Close Reading Clinic
Helping Students Read Complex Text

Facilitated by
Angela Di Michele Lalor

Session Agenda:

1. What is the purpose of a close reading experience?
2. What are the elements of a quality close reading experience?
3. How do you support students so they can engage in a close reading experience?

Close Reading

“... academic essays, begin with a close reading of some kind of text—a painting, a movie, an event—and usually with that of a written text. When you close read, you observe facts and details about the text.... making these observations constitutes the first step in the process of close reading. The second step is interpreting your observations.”

Patricia Kain, Writing Center at Harvard University
Gradual Release of Responsibility

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<th>Instructional Support</th>
<th>Classroom Learning Experience</th>
<th>Independent</th>
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Simulation:

• Read for the gist
• Annotate for purpose, argument and development

Discuss:

1. What question did the people of New York have to decide?
2. What position did Jay taken?
3. What was the position of those that opposed Jay?
4. What is the meaning of the term Providence and how does Jay use it throughout the Federalist Paper?
Write

Write a summarizing statement together, for each paragraph. The summarizing statement can only be one sentence and must be in your own words.

Examining the Experience

Task – Independently and then as a small group:
1. Identify the purpose of each element
2. Include any thoughts you have about the benefit or limitation of any of the elements in helping you to understand the text.

Key Elements of a Close Reading Experience
- Reading
- Annotating
- Questions
- Discussion
- Writing
Processing Questions:

1. What was your overall feeling about the close reading experience?
2. What did you find most beneficial to understanding the text?
3. What did you find limited or got in the way of your understanding of the text?
4. How did the intended purpose of each element of the close reading experience align with your actual experience?
5. What did you learn from the close reading that helped you better understand the intention of each element?
6. What did you learn from the close reading experience that will help you to better understand the experience of your students and how to best assist them?

Attributes of Quality

- Context and Purpose (including standards)
- Text
- First and Second Read
- Annotation
- Questions
- Discussion
- Writing

Context and Purpose

- The close read sits inside a unit of study where students are deeply engaged in connected learning experiences, building knowledge and skills that will assist them in reading a complex text
- A subset of reading standards has been selected
- The specific skills and strategies are aligned to the selected standards.
- The purpose of the close reading experience is clearly stated for students. It explains the specific skills and strategies that students will practice.
Unit Description

In this unit students explore the essential question, what inspires us? Students understand that through their examination of literature they can learn about people and events that have inspired others to do great things personally and in the world around them. Students read stories of inspiration and write their own story of a personal or real world event that inspired others.

Unit Reading Standards:

- RL.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- RL.4.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).
- RL.4.11 Recognize, interpret and make connections in narratives, poetry, and drama, to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, personal events and situations. Self-select text based upon personal preferences.
Close Reading Standards

- RL 4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- RL 4.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).

Read, Reread and Annotate

- The first reading is done independently so students become familiar with the text.
- The student re-read to deepen understanding.
- The teacher may read portions of the text aloud, after an independent read.

- Students annotate the text in order to prepare for discussions and writing.
- The annotation strategy matches the purpose for reading and the standards selected.

Day One

- The students read *Thank You, Mr. Faulker* independently to become familiar with the text.
- The students reread the first section of the text and take note of information that reveals how and why Patricia learned to read.
Questions

- There are text-specific questions to guide reading, discussion and writing.
- The questions are directly related to the focus and identified standards.
- Some questions target literal understanding and others require students to make inferences, analyze or make connections.
- Some questions require students to cite textual evidence and determine how specific words and phrases are used in the text.

Questioning

- Review the standards that are being emphasized in the current unit of study.
- Determine the texts students will be reading.
- Create text-specific and text-dependent questions from the standards.
- Cluster the questions based on purpose and/or section of the text being used for a close reading experience.
- Use questions to guide independent reading, discussion and writing tasks.

Generic to Text-Specific Questions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Generic Question</th>
<th>Text-Specific Question</th>
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<td>RL.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</td>
<td>What details from the text explain what the text means?</td>
<td>What details explain why Trisha asks her grandma, “Do you think I’m ... different? Do you think I’m smart?”</td>
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Discussion and Writing:

<table>
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<th>Reading Task</th>
<th>Discussion Task</th>
<th>Writing Task</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students read and annotate</td>
<td>Students meet in small groups and discuss the following questions:</td>
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<td>Teacher reads</td>
<td>• How does Trisha feel about herself in fifth grade? How do you know?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do you think Mr. Faulker knew that Trisha couldn’t read? How do you know?</td>
<td>Students use their notes to explain the challenge that Trisha faces and how Mr. Faulker learns her secret.</td>
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Considerations for Primary Students

- Shared reading experience
- Discussions are guided by standards-based questions
- Discussions connect to the text
- Can incorporate annotation experiences such as group annotations or post-it notes to identify important information
- Not always necessary to write in response

Activity: Examining Close Reads

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Processing Question:

How can you use your examination of these samples to evaluate and revise close reading experiences?

Work Session

Use the attributes of quality and the close reading template to
• Examine and revise a close reading experience or
• Design a close reading experience

Video Analysis: Close Reading and Instruction

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<td>1. How do the teachers embed instruction into the close reading experience?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. What is the connection between the instructional foci and the elements of a quality close reading experience?</td>
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Supporting Students

What are some of the challenges your students face when reading complex text?

Activity: Support Strategies

Choose two of the following areas that you feel could address the needs of your students and work with a small group to complete the activity before returning to answer the question in column two above:

- Vocabulary
- Scaffolding
- Annotation
- Analyzing
Vocabulary

- Discuss the vocabulary instructional cycle
- Identify Tier Two words from *Casey at Bat*
- Plan an activity that would be used as part of the vocabulary cycle.

Coax

- What do you think the dog is doing?
- Why might he want to stay on the other side of the fence?
- How might you convince him to come out?

*Sentence*: The little boy coaxed the dog from his hiding place.

*Synonym*: persuade, win over, talk into

*Antonym*: force

Scaffolds

- Examine how standards are used to design questions for close reading experiences.
- Develop scaffolding questions that would help your students participate in a classroom discussion about the text.
- Discuss how learning progressions could be used as scaffolds during the close reading experience.
Scaffolds

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<th>Text-Specific Text-Dependent Questions</th>
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Annotation Strategies

- Reflect and share your current annotation strategies.
- Read through the annotation strategies found and determine how you might use each by answering the questions on the top of column two.
- Choose one strategy and incorporate it into the directions of a close read.

Making Inferences:

- Students preview the text to become familiar with the topic and structure of the text. B
- Students create a three-column chart: It says, I know, And so B
- Students read 1 – 3 paragraphs at a time and record their inferences on the chart D
Analysis: Visual Literacy
- Read and discuss how visual literacy is connected to close reading
- Complete a simulation
- Discuss how a visual close read might be helpful in teaching students analysis.

Visual Close Read
- Who is the focus of the photo? Why do you think so?
- What do you think is happening? What details from the photo make you think so?

Supporting Students
How can the strategies shared be used to address the challenges you shared earlier?
End-of-Session Reflection