



# TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS: CREATING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

## *Case Studies*

June 2022



*Jeri Thompson, Ed.D.  
National Center for the Improvement  
of Educational Assessment*



[www.nciea.org](http://www.nciea.org)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	3
BACKGROUND .....	4
• Text Dependent Analysis .....	4
• Effective Processes for Change .....	5
• Case Study Research Methodology .....	7
CASE STUDY DESIGN .....	8
• District Selection .....	8
• Data Sources .....	10
• Coding Data Sources .....	12
QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS .....	13
• Research Question 1 .....	13
• Research Question 2 .....	17
• Research Question 3 .....	19
LIMITATIONS .....	21
DISCUSSION .....	21
• Instructional Implications .....	21
• Curricular Implications .....	22
• Assessment Implications .....	22
• Progress Monitoring Implications .....	23
CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS .....	24
REFERENCES .....	24
APPENDIX A: PA CASE STUDY INTEREST SURVEY .....	26
APPENDIX B: DISTRICT INFORMATION .....	27
APPENDIX C: DISTRICT LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS .....	29
APPENDIX D: SCHOOL-BASED LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS .....	31
APPENDIX E: TEACHER FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS .....	32

# TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS: CREATING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

## *Case Studies*



### INTRODUCTION

The Pennsylvania Department of Education engaged the Center for Assessment in conducting a series of eight (8) case studies with Pennsylvania school districts focused on making systemic changes to their English language arts instruction, curriculum, and assessment program in grades 4-8 to increase student achievement on analyzing text. Programmatic changes implemented by districts are intended to ensure that high quality instruction and evidence of student learning of the underlying expectations of text dependent analysis (reading comprehension, analysis, essay writing related to appropriate grade level complex text) occurs in a planned and purposeful manner. This case study research is intended to support the field in learning how districts with a range of cultural, demographic, and size differences seek to make systemic changes requiring programmatic shifts in instruction, curriculum, and assessment for the teaching and learning of text dependent analysis. Three key research questions were addressed through this research:

- 1) What skills and strategies were identified and implemented to create systemic changes in the instructional practices, curriculum, and assessment system when implementing text dependent analysis as an initiative?
- 2) What resources (time, materials/individuals, structures, professional development) were provided or identified as necessary for teachers to be able to employ the skills and strategies to teach and assess the underlying components of text dependent analysis?
- 3) How do action plans, created by district and school leadership, incorporate progress monitoring information to adjust the identified skills, strategies, resources, and/or professional development?

Programmatic changes implemented by districts are intended to ensure that high quality instruction and evidence of student learning of the underlying expectations of text dependent analysis (reading comprehension, analysis, essay writing related to appropriate grade level complex text) occurs in a planned and purposeful manner.

It is important to note that as this case study research was nearing its end in March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused the closing of schools and districts across the State. While the majority of the data were collected during the first seven (7) months of the 2019-2020 school year (September – March), many districts did not have an opportunity to analyze any data and/or observations collected to update their action plans for the following school year (2020-2021). The final leadership interviews were conducted virtually in all but one district, which did not participate in the final interview. This report provides the case study narratives from September 2019 to the closing of districts.



## Background

The case study research follows eleven years of working with grades 4-8 English language arts teachers and Intermediate Unit Consultants responsible for supporting districts' implementation of text dependent analysis. The need to involve district leadership in understanding text dependent analysis and the programmatic shifts necessary for high quality instruction and learning of analysis became apparent as teachers and consultants shared that district and school leadership were unaware or unclear of the structures and resources necessary to support text dependent analysis. Beginning in 2018-19, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and the Center for Assessment conducted a series of district leadership professional development sessions focused on text dependent analysis. This leadership series invited key district individuals (superintendent, principals of schools with grades 4-8, curriculum coordinators/directors, and a lead teacher) to learn about 1) the origin and importance of text dependent analysis (TDA) as a college and career ready item (Thompson, 2018) on the state test and consequently within the district's English language arts program, 2) analysis and the need for purposeful instruction and assessment practices, and 3) the development and implementation of an action plan for the instruction and assessment of analysis, including an examination of instructional resources, curricular units which includes a continuous and coherent design for embedding analysis, and a process for monitoring the implementation of the action plan. District feedback revealed that they desired to make changes and were moving forward with their action plans with the intent of increased student achievement and deeper learning. Consequently, PDE and the Center for Assessment sought to capture how these districts were creating programmatic changes and making plans for sustaining them.

It is important to note that this case study research was not designed to evaluate the school districts, district or school staffs, or any gains they are making on the State test in English language arts. Rather, this study was intended to document the action plan activities, including the skills, strategies, and resources identified and used by these case study districts and schools during the implementation of this initiative, and to report on their plans for continuous improvement.

## Text Dependent Analysis

Text dependent analysis (TDA) is a college and career ready item on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) which is administered to students in grades 4-8. This item is aligned to the standard that expects students to write in response to text, and specifically asks students to "draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research." Text dependent analysis requires students to read a literary or informational text and then use effective communication skills to write an essay in response to a complex prompt. A response requires students to make inferences about the author's meaning and choices by drawing evidence from the text, both explicit and implicit, to support an overall analysis of the reading elements (e.g., tone, setting, theme, etc.). Text dependent analysis prompts move beyond the general reading comprehension expectations, requiring students to critically examine a text to analyze the deeper meaning of these reading elements, and then provide evidence from the text in support of their responses. TDA prompts ask students specifically about the interrelationship of reading elements, such as how the *theme* is revealed through the *characters* thoughts, actions, and words. These prompts require much more than simply locating text

Text dependent analysis prompts move beyond the general reading comprehension expectations, requiring students to critically examine a text to analyze the deeper meaning of these reading elements, and then provide evidence from the text in support of their responses.

evidence to support a response. They necessitate an understanding of the author's presence in the text as it relates to the specified reading elements. The reading comprehension expectations are reflected in the content standards and assessment anchors and eligible content associated with each grade level.

## Effective Processes for Change

Many books and articles are written about the change processes required for enacting educational innovations and initiatives, or supporting school turnaround and school reform (Hopkins, 2001; Zavadsky, 2009; Zhao, 2009; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2009; Fullan, 2016; Byrk, Gomez, Grunow, & LeMahieu, 2017; Calkins, Guenther, Belfiore, & Lash, 2007; Whitaker, 2018; Cobb, Jackson, Henrick, Smith, & MIST Team, 2018). Considering this myriad of research, some changes required for school districts to consider when embedding text dependent analysis and the various supporting structures and strategies into their English language arts program are contextually dependent. For some districts, the changes may require significant shifts such as restructuring classes and schedules so that reading and writing are taught in one English language arts course, purchasing complex texts for teaching reading and analysis, and/or investing in sustained professional learning. Other districts may require fewer substantive changes in which common planning time or Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are repurposed to allow teachers to analyze student work and revise lesson plans based on the knowledge and skills demonstrated by students. In other words, while the expectations of instructing analysis remain the same, the structures, strategies, and/or resources necessary for implementation of text dependent analysis in one district may be different in another district, depending on their stage of implementation.

The change process in schools or districts is complex and multidimensional. According to Fullan (2016), the change process is comprised of three phases: initiation, implementation, and institutionalization. During initiation, which is the process leading up to and including the decision to proceed with implementation, there are many factors that influence whether a change program is started. These factors range from the quality of the innovation to community support, pressure, or apathy (among many other factors). The important point is that starting a change process in schools is in and of itself a complicated endeavor. The second phase is implementation. This is the phase that is most relevant to the TDA case study research as these districts have already chosen to initiate the reform and yet there are many unanswered questions about how educators apply the strategies and structure of this initiative.

