

WHITE PAPER

Providing Instruction and Practice Opportunities for Close Reading of Complex Text

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triumphlearning™

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“Reading complex text lies at the heart of the new standards, with the text complexity demand growing steadily over the course of a student’s K–12 education. A key requirement of the Anchor Reading Standard 10 in the Common Core State Standards is that all students must be exposed to texts of steadily increasing complexity.”

—The Aspen Institute, 2012

The Expectations of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

The intention of the CCSS initiative is to create internationally benchmarked college-and-career-readiness English language arts and mathematics standards that clearly and transparently identify what *all* students should know and be able to do by the time they complete high school (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). The Aspen Institute’s paper “Text Complexity and the Common Core State Standards” (2012) states,

Research shows that no matter what combination of factors is considered when defining text complexity, the ability to read complex text is the single greatest predictor of success in college. This finding is true regardless of gender, race, or socio-economic status. The implication is that teaching that focused solely on critical thinking would be insufficient: it turns out that being able to proficiently read complex text is the critical factor in actually understanding complex text (Appendix A, 2–4)....One of the key requirements of the Common Core State

Standards for Reading is that all students must be able to comprehend texts of steadily increasing complexity as they progress through school. By the time they complete the core, students must be able to read and comprehend independently and proficiently the kinds of complex texts commonly found in college and careers (CCSS Appendix A, p. 2).

The inclusive nature of the CCSS, specifically the identification of what *all* students should know and be able to do by the time they complete high school, creates a paradox for teachers as they plan instruction for those students in grades 2 through 12 who are not reading on grade level. Recognizing this paradox, the International Reading Association (IRA, 2012) endorses the CCSS as “more honest about *what* we need to teach if students are to leave school ready to work and to learn.” Furthermore, IRA (2012) adds, “We need to be just as forthright about the resources and adjustments that will be needed to ensure that all children—struggling learners, gifted students, dual language learners—reach these goals” (p. 4). While the CCSS identify *what* we need to teach—the student learning outcomes or goals—the CCSS do not dictate *how* teachers must teach to ensure students

achieve the standards. The CCSS place the emphasis on *results* rather than the *means* or *process* employed to support students in achieving the CCSS. The emphasis on results empowers teachers, curriculum specialists, instructional leaders, and local and state educational agencies to identify and make informed decisions regarding the tools, strategies, texts, and curricular materials employed to ensure that all students reach the grade-specific goals of the CCSS. “Teachers are thus free to provide students with whatever tools and knowledge their professional judgment and experience identify as most helpful for meeting the goals set out in the Standards” (CCSS, 2010, p. 4).

Challenges: Implementing the CCSS

The rapid adoption of the CCSS across the United States has presented and continues to present challenges to all stakeholders. States and districts have and continue to provide professional development to teachers to support understanding of the shifts inherent in the CCSS and the standards themselves (see the next section, *Challenges: the Shifts*, for an explanation of the shifts). Informing teachers is occurring concurrently with the implementation of the CCSS and new teacher evaluation systems, development of new curricula, transition to new high-stakes assessment systems, creation of standards-based report cards, adoption of new programs and curricula, and the undertaking of a variety of other initiatives (see also *Providing Assessment-Driven Differentiated Instruction in Reading and Writing*, Ruby, 2014).

Not only has adoption of the CCSS affected the availability of instructional materials designed for core (or Tier I) instruction, but it has also presented teachers and districts with the additional challenge of designing and delivering instruction with appropriate materials, strategies, and framework to provide additional support to students who are struggling with the rigors of reading comprehension. The CCSS charges educators to engage all students in *close reading* of grade-level complex text and to provide standards-aligned instruction to support *all* students in the achievement of grade-level goals. This is a paradigm shift

to the practice of relying predominantly on leveled text when working with students challenged by grade-level reading materials.

Challenges: The Shifts

It is the CCSS shifts for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/Literacy) that present the biggest challenge for educators when identifying, developing, and organizing curricula and instructional materials. The three shifts for ELA/Literacy focus on

1. regular practice with complex text and its academic language;
2. reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from the text, both literary and informational; and
3. increased knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.

