

What is the definition of texts?

Texts in this course are broadly described as follows: texts are anything that is produced with the intent of conveying a meaning to an audience, incorporating both spoken and written acts of communication, and the associated use of images and visual and aural stimuli. Texts under this definition can be literary or non-literary. They include any communicative device used to convey a message or idea,

for example:

- single images/ films/ voice recordings/ books/ blogs/ twitters/ poetry/ prose.

These various types of texts make different demands on the readers, viewers or listeners. Thus they are open to various interpretations based on the context in which they are written and received. The texts used in this course give students the opportunity to understand them according to their form, content, purpose and audience and through the social, historical, cultural and workplace contexts that produce and value them.

Types of text:

1. **Knowledge text:** The Common Core State Standards addresses informational text in the following categories.

Literary Nonfiction – uses factual information within a story-like format.

Exposition – factual, textbook-like reading.

Argument/Persuasion – texts that use argument to present a position and convince reader

Procedural – step by step instructions; how-to-do something

Informational text is a subset of the larger category of nonfiction (Duke & Bennett-Armistead, 2003). Its primary purpose is to inform the reader about the natural or social world. Different from fiction, and other forms of nonfiction, informational text does not utilize characters. Further, it has specialized language characteristics such as general nouns and timeless verbs that are not common in other genres. Some examples of this structure would be: “Dogs bark;” “Some sea snakes are quite deadly;” or “Apples can be red, yellow, or even green!”

Authors of informational text employ a variety of structures to assist the reader in finding information quickly and efficiently. These might include a table of contents, an index, bold or italicized text, glossaries for specialized vocabulary, embedded definitions for specialized vocabulary, realistic illustrations of photos, captions and other labels, and graphs and charts. Unlike narratives that tell a story across time in a linear fashion, informational text is often (though not always) non-linear. It is popular with skillful and non-skillful readers as it is usually topical and readers can locate a text on nearly any topic of interest. Some examples of types of informational text include cause-and-effect books, “all about...” books, question-and-answer books, and most reference texts.

The quality of informational text can be judged in a variety of ways. For this award, we will examine the texts with an eye on the following categories.

Accuracy of Content: Is the content timely, accurate and direct? Is this text likely to advance a young child's world knowledge?

Authority of Authorship: What are the qualifications of the author on this topic? Were collaborators consulted?

Accessibility to the Age Group (birth to age 8): While the text does not have to appeal to the entire age range, does the primary audience fall within the range?

Fidelity to Genre: Does the text employ features of informational text? If other genres are also present, such as in informational poetry, is the primary purpose to inform about the natural or social world? Is this a clear example of informational text?

Appeal to Children of Age Group: Is the text on a topic of interest to young children? Is the design manageable for a young child? Do the features support young children's interaction with the text? Do the features assist young children in comprehending the content?

What informational text IS NOT:

- A biography
- A procedural text (such as cook books or craft directions)
- A joke book
- A text with characters

We know that when exposed to a variety of genres, even very young children can tell the differences between them and identify features of the texts. Additionally we know that exposure to and instruction using informational text can significantly impact young children's developing world knowledge as well as their ability to comprehend text. Thank you for joining us as we advance exemplary informational text for young children.

2. Literary text:

a) it is authentic and culturally valued material.

b) it expands students' awareness of the structure of the language both at *usage* level (knowledge of linguistic rules) and *use* level (how to use those rules to communicate efficiently).

c) it expands their vocabulary.

d) it is an opportunity for students to become receptive to different cultures.

e) it develops students' interpretative skills.

f) it helps them to express themselves creatively and imaginatively. As W.T. Littlewood says: «The reader's creative (or rather, "co-creative") role, and the imaginative involvement engendered by this role, encourage a dynamic interaction between reader, text and external world, in the course of which the reader is constantly seeking to form and retain a coherent picture of the world of the text.

g) students that read literary texts have access to a vast and diverse range of human experience and reflection and that helps them learn about human relationships and understand more about themselves.

h) it motivates students to become enthusiastic readers, because, as we all know, a good book has the power of absorbing and fascinating the reader until the end of the plot is revealed and that will surely motivate students to read more. Besides, it is a fact that the more you read, the more you want and love to read and unfortunately statistics reveal that most students do not have reading habits. As a matter of fact, the results of the above mentioned survey have also showed that even among university students of Literature, less than half (42%) read fiction on a regular basis, and about 30% of these students rarely read fiction either national or foreigner.

3. Religious text:

Before we can say what religious texts are, we have to define the concept of religion. The idea of a "religious text" is already an interpretation, unless one just says that the text in question is central to a particular tradition of faith. Texts like the Torah, the Bible, or the Vedas "anchor" religions, because they are considered to be the word of God, or based on divine inspiration, and as such the text itself can sometimes be considered to be sacred.

Here are some of the oldest known religious texts:

- Pyramid texts of Ancient Egypt, 2400-2300 BCE.
- The Sumerian Temple Hymns (also the earliest form of the Phoenician alphabet) are inscriptions on the sarcophagus of King Ahiqar of Byblos.
- The Epic of Gilgamesh from Sumeria is one of the earliest literary works, 2150-2000 BCE.
- The Rigveda of Hinduism, between 1700–1100 BCE. (The world's oldest religious text still in use.
- The Zoroastrian Avesta has been transmitted orally for centuries before written down, roughly estimated around 1000 BCE.
- The Torah's composition also took place over centuries. Scholars suggest that the five books were created c.450 BCE by combining four independent sources: the Jahwist, or J (about 900 BCE), the Elohist, or E (about 800 BCE), the Deuteronomist, or D, (about 600 BCE), and the Priestly source, or P (about 500 BC)

- The first printed scripture for wide distribution was the Buddhist Diamond Sutra, published on May 11, 868 CE
- Quraan of Islam.