

ANALYZING TEXTBOOK LANGUAGE

Directions: In this activity you will work with your group to identify some of the language difficulties in a content subject (reading, science, or social studies) textbook. Select a text and work with your group to complete this analysis

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

Unfamiliar cultural assumptions or analogies.
Discipline-specific concepts that require pre-teaching.

TEXT ORGANIZATION

Long paragraphs that can be shortened or divided.
Text that can be clarified or replaced by a diagram.

GRAMMAR

Long sentences that can be broken into 2-3 short sentences.
Passive voice sentences (e.g., "A new law was passed by Congress;" "Stimuli are received by the brain").
Pronouns that can be replaced by a noun to clarify meaning.
Complex verb forms (e.g., has had, had had, may have had, might have had, would have had, could have had).
If...then and cause-effect sentences that can be clarified.

VOCABULARY

Discipline-specific words that students know only in a general sense (e.g., work in science, round (v.) in math, rights, power in social studies).
Other essential new vocabulary.
Non-essential vocabulary that can be replaced with known synonyms or phrases.

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