

# Preparing for PARCC

How We Can Help Students Get Ready  
for Complex Text

Dr. Marc Aronson

# Marc Aronson

- Rutgers University, School of Communication & Information
- Assistant Teaching Professor
- Ph.D. in American History
- 25 years as an author, editor of nonfiction for middle grade and high school
- Winner of the first Sibert Medal from the American Library Association for excellence in nonfiction

# Parsing PARCC

- Name is Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career
- Tests, thus, not to be on content, knowledge, scope and sequence but on readiness for post-secondary world.
- Or.....

# Complex Text

- “Those ACT-tested students who can read complex texts are more likely to be ready for college. Those who cannot read complex texts are less likely to be ready for college.”
- “Reading Between the Lines: What the ACT Reveals About College Readiness in Reading”
- [http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/reading\\_report.pdf](http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/reading_report.pdf)

# Complex Text as a Predictor

- Students who pass CT benchmark vs. those who don't
- enroll in college (74 percent vs. 59 percent);
- earn a first-year college GPA of 3.0 or higher (54 percent vs. 33 percent) or 2.0 or higher (87 percent vs. 76 percent);
- return for a second year of college at the same institution (78 percent vs. 67 percent).

# CT Key to CRR, Thus PARCC Tests For

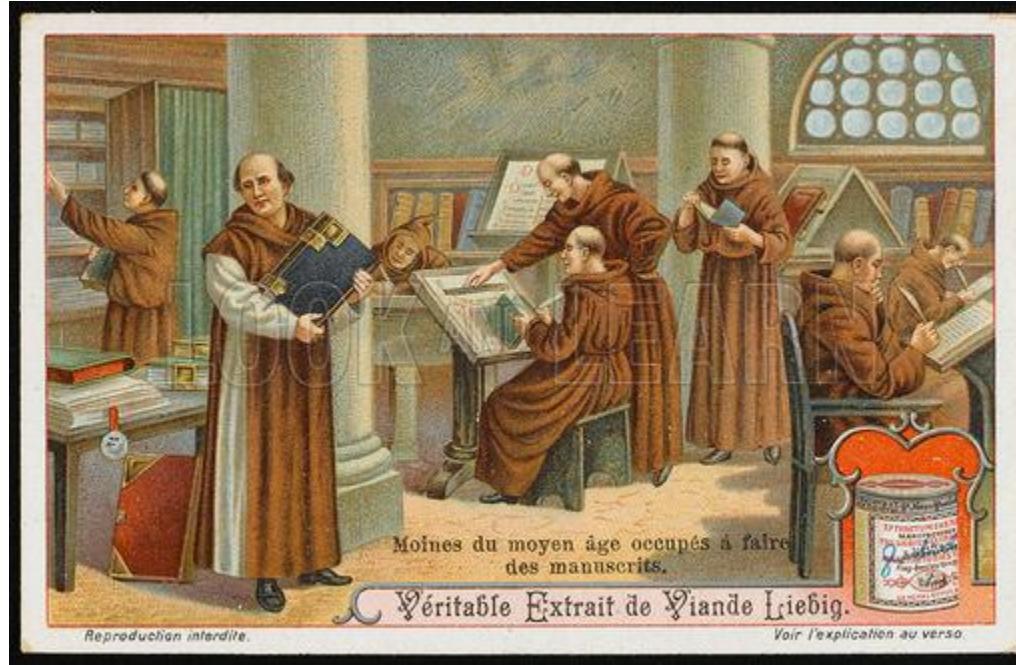
- **Relationships** (interactions among ideas or characters)
- **Richness** (amount and sophistication of information conveyed through data or literary devices)
- **Structure** (how the text is organized and how it progresses)
- **Style** (author's tone and use of language)
- **Vocabulary** (author's word choice)
- **Purpose** (author's intent in writing the text)

Or

- **Main Idea/Author's Approach**
- **Supporting Details**
- **Relationships**
- **Meaning of Words**
- **Generalizations or Conclusions**

