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SHELL
EDUCATION

Leveled Texts

For Second Grade



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What Is Differentiation?

Over the past few years, classrooms have evolved into diverse pools of learners. Gifted students, English language learners, special-needs students, high achievers, underachievers, and average students all come together to learn from one teacher. The teacher is expected to meet their diverse needs in one classroom. It brings back memories of the one-room schoolhouse during early American history. Not too long ago, lessons were designed to be one size fits all. It was thought that students in the same grade learned in similar ways. Today, teachers know that viewpoint to be faulty. Students have different learning styles, come from different cultures, experience a variety of emotions, and have varied interests. For each subject, they also differ in academic readiness. At times, the challenges teachers face can be overwhelming, as they struggle to figure out how to create learning environments that address the differences they find in their students.

What is differentiation? Carol Ann Tomlinson (2014, 1) describes the challenge of differentiation as reaching out to “students who span the spectrum of learning readiness, personal interests, and culturally shaped ways of seeing and speaking about and experiencing the world.” Differentiation can be carried out by any teacher who keeps the learners at the forefront of his or her instruction. The effective teacher asks, “What am I going to do to shape instruction to meet the needs of all my learners?” One method or methodology will not reach all students.

Differentiation encompasses what is taught, how it is taught, and the products students create to show what they have learned. When differentiating curriculum, teachers become the organizers of learning opportunities within the classroom environment. These categories are often referred to as content, process, and product.

- **Content:** Differentiating the content means to put more depth into the curriculum through organizing the curriculum concepts and structure of knowledge.
- **Process:** Differentiating the process requires the use of varied instructional techniques and materials to enhance the learning of students.
- **Product:** When products are differentiated, cognitive development and the students’ abilities to express themselves improve.

Teachers should differentiate content, process, and products according to students’ characteristics. These characteristics include students’ readiness, learning styles, and interests.

- **Readiness:** If a learning experience aligns closely with students’ previous skills and understanding of a topic, they will learn better.
- **Learning styles:** Teachers should create assignments that allow students to complete work according to their personal preferences and styles.
- **Interests:** If a topic sparks excitement in the learners, then students will become involved in learning and better remember what is taught.

How to Use This Product

Readability Chart



Title of the Text	Circle	Square	Triangle
What Are Rainforests?	0.9	2.8	4.8
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.	1.1	2.9	4.9
Sarah's Journal	0.8	2.6	4.2
Your Guide to Superheroes	0.9	2.4	4.2
The World's Fastest Computer	1.0	2.4	4.5
Lots of Boxes	0.9	2.9	4.7
Planning a Harvest Lunch	0.9	2.5	4.4
Getting Around on the Water	0.7	2.7	4.8
Markets in India	0.8	2.9	4.6
City Gardens	1.0	2.8	4.3
Water!	1.0	2.6	4.1
What Makes a Habitat?	1.0	2.6	4.1
Pollination	0.9	2.5	4.2
Rocks and Minerals	0.8	2.8	4.2
Solids	0.9	2.3	4.2
Rules to Live By	0.7	2.3	4.0
Trade Today	0.8	2.7	4.2
Lead the Way!	0.9	2.5	4.2
Using Maps	0.8	2.6	4.4
Young Abigail Adams	0.9	2.9	4.4

