Planning for Close Reading

Implementing the Process into the Classroom

What is close reading?

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"A careful and purposeful rereading of a text."

— Dr. Douglas Fisher

San Diego State University

Why Close Reading?

- Helps students understand **WHY WE READ**
- Promotes **CRITICAL THINKING** and **UNDERSTANDING**
- Is one of the main analytical tools used in **HIGHER EDUCATION** and the **WORKPLACE**
- Is a **SURVIVAL SKILL** in our media saturated world

What Do Close Readers Do Differently?

Close Readers	Not-So-Close Readers
Reread	Read the text once
Focus on the text	Let their thinking wander
Ask questions	Take the text at face value
Pay attention to language	Ignore syntax clues
Uncover deeper meaning	Understand only at surface level

Ten Questions Close Readers Ask . . .

What is the mood or feeling of the text?

What is the text about?

Who is the audience for the text?

Who is speaking in the text?

What happens in the text?

How does this part relate to what happens before and after?

Why did the author write the text?

What words do I notice?

What does the author mean by ___?

What is not being said?

Putting the Process to Work

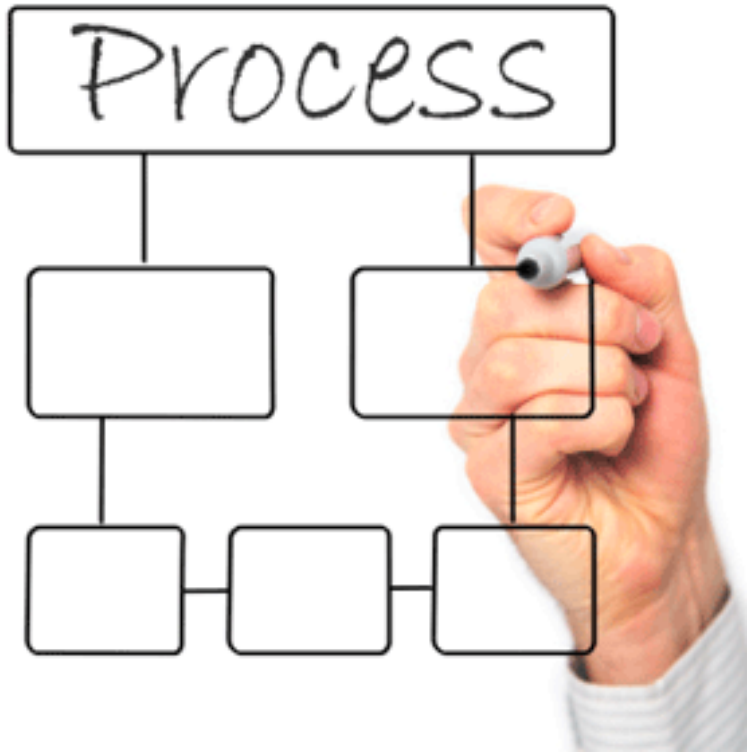
Step 1 – Find the Right Text

Step 2 – Do Your Pre-Work

Step 3 – Teach Students to Read with a Pencil

Step 4 – Discuss Students' Responses to TDQs

Step 5 – Have Students Write About What They Read



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Steps to Take . . .

Step 1 – Find the Right Text

The text should be:

- Complex
- Content-rich nonfiction or informational
- Short passages
- Applicable for multiple purposes

Finding the Right Text

Henry, Patrick. "Speech to the Second Virginia Convention." (1775)

Mr. President: No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the House. But different men often see the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen if, entertaining as I do, opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my sentiments freely, and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery; and in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth, and fulfill the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offence, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the majesty of heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and, having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.

http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf

Finding the Right Text

Bronowski, Jacob, and Millicent Selsam. Biography of an Atom. New York: Harper, 1965. (1965)

The birth began in a young star. A young star is a mass of hydrogen nuclei. Because the star is hot (about thirteen million degrees at the center), the nuclei cannot hold on to their electrons. The electrons wander around. The nuclei of hydrogen—that is, the protons—are moving about very fast too. From time to time one proton runs headlong into another. When this happens, one of the protons loses its electric charge and changes into a neutron. The pair then cling together as a single nucleus of heavy hydrogen. This nucleus will in time capture another proton. Now there is a nucleus with two protons and one neutron, called light helium. When two of these nuclei smash into each other, two protons are expelled in the process. This creates a nucleus of helium with two protons and two neutrons.

