

KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE- CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

ENGLISH 92 /ENGLISH R

TEACHER TOOLBOX

This Teacher Toolbox contains classroom activities and other teaching materials created by participants in the spring/summer 2012 Developmental English 92 and English R Practicums designed and facilitated by Eileen Ferretti and Ronna Levy

The Developmental English Practicum for English 92 spring 2012
English R Workshop summer 2012

This edition of *The Teacher Toolbox* is the latest in a series of booklets constructed in the collaborative setting of the Developmental English Practicum. It contains teaching materials and classroom activities created by the participants of the spring/summer 2012 Developmental English 92 and English R Practicums. The co-development of curricula and the publication of “teacher toolboxes” helps our mostly part-time faculty to jumpstart these course, which are often assigned a few days before classes begin. The publications also create an archive of “promising practices” that other faculty can use for ACT practice in the developmental courses.

The English 92 Practicum (Spring 2012)

This Practicum was held to prepare faculty to generate new pedagogy in English 92. The primary focus of the Practicum was twofold: 1) Immersing faculty in the current scholarship in the field of basic writing. 2) Engaging faculty in the construction of a pedagogical model that begins with intensive reading and low-stakes writing and culminates in more formal reading based essays. The seminar consisted of a series of nine two-hour faculty development sessions grounded in best practices and framed in seminal articles in the field of composition. The weekly topics built upon each other through natural progression from abstract concepts to concrete enactments of specific practices and back to the philosophical underpinnings that teachers rely upon to structure daily classroom activities. Each session was contextualized through theory and scholarship (the weekly reading) but practical in its approach to teaching in the English 92 classroom. The format of all sessions included large group discussion, small group activities, presentations, and composing reflections on the session. Twenty participants met for two hours a week over the course of nine weeks, engaging in a variety of activities, such as reviewing of relevant scholarship, teaching practices, and the generating artifacts and teaching materials to be implemented in the new configuration of English 92. To these ends, participants produced a new model for incorporating more reading into the English 92 classroom through a reconfiguration of the existing classroom and cohort model. Ultimately, the Practicum produced a preliminary plan of action to be further developed by six designated reading project managers drawn from the spring participants.

The English R Practicum (Summer 2012)

This Practicum was a follow-up to the spring 2012 English 92 Practicum. It consisted of a series of four two-hour faculty development sessions contextualized through relevant scholarship in the teaching of reading and the analysis of multiple-choice tests in preparation for the CUNY ACT Reading. Over four weeks, six participants met for two hours a week reading relevant scholarship, discussing classroom practices, creating teaching activities for use not only in the test prep classroom, but any reading (and writing) classroom. The main focus of this summer workshop was to strengthen the pedagogical practices of teachers in the Summer English BR. ACT Reading Exam, thus strengthen pedagogical practices, and generating a wider variety of teaching materials.

Eileen Ferretti
Ronna Levy

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**ENGLISH 92
SPRING 2012
PRACTICUM**

Laurie Abend

Independent Reading Activity

Students keep a “Reading Discovery” journal in which they record weekly entries regarding their perceptions and (hopefully) growing awareness of the purposes, meaning, and implications of the act of reading and of completing assigned reading tasks.

Rationale:

Students need to understand the value and power of the written word as a method of communication and to understand that reading is an active /interactive behavior. Students need to become active audience members and evaluators of information rather than passive acceptors of the author as authority. This is especially in today’s Internet culture where anyone can post/publish anything.

Learning Objectives:

Students will

- identify stakeholders named in or affected by a text.
- consider a text from multiple perspectives.
- begin to argue with the author.
- reflect upon their growth as readers and active consumers of information

Plan for Implementation:

The first entry would be a narrative (similar to our first task at this practicum) wherein students recollect and reflect upon their earliest moments regarding reading. The prompt for this task would be structured to elicit particulars as to the content of the memory as well as the emotions attached to it. The second entry would be designed to elicit students’ perceptions of their current reading practices (how, what, and why they read or don’t read) and in informal self-assessment of their reading abilities (comprehension, decoding, level of motivation). Subsequent entries would include student’ reactions to the content of assigned texts as well as discussions of how the texts were read. The midterm assessment would be a reflective formal essay in which students considered and synthesize their journal entries and trace their growing awareness of their own reading practices and progress, and would include concrete references to particular journal entries and reading passages to support students’ statements. The reflective essay would serve as both a student self-assessment tool and as an assessment instrument for teachers.

Cohort Activity

The independent cohort activity could also be adapted to include a cohort common text as one of the assigned readings. Students could independently compose a journal entry for the class teacher while cohort members conduct a joint or common activity such as a stakeholder debate. Each class could assume the identity of a different stakeholder and either debate with other classes or complete a teacher-crafted writing assignment incorporating a particular stakeholder perspective.

Benchmarks for English 92

Students should demonstrate understanding of an author’s perspective. Students should demonstrate the ability to think critically when evaluating a text by: discussing a perspective other than the author’s, arguing or questioning the author, and/or discussing present or future possible implications /consequences of an author’s proposal.

DL Anderson**Abstract of Individual Project**

Students would be required to do a Power Point presentation of the reading that gives a brief summary and how they are connecting to it. They would be required to use visual aids, as well as keep an annotated bibliography of each outside source used, along with an explanation of their choices. They must find resources on the time, place of the reading, and information on the author. They should be prepared to reflect on how the time, place and the writer's own personal experiences affected the choice the writer made. And they should reflect on how discovering these elements affected their understanding.

They would have to find one resource for each category in relation to the reading. Each resource should be a different kind, i.e., news article, hard copy, Internet, photos, art, poetry, music, nonfiction, scholarly journals, pop culture. They should look from each of these lens--

Historical Influences

Social Influences

Personal Influences

Their responses can be as creative as they want, as long as there is writing involved to clarify what they are doing. They can interview, write a poem, write a one act play, do a video, draw or do a graphic art piece.

They will have to write an abstract of what they are doing. They do as groups or individually.

RATIONALE

Students are hands on and respond more to technology. Through this activity they can learn the grammar basics of writing, and also see in a more hands on way how they are connected to the reading and how to use their critical thinking skills to analyze and write. It will help them learn to organize their thoughts and understanding of the readings in a visual way, as well as help them to organize their writing and develop stronger comprehension strategies for reading in a natural progression.