The reading standards for literature and informational text, speaking and listening, language, and writing embody these three shifts. By intention, the complement of individual, grade-specific standards build upon the skills and understandings of the CCSS identified in the preceding grade level. Each complement of advancing grade-level standards is defined by increasing detail, sophistication, and expectations. The architecture of the CCSS challenges educators to know each student’s literacy profile and to provide data-driven, evidence-based, standards-aligned instruction to ensure efficient and effective closing of identified gaps. “Gap-closing” efforts must occur while simultaneously providing ongoing instruction to support *all* students in meeting grade-level standards. This challenge requires real-time attention to instructional needs of below-level readers and instruction for *all* students supporting achievement of grade-level standards associated with the shifts. This challenge can be daunting given the diversity of learning needs in any given classroom. When instructional tools are not available, the challenge is intensified.

Concerns about Instructional Materials

Concerns about the appropriateness of instructional materials touted as being aligned with the CCSS are addressed in *Fulfilling the Promise of the COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS: Moving from Adoption to Implementation to Stability* (ASCD, 2012). A key concern of the authors is that "there is a difference between materials that are Common Core-aligned and materials that are authentically developed for the Common Core State Standards" (p. 32). An additional concern emerges when educators seek standards-aligned materials to support the instruction of below-grade-level readers. With the abundance of CCSS-aligned materials in the educational marketplace and the widespread efforts of schools, districts, and states to develop lessons and units that address the standards, selecting and developing materials that measure up to the demands of the shifts and the charge of the CCSS can be overwhelming.

Meeting the Challenge and Expectations

The "Revised Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Literacy, Grades 3–12" (Coleman & Pimentel, 2012) provides the criteria to guide developers and publishers in the creation of materials that support achievement of the CCSS, not only for on-grade-level students, but for those students who are considered at risk, challenged, or below grade level. The criteria "illustrate what shifts must take place in the next generation of curricula," with the goal of "shifting the focus of literacy instruction to center on careful examination of the text itself" and asking "the kinds of questions students should address as they write and speak about them" (p. 1). Furthermore, regarding standards-aligned materials, the document is clear on the centrality of text complexity:

In aligned materials, work in reading and writing (as well as speaking and listening) must center on the text under consideration. The standards focus on students reading closely to draw evidence and knowledge from the text and require students to read texts of adequate range and complexity (Coleman & Pimentel, 2012, p. 1).

The "Key Criteria for Text Selection" provides guidance for addressing the requirement described in Anchor Standard 10. Specifically, all students must be able to read independently and comprehend increasingly complex texts as they advance from grade to grade—in alignment with the grade-level standards. To accomplish this goal, all students must engage with complex material that is at grade level (or beyond grade level in the case of K–2 students). All students must be afforded ongoing, scaffolded opportunities, in a supported context, to learn how to "grapple" with close analysis of challenging grade-level text at the word, sentence, and paragraph levels. These experiences are requisite to the development of language skills, high-order comprehension skills, content knowledge, perspective, stamina, and persistence, irrespective of a student's current independent reading ability.

Prior to the adoption of the CCSS, many students who read below grade level were provided with "off-level" reading materials as their sole text sources. In many incidences, below-grade-level readers received reading instruction in below-grade-level text, while their peers received core reading instruction with on-level materials. Coleman and Pimental (2012) cite this practice and contrast it with the need to provide at-risk readers with the "support they need to read texts at the appropriate level of complexity" (p. 3). Coleman and Pimental further state:

Curriculum materials should provide extensive opportunities for all students in a classroom to engage with complex text, although students whose reading ability is developing at a slower rate also will need supplementary opportunities to read text they can comprehend successfully without extensive supports. These students may also need extra assistance with fluency practice and vocabulary building. Students who need additional assistance, however, must not miss out on essential practice and instruction their classmates are receiving to help them read closely, think deeply about texts, participate in thoughtful discussions, and gain knowledge of both words and the world (p. 3).

Clearly students who have not mastered CCSS Reading Foundational (RF) skills for their grade level require appropriate instruction to achieve mastery of RF skills to support independent decoding of grade-level text. Students with below-grade-level decoding skills must have access to appropriate levels of high-quality text for *independent* reading. Additionally, as stated previously, it is essential that students who are not independent on-level readers receive instruction and opportunities to encounter grade-level complex text with standards-aligned instruction identical to their on-level peers but that is designed to meet their needs.

