



# DIVERSITY AND CLASSROOM LIBRARIES

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# TEXT SELECTION

Text selection is critical to both literacy instruction and student engagement.

Traditionally, tools that support text selection have focused on quantitative and qualitative measures only. Reading Diversity (Extended Edition) is different.

It help educators prioritize text complexity, critical literacy and cultural responsiveness.

Reading Diversity (Extended Edition) considers four distinct—but interconnected—dimensions of text selection:

1. Complexity
2. Diversity and Representation
3. Critical Literacy
4. Reader and Task

# CONSIDERATION | COMPLEXITY

This section quantitatively and qualitatively evaluates the inherent elements of a text.

## Quantitative factors:

- word length or frequency
- sentence length and text cohesion

## Qualitative factors:

- are measured by an attentive reader
- reflect a teacher's professional judgment
- levels of meaning
- purpose, structure, language features
- knowledge demands.



Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_ Illustrator: \_\_\_\_\_

Text type:  Informational (DESCRIPTION)  Literature (DESCRIPTION)

**CONSIDERATION I COMPLEXITY**

**Quantitative:** Go to <http://www.lexile.com>. Use the Quick Book Search box in the upper right to see if your text already has a Lexile Measure. If not, copy and paste a portion of the text into the Lexile Analyzer. There are certain types of text that cannot be assigned a Lexile measure because they are not prose. These include poems, plays and song lyrics or texts with extensive dialogue. Check "NA" when working with these types of text.

Lexile Measure	CCSS Grade Band
<input type="radio"/> 420-820L	<input type="radio"/> Grades 2-3
<input type="radio"/> 740-1010L	<input type="radio"/> Grades 4-5
<input type="radio"/> 925-1185L	<input type="radio"/> Grades 6-8
<input type="radio"/> 1050-1335L	<input type="radio"/> Grades 9-10
<input type="radio"/> 1185-1385L	<input type="radio"/> Grade 11-CCR
<input type="radio"/> NA	

**Qualitative:** Consider the four qualitative measures of text complexity—meaning/purpose, structure, language features and knowledge demands—and how they make the text more or less complex. Mark an X on each line to place the text within its grade band for that qualitative measure.

Qualitative Measure	Notes and Comments on Text	Placement Within Band				
		Not suited to band	Beginning of lower grade	End of lower grade	Beginning of higher grade	End of higher grade
Meaning/Purpose		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Structure		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Language Features		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge Demands		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Use both the Lexile Measure and the qualitative analysis to adjust the overall placement of the text within its grade band. Summarize your analysis and reasoning.

OVERALL GRADE LEVEL	SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND REASONING

# CONSIDERATION II DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION

This section considers the ways in which the author and characters in a text contribute to the inclusion of diverse voices in the curriculum.



**CONSIDERATION II DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION**

1. Does the identity or experience of this text's author support the inclusion of diverse voices in the curriculum?  
Which voices?

- |                                   |                                |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Race        | <input type="radio"/> Language | <input type="radio"/> LGBT         |
| <input type="radio"/> Immigration | <input type="radio"/> Ability  | <input type="radio"/> Place        |
| <input type="radio"/> Ethnicity   | <input type="radio"/> Gender   | <input type="radio"/> Class        |
| <input type="radio"/> Religion    | <input type="radio"/> Age      | <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ |

Explain.

2. Do the identity or experiences of this text's characters and/or speakers support the inclusion of diverse voices in the curriculum? Which voices?

- |                                   |                                |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Race        | <input type="radio"/> Language | <input type="radio"/> LGBT         |
| <input type="radio"/> Immigration | <input type="radio"/> Ability  | <input type="radio"/> Place        |
| <input type="radio"/> Ethnicity   | <input type="radio"/> Gender   | <input type="radio"/> Class        |
| <input type="radio"/> Religion    | <input type="radio"/> Age      | <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ |

Explain.

3. Which elements of this text, if any, provide an authentic account or reflection of peoples' lived experiences?

- |   |                                |                                     |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Setting             | <input type="radio"/> Events   | <input type="radio"/> Illustrations |
| <input type="radio"/> Characters/Speakers | <input type="radio"/> Language |                                     |

Explain.

4. Do you have any concerns about generalizations, stereotypes or misrepresentations in the text?

Explain.



# CONSIDERATION III CRITICAL LITERACY

Critical literacy teaches readers to actively and reflectively engage with texts.

Readers should:

- use critical literacy skills to interpret messages and challenge the power relationships found within those messages.
- question social norms and institutions like family, poverty, education, equity and equality.

This section of the tool asks users to determine if a text is a good candidate for critical literacy instruction.



### CONSIDERATION III CRITICAL LITERACY

**Gaps and Silences:** Authors intentionally and unintentionally include and exclude information. A gap exists where something is left out of the text for the reader to fill in. A silence occurs when a voice or viewpoint is left out or suppressed.

1. Are certain people or groups left out or given roles that don't enable them to be heard? Are certain questions or topics not raised?