OBJECTIVE/OUTCOME

Inspired by Marcia Dickson's "Learning to Read/Learning to Write" article and the nine issues she discusses.

Through active research combined with reflection, the objective is that it will help them--

1. Understand the difference between author's ideas and those of others.
2. Help them discover textual clues through visual aid thorough research of time and place
3. Learn the different types of readings and how to approach them and use them to develop an argument.
4. Give them ways to search for information -- the relevance of text in a reading. It will help them recognize the differences between the little details and the bigger points of readings.
5. Teach them grammar without the torture-- To make the presentation presentable, it must be grammatically correct and clear.
6. Teach them to see the action of a reading to help in the comprehension.
7. Help them to connect what they are reading to other experiences and readings.

Anderson

8. Through learning research skills, they can start focusing more on reading rather than their own narratives. Learn it organically rather than “formulaically” so they can build from it in their next classes as they grow through their education.
9. Discovering that they can have a conversation with the author; see that they can have a view on the reading from their own intellectual reflection.

COHORT ACTIVITY

From this activity they could develop a collaborative project/presentation to present with other classes.

The cohort group would work on one main reading; each teacher can use added articles and material of own choosing and from the students' research.

Each class would add to the Power Point -- (however, their teacher develops their project. Can be another form, but would be presented with the Power Point as a group presentation and discussion) that would culminate into one big collaborative project/forum.

OBJECTIVE/OUTCOME

This would have the same basic objectives of the individual project(s), plus an added outcome: The students learn the power of working together to enhance learning. Learning to work in groups is imperative to college success. The students should start as soon as they start college, even at the developmental level. The sooner they start, the more chance of success.

Also, learning research strategies and how to cite sources should be introduced immediately upon entering college.

BENCHMARKS FOR EVALUATION-- (Ideas-- not necessarily all of them)

Midterm - A short answer exam that all can use from the shared reading

An abstract of what they are doing on their project

An Annotated Bibliography to date (Minimum 3).

Must have a variety that include academic scholarly resources)

Final Project

Bibliography (6--12)

A multi-draft essay from reading.

An In--class reflective on the project and what was learned from reading and class experience.

Sylviane Baumflek

Independent reading for English 92 students:

- 1) Allow students to pick a book they want to read either as a whole class or as a member of a group (a maximum of four books/four groups in the class). The book choices can be student generated or can begin with a list that I have generated for the class. Looking at the synopses of the books or the first chapters of the books on Amazon or NY Times first chapters will help students make a selection.
- 2) Once the students have picked a book and joined a group, students will read their books independently and meet with their group once a week to discuss a section they have read. At the session, they will need to journal and inkshed. For instance, they might write about a character's actions and motivations or about a particular section of a chapter. The journals will then be circulated around the group and each member will respond briefly to what was written. The journals will then be handed in to the instructor
- 3) At the end of a specific number of pages, students will also be asked to generate questions about their text that they want to discuss within the group or within the class. After their discussion, representatives of each group will present an overview of the events in the book to the class.
- 4) The book should be finished by midterm and students can then choose a second book to work on / switch groups/ etc.

Assessments - At midterm, all students will take the ACT Reading Exam. However, we also need a department or cohort level assessment, which the cohorts can work with in order to help students understand their strengths and weaknesses.

Possible models for the midterm assessment:

- a) Have students read a short piece and generate a summary of the piece. They will have to be able to identify the main idea of the piece and some of the supporting details the author offers. This can be cross read by cohort members and responded to quickly or the teacher may assess it and cohort members can see sample high, low, and mid-range papers. "A Contextualized Intervention for Community College Developmental Reading and Writing Students" (Dolores Perin et. al.) discusses privileging summary of as a method to assessment, limiting summarization to a specific type of reading.
- b) Have students read different pieces and give oral summaries to the class before they write. (This approach may be too cumbersome if the class is very large.)
- c) Have students write a first draft using a CATW like prompt based on the independent reading done during the first 6 weeks of class. The teacher and cohort members will need to assess this piece using the CATW rubric and return it to the students as soon as possible in order for it then to be turned into a revisable essay for the final portfolio. Since the CATW requires summary, it will still offer a fair assessment of the students' ability to read as well as write.

Baumflek

At the end of the course, students will take the ACT Reading Exam and the CATW if the student has completed the work for the course. The students need to be assessed by departmental measures as well.

Possible model for the final portfolio: a two part final exam that will span 2 days (4hours). The first day, students will receive a reading and 10-12 questions on the reading. After they have handed in the answers, they will take the reading material home and reread and annotate the piece. The next meeting, students will be asked to write an impromptu essay based on the text. This will replace of the 10th week essay we are now using. The exam will provide cohorts a standard measure for assessment. In addition, the cohort should also look at a revised piece of writing either at the end of the semester or perhaps during the 10th week. I believe we need a piece for comparison in terms of what the student is capable of doing with direction and what the student can do alone, simply following the prompt of the final exam.

Liza Bruna

Independent Reading-based Activity to Assess Students' Reading Comprehension

Weekly Reading Responses

These responses can take different forms, but all include some kind of textual annotation, selection of a major idea in the text, creative response to this idea, presentation of work to classmates, and written summary of the major ideas in the text and how their creative response represented one or more of these ideas. The creative response could take the following forms:

- Annotating an essay, article, poem, story or chapter by using pictures, charts or diagrams, and creating a graphic that captures the major ideas of the text and how they relate to each other. This graphic could take the form of a story board, comparison chart, cause and effect diagram, data chart, etc. Graphics are presented to classmates for feedback, after which students write a 1-2 page summary of the article and how their graphic represented one or more of its main ideas.
- Annotating the text however the student chooses, and creating an activity, game or role play that teaches or illustrates a major theme or concept in the text. Activities will be enacted for/with classmates, and then receive class feedback. Students will then write a 1-2 page summary of the article and how their activity taught or illustrated one or more of its main ideas.
- Annotating the text however the student chooses, and writing a monologue or dialogue that relates to a major idea in the text, from a different point of view than the narrator's voice. This could be an unwritten monologue or dialogue from the point of view of a character(s) in a story or novel, or from the point of view of a made up character or other animate or inanimate player important in the text. These are read to classmates who provide feedback, after which students write a 1-2 page summary of the article and how their mono/dialogue represented one or more of its main ideas.