The Support Coach Solution

Recognizing the *challenge* to support all students in meeting grade-level *expectations* of the CCSS, and aligned with the “Revised Publishers’ Criteria” document’s key criteria of (a) text selection, (b) questions and tasks, (c) academic vocabulary, (d) writing to sources, and (e) student reading, writing, listening, and speaking as the guiding benchmarks, **Triumph Learning** created *Support Coach*. It was developed to provide educators with a research-based tool for supporting all students in reading complex grade-level text. Through highly scaffolded instruction, *Support Coach* engages students in close reading of grade-level complex texts in a variety of genres. The instructional framework of *Support Coach* is the gradual release of responsibility.

In this document, the author will (a) describe the “gradual release of responsibility” (GRR) model, its alignment with the CCSS, and its place in **Triumph Learning’s** curriculum design for *Support Coach*; (b) define “close reading” of complex text in the context of the CCSS as specified in Appendix A of the CCSS document; (c) delineate how *Support Coach* is strategically designed to support all students in meeting the challenges of Standard 10 through recursive opportunities for close reading of on-level complex texts embedded in the GRR model; and (d) demonstrate how *Support Coach* can be used by educators.

Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) Instructional Framework

As presented in *Providing Assessment-Driven Differentiated Instruction in Reading and Writing* (Ruby, 2014), the GRR model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) is a student-centered instructional framework designed to release responsibility for learning from teacher to student in a gradual and purposeful manner (Fisher & Frey, 2008a). Fisher and Frey (2008a) describe the transfer of responsibility for learning from teacher to student by stating that teachers must “give students supports that they can hold on to as they take the lead—not just push them onto the path and hope they find their way” (p. 33). Fisher and Frey (2008a) identify these required supports as “models of the kind of thinking they will need to do, access to academic language, peer collaboration, and guided instruction” (p. 33). The GRR is not intended to be a strictly linear model of releasing responsibility for the cognitive load of learning from teacher to student, but rather, as described by Fisher and Frey (2014) “instructional moves may occur multiple times within the same lesson, as when a teacher establishes several different purposes to reflect a shift in instructional focus from one concept or skill to another” (p. 124). *Support Coach* capitalizes on this iterative, recursive nature of GRR.

The principles of several educational theories are embodied in Pearson and Gallagher’s original GRR model. These include Piaget’s work on schema; Vygotsky’s work on the Zone of Proximal Development; Bandura’s work on attention, motivation, and retention; and Wood, Bruner, and Ross’s work on scaffolding instruction (Fisher & Frey, 2008b). Pearson and Gallagher’s original model has largely been implemented as a three-part framework of “I do,” “We do,” and “You do,” with the roles of the teacher and the students identified as follows:

Three-Part Framework for Gradual Release of Responsibility Model

Phase	Teacher	Student
“I DO” Direct Instruction/ Focus Lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States goals/establishes coherent objective or purpose (both content and language) • Establishes instructional task • Gives direct instruction • Identifies strategies • Models • Thinks aloud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens actively to teacher • Takes notes/draws • Asks questions
“WE DO” Guided Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins shift of cognitive responsibility • Determines what students learned from initial instruction • Questions, prompts, cues • Provides additional modeling • Works with small groups based on formative assessment data • Engages student thinking • Provides strategic scaffolding/ “lean coaching” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks and answers questions • Works with peers and teacher • Assumes some cognitive responsibility/ thinks independently
“YOU DO” Independent Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes cognitive shift • Provides feedback • Evaluates student work • Checks for understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumes some cognitive responsibility/ thinks independently • Independently applies new learning to assignment/instructional task • Completes in-class and/or out-of-class independent work

Figure 1

Fisher and Frey, building upon Pearson and Gallagher’s model of GRR, incorporated extensive research findings centered on the effectiveness of peer learning with students with special needs, gifted learners, and English Language learners into their version of the GRR model by situating a “collaborative” stage following guided instruction (“We do”) and before the independent stage (“You do”) as seen in Figure 2 (Fisher & Frey, 2008b).

