

# Close Reading in the Classroom



Office of Curriculum & Instruction

Tucson Unified School District  
Curriculum & Student Engagement: MODULE 6  
November 13, 2014  
6-12 ELA

# What is close reading?

At your tables discuss your understanding of close reading.

# Outcomes

- Gain knowledge of close reading and make connections to the ELA shifts
- Practice annotation to identify key components of close reading
- Recognize culturally responsive instructional strategies that occur during close reading

# Norms

- Equity of Voice
- Active Listening
- Respect for All Perspectives
- Safety and Confidentiality
- Respectful Use of Technology

# ELA SHIFTS

1. Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic language**
2. Reading, writing and speaking grounded in **evidence from the text**, both literary and informational
3. **Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction**

# Connecting to ELA standards and Content Literacy Standards

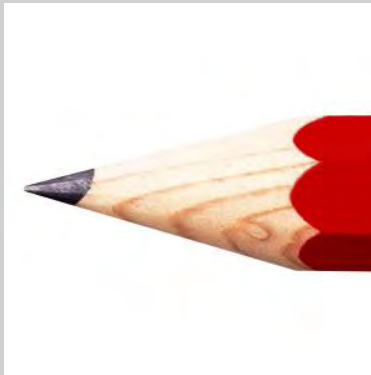
Close reading provides the opportunity for multiple standards to be practiced in both literary and **informational** reading.

# Connecting to Culturally Responsive Instruction

Refers to the practice of accessing all students' strengths and cultural understandings (social capital) so as to better engage students in learning

Annotation is a note of any form made  
while reading text.

“Reading with a pencil.”





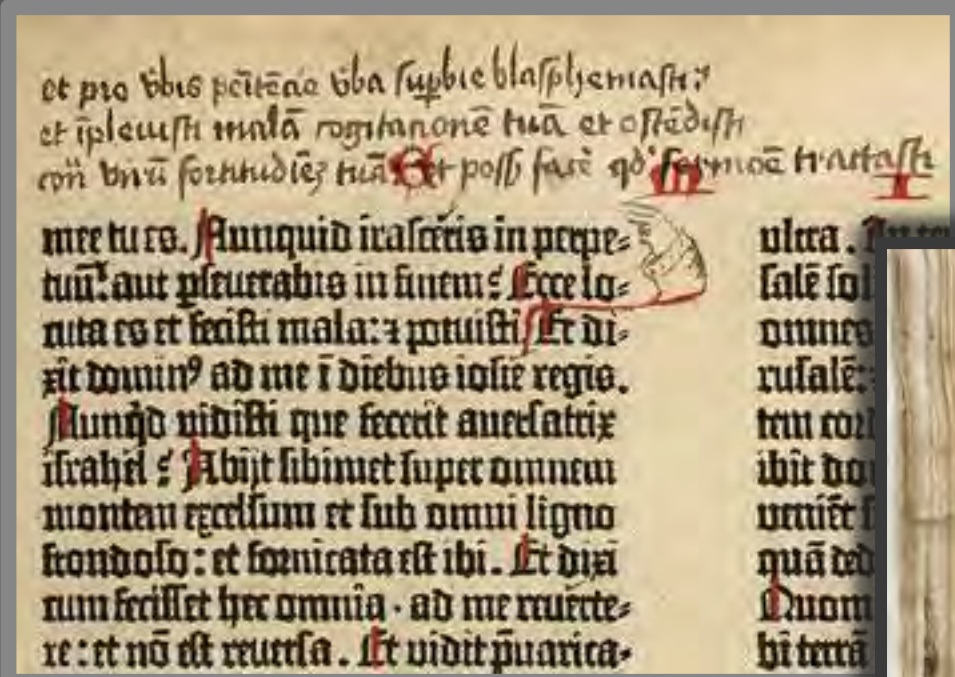
# Annotation slows down the reader in order to deepen understanding.