The presentation of student responses/activities will be too time-consuming to occur as individual presentations to the whole class. Thus the class may be divided into 3 groups based on which type of textual response students want to do. While textual annotations and the 1-2 page summaries should be individual, presentations of graphics, activities or dialogues could be group works.

I. Common semester-long, reading –based activity within cohort:

Instructors in cohort give a common text to students (non-fiction, similar level as *NYTimes* articles used for 91/92 reading exams). Students must 1) annotate,* 2) create a graphic, activity-based or creative summary, and 3) develop their own response to the ideas in the text.

**Annotations and responses could take the forms students have practiced in reading-based activity described above.*

Or a selection of the 2 best works created during the module should be edited and presented for evaluation.

Bruna

II. Two common course criteria (benchmarks) for all sections of 92

1. Instructors in cohort give a common text (non-fiction, similar level as *NYTimes* articles used for 91/92 reading exams) to students to 1) annotate,* 2) summarize, and 3) write an essay in which they discuss their opinion about an important point the author makes in the text. The reading is not given in advance. Instead, this exam is given during 3 classes.
 - During the first, students are instructed to read and annotate the text, use dictionaries to look up words, etc.

**Annotations could take the forms students have practiced in reading-based activity described above.*

- During the second, students are instructed to write a summary of the main points the author is making.
 - During the third, the students are instructed to write an in-class essay in which they develop their opinion about the thesis or another major point the author makes. They are not given a prompt for this; they are evaluated on their ability to select an important idea to respond to, develop their own thesis, and respond to the ideas in the text meaningfully and thoroughly.
2. A final project in which students:
 - Select and edit the written work they did during their class for the two or more texts used in their final revised essay (below).
 - A final essay, which has undergone revision with peer and some faculty feedback, in which students develop a response to the major ideas in two more texts, read during their class in an essay of 3-5 pages. The essays should showcase their ability to write about the ideas and issues presented in the texts they read during the semester.

Jennifer Cortijo

**Independent Activity Proposal
Independent Reading Project**

This is a project that I have been running for several semesters with my 92 sections. I have also run a modified version with an English 04 class.

For this project, students choose their own book, read it completely, and submit writing assignments related to it weekly.

Rationale:

It's not enough for students to get good at reading what's assigned to them. If reading skills are truly to improve, the students must take ownership of the selection of at least some of their reading material.

The week before book choice is due, there's a lot of classroom time devoted to discussing how to choose a book and recommending books to one another. A casual but valuable dialogue about books and reading is created.

Once the book has been chosen, the following four weeks the students are responsible for reading and "checking-in" about a quarter of the text (they may divide by number of chapters or number of pages). The check-ins require the students to summarize and react to the section, and to ask questions about the section or make predictions about the rest of the book. The summarizing section helps to ensure that they are secure with the first levels of Bloom's taxonomy, knowledge and comprehension, particularly since they are writing for an audience they know has not read the book. The reacting section, depending on the direction they take it, encourages critical thinking and leads them toward reading skills higher on Bloom's taxonomy, such as analysis and evaluation.

At this point, it would be week six of the semester. In addition to whatever the class would be doing, each student would have read a book of their own choosing – something many of our students have never done, and I have heard them tell me that it creates a tremendous feeling of accomplishment.

The second portion of the project is a writing assignment, but not portfolio-style. (As a general rule, I discourage students from including this project in the portfolio.) The students write a book review. They choose an audience to encourage or discourage from reading the book. They write an evaluative review of the text matching the needs and concerns of that audience. They are encouraged to delve into the details of the text analytically to support their judgments, but also to avoid giving away too many "spoilers," thus avoiding using summary as a crutch.

Ultimately, the project spans the whole semester – six weeks to reading alone, and four to writing an essay about reading.

Cortijo**Plan for Implementation:**

See the attached handouts for how I have run it this semester.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

Students take ownership of the reading process, from book choice to evaluation. They work at all of the levels of Bloom's taxonomy (except, perhaps, synthesis). If they like the book, they have learned that reading can be enjoyable. If they don't like the book, they have learned about *sticktoitiveness*, having read the whole text and written about it over many weeks anyway.

PS – Some teachers have expressed to me the concern that students, given the opportunity to choose their own text, would choose something “inappropriate.” I do not share this concern. Our students are adults, and as such, I make only three limits on their books choice: 1) It must be aimed at adults or young adults; 2) It must be in English; 3) It must be text-based, not a picture book or graphic novel. I reserve veto power, but in the many semesters I have done this project, I've never used it. Generally, the students pick texts no one would worry about. If they choose something with content that's very sexual, I ask if they'll be comfortable writing about it academically. If they say yes, I don't object – we are all adults. Frequently students choose religious texts (a book of the Bible, the Qur'an, etc.). In those cases, I ask if they will be able to step back and write evaluatively about it for the Book Review essay. Most of the time they then choose another text on their own, but if they feel they can be analytical and evaluative about the religious text, I allow them to use it. Some teachers might not feel as I do about these issues, and might make stricter rules about book choice. I don't recommend, however, asking students to choose from a pre-approved list. This defeats personal ownership and reinforces that books are something that must be assigned and selected by an expert outside the self.

Jennifer Cortijo

**Cohort Activity Proposal
Theme Investigation**

This would be essentially be a variation on one of the assignments that Walter Barleycorn suggested to us during his presentation, asking student to challenge their assumptions about a topic through research-based reading. In this variation, either each instructor would choose a topic for the class to investigate based on her individual course theme, or the cohort as a whole could choose a common theme that all classes within it would investigate. The students could use the *Times Topics* option to learn about a topic if the class has a *New York Times* subscription, or if not, they could use *Opposing Viewpoints*, a database available through KCC's library intranet. Students would collect articles, read, and discuss them, and in writing they could track the evolution of their opinions and knowledge of the subject.

Rationale:

Through reading factual and opinionated articles on a topic about which they may already have established opinions, the students will weigh preconceived notions against what they read, and one text against another. This will encourage critical reading and critical thinking in general. The texts used will be at a level that is challenging to them, but reachable with teacher help, thus stretching their reading ability.