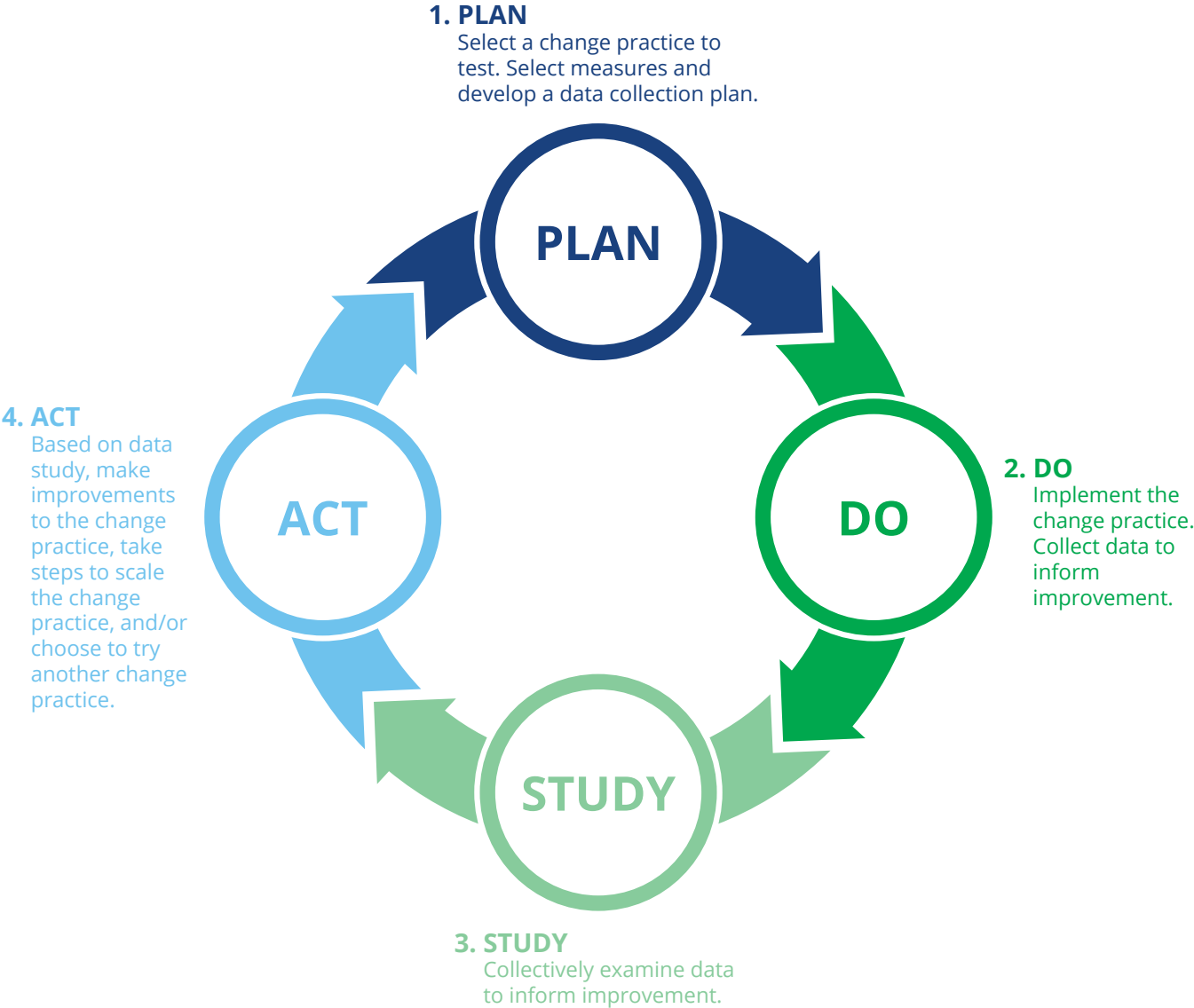
This case study report uses the continuous improvement cycle of *Plan-Do-Act-Study* (Shakman, Wogan, Rodriguez, Boyce, & Shaver, 2020) as a lens for examining how activities identified in each district's action plan were implemented, studied, and modified by district and/or school leaders. This contextually based cycle of continuous improvement is grounded in improvement science in which educators bring both pedagogical- and organizational-specific knowledge to create system changes (Bryk et al., 2017; Lewis, C., 2015). District and school leaders were not trained or required to use this or any other process for creating changes in their district. However, the *Plan-Do-Act-Study* cycle of continuous improvement was selected as a lens for reviewing each district's action plan because it provided a structure for making meaning of the role of progress monitoring in each district's action plan. When this improvement cycle is used, it supports a range of educational changes "including decreased failure rates, increased homework completion rates, increased Advanced Placement exam participation, increased kindergarten readiness, increased college enrollments, and more efficient use of funds" (Best & Dunlap, 2014).

This cycle is displayed in Figure 1 which is used to answer three main questions:

- 1) What problem are we trying to solve?
- 2) What change might we introduce and why?
- 3) How will we know that a change is actually an improvement?

These questions are at the core of what we believe districts need to consider for cohesively and coherently implementing the instructional, curricular, assessment, and professional learning necessary for embedding text dependent analysis into an English language arts program. Each of the four stages of this improvement process are described in Table 1 (Shakman et al., 2020; Vermont Agency of Education, 2019).

**Figure 1. Plan-Do-Act-Study Cycle**



(Shakman et al., 2020)

**Table 1. Stages of the Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle**

Stage	Description
<b>Plan</b>	Select a change idea to implement. Identify tasks and who is responsible, when it will take place, and where they will be implemented. Select measures and develop a data collection plan.
<b>Do</b>	Implement the change idea. Collect and compile data to inform improvement.
<b>Study</b>	Collectively examine data to inform improvement. Summarize lessons learned.
<b>Act</b>	Based on data study, make improvements to the change idea, and/or choose to try another change idea. Take steps to implement, spread, and scale the change idea.

This continuous improvement cycle moves beyond focusing on test result outcomes to considering the principles and processes required for making sustainable change in a specific context. The districts engaged in this Case Study research expressed the desire to create systemic changes that provided opportunities for leaders and teachers to learn and implement the expectations necessary for students to be successful when analyzing text. Using this lens will also help to understand how district leaders consider moving from small- to wide-scale implementation, especially in larger districts.

### Case Study Research Methodology

Case studies are a research methodology for describing, understanding, and/or predicting a phenomenon within a specific context (Woodside, 2017). These case studies focus on how educators apply changes within the culture of their district, schools, and classrooms. Case studies provide a holistic view of their context using a variety of qualitative research methods, such as observations and interviews, to provide the rich detail of the contextual situation. Case studies provide the researcher the opportunity to 1) engage in discussions with groups and individuals regarding the context, challenges, and facilitators of change, 2) observe implementation in practice, and 3) analyze the qualitative data to understand how an activity functions within a specific situation (Erickson, 2018). In this case study report, we examine the processes used by eight (8) districts, examining similarities and differences, but more importantly the ways in which different districts address their own strengths and needs to make systemic changes resulting in continuous improvement with respect to text dependent analysis.

Case studies provide a holistic view of their context using a variety of qualitative research methods, such as observations and interviews, to provide the rich detail of the contextual situation.

## CASE STUDY DESIGN

### District Selection

District leaders who attended the Year 1 2018-2019 TDA Leadership series were invited to complete a short survey sent by the Pennsylvania Department of Education designed to identify their interest and willingness to engage in this case study research (Appendix A). The criteria for involvement in the case study research included district leadership's willingness to:

- 1) share their district's action plan for making changes to their curriculum, instruction, assessment system, and professional development plan focused on the expectations of text dependent analysis in English language arts;
- 2) provide access to key individuals (e.g., directors of curriculum and instruction, principals, teachers in grades 4-8) for interviews and focus group discussions;
- 3) make available opportunities for classroom observations of ELA lessons in which teachers in grades 4-8 instructed students on the underlying expectations of text dependent analysis and students produced formative assessment artifacts resulting from their learning; and
- 4) share 3-4 years of PSSA English language arts data.

We anticipated that approximately 3-4 districts would be interested; however, eight (8) districts desired to be part of this study and all requests were accepted. The interested districts are identified as A-H, representing three different demographic classifications (PDE, 2022), identified as:

- Large Suburban (LS) - Area outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population of 250,000 or more.
- Distant Town (DT) - Area inside an urban cluster that is more than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an urbanized area.
- Rural Fringe (RF) - Area that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural area that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an urban cluster.

Table 2 provides a profile of the districts and Figure 4 provides an overall composition of the schools in the case study research. The large suburban districts represented the majority of districts in the research with the largest school enrollments (84% of total sample). However, the smallest school district, classified as distant town with 1,079 students, represented the highest minority and economically disadvantaged populations (70% of total sample). Specific district information can be found in Appendix B.