# Annotation is not highlighting.



# People have been annotating texts since there have been texts to annotate.



Before Breakfast

alliteration

WHERE'S Papa going with that ax?" said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast. "Out to the hoghouse," replied Mrs. Arable "Some pigs were born last night." "I don't see why he needs an ax," continued Fern, who was only eight. "Well," said her mother, "one of the pigs is a runt. It's very small and weak, and it will never amount to anything. So your father has decided to do away with it." "Do away with it?" shrieked Fern "You mean kill it? Just because it's smaller than the others?" Mrs. Arable put a pitcher of cream on the table. "Don't yell, Fern!" she said. "Your father is right. The pig would probably die anyway." Fern pushed a chair out of the way and ran outdoors. The grass was wet and the earth smelled of springtime. Fern's sneakers were sopping by the time she caught up with her father.

plowable

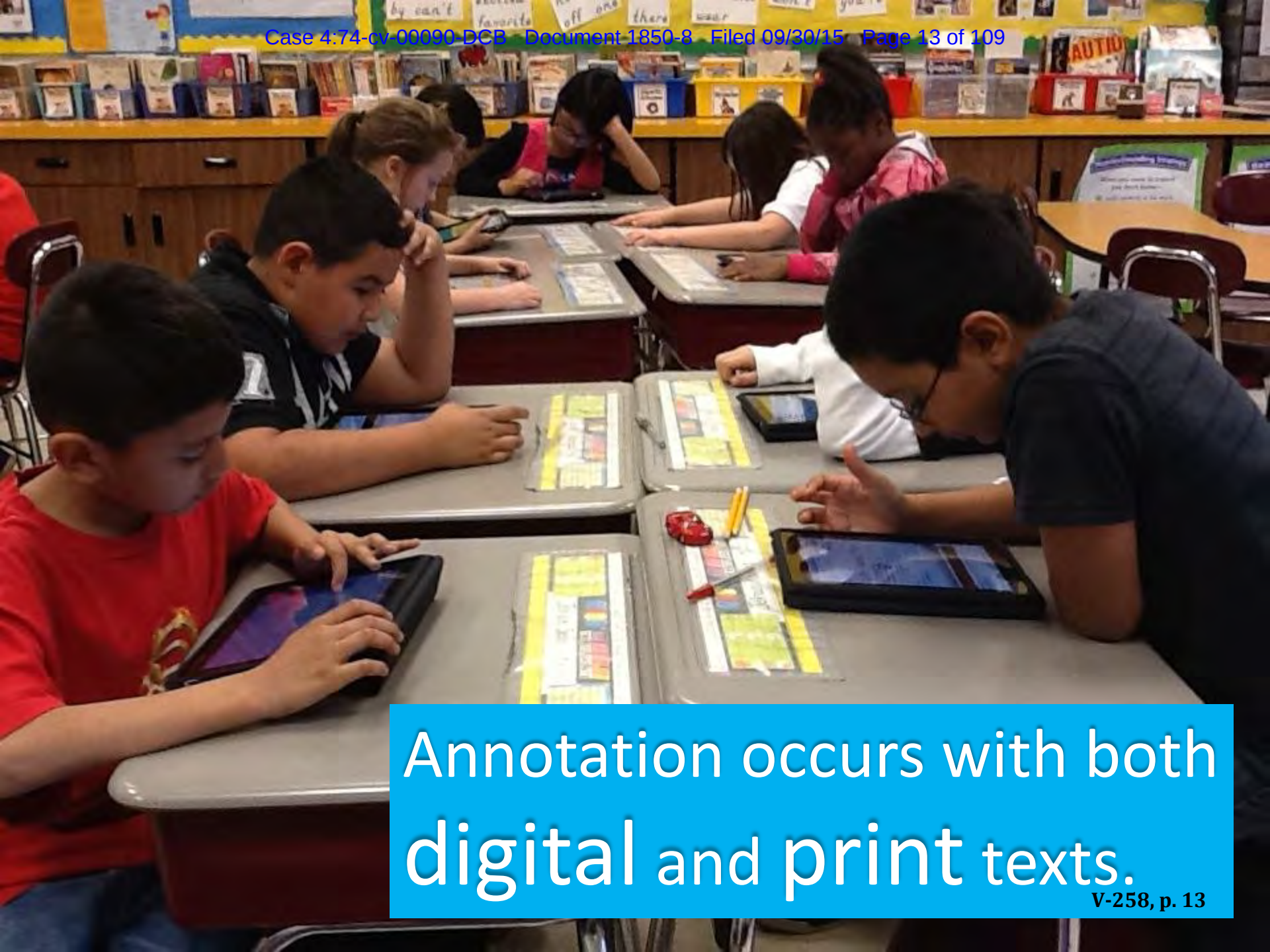
nature

death

plant  
killing  
goes with  
rating in  
a farm  
spring  
pig

sense

4<sup>th</sup> grade student's annotation of connotative\* meanings in *Charlotte's Web*



Annotation occurs with both  
**digital and print texts.**

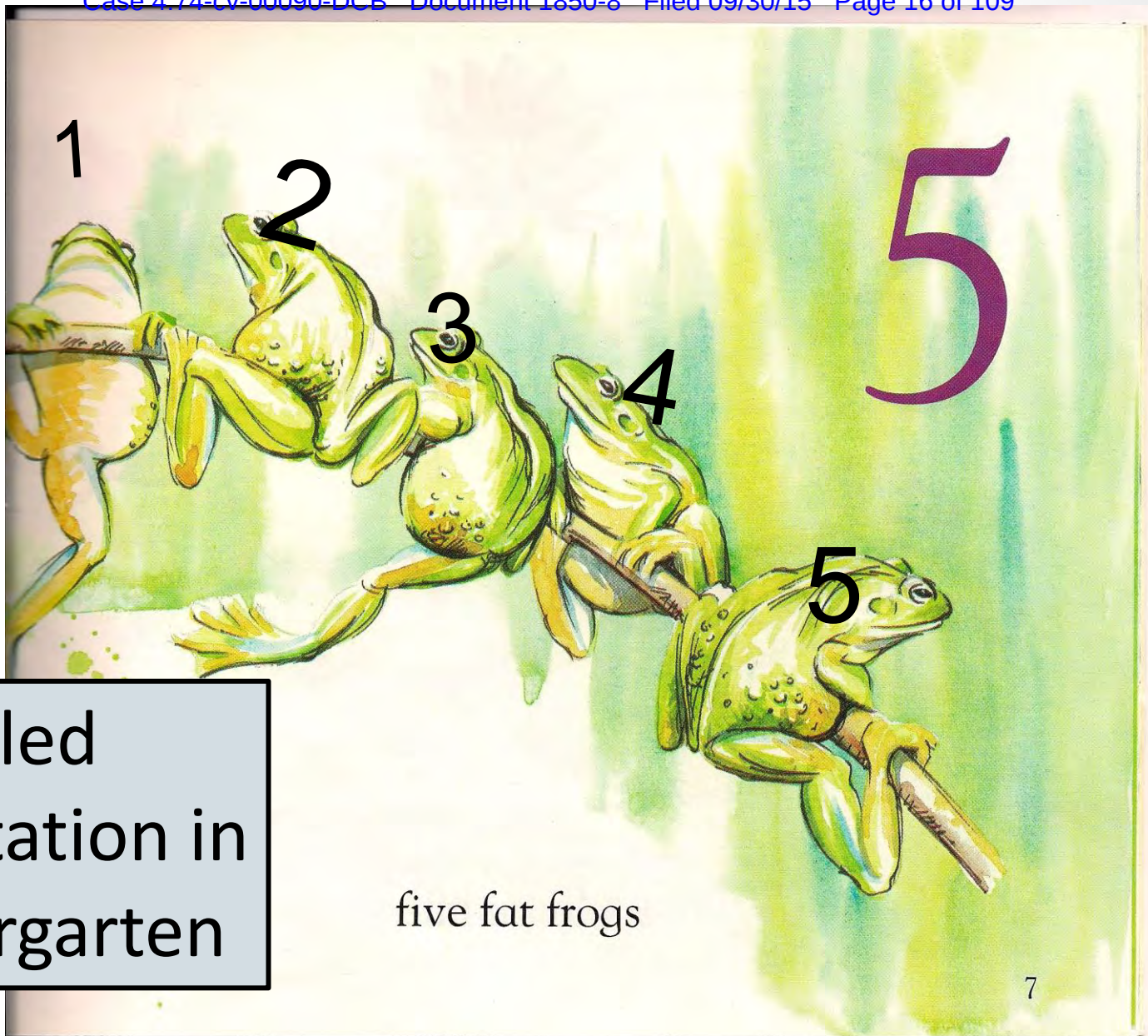
Even young students can annotate.