Plan for Implementation:

Week 1 – The topic is introduced. Students complete prompts like the following:

- What I already know about this topic is . . .
- Based on what I know, my opinion about this is . . .
- What I'd like to know more about this is . . .
- What I expect to find when we research this is . . .

Weeks 2-9 – Every week or two, a new article is read and discussed by the class.

Weeks 3, 6, and 9 - Students check in again by completing the same or similar prompts that they did initially.

This can be run as purely individual student work, or it could be divided between whole class and small group discussions and individual work.

The four check-ins could be exchanged and evaluated by the cohort.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

Students will work their way through all levels of Bloom's taxonomy. They will challenge their assumptions through reading, gaining topical knowledge, but also critical reading, critical thinking, and information literacy skills.

Jennifer Cortijo

**English 92 Community Benchmark Proposal
Recursive Reading Log**

For this project, all students in English 92 would work from a common reading, thereby standardizing the difficulty and allowing for fewer complications in norming. The reading assigned would be fairly tough, but appropriate for students early in the college careers. For this proposal, let's imagine it's Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail." Students would read and record their understanding of it and reactions to it twice, maybe even three times, over the course of the semester.

Rationale:

If we want to encourage the idea that reading is a process, and that re-reading is a valuable part of that process, it's something we'll have to model for the students through a required assignment. If we leave it to them, they will simply skip it. "Let's not and say we did." I think we've all seen this when we ask students to go back to the text while they are revising an essay. The students who do it are few and far between. The writing done along with this project will create awareness for students of their own meta-cognition, while also laying this bare for the instructors, as well. It will not be "portfolio style," and it will be more structured than the meta-writing assignments we have previously tried.

Plan for Implementation:

This would be a fairly large project, probably taking up 2-3 days of class time early in the semester – say week two, and another 2-3 days a bit later on, say week six. It could even be extended to a third check at week nine.

This would be entirely unaided. The text would never be "taught" and discussions of it would not be held formally in class. (Students may choose to discuss it amongst themselves or even research this. I don't see this as problematic. Indeed, aren't these things valuable parts of real-life reading processes that we hope our students might independently adopt?)

Week 1–

1. All students in all sections of 92 are given copies of "Letter from Birmingham Jail." They are asked to read and annotate the text.
2. Every paragraph, or every few paragraphs, the students are prompted by a worksheet to record their understanding of what they've read – its content, its structure, etc. (I'm thinking this would look something like the "captioning" exercises in Ronna's old CPE workbooks.)
3. Students would create "Context Journals" for words and terms that are unfamiliar to them in the text. (This is an activity that I have run for several semesters in my 92s as its own project. It's been lovingly appropriated from Heal McKnight's article "'The Most Annoying Assignment Ever': Helping Composition Students Navigate New Vocabulary," attached.)

Cortijo

4. Students would create 3-4 questions to ask the text, and 3-4 questions to ask themselves about the text and the ideas it brings up. They would then attempt to answer those questions.
5. The annotated text and all written work related to it are collected.

Week 6 –

1. The annotated texts and previous written work are redistributed. Students must re-read the text and re-annotate in a different color pen or pencil.
2. Students must react, in writing, to their old annotations, and to the questions and answers they noted before.
3. Students would create two new questions for the text, and two new questions for themselves about the ideas provoked by the text, and attempt to answer them.
4. Students would answer a series of questions encouraging them to examine the evolution of their reading of the text, some things like:
 - a. Was the text easier or harder to read this time around? In what way? Why do you think that is?
 - b. What did you notice reading this time that you did not notice the last time?
 - c. Would you still answer the questions you asked yourself and the text after the first reading the same way now? Why or why not? If you would, what would change?
 - d. What happened between the first reading a few weeks ago and now that may have changed the way you see the text?
 - e. What methods did you use to read the text the first time? What methods did you use to read it now?

And this could really be the whole project. From this, we would really get a window into the students' evolving (or stagnating) understanding, and see if they have really created a reading process for themselves.

However, it could also be extended with a more formal check in week nine or ten, with a short answer exam about the text, similar to the style of the department final we have now. We would then be able to compare the students' proficiency with a text they'd spent time and process on, versus their proficiency with a cold text, as in the department final.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

The students would have a lengthy and recursive reading process modeled for them, and they will have practiced through it. This will be a portable skill, applicable to all academic reading, and indeed all reading in general. It will promote Metacognition. Of course, understanding of the particular text will also be deepened.

Instructor: Jennifer Cortijo

English 92 D18FM

Spring 2012

Kingsborough Community College, CUNY

Independent Reading Project**Due Dates:**

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Monday, March 5 th | Book choice due |
| 2. Monday, March 12 th | First quarter Check-In due |
| 3. Monday, March 19 th | Second quarter Check-In due |
| 4. Monday, March 26 th | Third quarter Check-In due |
| 5. Monday, April 2 nd | Last quarter Check-In due |
| 6. Monday, April 16 th | Book review worksheet due |
| 7. Monday, April 23 rd | Book review draft 1 due |
| 8. Monday, April 30 th | Book review draft 2 due |
| 9. Monday, May 7 th | Book review final draft due |

About the Project:

Frequent reading is a valuable habit, improving vocabulary, awareness of writing conventions and style choices, and cultural literacy. People who read often tend to be stronger writers than people who don't. It may seem like a hassle to read often, but there's good news: it's beneficial to read, even if it's not something a teacher assigned. For the independent reading project, you'll choose the book, and you'll get to review it.

I. Book Choice(Part 1, due March 5th)

- a) Go to the public library, the Kibbee Library here at Kingsborough, or any bookstore. Browse the racks; ask librarians or salespeople for assistance; look at bestseller lists; ask friends or family for recommendations. Choose something you think you'll really like. You may choose whatever interests you: romance, adventure, mystery, horror, fantasy, science fiction, biography, nonfiction, etc. I have very few restrictions: It must be in English. It must be aimed at adults or young adults. While comic books and graphic novels do have literary value, they are not appropriate for this project. (While I have every expectation that your book choice will be fine, I do have veto power.)
- b) March 5th: Bring your book to class, along with a written note including the following: Title, author, number of pages, reason for choosing this book.