Triumph Learning recognized that the implementation of the GRR instructional framework without student collaboration and productive group work deprives students of the critically important opportunities to interact, use academic language in authentic situations, engage in perspective taking, and solidify their learning. Honoring this critical component of learning, *Support Coach* ensures student collaboration in discussions and in

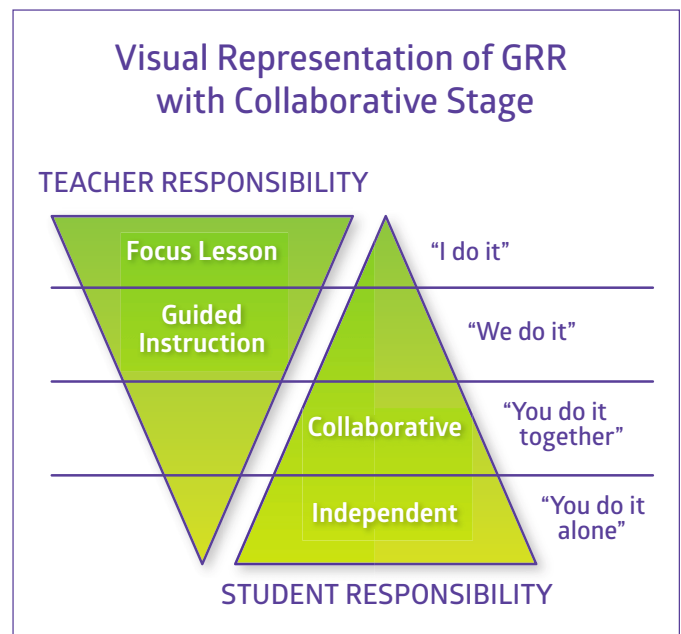


Figure 2

reflection and response activities during multiple close readings of complex text.

To meet the CCSS, students are challenged to achieve *deep understanding* of complex text, and this requires cognitive wrestling with the text, language, and instructional tasks. For *all* students, but especially for at-risk students and ELLs, interaction with peers facilitates learning. Fisher, Frey, and Nelson (2012) and Frey, Fisher, and Nelson (2013) highlight the significance of productive group learning tasks in helping students to recalibrate and deepen their understanding. As explained in *Providing Assessment-Driven Differentiated Instruction in Reading and Writing* (Ruby, 2014), Fisher, Frey, and Nelson assert that students overestimate what they know. Through engaging with peers in learning tasks, students can uncover what they do and do not know about the focus of instruction. Collaborative learning with peers can highlight and direct “their [students’] attention to aspects they may have initially overlooked, a condition known as *productive failure*” (Fisher, Frey, and Nelson, 2012, p. 555). **Triumph Learning** acknowledges the critical role of collaboration and grappling with problems and evidence in the learning process and integrates this opportunity into the pathways of learning of *Support Coach*. The strategic implementation of the GRR framework, in alignment with the spirit of the CCSS, necessitates the inclusion of the collaborative learning phase depicted in Figure 3 between guided instruction and independent practice.

The inherent flexibility of the GRR model makes it the most appropriate instructional framework for implementing the CCSS. As a nonlinear, recursive model, GRR provides opportunities for teachers to identify different starting points (modeling, independent work, or group work) as appropriate to the instructional objective and student performance data. This iterative nature ensures that teachers do not prematurely shift responsibility to students; rather, instructional moves are purposefully determined using just-in-time formative assessment data. The GRR framework supports lessons that are delivered in a single class period or extend over longer periods (e.g., days, weeks, etc.). Within the GRR framework, teachers can plan and provide standards-based, structured-yet-responsive instruction, resulting in higher achievement, competence, and responsibility for learning for *all* students.

Triumph Learning’s curriculum design of *Support Coach*, specifically the context of the GRR instructional framework, will be described in detail later in this white paper.

Close Reading of Complex Text in the Context of the CCSS

As described in Appendix A of the CCSS, “being able to read complex text independently and proficiently is essential for high achievement in college and the workplace and important in numerous life tasks” (p. 4). The reading instructional routine required to support students

Collaborative Stage of GRR Model

Phase	Teacher	Student
<p>“YOU DO IT TOGETHER” Collaborative Learning with Peers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfers more cognitive responsibility • Assigns tasks that require collaboration • Defines parameters (time, roles, responsibilities) • Circulates among groups • Provides differentiated Socratic supports • Clarifies misconceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborates with peers • Problem-solves with peers • Engages in productive group work • Clarifies and recalibrates understanding • Practices finding and citing textual evidence • Assumes responsibility for their own learning and for that of their peers • Is individually accountable

Figure 3

to accomplish the task of being able to read complex text independently and proficiently is referred to as “close reading.” Essentially, close reading means reading to uncover layers of meaning that lead to deep comprehension.

