The Common Core State Standards suggest that students should consider the sociopolitical and historical context of the text while focusing on what the author actually says. The adoption of the new standards and the focus on text complexity will not push the field backward to an exclusive focus on the text and the one right way to think about what the author says. In fact, we are hopeful that quite the opposite will occur. Close examination of complex texts is exactly what is required for critical literacy. Freebody and Luke (1990) describe four roles that are necessary for every reader to assume:

1. *Code Breaker*: Understanding the text at the surface level (i.e., alphabetic, structural) [CCR - What does the text say? How does it say it?]\*
2. *Meaning Maker*: Comprehending the text at the level intended by the author [CCR - What does it mean?]
3. *Text User:* Analyzing the factors that influenced the author and the text, including a historical grounding of the context within which it was written. [CCR – What does it mean?]
4. *Text Critic*: Understanding that the text is not neutral and that existing biases inform calls to action. [CCR – What does it mean to me? So what?]

Students reach the deep understanding necessary for text criticism by progressing through these stages of analysis. To stop prematurely, locating understanding only through the first two roles, is to shortchange readers by limiting their view of themselves merely as consumers of text and nothing more.

However, adoption of new standards and the focus on text complexity will require that students understand what the author says and be able to defend their opinions and ideas with evidence from the text. In other words, lessons of the future must provide the balance that we think Rosenblatt was looking for. To accomplish this, several key points deserve attention, including the use of

* short worthy passages
* rereading
* reading with a pencil
* noticing things that are confusing
* discussing the text with others
* responding to text-dependent questions.

\*[CCR – Close and Critical Reading Questions used in MMC ELA Framework, CCR Bookmarks on MMP site]