You Will Find These 5 All Over the  
PARCC Tests

# How Do We Prepare Students for the 5? All Complex Text?

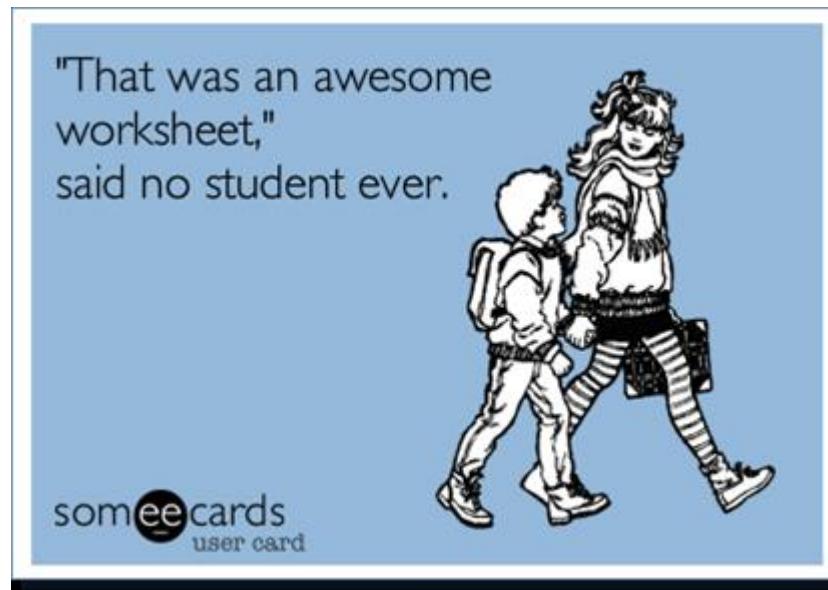


# All Close Reading?



No!

