Wild	History & Geography	How People Live	You  e!

4. Vocabulary

The Vocabularies of Informational & Narrative Texts



Vocabulary of Informational Text



Natural Resources & the Economy



Left Photo: Typical rocky shores. September, 2009. ©2009 by Petritap in en:wikimedia. Some rights reserved CC-BY-SA-3.0 (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en).

Middle: Refilling a 18L water jug. Released into public domain by Myke2020 in en:wikimedia.

Corresponds to QuickReads Level D, book 2, Geography and Economics, *Natural Resources & the Economy*

Resources



Definition: Something such as land, mineral or natural energy that exists in a country and can be used in order to increase its wealth

Example: Trees are a natural *resource* that humans use to make paper.



The Vocabularies of Narrative Texts

Story Word	Cluster	Examples of Words in Cluster (Beyond Story)
amazed	Emotions/Feelings/Happy Excitement	surprised jubilant ecstatic dumbfounded
fascinated		
marveled		
baffled	Communication/Mental Actions/Confused	confused bewildered mystified perplexed confounded
bewildered		
stumped		
humble	Traits/Shyness/Meek	reluctant retiring self-effacing
timid		

Talk



Talk as in a conversation (noun)

- conversation
- chat
- discussion
- slang
- dialogue
- chatter
- lecture
- address
- speech
- meeting
- conference
- summit
- utterance
- gossip
- comment
- debate

Talk as in to speak casually (verb)

- chat/chatter
- scuttlebutt
- gossip
- comment
- smooze
- mention
- say
- utter
- remark

Talk as in to speak (verb)

- speak
- verbalize
- converse
- vocalize
- articulate
- communicate
- confer
- dialogue

Talk as in to speak in a specific way (verb)

- whisper
- flirt
- snap
- shout
- yell
- orate
- lecture
- pontificate
- address
- drone
- stammer
- bark
- slur
- bay
- jabber
- chant
- preach
- boast
- debate
- enunciate
- pronounce
- question
- ask
- declare



Talk

COMMON PHRASES

- Talk to me
- Talk back
- Talk over
- We need to talk

IDIOMS

- Talk a mile a minute
- Spit it out
- Talk big
- Talk sense
- Dance around the topic
- Speak up
- Talk it up
- Talk down
- Talk is cheap
- Talk it over
- Talking to a brick wall
- Talk of the town
- Small talk
- Speak of the devil
- Sweet talk
- Talk your ear off
- Talk in circles/riddles
- Talk shop
- Walk the talk
- Talk your way out of a paper bag
- Talk until your blue in the face
- You're a fine one to talk
- Shooting the breeze