**Table 2.**  
**Case Study District Profiles**

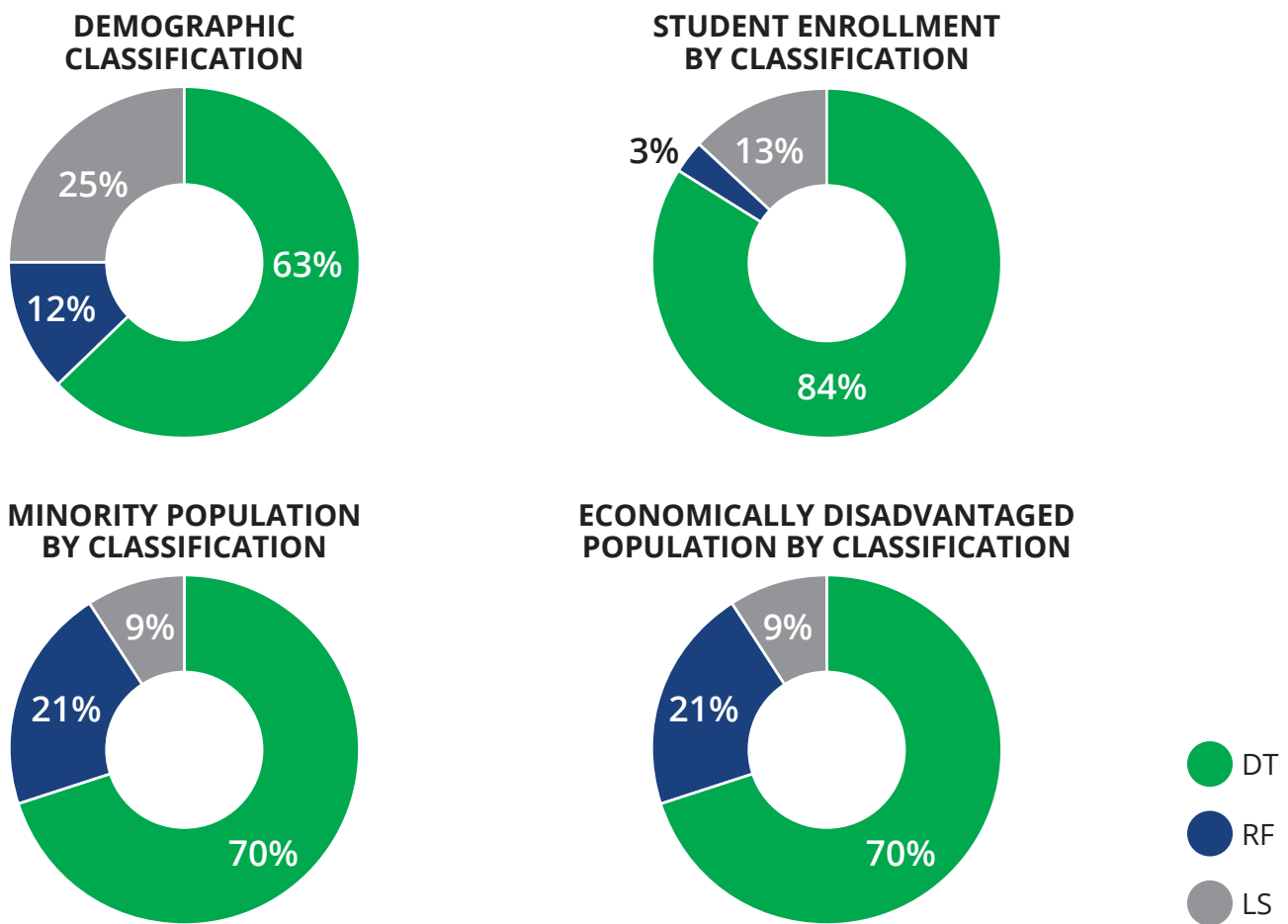
District	Demographic Classification	Number of Schools (4-8)	Student Enrollment (2019)	Minority Population	Economically Disadvantaged
District A	Large Suburban	5 Elementary 1 Middle	6,554	20%	9.2%
District B	Large Suburban	5 Elementary 3 Middle	5,516	10%	22.6%
District C	Large Suburban	6 Elementary 2 Middle	8,797	30%	7.9%
District D	Large Suburban	4 Elementary 1 Middle	3,381	20%	17.5%



Table 2. *continued*

District	Demographic Classification	Number of Schools (4-8)	Student Enrollment (2019)	Minority Population	Economically Disadvantaged
District E	Large Suburban	5 Elementary 2 Middle	3,828	10%	13.3%
District F	Distant Town	1 Elementary 1 Middle	1,079	60%	96.7%
District G	Rural Fringe	3 Elementary 1 Middle	2,964	10%	17.1%
District H	Rural Fringe	4 Elementary 1 Middle	4,407	20%	37.2%

Figure 4. *Overall District Composition*



Note: LS = large suburban; DT = distant town; and RF = rural fringe.

## Data Sources

Qualitative data were collected from each school district to create a broad picture of their efforts to implement text dependent analysis and the underlying expectations with respect to instruction, curriculum, assessment, and professional development. Data were collected using the following methods:

- District leader interviews or focus group
- School leader interviews or focus group
- Teacher focus groups, both observed and not observed
- Classroom observation field notes
- Instructional and formative assessment artifacts
- Action plan and other documents and artifacts provided by the district

### **District Leader Interviews or Focus Group**

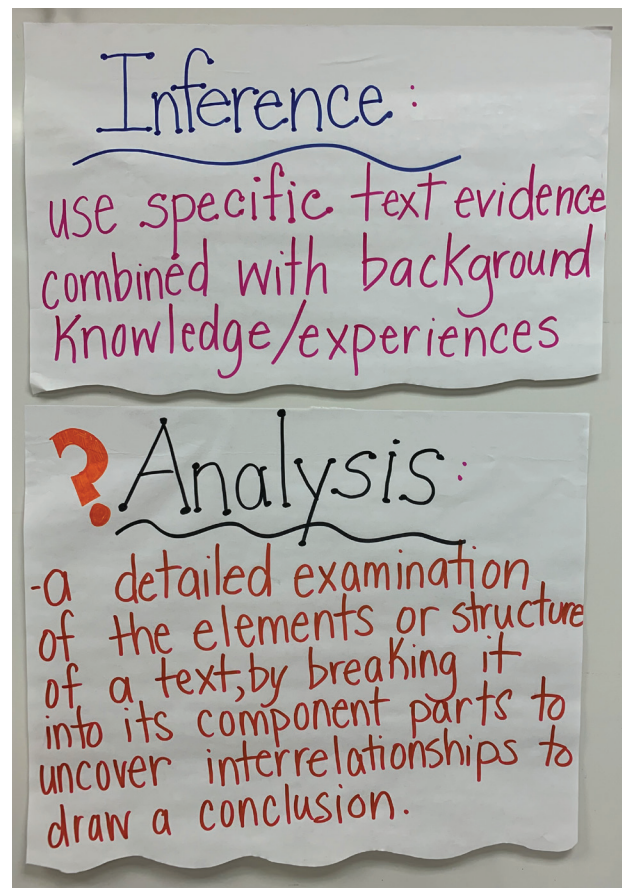
District leaders included those individuals responsible for implementing the action plans that were started during the leadership professional learning series. In some districts this included the superintendent, assistant superintendent and/or ELA curriculum supervisors. These interviews or focus groups were scheduled for the beginning and end of the 2019-2020 school year and were anticipated to require approximately one-hour. These semi-structured discussions were intended to elicit leader perspectives on their understanding of the ways in which the components necessary for change were considered and included in their action plan. Specific questions were developed and used for organizational and consistency purposes; however, follow-up or probing questions were included based on responses (see Appendix C).

### **School Leader Interviews or Focus Group**

Since school leaders are responsible for supporting the implementation of the action plan within their school (e.g., observing teachers for formative and evaluative purposes, and monitoring instruction) it was important to hear their perspectives of this initiative. The discussion was also semi-structured with planned questions intended to understand and make meaning of how they believed instruction changed as a result of the activities in the action plan. This interview/focus group was scheduled for the middle of the 2019-2020 school year and was anticipated to require approximately one-hour (see Appendix D). In many of the districts, the leadership teams were combined into one focus group because there was only one or two central office administrators responsible for the implementation of the action plan. For example, in District F there is one superintendent, and the next line of support are the school principals.

