

DESIGNING POWERFUL CLOSE READING LESSONS:



Helping Students Master Complex Text

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DEFINING CLOSE READING

Close, analytic reading stresses examining meaning thoroughly and methodically, encouraging students to read and reread deliberately. Directing student attention on the text itself empowers students to understand the central ideas and key supporting details. It also enables students to reflect on the meanings of individual words and sentences; the order in which sentences unfold; and the development of ideas over the course of the text, which ultimately leads students to arrive at an understanding of the text as a whole.

**INSTRUCTIONAL SHIFTS FOR CLOSE READING
TO ACHIEVE THE COMMON CORE**

	Pre-Common Core	With the Common Core	Guidelines	Ask yourself. . .
Text Complexity	The text selected for the lesson was _____ for students: not too hard; not too easy. It was chosen to match _____ aligned to students' skill needs.	The text selected for close reading is _____, representing significant _____ that requires careful teacher _____ to support students' full comprehension.	Look for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texts with complex knowledge demands, meaning, language, structure • Short text—including excerpts • Lots of informational text—including biography, narrative nonfiction, etc. • Poetry—classics; limited use of Shel Silverstein, etc. 	What makes this text complex?
Lesson Focus	The lesson was driven by _____. Teachers taught to _____, often isolated objective, such as identifying character traits, finding the theme, etc.	The lesson is driven by the _____ The first reading is intended to be more _____: how much meaning can you make the <i>first</i> time you read a text?	Make a distinction between a <u>first</u> close reading of a text, and a <u>follow-up</u> close reading First reading should be <u>general</u> —looking for as much <i>meaning</i> as possible A second or third reading should be more focused based on a skill or standard (looking for point of view, author's purpose, etc.)	Is this the first reading of this text, or a reread? What is my purpose? (For follow-up): Why did I choose this focus?
Supporting Readers BEFORE Reading	“Pre-reading” was a significant lesson component with many minutes used to: _____ _____ _____	The “pre-reading” part of the lesson is substantially reduced. It is intended to take less time, with less teacher input and more student _____	Pre-reading should be SHORT! (under 5 minutes) Should be <u>very</u> minimal front loading Restrict: personal connections,	Questions related to strategy use: “What should we notice on the cover?” Do you think this is literature or

			<p>vocabulary frontloading, picture walk, predictions</p> <p>Help students <u>observe</u> key details on the cover: important words in the title, details in picture, etc.—to monitor during their reading</p> <p>Help students determine whether the text is literary/informational—and what kind of evidence to look for</p>	<p>information, and why?—and other questions like this.</p>
<p>Supporting Readers DURING Reading</p>	<p>During reading students mostly retrieved evidence from the text in support of the lesson _____.</p> <p>Students' personal connections were _____ along the way.</p>	<p>During close reading students _____ and _____ as much as they can about the text to understand how all text elements work _____.</p>	<p>Ask text dependent questions—questions that need evidence from the text</p> <p>Ask questions that cover a full range of CCR standards (especially standards 4-6)</p> <p>Remember your goal is the gradual release of responsibility so students can read closely and INDEPENDENTLY</p> <p>Focus on the <u>author's</u> meaning (not personal opinions)</p>	<p>Which standards are represented within my questions?</p> <p>Do all my questions require evidence from the text?</p>
<p>Supporting Readers AFTER Reading</p>	<p>After reading students were typically tasked with a _____ to a question that aligned with a discrete lesson _____.</p>	<p>After close reading students are tasked with producing both _____ and _____ responses, synthesizing and integrating information from multiple print and nonprint</p>	<p>Review the text in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify <u>important words</u> ▪ Identify the <u>theme</u> ▪ Produce a brief <u>summary</u> or <u>gist statement</u> ▪ Identify the <u>genre</u> <p>Include activity for collaborative</p>	<p>What will I do <i>after</i> reading to support my students?</p>

