TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS OF
A Place for Birds

by Melissa Stewart

Text Type: Informational

TEXT DESCRIPTION	PLACEMENT
This illustrated picture book focuses on the many threats to the bird population, and specific actions people can take to help protect birds. The book includes basic information about birds and a section that explains how birds are important to both animals and plants. The text ends with a call to action and suggests ways students can help to protect the bird population. Note: Students work only with specific sections of this text.	Students work primarily with the text at the top of each page and two short sections on the importance of birds to plants and animals. These parts of the text are challenging, but accessible to first graders when read aloud and supported by instruction. When quantitative level, qualitative level and tasks are considered, this is an appropriately complex read- aloud for first graders.

QUANTITATIVE MEASURE

QUANTITATIVE MEASURE OF THE TEXT: 970L
ASSOCIATED BAND LEVEL: 4-5

QUALITATIVE MEASURES

MEANING/PURPOSE: Slightly Complex
The purpose of the text, "If we work together…there will always be a place for birds", is explicitly stated at the beginning of the book. The text at the top of each page is clear and tightly focused. Each two- page spread presents a specific threat birds face and a related action humans can take to protect birds from that threat.

TEXT STRUCTURE: Moderately Complex
The text has a clear, repetitive problem/solution structure. Problems and solutions are described in large print at the top of each two-page spread. The organizational structure of the text is complex, but predictable- a specific problem is stated on the left-hand page, a corresponding solution on the right, and a related example is included in a single sidebar (work with these sidebars is minimal). Understanding of the text is well supported by detailed illustrations. Predictable page layout and headings support readers in navigating and understanding the text.

LANGUAGE FEATURES: Very Complex
The text contains some academic and domain specific vocabulary, but the parts of the text students work closely with are not overly technical. The language in the text is fairly clear, but at times, students must make simple inferences to connect ideas between sentences. Stylistically, the author often uses complex sentences in which the subordinate clause comes before the main clause. While this may be initially confusing to young students, many of these sentences have a very similar structure (When people…birds can live and grow.) Once the initial sentence has been unpacked, this repeated exposure supports the understanding of complex sentences and the relationship between ideas in the text.

KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS: Moderately Complex
This text requires some discipline-specific knowledge about what birds eat, where they live and how they raise their young. This book includes a mix of simple and more complex ideas.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR READER AND TASK

This text is read aloud and well supported through discussion and direct instruction. Because of the complexity of the sidebars, students work closely only with the simpler sentences at the top of each page (one to two sentence statements of problem and solution heavily supported by illustrations). Teachers may choose to differentiate by including more work with the examples in the sidebars or by paraphrasing the examples while encouraging students to note key details in the illustrations. This book is used as a read aloud after students have done extensive work on birds; this previous work should solidly support students in comprehending this challenging text.

Specific supports for English Language Learners, students with special needs, and students who need enrichment are included in the module.

RATIONALE

This text continues to build students' understanding of the importance of birds and allows them to apply some of the scientific knowledge built in Module 3 as they examine the dangers faced by birds and what people can do to help protect them. Working with this text lays the groundwork for taking action to protect birds (by creating a Feathered Friend Saver) in the performance task. The complexity of the text provides an opportunity for working with many of the more challenging standards in the first grade curriculum. The strong focus in this book, as well as the predictable problem/solution structure, make it an excellent vehicle for examining how reasons can support the points an author makes (RI.1.8), and identifying the connections between two pieces of information in a text (RI.1.3). The number of common academic vocabulary words, richly supported by context, illustrations and the students' in-depth understanding of the topic, offer valuable practice in determining the meaning of new words using a variety of strategies (RI.1.4, L.1.4).

1M4.3 #11