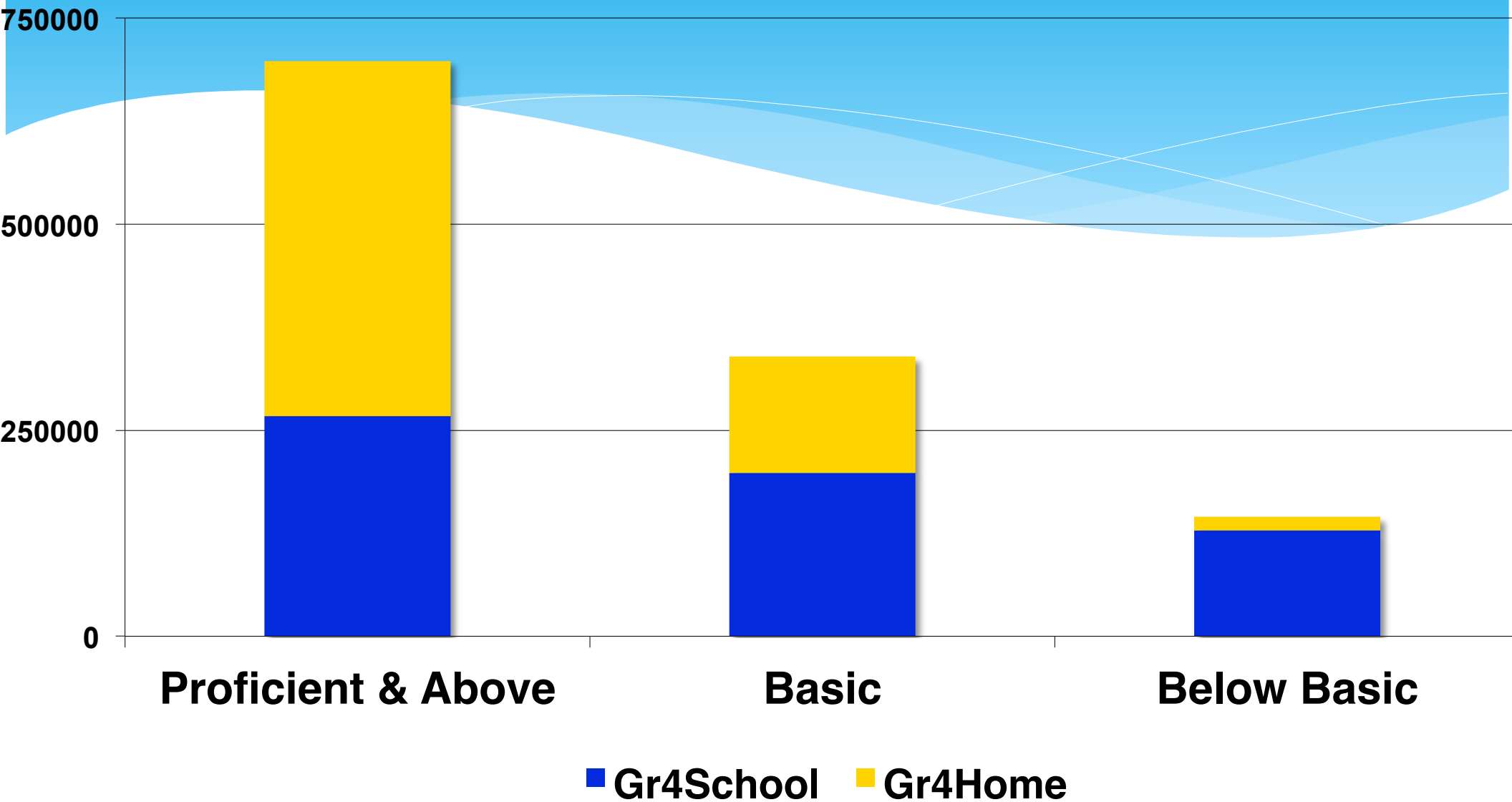
THE SPANISH CONNECTION

- conversation / conversación
- discussion / discusión
- to discuss / discutir
- dialogue / diálogo
- to have a dialogue / dialogar
- comment / comentario
- to comment / comentar
- to mention / mencionar
- to verbalize / verbalizar
- to converse / conversar
- to communicate / comunicar
- communication / comunicación
- pronounce / pronunciar
- to debate / debatir
- debate / debate
- enunciate / enunciar
- pronounce / pronunciar
- declare / declarar



5. Volume

Typical Amount of Text Read at School & Home



Anderson, R.C., P.T. Wilson, and L.G. Fielding. 1988. Growth in reading and how children spend their time outside of school. *Reading Research Quarterly* 23(3):285-303.

Recent evidence from Reading First Classrooms

Length of Instructional Blocks	Time with eyes on text
90-minute	17.57
100-minute	16.25
120-minute	19.25
Overall	18.33

