Text Talk Protocol

This protocol is designed to help educators hold "text talks" that deepen understanding of a text's complexity and of its layers of meaning—its big ideas/themes, issues and questions. These deeper understandings allow educators to leverage the authentic connections high-quality instructional resources (HQIRs) make available between what is teachable in a text and the *Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) for Reading and Writing*.

Teacher teams can engage in this process during collaborative planning/PLC time.

Objectives:
- Understand the key takeaways in the text AND the textual evidence that brought them about.
- Understand where the text is particularly challenging and why (where the text is "begging to be taught").
- Understand how to leverage the *KAS for Reading and Writing* to explore teaching points available in the text.
- Prioritize key text-dependent questions.

Step 1: Identify key text from HQIR—or part of a text—that will be used in upcoming instruction.

Step 2: Read and annotate the text. Time can be saved by asking team members to read the text before the meeting.
- Note what seems most important (topically), what seems most interesting (personally) and what questions emerge that are most worth wondering about and wrestling with during (and perhaps even after) reading.
- Notice where you stopped to re-read or where you asked yourself a question.

Step 3: Pretend you are part of a book club and talk about the text with your peers. Start by discussing the text from your own perspective, not through a student lens.
- What did you find interesting about the text? What questions did you find compelling? Why?

Step 4: Now, put on your "teacher hat," and consider the qualitative complexity of the text.
- Identify features that will be easy or challenging for students when reading the text. Consider the meaning, structure, language and knowledge.
- Look back to the text for examples of qualitative complexity. Use the following table to capture your findings:

Meaning *[Layers of meaning, subtlety of purpose, concept complexity, multiple themes or purposes, etc.]*	**Structure** *[Text features, genre, organization, etc.]*

Language [*Vocabulary, sentence length and syntax, figurative language, regional/historical usage/dialects, etc.*]	**Knowledge** [Background/experience, domain and general knowledge, etc.]

Step 5: Identify the key understandings of the text—the one or two most important issues, ideas and/or themes for students to understand more deeply after reading it.

Step 6: Review the questions that are part of your curriculum or instructional resources and, if needed, tweak or supplement.

- With the text's key understandings and complexity in mind, review the questions to make sure they are thoughtfully sequenced to help students navigate the complexities of the text and build understanding.
- Discuss how questions authentically connect to grade-level standards for this lesson/unit.
- Determine whether you might need to supplement or scaffold existing questions by writing additional text-dependent questions, using the standards as a guide.