### **Teacher Focus Group**

Teacher discussions were a critical component in identifying how, to what extent, and in what ways teachers understood and applied the expectations of text dependent analysis into their instruction, curriculum, and classroom assessment practices. The semi-structured teacher focus groups were scheduled for the middle of the 2019-2020 school year and anticipated to require approximately one to two hours. All teachers of

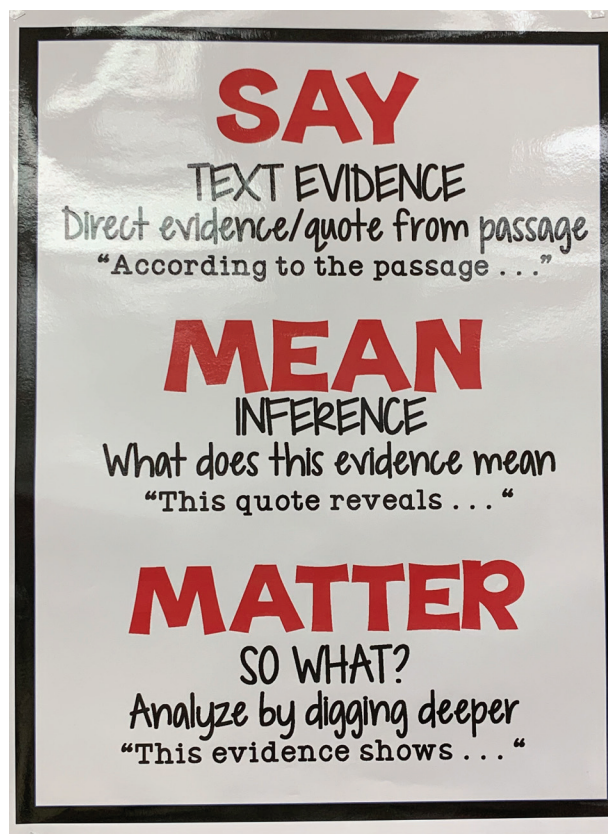


English language arts grades 4-8 were invited to attend whether or not they were observed. Similar to the district- and school-leader focus groups, questions were developed and used for organizational and consistency purposes (see Appendix E). Due to availability and time, many of the teacher focus groups were scheduled as a large group and adjustments were made as to how the sessions were conducted and information gathered. For example, groups of teachers were asked to discuss in smaller groups a focus group question and then one person per group was asked to report out the group's response. While this was not ideal for learning what the teachers knew and understood about text dependent analysis or the district's implementation plan, it provided enough information for making sense of how the initiative was implemented and moving forward.

### **Teacher Observations and Field Notes**

District leaders were asked to select 3-4 teachers responsible for the instruction of the underlying components of text dependent analysis for an observation of approximately 30-40 minutes. The observations occurred in the middle of the 2019-2020 school year. A sampling of teachers from grades 4-8 were selected by district- and/or school-based leadership for the observations, and field notes were used to record the lesson information. Specifically, the observations and field notes looked to capture:

- 1) general information about the lesson such as the text used for analysis, evidence of teaching the underlying aspects of text dependent analysis (reading comprehension, analysis, essay writing about text), and the extent to which the teacher demonstrates command of the necessary expectations,
- 2) instructional decisions made during the lesson, including the lesson structure, strategies, questions posed, reference to prerequisite knowledge and skills, and scaffolding provided,
- 3) student learning and understanding of analysis, methods of student engagement when analyzing text, successful demonstrations of analysis, and/or areas of struggle.



The observational data was used to examine the ways in which teachers interpreted and implemented the knowledge and skills/strategies they gained from any professional learning.

### **Instructional and Formative Assessment Artifacts**

During classroom observations teachers selected and submitted resources (e.g., texts, comprehension questions, organizers) they used for the lesson related to the underlying expectations of text dependent analysis, questions for students to respond to when reading texts, and text dependent analysis prompts used to elicit students' demonstration of analyzing text. No specific artifacts were requested.

### **Action Plan, Documents, and Artifacts**

Initial action plans completed at the end of the leadership sessions and modified action plans completed at the end of the case study research year were requested. The action plans included activities and progress

monitoring strategies for instruction, curriculum, assessment, and professional development and were submitted along with different documents or artifacts that were used in conjunction with the implementation of this initiative. The documents and artifacts provided any information district and/or school leaders believed would provide background and contextual information that would support the activities of the action plan. These documents/artifacts included self-reflection inventories completed by teachers, materials used for professional development, revisions to curricular scopes and sequences, etc. Combined, these qualitative data sources were used to provide background and contextual knowledge around how the initiative was organized, structured, and operationalized.

Combined, these qualitative data sources were used to provide background and contextual knowledge around how the initiative was organized, structured, and operationalized.

### Coding Data Sources

The data sources were analyzed and triangulated to address each of the research questions and to develop a consistency of evidence from the data sources and various individuals. Coding entails analyzing and organizing the information collected from the data sources and examining them for connections to the relevant features of the initiative, possible relationships between these features, and relationships to the research questions (Locke, Feldman, & Golden-Biddle, 2022). A coding system was used for this analysis to examine how the different districts demonstrated or referenced the underlying skills for text dependent analysis, the resources necessary for implementation of the initiative, and how the district managed the change process during the first year of this initiative. Table 3 identifies the coding system used for analyzing the qualitative data in this case study research and the meaning of each code.

**Table 3.**  
**Qualitative Data Coding System**

Data Codes	Evidence Used
S1 S2 S3	Demonstration of or reference to learning the appropriate <b>skills and strategies</b> necessary for 1) instruction 2) curriculum, and 3) assessment practices related text dependent analysis.
R1 R2 R3 R4	Demonstration of or reference to the <b>resources</b> , including 1) time, 2) materials, 3) structures (e.g., PLCs, grade-level team time, department meetings, after-school opportunities), and 4) professional development necessary for making instructional, curricular, and assessment changes.
AP1 AP2 AP3 AP4	Demonstration of or reference to the <b>action plan</b> that identifies 1) <i>plan</i> (who, what, when, and where the different aspects of the initiative will take place, how and when data would be collected, 2) <i>do</i> (collect and compile data), 3) <i>study</i> (the ways in which the district will examine and summarize the lessons learned), 4) <i>act</i> (use the data to make changes to the action plan activities).



## QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The key findings from all districts are summarized providing an overview of the skills/strategies, resources, and action plan activities and change process. Based on the qualitative data, the results were synthesized, and are organized by the research questions.

### Research Question 1

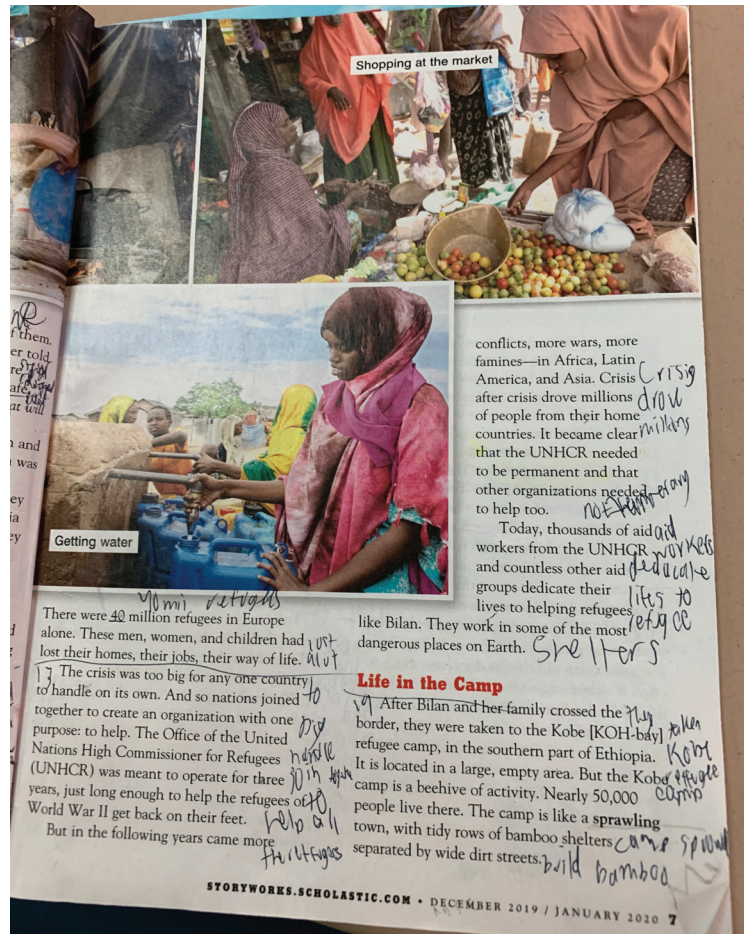
*What skills and strategies were identified and implemented to create systemic changes in the instructional practices, curriculum, and assessment system when implementing text dependent analysis as an initiative?*

Each district's action plan(s) along with other qualitative data resulting from stakeholder interviews/focus groups, classroom observations, and other artifacts, indicate that the educators are aware of and generally knowledgeable about the skills/strategies necessary to implement the TDA initiative in the district. Table 4 summarizes the skills/strategies identified as areas of focus and/or demonstrated in each district relative to instruction, curriculum, and assessment. All districts reported the need for and use of the following skills/strategies:

- text dependent questions for comprehension,
- analyzing complex text,
- reading elements/author's craft in text,
- explicit and implicit text evidence,
- inferencing based on text evidence,
- scaffolding analysis with appropriate graphic organizers,
- close reading strategies for analysis instruction, and
- lesson and/or unit plan revision to include analysis of reading elements.

Several other skills/strategies identified by and/or observed in the majority of districts (75%) included:

- analysis as the interrelationship of reading elements,
- collaborative discussions by students when analyzing text,
- deconstruct TDA prompts with students,
- student work analysis using the TDA Learning Progressions to adjust instruction,
- common benchmark TDA prompts for summative assessment purposes, and
- collaboratively score TDA responses.





