



# College and Career Readiness Standards-in-Action

Foundational  
Unit

2

WORKSHOP MATERIALS  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

---

## **SELECTING TEXTS WORTH READING**

Produced Under U.S. Department of Education  
Contract No. ED-VAE-13-C-0066 With StandardsWork, Inc.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## For Participants

Directions for Participants ..... 1

Worksheet: Qualitative Analysis of Text ..... 2

## Resource: Excerpt from *The Words We Live By*:

*Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution* ..... 3

Resource: Quantitative Analysis Chart for Determining Text Complexity ..... 4

Resource: Qualitative Analysis Rubric for Informational Texts ..... 5

Worksheet: Qualitative Analysis of Text ..... 6

Resource: Eleanor Roosevelt’s Speech to the Members  
of the American Civil Liberties Union ..... 8

## For Facilitators

Answer Key: Qualitative Analysis of Text (*The Words We Live By*:  
*Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution*) ..... 9

Answer Key: Qualitative Analysis of Text (Eleanor Roosevelt’s  
Speech to the Members of the American Civil Liberties Union) ..... 10



## Directions for Participants

1. Read the excerpt from *The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution*. Decide whether to read the text aloud at your table while others follow along, or to read silently.
2. Look at the quantitative measures listed at the top of the Qualitative Analysis of Text worksheet for *The Words We Live By*. Consult the Quantitative Analysis Chart for Determining Text Complexity to determine in what level of learning the text belongs. When different measures indicate adjacent bands, look at the overlap in ranges between bands to decide in which level to place the text.
3. Review the Qualitative Analysis Rubric for Informational Texts. For each category or text feature (structure, language clarity and conventions, knowledge demands, and purpose), provide evidence in the blank space for why you think the text is or is not especially challenging in that category. Share your insights with a partner.
4. Share your evidence with other participants at your table and discuss any points of agreement or disagreement. Rather than discussing the rating itself, focus on the evidence from the text that supports your rating on the qualitative rubric.
  - What did you read in the text that made you think about it in this way?
  - Can you point to a specific example?
  - Why does [refer to the specific example] seem to be more moderately complex than very complex?
5. At your table, assign placement ratings in each category, and finally an overall placement of how complex the text is when you consider all of its features. Remember, you are thinking about this text for a certain level of adult education students, so consider how challenging it is for students at that level.
6. Explain your overall placement for how complex the text is in the bottom row of the chart.

**Worksheet: Qualitative Analysis of Text**  
*The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution*

**Lexile:** 1250    **ATOS:** 9.4

**Type of Text (Literary/Informational):** Informational

Category	Notes and Comments on the Characteristics of the Text (Support for Placement in This Band)	How complex is it for this level?			
		Slightly Complex	Moderately Complex	Very Complex	Exceedingly Complex
<b>Structure</b>					
<b>Language Clarity and Conventions</b>					
<b>Knowledge Demands</b>					
<b>Purpose</b>					
<b>Overall Placement</b>					

**Resource: Excerpt from Linda R. Monk,  
*The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution***

**From “The Preamble: We the People”**

The first three words of the Constitution are the most important. They clearly state that the people—not the king, not the legislature, not the courts—are the true rulers in American government. This principle is known as popular sovereignty.

But who are “We the People”? This question troubled the nation for centuries. As Lucy Stone, one of America’s first advocates for women’s rights, asked in 1853, “‘We the People’? Which ‘We the People’? The women were not included.” Neither were white males who did not own property, American Indians, or African-Americans—slave or free. Justice Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American on the Supreme Court, described the limitation:

“For a sense of the evolving nature of the Constitution, we need look no further than the first three words of the document’s preamble: ‘we the people.’ When the founding fathers used this phrase in 1787, they did not have in mind the majority of America’s citizens ... the men who gathered in Philadelphia in 1787 could not ... have imagined, nor would they have accepted, that the document they were drafting would one day be construed by a Supreme Court to which had been appointed a woman and the descendant of an African slave.”

