Close and Critical Reading

Common Core Reading Standards

Step 1: What does the text say? Or What is the content of the text?

Close reading of text assumes that the first reading is to determine the content of the passage. If there are questions following the text, then the first reading is to read the questions and then read text to locate the answers to the questions. If there is a purpose beyond answering the questions, then a second read is done to determine the whole content of the passage.

Questions for Summary/Restatement/Retelling

- Determine a shortened version of the text containing only the main points and logical inferences.
- How would you summarize or determine a shortened version of the text containing only the main points? *CC1, CC2*
- What is the gist/central idea? *CC2*
- What is the specific textual evidence used to support the central idea? *CC1*
- What are the most important ideas/events? *CC1, CC2*
- What are the ideas in order of importance or presentation? *CC1*
- What ideas might the author be *suggesting* rather than directly stating? What can you *infer* (obvious, logical inferences) from these hints or suggestions? *CC1*

Common Core Reading Anchor Standards
CC1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
CC2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas

> **Step 1** assumes that students can decode the words and read fluently enough to replicate the meaning intended by the author. To support the reading development of students who cannot decode or read fluently or comprehend sufficiently go to www.missionliteracy.com Reading Comprehension and find the appropriate assessments and interventions.

Summary Definition
Summary means a short version containing the gist of something: a shortened version of something that has been said or written, containing only the main points. To read for summary, students need to have developed the following comprehension skills: determining important ideas, visualizing, synthesizing, fixing-up strategies, and asking questions. They need to know how to use the ideas without using the same language (paraphrasing and using synonyms).

Summarizing Activities

Word or Phrase
> Students circle the most important word or phrase in the sentence, paragraph or text.

Important Ideas
> Students underline the most important words or phrases that describe an idea.

One-syllable Word Summary
> Students work in small groups to develop a one-syllable word summary of the article. Students may use only one-syllable words.

One Sentence Summary
> Students state key ideas by using one of the following sentence structures: description; definition; compare/contrast; problem/ solution; sequence; cause/effect.

One Sentence Summary Citation
> Santa, C.M., Havens, L.T., Maycumber, E.M. (1998). Creating independence through student-owned strategies, 2ndEd. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Guided Highlighted Reading   *Developed by Dr. Elaine Weber*

1. Teacher selects an article or piece of text that is accessible to all the students.
2. Teacher identifies the vocabulary that needs to be taught in advance.
3. Teacher determines a context for the information that could frame it for the students' prior knowledge.
4. Teacher considers what kind of discussion you want to come out of the reading of the text.
5. Teacher selects the appropriate information to be highlighted based on the goal for the discussion.
6. Teacher maps out the text paragraph by paragraph with prompts to highlight the information.
7. Students use a highlighter and follow directions to highlight the text that is requested by the prompt.
8. Students compare their highlighted text with one another.

Research Supporting Step # 1 What does the text say?
Schema Theory
Anderson, R.C., & Pearson, P.D. (1984). "A Schema-Theoretic View of Basic Processes in Reading Comprehension." In P.D. Pearson, R. Barr, M.L. Kamil, & P. Mosenthal (Eds.), *Handbook of Reading Research* (pp.255-291). New York: Longman.

Summary
Robert Marzano's Meta Analysis of Instructional Strategies 2004 to 2008 - Marzano Research Laboratory

Retelling
Cambourne, B., 'Retelling: a whole-language, natural learning activity for helping learner-writers' in Walshe, R. D., March, P. & Jenson, D. (eds), (1998)Writing and learning in Australia, Dellasta Books in association with Oxford University Press, Melbourne,.

Step 2: How does the text say it? Or What techniques of craft and structure does the author use in the text?

Critical reading of text is done after *close* reading when an adequate understanding of the content occurs. Critical analysis of the text contributes to the understanding of what the text means. Reading to analyze the text may take several reads. Each time you may read the text to determine different aspects of the craft, structure and purpose.

Guiding Questions to determine the craft and structure of the text. (What are the genre, organization, features, word choice, figures of speech, etc.?)