Based on the classroom observations, most teachers generally understood the expectations necessary for teaching students to analyze text. The majority of the TDA prompts shared with students were written correctly and deconstructed with students to ensure understanding of each statement in the prompt. Overall, reading comprehension questions were text dependent and supported students' focus on the reading elements they were expected to analyze within the text.

Some districts reported that these expected skills/strategies were significantly different compared to what was demonstrated prior to the implementation of the action plan. They reported that educators now recognized text dependent analysis as an instructional process requiring continuous focus rather than an event (e.g., TDA Tuesday). Some educators noted that rather than teaching a myriad of reading elements with each text, the texts that supported specific reading elements allowing for analysis were being incorporated into one unit, which focused specifically on those reading elements. Some districts reported the need for all teachers to understand the underlying expectations of grade-level standards for backward mapping curriculum across and within grade levels, identifying when different reading elements/author's craft are introduced, taught deeply, and reinforced.

A few misconceptions were noted during observations and in focus groups such as 1) viewing analysis as an opinion, 2) analysis as an *if this didn't happen, then this wouldn't happen* statement, 3) comparing and contrasting information. One missing component of teaching the underlying expectations of text dependent analysis was the instruction of writing an analytic essay. Although the lessons included reading comprehension questions and text analysis, few teachers modeled writing a TDA response, making the assumption that students knew how to construct the essay independently.

They reported that educators now recognized text dependent analysis as an instructional process requiring continuous focus rather than an event (e.g., TDA Tuesday).

**Table 4.****Identified and Observed Skills/Strategies Necessary for TDA Instruction, Curriculum, and Assessment**

Skills	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E	District F	District G	District H
<b>Instruction</b>								
Text dependent questions for comprehension	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Consistent vocabulary for analysis	X		X					
Analyzing complex texts and variety of genres	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reading elements/author's craft in text	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Explicit and implicit text evidence	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Inferencing based on text evidence	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Explain and elaborate connection between evidence and inference					X		X	
Text annotations or highlighting	X		X	X		X	X	
Analysis as the interrelationship of reading elements	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Scaffolding analysis with appropriate graphic organizers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Close reading for analysis instruction	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Collaborative discussions to analyze text	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Deconstruct TDA prompts with students	X	X	X	X		X		X
Model writing responses to a TDA prompt	X	X						X
TDA Learning Progressions to analyze student work and adjust instruction	X	X	X	X		X	X	

**Table 4. continued**

Skills	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E	District F	District G	District H
<b>Curriculum</b>								
Deconstruct grade level reading standards		X			X			
Revise grade level ELA lessons and/or curricular units to include text analysis of reading elements	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Revise grade level ELA curricular unit to include analysis writing expectations					X			
<b>Assessments</b>								
TDA prompts for formative assessment purposes	X	X			X	X	X	
Develop expected TDA responses	X				X	X		
Formative feedback on TDA responses	X							
Peer review of formative responses	X			X			X	X
Common benchmark TDA prompts for summative assessment purposes		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Collaboratively score TDA responses			X	X	X	X	X	X
Annotate student work samples			X					

## Research Question 2

*What resources (time, materials/individuals, structures, professional development) were provided or identified as necessary for teachers to be able to employ the skills and strategies to teach and assess the underlying components of text dependent analysis?*

The resources identified as necessary for making systemic changes to instruction, curriculum, and assessment practices are identified in Table 5. It is important to note that most districts identified that time, as well as the existing structures and opportunities for professional development were insufficient. However, it was not always clear how the districts would utilize additional time. Several districts identified the need for time to do specific activities and these are included in the table. All districts identified that selecting or purchasing complex text was a necessary resource for implementing text dependent analysis in the classrooms and that common planning time was an available structure for teachers to plan analysis lessons, review texts, and/or score or review student responses to TDA prompts.

Six districts reported relying on the IU for the professional development with the anticipation that teachers and leaders attending these sessions would bring the learning back to other teachers. These IU Consultants were part of an on-going, five-year professional learning series with the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Center for Assessment which supported their 1) understanding of text dependent analysis, 2) their ability to create and facilitate professional development for teachers and districts, and 3) practices for providing districts with instructional, curricular, and assessment support. Therefore, they should be viewed as a valuable resource for districts in moving the TDA initiative forward.

Six of the eight districts reported that school leaders lacked understanding of what analysis entails or what programmatic shifts are necessary for implementing the skills associated with text dependent analysis and would benefit from professional development opportunities. Additionally, although text dependent analysis was a new initiative in English language arts for grades 4-8, seven districts identified the need and/or intent to engage K-2, 9-12, and/or content area teachers in understanding analysis and having students demonstrate analysis in these classes/courses. Some districts included this training and expectation in their action plan although it's not clear how districts are differentiating the meaning of analysis for these different groups, how they are considering the developmental levels of students, and the specific concepts to be analyzed in the content areas.

All districts identified that selecting or purchasing complex text was a necessary resource for implementing text dependent analysis in the classrooms and that common planning time was an available structure for teachers to plan analysis lessons, review texts, and/or score or review student responses to TDA prompts.

**Table 5.**  
**Resources Identified as Necessary for TDA Instruction, Curriculum, and Assessment**

Resources	Identified as Occurring or Planned							
Time	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Examine grade level student work and data			X	X	X			
Teacher planning/gather resources	X			X	X			
Learning remediation			X					
<b>Materials/Individuals</b>								
Selecting/purchasing complex text	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Common close reading lessons (texts, lessons, organizers, and TDA assessments)			X	X	X			
TDA Resources from State/Center for Assessment	X						X	
Reading interventionist/coach/specialist	X		X		X		X	X
School administration engagement	X			X				
<b>Structures for Planning</b>								
Grade level common planning time	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Department meetings	X		X	X	X			
Curriculum meetings				X				
Faculty meetings							X	
Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)	X		X	X	X			
Vertical articulation meetings	X		X					
Teaching partners	X		X			X		X
In-service days				X	X			
Unstructured time (e.g., during school assemblies)					X			
<b>Professional Development Opportunities</b>								
League of Learners for PD	X			X				
IU professional development	X	X	X	X		X		X
In-house professional development		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Book study	X		X					
After school/summer professional learning			X		X			X
PD for grades K-2, 9-12, and/or other content areas	X	X	X	X	X		X	X



### Research Question 3

*How do district and school leadership create an action plan which incorporates progress monitoring information to adjust the identified skills, strategies, resources, and/or professional development?*

Overall, districts viewed the TDA initiative as part of a change process requiring multiple years of implementation and progress monitoring. However, the monitoring of results focused mostly on classroom teachers' expectations rather than the district or school leaders' responsibilities for monitoring the TDA initiative. Subsequently, the continuous improvement cycle was an area in most need of attention based on the action plans, and district and school leadership interviews/focus groups.

Using the lens of the Plan-Do-Act-Study Cycle, all districts clearly identified the change idea as the Text Dependent Analysis initiative with a focus on instruction, assessment, and professional development. District E specifically included a focus on curriculum, although all districts identified the need to revise units of instruction as noted in Table 4. All districts identified specific activities or tasks that needed to occur throughout the year of the initiative; however, the dates for the tasks and the individuals responsible were inconsistent as identified in Table 6 below. District B identified dates and individuals for some of the tasks, but not all of them which is indicated by the lower-case mark in the table. Both districts D and E identified the leading indicator of success as student responses to benchmark performance assessments; no other indicators were identified such as perception surveys, attendance at professional development sessions, instructional shifts based on informal observations, etc.

All districts began the implementation of the activities identified on their action plan. During the end-of-year district-level interviews, District D reported that due to COVID-19 and the closing of schools, they did not collect or review any student responses to the benchmark text dependent analysis prompts. They shared that teachers were still in the midst of instruction and having students respond to prompts verbally or through formative assessments. Conversely, District E leaders collected benchmark assessment student responses, calibrated the scoring with teachers and were able to identify misconceptions about content, as well as misunderstandings about the rubric descriptors. They were also able to provide follow-up professional learning and teachers were asked to adjust lessons and rescore student work, when necessary. Additionally, District E reported that they recognized the need for principal professional learning and initiated professional development for principals to understand the process for instructing analysis. Due to COVID-19, Stage 4 actions were not addressed and, therefore, this information could not be included in this report.

Overall, districts viewed the TDA initiative as part of a change process requiring multiple years of implementation and progress monitoring.