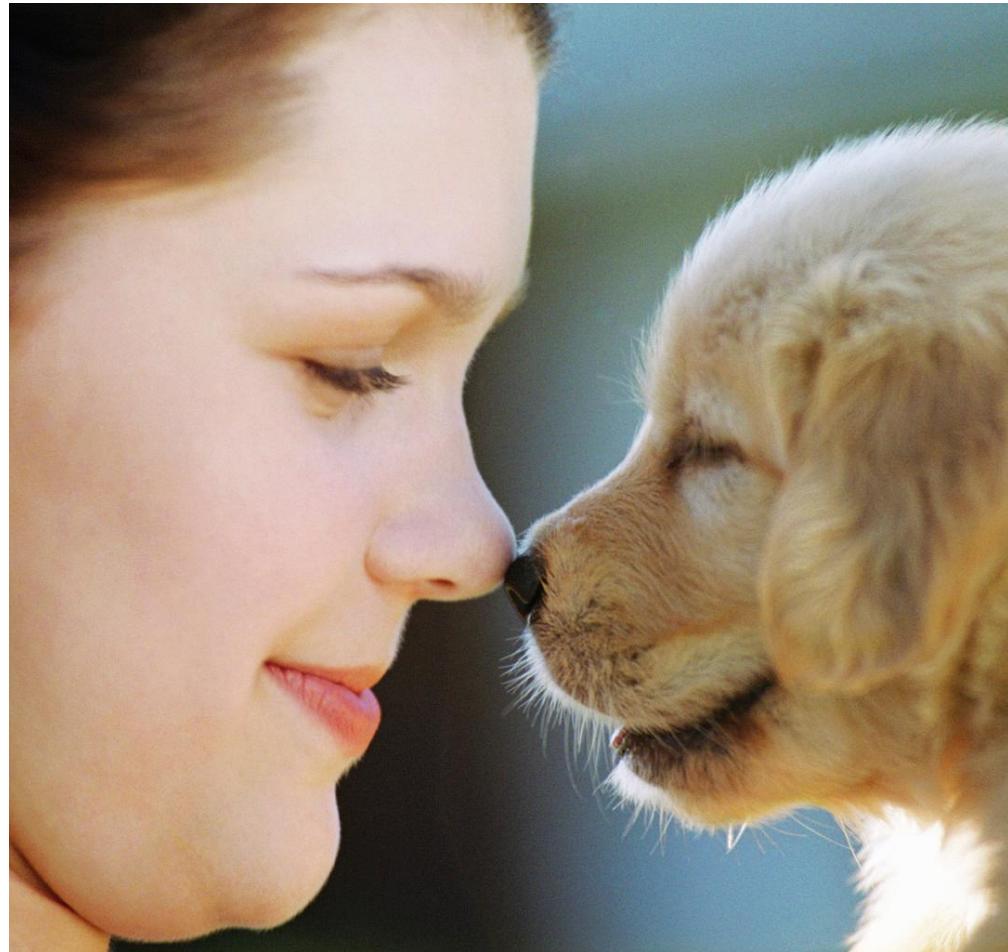
# Pathways to CT: Engagement



# Volume Reading = Expertise

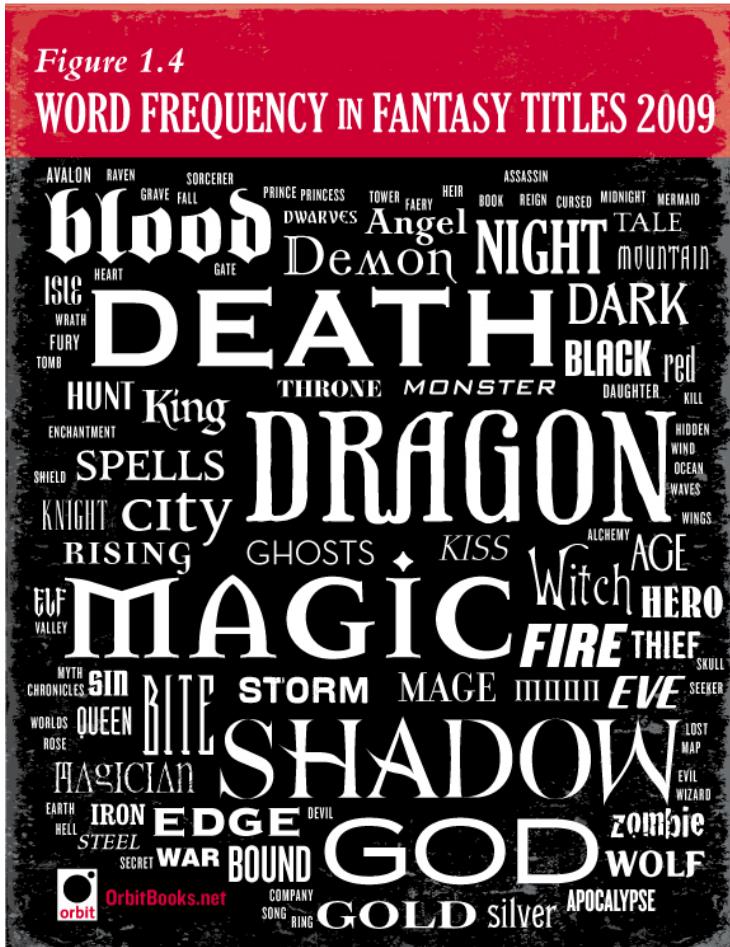
- “If one is master of one thing and understands one thing well, one has, at the same time, insight into and understanding of many things.”
- VINCENT VAN GOGH