As an instructional routine, close reading is a process with several important components.

1. Texts used in close reading must be appropriately complex. Text complexity is determined by careful and informed analysis of text using the Text Complexity Triangle found in Appendix A of the CCSS document. This model examines text through three lenses: qualitative, quantitative, and reader-text-task.
2. Selected complex texts should be short to allow for repeated readings and application of strategies. Appropriate text selections include short stories, excerpts of longer passages, speeches, news articles, selections from primary sources, and so on.
3. No prereading review of the text is provided to students. The prereading information provided should include only review or introduction of vocabulary meaning necessary for comprehension (which is not provided by context), setting a purpose for reading, and situating the text within a larger context of study (Wilhelm, 2013).
4. Texts are read multiple times. Through repeated readings and close examination of the text with questioning, teacher think-alouds, and so on, the students wrestle with the text to unlock meaning and deeply comprehend the text. Multiple reads of the text with purpose deepens comprehension, clarifies misconceptions, and builds fluency.
5. Students understand the lesson objective for the text selection. The objective addresses the targeted CCSS skills that the students will practice in their close reading.
6. Students engage in annotating the text to record their thinking, note responses to their reading, identify confusions, pose questions, and identify text evidence.
7. Text-dependent questions (TDQs) are designed to move students toward a key understanding of the text, through application of critical reading

and analytical or thinking skills. TDQs are aligned with grade-level standards and highlight critical aspects of the text to which students must attend. TDQs scaffold student focus on important details, text structure, craft, author’s purpose, and vocabulary.

9. Peer interaction through guided, purposeful, text-dependent conversations engages students in deep thinking using supportive textual evidence, perspective taking, and development of text-based claims and evidence-based counterarguments.
10. Expressive language products, both oral and written, aligned with CCSS are supported outcomes of effective close reading experiences. Students build upon the close reading experience and apply their deepened understanding of the language, craft, and message of the text to postreading assignments.
11. Students develop persistence and stamina relative to reading tasks through purposeful reading, using annotation, rereading guided by text dependent questions, teacher modeling, peer interaction, and striving to construct deep meaning and new learning in a supportive context (Shanahan, Fisher, & Frey, 2012).

Strategic Design of *Support Coach*

Support Coach is strategically designed, in the GRR instructional framework, to meet the challenge for all readers to access complex, grade-level text through recursive opportunities for close reading of on-level complex texts. *Support Coach* has three components: a comprehensive *Teacher’s Manual*, a *Student Edition* worktext, and an *Assessments* book.

Each grade level in the series (grades 3–8) has two units: one fiction and one nonfiction. Each unit has up to six lessons, each of which individually focuses on a specific genre. The lessons are independent of each other, with no interdependence or cross-referencing. The “independence” feature allows teachers to select lessons by genre and/or skill in order to meet the targeted instructional needs of the students in the class.

The *Teacher’s Manual* provides information based on the CCSS Text Complexity Triangle by presenting a *Text Complexity Box* on the *Teacher’s*

Manual materials page for every lesson. Information provided in the *Text Complexity Box* includes the Lexile® measure (when applicable; quantitative); information about the text’s structure, levels of meaning, language, demands on reader’s prior knowledge, as well as aspects of the reading task that may make comprehension more challenging, whether because of the text’s content or the task the reader will be asked to perform (reader-text-task). Readings in the *Support Coach* lessons were selected or created to meet the demands of the CCSS.

Each lesson in the program has two *Close Read Together* selections:

- Each *Close Read Together* selection focuses on two comprehension skills and one vocabulary skill, resulting in the teaching of four comprehension skills and two vocabulary skills per lesson.
- Each *Close Read Together* selection has two *Practice the Skill* pages, one for the first close reading and one for the second close reading. The *Practice the Skill* lesson component provides direct instruction to introduce the skills addressed in the subsequent reading of the selection and provide initial teacher modeling and directed practice.
 - Skill instruction is presented through a teacher-modeled interactive “Think Aloud.”
 - Following *Practice the Skill*, students are introduced to a *Close Reading* worksheet found at the back of the student book. This worksheet and selection-specific graphic organizers provided in the student books will scaffold students in their application of the focus skill during the teacher-directed readings of the selection that follows the *Practice the Skill*.
 - Additional supports for struggling readers and ELLs are included.
- Each of the lesson’s two *Close Read Together* selections is read three times (see Figure 4).
 - Each reading is accompanied by an explicit instructional sequence and strategically aligned student scaffolding tools.

