Text Complexity Analysis Template

Text complexity analysis			
Created by:	Terri Faucher	**Event/Date:**	TeachFest CT: Summer Academy, July 2014
Text and Author	"Star-Spangled Relic" (ReadWorks.org)	**Where to Access Text**	http://www.readworks.org/node/2207 ReadWorks.org, Drawing Conclusions 5th Grade Unit

Text Description
This is an informational text that describes how a lost piece of American History was accidentally found in the basement of the Connecticut Historical Society by the head librarian in 1998. It gives a brief overview of the three year study that was performed to prove the authenticity of this flag and how it ended up in Hartford after hanging behind President Abraham Lincoln when he was shot to death in 1865.

Quantitative			
Lexile and Grade Level	1000L, 5th Grade Level	**Text Length**	284 words

Qualitative	
Meaning/Central Ideas	**Text Structure/Organization**
The Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford houses an important piece of American History—a Treasury Guard Regiment flag that dates back to before 1865. This flag was one of the five hanging behind Abraham Lincoln when he was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth. This relic was discovered in a storage room in 1998 after being left there for 76 years.	The organization of this text is moderately complex. Connections between some ideas and events are implicit or subtle; organization is generally sequential or chronological. However, the author goes back and forth from 1998 to 1864/1865, then back to 1870's then to 1922 and 1998. This organization helps the reader understand the difficulty of proving the flag's authenticity and the historical events that occurred.
Prior Knowledge Demands	**Language Features**
The reader should know about the significance of the flag and its importance in regards to the President of the United States and the American people. Prior knowledge of Abraham Lincoln's assassination would be helpful as well as understanding the purpose of a historical society.	Language Features are moderately complex. Vocabulary is mostly contemporary and conversational with some subject-specific. Three tier 3 vocabulary words are foot-noted and defined at the end of the text. Sentences are simple and compound with some complex constructions.

Potential Reader/Task Challenges
This informational text is written in the form of an article, and doesn't really grab the reader's attention. There are no graphics or illustrations and it is written in 9 brief paragraphs, all on one page. The title can be confusing if 'relic' is an unknown word. If they uninterested in American history, the reader may not stay engaged. I would assume a fifth grade reader would know who Abraham Lincoln was and have background knowledge about his assassination, but if not this could also be a challenge. Other challenges are knowing what/whom the "Treasury Guard Regt." and the "Ladies of the Treasury Dept." are referring to in this piece.

Big Takeaway
It is almost ironic that such an important piece of American history was 'lost' in a historical society for 76 years. This passage leaves the reader wondering what other pieces of history have been 'lost' or simply not shared with others, as well as what should be preserved. As an individual, what is your responsibility for preserving history? Our history is kept alive through artifacts, which all have stories behind them. What other stories lie behind this particular flag? This text is a great one for students to start with before looking at other primary sources as it brings up many questions that can lead to further discussion/inquiry.

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	Tier 2 Words stumbled ordinary librarian displayed Tier 3 Words assassination historians historical society	Tier 2 Words exhaustive clutched fateful surrounded Tier 3 Words authentic US Treasury Department veteran Captain
Words that cannot be determined in context	Tier 3 Words Relic	Tier 3 Words Treasury Guard Regt.