

# The What, Why and How of Close Reading: *How coaches can help.*

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# *What is Close Reading?*

- A close reading is a careful and purposeful reading...it's rereading. It's a careful and purposeful **rereading** of a text. It's an encounter with the text where students really focus 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.
- It is what Louise Rosenblatt, the originator of Reader-Response Theory, talked about as a transaction between the reader and the text: it's about understanding what the author had to say and bringing some of your own ideas to bear on that text.

# *What is Close Reading?*

- In a close reading, students *must* reread the text. We give them questions; text dependent questions that require that they go *back into the text and search for answers*. These aren't simply recall questions, just the facts of the text, but rather questions that allow students to think about the text, and the author's purpose, the structure, and the flow of the text.
- Close reading requires that *students actually think and understand what they are reading*.

Dr. Douglas Fisher

*Professor of Language and Literacy Education*

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*Consultant to PARCC*

# Why Close Reading?

- A significant body of research links the close reading of complex text—whether the student is a struggling reader or advanced—to *significant gains in reading proficiency* and finds close reading to be a *key component of college and career readiness*

*Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, 2011.*

# *Why Close Reading?*

Grappling with rich, complex texts is an exciting, thought-expanding experience that can change minds and mold beliefs. Repeated opportunities to process and manage such texts enhance the reader's knowledge of vocabulary, syntax, and the world—an experience all students should have. Historically, though, this approach has been reserved for our more advanced students; those deemed less able have been denied access to rich, rigorous text. Teachers who have implemented Close Reading in their classrooms are finding that being challenged by complex texts is not, as they feared, tripping students up; on the contrary, it is actually motivating students to work harder and think more deeply.

“Implementing the PA Core Standards: A Primer on “Close Reading of Text”  
(adapted from Close Reading-Aspen Institute, 2012)

# *How coaches can nurture Close Reading*

- What Teachers need:
  - A consistency of vision and practice
  - An understanding of opportunity
  - The necessity of modeling
  - The need to scaffold
  - The role of feedback

# *How coaches can nurture Close Reading*

- *A consistency of vision and practice:*
  - The structure:
    - Read around the text
    - Read strategically
    - Reread deeply and with purpose
  - The skills:
    - Fluency
    - Text marking
    - Annotating
    - Questioning
    - Clarifying
    - Drawing conclusions
    - Making judgments

# *How coaches can nurture Close Reading*

- *A consistency of vision and practice:*
  - The text:
    - Text complexity
    - Issues of fluency
    - Informational and Literary
    - Length and Access
    - Prior knowledge
  - The questions:
    - Inference, inference, inference
    - Depth of knowledge
    - Textual support
    - Open-ended

# *How coaches can nurture Close Reading*

- *An understanding of opportunity:*
  - Across content areas
  - Related to content
  - Learning opportunity
  - Integrated within the curriculum

# *How coaches can nurture Close Reading*

- *The importance of modeling and scaffolding:*
  - Deliberate, intentional, transparent
  - Lesson structure: B/D/A or Model of Engagement
  - Chunking
  - Sharing
  - Charting

# *How coaches can nurture Close Reading*

- *The importance of feedback:*

- Evaluation vs. Feedback
- Timely
- Specific
- Time for revision
- Practice to reinforce

# *A Time to Reflect*

As a coach or school leader, what can you do with this information?