- Scaffolding tools are designed to mediate student skill acquisition.
- Lessons culminate with a *Read on Your Own* (ROYO) selection.
 - ROYO selection is an on-level, lightly scaffolded text.
 - ROYO selection provides students with the opportunity to independently apply and practice the skills explicitly taught in the *skills practice* lesson component and subsequently modeled by the teacher in the teacher-directed reads of the lesson’s *Close Read Together* selections.
 - The intentionality of this design prepares students to be able to analyze and respond to a novel complex text selection of the same genre as the *Close Read Together* selections.

The "Three-Readings" Process

Each of the *Close Read Together* lessons is designed around the GRR instructional framework and **Triumph Learning’s** “Three-Readings Process.” A lesson selection is read multiple times (three) with a different, specific purpose that is intentionally designed to explicitly teach a skill that is directly aligned with a grade-level CCSS. Management of the three readings of the individual *Close Read Together* selections is guided by color-coding in both the *Teacher’s Manual* and the *Student Edition* (first read: orange; second read: green; third read: blue).

Student Edition

Above the title of each *Close Read Together* selection, the “Purpose for Reading” is clearly identified by the color-coding system. The *purpose* for the first read and the second read is directly aligned to the skills addressed in the *Practice the Skill* focus lesson that precedes the *Close Read Together* selection. The third reading focuses on critical evaluation of the story.

The following table (Figure 4) graphically displays the design of the color-coding and scaffolding of the *Close Reading* process as presented in the *Student Edition*.

Close Reading and Skills Focus (Comprehension and Vocabulary)

CLOSE READING OPPORTUNITIES			
Selections in Lesson	1st Reading	2nd Reading	3rd Reading
Selection A	Comprehension: Skill 1 Vocabulary: Skill 1	Comprehension: Skill 3	Critical Thinking Skill
Selection B	Comprehension: Skill 2 Vocabulary: Skill 2	Comprehension: Skill 4	Critical Thinking Skill
<i>Read on Your Own</i> (Independent Reading)	Review comprehension and vocabulary skills	Review comprehension and vocabulary skills	Review Critical Thinking

Figure 4

Teacher's Manual

When students are supported, they are more likely to meet with success. Successful students are generally more engaged and motivated than students who do not experience success. *Support Coach*, through its GRR framework and alignment with the key shifts of the CCSS, provides multiple intentionally scaffolded opportunities for *all students* to engage and grapple with complex on-level text through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Through teacher-directed discussions, direct instruction, graphic organizers and embedded supports, guided peer interactions, and purpose-focused multiple readings of text, all students can experience success in independently comprehending on-level complex text. Following the highly scaffolded *Close Read Together* selections, the students transition to independence in the *Read on Your Own* selection of the lesson. Teachers can provide additional supports to students for accessing text as needed. Ideally, the *Read on Your Own* component of the lesson allows students to demonstrate independence in application of grade-level comprehension skills in complex text.

The color-coding design included in the *Student Edition* and described earlier is also included in the *Teacher's Manual*. In addition to the image of the *Student Edition* pages, the *Teacher's Manual* includes detailed color-coded supports and directions.

Assessments

In addition to the embedded activities of the lesson, which serve as formative assessment, the *Assessments* contains lesson quizzes and two summative practice tests. The quizzes for each lesson contain two at-level reading selections. These selections are the same genre as the lesson texts. The questions are aligned with and identified by the CCSS they assess. The practice summative tests can be used as a pretest and a posttest for measuring student progress. The assessments have both multiple choice items and short answer questions.

Another assessment feature of *Support Coach* is the inclusion of a Fluency Assessment in the *Teacher's Manual*. The Fluency Assessment includes three passages for beginning-, middle-, and end-of-year fluency checks using the 4-point Oral Reading Fluency Scale from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the Oral Reading Fluency Norms from Hasbrouck and Tindal.

