



# Text Complexity Analysis of

Everyday Mysteries: Why Do We Yawn?

(title)

Library of Congress

(author)

Recommended Complexity Band:

9-10

## Qualitative Measures

**Meaning/Purpose:** (Briefly explain the levels of meaning (Literary Text) or purpose (Informational text.) The purpose of the text is to answer the title question, “Why do we yawn?” The first line following the title provides one possible answer. The remainder of the article describes what a yawn is, then provides claims about why we yawn, including contagious yawns.

**Text Structure:** (Briefly describe the structure, organization, and other features of the text.) The organization of the text is generally sequential, moving from a description of when people yawn to a scientific explanation of what a yawn is, and finally to historical theories of yawns. Text features enhance understanding. The first sentence states that “yawning might serve a social function and physiological function,” alerting the reader that explanations of how yawning is both social and physiological will be discussed. The use of graphics is unnecessary but adds interest to the text.

**Language Features:** (Briefly describe the conventions and clarity of the language used in the text, including the complexity of the vocabulary and sentence structures.) The conventionality of the text is straightforward. The author presents the information in a conversational way with limited use of figurative language. The article contains many academic and scientific vocabulary words. Some of the academic words are defined within the context of the text. The article contains many complex and compound sentences.

**Knowledge Demands:** (Briefly describe the knowledge demands the text requires of students.) The article requires moderate levels of discipline content knowledge. Yawning is defined in scientific terms, and the article includes parts of the circulatory, respiratory, and neurological systems. There is a strong emphasis on collaboration and change over time.

## Text Description

### Briefly describe the text:

This article seeks to answer the question, “Why do we yawn?” Scientists have yet to reach consensus about the function of yawning. Social and physiological claims about why we yawn are presented from Hippocrates, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century scientists, and scientists today.

## Quantitative Measure

**Complexity Band Level** (provide range): 9-10, 11-CCR

**Lexile or Other Quantitative Measure of the Text:** 1210L (this is an unofficial Lexile measure)

## Considerations for Reader and Task

Below are factors to consider with respect to the reader and task.

### Potential Challenges this Text Poses:

The text is very technical in describing body functions involved in a yawn. For example, a yawn is defined as “a coordinated movement of the thoracic muscles in the chest, diaphragm, larynx in the throat, and palate in the mouth.” Other scientific vocabulary words include *vertebrates*, *theories*, *biological*, *surfactant*, *alveoli*, *semi-voluntary*, *reflex*, *neurotransmitters*, *hypothalamus*, *neuropeptide*, *protein*, *hormones*, *homeostatic*, *jugular vein*, *organism*, *circadian*, and *neurons*. Some of these terms (*hormones*, *theories*) will be familiar from 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades, but others (*circadian*, *neuropeptide*) are new.

Although some academic vocabulary words are defined within context (i.e., *pandiculation*, *oscitation*), other words are not as obvious in meaning and might need to be taught prior to reading the article.

## Recommended Placement

### Briefly explain the recommended placement of the text in a particular grade band.

The quantitative measure places this article within the high school grade bands (9-10 and 11-CCR), which is appropriate based on the knowledge demands required for this text. While the article contains a large amount of subject-specific vocabulary and challenging academic concepts, the relatively simple organization and structure along with an accessible subject make it most appropriate for an early high school student in the 9-10 grade band.

Reviewed by: Melissa Woods, Brevard, January 28, 2016

(Name, School District, Date)