# Pets

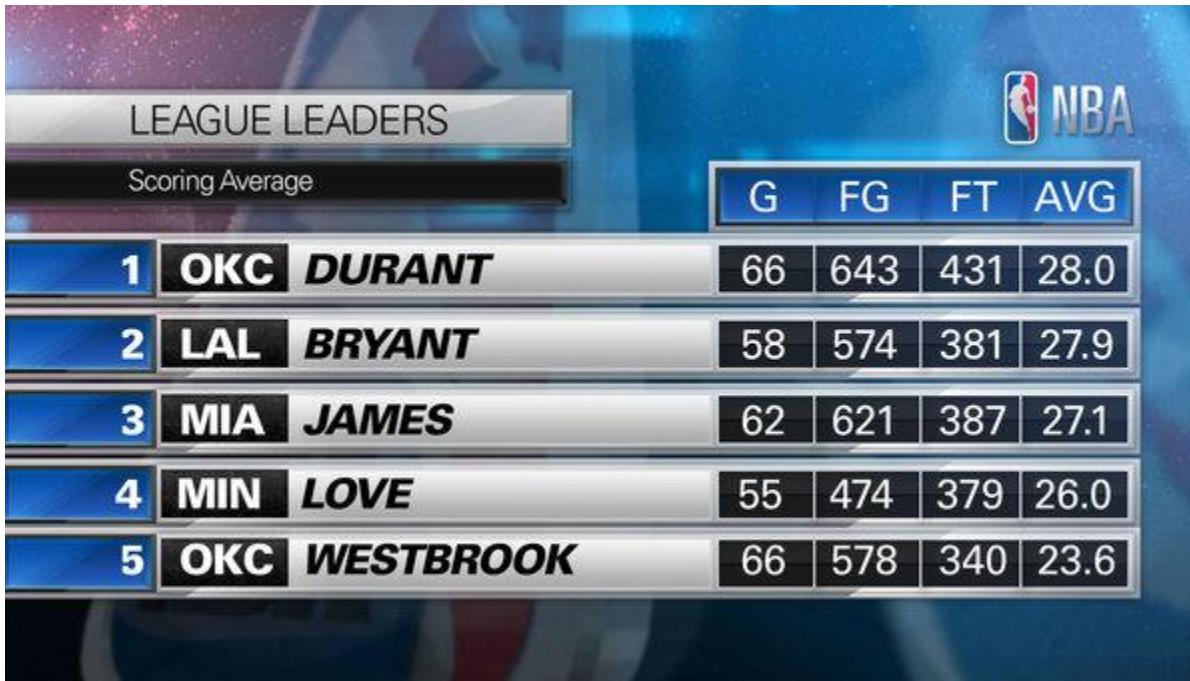


# Fantasy

*Figure 1.4*



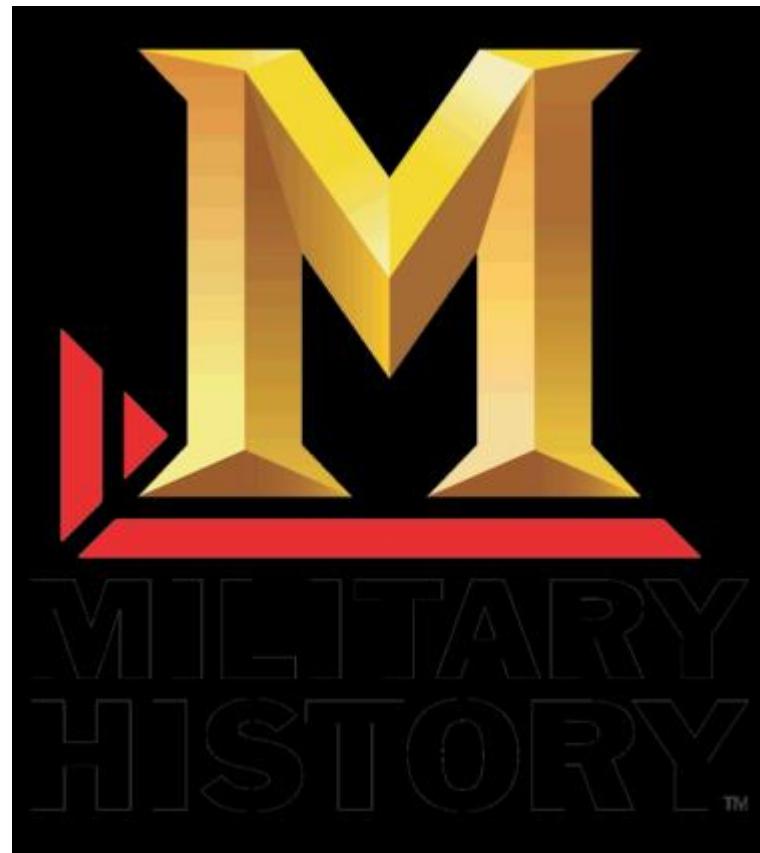
# Sports Statistics



The image shows a digital scoreboard for NBA League Leaders. The title "LEAGUE LEADERS" is at the top left, and the NBA logo is at the top right. Below the title, it says "Scoring Average". The table has columns for Rank, Team, Player, Games Played (G), Field Goals (FG), Free Throws (FT), and Average (AVG). The data is as follows:

			G	FG	FT	AVG
1	OKC	DURANT	66	643	431	28.0
2	LAL	BRYANT	58	574	381	27.9
3	MIA	JAMES	62	621	387	27.1
4	MIN	LOVE	55	474	379	26.0
5	OKC	WESTBROOK	66	578	340	23.6

# Military History



# Friendship Novels



# Any Type of Reading Can Lead to Expertise

- Dr. Kieran Egan <https://www.sfu.ca/~egan/>
- Student Achievement Partners  
<http://achievethecore.org/about-us>
- Expert Pack project

# Expert Pack Project

- The goal of the Text Set Project is to bring together teams of librarians, educators and suppliers (vendors, distributors, publishers) to learn more deeply about the critical role building knowledge plays in the Common Core State Standards.
- Topic – from standard scope and sequence, collection of materials (book, chapter, database, website, infographic, film clip) that builds knowledge and offers increasing text complexity as student gains comfort, expertise, familiarity
- Training taking place right now – contact SAP, project created in concert with Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

# Expertise Means

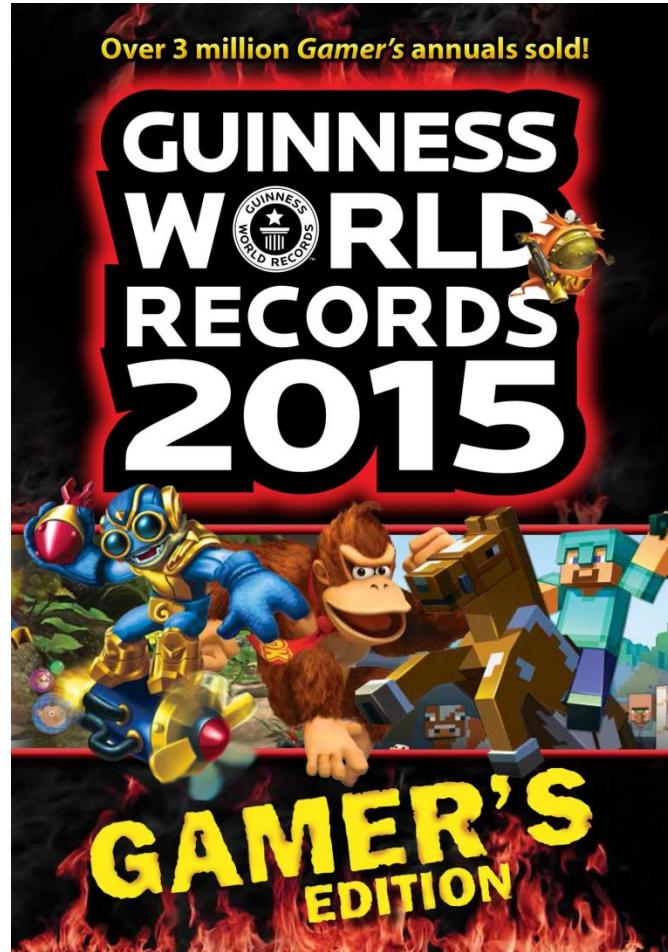
- You read from one text to the next.
- You compare and contrast author's ideas and approaches.
- You master specific vocabulary
- You identify supporting details
- You are accustomed to the process of building knowledge
- You arrive at and defend conclusions