- How is the information organized (e.g. time, topic, cause/effect, compare/contrast, persuasion)) *CC5*
- What genre does the selection represent? *CC5*
- How does the piece open—exposition, lead, etc.?*CC5* Whose voice did the author choose as narrator? *CC3*
- From what point of view/perspective was this written? *CC3*
- What are the sources of information and fact? Is there more than one source of information? *CC3*
- What role does dialogue play in the text? *CC3*
- What language is used—technical, dialect, variant spellings, archaic words, etc.? *CC4*
- What are the style, mood, and tone? *CC4*
- What word choice, imagery and figures of speech (e.g. simile, metaphor, alliteration, irony, repetition, personification, etc.) does the author use? *CC4*

Common Core Reading Anchor Standards
CC3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
CC4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
CC5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

Informational Text
With informational text this step of reading involves recognizing the structure, craft, and function of the discussion. The text is analyzed to determine what a text does to convey ideas. The text is analyzed for structure, organization, genre, language, purpose and perspective. This step is to determine the "how" of the text:

- How are topics discussed?
- How are examples and evidence used?
- How are conclusions reached?
- How are the purpose and perspective conveyed?
- How is language used to inform and influence the reader?

Literature
When literature is analyzed it helps to explain what a work of literature means, and how it means it; it is essentially an articulation of and a defense of an interpretation which shows how the resources of literature are used to create the meaningfulness of the text. There are several main reasons for analyzing literature:
- To understand the function of genre in creating meaning.
- To learn the power of the perspective. #3
- To recognize the role of language, figures of speech, and literary devices to create meaning.

Activities for Analyzing Text
Use activities that teach students to analyze structure with graphic organizers, language denoting the structure, and disciplines' dominating structures.

Graphic Organizers for Text Structures
Have students use graphic organizers to display the structure of the various types of text.

Guided Highlighted Reading for Analysis of Text
(Uses the same procedures as Guided Highlighted Reading in Step # 1 except prompts are developed to highlight the language that shows the structure, perspective, and craft of the text.)

Research Supporting Step # 2 How does the text say it?
Beck, I.L., McKeown, M.G., Sandora, C., & Worthy, J.(1996). "Questioning the Author: AYearlong Classroom Implementation to Engage Students With Text." *The Elementary School Journal*, 96, 385-414.

Meyer, B.J.F., & Rice, G.E. (1984). "The Structure of Text." In P.D. Pearson, R. Barr, M.L. Kamil, & P. Mosenthal (Eds.), *Handbook of Reading Research* (pp.319-351). New York: Longman.

Taylor, B.M. & Beach, R.W. (1984). "The Effects of Text Structure Instruction on Middle-Grade Students' Comprehension and Production of Expository Text." *Reading Research Quarterly*, 19, 134-146.

Close and Critical Reading

Common Core Reading Standards

Step 3: What does the text mean? Or What is the theme/thesis of the text and how does the author's choice of content, structure, and craft combine to achieve his/her purpose—author's intent ?

Close reading (Step 1) and critical reading (Step 2) together with reflection on the content and craft, structure, and purpose reveal the big idea, theme/thesis, and the effectiveness of the passage.

Guiding Questions to determine what the text means. (What is the theme/thesis of the text and how do the author's choice of content, structure, and craft combine to achieve his/her purpose—author's intent?)

- What is the central idea/thesis/theme of the text? *CC2*
- How does the author support the central idea, thesis, or theme with ideas and details? *CC2*
- What are the purposes, ends, and objectives? *CC2*
- What is the author's stance/perspective towards the topic? *CC6*
- How does the author use language: dialect, variant spellings, archaic words, formal or informal words, etc. to shape the tone (the author's attitude toward the subject) and the meaning of the piece? *CC6*
- How does the author use point of view, style, mood, tone, text features, imagery, figures of speech (e.g. simile, metaphor, alliteration, irony, repetition, onomatopoeia, personification, etc.), and the lead, etc. to achieve his/her purpose (author's intent)? *CC6*
- Why does the author choose the method of presentation? *CC8*
- What are the concepts that make the reasoning possible, what assumptions underlie the concepts, and what implications follow from the concepts? *CC7, CC8*
- What does the author want the reader to believe? *CC7, CC8*
- What is the quality of information collected; are the sources sufficient, relevant, credible, and current? *CC7, CC8*
- Who or what is not represented? Why? *CC7, CC8*
- What is the quality of information collected, and are the sources sufficient, relevant, credible, and current? *CC8*
- Who or what is not represented? Why? *CC7, 8*

