

Close Reading

Close reading is purposeful reading and rereading of a text to fully comprehend the meaning and purpose behind it. A close reading allows a reader to analyze the text by taking in the language, syntax, narrative and context for depth of understanding. Close reading is a first step to critical thinking about the text.

A close reading is not a quick read or skimming of a text; it is more involved, with multiple readings of the text, and will take some time and effort.

How to do a close reading:

- Read the text in its entirety, making general observations regarding purpose, meaning, themes, and narrative
- Break it down line by line, making notes by marking key words, phrases, or writing down questions about confusing areas
- Highlight or circle words that have similar meanings and associations
- Mark repetitive syntax structures (the arrangement or style of words in a sentence) and the author's stylistic choices
- Write down connections to outside events or texts
- Take note of any connections between the written form and the meaning of the passage
- Reflect on the reading as a whole:
 - Can I summarize the meaning of this text in my own words?
 - Can I give examples from my own experience of what the text is saying?
 - Can I generate metaphors and diagrams to illustrate what the text is saying?
 - What is clear to me and what do I need clarified?
 - Can I connect the core ideas in this text to other core ideas I understand?

(Elder & Paul, 2014, Engaging a text, para. 1)

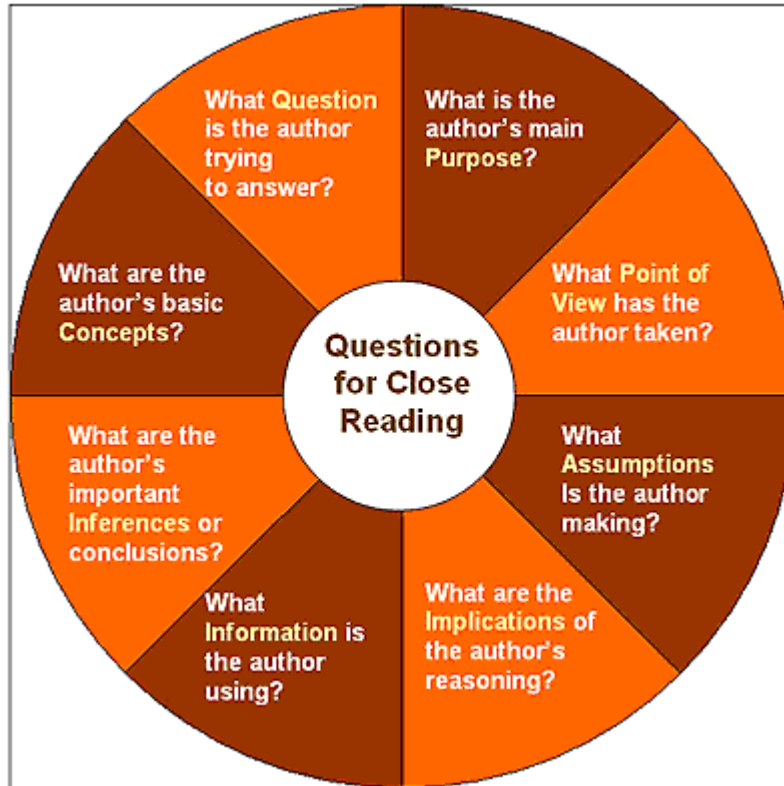


Chart from:

Umphey, Michael. (2013). *Questions for close reading (graphic)*. Retrieved from <http://www.umphey.org/609/questions-for-close-reading-graphic/>

Elder, Linda & Paul, Richard. (2014). The art of close reading (part two). Retrieved from <http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/the-art-of-close-reading-part-two/510>