# You See, the Big 5

# Are Only Top Students Experts?

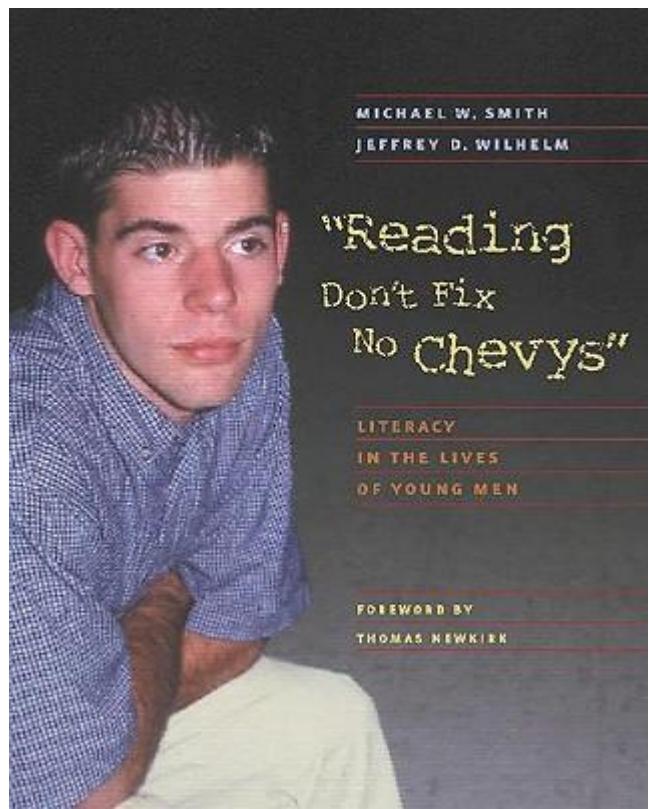
No!

# Invisible Readers



# Readers Who Prefer Facts to Story

- Records
- Statistics
- Weird and Wacky
- Manuals
- Instructions



# Fact Readers Are Developing Expertise

- We need to capture that reading and learn how to build on it
- Use Fact and Record reading to build ladder of reading for ELL, “non-reader,” reader who prefers data to story

# Pathways to CT: Clusters

# Build Reading Clusters

- Not A book on a subject
- Book plus article plus database plus website plus media
- Do not train students to look for answers.
- Train students to look for how to build answers by comparing resources

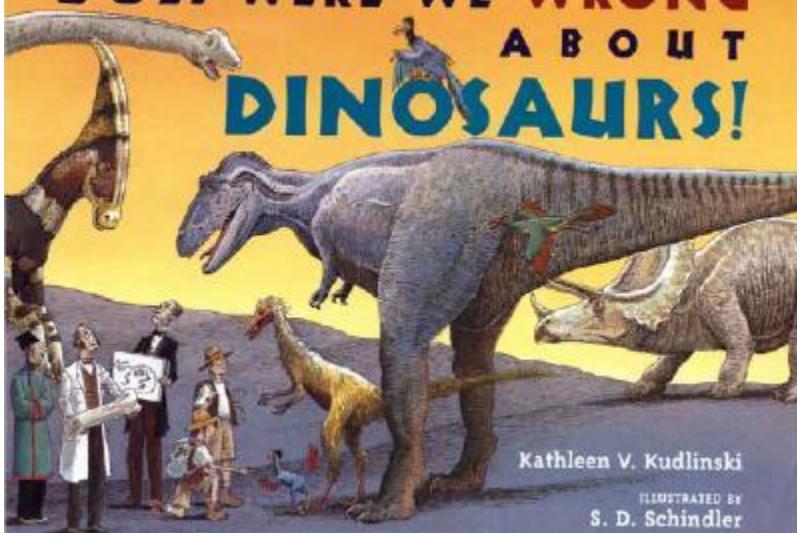
# Display Clusters of Resources



# *Tuesday's New York Times*

- NASA Spacecraft Closing In on Dwarf Planets  
Pluto and Ceres
- By KENNETH CHANG JAN. 19, 2015

# **BOY, WERE WE WRONG ABOUT DINOSAURS!**



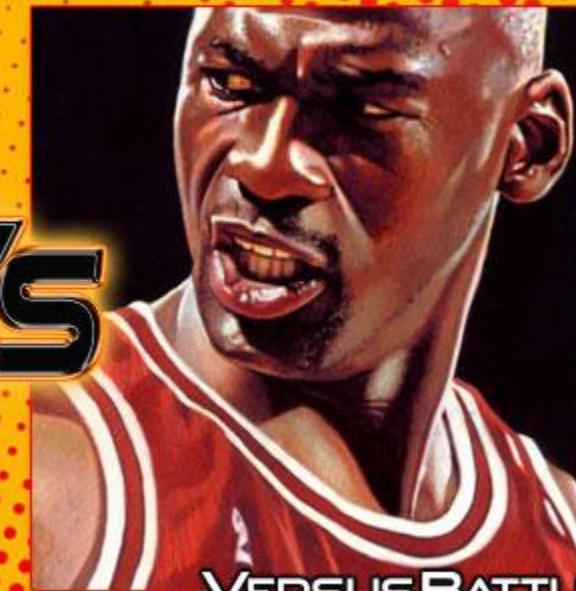
Kathleen V. Kudlinski

ILLUSTRATED BY  
S. D. Schindler

**LeBron James**



**Michael Jordan**

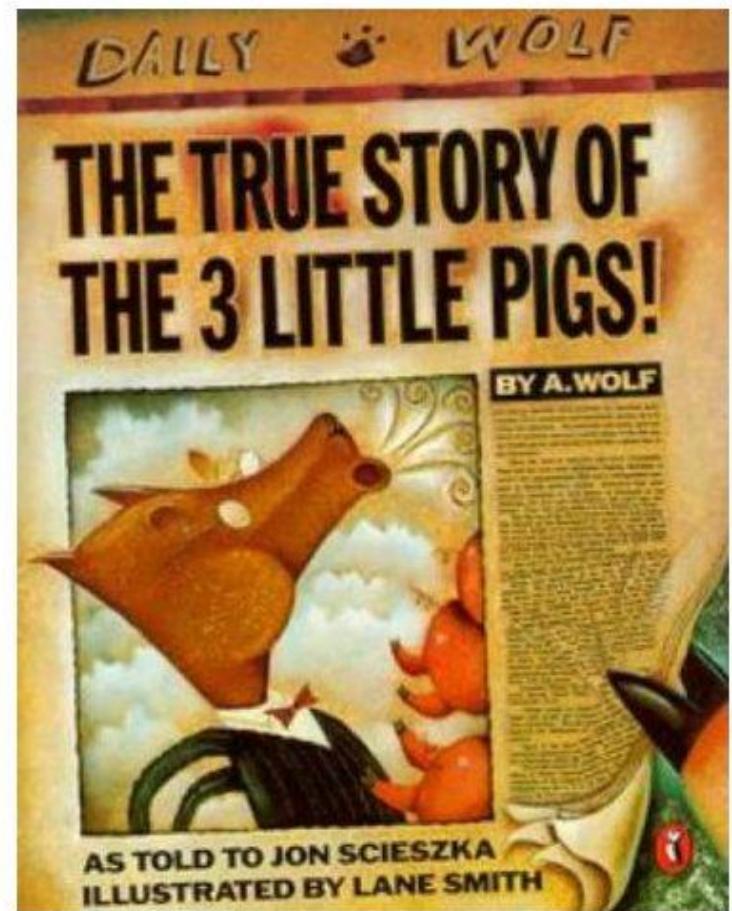