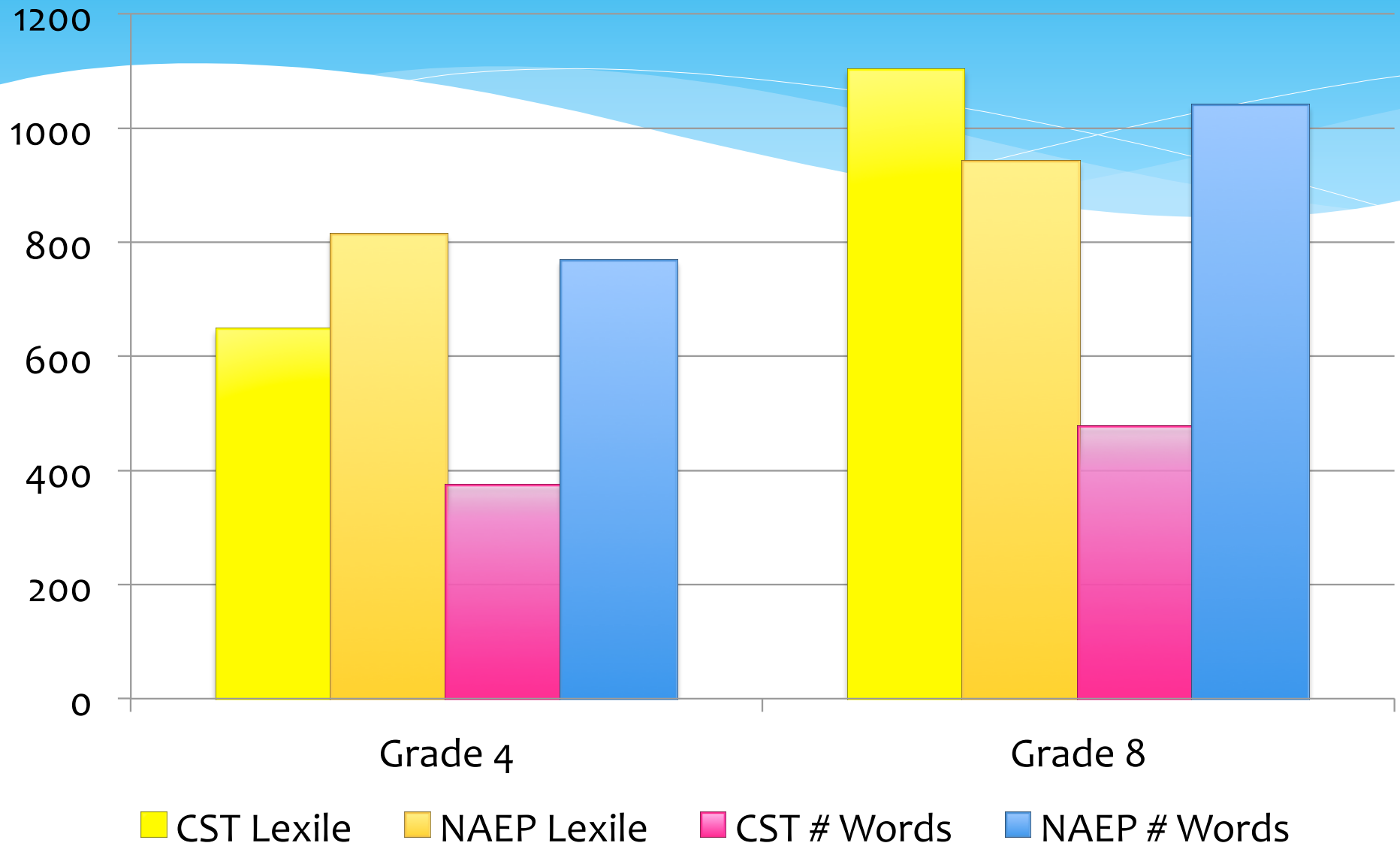
(Brenner & Hiebert, 2009)

What 7 Minutes of Extra Reading Mean

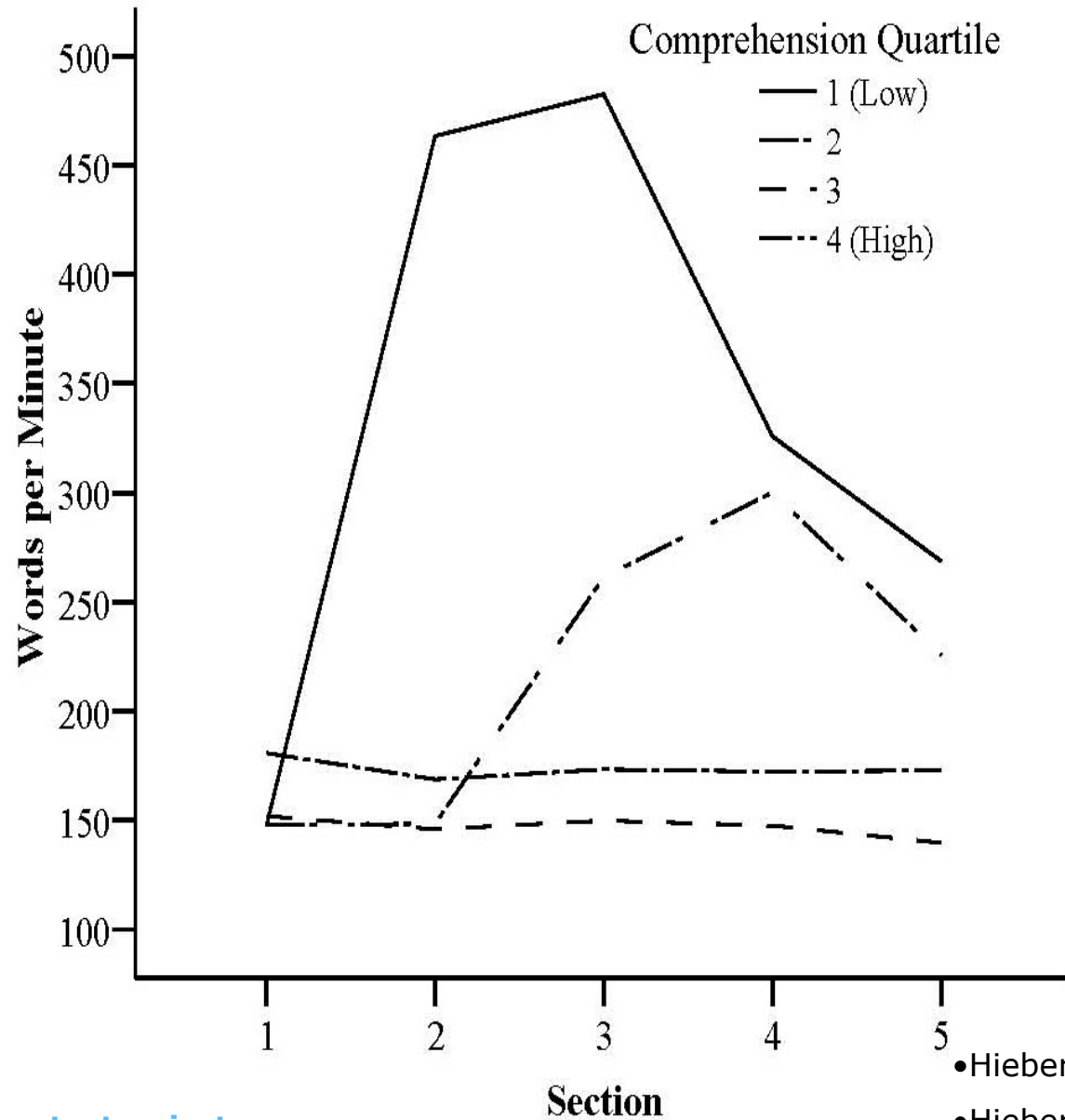
- * Kuhn & Schwanenflugel (2009): Data from the seven classes most successful in increasing reading rate were compared to 7 least successful classes: students in former read 7 minutes more daily than students in latter.
- * Average 3rd grader:
 - * 127 words per minute x 7 minutes x 180 school days: **160,020 additional words**
 - * Using Hayes & Ahren's (1988) data (31 rare/new words per 1,000): **5,000 additional words**

