

TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS OF *Esperanza Rising*

by Pam Munoz Ryan

Text Type: Literary

TEXT DESCRIPTION	PLACEMENT
<p>The story of a privileged young girl who is forced to leave the family ranch in Mexico after the tragic death of her father. Esperanza and her mother have no choice but to move to a camp for Mexican farm workers in California during the Great Depression. Esperanza is unprepared for the financial difficulties, hard labor and discrimination her family faces. The novel traces Esperanza's journey as she struggles to "start over" in the face of incredible adversity.</p>	<p>This text falls in the 4-5 band level. Despite its lower quantitative measure, the structure of the text, multiple themes, heavy use of metaphor and cultural and historical references make this text rich, complex and challenging for upper elementary students.</p>
QUANTITATIVE MEASURE	
<p>QUANTITATIVE MEASURE OF THE TEXT: 750L ASSOCIATED BAND LEVEL: 2-3</p>	
QUALITATIVE MEASURES	
<p>MEANING/PURPOSE: Very Complex This text contains multiple levels of meaning are often difficult to identify. Themes are subtle and require connections across the full text.</p> <p>TEXT STRUCTURE: Moderately Complex The plot is sequential, but spans two countries and includes large time shifts. Multiple complex characters develop and change throughout the story. Main characters react very differently to major events and present conflicting perspectives, offering a nuanced view of the issues raised by each character's experiences.</p> <p>LANGUAGE FEATURES: Moderately Complex The sentence structure consists primarily of simple and compound sentences, with some complex constructions and the vocabulary is generally easy to understand. However, the use of language in this text is quite complex. Metaphors, which are repeated and developed over the course of the novel, are used to convey themes.</p> <p>KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS: Moderately Complex This story is set in Mexico and rural California during the early 1930s and includes many historical references. The experiences portrayed are likely to be uncommon to many readers. The book also includes many words and aphorisms in Spanish which contribute to a deeper understanding of the text.</p>	
CONSIDERATIONS FOR READER AND TASK	
<p>Students may require some support in understanding the settings in the story, as well as many cultural aspects specific to the time and place in which the story takes place. Additional nonfiction texts are included in the module to build background knowledge and understanding. The larger social issues raised by the book are still current and complex and should be handled sensitively. Throughout the book, students are asked to consider multiple perspectives; work on respectful discourse will ensure that these discussions are comfortable and productive learning experiences.</p> <p>Specific supports for English Language Learners, students with special needs, and students who need enrichment are included in the module.</p>	

RATIONALE

This novel builds understanding and empathy as students explore the guiding question, “What are human rights, and how can they be threatened?”. The complex characters in the book offer the opportunity to examine how characters respond to challenges (RL.5.2) and to compare and contrast the main character in the novel (RL.5.3). Chapters in the story have meaningful titles and connections (RL.5.5) and several repeating metaphors used to develop the themes in the book offer opportunities to explore how the authors uses figurative language to create layers of meaning within the story (L.5.5, RL.5.4).

5M1.1 #1