**Table 6.**  
**Action Plan Information**

Activities	District							
Stage 1: Plan	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Identification of change idea	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity/task	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Person responsible	X	x		X	X		X	
Date of activity	X	x		X	X	X		
Place of activity				X	X			
Leading indicators of success				X	X			
Data collection plan					X			
Stage 2: Do								
Implementation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Data collection					X			
Stage 3: Study								
Examine data to inform improvement					X			
Summarize lessons learned					X			
Stage 4: Act								
Make improvements/changes to action plan and initiative								
Spread and scale changes to initiative								

While not identified in the action plans, Districts A, B, D, E, and F leaders reported during the interviews/ focus group that they anticipated using informal classroom observations as a way of progress monitoring to allow for adjustments to the action plan. These school leaders identified that they would look for teachers engaging students with:

- text dependent questions moving beyond basic comprehension
- collaborative conversations
- citing text evidence, making inferences, and explaining the information
- discussing and modeling analysis as the interrelationship between two reading elements
- reviewing exemplar analysis responses

Additionally, they anticipated teachers 1) writing TDA prompts and responding to their own prompts to use as a model with students, and 2) collaboratively reviewing curriculum, pacing, guides, and lesson plans for analysis instruction. It is important to note that the educators reported that school leaders' understanding of what is necessary for teaching text dependent analysis was identified as an area of need in most districts. Consequently, this information will need to be carefully considered prior to creating potential changes or solutions to the action plan.

## LIMITATIONS

Valuable information was obtained from the districts involved in the case study research about the implementation of the TDA initiative. There were several limitations to this research that were also noted.

1. The greatest limitation to this case study research stemmed from COVID-19 as mentioned in the introduction, which prevented districts from revising their action plan and making decisions for how to move forward with the initiative in the following school year. During the end-of-year interviews, most district leaders reported that although they still viewed analysis as a focus and need, other priorities surfaced, such as a myriad of activities to support instruction in a virtual environment, moving analysis instruction into the background. District and school leaders reported that basic reading comprehension became the norm of English language arts instruction.
2. This case study research encompassed only seven months, less than one school year, before it came to an abrupt stop. Knowing that a change in culture and practice requires multiple years, any impact on test scores would also require time. Although the intent of the case study research was to report how different districts were creating programmatic (instructional, curriculum, and assessment) changes to ensure text dependent analysis instruction and learning were taking place, the hope was that districts would note some incremental changes in their English language arts PSSA data.
3. A third limitation to the case study research was the imbalance of districts based on their demographic classification. The majority of districts (5 of the 8) were identified as large suburban districts. Only one distant town and two rural fringe districts were included. Not represented in this data are a) city (large, midsize, or small), b) midsize or small suburban, c) town (fringe, or remote), or rural (fringe or remote). While it is not possible or desirable to include more districts for this one-year case study research, it should be replicated with other districts to ensure the results are accurate and applicable to districts across the State.

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this case study research was to examine how districts make systemic changes requiring programmatic shifts in instruction, curriculum, and assessment for the teaching and learning of text dependent analysis. The review of data sources was guided by research questions focused on the necessary skills, strategies, resources, and progress monitoring activities associated with continuous improvement. Overall, educators included appropriate skills, strategies, and resources needed for creating teaching and learning shifts that support analysis. The following sections provide insight into some of the instructional, curricular, assessment, and progress monitoring next steps in supporting the change process for text dependent analysis.

### Instructional Implications

One key goal of this study was to understand the extent to which the necessary skills and strategies were identified and taught, allowing students in grades 4-8 to successfully analyze texts. The professional learning that has been provided through various opportunities indicates that educators know these expectations and are embedding them within their lessons. However, two specific concerns surfaced during the focus groups that should be considered. Teachers indicated that they are unclear whether they are implementing these skills/strategies correctly and would like feedback. Secondly, while school leaders were viewed as being supportive and willing to purchase texts, they were not sufficiently engaged in the text dependent analysis professional learning and consequently formative feedback was not viewed as detailed or content specific.

### **Follow-up**

As a result of this information, districts will want to engage school leaders in a deeper dive related to the text dependent analysis and the instructional moves associated with it. This can occur through using a study using the TDA resources that have been posted on the Center for Assessment, Pennsylvania Department of Education, and the SAS websites. Additionally, a series of modules related to these resources will be published in the near future and could be used as part of this professional learning. While this professional learning focuses on the second area of need, it will also support teachers' questions about successful implementation as all educators examine lessons and student work during PLCs or during other available structures. Four districts reported the use of teaching partners to share ideas or common planning time as a means of discussing lessons. These two planning structures, among others, can be strategically implemented in all districts to support instructional decision-making.

Districts will want to engage school leaders in a deeper dive related to the text dependent analysis and the instructional moves associated with it.

### **Curricular Implications**

In addition to the instructional implications, there are also curricular considerations for districts and educators. All districts reported that they planned to revise ELA curricular units to include complex texts and analysis of reading elements. However, during the interviews and focus groups, it was reported that these revisions were only occurring in some grades (e.g., District D reported only focusing on grades 4 and 5) and other grades were expected to follow a reading series. Consequently, districts will want to be sure that there is a consistent plan for all grades to consider how to review and revise curricular units to ensure a systematic instruction and assessment process.

Districts will want to be sure that there is a consistent plan for all grades to consider how to review and revise curricular units to ensure a systematic instruction and assessment process.

### **Follow-up**

While it is not necessary to eliminate the use of reading programs or to revise all curricular units, district leaders and educators should plan to deconstruct standards and identify the reading elements that are appropriate for analysis at each grade level. Subsequently, using this information will help to determine which units are most appropriate for modification in each grade level and will allow for a horizontal and vertical review of how and when analysis is taught and assessed. A second issue that arose from the review of the qualitative data was the limited focus on analytic writing. Examining curricular units would also ensure that there is a common understanding of the similarities and differences of different modes of writing, including analytic writing. Restructuring units which embed these similarities and differences will support students' ability to shift to different writing modes in a fluid manner. A third and broader issue is the desire for all grades and content areas to embed analysis in the instructional and curricular programs. There are developmental and content-specific implications, as well as professional development expectations, that should be studied and planned for prior to this broad-based implementation.

### **Assessment Implications**

Five districts identified creating common TDA prompts for formative assessment purposes and seven districts identified that they had a plan for creating common benchmark TDA prompts for summative assessment purposes. However, the formative assessment process should plan for the inclusion of

feedback from teachers and peers, as well as self-assessment, as an integral part of the assessment system. Additionally, based on the interviews and focus groups, there was often some confusion with the purpose and use of the TDA Learning Progressions. Teachers often refer to the progressions as a way to evaluate students' responses rather than a formative assessment tool for making instructional decisions.

### Follow-Up

It would be beneficial for districts to create a clear plan for 1) reviewing formative student responses using the TDA Learning Progressions, 2) making lesson and/or unit adjustments based on the results of the student work review, 3) using the descriptors of the different levels of the TDA Learning Progressions to provide formative feedback to students, and 4) collaboratively scoring summative student responses using the PA holistic rubric or district-created analytic rubric. The scoring of summative responses should include multiple teachers and school and/or district leaders for calibrating the scoring and analyzing results for curricular purposes. Creating a plan that incorporates both formative and classroom summative reviews of student responses will help to clarify and differentiate the purpose and use of the TDA assessment tools.

However, the formative assessment process should plan for the inclusion of feedback from teachers and peers, as well as self-assessment, as an integral part of the assessment system.

### Progress Monitoring Implications

Given the post-COVID-19 opening of schools and reinstatement of PSSA, districts should consider revising their action plans to continue the initiative related to text dependent analysis. One model that can be used to guide this revision is the Managing Complex Change process (Lippitt, 1987). This model postulates that it takes vision, skills, incentives, resources and an action plan to implement change.

One model that can be used to guide this revision is the Managing Complex Change process (Lippitt, 1987).

Figure 5 graphically illustrates this complex change model and shows how if one component is left out, the change process is thwarted. This model helps identify various forces that help or hinder a district or school from reaching a proposed change. As different forces collide within districts or schools, the extent to which change occurs is a function of whether each of the forces are considered (Weiner, 2009). Using this model, district and school leaders can make sense of why there may be confusion, anxiety, a slow pace of change, frustration, and/or false starts.

**Figure 5. Managing Complex Change**

Vision	+	Skills	+	Incentives	+	Resources	+	Action Plan	=	<b>CHANGE</b>	
		+	Skills	+	Incentives	+	Resources	+	Action Plan	=	<b>CONFUSION</b>
Vision	+		+	Incentives	+	Resources	+	Action Plan	=	<b>ANXIETY</b>	
Vision	+	Skills	+		+	Resources	+	Action Plan	=	<b>GRADUAL CHANGE</b>	
Vision	+	Skills	+	Incentives	+		+	Action Plan	=	<b>FRUSTRATION</b>	
Vision	+	Skills	+	Incentives	+	Resources	+		=	<b>FALSE START</b>	



## CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The results of this exploration study can support PDE's next steps with educators across Pennsylvania by ensuring that all resources are posted and shared with district leaders and teachers. This case study research was structured to isolate the skills, strategies, resources, professional learning, and steps in the improvement cycle necessary to create and support the implementation of the text dependent analysis initiative. Using the information presented in this case study research, district and school leaders, teachers, and IU consultants should collaborate to create an action plan for continuing the TDA initiative which includes leading and lagging indicators of success, a data collection plan, and how these data will be reviewed and acted upon.