Through the Amendment process, more and more Americans were eventually included in the Constitution’s definition of “We the People.” After the Civil War, the Thirteenth Amendment ended slavery, the Fourteenth Amendment gave African-Americans citizenship, and the Fifteenth Amendment gave black men the vote. In 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote nationwide, and in 1971, the Twenty-Sixth Amendment extended suffrage to eighteen-year-olds.

## Resource: Quantitative Analysis Chart for Determining Text Complexity<sup>1</sup>

CCR Levels of Learning	ATOS	Degrees of Reading Power	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework	Reading Maturity
B (2 <sup>nd</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> )	2.75 – 5.14	42 – 54	1.98 – 5.34	420 – 820	3.53 – 6.13
C (4 <sup>th</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> )	4.97 – 7.03	52 – 60	4.51 – 7.73	740 – 1010	5.42 – 7.92
D (6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> )	7.00 – 9.98	57 – 67	6.51 – 10.34	925 – 1185	7.04 – 9.57
E (9 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> )	9.67 – 12.01	62 – 72	8.32 – 12.12	1050 – 1335	8.41 – 10.81
E (11 <sup>th</sup> – CCR)	11.20 – 14.10	67 – 74	10.34 – 14.2	1185 – 1385	9.57 – 12.00

*(ATOS and Lexile appear in bold outlines because they are the two measures used to analyze the text excerpt used in this unit.)*

<sup>1</sup> Note that this chart only identifies text complexity for Levels B through E. That’s because at Level A, students are just learning how to read. It is not appropriate to focus on the complexity of the texts students are reading until they reach Level B.

## Resource: Qualitative Analysis Rubric for Informational Texts

Text Title _____	Text Author _____			
Feature	Slightly Complex	Moderately Complex	Very Complex	Exceedingly Complex
<b>STRUCTURE</b>	<b>Organization:</b> Connections among ideas, processes, or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is chronological, sequential, or easy to predict	<b>Organization:</b> Connections among some ideas or events are implicit or subtle; organization is evident and generally sequential or chronological	<b>Organization:</b> Connections among an expanded range of ideas, processes, or events are often implicit or subtle; organization may contain multiple pathways or exhibit some discipline-specific traits	<b>Organization:</b> Connections among an extensive range of ideas, processes, or events are deep, intricate, and often ambiguous; organization is intricate or discipline-specific
	<b>Text Features:</b> If used, help the reader navigate and understand content but are not essential to understanding content	<b>Text Features:</b> If used, enhance the reader’s understanding of content	<b>Text Features:</b> If used, directly enhance the reader’s understanding of content	<b>Text Features:</b> If used, are essential in understanding content
	<b>Use of Graphics:</b> If used, are simple and unnecessary to understanding the text, but they may support and assist readers in understanding the text	<b>Use of Graphics:</b> If used, are mostly supplemental to understanding the text	<b>Use of Graphics:</b> If used, support or are integral to understanding the text	<b>Use of Graphics:</b> If used, are intricate, extensive, and integral to making meaning of the text; may provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text
<b>LANGUAGE CLARITY AND CONVENTIONS</b>	<b>Conventionality:</b> Language is explicit, literal, straightforward, and easy to understand	<b>Conventionality:</b> Language is largely explicit and easy to understand, with some occasions for more complex meaning	<b>Conventionality:</b> Language is fairly complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language	<b>Conventionality:</b> Language is dense and complex; contains considerable abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language
	<b>Vocabulary:</b> Words are contemporary, familiar, and conversational	<b>Vocabulary:</b> Words are mostly contemporary, familiar, and conversational; rarely overly academic	<b>Vocabulary:</b> Words are fairly complex and sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic	<b>Vocabulary:</b> Words are complex and generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading

