

Introduction to Text and Task Sets

With the adoption of the Common Core standards teachers are being called upon to shift their practice.

Included in these shifts is the requirement for reading and writing to be grounded in text-based evidence as well as the need for content area teachers to emphasize literacy experiences in their classrooms. A text and task set is a resource to aid teachers in these shifts. These sets infuse literacy into science and social studies through the close reading of a sequenced set of complex texts aligned to a unit in the New York City scope and sequence. The sets do not provide coverage of a complete unit, but rather they provide the opportunity to deepen student knowledge of key areas in a unit. They also built students content area literacy skills within each set are several key components. They include a sequence set of short informational text, a culminating task, focus questions for the set, text dependent questions for each text, a close reading instructional framework, key vocabulary and concepts, a thinking map and supporting trade books.

The first component is a sequenced set of short informational texts. Both the quantitative measure and the qualitative measure are indicated, these are two of the three measures used to determine text complexity.

For more information on text complexity, check out the text complexity video in the Common Core library.

Secondly, included in the set is a culminating task that is aligned to the Common Core learning standards. This task draws directly from the texts and focuses on evidence based writing that is grounded in the text.

The focus questions included are broad open ended questions that are meant to guide some of the students thinking as they work through the set. In many cases they come directly from the essential questions for the unit in the New York City scope and sequence for either science or social studies. The text dependent questions included in the set provide a focus for each text in the unit of study and provide examples of the types of questions that can be used to read the text closely while preparing the students to perform the task.

The close reading instructional framework helps to guide the reading process for the set by providing a model for instruction when reading complex texts, as well as providing a set of selected features for students to observe, analyze and evaluate. Within the sets, we've also included key vocabulary and concepts that students may lack familiarity with. You should be prepared to support students as they encounter these concepts while working through the texts. The student thinking map works directly with the close reading instructional framework as it scaffolds students ability to notice, collect, analyze and evaluate the particular set of selected features.

Finally there is a list of trade books that compliment the text and task set. These trade books can be purchased with the set and can provide opportunities for further inquiry, as well as serve as resources for



individual students. When you purchase a Text and Task Set through FAMIS you will receive a teachers edition that contains all of the components that were just outlined, as well as the class set with texts and thinking maps for students. The text and task sets provide a structured model for infusing literacy into the content areas. In the following videos in this series we will look at how to use these sets in your classroom as well as how to create your own.