II. Check-Ins(Parts 2-5, due March 12th, 19th, 26th and April 2nd)

Divide the book into quarters. Write a Check-In for each quarter by the dates listed above.

Check-Ins may be submitted early, if you choose.

Your Check-Ins should be typed. (See formatting instructions on the syllabus.) Each Check-In should include:

- Summary of the section
- Your reaction to the section
- Questions about the section, and/or predictions about the rest of the book
- (Recommended but not required) A list of new vocabulary from the section, including page number where it was found and definition (you need only include the definition appropriate to that usage)

Cortijo**III. Book Review**

(Parts 6-9, due April 16th, 23rd, 30th, and May 7th)

Once you've finished your book, you will compose a book review, analyzing the book and evaluating whether or not it others should read it.

The Independent Reading Project is meant to be a goal in-and-of-itself to improve reading skills. However, if a student has turned in all parts of the Independent Reading Project on time and if the Book Review is thorough and analytical enough, that student may request my permission to use the Book Review as a portfolio possibility essay. If that permission is granted and the student opts to use the Book Review as the multi-draft essay in the portfolio, a 4th (final) draft will be needed. Be aware that such permission is granted only rarely.

ELIZABETH DILL

Multiple-Reading Annotated Bibliography

An independent reading-based activity that spans module 1 (the first 6 weeks of the course) and can be assessed by the teacher at midterm.

RATIONALE:

The Annotated Bibliography involves students in the construction of meaning through selection of context readings. It shows students that reading is about analysis *and* about the choices we make as readers to inform our understanding of a text.

PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

Students will create an Annotated Bibliography that contextualizes a common reading. Students all read one text. Whole class discussion of the common text will serve both as a way into analyzing the reading and as a springboard for the Annotated Bibliography.

- Students will compile a list of texts that inform and illuminate the meaning of that common text. For the list of outside contextual readings, students can do research to find scholarly articles, or they can use song lyrics, poetry, blogs, newspaper articles, chapters from textbooks, novels, plays, etceteras.
- Students will compose contextual readings. For the list of texts that they themselves write, students can produce found poems from the language of the shared reading, write a review of the reading, write a letter to the teacher about whether the common reading should be taught again, create a graphic depiction based on the common reading, annotate the text (visually or in the usual way).
- Each text that the students include will have an entry in the Annotated Bibliography. Students will present a summary of the text and a brief overview of how it relates to the common reading.
- Instructors can assess these Annotated Bibliographies by collecting them at midterm; instructors can collect individual entries as they are assigned throughout the first six weeks. Students might give presentations as well, or work in groups so that they are collaborating on an Annotated Bibliography and each creating their own set of entries on a theme of their choosing.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENTS:

To get students to read independently; to foster student interest in reading; to create a context for textual analysis outside of the multiple-draft essay; to place students at the forefront of the interpretive reading process; to teach textual analysis as synonymous with the act of reading; to learn summary and contextual analysis/synthesis outside of long written essays.

Dill

In-Class Essay on The Common Reading and One Text from the Annotated Bibliography

Each cohort agrees upon one common reading-based activity that spans the entire semester and can be collaboratively assessed in the cohorts at the end of the semester.

RATIONALE:

Using writing as a way to represent an interpretation of the reading (rather than as a formal textual analysis that showcases the author's purpose/argument) presents students with an empowered reading stance. Their writing is in-class, and therefore captures an understanding of the readings without instructors using revision as an occasion to over-direct the student's understanding.

PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

Students select one annotation from the Annotated Bibliography and develop it into an in-class essay that will be assessed by an outside reader at the end of the semester. The essay's goal will be to *explore the connection between the common text and the selected text*. This is not a thesis-driven textual analysis, but rather an essay in which students can develop different connections that they see between the common text and the text selected from the Annotated Bibliography. The outside reader will give it a Pass/Fail.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENTS:

To present texts to an outside reader (presumably unfamiliar with the readings); to explore the meanings of readings and how pairing two readings influences interpretation; to engage in student-centered reading practices that encourage students to develop their *own* perspectives on how to read; to see that students are the agents of meaning and meaning-making in the act of reading; to use writing as a means of presenting one's understanding of a text to an outside reader.

All sections of English 92 agree to construct 2 common course criteria (assignments) that will be collaboratively assessed to provide uniformity of academic standards.

Criteria: 2 Part Final Exam

RATIONALE:

Students will be asked to address reading as a process that produces meaning.

PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

Students will take a two-part exam that asks them to analyze a reading selected by the cohort.

Part 1: Comprehension

For the first 2-hour portion of the exam, students will be given a short reading accompanied by a set of directions that asks them to annotate the text in specific ways. Directions might include:

- Identify at least three key quotations that need “unpacking” and in your notes explain specifically what words or phrases seem “loaded” and why.
- Capture your initial reactions to at least three places in the reading: how did the reading make you feel? What did it make you think of? What thoughts do you associate with this section?

Dill

- Identify at least three places in the reading where you have unanswered questions. Write out those questions. (And even follow-up questions.)
- At the end of the reading, freewrite a response to what you feel is the “center of gravity” in the reading. Focus on generating ideas and capturing your reactions as a reader; this is not a formal piece of writing!

Part 2: Presenting an Interpretation

For the second day of the exam (another 2 hour session), students will write an essay that takes ONE of their annotations and explores it. This could be a quotation they underlined, a question they asked, or something that they produced during the freewrite.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENTS:

To approach reading as a multi-layered process; to assume control over the meaning of a reading through analysis; to learn that as a reader, one can control how a text’s meaning is presented; to appreciate and develop one’s own *readerly* reactions and responses to a text.

Elroy Esdaille

Listening, Reading, and Writing: Highlighting a text

Objectives:

1. Students will learn to highlight information.
2. Students will use highlighting to help to decipher important information.
3. Students will use highlighting skills.
4. Students will use highlighting to enhance understanding.
5. Students will work independently and cooperatively.

Selective Highlighting is used to help students organize what they have read by selecting what is important. This strategy teaches students to highlight **ONLY** the key words, phrases, vocabulary, and ideas that are central to understanding the reading.

Strategies: Teacher directed/Group work/presentation

Aim: How can we highlight important information about the character, [Name of character] on pages [Give a page range-no more than 3 pages] of [Name of text]?

Motivation-Do Now: Brainstorm: Make a list of the things we can do to remember important information.

Materials: White board, Smart board, eraser, marker, Pencils for each student, Writing paper for each student, Handouts, specific text for the assignment, Different color Highlighters.

Development and Procedure: Activities: Teacher will ask the students to listen attentively, while he/she reads pages 2-3 of an assigned text, one time only. For example: the teacher can say, “On pages 10-13, the character, Richard is introduced to us.”

1. Ask the students to reread and begin to highlight important information about the character, Richard, in the passage.
2. Highlight only the facts, which are important or the key vocabulary not the entire sentence.
3. After highlighting, look at what they have highlighted and summarize what they read.
4. Take what was highlighted and write a summary paragraph about the character of Richard.

Teachers may wish to have students use various colors of highlighters to identify main ideas from details (e.g., use orange to represent main ideas and yellow to represent supporting details).

Questions:

- How can you recall important information in a text?
- Why do you think it is important to highlight information in a text?
- What do you think the highlighted information in a text could be used for?

Medial Summary: Model task: The smart board will show an example of a short paragraph. The teacher will highlight it for the students to see how it is done.

Final Summary: Share out—students will individually share answers.

Home Work: Explain the importance of highlighting a text, and why is it useful to enhance understanding of a text?

Elroy Esdaille**A Proposed Course Outline**

- I. Reading incomprehension: (students' perspective)
- II. Using Prior knowledge to help discover meaning:
 - a) Question types
 - b) Making questions
 - c) Strategies
- III. Exploring meaning:
 - a) Asking questions to explore meaning
 - b) How to understand a text by using main idea, topic sentences, summary, annotating and highlighting
 - c) How to analyze a text: breaking down a text, text analysis worksheet
- IV. Vocabulary:
 - a) Key words and word association
 - b) Vocabulary and understanding
 - c) Vocabulary in context
 - d) Context clues

Creating meaning and making connections: 6 week unit.

The course text/reading packet outlines the readings you are assigned for the entire term. For each reading assignment for the first six weeks, you are asked to read the assigned texts and pick two different key word(s) or terms (what you deem to be significant) from each of the texts. In a one page written response, you are asked to discuss how both terms individually and collectively relate to the theme of the course. In your discussion make sure to include the main idea of each reading and its ramifications.

The writing can be in the form of a journal and or become material that can be used in class discussion.

At the end of six weeks (Midterm), you would choose the three best word(s) or terms from your key word list and create a thesis sentence that will enable you to discuss all three terms as they relate to each other and the theme of the course.

Sample Lesson and Assignment

Motivation: Have students make a list of five words that can best describe the reading. (3 mins)

Procedure and development: Have a few students read aloud their response to the class. From students' responses, have a class discussion about the implications of those word(s) with regards to meaning and textual analysis. Facilitate the discussion with a specific focus on textual analysis and multiplicity of meaning.

Esdaille

Activity: Ask students to pick a word from the **key word** list, pair up with a partner, and discuss how their terms individually and collectively relate to the theme of the course. After a group discussion, each team will share a response with the class. (30 secs-1 min)

Homework: Ask students to interview five people and tell them the theme of the course. Student-interviewer should ask the interviewees about the first thing that comes to their minds when they hear the theme. Students write down the responses and compare the interviewees' responses to their own word lists, and then write a page journal response.

Elroy Esdaille

TEXT TITLES
Title [Title of the text]

Objectives:

1. Students will examine the title of [Title of the text].
2. Students will write about the title of [Title of the text].
3. Students will analyze the title for meaning.
4. Students will use the title to help predict the outcome of the book.
5. Students will present responses.
6. Students will work cooperatively.

Strategies: Teacher directed/Group work/presentation

Materials: White board, Smart Board, eraser, markers, activity sheet for each student, the novel Maniac Magee, Pencils for each student, Writing paper for each student.

Aim: How can we use the title of the text, [Title of the text] to help us predict the outcome?

Motivation: Do Now: Make a list of some of the books you have read and enjoyed.
Elicit responses, write (one line) on board and discuss.

Transition: How can you compare any of the book titles with [Title of the text]?

Development and Procedure: Activity: group work.

1. Write three (3) possible titles for the text [Title of the text] and explain what prediction(s) they can help you to make.

Questions:

- What ideas come to mind, when you read or hear the title, [Title of the text]?
- Why do think the author came up with the title, [Title of the text]?
- State why you think the title, [Title of the text] is appropriate or not appropriate.
- Explain why you think the title suggests or not suggests anything that will happen in the book.
- Explain why you think the title [Title of the text] is important or not important.
- How can the title, [Title of the text] help us predict the outcome of the story?
- State what predictions you can make from the title, [Title of the text].

Medial Summary: Somewhere in the midst of the questions (as needed).

Final Summary: Share out—students will share answers: Each group will write one answer on the board.

Home Work: Interview two people. Mention the title [Title of the text] and ask them to make a prediction of the outcome of the text. In a one paragraph, paraphrase the two people's response.

Elroy Esdaille

Title Prediction
[Title of the text]

Activity: *Group work:*

Write three (3) possible titles for the text [Title of the text].
Explain the your predictions.

Title:

Prediction:

Title:

Prediction:

Title:

Prediction:

Meg Feeley

Reading Screens Independent Reading Activity

Rationale: Can students engage in ‘composition’ through the use of digital forms? Is it possible that reading texts on a ‘screen’ changes students’ interactions with those texts? Does reading texts on a screen produce a ‘community’ of sorts more easily; one in which students naturally move to respond as writers? And if, indeed, students are ‘digital natives’, should we not seek to teach our students to be critical and connected readers of digital text and images? These expected outcomes of the entire sequence of English composition courses – both developmental and Freshman level - - are very much in keeping with the kind of “immobilized” and “enervated, atrophied” types of reading skills discussed by Mariolina Salvatori in *Conversations with Texts* (442).

Implementation: Students will need regular and reliable access to electronic devices in a type of mediated, on-line ‘community’ to which they would have access daily (every day meeting in a wired or wireless space with equipment provided). Students would then have the opportunity to read texts generated by each other (as suggested by Salvatori); possible activities in class would include a blog; the use of social media; developing discourse collaboratively using PowerPoint and other softwares, and discussion forums. Having access to technology represents that possibility that students might really get to choose what they read, and how they read.

