

# **Close Reading in the Common Core Classroom**

PRDV#72426

Framingham State University

Summer 2017; 1 credit

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## **Course Description:**

Close reading is a purposeful reading of a text that allows for deep and analytical comprehension. It is accomplished through a careful rereading of a text where one focuses on what the author had to say, what the author's purpose was, what the words mean, and what the structure of the text tells us. This course will examine the effectiveness of close reading in the classroom, understand its importance throughout the common core and develop useful strategies that can be applied to teaching and instruction of close reading. Historically, close reading has been a common practice among the upper grade levels. However, with the implementation of the Common Core, it now has a strong presence in the lower grades and this course will focus mainly on close reading in the elementary grade levels.

## **Objectives:**

- Participants will develop an understanding of close reading through selected readings and videos and articulate its effectiveness and purpose within the classroom, particularly the elementary grades.
- Participants will examine the Common Core State Standards and identify the standards that specifically address close reading.
- Participants will compare close reading strategies by viewing various sample lessons and then identify which strategies are specifically useful for their own teaching.
- Participants will select a specific text from their curriculum that requires a close reading, provide a rationale for that text and develop text dependent questions based on the information they gathered from assigned articles and videos.
- Participants will develop two close reading lesson plans that align with the Common Core and incorporate the methods and strategies presented throughout the course material.

## **Student Expectations:**

Students are expected to complete assigned reading from various articles and websites as well as watch selected videos that can all be accessed via Blackboard. Students will respond to posted discussion questions that coincide with the required reading and videos. Discussion posts are expected to be well-developed reflective pieces of writing that are completed within the week they are assigned. Assignments that are not completed on time will not receive full credit. Each discussion post is worth 10 points and will be graded on the following rubric scale.

<b>Unsatisfactory: 0-3</b>	<b>Satisfactory: 4-6</b>	<b>Proficient: 7-8</b>	<b>Exemplary: 9-10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Postings are not relevant to the question posted</li> <li>✓ Postings were not completed, or do not show an understanding of the material</li> <li>✓ Postings were not completed on time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Postings are relevant to the question posted</li> <li>✓ Postings reflect an vague understanding of the material, they are general and do not refer to specific connections to individual teaching</li> <li>✓ Postings were not completed on time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Postings are thoughtful, reflective, and relevant to the question posted</li> <li>✓ Postings show a strong understanding of the material</li> <li>✓ Postings reference connections to individual teaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Postings are thoughtful, reflective, and relevant to the question posted</li> <li>✓ Postings show a strong understanding of the material and specifically cite information and examples from the material</li> <li>✓ Postings refer to specific connections to individual teaching</li> </ul>

Students will complete a final assignment that will be a culminating activity of the course. Students will further develop their understanding of close reading by developing two detailed lesson plans that incorporate the methods and strategies in the assigned readings and videos. The lesson plans will align with the Common Core State Standards and demonstrate the students understanding of how to incorporate close reading strategies into classroom instruction. A template for the lesson plans is attached. The final assignment will be worth a total of 40 points, each lesson plan is worth 20 points. Each lesson plan will be graded on the following rubric.

<b>Unsatisfactory: 0-13</b>	<b>Satisfactory: 14-16</b>	<b>Proficient: 17-19</b>	<b>Exemplary: 20</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assignment is not complete or none of the required guidelines were followed</li> <li>✓ Assignment was not completed on time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Most of the assignment is complete but some of the required guidelines were not followed</li> <li>✓ Assignment reflects an understanding of the content</li> <li>✓ Assignment was not completed on time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assignment is complete and all of the required guidelines were followed</li> <li>✓ Assignment reflects a well developed understanding of the content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assignment is complete and all of the required guidelines were followed and/or exceeded</li> <li>✓ Assignment reflects a well developed understanding of the content and a thoughtful, effective application to teaching</li> </ul>

There are a total of 100 possible points that can be earned from all of the above assignments. The final grade will be determined on the following scale:

*A= 90-100 points*

*B= 80-89 points*

*C= 70-79 points*

*D= 65-69 points*

*F= less than 65 points*

### **Course Content and Outline:**

## **Module One: Understanding Close Reading**

### **Discussion #1: Introductions**

Read the Welcome message posted on Blackboard then post an introduction of you in Discussion Board. Include your name, grade/subject that you teach, and something about your career in education. Be sure to read the responses of the other class participants, as you will find it useful throughout the course to communicate with classmates teaching at the same grade level or subject.