		sources.	oral response (small group/partner) [MAY include written response, but this might be less frequent than in the past due to need for multiple texts]	
Moving Students toward Independence in Close Reading	The goal of reading instruction has always been to move students to _____, but lately it has been more focused on independence with an _____.	We need to help students to become more independent in retrieving all of the _____ from a text <i>themselves</i> without a teacher by their side to guide them.	Teach strategy mini lessons (how to approach the cover, identify the narrator, etc.) Teach students to ask their own “good reader” questions Look for signs that students’ thinking shows understanding of close observation and analysis of the text (points related to theme, craft, character development, etc.)	How am I helping my students to be <u>independent</u> close readers?
Extending Close Reading	There was little _____ or use of the text for other purposes because it had served its purpose to support the objective; students moved on to a different text to apply the same _____.	_____ the entire text or portions of it is critical to even deeper comprehension; May include a focus on _____ Extend close reading through small group instruction and independent reading,	Reread a text or portions of a text multiple times for deeper understanding A second or third reading will probably be more <u>focused</u> (on a skill or standard) (explicit teaching) Use your anchor text for lessons that apply standards beyond comprehension: writing, listening/speaking, fluency, etc. Teach close reading within small group instruction and independent reading	Beyond an initial shared lesson, where does close reading fit in my curriculum? How am I using my close reading anchor text to extend learning?

<p>Instructional Implications for New Assessments</p>	<p>There was a clear alignment between the _____ taught and the assessment question.</p> <p>Many questions related to personal _____</p>	<p>Assessments are more complex, requiring the _____ and _____ of knowledge from _____ texts.</p> <p>No more _____</p>	<p>There may be fewer written responses because students will often need to read multiple texts to respond to questions</p> <p>Written responses should incorporate multiple texts (often)</p> <p>Students should cite their sources within their response</p> <p>Teach summarizing (different text structures) as this will be useful for informative writing</p> <p>Make sure that students write to sources</p> <p>Be sure to apply three text types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opinion/argument writing ▪ Explanatory/informative ▪ Narrative <p>Pay attention to craft in students' writing!!!</p>	<p>How can I incorporate multiple texts into responses?</p> <p>How am I attending to <u>craft</u> in writing??</p>
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REFLECTING ON AN INITIAL CLOSE READING LESSON

Teacher: _____ Coach/Administrator: _____

Text: _____ This text is / is not suitably complex for these students

BEFORE READING

Sets purpose: Identifies lesson purpose as deep comprehension of the text rather than designating isolated objective	
Activates strategies: Helps students prepare for close reading by considering clues on book cover or page layout	
Clarifies evidence to identify: Helps students identify text components to look for during reading	
Quick pace; limits input: Completes pre-reading portion of lesson quickly, without activating unnecessary prior knowledge, personal connections, or predictions	

DURING READING

Models: Models thinking where needed to demonstrate strategic thinking	
Pauses after short chunks: Pauses <u>frequently</u> during reading to ensure close monitoring; text chunks are <u>short</u>	
Prompts: Prompts students to activate their own good reader strategies; gradually releases responsibility to help students become <u>independent</u> close readers	
Text dependent questions: Asks appropriate text dependent questions that address <u>many</u> standards; incorporates a line of questions leading to higher level thinking; not all Standard 1 (evidence)	
Words: Helps students word-solve as needed (both decoding and vocabulary)	

AFTER READING (*may occur during a follow-up session)

Useful words: Helps students identify useful words for talking about the text*	
Theme/main idea: Helps students infer author's message*	
Gist statement/summary: Helps students create brief <u>gist</u> statement/summary*	
Oral collaboration: Provides opportunity for oral collaboration for text-dependent task*	

Lesson length:

___ Seemed appropriate for these learners

___ Too short (more like a mini-lesson)

___ Too long for these students

___ Too long for the overall length of the literacy block (took too much time away from small group instruction, independent reading, etc.)

Strengths of the lesson: _____

Areas for continued growth: _____

Support requested by the teacher: _____

Other: _____