Objectives and Outcomes: The use of a digital portfolio, incorporating standardized and departmental assessment measures, with self-paced ‘gateways’ that would allow students to demonstrate proficiencies over a range of competencies at will. Elements in the DP could include a revised essay; a ‘timed’ response; a ‘reading’ exam using short answer responses; meta-narrative; a reading journal; annotated bibliography, etc. It would be possible that the standardized measures (CATW and R-ACT) would be just two of many ‘measures’ that students would complete on their way to the undergraduate curriculum.

Performing Texts Cohort Activity

Rationale: Learning about the work of our colleagues by trading assignments and responses lacks what I might call ‘flavor.’ The labor of reading and assessing one another’s students’ work does not really convey the ways in which critical reading, writing and thinking takes place in a collaborative environment.

Implementation: At the cohort level, I would propose a collaborative teacher/student capstone ‘project’ consisting of discourse, written and visual, between and among the various sections. This could be a ‘symposium’ or other cohort-facilitated project or performance; a cohort-wide digital portfolio or other artifact representing the work of the cohort as a whole. I am intrigued at the possibility of reaching beyond the usual ‘limitations’ of time and space when considering these kinds of collaborative projects.

Feeley

End of Term Assessment: The digital portfolio has the potential to be a cohort activity for assessment. I would prefer to see a holistic assessment, rather than a piece-by-piece ‘grading’ of student work. I also envision members of a cohort participating in a discussion on-line structured to reflect on teaching and learning (rather than the administrative responsibilities) of the cohort. Members can share readings/ideas/links, etc.

ENG 92 COMMUNITY BENCHMARKS

Rationale: It’s very easy to be beguiled by the possibilities of the ‘paperless classroom’ and other wonders offered by technology. A small glitch, virus or a power outage would probably have us all yearning for a trade paperback with wide margins for annotation. I have found that, as a scholar, teacher and learner, it takes time to use, implement and create work using digital technology.

But the possibility – that we can offer students an experience of becoming readers and writers in the way most of us generally work with texts daily – is the possibility of ENG 92 having its own unique identity in the curriculum, distinct in its form and mission – *information literacy* at its critical best.

Implementation: One possibility is the use of a digital portfolio at the departmental level, incorporating standardized and departmental assessment measures, with self-paced ‘gateways’ that would allow students to demonstrate proficiencies over a range of competencies at will. In this way, students who move at a slower pace might satisfy some elements of the course, and not others (and complete them when ‘repeating’ 92.)

Elements in the DP could include a revised essay (with comments); a ‘timed’ response; a ‘reading’ exam using short answer responses; meta-narrative writing; a reading journal; annotated bibliography; collaborative discussions; digital story-telling, etc. It would be possible that the standardized measures (CATW and R-ACT) would be just two of many ‘measures’ that students would complete on their way to the undergraduate curriculum.

Objectives and Outcomes: A unified and cohesive approach to ‘reading’ in a way that embraces the ways in which students do and will read. Teaching methods of reading/responding and researching that will support scholarship at ever-higher levels of difficulty. An end to the idea of 92 as a ‘Grand Central Station’ and a beginning of it as a ‘baseline’ for all that follows.

Lea Fridman

"I Choose Project"

The pleasure books "system" is about helping students discover reading and become readers by having them read books selected for pleasure. The details can vary, the number of books can vary, but I have had students reading 3 books over a semester - that is 750 pages or more - and doing it happily and with no resistance whatever. The real payback is when the student who says he or she does not like to read discovers the genre or the author or subject he or she loves and is "turned on" or when ELS students tell me that they no longer translate into their language as they read.

The beauty of the system is that it takes up so little class time and yet it accomplishes so much. I like to cap the reading of a book with an in-class essay (I give out the topics in advance and students may choose a topic that appeals to them). The secret is to give enough attention that the student knows that this is a meaningful and serious component of the course. Students may share about their books in small groups in the classroom and write in logs about them.

The critical part of the system has to do with letting the students know that you are serious about insisting they search and find a book they totally love. This is hard for some. But I am insistent and this has always paid off. My first log assignment is for the student to write about why, after reading the first two chapters of their pleasure book, they adore the book or else plan to dump it. I support the dumping of book after book until the student does find a book they love. Giving them dates for the in-class essay associated with the pleasure book helps everyone move forward and pace themselves.

From a pedagogical perspective the system assumes that short readings done in the classroom will receive intensive analytic attention at the same time that reading for pleasure (and in quantity) goes on at home.

Simple system, easy as pie to administer, but so much bang for the buck!

Pleasure Book List Suggestions

Note: You will read three pleasure books over the course of this semester. The only requirement is that these be books you love. If you find that you are not enjoying your book, pick up another one until you discover a book that really turns you on. You are not at all limited to books on the list below – they are intended only as possibilities, as suggestions, to inspire!

The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri

Named for a Russian writer by his Indian parents in memory of a catastrophe years before, Gogol Ganguli knows only that he suffers the burden of his heritage as well as his odd, antic name. Lahiri brings great empathy to Gogol as he stumbles along the first-generation path, strewn with conflicting loyalties, comic detours, and wrenching love affairs. With penetrating insight, she reveals not only the defining power of the names and expectations bestowed upon us by our parents, but also the means by which we slowly, sometimes painfully, come to define ourselves.

Born Free by Joy Adamson

Joy Adamson's story of a lion cub in transition between the captivity in which she is raised and the fearsome wild to which she is returned captures the abilities of both humans and animals to cross the seemingly unbridgeable gap between their radically different worlds.

Fridman

A Lion Called Christian by Anthony Bourke (true story)

A Lion Called Christian tells the remarkable story of how Anthony “Ace” Bourke and John Rendall, visitors to London from Australia in 1969, bought the boisterous lion cub in the pet department of Harrods. For several months, the three of them shared a flat above a furniture shop on London’s King’s Road, where the charismatic and intelligent Christian quickly became a local celebrity. . . .How could Ace and John avoid having to send Christian to a zoo for the rest of his life?