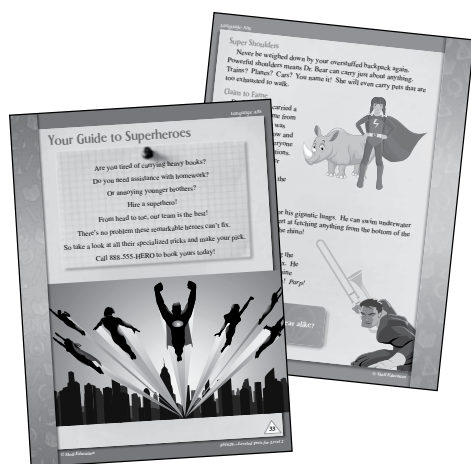
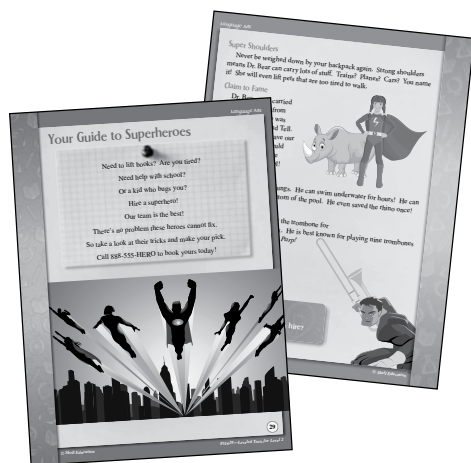
Correlation to standards

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) mandates that all states adopt challenging academic standards that help students meet the goal of college and career readiness. While many states already adopted academic standards prior to ESSA, the act continues to hold states accountable for detailed and comprehensive standards.

Shell Education is committed to producing educational materials that are research and standards based. In this effort, all products are correlated to the academic standards of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Dependent Schools. Shell Education uses the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) Compendium to create standards correlations. Each year, McREL analyzes state standards and revises the compendium. By following this procedure, they are able to produce a general compilation of national standards. A correlation report customized for your state can be printed directly from the following website: www.tcmpub.com/administrators/correlations/.

How to Use This Product *(cont.)*

Components of the Product



The Leveled Texts

- There are 20 topics in this book. Each topic is leveled to three different reading levels. The images and fonts used for each level within a topic are the same.
- Behind each page number, you'll see a shape. These shapes indicate the reading levels of each piece so that you can make sure students are working with the correct texts. The reading levels fall into the ranges indicated below. See the chart on page 8 for the specific level of each text.



Levels
0.7-1.1



Levels
2.3-2.9



Levels
4.0-4.9

Comprehension Questions

- Each level of the texts includes a comprehension question. Like the texts, the comprehension questions were leveled by an expert. They are written to allow all students to be successful within a whole-class discussion. The questions are closely linked so that teachers can ask multiple questions on the topics and all students will be able to participate in the conversations about the texts. The below-grade-level students might focus on the facts, while the above-grade-level students can delve deeper into the meanings of the texts.

What Are Rainforests?

Rainforests are like most forests. They have trees. They have plants. But they are wet.

Most rainforests get a lot of rain. They are warm most of the time. Trees and plants grow well. These are tropical (TRAH-pih-kuhl) rainforests.



Other forests are wet, but not from the rain. They get water from fog and the air. These are temperate (TEM-puhr-uht) rainforests. They are not too warm. And they do not get too cold.



Think About It!
What are the names of two different types of rainforests?

What Are Rainforests?

Rainforests are like other forests.
They are filled with trees and plants.
But they are different in one special way.
They are very wet.

Most rainforests get a lot of rain. They are also warm most of the time. This helps trees and plants stay healthy. These are called tropical (TRAH-pih-kuhl) rainforests.



Other rainforests are wet for other reasons. They get water from fog and the moist air near oceans. These are called temperate (TEM-puhr-uht) rainforests. They are not very warm. But they do not get very cold either.