# Annotation in PreK-2



- Language experience approach
- Interactive writing and shared pen activities



Modeled  
Annotation in  
Kindergarten



**Modeled Annotation  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Grade)**

*Wings in Water*



✓ It looks like its flying! Maybe that's why they mention wings.

A huge, flat creature leaps out of the sea. It skims over the waves and flips backward with a splash. Could this be a fish? Yes. It is a manta ray.

These diamond-shaped giants live in warm oceans. They can be 22 feet wide and weigh as much as a small car—up to 3,000 pounds.

Wow! 22 ft. wide. That's huge! Is the manta ray dangerous?

**Speed Swimmer**

Their skeletons are made of soft bone called cartilage. This flexible cartilage skeleton helps to make the manta a graceful, powerful swimmer.

Slowly flapping their two large fins like wings, mantas fly under the water.

They do fly (sort of)

**Eating on the Run**

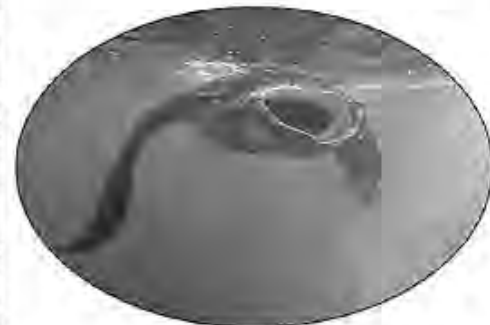
Mantas eat tiny plants and animals called plankton. The manta uses fins on the sides of its mouth to guide plankton into its big mouth while it swims.

✓ That's a big mouth!



Mantas swim with their mouths wide open when they feed.

Ⓐ They're not dangerous at all!



**Friendly Giants**

Mantas may be big, but they are gentle. They are curious. They will sometimes swim near human divers, and even let the divers reach out and touch them. A manta's tail looks scary, but it is harmless and will not sting a diver.

Wow! You can touch them!

**Big Babies**

When a female manta mates, her baby grows in an egg that hatches inside her. Later the baby is born, rolled up in its fins. It uncurls these fins, then swims away. At first, the baby stays close to shore. But soon it will fly through the ocean and leap and somersault above the waves.

Ⓠ Does the mother manta ray take care of the baby?

# Annotations in Grades 3-5

- Underline the major points.
- **Circle** keywords or phrases that are confusing or unknown to you.
- Use a question mark (?) for questions that you have during the reading. Be sure to write your question.

Nature photography can be a fun and interesting hobby. In this article, [unclear] describes his experiences and provides tips for beginning photographers. [unclear] questions that follow.

Using Questioning in Fifth Grade

# Taking His Best

by Claudia Cangilla McAdam

1 John Fielder could have drowned on his way to work. His raft bumped over rocks and pitched through rapids on the Dolores River in southwestern Colorado. The spring runoff of melting snow from the mountains sent chilly water crashing down the river.