6. Stamina

Comparison of CST & NAEP



Stamina



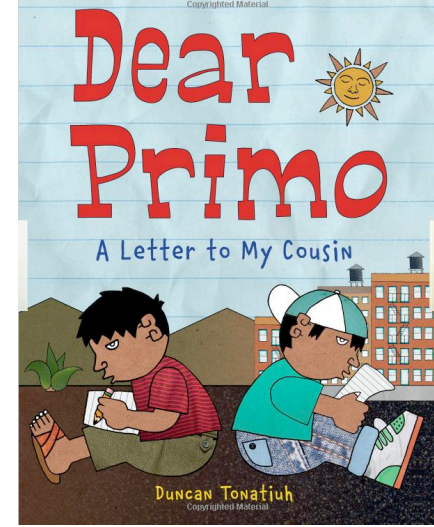
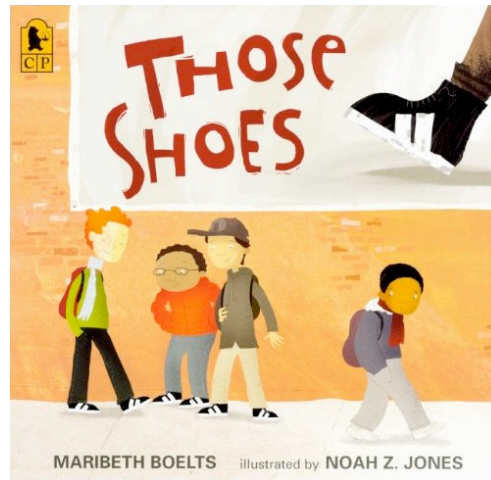
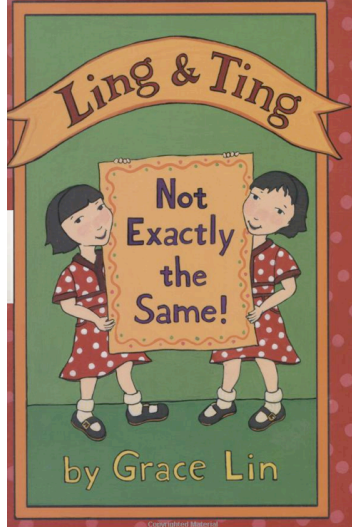
•Hiebert, Wilson, & Trainin (2010)

•Hiebert, Trainin, Wilson (2011)

