

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts: K-12 Close Reading Task

Text grade band placement: 11-12	
Text	Text Complexity Analysis
<p>Title: “Is It a Crime for a U.S. Citizen to Vote?”</p> <p>Author: Susan B. Anthony</p> <p>Citation/Publication info: Anthony, Susan B. “Is It a Crime for a U.S. Citizen to Vote? (3 Apr. 1873).” Voices of Democracy: The U.S. Oratory Project, 2009. Web. 10 November 2012.</p> <p>Link: http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/anthony-is-it-a-crime-speech-text/</p>	<p>Quantitative: Lexile Score: 1480L</p> <p>Qualitative: Purpose: This seminal, historic persuasive speech clearly discusses the right of women to vote on the grounds of full citizenship and humanity. Text Structure: The structure is complex with multiple quotes from outside people or sources. It is also lengthy and will require multiple days of reading for comprehension. Language Features: The archaic language used will require close reading of the text especially in smaller portions. The sentence structure is at times complex as well. Knowledge Demands: The speech contains intertextuality due to allusions to outside texts. Prior knowledge of women’s suffrage, the emancipation of slaves and the context of the public speaking event will add to the meaning, though it is not required to comprehend the meaning.</p> <p>Reader and Task: Though considered challenging by many qualitative measures, this text has a level of familiarity of theme and content that make it suitable for high school students who can apply their cultural knowledge of civil rights and the significance of voting. Although the speaker does make some literary references to legal documents and political speakers, the references are summarized as needed and used to support the central argument of the text.</p> <p>The complexity of the speech’s theme, the issue of gender discrimination, and the vocabulary level indicates a need for advanced reading skills. Some prior knowledge of post-Civil war politics and amendments will increase reading comprehension of this text. The length is also a challenge. Close reading of the text will require smaller portions addressed over multiple lessons during which students return to the tasks to complete text dependent questions and the writing prompt.</p>
ELA Common Core Standards addressed by task	
<p><u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1</u> Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.4</u> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).</p>	

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.5 Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.8 Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., *The Federalist*, presidential addresses).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

What key insights should students take from this text?

- Key supporting arguments in the campaign for women's voting rights: all humans are citizens and therefore equal; freed male slaves were offered the vote, so women should be as well.
- Anthony uses the Declaration of Independence as support for a woman's right to vote and cross-references historical documents.
- Susan B. Anthony uses rhetorical devices to support her purpose for the speech.
- Anthony utilizes taxation without representation as a vital aspect of her argument.

Text-Dependent Questions

Prior Knowledge:

What do you believe are basic human rights? What do you know about the journey of women in the United States to claim their rights?

Comprehension:

What is the speech about? Who is the speaker? What do we know about her?

According to Susan B. Anthony, from where do people obtain rights? What are the limitations of the Constitution and Declaration of Independence?

Significance:

Explain the significance of Anthony's using personal experiences to explain her point of view.

What is significant about Anthony's phrase "15,000,000 monsters"? Explain this use of a metaphor.

Analytical:

How does Anthony's use of the Charles Sumner quotation advance her argument?

Why does Anthony ask, "Are women persons?"

Writing Mode

Writing Prompt

Informative/Explanatory	Susan B. Anthony uses taxation as a substantial point in her argument. In this part of her argument, she references monarchy and the Declaration of Independence as her support. Using the Declaration of Independence and our text, explain her use of taxation as her argument. How does using this historical document and the United States' quest for freedom strengthen her argument? Compose an informative essay in which you use evidence from both sources to explain her use of the taxation argument.
-------------------------	---

Scaffolding and support for special education students, English language learners, and struggling readers:

Struggling readers would benefit from in-class read aloud and annotation of the text, as well as from reviewing a pre-reading vocabulary list to gain familiarity and confidence with the use of unfamiliar words that will appear in the text. When annotating the text, students can highlight words or phrases that repeat and/or appear to be significant, as well as statements that could possibly be the thesis statement. Once the thesis statement is identified and agreed upon by the class, in pairs or groups, students can identify evidence used throughout the speech to support the thesis and summarize or paraphrase these examples in informal language in the margin.

Another beneficial pre-reading activity would be to have students reflect on their prior knowledge of civil rights and voting, as well as to look at a general timeline of major laws and events that have affected civil rights in the United States. Another support piece for both struggling readers and students could be to either complete an in-class reading of an informational text article about the Dred Scott decision or to have students research the Dred Scott case and share their findings in class prior to reading this text.

It might also be useful to read a shorter selection of the speech with struggling readers, rather than overwhelming them with the entirety of the speech. They would still be exposed to the same level of text complexity but with a shorter length of text.