2. What strengths and weaknesses does this text pose in terms of gaps and silences?

**Intertextuality:** Students are exposed to multiple texts at school, at home, in the media and through cultural transmission. Intertextuality refers to the way a text's meaning is shaped by other texts.

1. What are some examples of similar texts or of other texts that would pair well with this one?

2. What strengths or weaknesses does this text pose in terms of intertextuality?

**Positioning:** The content and characters in a text are framed by the author's attitudes, beliefs and point of view. This is referred to as positioning. Positioning also impacts the way a reader absorbs and interprets a text.

1. What do I know about the author's attitudes, beliefs or point of view in relation to the topic? How might this affect author and reader positioning?

2. What strengths or weaknesses does this text pose in terms of positioning?

**Context:** The time period in which a text is read shapes reader response. A reading in 1850 will differ from a reading in 2014. The history of a text, as well as contemporary attitudes and practices, shapes the context.

1. What is the historical, social or cultural context in which this text was written? How can it be made relevant to a contemporary context?

2. What strengths or weaknesses does this text pose in terms of context?

# CONSIDERATION IV READER AND TASK CONSIDERATIONS

Culturally responsive text selection includes:

- finding texts that both reflect your students' identities, experiences and motivations (mirrors)
- provide insight into the identities, experiences and motivations of others (windows).

This section asks users to consider whether texts act as windows or mirrors and to explicitly name how the text will help meet established learning goals.



**CONSIDERATION IV READER AND TASK CONSIDERATIONS**

**Reader considerations:** *Culturally responsive text selection relies on a teacher who knows the reader(s) and considers their experiences, motivations and knowledge. These considerations relate to the discursive background of your readers.*

1. Experience: For whom could this text be a mirror, a reflection of identity and experience? For whom could this text be a window into the identities and experiences of others?

2. Motivation: How could this text motivate and connect with the interests and concerns of my students?

3. Knowledge: To what extent does this text access and build upon the knowledge my students bring with them?

**Task considerations:** *Perhaps the most important question when selecting a text is "How will it help students learn?" Keep your standards and learning objectives in mind as you select texts.*

1. What are the learning objectives? How does this text help me meet those objectives?

2. What task might I match with this text in order for students to demonstrate mastery of the instructional goals?

3. What supports or differentiation will my students need to succeed in that task using this text?



**DECISION WILL I SELECT THIS TEXT?**

Yes	No
Why and how will I use this text in instruction?	Why am I choosing not to use this text in instruction?

**CITATION INFORMATION**

Title 1 (of this specific text)

Title 2 (of the larger work within which this text is included)

Author(s)

Editor(s)

City of publication

Publisher

Publication date

Access date (if website only)

URL (if website only)



## READING DIVERSITY LITE (TEACHER'S EDITION): A TOOL FOR SELECTING DIVERSE TEXTS

Use this checklist to enhance reading diversity in your classroom.

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_ Grade level \_\_\_\_\_ Lexile score \_\_\_\_\_

1. What voices does this text include in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, class, age, ability, religion, place, immigration status or LGBT identity?  
Do the identities or experiences of the author(s), illustrator(s), character(s), speaker(s) or narrator(s) contribute to students' diverse reading experiences? YES  NO
2. Does this text accurately reflect lived experiences in terms of setting, characters, speakers, events, language and illustrations? YES  NO
3. Consider the author's attitudes, beliefs and point of view. Do they promote inclusion and equality? YES  NO
4. Does the content perpetuate or rely on stereotypes, generalizations or misrepresentations?  
(Note: A text may address a stereotype without relying on it.) YES  NO
5. Consider the gaps and silences.  
Are certain people or groups left out or given only a silent or insubstantial role? YES  NO   
Are certain questions or issues related to the topic omitted? YES  NO
6. Does this text pair well with other texts that students encounter at school, home, in the media and through cultural transmission? YES  NO
7. Consider the historical, social and cultural context in which the text was written. Is the text relevant now? YES  NO
8. Does this text mirror the identities and experiences of my students? YES  NO
9. Might this text be a window into the identities and experiences of people whose lives are different than my students' lives? YES  NO
10. Does this text connect with the interests and concerns of my students? YES  NO
11. Does this text relate to and build upon the knowledge my students bring with them? YES  NO
12. Does this text work toward goals within the four domains of anti-bias education:  
**Identity:** Promote a healthy self-concept and exploration of identity YES  NO   
**Diversity:** Foster intergroup understanding YES  NO   
**Justice:** Raise awareness of prejudice and injustice YES  NO   
**Action:** Motivate students to act by highlighting individual and collective struggles against injustice YES  NO
13. How might this text motivate, engage or enable my students?

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I will use this text in my instruction to [indicate task].

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I will not use this text in my instruction because [indicate reason].

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# REFERENCES

**Teaching Tolerance - Reading Diversity A Tool for Selecting Diverse Texts. (2015, December 16). Retrieved July 31, 2017, from**

**[http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/Reading%20Diversity--Extended%20Edition2016\\_VFF.pdf](http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/Reading%20Diversity--Extended%20Edition2016_VFF.pdf)**

<http://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources>