

Creating Text Sets for Your Classroom

What are text sets?

Text sets are collections of resources from different genre, media, and levels of reading difficulty that are designed to be supportive of the learning of readers with a range of experiences and interests. A text-set collection focuses on one concept or topic and can include includes multiple genres such as books, charts and maps, informational pamphlets, poetry and songs, photographs, non-fiction books, almanacs or encyclopedias.



What's the best way to arrange text sets?

Text sets are most readily accessed when they are stored in containers that allow the front covers of books or prints to face forward. Half size crates [half height, half depth] are perfect for this as are plastic carry containers meant for grooming products or household cleaners. Alternately, large magazine holders that hold oversized texts can be used. You will need one such container for every 4-5 students in your class and some way to label the containers.

How is a text set assembled? What do you look for in a collection?

Typically, text sets are unified by the topic that they explore. At the same time, they are differentiated by their genres and format. The collection should include a range of kinds of texts all on the same topic. "Flight," for instance, can be a text set focal point for a collection of books that range from books on Charles Lindbergh to how birds fly.

As the text sets you assemble will demonstrate the possibilities to your students, strike a middle balance. A slim collection may not inspire their efforts, and an amazing collection might intimidate your students. If you have a number of English language learners or special education students, try to locate a picture dictionary and copy the pages particular to your concept.

You might anchor a "Princess Power" Text Set with any of the following
Munsch, Robert. *The Paper Bag Princess*. Toronto: Annick Press, 1980.
Jackson, Ellen. *Cinder Edna*. New York: HarperTrophy, 1998.
Cole, Babette. *Princess Smartypants*. New York: Puffin, 1997.

A "Color" text set could contain texts ranging from Stephanie Feeney's captivating wordless book, *Hawaii is a Rainbow* (U of Hawaii P, 1985) all the way to Neil Ardley's *The Science Book of Color: The Harcourt Brace Science Series*, with an accompanying prism (Harcourt, 1991).