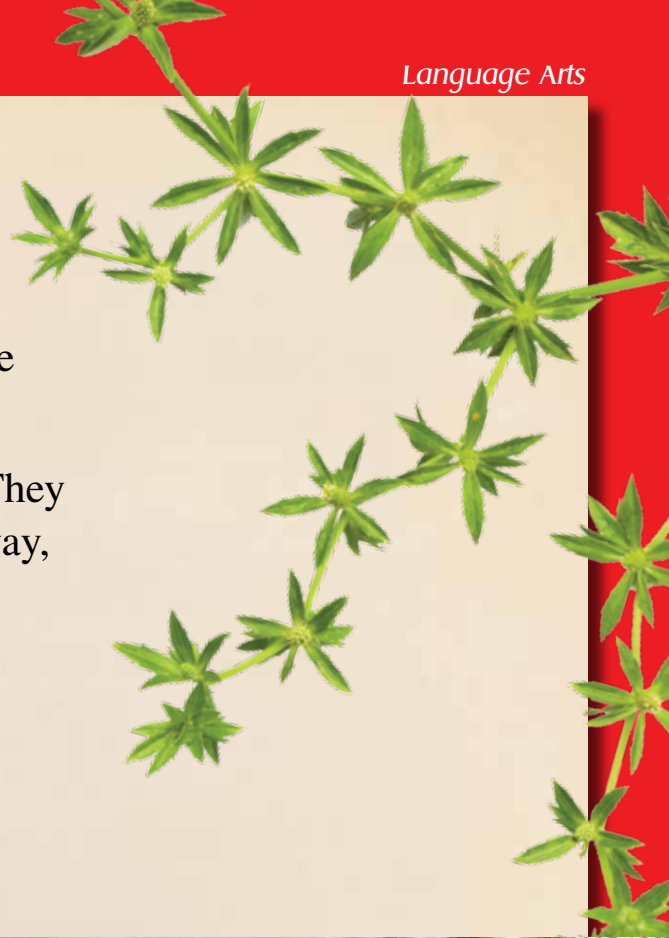


Think About It!
What is the difference between a temperate rainforest and a tropical rainforest?

What Are Rainforests?

Rainforests are like other forests because they are filled with trees and plants. But rainforests are different in one special way. They are very wet.

Most rainforests get a lot of rainfall. They are also warm most of the time. In this way, trees and plants stay colorful and healthy. Rainforests like this are called tropical (TRAH-pih-kuhl) rainforests.



Other rainforests are wet, too, but for more reasons than rainfall. They get a lot of water from fog and the moist air that comes from nearby oceans. Rainforests like this are called temperate (TEM-puhr-uht) rainforests. They are not as warm as tropical rainforests, but they do not get very cold either.



Think About It!

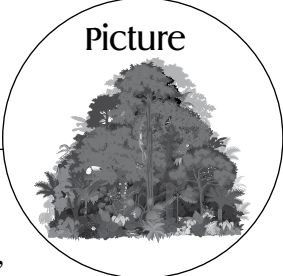
How might the differences between the two types of rainforests affect animals?

Strategies for Using the Leveled Texts *(cont.)*

Below-Grade-Level Students *(cont.)*

Vocabulary Scavenger Hunt

Another prereading strategy is a Vocabulary Scavenger Hunt. Students preview the text and highlight unknown words. Students then write the words on specially divided pages. The pages are divided into quarters with the following headings: *Definition*, *Sentence*, *Examples*, and *Nonexamples*. A section called *Picture* is put over the middle of the chart. As an alternative, teachers can give students selected words from the text and have them fill in the chart individually. (Sample words can be found on page 134).

rainforest	
<p>Definition</p> <p>a forest that receives a lot of water yearly</p>	<p>Sentence</p> <p>Rainforests are wetter than other forests. Because of this, trees and plants grow lush and green.</p>
<p>Picture</p> 	
<p>Examples</p> <p>tropical rainforests, temperate rainforests</p>	<p>Nonexamples</p> <p>deserts, meadows</p>

This encounter with new vocabulary words enables students to use the words properly. The definition identifies the word's meaning in student-friendly language, which can be constructed by the teacher and/or student. The sentence should be written so that the word is used in context. This sentence can be either one students make up or copied from the text in which the word is found. This helps students make connections with background knowledge. Illustrating the word gives a visual clue. Examples help students prepare for factual questions from the teacher or on standardized assessments. Nonexamples help students prepare for *not* and *except for* test questions such as "All of these are examples of rainforests *except for* . . ." and "Which of these examples is *not* a rainforest?" Any information students are not able to record before reading can be added after reading the text.

