



ACCESS TO COMPLEX TEXT

WHY?

- Opportunities to develop academic language (vocabulary and syntactic awareness)
- Acquire knowledge about the world
- High academic expectations for all students using challenging text is an important way to support students from multiple ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds
- If students who do not have grade-level skills are limited to leveled readers (text), they do not have sufficient exposure to the rich, complex text that is needed to grow vocabulary, develop proficiency with reading, understand complex sentences, and acquire background knowledge

HOW?

- Develop background knowledge
 - Knowledge about the content in text students are reading (or listening to during read-aloud) provides a scaffold for learning
- Develop vocabulary
 - A reader's comprehension of a story depends greatly upon the knowledge and language she brings to the experience
 - Explicit instruction in strategies for determining the meaning of unfamiliar words
- Build schema
 - A *schema* is a mental map that represents and organizes one's understanding of a particular topic
 - Students use their schema and the associations within it to help make inferences and to resolve ambiguity in what they read
- Explicit instruction in comprehension strategies ("intentional mental actions during reading that improve reading comprehension")
- Explicit instruction in critical thinking
- Opportunities for extended discussion about the text should be provided
- Writing tasks that require students to write about the text
- Provide multiple opportunities to read the same text
- Paragraph shrinking- pulling out the 'who' and 'what' of smaller pieces of larger text
- Teach text structure to predict what to expect
- Teach cohesive devices in sentences
- Teach how sentences are constructed