Text Complexity Analysis Template

Text complexity analysis			
Created by:	Emilia Cassata	**Event/Date:**	TeachFest Connecticut Summer Academy 2014
Text and Author	"The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson	**Where to Access Text**	http://americanliterature.com/author/shirley-jackson/short-story/the-lottery http://www.calgaryacademy.com/ICT/ss/shortstory.html (audio version available)

Quantitative			
Lexile and Grade Level	1090L- Grades 6-8	**Text Length**	3,378 words or 6 typed pages

Qualitative

Meaning/Central Ideas	Text Structure/Organization
A short story, written in 1948, which exemplifies the dangers of mindless adherence to tradition.	This is a narrative written in third person limited point of view, and includes dialogue, imagery and symbolism. The story follows Freytag's pyramid in that it includes an introduction, rising action, and climax. The ending occurs immediately after the climax. Example and mini-lesson on Freytag's plot structure pyramid: http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/plot-structure-literary-elements-904.html

Prior Knowledge Demands	Language Features
Students should discuss their understanding of a lottery. Most students will agree that is has a positive connotation and will share stories of individuals who win millions of dollars and whose lives change dramatically. This adds to the irony of the story when the students realize that winning this lottery is a terrible fate. Students should be introduced to the milieu of a farming community whose lives revive around the seasons: planting, growing, and the harvest. Perhaps a discussion of the traditional feasts and celebrations surrounding harvest. This aids students to understand the significance of Old Man Warner's implication that the lottery and a good harvest are related. Old Man Warner repeats the adage, "Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon."	Although conventional English is used throughout the story, there are some references to terms such as 'dinner' instead of lunch. Language features in this short story include: figurative language (simile and metaphors), connotation, symbolism, and the use of juxtaposition to create suspense. The point of view is in third person objective /limited and lends a somewhat clinical feel to the writing.

Potential Reader/Task Challenges

The reference to stewed chickweed (a wild weed found in deciduous areas) may stump students. Old Man Warner is referencing what happens when there is a bad harvest the townspeople. They must forage for chickweed and acorns to eat.

The use of 'dinner' in the middle of the day might confuse students. The teacher should explain that dinner, the main source of sustenance to fuel the farmers throughout the day, is a meal served at noon.

Big Takeaway

The author, Shirley Jackson, uses the symbols of the stones, the stool, the black box, and the villagers' names to create an allegory depicting the dangers of blindly following tradition. Each of these symbols can be seen as literary allusions (i.e. stoning was an ancient rite, the stool has three legs and may represent the Trinity, the color of the box represents death, and the villagers names: Graves, Summers, Delacroix are allusions as well.

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	• profusely (Tier 2) • boisterous (Tier 2) • reluctantly (Tier 2) • jovial (Tier 2) • consulted (Tier 2) • ducked (Tier 2) • allegory (Tier2)	• paraphernalia (Tier 2) • perfunctory (Tier 2) • allegory (Tier2)
Words that cannot be determined in context		