2 Fielder's rubber raft rushed toward "Snaggletooth," the largest rapid on this stretch of the Dolores. The raft smacked into a big rock in the middle of the 100-foot-wide river. Thousands of

5 ① Dur...  
recorde...  
camera...  
driving...  
done, ...  
in Col...

6 ② ...  
want t...  
on fil...  
65 po...  
hikes

Places  
Islands?

Work  
-on  
Islands?

Same text,  
different student,  
different strategy:  
Inferring.

# Taking His B

by Claudia Cangilla

infer  
is very  
dangerous

infer  
is  
more  
experin

1 John Fielder could have drowned on his way to work. His raft bumped over rocks and pitched through rapids on the Dolores River in southwestern Colorado. The spring runoff of melting snow from the mountains sent chilly water crashing down the river.

2 Fielder's rubber raft rushed toward "Snaggletooth," the largest rapid on this stretch of the Dolores. The raft smacked into a big rock in the middle of the 100-foot-wide river. Thousands of pounds of water poured over the edge of the boat.

# Annotation in Grades 6-8

- *Underline* the major points.
- *Circle keywords or phrases* that are confusing or unknown to you.
- *Use a question mark (?)* for questions that you have during the reading. Be sure to write your question.
- ***Use an exclamation mark (!)*** for things that surprise you, and briefly note what it was that caught your attention.
- ***Draw an arrow (↵)*** when you make a connection to something inside the text, or to an idea or experience outside the text. Briefly note your connections.

Modeled annotation in Seventh Grade

Charlie Stowe waited until he heard his mother snore before he got out of bed. Even then he moved with caution and tiptoed to the window. The front of the house was irregular, so that it was possible to see a light burning in his mother's room. But now all the windows were dark. A searchlight passed across the sky, lighting the banks of cloud and probing the dark deep spaces between, seeking enemy airships. The wind blew from the sea, and Charlie Stowe could hear behind his mother's snores the beating of the waves. A draught through the cracks in the window-frame stirred his nightshirt. Charlie Stowe was frightened. But the thought of the tobacconist's shop which his father kept down a dozen wooden stairs drew him on. He was twelve years old, and already boys at the County School mocked him because he had never smoked a cigarette. The packets were piled twelve deep below, Gold Flake and Players, De Reszke, Abdulla, Woodbines, and the little shop lay under a thin haze of stale smoke which would completely disguise his crime. That it was a crime to steal some of his father's stock Charlie Stowe had no doubt, but he did not love his father his father was unreal to him, a wraith, pale, thin, indefinite, who noticed him only spasmodically and left even punishment to his mother. For his mother he felt a passionate demonstrative love; her large boisterous presence and her noisy charity filled the world for him; from her speech he judged her the friend of everyone, from the rector's wife to the 'dear Queen', except the 'Huns', the monsters who lurked in Zeppelins in the clouds. But his father's affection and dislike were as indefinite as his movements. Tonight he had said he would be in Norwich, and yet you never knew. Charlie Stowe had no sense of safety as he crept down the wooden stairs. When they creaked he clenched his fingers on the collar of his nightshirt. At the bottom of the stairs he came out quite suddenly into the little shop. It was too dark to see his way, and he did not dare touch the switch. For half a minute he sat in despair on the bottom step with

Sense of secrecy

Sense of mystery, menace, potential danger, etc

Searchlight - airships - wartime

1st World War

Sleeping mother - repetition of snore

Cold - out of bed! - darkness emphasized

Not modern

What is Charlie up to?

Mention of father

'Manly' to smoke - grown up

More info about Charlie

Brands of cigarettes

Pressure from peers

A 'crime' stealing, guilty conscience

Why?

What does all this mean?

Father does not seem to bother with him - different to mum

Contrast with father

Zeppelins - bombing raids

Something mysterious about father

A sign of fear!

A sense almost of surprise

What to do next!