**VS**

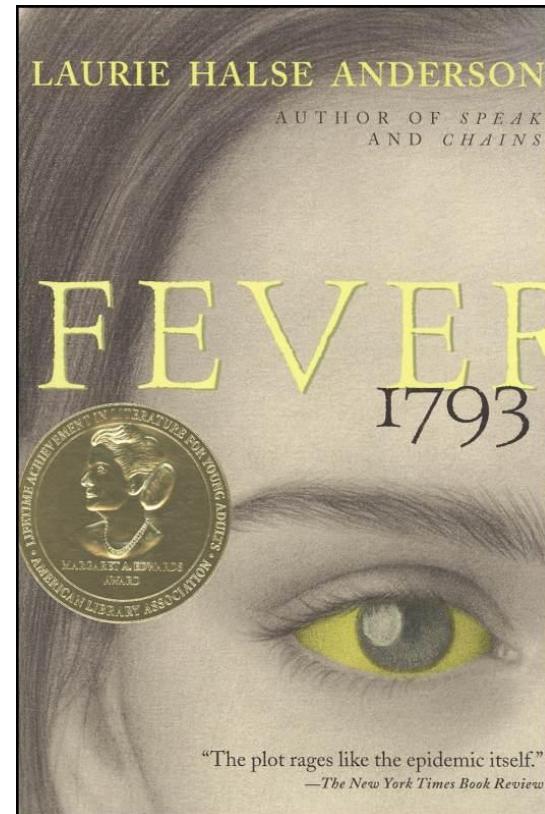
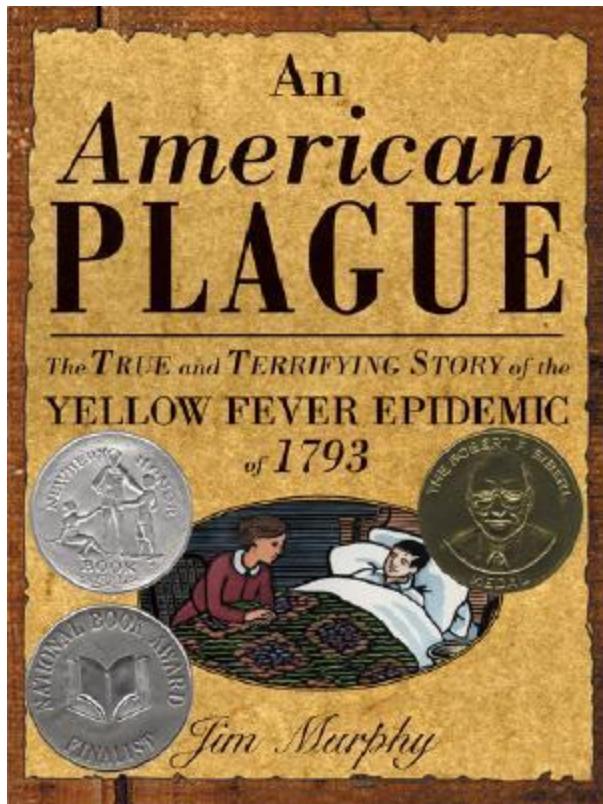
**VERSUS BATTLE**  
.COM

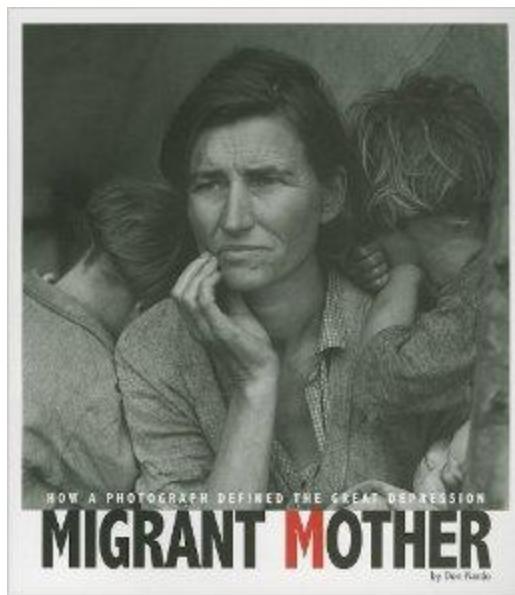
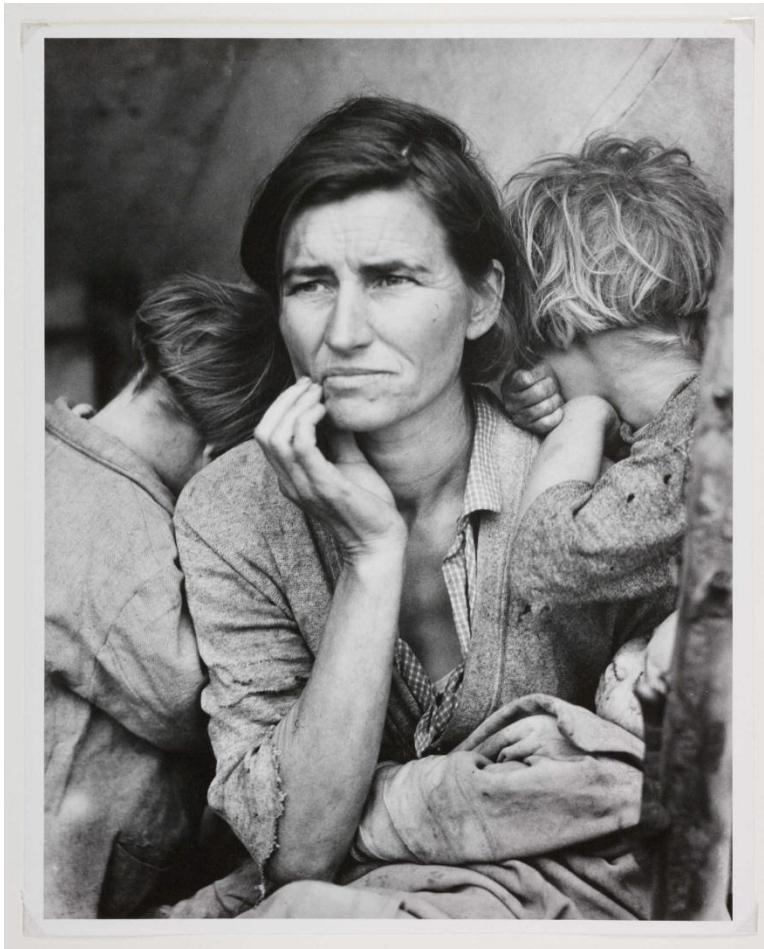
# Pathways to CT: Storytime