This is the fundamental process of fusion by which the primitive hydrogen of the universe is built up into a new basic material, helium. In this process, energy is given off in the form of heat and light that make the stars shine. It is the first stage in the birth of the heavier atoms.

http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf

Steps to Take . . .

Step 2 – Do Your Pre-Work

Identify the most important thing for students to learn, then:

- Create a series of TDQs (text-dependent questions)
- Identify key words
- Determine the annotation symbols
- Chunk the text
- Develop a reflection activity

Text Dependent Questions

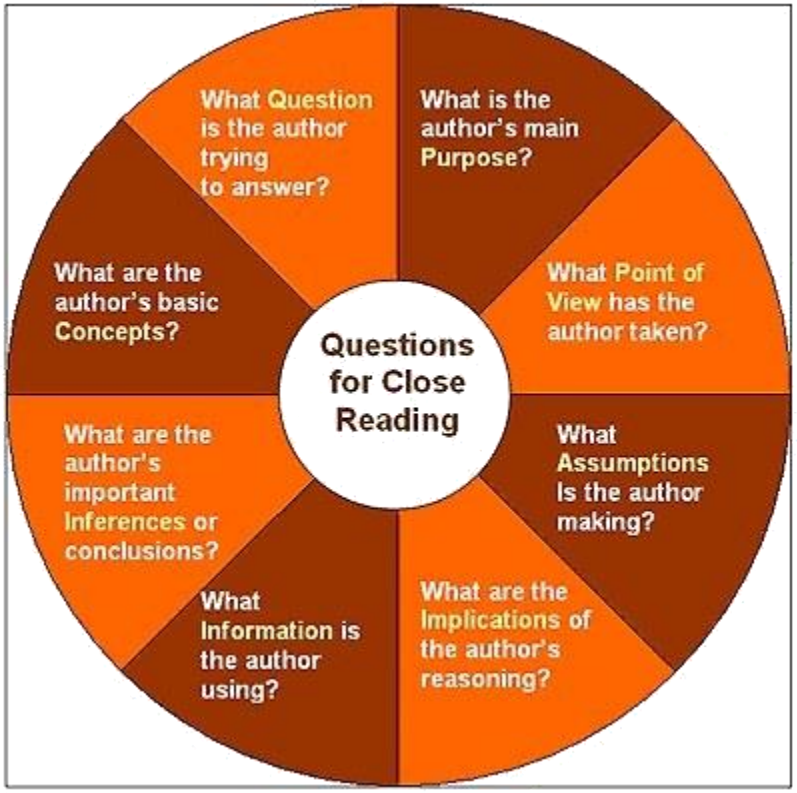
Answered from text

Can be used to . . .

- Identify key ideas and evidence in complex text

Should cause students to think at higher levels by . . .

- Making logical inferences
- Drawing conclusions
- Engaging in arguments based on what the text says