GRR Alignment

Support Coach capitalizes on the recursive, nonlinear character of the GRR instructional framework to ensure that struggling readers are fully supported to meet with success in comprehending grade-level complex text. Additionally, as an instructional support for students who are challenged when reading grade-level complex text, *Support Coach* embodies the six major features of high-quality educational tools as identified in *Effective Teaching Strategies that*

Close Reading Pathway

Selections in Lesson	CLOSE READING OPPORTUNITIES		
<i>Selection A</i>	<p>Comprehension Skill 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Instruction of comprehension, fluency skills • Road map for close reading of selection • Interactive prompts and supports for differentiation • Introduction to the <i>Close Reading Worksheets</i> <p>Vocabulary Skill 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Instruction of vocabulary skills using <i>Think-Aloud</i> and <i>Student Edition</i> 	<p>Comprehension Skill 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Instruction of comprehension, fluency skills • Road map for close reading of selection • Interactive prompts and supports for differentiation • Introduction to the <i>Close Reading Worksheets</i> <p>Review Vocabulary Skill</p>	<p>Critical Thinking Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Instruction of critical thinking skills • Road map for close reading of selection • Interactive prompts and supports for differentiation • Completion of <i>Close Reading Worksheets</i>
<i>Selection B</i>	<p>Comprehension Skill 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Instruction of comprehension, fluency skills using <i>Think-Aloud</i> and <i>Student Edition</i> • Road map for close reading of selection • Interactive prompts and supports for differentiation • Introduction to the <i>Close Reading Worksheets</i> <p>Vocabulary Skill 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Instruction of vocabulary skills using <i>Think-Aloud</i> and <i>Student Edition</i> 	<p>Comprehension Skill 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Instruction of comprehension, fluency skills using <i>Think-Aloud</i> and <i>Student Edition</i> • Road map for close reading of selection • Interactive prompts and supports for differentiation • Introduction to the <i>Close Reading Worksheets</i> <p>Review Vocabulary Skill</p>	<p>Critical Thinking Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Instruction of critical thinking skills • Road map for close reading of selection • Interactive prompts and supports for differentiation • Completion of <i>Close Reading Worksheets</i>
<i>Respond to Text Pages</i>	<p><i>Think-Aloud</i> script and <i>Discuss</i> sentence starters help engage students and support independence in close reading of one (or two) selection(s).</p> <p><i>Prepare for Writing</i> clarifies purpose and intended outcome of the writing task and its evaluation.</p>		
<i>Read on Your Own (Independent)</i>	<p>Review of four Comprehension Skills, two Vocabulary Skills, and two Critical Thinking Skills for the lesson.</p>		

Figure 5

Accommodate Diverse Learners (Coyne, Kame'enui, & Carnine, 2011). These six critical features are (a) Big Ideas, (b) Conspicuous Strategies, (c) Mediated Scaffolding, (d) Strategic Integration, (e) Primed Background Knowledge, and (f) Judicious Review. The “Big Ideas” are aligned with the CCSS. Instructional strategies are embedded conspicuously within *Support Coach*. Strategies are present and sequenced from the most directive instructional phase to the independent stage. *Support Coach* includes a highly structured, explicit

approach to instruction conspicuously supported by modeling, think-alouds, and graphic organizers.

Students meet with success when they are (a) provided with a clearly defined purpose and direct, explicit and sequential instruction with modeling; (b) guided in a supportive context with opportunities to work collaboratively, yet receive immediate constructive feedback and redirection; (c) encouraged through multiple opportunities to apply what has been learned while receiving responsive feedback, redirection, and further

clarifying instruction in a safe collaborative environment; and (d) encouraged to independently take risks and experiment with new learning, using scaffolds and applying learned strategies, with the opportunity to seek assistance from peers and teachers. The scaffolding in *Support Coach* mediates the transition from teacher directedness to student independence. This nonlinear ebb and flow of instruction, guided and supported strategy application, and immediate constructive feedback results from strategic integration of instructional

moves and supports that bridge old and new learning. The relationship of the “Skill Instruction” component and **Triumph Learning’s** “Three Readings Process” builds background knowledge and sequences both the building upon new skills and the application of skills to support student learning, developing both competence and confidence. These features, coupled with the iterative nature of the GRR, or ongoing judicious review, are the heart and soul of *Support Coach*.

