

By [IU PIIC Mentors Amy Walker and Diane Hubona](#)

When an instructional coach is working with teachers around text complexity, there are three essential entry points to consider that should guide the coaching conversations. The first component for this work is choosing a text. The coach can be a great resource in helping the teacher match a text to a purpose. The notion of stamina building with text complexity is vital. If a teacher is teaching author's purpose, for instance, finding a text set that builds in complexity is ideal...coaches can help teachers think through when and how to use a particular text and layer the texts as well as activities they plan to use. Asking questions during *Before* portion of the BDA coaching cycle regarding the student's strengths and needs in a particular skill can help to guide the selection and layering. Many of the types of questions to enhance the

*Before*

coaching conversation can be found in the resources surrounding READER and TASK considerations.

A second entry point when working with teachers is to guide a teacher's planning of scaffolds for student success in a task using a complex piece of text. The Golden Rule is *the more complex the task is, the less complex the text should be*

. Without the coach's guidance in the

*Before*

planning conference, teachers automatically make the leap to complex, grade-level text without any regard to the complexity of what the reader is being asked to do, namely, analyze and synthesize what is being read. Coaches can use effective questions regarding task demands and guide teachers as they plan in the

*Before*

conference, and reflect during the

*After*

conference, to assist teachers in determining and evaluating their instructional sequence and scaffolds.

The third key entry point for coaching teachers to effectively scaffold text complexity is to model and plan throughout the BDA cycle for depth of questioning. Skillful coaches will use questioning in all parts of the coaching cycle to help teachers plan and sequence text dependent questions for use during "close reading" lessons. These close readings help students uncover the layers of meaning in complex pieces so that they can make their own meanings in a transaction between the reader, text and author.

When coaching teachers through the maze that is close reading and text complexity, it is helpful to remember Kylene Beers' advice:

*“Just as rigor does not reside in the barbell but in the act of lifting, rigor in reading is not merely an attribute of a text but rather of a reader’s behavior—engaged, observant, responsive, questioning, analytical. Close reading strategies help cultivate those critical reading habits that will make your students more attentive, thoughtful, independent readers.”*

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