---

## REFERENCES

- Best, J. & Dunlap, A. (2014). *Continuous Improvement in Schools and Districts: Policy Considerations*. Denver, CO: McRel International.
- Bryk, A.S., Gomez, L.M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P.G. (2017). *Learning to Improve: How America's Schools Can Get Better at Getting Better*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Calkins, A., Guenther, W., Belfiore, G. (2007). *The Turnaround Challenge*. Boston, MA: Mass Insight Education & Research Institute.
- Cobb, P., Jackson, K., Henrick, E., Smith, T.M., and the MIST Team (2018). *Systems for Instructional Improvement: Creating Coherence from the Classroom to the District Office*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Erikson, A. (2018). *The Art of Case Studies (Chapter 5)*. Pressbooks: Retrieved from <https://educationresearch.pressbooks.com/chapter/case-studies/>.
- Fullan, M. (2016). *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Hargreaves, A. & Fullan, M. (2012) *Professional Capital*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Hopkins, D. (2001). *School Improvement for Real*. New York, New York: Routledge Falmer.
- Lewis, C. (2015). *What is Improvement Science? Do We Need It in Education?* Educational Researcher 44(1), pp. 54-61.
- Lippitt, M. (1987). *The Managing Complex Change*. Enterprise Management, Ltd. Retrieved from [http://s3.amazonaws.com/mooc-ed.org/course\\_readings/Managing-Change-Model.pdf](http://s3.amazonaws.com/mooc-ed.org/course_readings/Managing-Change-Model.pdf).
- Locke, K., Feldman, M., & Golden-Biddle, K. (2022). *Coding Practices and Interactivity: Beyond Templates for Analyzing Qualitative Data*. Organizational Research Methods, 25(2), pp. 262-284.
- Pennsylvania Department of Education (2022). [School Locale](#) Classifications.

Shakman, K., Wogan, D., Rodriguez, S., Boyce, J., & Shaver, D. (2020). *Continuous Improvement in Education: A Toolkit for Schools and Districts*. (REL 2021-014). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast & Islands. Retrieved from: [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/regions/northeast/pdf/REL\\_2021014.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/regions/northeast/pdf/REL_2021014.pdf).

Thompson, J. (2018). *Text Dependent Analysis: The Need for a Shift in Instruction and Curriculum*. Retrieved from [nceia.org](http://nceia.org).

Vermont Agency of Education (2019). *Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Toolkit*. Retrieved from: <https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/PDSAToolkit.pdf>.

Weiner, B.J. (2009). *A Theory of Organizational Readiness for Change*. *Implementation Science*, 4(67).

Whitaker, T. (2018). *Leading School Change*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Woodside, A. G. (2017). *Case Study Research: Core Skill Sets in Using 15 Genres*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Zavadsky, H. (2009). *Bringing School Reform to Scale*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Zhao, Y. (2009). *Catching Up or Leading the Way*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

## APPENDIX A: PA CASE STUDY INTEREST SURVEY

### TDA Case Study



Pennsylvania Department of Education believes that some districts have made changes to their curriculum and instructional programs which should contribute to increased overall student achievement on the PSSA English Language Arts assessment including the text dependent analysis item. However, since Pennsylvania is a large state with over 600 locally controlled LEAs, it is difficult to determine the types of programmatic changes (curricular & instructional) implemented by districts to ensure the effective teaching and learning of analysis. Pennsylvania Department of Education has partnered with Dr. Jeri Thompson from the Center for Assessment to conduct several case studies to document systemic changes in local curriculum, instruction, and professional development related to the underlying expectations of text-dependent analysis. These case studies will provide all stakeholders with the following information.

- Text dependent analysis strategies/resources were identified by district leaders to incorporate into the curriculum.
- Strategies/resources that were identified and secured by district leaders to ensure that teachers were prepared to teach students the underlying components of text dependent analysis.
- Strategies that were used by district leaders to analyze and measure the student results relative to the curricular and instructional changes with respect to the underlying components of text dependent analysis.
- Perception of teachers' ability to employ the identified strategies and resources in order to teach and assess the underlying components of text dependent analysis.

If your district has begun to make systemic changes based on the information provided during our Leadership series and you are interested in being interviewed for a case study, please read the following statements, identify your district's name, provide your signature, and return this form to [RA-EDPA\\_Leadership@pa.gov](mailto:RA-EDPA_Leadership@pa.gov).

- We want to support the educational growth of all Pennsylvania teachers and students by sharing our experience with systemic changes in our district.
- We are willing to share and discuss our 3-5 year action plan that outlines the curriculum, instruction, and professional development focusing on the expectations of text dependent analysis in English language arts and the college and career ready expectation of analysis more broadly in all courses and content areas.
- We are willing to discuss our ELA and text dependent analysis data on the PSSA ELA test over the past several years (Note: this data will not be shared in the case study document).
- We are willing to allow access to key individuals (e.g., directors of curriculum and instruction, principals, teachers in grades 4-8) for interviews and focus group discussions.
- We are willing to allow several district-selected teachers to be observed by Dr. Thompson during an English language arts lesson that focuses on analysis.
- We understand that no identifiable data related to teacher effectiveness or student achievement will be disclosed in the case study.

All case studies will be conducted by Dr. Jeri Thompson, Center for Assessment.

District Name:

Signature:

## APPENDIX B: DISTRICT INFORMATION

### **District A**

District A is a large suburban school district in southeastern Pennsylvania. They have five (5) elementary schools and one (1) middle school with approximately 6,554 students. An action plan was submitted at the beginning and end of the case study research. Two district leadership interviews/focus group meetings were conducted, one at the beginning of the case study research and one at the end. A total of three focus groups were conducted. The principal focus group was held in the district administration office with seven (7) administrators from the middle and elementary school. An elementary level (grades 4-5) focus group included twenty (20) teachers at a school building and a separate middle level (grades 6-8) focus group included twenty (20) teachers at a school building. A total of eleven (11) classroom observations were conducted, four (4) at the elementary level and eight (8) at the middle level.

### **District B**

District B is a large suburban school district in southwestern Pennsylvania. They have five (5) elementary schools and three (3) middle schools with approximately 5,516 students. An action plan was submitted in the beginning of the case study research. Two district leadership interviews/focus group meetings were conducted, one at the beginning of the case study research and one at the end. The principal focus group was held in the district administration office with eight (8) administrators from the middle and elementary school. A combined elementary level (grades 4-5) and middle school (grades 6-8) focus group was conducted, which included nine (9) teachers at a school building. A total of six (6) classroom observations were conducted, three (3) at the elementary level and three (3) at the middle level.

### **District C**

District C is a large suburban school district in southeastern Pennsylvania. They have six (6) elementary schools and two (2) middle schools with approximately 8,797 students. An action plan was submitted in the beginning of the case study research. Two district leadership interviews/focus group meetings were conducted, one at the beginning of the case study research and one at the end. A principal interview was held in the district administration office with one (1) elementary school administrator. A combined elementary level (grades 4-5) and middle school (grades 6-8) focus group was conducted which included thirteen (13) teachers at the district administration office. A total of six (6) classroom observations were conducted, three (3) at the elementary level and three (3) at the middle level.

### **District D**

District D is a large suburban school district in southeastern Pennsylvania. They have four (4) elementary schools and one (1) middle school with approximately 3,381 students. An action plan was submitted in the beginning and end of the case study research. Two district leadership interviews/focus group meetings were conducted, one at the beginning of the case study research and one at the end. An elementary school leader focus group with three (3) administrators was held in an elementary school and a middle school leader focus group with two (2) administrators was held in the middle school. A combined elementary level (grades 1-5) and middle school focus group included twenty-one (21) teachers was facilitated at the district administration office. A total of nine (9) classroom observations were conducted, six (6) at the elementary level and three (3) at the middle level.

### **District E**

District E is a large suburban school district in southwestern Pennsylvania. They have five (5) elementary schools and two (2) middle schools with approximately 3,328 students. An action plan was submitted in the beginning and end of the case study research. A combined district and school leadership focus group was



conducted at the beginning of the case study research and a district leadership interview was conducted at the end. A combined elementary and middle school teacher focus group was held at the high school with five (5) teachers from grades 3-5 and four (4) teachers from grades 6-8. Five (5) classroom observations were conducted, three (3) at the middle school and two (2) at the elementary level.

