

Start-to-Finish Library[®]

and the

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

"Students need the opportunities to stretch their reading abilities but also to experience the pleasure and satisfaction of easy, fluent reading within them, both of which the standards allow for. Such factors as students' motivation, knowledge and experiences must also come into play in text selection."

—Common Core State Standards, Appendix A

Start-to-Finish® and the COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

What is the Common Core?

The Common Core is a state-led effort to establish a shared set of clear educational standards to prepare our students for college and careers, and make them more competitive in today's global society. It gives students and educators consistent expectations about the skill sets that must be taught and learned.

How does the Common Core change things for Special Education?

Perhaps the most important shift for Special Education is that the Common Core promotes a culture of high expectations and success for ALL students—this means that more than ever before students need to be working at grade level in the general education curriculum.

“Educators will employ professional judgement to match texts to particular students and tasks. Numerous considerations go into such matching. For example, harder texts may be more appropriate for highly knowledgeable or skilled readers and easier texts may be suitable as an expedient for building struggling readers’ knowledge or reading skill up to the level required by the Standards.”

Common Core Standards, Appendix A

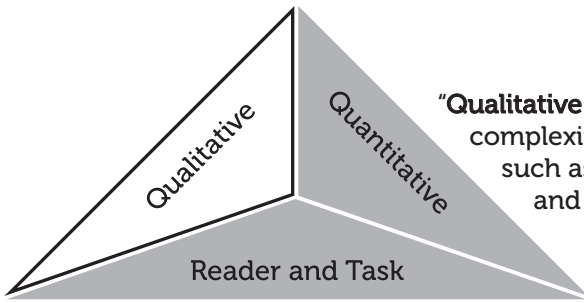
How does Start-to-Finish Library align with the Common Core?

The Common Core State Standards give us a framework to use while evaluating text complexity and appropriateness. The three elements of text complexity that make up this framework must be in balance for each student. Educators need to evaluate and consider quantitative, qualitative, as well as reader and task considerations when selecting materials and supports for their students. This document will define each of the two Start-to-Finish Libraries within the context of these three elements, so educators can easily assess the appropriateness of each library for their students when implementing the Common Core.

What is Start-to-Finish Library?

Start-to-Finish Library brings many of the most important books of all time to older students reading at 2nd to 5th grade levels. The books allow students to progress through Common Core reading skill levels. Highly supported content features professional narration, word highlighting, built-in physical accessibility, and end-of-chapter quizzes.

Qualitative Dimensions of Text Complexity



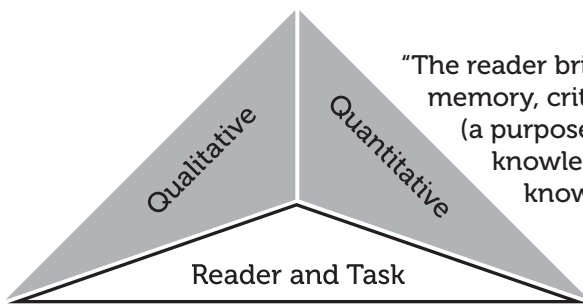
“Qualitative dimensions and qualitative factors refer to those aspects of text complexity best measured or only measurable by an attentive human reader, such as levels of meaning or purpose, structure, language conventionality and clarity, and knowledge demands.”

Common Core Standard–Qualitative	Start-to-Finish Gold Library	Start-to-Finish Blue Library
<p>Levels of Meaning (literary texts) or Purpose (informational texts)</p> <p>“Literary texts with a single level of meaning tend to be easier to read than literary texts with multiple levels of meaning. Informational texts with an explicitly stated purpose are generally easier to comprehend than informational texts with an implicit, hidden, or obscure purpose.”</p> <p>Common Core Standards, Appendix A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word meanings are limited to most common usage. • Words are selected on the basis of phonetic regularity, frequency of use, and meaning. • Encourages readers to pay attention to text. The words on the screen are highlighted to match the narration, adding expression to the text and conveying meaning more effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word meanings include less common usage. • More complex text, assumes greater ability to use context clues to comprehend idioms and new vocabulary. • Encourages readers to pay attention to text. The sentences on the screen are highlighted to match the narration, adding expression to the text and conveying meaning more effectively.
<p>Structure</p> <p>“Texts of low complexity tend to have simple, well-marked, and conventional structures, whereas texts of high complexity tend to have complex, implicit, and (particularly in literary texts) unconventional structures. Simple literary texts tend to relate events in chronological order ... are likely not to deviate from the conventions of common genres and subgenres ... graphics tend to be simple and either unnecessary or merely supplementary to the meaning of texts of low complexity.”</p> <p>Common Core Standards, Appendix A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% of the words used in the text come from EDL Core Vocabularies Primer–3rd grade word lists. (<i>Word Express: The First 2,500 Words of Spoken English</i>) • 330 high frequency sight words account for 70% of a book’s total word count. These words are a subset of the Primer–3rd grade Core Vocabularies lists. • 5% of the words in a text is vocabulary unique to the story content–new or less familiar vocabulary words are defined within the text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% of the words used in the text come from EDL Core Vocabularies Primer–5th grade word lists. (<i>Word Express: The First 2,500 Words of Spoken English</i>) • 330 high frequency sight words account for 70% of a book’s total word count. These words are a subset of the Primer–5th grade Core Vocabularies lists. • 5% of the words in a text is vocabulary unique to the story content–new meanings of familiar vocabulary and less familiar vocabulary are defined within the text.