Strategies for Using the Leveled Texts *(cont.)*

Below-Grade-Level Students *(cont.)*

Framed Outline

This is an underused technique that yields great results. Many below-grade-level students struggle with reading comprehension. They need a framework to help them attack the text and gain confidence in comprehending the material. Once students gain confidence and learn how to locate factual information, the teacher can phase out this technique.

There are two steps to successfully using this technique. First, the teacher writes cloze sentences. Second, the students complete the cloze activity and write summary sentences.

Framed Outline Example

Forests are filled with _____ and _____. Unlike other forests, rainforests are very _____ because they get a lot of _____.

Another type of forest is a _____ rainforest. Like rainforests, tropical rainforests are also very _____ from _____, but they are also _____. Because of this, _____ and _____ grow healthy and colorful. Temperate rainforests are _____ and _____. The fog comes from moist _____ from _____.

Summary Sentences

Tropical rainforests and temperate rainforest have many similarities and differences. Both rainforests have wet and rainy weather. Tropical rainforests are warm, which helps plant life. Temperate rainforests are foggy because of the moist air from the ocean.

Modeling Written Responses

A frequent concern of educators is that below-grade-level students write poor responses to content-area questions. This problem can be remedied if resource teachers and classroom teachers model what good answers look like. This is a technique you may want to use before asking your students to respond to the comprehension questions associated with the leveled texts in this series.

First, read the question aloud. Then display the question on the board and discuss how you would go about answering the question. Next, write the answer using a complete sentence that accurately answers the question. Repeat the procedure for several questions so that students can understand that written responses are your expectation. To take this one step further, post a variety of responses to a single question. Ask students to identify the strongest response and tell why it is strong. Have students identify the weakest answers and tell why they are weak. By doing this, you are helping students evaluate and strengthen their own written responses.

Strategies for Using the Leveled Texts *(cont.)*

On-Grade-Level Students

Student-Directed Learning

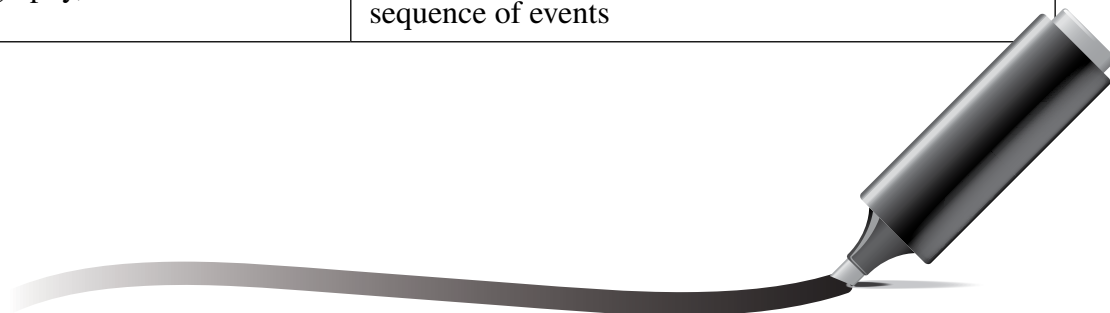
Because they are academically on grade level, student-directed learning activities can serve as a way to build independence and challenge this population of students toward further success. Remember to use the texts in this book as jump starts so that students will be interested in finding out more about the topics. On-grade-level students may enjoy any of the following activities:

- Write your own questions, exchange them with others, and grade each other's responses.
- Review the text and teach the topic to another group of students.
- Read other texts about the topic to further expand your knowledge.
- Create an illustrated timeline or presentation on the topic to present to the class.
- Create your own story similar to the plot in the passage read.
- Lead a discussion group around the leveled question that accompanies the text.
- Research topics from the text in depth and write a new text based on the information.
- Extend the plot of the story or write a new ending to the text.

Highlight It!

Teach students to parse out information based on the genre while they are reading. Use the chart below and a highlighter to focus students on genre-specific text features.

