

Text Complexity Analysis Template

Text complexity analysis			
Created by:	Rebecca Pilver	Event/Date:	TeachFest Connecticut, July 2014
Text and Author	<i>Enemies and Friends</i> by Duane Damon	Where to Access Text	<i>Cobblestone Magazine</i> , February 2010 Issue
Text Description			
<p>This text is a narrative nonfiction magazine article that tells the story of an amazing act of compassion during the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg. The article describes an interaction during the bloody Battle of Gettysburg where an act of kindness changed the lives of two enemies. During the heat of battle, Confederate Brigadier General John B. Gordon, impressed by the actions of the boyish-looking Union General, Francis Barlow, took time to care for his critically wounded enemy. Gordon, kindly offered Barlow water then summoned medics to Barlow move to a shady spot off the battlefield and had Barlow’s wife safely escorted to his side, providing readers with evidence of a true “humane” action toward one’s enemy during war time. The article highlights the compassionate character of one general, and the bravery and devotion of another.</p>			
Quantitative			
Lexile and Grade Level	900 – 4 th and 5 th grade	Text Length	700 words
Qualitative			
Meaning/Central Ideas		Text Structure/Organization	
<p>The meaning of the text is very complex. The purpose of the text is to tell the story of a historical event and to explore the idea of human character in times of conflict. The meaning and central ideas of the text (enemies can be friends and a person’s true character is revealed in difficult times) are subtle and may be difficult to imply and are revealed throughout the text.</p>		<p>The text structure is moderately complex. The title provides a clue to the central idea of the text. The text is narrative nonfiction, through which a historical event is told with the elements of narrative texts (setting, problem, events). It has more than one storyline that may be difficult to predict. There are graphics that can help support visualization of the setting and characters.</p>	
Prior Knowledge Demands		Language Features	
<p>The text demands moderate background knowledge. It relies on some knowledge about the Civil War and the Battle of Gettysburg. Knowledge about the landforms (knoll, ridge, plain) described at the scene of the battle is helpful for visualizing the setting and events.</p>		<p>The language features are very complex. The text uses some abstract and figurative language (thick of the struggle. fighting roared around him, storm of bullets, seeking to rally, through pain-clouded eyes, hair raising yells splitting the air, ultimate sacrifice) and the vocabulary is a mix of familiar and unfamiliar language. It includes a mix of simple, compound and complex sentences with subordinate and independent clauses.</p>	
Potential Reader/Task Challenges			
<p>The narrative structure will help 4th and 5th grade students access the text. Students should be able to connect to the emotion but find it challenging to connect to the horrific experiences of war. Visualizing the setting and following the actions and thoughts of the characters may be challenging since it requires background knowledge on the topic as well as attention to the key details and complex language in the text. Guiding questions that help the readers infer the perspectives, emotions and traits of the characters along the way will lead them to understanding the big ideas in the text. The line that begins “<i>To me, Barlow was dead,</i>” <i>Gordon related later,</i> is important for the reader to closely read as it sets the stage for the surprise ending of the story.</p>			

Big Takeaway

In a time of conflict, an enemy can be treated like a friend. Confederate Brigadier General John B. Gordon, impressed by the devotion and bravery of Union Brigadier General Francis C. Barlow, helped him in the midst of the horrific battle of Gettysburg. The big take away is a big idea that has lasting value beyond the classroom. *A person's true character shows through even in the worst times. War need not strip us of our humanity.*

Vocabulary Analysis Template

	Words that demand less teaching time (i.e. the definition is singular and concrete)	Words that demand more teaching time (i.e. words with multiple meanings and/or that are part of a word family)
Words that can be determined in context	Brigadier General (tier 3) sprawled (tier 2)	bolted (tier 2) reform (tier 2) rally (tier 2) devoted (tier 2)
Words that cannot be determined in context	heed (3) brigade (2) opponent (tier 2) gasped (tier 2) canteen (tier 2) escorted (tier 2) grim (tier 2) sacrifice (tier 2) banquet (tier 2) prominent (tier 2) abiding (tier 3) vital (tier 2) knoll (tier 3) ridge (tier 2) plain (tier 2)	anchor (tier 2) dispatched (tier 2) undeceived (tier 2) valiantly (tier 2) numbness (tier 2) dimly (tier 2)