Qualitative Dimensions of Text Complexity (Continued)

Common Core Standard– Qualitative	Start-to-Finish Gold Library	Start-to-Finish Blue Library
<p>Language Conventionality and Clarity</p> <p>“Texts that rely on literal, clear, contemporary, and conversational language tend to be easier to read than texts that rely on figurative, ironic, ambiguous, purposefully misleading, archaic or otherwise unfamiliar language or on general academic and domain-specific vocabulary.”</p> <p>Common Core Standards, Appendix A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple vocabulary and suffix usage • Limited to the grammar and syntax of conversational speech including complex sentences that appear first in the oral language of native speakers of English. • Idiomatic language, similes and other metaphors are limited, carefully introduced, and directly supported by the text. • Considerate text presents information in manageable chunks to help readers comprehend curriculum-based, informational text. • Considerate text helps readers gain vocabulary and background knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes more formal, written English • Increasingly complex grammar and syntax associated with expository and informational text; density of ideas increases with varied sentence structures and word order. • Idiomatic language, similes and metaphors are used more often and with less direct explanation. • Vocabulary is used in varied ways, with prefixes and suffixes that change meanings and parts of speech. • Considerate text presents information in manageable chunks to help readers comprehend curriculum-based, informational text.
<p>Knowledge Demands</p> <p>“Texts that make few assumptions about the extent of the readers’ life experiences and the depth of their cultural/literary and content/discipline knowledge are generally less complex than are texts that make many assumptions in one or more of those areas.”</p> <p>Common Core Standards, Appendix A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces readers to stories with strong plots that include a problem and a resolution and interesting characters that help readers make text-to-self, text-to-world, and text-to-text connections. • Increases background knowledge and repairs faulty mental models • Curriculum content is related to subjects including: Biographies, Classic Literature, Science and Social Studies, Historical Fiction • Self-selected reading topics include: Adventures, Mysteries, Original Fiction, Sports Biographies, Short Story Collections, Teen Stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes expanded, more formal written English and smaller, content-related illustrations to provide greater opportunity for readers to draw on background knowledge and make predictions, going beyond the exact meaning of the text to find underlying meanings. • Increases background knowledge and repairs faulty mental models • Curriculum content is related to subjects including: Biographies, Classic Literature, Science and Social Studies, Historical Fiction • Self-selected reading topics include: Adventures, Mysteries, Original Fiction, Sports Biographies, Short Story Collections, Teen Stories

Reader and Task Considerations

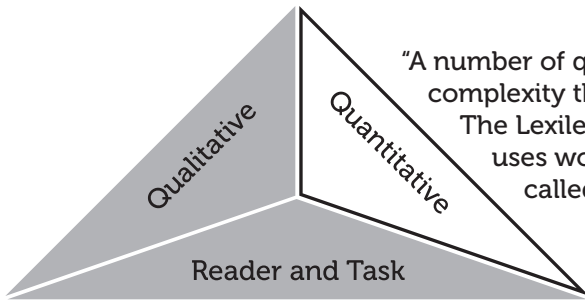


“The reader brings to the act of reading his or her cognitive capabilities (attention, memory, critical analytic ability, inferencing, visualization); motivation (a purpose for reading, interest in the content, self-efficacy as a reader); knowledge (vocabulary and topic knowledge, linguistic and discourse knowledge, knowledge of comprehension strategies); and experiences.”

Common Core Standards, Appendix A

Common Core Standard– Reader & Task	Start-to-Finish Gold and Blue Library
Background Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerate, conversational text helps readers acquire new vocabulary and background, and repair faulty mental models. • Cloze passage computer quiz (Gold Library) follows each chapter to measure comprehension. • End-of-chapter questions and word meanings quizzes (Blue Library) make readers accountable for vocabulary, idioms and inferences–tasks that require a close reading of the text
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerate text presents information in manageable chunks so that readers comprehend curriculum-based, informational text. • Multiple formats and motivating text give readers an opportunity for repeated reading experiences to build fluency and automaticity. • New, topic-specific vocabulary is carefully introduced and defined in the context of the text. This extends vocabulary without the need to interrupt reading fluency to look up unfamiliar words.
Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Books are written at a high-interest, age-appropriate level. • Learners read for pleasure and information. • Individual word support or key word support assists learners when they begin to read a chapter independently. Learners click on unfamiliar words for instant feedback and continue to read fluently. • Recorded speech of professional actors and text highlighting allows learners to experience models of fluent reading.
Accessibility	<p>Formats: Computer Book and Paperback Book</p> <p>Considerate Text: Sophisticated subject matter to match the interests and issues of the older reader</p> <p>Book Length: 5,000-7,000 words (Gold Library) 10,000-12,000 words (Blue Library)</p> <p>Auditory Support: Digitized, recorded speech Mouse click provides auditory support</p> <p>Visual Support: Word-by-word highlighting (Gold Library) Sentence-by-sentence highlighting (Blue Library)</p>

Quantitative Dimensions of Text Complexity



"A number of quantitative tools exist to help educators assess aspects of text complexity that are better measured by algorithm than by a human reader.... The Lexile Framework for Reading, developed by MetaMetrics, Inc., uses word frequency and sentence length to produce a single measure, called a Lexile, of a text's complexity."