Common Core Reading Anchor Standards

CC2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CC6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

CC7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.*

CC8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Activities to Determine Meaning

Reflection Activity

Students learn to ask the following kinds of questions of the text
What would make this passage more believable?
What would make this passage more effective?
How would changing the perspective, change the meaning?

Steps for Creating Socratic Circles

The Socratic Seminar is based on the idea of Socratic dialogue in which *teachers* lead student discussion through careful questioning to higher levels of thinking, analysis and interaction. Students are divided into two randomly selected groups, the inner and outer circle. The inner circle starts off in its discussion of the text. The outer circle is responsible for listening to the dialogue in the inner circle and, after the discussion is complete (in about 20 minutes), providing feedback to the members of the inner circle about the effectiveness (not content) of the dialogue. Then the process is repeated with the circles exchanging places. Finally, all students turn in a personal reflective piece of writing about the discussed text as well as the process of the circle.

Copeland, Matt (2005). *Socratic Circles: Fostering Critical and* Copeland, Matt. *Creative Thinking in Middle and High School.* Portland, Maine:
Stenhouse Publishers

Tear and Share

Students respond to the four steps of the Close and Critical Reading Protocol on a paper divided into four boxes. The papers are collected and papers are torn into the four parts and organized by the 4 steps. Responses are shared. *- developed by Cynthia Clingman*

Research Supporting Step # 3 What does the text mean?

Gallagher, M., & Pearson, P.D. (1989) "Discussion, Comprehension, and Knowledge Acquisition in Content Area Classrooms" (Tech. Rep. No. 480). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, Center for the Study of Reading.

Raphael, T.E., & Wonnacott, C.A., & Pearson, P.D. (1983). "Increasing Students' Sensitivity to Sources of Information: An Instructional Study in Question-Answer Relationships" (Tech. Rep. No. 284). Urbana, IL University of Illinois, Center for the Study of Reading.

Step 4: What does the text mean to me?

To make a connection to the reader's life requires both close reading and critical reading to get to the big ideas and themes revealed in the passage and reflection to connect the ideas in the passage to what is important in the life of the reader.

Application: So what?
(Synthesis and Application: What does the theme/ thesis mean in your life and/or in the lives of others— text-to-self, text-to-text, and/or text-to-world?)
Text(s)-to-self: *CC7*
- What does this remind me of in my life?
- What is this similar to in my life?
- How is this different from my life?
- Has something like this ever happened to me?
- How does this relate to my life?
- What were my feelings when I read this?

Text(s)-to-text: *CC9*
- What does this remind me of in another book I've read?
- How is this text similar to other things I've read?
- How is this different from other books I've read?
- Have I read about something like this before?

