Close Reading in the Classroom

Office of Curriculum & Instruction

Tucson Unified School District
Curriculum & Student Engagement: MODULE 6
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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.
People have been annotating texts since there have been texts to annotate.
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 soaking by the time she caught up with her father.
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

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.

**Speed Swimmer**

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

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

**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.

**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.

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.
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 pounds of water slammed the raft into a million pieces.
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.

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
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.
Digging

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; as snug as a gun.

Under my window a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:
My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, cornes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft
Against the inside knee was wedged firm
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep
To scatter new potatoes that we picked
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

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.

The cold smell of potato mold, the squelch and slap
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge
Through living roots awaken in my head
But I've no spade to follow men like them.

Seamus Heaney

2 Separate memories:
Father digging potatoes
Grandfather digging turf - peat bogs

The pen is mightier than the sword.
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
- www.newsela.com
- http://kellygallagher.org
  - Article of the Week (Building Deeper Readers & Writers)
- www.achievethecore.org
  - Close reading: model lessons
  - article for more experienced users of close reading