Six Major Principles of Effective Instructional Tools* and Application in *Support Coach*

Features	Overview	<i>Support Coach</i>
Big Ideas	Concepts, principles, rules selected for efficient, effective learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCSS for Reading and Language Arts with a goal of comprehension of grade-level complex text for <i>all</i> students • Lesson Overview in <i>Teacher’s Manual</i> identifies standards-aligned objectives
Conspicuous Strategies	Teacher actions and “teaching events” are explicit, sequenced, and supported with visuals, including graphic organizers, models, and clarity of directions and explanations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think-alouds for modeling strategic reading and thinking • Interactive prompts • <i>Close Reading Worksheets</i> and graphic organizers • Color-coding that identifies skills for each of three close readings • Supporting Struggling Learners features
Mediated Scaffolding	Temporary supports during learning with intentional fading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher modeling • <i>Read on Your Own</i> graphic—reminds students of steps in three-read procedure • Graphic organizers • Sample text markings • Collaborative partner work with immediate feedback • Sentence frames
Strategic Integration	Planning, sequencing, and integrating of instruction makes explicit the relationships between old and new knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Three-read</i> framework • <i>Read on Your Own</i> selection
Primed Background Knowledge	Required knowledge base for building new knowledge is strategically and logically incorporated in sequence of instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill Instruction pages present skills to students to strategically ensure equitable access and knowledge base focused on the skills addressed in the <i>Three-read</i> framework
Judicious Review	Opportunities for learners to systematically apply and become fluent with new skills and knowledge; opportunities are sufficient, diverse, distributed, and cumulative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Three-read</i> framework with <i>Read on Your Own</i> text selection • Deepening vocabulary understanding • Assessment system (quizzes, Practices Tests 1 & 2) • Comprehension checks • Respond to text activities

Figure 6

*Modeled on Figure 1-1 Coyne, Kame’enui, and Carnine (2011, p. 13).

Using Support Coach

Support Coach affords educators a number of options for use in the classroom. Each lesson in *Support Coach* is designed to be independent of other lessons within the grade level. For ease of planning, lessons are identified by genre, and each genre selection is identified by both CCSS and by specific skills targeted in the lesson. This information is readily accessible on the Lesson Overview and materials pages in the *Teacher's Manual*. Options for use include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Select lessons that match the genre and/or CCSS and skill being addressed in the grade-level core instructional program and use *Support Coach* to provide preteaching.
- Select lessons that match the genre and/or CCSS and skill being addressed in the grade-level core instructional program and use *Support Coach* to provide review.
- When co-teaching, use aligned lessons from *Support Coach* in parallel, station, or team teaching, to provide instruction to below-level learners in a GRR format with all the features required to accommodate diverse learners.
- When using *Common Core Coach* as a core program, incorporate lessons from *Support Coach*, which can be aligned, one-to-one, with regard to genre, standards, and skills. Teachers can pair lessons from both sources to support an individual student's need for preteaching, additional practice, and reteaching as determined using formative data. Additionally **Triumph Learning** has developed *Coach Common Core Suite Implementation and Pacing Guides*, which provide a framework for grade-level ELA units, which integrate *Common Core Coach*, *Support Coach*, and *Performance Coach*.

Conclusions

Recognizing the challenge to support all students in meeting grade-level expectations of the CCSS, **Triumph Learning** developed *Support Coach* to provide educators with a research-based tool for supporting all readers who sometimes need extra support with specific comprehension skills and strategies in reading complex grade-level text. *Support Coach* engages at-risk students and below-grade-level readers in “close reading” of grade-level complex texts across a variety of genres.

This paper (a) described the gradual release of responsibility GRR model, its alignment with the CCSS, and its place in **Triumph Learning's** curriculum design for *Support Coach*; (b) defined “close reading” of complex text in the context of the CCSS as specified in Appendix A of the CCSS document; (c) delineated how *Support Coach* is strategically designed to meet the challenge for at-risk readers and ELLs to access complex, grade-level text through recursive opportunities for close reading of on-level complex texts embedded in the GRR model; and (d) demonstrated how *Support Coach* can be used by educators.

Support Coach provides an efficient, strategic, and cohesive set of instructional tools to support educators who are committed to providing *all* children with the opportunity to achieve the goals and common aspirations of the CCSS—particularly reading complex text, the heart of the standards.

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