Text Dependent Questions

General understanding

Key details

Vocabulary and text structure

Purpose

Inferences

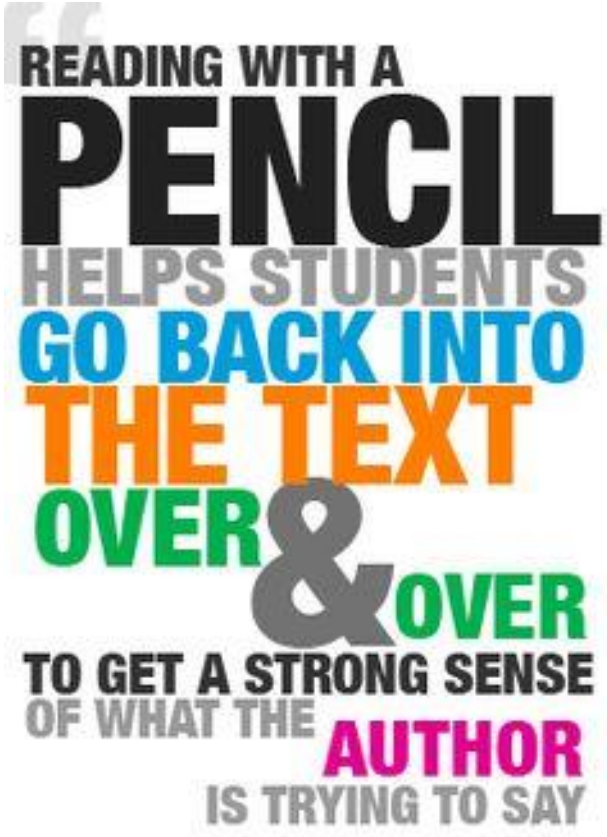
Opinions, arguments, and intertextual connections

Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2012). Text-dependent questions. *Principal Leadership*, 13(1), 70-73. Retrieved from http://www.fisherandfrey.com/_admin/_filemanager/File/Text_Dependent.pdf

Steps to Take . . .

Step 3 – Teach Students to Read with a Pencil

- Number the paragraphs
- Underline major points
- Highlight or circle key words/terms
- Use the following symbols
  - ? – for something that is confusing or that they don't understand (explain why)
  - ! – something that is surprising (explain why)
  - E – example or evidence that supports major points (write a note)



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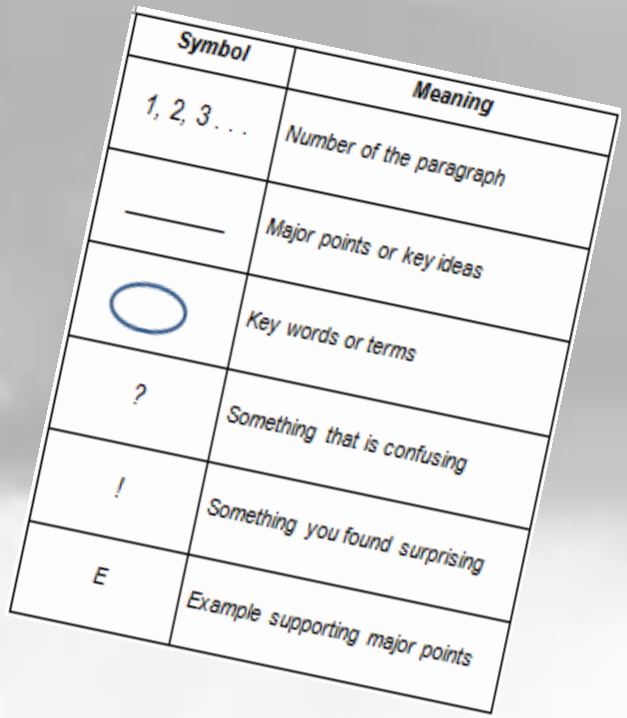
Annotation is a note of ***any form*** made while reading text.

(It is not highlighting text.)



Symbol	Meaning
1, 2, 3 . . .	Number of the paragraph
———	Major points or key ideas
◯	Key words or terms
?	Something that is confusing
!	Something you found surprising
E	Example supporting major points

"Reading with a pencil."

Steps to Take . . .

Step 4 – Discuss Students' Responses to TDQs

- Use TDQs from your pre-work
- Have students:
  - Provide their answers
  - Indicate where they found the answer
  - Provide the evidence that supports their answers

Step 5 – Have Students Write About What They Read

- Provide students with a prompt
- Have students write about what they read, using evidence from the text

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Questions

Thank you!

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