Feature	Slightly Complex	Moderately Complex	Very Complex	Exceedingly Complex
	<p><b>Sentence Structure:</b> Uses mainly simple sentences</p>	<p><b>Sentence Structure:</b> Uses primarily simple and compound sentences, with some complex constructions</p>	<p><b>Sentence Structure:</b> Uses many complex sentences, with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words</p>	<p><b>Sentence Structure:</b> Uses mainly complex sentences, with several subordinate clauses or phrases and transition words; sentences often contain multiple concepts</p>
<p><b>KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS</b></p>	<p><b>Subject Matter Knowledge:</b> Relies on everyday, practical knowledge; includes simple, concrete ideas</p> <p><b>Intertextuality:</b> Includes no references or allusions to other texts, or outside ideas, theories, etc.</p>	<p><b>Subject Matter Knowledge:</b> Relies on common practical knowledge and some discipline-specific content knowledge; includes a mix of simple and more complicated, abstract ideas</p> <p><b>Intertextuality:</b> Includes few references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.</p>	<p><b>Subject Matter Knowledge:</b> Relies on moderate levels of discipline-specific or theoretical knowledge; includes a mix of recognizable ideas and challenging abstract concepts</p> <p><b>Intertextuality:</b> Includes some references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.</p>	<p><b>Subject Matter Knowledge:</b> Relies on extensive levels of discipline-specific or theoretical knowledge; includes a range of challenging abstract concepts</p> <p><b>Intertextuality:</b> Includes many references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.</p>
<p><b>PURPOSE</b></p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> Explicitly stated, clear, concrete, and narrowly focused</p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> Implied but easy to identify based on context or source</p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> Implicit or subtle but fairly easy to infer; more theoretical or abstract than concrete</p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> Subtle and intricate, and difficult to determine; includes many theoretical or abstract elements</p>



**Worksheet: Qualitative Analysis of Text**  
**Eleanor Roosevelt’s Speech to the Members of the**  
**American Civil Liberties Union**

**Lexile:** 1350 **ATOS:** 8.4

**Type of Text (Literary/Informational):** Informational

Category	Notes and Comments on the Characteristics of the Text (Support for Placement in This Band)	How complex is it for this level?			
		Slightly Complex	Moderately Complex	Very Complex	Exceedingly Complex
Structure					
Language Clarity and Conventions					
Knowledge Demands					
Purpose					
Overall Placement					

## **Resource: Eleanor Roosevelt's Speech to the Members of the American Civil Liberties Union**

Chicago, March 14, 1940

Now I listened to the broadcast this afternoon with a great deal of interest. I almost forgot what a fight had been made to assure the rights of the working man. I know there was a time when hours were longer and wages lower, but I had forgotten just how long that fight for freedom, to bargain collectively, and to have freedom of assembly, had taken.

Sometimes, until some particular thing comes to your notice, you think something has been won for every working man, and then you come across, as I did the other day, a case where someone had taken the law into his own hands and beaten up a labor organizer. I didn't think we did those things any more in this country, but it appears that we do. Therefore, someone must be always on the lookout to see that someone is ready to take up the cudgels to defend those who can't defend themselves. That is the only way we are going to keep this country a law-abiding country, where law is looked upon with respect and where it is not considered necessary for anybody to take the law into his own hands. The minute you allow that, then you have acknowledged that you are no longer able to trust in your courts and in your law-enforcing machinery, and civil liberties are not very well off when anything like that happens; so I think that after listening to the broadcast today, I would like to remind you that behind all those who fight for the Constitution as it was written, for the rights of the weak and for the preservation of civil liberties, we have a long line of courageous people, which is something to be proud of and something to hold on to. Its only value lies, however, in the fact that we profit by example and continue the tradition in the future.

We must not let those people in back of us down; we must have courage; we must not succumb to fears of any kind; and we must live up to the things that we believe in and see that justice is done to the people under the Constitution, whether they belong to minority groups or not. This country is a united country in which all people have the same rights as citizens. We are grateful that we can trust in the youth of the nation that they are going on to uphold the real principles of democracy and put them into action in this country. They are going to make us an even more truly democratic nation.