7. Keeping the Goal in Sight

Level	Source	Title	Curriculum	
			Word Recognition	Comprehension Strategies
1	CCSS	• <i>The Fire Cat</i> (Averill, 1960)	600 most-frequent (& inflected endings) + less-frequent words with 1-3 letters	Follow story structure with a dilemma that is fairly common (e.g., a mischievous cat, twins who are different)
	High recognition	• <i>Frog and Toad Are Friends</i> (Lobel, 1970)		
	Contemporary	• <i>Ling and Ting</i> (Lin, 2010) • <i>Fly High, Fly Guy</i> (Arnold, 2008)		
2	CCSS	• <i>The Treasure</i> (Shulevitz, 1978)	1,000 most-frequent (& inflected endings) + less-frequent words with 1- 4 letters	Follow story structure where characters need to make choices (e.g., giving away shoes)
	High recognition	• <i>Henry & Mudge</i> (Rylant, 1987)		
	Contemporary	• <i>Those Shoes</i> (Boelts, 2007) • <i>Grandfather Counts</i> (Cheng, 2003)		
3	CCSS	<i>Tops & Bottoms</i> (Stevens, 1995)	1,000 most frequent words (& inflected endings) + less-frequent words with 1-5 letters	Understand that characters may be “playing” tricks (as in a fable); compare/contrast contexts
	High recognition	<i>Good Luck, Ronald Morgan</i> (Giff, 1999)		
	Contemporary	• <i>Dear Primo</i> (Tonatiuh, 2010) • <i>Amazing Grace</i> (Hoffman, 1991)		

Level	Source	Title	Curriculum	
			Word Recognition	Comprehension Strategies
1	CCSS	• <i>The Fire Cat</i> (Averill, 1960)	600 most-frequent (& inflected endings) + less-frequent words with 1-3 letters	Follow story structure with a dilemma that is fairly common (e.g., a mischievous cat, twins who are different)
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	Contemporary	• <i>Ling and Ting</i> (Lin, 2010) • <i>Fly High, Fly Guy</i> (Arnold, 2008)		
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Grade 2.1

“Tell me a story,” Ling says.
 “Okay,” Ting says. Once upon a time there were twin girls. They were named Ling and Ting. People saw them and said, you two are exactly the same.
 “Oh good” Ling says. “I know this story.”

Grade 2.2

I dream about those shoes. Black high tops. Two white stripes.
 “Grandma, I want them.”
 “There's no room for want around here, just need,” Grandma says. “And what you need are new boots for winter.”

Grade 2.3

Dear primo Carlitos,
 I live in a city. From my window I can see a bridge and cars zooming by. I can see skyscrapers, too. Skyscrapers are buildings so tall they tickle the clouds. At night all the lights from the city look like the stars from the sky.

[Go](#)

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
- Beginning Reading
- Morphological Awareness
- Content & Story Words
- Silent Reading & Reading Stamina
- Reading Automaticity & Fluency

Upcoming Events

Jan 21, 2012 in CSU, East Bay
Alameda County Office of
Education: English Learner
Conference 2011

Reading Today The Common Core's Staircase of Text Complexity: Getting the Size of the First Step Right

TextProject president and CEO Elfrieda (Freddy) Hiebert explains why the assertion in the Common Core State Standards that K-3 reading texts have been dumbed down along with those for higher grades is contradicted by research, that too much text complexity in lower grades is an obstacle to beginning reading proficiency, and that there is no evidence that the recommended increase in complexity for third-grade texts will improve reading proficiency at higher grades. The article appears in the December 2011/January 2012 issue of IRA's *Reading Today* (digital magazine version available online to IRA members only) but is  reprinted here from *Reading Today* with the permission of the International Reading Association.

TEtT Products

TextProject creates reading programs based on our TEtT model of text complexity.



Among the leading classroom reading

programs based on TEtT are QuickReads and ZipZoom.



SummerReads is TextProject's free summer reading program, based on the TEtT model, that helps at-risk readers avoid the summer slump.



For Fall 2011, TextProject launches our new BeginningReads program to support bringing children into reading by connecting their oral language knowledge

Teacher Support

TextProject helps teachers who want to improve their students' reading achievement.



Reading activities promote fluency and vocabulary, including

E4: Exceptional Expressions for Everyday Events (still free but newly revised, updated and polished) and QuickReads Word Pictures.

Professional development, including a series of upcoming webinars, provides teachers background on the elements of reading success.

Benchmark Texts: Stepping Up Complexity is a set of contemporary benchmark

Research

TextProject's new Reading Research Report series documents innovations in reading education.



The latest report looks at the

measurement of text complexity under the guidelines of the CCSS.

The TextProject Library contains a decade's worth of research articles, presentation slides and more from founder Elfrieda H. Hiebert and her colleagues.

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