# Annotation in Grades 9-12

- *Underline* the major points.
- *Circle keywords or phrases* that are confusing or unknown to you.
- *Use a question mark (?)* for questions that you have during the reading. Be sure to write your question.
- *Use an exclamation mark (!)* for things that surprise you, and briefly note what it was that caught your attention.
- *Draw an arrow (↔)* when you make a connection to something inside the text, or to an idea or experience outside the text. Briefly note your connections.
- **Mark EX** when the author provides an example.
- **Numerate arguments, important ideas, or key details** and write words or phrases that restate them.

Tone: celebratory  
 Form: Free form  
 Digging = extended metaphor of digging and roots.  
 He never digs into his roots, his heritage  
 Broken down  
 Assembles  
 Language: technical  
 Colloquial  
 Conversational  
 monosyllables  
 Pen fat  
 with what?  
 Digging  
 opening - coming to terms with self?  
 home  
 violence?  
 protection?  
 A natural extension?  
 Speaker - male  
 patriarchal traditions  
 reverent attitude

Memory #1  
 Under my window a clean rasping sound  
 When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:  
 My father, digging. I look down - remembering / rasping connotes a living thing  
 to look down on has negative con. but the poem is positive + celebratory  
 Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds  
 Bends low, comes up twenty years away - connections with the past, former generations, traditions  
 Stooping in rhythm through potato drills  
 Where he was digging.  
 In rhythm =  
 In touch with  
 In agreement with  
 The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft  
 Against the inside knee was levered firmly.  
 He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep  
 To scatter new potatoes that we picked  
 Loving their cool hardness in our hands.  
 homely  
 in control, precise

Admiration  
 Colloquial  
 language  
 Transition  
 By God, the old man could handle a spade,  
 Just like his old man.  
 Memory #2  
 My grandfather could cut more turf in a day  
 Than any other man on Toner's bog.  
 Once I carried him milk in a bottle  
 Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up  
 To drink it, then fell to right away  
 Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods  
 Over his shoulder, digging down and down  
 For the good turf. Digging.  
 skill, pride, dignity  
 - bragging rights  
 worked hard - work ethics  
 strength - technique  
 Symbol: peat  
 living roots  
 digging  
 squat pen  
 Why squat?  
 crouching  
 ownership

Turning Point  
 heritage  
 The cold smell of potato mold, the squelch and slap  
 Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge  
 Through living roots awoken in my head.  
 But I've no spade to follow men like them.  
 - negative images  
 traditions / livelihoods destroyed  
 no longer available  
 an awakening  
 of what?  
 Follow in what way?

Closure - Acceptance  
 Between my finger and my thumb  
 The squat pen rests.  
 I'll dig with it.  
 weapon - tool  
 Follows tradition of fathers  
 using the tools available  
 to him.  
 Seamus Heaney  
 Reminders of home  
 + health  
 rests, snug,  
 nestled

2 separate memories:  
 Father digging potatoes  
 Grandfather digging turf - peat bogs  
 The pen is mightier than the sword.  
 Onomatopoeia  
 rasping  
 gravelly  
 squelch  
 slap  
 V. 258, p. 24

# Student annotation in 11<sup>th</sup> grade English



# Connecting to ELA Standards

If you want to teach effective annotation, begin with the purpose.



<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/student-annotated-reading-strategy>

# *Closing in on Close Reading*

## by Nancy Boyles

- Independently read from the beginning through the section “Why Close Reading Now?”
- Read to find out what close reading is and what is its purpose.
  - Underline the major points
  - Circle keywords or phrases that are confusing or unknown to you
  - Use a question mark (?) for questions that you have during the reading. Be sure to write your question
  - Use an exclamation mark (!) for things that surprise you, and briefly note what it was that caught your attention

# According to the text, what is close reading and what is its purpose?

- Select a couple of your annotations and share at your table
- Discuss why you chose to annotate a particular phrase, sentence, section etc...