**Answer Key: Qualitative Analysis of Text**  
***The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution***

**Lexile:** 1250    **ATOS:** 9.4

**Type of Text (Literary/Informational):** Informational

Category	Notes and Comments on the Characteristics of the Text (Support for Placement in This Band)	How complex is it for this level?			
		Slightly Complex	Moderately Complex	Very Complex	Exceedingly Complex
<b>Structure</b>	The form of this piece is fairly straightforward for this level: An opening statement followed by a question that is answered by considering quotes, and then offering a brief chronology. The block quote might throw off some readers, but overall the structure of the explication is direct and clear.			✓	
<b>Language Clarity and Conventions</b>	The language overall is fairly explicit and literal, but Monk uses several academic words that would be challenging to students at this level and are important to the meaning of the essay. However, except for the quote by Marshall, the sentence structures are generally simple and direct, with a minimum of subordination.		✓		
<b>Knowledge Demands</b>	The subject matter of the text requires some understanding of basic principles of a democratic government, but students at this level should not struggle too much with that expectation and the overarching idea (i.e., who is included in “We the People”) that drives the discussion.		✓		
<b>Purpose</b>	The purpose of the text is simple and direct, though of course the history behind answering the question is complex and multifaceted. Those facets, however, are presented in a direct fashion and directly linked to the central focus on the source of sovereignty.		✓		
<b>Overall Placement</b>	The clarity of the explanation and the focus on one theme, despite the occasional academic vocabulary and the complexity of Marshall’s remarks, make this text appropriate for the beginning of the level.		✓		

**Answer Key: Qualitative Analysis of Text  
 Eleanor Roosevelt’s Speech to the Members of the  
 American Civil Liberties Union**

**Lexile:** 1350 **ATOS:** 8.4

**Type of Text (Literary/Informational):** Informational

Category	Notes and Comments on the Characteristics of the Text (Support for Placement in This Band)	How complex is it for this level?			
		Slightly Complex	Moderately Complex	Very Complex	Exceedingly Complex
<b>Structure</b>	The connections between ideas are not always clear. Roosevelt is responding to a broadcast we have not heard and making subtle references to the Constitution and events she heard about. As a speech, it is narrative and not structurally complex. However, as her statements indicate, it was impromptu (“Now I listened to the broadcast this afternoon,” “We must not let those people in back of us down”) and therefore not highly organized or planned.			✓	
<b>Language Clarity and Conventions</b>	Roosevelt uses some archaic language, such as “ready to take up the cudgels,” and some notions, like a broadcast, might be unfamiliar, but they are not hard to figure out. Most of the language and sentence structures are straightforward.	✓			
<b>Knowledge Demands</b>	Roosevelt is speaking to a crowd that is hard to visualize in a non-contemporary time (1940). She doesn’t paint their concerns very clearly; we know they relate to labor organizing and the right to do so, which may or may not be a topic familiar to readers. She assumes her audience has familiarity with the Constitution and can make the connection between the Constitution and the rule of law. In addition, readers are unlikely to understand—with the breadth she assumes—the struggles throughout U.S. history to defend the rule of law. Without this knowledge, students will struggle to make sense of her message of continuing that struggle to keep democracy strong and rights intact. However, they may be able to connect it to labor organizing and to that history in the U.S.			✓	

<p><b>Purpose</b></p>	<p>By her very presence, Roosevelt is defending the right of people to organize into collective bargaining units. However, that is not explicitly stated at all, and she is subtle in her message (“I almost forgot what a fight had been made to assure the rights of the working man”). She is modest and understated, and her argument, which connects the right to organize with the preservation of a law-respecting society, is subtle.</p>			<p>✓</p>	
<p><b>Overall Placement</b></p>	<p>If this piece were being studied in the context of a unit on 20th-century American history or the history of the labor movement and civil rights in the U.S., it might not be nearly as challenging as it is in this placement.</p> <p>If it is being read as a speech with little context, it will be challenging for students to overlook the parts that confuse them to arrive at Roosevelt’s message that the right of working people to organize without obstruction is essential to preserving a free and law-abiding society.</p>			<p>✓</p>	