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# Guidelines and Resources for Creating & Implementing Effective Text Sets

**A text set is a collection of sources about a specific topic, theme, or issue. Text sets are often created around an anchor text.**

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| Choose an **anchor text (or texts)** that serve as the cornerstone for the unit of study and that students will read closely (see table on literacy and close reading). | ● Anchor texts are rich and often-studied canonized texts that explore important questions and universal themes in the human experience.<br><br>● Anchor texts also are selected because they review or represent historical events, scientific break-throughs, pivotal art, and/or specific eras or time periods.<br><br>● When selecting anchor texts, teachers need to<br>　○ Select texts that are right for the grade level with the appropriate complexity for the intended readers.<br>　○ Consider how students might connect with the text.<br>　○ Connect the analysis of the text with the standards that are being addressed. | Sample Units Based on Text Sets<br><br>Creating Text Sets for Whole Classroom Instruction: ELA K-12<br><br>Read, Write, Think Text Sets |

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| Organize the text set **around the topic of an anchor text** so that students will acquire additional knowledge on that topic. | ● Establish the line of inquiry for the anchor text. What do you want students to glean from it? What is the primary question you want students to consider?<br>● Build vocabulary and content knowledge about the time period, context, and/or genre of the anchor text.<br>● Ask repeatedly: What knowledge about the world will this set help my students gain? | Guide to Creating Text Sets from the National Governors' Association<br><br>Guide to Creating Text Sets for Grades 2-12<br><br>Steps to Creating Text Sets |
| Make certain that texts are **connected meaningfully to each other** and engaging for students. | ● Select texts that "dialogue" with each other so students build a coherent body of knowledge around the subject.<br>● Choose texts that provide a context for close analytical reading, comparison, evaluation and synthesis.<br>● **Avoid** texts that are not clearly related or only superficially connected. | Sample Units Based on Text Sets<br><br>Read , Write, Think Text Sets to Support All Learners |
| Select texts that are **authentic, rich and worthy of study** and that connect to students' lives and experience. | ● Make certain that texts present connections both topically and thematically.<br>● Check that thematically connected texts provide commentary on personal, social, cultural, political, and historical impacts of the topic.<br>● Provide texts that will allow students to care deeply about an important question, to increase their empathy for others, and consider the human condition.<br>● Choose texts that not only provide a deep and | Scaffolding high school students' reading.pdf<br><br>Guide to Creating Text Sets from the National Governors' Association<br><br>Reading & Writing Project Non-Fiction Text Sets |

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| | rich knowledge base for students but also encourage a greater joy in the reading experience.<br>● **Avoid** texts that are commissioned or only from textbook passages. | |
| Choose a **range of text formats** and types (literary and informational). | ● Aim for balance and variety of length in the types of texts.<br>● Consider using the following as possible types of text for your set:<br>  ○ Fiction (novels, picture books, short stories)<br>  ○ Non fiction<br>  ○ Poetry<br>  ○ Images<br>  ○ Newspaper and magazine articles<br>  ○ Webcasts and podcasts<br>  ○ Websites<br>  ○ Artwork<br>  ○ Songs<br>  ○ Primary sources (interviews, documents, artifacts)<br>● **Avoid** texts that focus exclusively on one genre or study (unless the set is addressing a genre study). | What are Text Sets?<br><br>Newsela Text Sets (Text sets from current news issues and stories)<br><br>Janet Evans Picture Book Text Sets (Picture book sets tied by theme or issue)<br><br>ReadWorks Paired Texts (Different genres on the same topics and reading levels)<br><br>Youngzine (Current events and interactive stories from around the world)<br><br>Newspaper Map (Google tool for searching newspapers and newsposts around the world)<br><br>Lit2Go (Free online collection of stories |

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| | | and poems in Mp3 by Florida Center for Instructional Tech) |
| Provide **levels in text complexity** that support student achievement. | <ul><li>Use gradated text sets where the complexity steadily increases towards instruction around the grade-level anchor text.</li><li>Allow that some texts may be above grade level to promote advanced engagement with the content.</li><li>Consider that some texts may support struggling readers in building knowledge around a topic prior to engagement.</li><li>**Avoid** creating text sets in which the complexity of the texts is erratic rather than tiered.</li></ul> | Sample Units Based on Text Sets<br><br>The Lexile Framework for Reading - Defining the Text Complexity |

**Other Helpful Resources**

"Children's Books: Text Sets" Children's books text sets.pdf

"Scaffolding the English Cannon with Linked Text Sets" Scaffolding the English canon with linked-1.pdf

"Text Sets: The Why and the Wherefore" What are Text Sets?
http://conniekamm.com/sg_userfiles/Creating_Text_Sets_for_Whole-Class_Instruction-2.pdf

Outstanding Resources on Text Sets from North Carolina Text Sets

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