# Defining Close Reading

Close reading is:

An instructional routine in which students critically examine a text, especially through repeated reading.

It invites to examine the deep structure of a piece of text, to “x-ray the book. . .(for) the skeleton hidden between the covers”

# The Key Concepts of Close Reading

## **Close reading requires the ability to**

- Engage directly with a complex text
- Examine a text's meaning thoroughly and methodically
- Exhibit the patience to read and reread
- Understand central ideas and key supporting details
- Reflect on:
  - the meanings of individual words and sentences
  - the order in which sentences unfold
  - the development of ideas over the course of the text
- Attain a solid understanding of the text as a whole

# What makes close reading a culturally responsive strategy in literacy?

- Student-centered discourse
- Inclusive of student voices, experiences, prior knowledge
- Multiple perspectives shared
- Students are engaged and active participants
- Use of multicultural texts and topics
- Promotes meaningful literacy experiences

# Outcomes

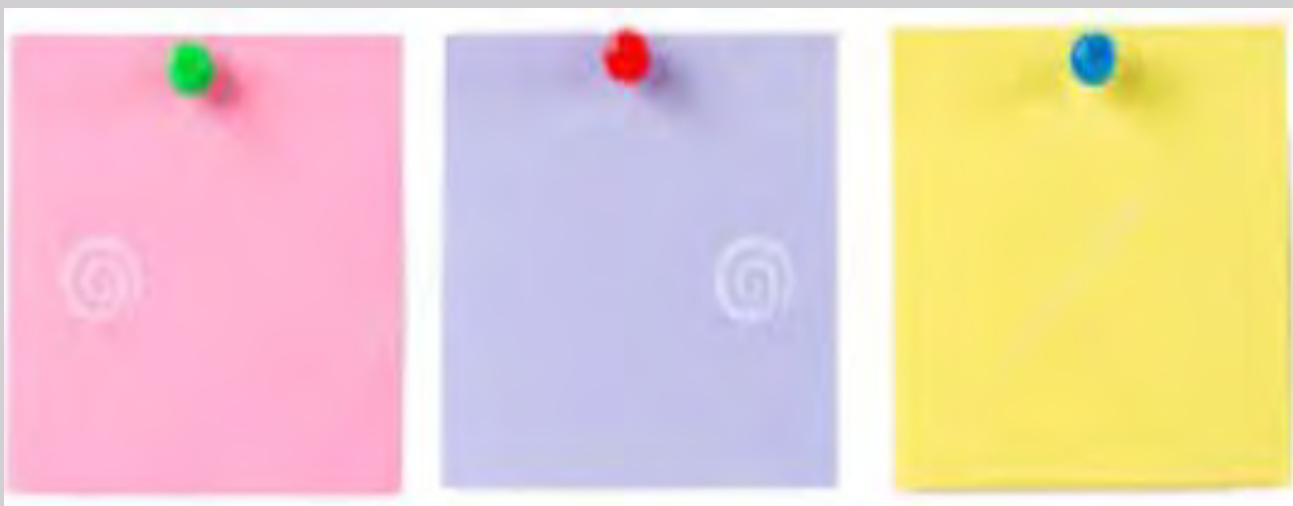
- Gain knowledge of close reading and make connections to the ELA shifts
- Practice annotation to identify key components of close reading
- Recognize culturally responsive instructional strategies that occur during close reading

# Closure

What features of close reading are evident in the classrooms I visit and which could be added?

What questions should I be asking as part of the teacher evaluation process?





# Resources

- [www.readworks.org](http://www.readworks.org)
- [www.newsela.com](http://www.newsela.com)
- <http://kellygallagher.org>
  - Article of the Week (Building Deeper Readers & Writers)
- [www.achievethecore.org](http://www.achievethecore.org)
  - Close reading: model lessons
  - <http://www.reading.org/Libraries/lrp/ira-lrp-policy-brief--close-reading--13sept2013.pdf>  
article for more experienced users of close reading