

# Close Reading and Analysis

## Strategies & Techniques

### Things Close Readers Do

- 🎧 Ask questions to focus reading and determine author's purpose
- 🎧 Read for the "gist"
- 🎧 Reread the text
- 🎧 Annotate the text
- 🎧 Use context clues to decipher vocabulary
- 🎧 Talk w/ others and question the text
- 🎧 Use details to make inferences, conclusions, and claims
- 🎧 Find/cite evidence for support

### Basic Guiding Questions

- 🎧 Who is the author?
- 🎧 What is the title?
- 🎧 What type of text is it?
- 🎧 Who published the text? When?
- 🎧 Why ask these questions?

## Analytical/Literary Guiding Questions

### Structure:

- 🎧 How is the text structured?
- 🎧 In what order are the ideas presented?
- 🎧 How has the author structured the sentences and paragraphs?

### Topic, Information and Ideas:

- 🎧 What information/ideas are presented at the beginning of the text?
- 🎧 What information/ideas are described in detail?
- 🎧 What stands out to me as I first examine this text?
- 🎧 What do I learn about the topic as I read?
- 🎧 What is the text mainly about?

### Language:

- 🎧 What words/phrases stand out to me?
- 🎧 What words/phrases are powerful or unique?
- 🎧 What do the author's words cause me to see or feel?
- 🎧 What words do I need to define?
- 🎧 What words and phrases are repeated?

### Perspective and Techniques:

- 🎧 Who is the intended audience of the text?
- 🎧 What is the author saying about the topic?
- 🎧 What is the author's attitude about the topic?
- 🎧 What literary or rhetorical techniques does the author use to convey his or her message?
- 🎧 Does the author use pathos (emotion), logos (logic), or ethos (his or her credibility)?

## Annotations (Annotating)

- 🎧 Taking notes in the margins as you read to improve comprehension and analysis
  - 🎧 Let the guiding questions *guide* your annotations
  - 🎧 Ask new questions as you read
  - 🎧 Translate sentences that are confusing
  - 🎧 Respond emotionally

### Practice:

To My Dear and Loving Husband  
by Anne Bradstreet (1678)

If ever two were one, then surely we.

If ever man were loved by wife, then thee;

If ever wife was happy in a man,

Compare with me ye women if you can.

I prize thy love more than whole mines of gold,

Or all the riches that the East doth hold.

My love is such that rivers cannot quench,

Nor ought but love from thee give recompense.

Thy love is such I can no way repay;

The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.

Then while we live, in love let's so persevere,

That when we live no more we may live ever.

### Steps:

-  1. Ask basic questions
-  2. Read poem for “gist”
-  3. Remind yourself of literary questions
-  4. Read text again
-  5. Annotate, answer guiding questions, and comment on other details

## Now Make Inferences

- 🎧 Inference: “a conclusion reached on the basis of evidence and reasoning” (dictionary.com)
- 🎧 A claim, conclusion, or inference must have validity (a strong evidence-based claim)
- 🎧 Cite evidence to support your inferences

## HOW? SOAPSTONES

- 🎧 Speaker
- 🎧 Occasion
- 🎧 Audience
- 🎧 Purpose
- 🎧 Subject
- 🎧 Tone
- 🎧 Stylistic Techniques and Structure

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 Take your annotations  
and plug them in to  
organize and focus your  
ideas

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### Who is the Speaker?

- The voice that is speaking. Identification of the historical person (or group of people) who created the source.
- What do we know about this historic or contemporary person? What type of language does he or she use?
- From what class does he or she come? What political party? Gender?

### What is the Occasion?

- What is the context in which the text was created? The geographic and historic intersection at which this source was produced?
- **What event led to its publication or development?**

### Who is the Audience?

- The readers to whom the document is directed (the audience may be one person, a small group, or a large group; it may be a certain person or a certain people (or a very broad audience)).
- Audience determines style, presentation, language, etc.

### What is the Purpose?

- What message is the author trying to convey?
- What is the author's goal? What is his or her intended effect?

### What is the Subject?

- What is the topic of the text? On what subject is the author focusing?

### What is the Tone?

- What is the attitude expressed by the speaker regarding the topic?
- Examine the choice of words, emotions expressed, imagery used to determine the speaker's attitude (and other techniques): Diction & Style  Tone = Purpose

### What Stylistic techniques does the author or speaker use? How is the text structured?

- How is the speaker trying to spark a reaction in the audience? What words or phrases help communicate the speaker's message?
- What literary or rhetorical techniques does he or she use to convey his message?
- How is the text structured? In what order are the ideas presented?

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## Some Words Used to Describe Tone

- lighthearted, hopeful, enthusiastic, confident, optimistic, loving, passionate, amused, elated, sentimental, sympathetic, compassionate, proud
- angry, disgusted, outraged, accusing, inflammatory, irritated, indignant, threatening
- sarcastic, cynical, critical, facetious, patronizing, satiric, irreverent, taunting, ironic, flippant
- somber, elegiac, gloomy, melancholic, disturbed, mournful, solemn, serious, apprehensive, concerned, hopeless, resigned
- formal, objective, nostalgic, ceremonial, candid, shocked, reminiscent, restrained, clinical, baffled, sentimental, detached,
- objective, questioning, urgent, instructive, matter-of-fact, certain, didactic, informative, authoritative

## OVERVIEW