# Pathways to CT: Middle School

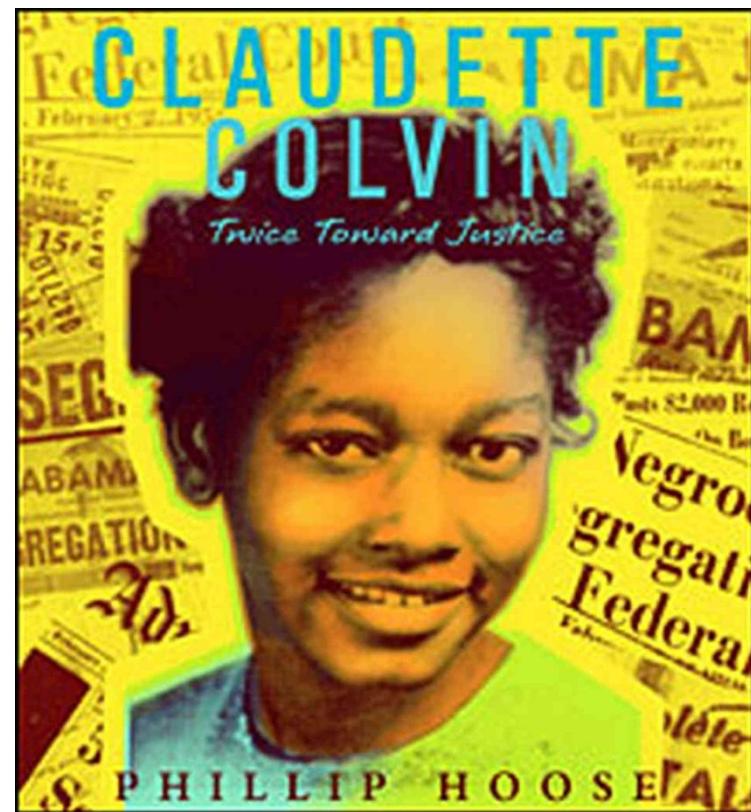




# Rosa Parks



1913 - 2005





# SUGAR CHANGED THE WORLD

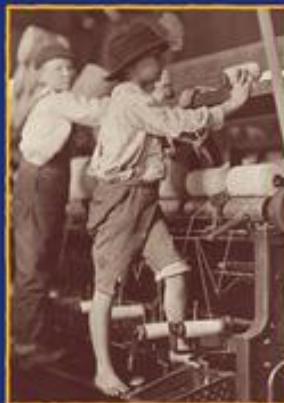
A Story of Magic, Spice, Slavery, Freedom, and Science

BY MARC ARONSON AND MARINA BUDHOS



# UP BEFORE DAYBREAK

COTTON AND PEOPLE IN AMERICA



DEBORAH HOPKINSON

# Pathways Help But What About the Test Itself?

Photoshop PSD File download - Resolution 1280x1024 px - www.psdgraphics.com





# PARCC

- In some two-part questions you must select the definition of an unfamiliar word; then, you must show what evidence led you to that conclusion.
- If you get the definition wrong, both parts are automatically wrong
- What can we tell our students?

# Take Your Time!

- Must read same passages many times to answer sequence of questions
- Second, third, fourth read may show you that your first response was not correct
- As you read and re-read, you have the chance to re-review earlier questions on that passage

# There is NO Advantage to Speed

- Take your time to immerse yourself in the passage – or passages if you are comparing two selections – give tentative answers then return
- It is very much like

# Diving Into the



# Tread Water, Find Your Balance



# It is Unfamiliar But

- You can swim, if you take your time
- You are not expected to know the words, the authors, the passages
- You may be reading documents from different historical eras
- Poems or novels written in unfamiliar styles

# Use skills taught in school

- Context clues for vocabulary
- How to identify main idea?
- What details support the idea?
- How does this author and POV differ from that one?

# In Sum

- Identify 5 elements of Complex Text
- Build Student muscles with volume reading, expertise, clusters, compare and contrast
- Practice skills for dealing with unfamiliar terms, texts, ideas
- Train students to go slow, review, re-think – trust that they have the skills to swim.

# CCR = CT

- CT as appropriate to each age and grade
- Give students as many ways as possible to develop CT skills
- Let them know that PARCC is more like classroom experience of close reading then it is a test of prior knowledge.
- And most of all



**GO  
SLOW**