### **District F**

District F is identified as a distant town school district in central eastern Pennsylvania. They have one (1) elementary school and one (1) middle school with approximately 1,079 students. An action plan was submitted at the beginning of the case study research. A combined district and school leadership focus group was conducted at the beginning of the case study research and a district leadership interview was conducted at the end. A combined elementary and middle school teacher focus group was held at the district office with eleven (11) teachers from grades 3-8, four (4) teachers from grades 3-4 and five (5) teachers from grades 6-8. Seven (7) classroom observations were conducted, five (5) at the middle school and two (2) at the elementary level.

### **District G**

District G is identified as a rural fringe district in southern Pennsylvania. They have three (3) elementary schools and one (1) middle schools with approximately 2,964 students. An action plan representing work prior to September 2019 was submitted at the beginning of the case study research. A combined district and school leadership focus group was conducted at the beginning of the case study research; however, only two school leaders were present. The district and school leadership did not participate in a final interview. A combined elementary and middle school teacher focus group was held with five (5) teachers from grades 4-5, four (4) teachers from grades 6-8, and four (4) reading teachers. Four (4) classroom observations were conducted, three (3) at the middle school and one (1) at the elementary level.

### **District H**

District H is a rural fringe school district in southern central Pennsylvania. They have four (4) elementary schools and one (1) middle school with approximately 4,407 students. An action plan was submitted in the beginning of the case study research. A combined district and school leadership focus group was conducted at the beginning of the case study research and at the end. Two focus groups were held. The middle school focus group was conducted at the middle school and included two (2) teachers and the elementary school focus group was held at an elementary school with nine (9) teachers from grades 3-5. Four (4) classroom observations were conducted at the elementary level.



## APPENDIX C: DISTRICT LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

### Beginning of Year District Level Interview Questions

1. What is your **vision** at the end of the implementation process?
  - a. How would you describe student success with regard to the knowledge, skills, and abilities they should demonstrate?
  - b. How do you think a teacher best facilitates student learning of the underlying components of text dependent analysis?
2. How did you decide what to include in your **action plan**? Why were these activities included and how do you expect them to lead to deeper learning?
  - a. In what ways have you communicated the action plan to your staff?
  - b. What is your role, as a principal, in supporting teachers' learning of text dependent analysis?
  - c. What is your role, as a superintendent, in supporting principals and teachers' learning of text dependent analysis?
3. In what ways have you solicited **buy-in** and tried to motivate teachers to embrace a change in their instruction related to text dependent analysis?
  - a. For teachers reticent to change their instructional practice, how will you motivate them to embrace the strategies necessary for student success with analyzing text?
4. Not all **curricular resources** that may be used will aide in instructing the underlying components of text dependent analysis. What resources will teachers use to teach analysis? Why were these resources selected?
  - a. If using a reading series, how are teachers expected to supplement materials that will allow for teaching analysis?
  - b. Do you rely on the unit assessments in the reading series as a data point?
    - i. How will the administration of the unit assessment be impacted by the change in instruction? Consider time factors the types of questions that are being asked.
5. How will teachers have an opportunity to develop text dependent analysis questions and expected responses in order to create lesson plans?
  - a. In what ways will **supports** (time-PLCs, common planning time – and professional learning-coaching, examination of the TDA resources, IU training) be provided to allow teachers to gain a deeper understanding of text dependent analysis?
6. How will you know that teachers are appropriately applying the **skills** necessary for instructing the underlying expectations of text dependent analysis?
  - a. How will you know that students are demonstrating a clear understanding of analysis? Consider opportunities to look at student work, use the TDA learning progressions, annotations of student work, and reteach.
7. Given your action plan, how will you address barriers to implementing a systematic approach to teaching and assessing text dependent analysis (**change process**)?

## End of Year District Level Interview Questions

1. How would you describe the TDA instruction prior to the interruption in instruction?
2. Given the interruption in instruction, how has your **vision** of the implementation process changed?
3. What is your **vision** now for the end of the implementation process?
  - a. How would you describe student success with regard to the knowledge, skills, and abilities students should demonstrate?
  - b. How do you think a teacher best facilitates student learning of the underlying components of text dependent analysis?
4. Have you changed the activities and priorities in your **TDA action plan**? If so, why and in what way?
  - a. How do you expect the changes to lead to deeper learning?
  - b. In what ways have you or will you communicate the action plan and the changes to your staff?
  - c. What is your role in supporting principal's learning of text dependent analysis?
  - d. What do you see as their role in supporting teachers' learning of text dependent analysis?
5. In what ways have you solicited **buy-in** from principals to embrace a change in the instruction related to text dependent analysis prior to the interruption in instruction?
  - a. For principals reticent to making changes to teachers' curriculum practices, how will you motivate them to embrace the changes necessary for student success in analyzing text?
6. How will teachers have an opportunity to develop text dependent analysis questions and expected responses to create lesson plans?
  - a. In what ways will **supports** (time-PLCs, common planning time, and professional learning-coaching, examination of TDA resources, IU training) be provided to allow teachers to gain a deeper understanding of text dependent analysis?
7. How will you know that teachers are appropriately applying the **skills** necessary for instructing the underlying expectations of text dependent analysis?
  - a. How will you know that students are demonstrating a clear understanding of analysis? Consider opportunities to look at student work, use the TDA Learning Progressions, annotations of student work, and reteaching.

## APPENDIX D: SCHOOL-BASED LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What is your **vision** at the end of the implementation process?
  - a. How would you describe student success with regard to the knowledge, skills, and abilities they should demonstrate?
  - b. How do you think a teacher best facilitates student learning of the underlying components of text dependent analysis?
2. Are you familiar with the activities embedded in the action plan?
  - a. If yes: In what ways are you supporting these activities and how do you expect them to lead to deeper learning?
  - b. If no: As a principal, what do you see your role in supporting teachers' learning of text dependent analysis?
3. What types of comments do you hear from teachers regarding text dependent analysis considering this as a PSSA item, instructional resources necessary to support the instruction of analysis, and the instructional strategies necessary to instruct students on text dependent analysis?
  - a. In what ways have you solicited **buy-in** and tried to motivate teachers to embrace a change in their instruction related to text dependent analysis?
  - b. For teachers reticent to change their instructional practice, how do you motivate them to embrace the strategies necessary for student success with analyzing text?
4. Not all **curricular resources** that may be used will aide in instructing the underlying components of text dependent analysis. What resources are you providing/suggesting teachers use to teach analysis? Why were these resources selected?
  - a. If using a reading series, how are teachers expected to supplement materials that will allow for teaching analysis?
  - b. Do you rely on the unit assessments in the reading series as a data point?
    - i. How will the administration of the unit assessment be impacted by the change in instruction? Consider time factors the types of questions that are being asked.
5. How do teachers have an opportunity to develop text dependent analysis questions and expected responses in order to create lesson plans?
  - a. In what ways will **supports** (time-PLCs, common planning time – and professional learning-coaching, examination of the TDA resources, IU training) be provided to allow teachers to gain a deeper understanding of text dependent analysis?
6. How will you know that teachers are appropriately applying the **skills** necessary for instructing the underlying expectations of text dependent analysis?
  - a. How will you know that students are demonstrating a clear understanding of analysis? Consider opportunities to look at student work, use the TDA learning progressions, annotations of student work, and reteach.
7. What barriers to implementing a systematic approach to teaching and assessing text dependent analysis do you see and anticipate (**change process**)? How are you overcoming or facilitating navigating these barriers?

## APPENDIX E: TEACHER FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

- 1) How has your learning about the expectations of analysis impacted your instruction, view of materials, and overall units of instruction?
- 2) In what ways are collaborative structures (e.g., PLCs, common planning) used to support the instruction of analysis?
- 3) In what ways are your principals leading the learning on instructing analysis?
- 4) How do you see the district leadership collaborating in support of quality instruction of analysis embedded in curriculum, teaching materials, and resources?
- 5) In what ways are system-wide data used to inform practice and monitor progress on student demonstration of analysis? Which data sources are used, how often are they used, and who developed the assessments that yield this data?
- 6) In what ways have students been involved in understanding analysis as a natural expectation of reading comprehension rather than something different or additional? What observations have you made to inform this belief?
- 7) In what ways have parents been involved in understanding the expectations of a text dependent analysis prompt and response?



TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS:  
CREATING SYSTEMIC CHANGE  
*Case Studies*



National Center for the Improvement  
of Educational Assessment  
Dover, New Hampshire



[www.nciea.org](http://www.nciea.org)