Common Core Standards, Appendix A

Common Core Standard—Quantitative	Start-to-Finish Gold Library	Start-to-Finish Blue Library
Lexile Range	300-650 L	600-850 L
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloze passage computer quiz (supported by digitized speech, if selected) follows each chapter to measure comprehension (literal) • One central location stores data for every book read by each student to show progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two multiple choice quizzes (supported by digitized speech, if selected) to measure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Comprehension (inferential) – Meanings of vocabulary and idioms • One central location stores data for every book read by each student to show progress

About the Language of Start-to-Finish® Books

In editing a Start-to-Finish book, editors look first at sentence structure. Is the story coherent and well sequenced for understanding? If it's a re-written version of classic literature, does the voice and spirit of the original author come through? Have the most important parts of the story been included? Is there enough dialogue? Is the text engaging enough to keep a struggling reader motivated?

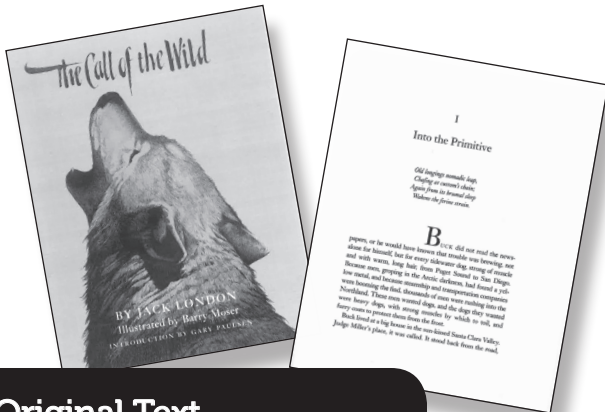
Next, the editors look for places where comprehension depends on certain conventions of literature that may be unfamiliar to the struggling reader. For example, novels often present extended dialogue where the only clue to a change of speaker is indentation. Start-to-Finish books in the Gold Library always explicitly identify the speaker in the written text. In the Blue Library books, the speakers in a passage of dialogue are not always identified in the written text, providing a bridge

to move students closer to reading grade level text. In both libraries, the voices and accents provided by the narrator help students to see the connections between the punctuation and indentation on the page and the spoken dialogue.

Especially at the lowest reading levels, struggling readers often stumble over specific words, grammatical structures and word order in reading. Start-to-Finish editors change the Gold Library

Text Comparison: *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London

Original Text vs. Start-to-Finish Library Book (Online or Chapter Book Library)



Original Text



Considerate Text
(Blue Library)

Buck did not read the newspapers, or he would have known that trouble was brewing, not alone for himself, but for every tidewater dog, strong of muscle and with warm, long hair, from Puget Sound to San Diego. Because men, groping in the Arctic darkness, had found a yellow metal, and because steamship and transportation companies were booming the find, thousands of men were rushing into the Northland. These men wanted dogs, and the dogs they wanted were heavy dogs, with strong muscles by which to toil, and furry coats to protect them from the frost.

Buck didn't read the newspapers. But if he had read them, he would have known that trouble was brewing for dogs like him. Gold had been discovered in Alaska, and now thousands of men were rushing north, hoping to get rich. These men needed dogs, and the dogs they wanted were dogs like Buck.

Sentence Structure

Background Knowledge

Idioms / Vocabulary

About the Language of Start-to-Finish® Books (Continued)

text to remove as many of these stumbling blocks as possible, enabling students to read more smoothly—freeing them to think about the ideas in the book.

Based on their collective experience of listening to students' oral reading errors, Start-to-Finish editors have developed an approach that includes an extensive set of guidelines for writing and editing easy-to-read considerate text. All guidelines are applied flexibly with sensitivity

to the particular content and educational needs of the student.

The following are a few examples of the many guidelines used for the Gold library:

1. Avoid using a word that is hard to decode as an adjective right before a noun. For example, because students tend to read the word scarred as scared, change: *She saw his scarred face* to *She saw that he has a scar on his face*.

2. Do not end a sentence with a transitive verb when the next sentence begins with a noun. For example, *Ken was teasing. Mandy and Kris grinned*. Students may ignore the period and read this as *Ken was teasing Mandy and Kris* and then get confused when they come to *grinned*. Therefore, change the sentence to the following: *Ken was teasing Mandy and Kris. They grinned*.



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