### **Discussion #2: Unlocking the Secrets of Complex Texts**

Read the attached article titled “Unlocking the Secrets of Complex Texts” by Mary Ehrenworth.

Ehrenworth, M. (2103). Unlocking the Secrets of Complex Text. *Educational Leadership: Tackling Informational Text*, 71, 16-21. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov13/vol71/num03/Unlocking-the-Secrets-of-Complex-Text.aspx>

Reflect on the article and answer the following questions in the Discussion Board. Then, read and respond to at least one other participant’s response.

What components (if any) of close reading are currently in place in your own teaching? After reading the article, what information do you feel is the most pertinent and useful to your own teaching and understanding of close reading?

## **Module Two: Close Reading in the Classroom**

### **Discussion #3: Close Reading in Elementary Schools**

Read the following article titled “Close Reading in Elementary Schools” by Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey.

Fisher, D. & Frey, N. (2012) Close Reading in Elementary Schools. *The Reading Teacher*, 66, 179-188. Retrieved from <https://www.americanreading.com/documents/close-reading-in-elementary-schools.pdf>

Complete the following activity in the Discussion Board. Select a text from your curriculum that is worthy of a deep investigation. Read and analyze the piece to determine which aspects contribute to the complexity of the reading. In

the discussion post, identify and summarize the parts of the text that will require a close reading and then provide a rationale. The text you select does not have to be an entire book (articles, poems, etc. are all appropriate texts). Be sure to include the title and author of the text in your summary.

#### **Discussion #4: Focus on Close Reading**

Watch the following video titled *Focus on Close Reading* by Thinkport MPT.

Thinkport MPT, *Focus on Close Reading* (2014, September 22). Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2anzoCrsgfw>

Using the text you selected above develop three text dependent questions. Along with the title and author of the text list the questions in the discussion post. If the text you have selected is a section of a longer text please provide the necessary information pertaining to the specific section of the chosen text.

### **Module 3: Close Reading Strategies**

#### **Discussion #5: Closing in on Close Reading**

Read the following article “Closing in on Close Reading” by Nancy Boyles

Boyles, N. (2012/2013) Closing in on Close Reading. *Educational Leadership: Common Core- Now What?*, 70, 36-41. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/dec12/vol70/num04/Closing-in-on-Close-Reading.aspx>

Answer the following question in the Discussion Board. Reflecting on your own teaching, which element of Boyles article is the most significant?

#### **Discussion #6: Close Reading Lesson Comparison**

View the following two videos that each highlights a close reading lesson.

The Teachers College of Reading and Writing Project, *Bringing Close Reading and Accountable Talk into an Interactive Read Aloud of Gorillas* (3-5). (2013, January 8). Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nznO1BMtahw>

McGraw-Hill Education, *Complete Lesson Modeling Close Reading of Short Texts*. (2014, May 28). Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDfv3B\\_JZQo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDfv3B_JZQo)

In the Discussion Board, compare the two videos. What specific strategies did either teacher use that you found to be most effective?

### **Module Four: Close Reading Lesson Plans**

#### **Final Assignment: Create two Close Reading Lesson Plans**

Using the attached template create two lesson plans centered on close reading. Each lesson must align with the

Common Core State Standards and specifically reference at least one standard. The text that was selected in module two may be incorporated into one or both of the your lesson plans. The template provides specific guidelines for the lessons.

[../Desktop/Close Reading Lesson Plan Template.doc](#)

The following websites are meant to serve as additional resources and support as you complete the final assignment. Please feel free to use any other resources that you find or that may be available to you.

<http://achievethecore.org/page/752/close-reading-model-lessons-close-reading-exemplars>

[www.learnzillion.com](http://www.learnzillion.com) (create a free account, search close reading)

### **Academic Honesty Policy:**

“Integrity is essential to academic life. Consequently, students who enroll at Framingham State University agree to maintain high standards of academic honesty and scholarly practice. They shall be responsible for familiarizing themselves with the published policies and procedures regarding academic honesty. Academic honesty requires but is not limited to the following practices: appropriately citing all published and unpublished sources, whether quoted, paraphrased, or otherwise expressed, in all of the student’s oral and written, technical and artistic work.”

*Please refer to academic honesty policy in the Framingham State University Graduate Catalog, Student Conduct page 7.*