Genre	What do I highlight?
fiction—historical fiction, realistic fiction, literature	characters setting theme/moral problem solution
nonfiction—biography, autobiography, informational	leading/main idea sentence important information sequence of events



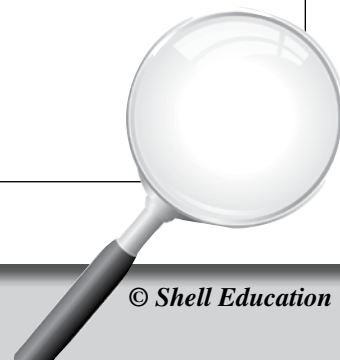
Strategies for Using the Leveled Texts *(cont.)*

On-Grade-Level Students *(cont.)*

Detective Work

Teach students to be analytical, like detectives. Direct students' attention to text features such as titles, illustrations, and subheadings by asking students to cover the text and only look at the text features. They can use the chart below to organize analytical thinking about text features prior to reading the text.

Name of Text:		
Text Feature	Why do you think this feature was included?	What can this feature tell you about what the text might be about?
title, subtitle, and headings		
pictures, images, and captions		
diagrams and maps		



Strategies for Using the Leveled Texts *(cont.)*

Above-Grade-Level Students

Open-Ended Questions and Activities

Teachers need to be aware of activities that provide a ceiling that is too low for above-grade-level students. When given activities like this, these students become disengaged. These students can do more, but how much more? Offering open-ended questions and activities will provide above-grade-level students with opportunities to perform at or above their ability levels. For example, ask students to evaluate major events described in the texts, such as: “In what ways is world trade more efficient today?” or “Explain several reasons why movers should understand math.” These questions require students to form opinions, think deeply about the issues, and form statements in their minds. Questions like this have lots of right answers.

The generic open-ended question stems listed here can be adapted to any topic. There is one leveled comprehension question for each text in this book. These extension question stems can be used to develop further comprehension questions for the leveled texts.

- In what ways did . . .
- How might you have done this differently . . .
- What if . . .
- What are some possible explanations for . . .
- How does this affect . . .
- Explain several reasons why . . .
- What problems does this create . . .
- Describe the ways . . .
- What is the best . . .
- What is the worst . . .
- What is the likelihood . . .
- Predict the outcome . . .
- Form a hypothesis . . .
- What are three ways to classify . . .
- Support your reason . . .
- Compare this to modern times . . .
- Make a plan for . . .
- Propose a solution to . . .
- What is an alternative to . . .



Strategies for Using the Leveled Texts *(cont.)*

English Language Learners

Effective teaching for English language learners requires effective planning. To achieve success, teachers need to understand and use a conceptual framework to help them plan lessons and units. These are the six major components to any framework:

1. Select and Define Concepts and Language Objectives—Before having students read one of the texts in this book, first choose a subject/concept and a language objective (listening, speaking, reading, or writing) appropriate for the grade level. The next step is to clearly define the concept to be taught. This requires knowledge of the subject matter, alignment with local and state objectives, and careful formulation of a statement that defines the concept. This concept represents the overarching idea and should be posted in a visible place in the classroom.

By the definition of the concept, post a set of key language objectives. Based on the content and language objectives, select essential vocabulary from the text. (A list of possible words can be found on page 134.) The number of new words selected should be based on students' English language levels. Post these words on a word wall that may be arranged alphabetically or by themes.

2. Build Background Knowledge—Some English language learners may have a lot of knowledge in their native language, while others may have little or no knowledge. Build the background knowledge of the students using different strategies, such as the following:

Visuals—Use posters, photographs, postcards, newspapers, magazines, drawings, and video clips of the topic you are presenting. The texts in this series include multiple images, maps, diagrams, charts, tables, and illustrations for your use.

Realia—Bring real-life objects to the classroom. If you are teaching about reading a map, bring different types of maps, a compass, and/or a globe.

