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## Book Study:

*Text Complexity: Raising Rigor in Reading* by  
Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey & Diane Lapp

## Syllabus



Dr. Anne F. Goiran-Bevelhimer

**Book Study: *Text Complexity: Raising Rigor in Reading*  
by Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey and Diane Lapp**

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**COURSE CREDIT:** 1.0 graduate credit  
**DATES & TIMES:** 30 hours Directed Study  
**METHOD OF DELIVERY:** Online and Print-based Correspondence

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Read closely *Text Complexity: Raising Rigor in Reading* by Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey and Diane Lapp to gain hands-on knowledge of how to choose and use complex texts to meet your grade level expectations for the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* or your State Standards in Reading. Apply what you are reading in practical and useful ways. Choose activities described in the study guide to explore what makes a text complex. Assess which quantitative measures work best for you. Use rubrics to determine qualitative measures of texts and employ a checklist to match readers to texts and tasks. Leave this class feeling empowered to choose and use complex texts and raise the rigor in reading in your classroom practices.

*This course meets the **Common Core State Standards (CCSS)** for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects focusing on the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading, 1-10, and Appendix A. Teachers taking this course will focus on their grade level or content area expectations of the Common Core State Standards.*

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify what makes a text complex.
2. Assess text complexity by using and evaluating a variety of quantitative measures.
3. Determine qualitative measures of text complexity by weighing levels of meaning, purpose, structure, language conventionality, clarity and knowledge demands through the use of rubrics.

4. Match readers to texts and tasks using checklists described in *Text Complexity: Raising Rigor in Reading*.
5. Apply the strategies from *Text Complexity: Raising Rigor in Reading* by creating 2 grade level lesson plans correlated to the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects for Reading 1-10 or your State Standards in Reading.

## **TEXTS, READINGS, INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:**

**Study Guide:** *Book Study: Text Complexity: Raising Rigor in Reading* by Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, and Diane Lapp. (2012) Prepared by Anne Goiran-Bevelhimer, Ed.D. This study guide will be sent upon registration.

### **Required Text:**

Fisher, D., Frey, N., & Lapp, D. (2012) *Text Complexity: Raising Rigor in Reading*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

### **Supplementary Texts:**

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). 2010a. *Common Core State Standard for English Language Arts & History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects*. Washington D.C.: NGA Center and CCSSO. <http://www.corestandards.org/>

\_\_\_\_\_ 2010b. *Common Core State Standard for English Language Arts & History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: Appendix A: Research Supporting Key Elements of the Standards; Glossary of Key Terms*. Washington D.C.: NGA Center and CCSSO. <http://www.corestandards.org/>

\_\_\_\_\_ 2010c. *Common Core State Standard for English Language Arts & History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: Appendix B: Text Exemplars and Sample Performance Tasks*. Washington D.C.: NGA Center and CCSSO. <http://www.corestandards.org/>

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

This course is delivered asynchronously; you may start anytime and will work one-on-one with the instructor. You are expected to invest 30 hours of directed study to this course. You may submit all work and complete the course anytime between 6 weeks to one year from date of registration.

Use the study guide to direct your reading of *Text Complexity: Raising Rigor in Reading*. Complete the following course requirements:

**1. Annotated Reading Log:** Keep an annotated reading log/ journal of your reading of *Text Complexity: Raising Rigor in Reading*. As you read, note what's important, and what's interesting – to YOU. Read closely. You may find it helpful to correlate your reading of this text with Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CCSS/ELA) for Reading. **Summarize**

**your insights and findings in the Reflection Paper.** It is anticipated that you will invest about 10 hours of your time in reading and annotating.

2. **Activities:** Complete an activity from the study guide for each of the five chapters of *Text Complexity*. Feel free to create your own activity for each Chapter. Identify each activity you choose for the five chapters. Summarize what you did and what you learned that helped you internalize the content for the chapter in an annotated activity log. It is estimated that you will spend about 10 hours in completing and recording 5 activities. **Each activity is worth 5% of your grade for a total of 25%.**

- Chapter 1: What makes a text complex? “The Case for Struggle”(10)
- Chapter 2: Practice using quantitative measures to measure text complexity.
- Chapter 3: Assess qualitative measures of text complexity using rubrics.
- Chapter 4: Use the rubrics to match readers to text and task.
- Chapter 5: Use close reading and the study the sample lessons from 4<sup>th</sup> grade and 9<sup>th</sup> grade in preparation of creating your own lesson plans for text complexity.

3. **Classroom Application: Create 2 lesson plans using text complexity for your grade level.** Use the close reading of *Text Complexity: Raising Rigor in Reading* as a reference and the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CCSS/ELA) for Reading or your State Standards for Reading for your grade level. Prepare two (2) close reading lessons using complex texts. Include grade level, text selection, Common Core State Standard focus or your State Standard, quantitative and qualitative assessment tools, criteria for matching reader to text and tasks, discussion questions and scaffolding. It is estimated that you will invest about 5 hours in the preparation of the 2 lesson plans. **Completion of the 2 lesson plans constitutes 25% of your grade.**

4. **Reflection Paper.** Write a 3-4-page reflection paper addressing the annotated reading log and your reflection on the chapter activities, lesson plans and overall significant learning from this book study course. It is expected that you will spend about 5 hours in completing the reflection paper. **There are 2 parts. Each part is worth 25% of your grade.**

**Part 1: Reflection on Annotated Reading Log:** Using your annotations, describe how your reading of *Text Complexity: Raising Rigor in Reading* informed or changed your thinking about text complexity and its application to your classroom practice. Identify your thinking about what makes a text complex, what quantitative measures work effectively for you, what you learned about qualitative measures, and matching reader to text and task. Make specific references to the book, and site them in your reflection paper.

**Part 2: Reflection on Activities and Lesson Plans:** What are the 3 most important things you learned that have the greatest impact on your teaching of close reading, complex texts and your student’s learning? As a result of your reading, completing the activities and lesson plans identify the 1 most important thing you have done and will continue that has radically changed the experience of close reading of complex texts for you and your students. And lastly, what support do you need to continue best practices to promote close reading of complex texts?

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION AND SCALE:**

Grade Distribution:

1. Book Study Activities 25%
2. 2 Lesson Plans 25%
3. Final Reflection Paper
  - a. Summary of Annotated Reading Log 25%
  - b. Reflection on Activities and Lesson Plans 25%

Grade Scale:

A	91-100%	91-100 pts.
B	81-90%	81-90 pts.
C	71-80%	71-80 pts.
D	61-70%	61-70 pts.
F	Less than 60 %	Less than 60 pts.

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