

Close Reading

Tips and strategies to use with your students in class

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What is close reading?

"Close, analytic reading stresses engaging with a text of sufficient complexity directly and examining its meaning thoroughly and methodically, encouraging students to read and reread deliberately....[It] entails the careful gathering of observations about a text and careful consideration about what those observations taken together add up to" (PARCC, 2011, p. 6).

Close reading tips

(Hinchman & Moore, 2013)



1. Read and re-read

Close reading involves reading the text multiple times (usually 3 times or more). Each reading uncovers a layer of meaning and incrementally works towards building the general comprehension of the text.



2. Annotate

Annotating is an instrumental practice in purposeful close reading. It involves jotting down notes, highlighting key lexical terms and grammatical structures, and identifying topical ideas and factual information.



3. Summarize

Through summarizing and synthesizing, close readers get to consolidate their overall understanding of the text making sure every nuance of meaning is captured.



4. Self-explain

Self-explaining involves figuring out "how ideas and information relate to one another. Ask and answer questions about the text."

5. Determine the significance of what you notice

Identify the rationale why you think certain ideas in the text are more significant than others.

Close reading questions

Text-based questions

- What is the text about?
- How does the text establish the setting?
- What keywords and phrases the author use to signal the general topic/theme of the text?
- What inferences can you make about the topic of the text from your first reading?
- What words or phrases you did not understand in the text?
- Who is speaking in the text?
- Why did the author write the text?
- Who is addressed in the text?
- Which language cues did you find helpful in understanding the text?
- Does the text embed visual images? If so, how do they align with the content of the text?
- Is the text cohesive? What textual features used to connect sentences and paragraphs together?
- Is the text coherent? Explain how?

Reader-based questions

- Did you draw on your prior knowledge to understand the text?
- Did you find any parts of the text confusing and why?
- How did you overcome a particular difficulty you had with the text?
- What do you think about the topic of the text?
- Do you agree/disagree with the author's stance regarding...?
- If you were the author of this text, what would you have changed in its content and why?
- What do you think about the language of the text?



Sources

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