Vocabulary and Word Wall—Introduce key vocabulary in context. Create families of words. Have students draw pictures that illustrate the words and write sentences about the words. Also be sure you have posted the words on a word wall in your classroom. (Key vocabulary from the various texts can be found on page 134.)

Desk Dictionaries—Have students create their own desk dictionaries using index cards. On one side of each card, they should draw a picture of the word. On the opposite side, they should write the word in their own language and in English.

Strategies for Using the Leveled Texts *(cont.)*

English Language Learners *(cont.)*

- 3. Teach Concepts and Language Objectives**—Present content and language objectives clearly. Engage students by using a hook and pace the delivery of instruction, taking into consideration the students' English language levels. State the concept or concepts to be taught clearly. Use the first languages of the students whenever possible, or assign other students who speak the same languages to mentor and to work cooperatively with the English language learners.

Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1978), a Russian psychologist, wrote about the zone of proximal development. This theory states that good instruction must fill the gap that exists between the present knowledge of a child and the child's potential. Scaffolding instruction is an important component when planning and teaching lessons. English language learners cannot skip stages of language and content development. You must determine where the students are in the learning process and teach to the next level using several small steps to get to the desired outcome. With the leveled texts in this series and periodic assessment of students' language levels, you can support students as they climb the academic ladder.

- 4. Practice Concepts and Language Objectives**—English language learners need to practice what they learn by using engaging activities. Most people retain knowledge best after applying what they learn to their own lives. This is definitely true for English language learners. Students can apply content and language knowledge by creating projects, stories, skits, poems, or artifacts that show what they have learned. Some activities should be geared to the right side of the brain, like those listed above. For students who are left-brain dominant, activities such as defining words and concepts, using graphic organizers, and explaining procedures should be developed. The following teaching strategies are effective in helping students practice both language and content:

Simulations—Students re-create concepts in texts by becoming a part of them. They have to make decisions as if they lived in historical times. For example, students can pretend that they are Sarah, an immigrant traveling to America. They have to describe and act out the conditions of her voyage to the New World. Or, students can act out a fictional passage by pretending they are one of the superheroes described. They can reenact the passage, while extending their understanding of the superheroes' abilities and claims to fame.

Literature response—Read a text from this book. Have students choose two people described or introduced in the text. Ask students to write conversations the people might have. Or you can have students write journal entries about events in the daily lives of the important people. Literature responses can also include student opinions, reactions, and questions about texts.

Strategies for Using the Leveled Texts *(cont.)*

English Language Learners *(cont.)*

4. Practice Concepts and Language Objectives *(cont.)*

Have a short debate—Make a controversial statement such as, “We can live without rules.” After reading a text in this book, have students think about the question and take a position. As students present their ideas, one student can act as a moderator.

Interview—Students may interview a member of their family or a neighbor in order to obtain information regarding a topic from the texts in this book. For example: How is your life similar to the lives of African Americans in the 1930s?

- 5. Evaluation and Alternative Assessments**—Evaluation should be used to inform instruction. Students must have opportunities to show their understandings of concepts in different ways and not only through standard assessments. Use both formative and summative assessments to ensure that you are effectively meeting your content and language objectives. Formative assessment is used to plan effective lessons for particular groups of students. Summative assessment is used to find out how much the students have learned. Other authentic assessments that show day-to-day progress are: text retelling, teacher rating scales, student self-evaluations, cloze statements, holistic scoring of writing samples, performance assessments, and portfolios. Periodically assessing student learning will help you ensure that students continue to receive the correct levels of texts.
- 6. Home/School Connection**—The home/school connection is an important component in the learning process for English language learners. Parents are the first teachers, and they establish expectations for their children. These expectations help shape the behavior of their children. By asking parents to be active participants in the education of their children, students get double doses of support and encouragement. As a result, families become partners in the education of their children and chances for success in your classroom increase.

You can send home copies of the texts in this series for parents to read with their children. You can even send multiple levels to meet the needs of your second-language parents as well as your students. In this way, you are sharing what you are covering in the classroom with your whole second language community.