Text(s)-to-world: *CC7*
- What does this remind me of in the real world?
- How is this text similar to things that happen in the real world?
- How is this different from things that happen in the real world?
- How did that part relate to the world around me?
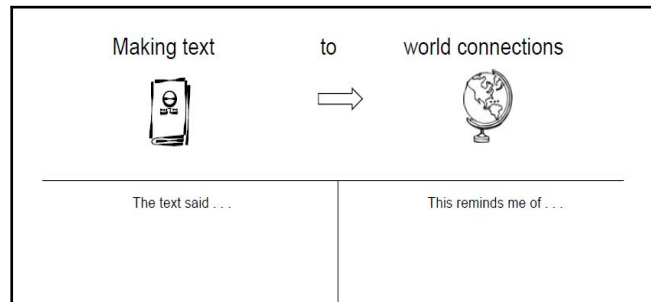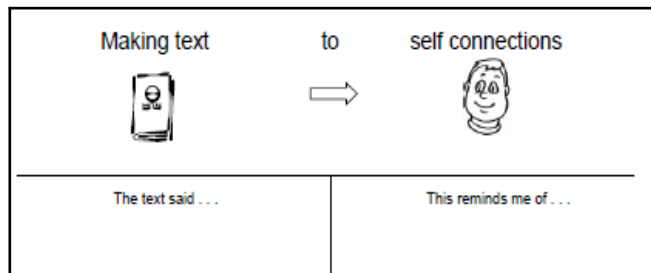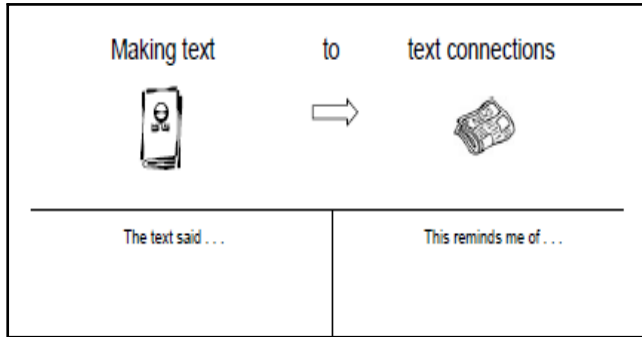
Common Core Reading Anchor Standards
CC7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.*
CC9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Strategies for Making Connections

The link below provides a wealth of resources and graphic organizers to support students in finding relevancy with text.

http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/graphic_organizers.htm

Making text   to   **text connections**

The text said . . .   This reminds me of . . .

Making text   to   **self connections**

The text said . . .   This reminds me of . . .

Making text   to   world connections

The text said . . .   This reminds me of . . .

Education Oasis provides educators with ideas, information, and inspiration. In addition to graphic organizers many other tools can be found on the site to promote close and critical reading
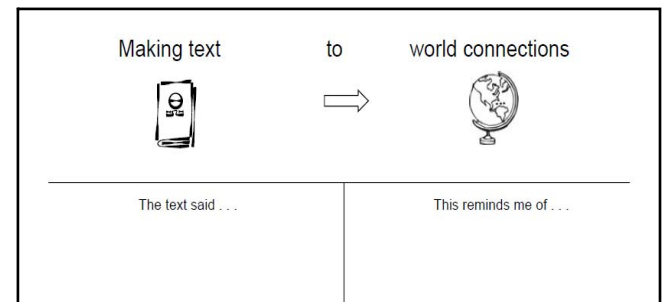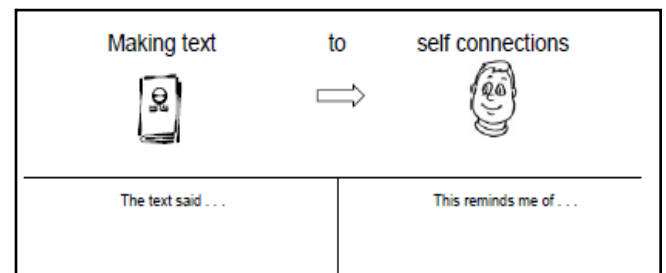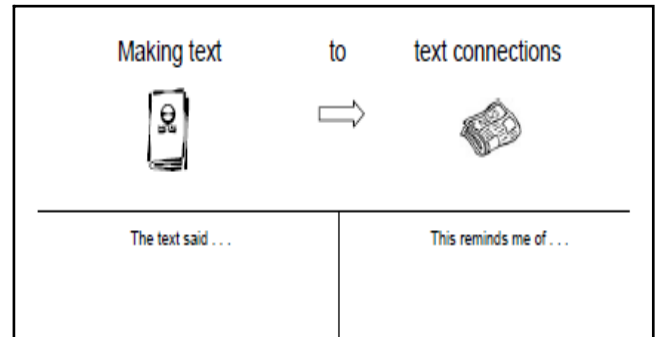
Research Supporting Step #4, What does the text mean to me?

Pearson, P. David, L.R. Roehler, J.A. Dole, and G.G. Duffy. 1992. "Developing Expertise in Reading Comprehension." In S. Jay Samuels and Alan Farstrup, eds. *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*, 2nd Edition. Newark, DE: International Reading Association