The Lucky One by Nicholas Sparks (love story)

Nicholas Sparks tells the unforgettable story of a man whose brushes with death lead him to the love of his life.

The Soloist by Steven Lopez

When Steve Lopez saw Nathaniel Ayers playing his heart out on a two-string violin on Los Angeles’ skid row, he found it impossible to walk away. Over time, Steve Lopez and Nathaniel Ayers form a bond, and Lopez imagines that he might be able to change Ayers’s life. Lopez collects donated violins, a cello, even a stand-up bass and a piano; he takes Ayers to Walt Disney Concert Hall and helps him move indoors. For each triumph, there is a crashing disappointment, yet neither man gives up. In the process of trying to save Ayers, Lopez finds that his own life is changing, and his sense of what one man can accomplish in the lives of others begins to expand in new ways.

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

"Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." A lawyer's advice to his children as he defends the real mockingbird of Harper Lee's classic novel—a black man charged with the rape of a white girl. Through the young eyes of Scout and Jem Finch, Harper Lee explores with rich humor and unswerving honesty the irrationality of adult attitudes toward race and class in the Deep South of the 1930s. The conscience of a town steeped in prejudice, violence, and hypocrisy is pricked by the stamina and quiet heroism of one man's struggle for justice—but the weight of history will only tolerate so

A Perfect Stranger by Danielle Steele (and her other novels)

The only daughter of a European banking dynasty, Raphaella had always been sheltered from the world. Married to a much older American, she was kept in the privacy of great luxury, tended to by servants, watched over by bodyguards. She was the beautiful dark-eyed woman the young lawyer from San Francisco, Alexander Hale saw sitting alone one misty evening. Before he could approach her, she rushed away into the garden. She was the "perfect stranger" he couldn't forget. When they met again their lives would change forever.

Harry Potter by J.K. Rowling (fantasy)

Harry Potter has no idea how famous he is. That's because he's being raised by his miserable aunt and uncle who are terrified Harry will learn that he's really a wizard, just as his parents were. But everything changes when Harry is summoned to attend an infamous school for wizards, and he begins to discover some clues about his illustrious birthright. From the surprising way he is greeted by a lovable giant, to the unique curriculum and colorful faculty at his unusual school, Harry finds himself drawn deep inside a mystical world he never knew existed and closer to his own noble destiny.

Fridman

The Help by Kathryn Stockett

The Help is about a young white woman in the early 1960s in Mississippi who becomes interested in the plight of the black ladies' maids that every family has working for them. She writes their stories about mistreatment, abuse and heartbreaks of working in white families' homes, all just before the Civil Rights revolution. That is the story in a nutshell - but it is so much more than just stories. . . .

A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry

The plot revolves around the divergent dreams and conflicts within three generations of the Younger family: son Walter Lee, his wife Ruth, his sister Beneatha, his son Travis and matriarch Lena, called Mama. When her deceased husband's insurance money comes through, Mama dreams of moving to a new home and a better neighborhood in Chicago. Walter Lee, a chauffeur, has other plans, however: buying a liquor store and being his own man. Beneatha dreams of medical school. . . .

Of Human Bondage by Somerset Maugham (classic)

W. Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* is one of the best novels I have ever read. The language is simple. The narration is subtle. The characters are real and display emotions and feelings everyone can identify with. The power of novel becomes apparent when you are reading it. You choke up every once a while, you smile for hours after you have finished reading certain passages, and you comprehend your own self, your woes and possibilities, better through perspectives that novel provides.

The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran (poetry, wisdom)

This book remains "simply the best!" I have read it many times and quoted it frequently over the last 60 years. I gave a copy to my daughter as part of her wedding gift - and years later it is at her bedside. The information given is simple, yet profound. It is something that exhaults when you are need to be lifted up, comforts you . . .

What is the What by Dave Eggers (novel, contemporary)

The epic novel based on the life of Valentino Achak Deng who, along with thousands of other children—the so-called Lost Boys—was forced to leave his village in Sudan at the age of seven and trek hundreds of miles by foot, pursued by militias, government bombers, and wild animals, crossing the deserts of three countries to find freedom.

Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane (old favorite – novel)

Henry Fleming, a private in the Union Army, runs away from the field of war. Afterwards, the shame he feels at this act of cowardice ignites his desire to receive an injury in combat—a “red badge of courage” that will redeem him.

Things Fall Apart by Chinua Acheve (amazing novel about colonialism in Africa)

Things Fall Apart tells two intertwining stories, both centering on Okonkwo, a “strong man” of an Ibo village in Nigeria. The first, a powerful fable of the immemorial conflict between the individual and society, traces Okonkwo’s fall from grace with the tribal world. The second, as modern as the first is ancient, concerns the clash of cultures and the destruction of Okonkwo's world with the arrival of aggressive European missionaries.

Fridman

The Color of Water by James McBride (recent novel)

As a boy in Brooklyn, James McBride knew that his mother was different. But when he asked about it, she'd simply say, "I'm light-skinned". Later he wondered if he was different too, and asked his mother if he was black or white. "You're a human being", she snapped. "Educate yourself or you'll be a nobody!" When James asked what the colour of God was, she said, "God is the colour of water". As an adult, McBride finally persuaded his mother to tell the story.

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo by Steig Larson

The first volume in the Millennium Trilogy, and an international publishing sensation, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* combines murder mystery, family saga, love story, and financial intrigue into one satisfyingly complex and entertainingly atmospheric novel.

Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan (novel popular with students)

In 1949 four Chinese women, recent immigrants to San Francisco, begin meeting to eat dim sum, play mahjong, and talk. United in shared unspeakable loss and hope, they call themselves the Joy Luck Club. Rather than sink into tragedy, they choose to gather to raise their spirits and money. "To despair was to wish back for something already lost. Or to prolong what was already unbearable." Forty years later the stories and history continue.

The Mysterious Island by Jules Verne (favorite and classic)

The book tells the adventures of five Americans on an uncharted island in the [South Pacific](#). The story begins in the [American Civil War](#), during the siege of [Richmond, Virginia](#), the capital of the [Confederate States of America](#). As famine and death ravage the city, five northern prisoners of war decide to escape by the unusual means of hijacking a balloon. . . .

Dr. Zhivago by Boris Pasternac (great romance novel set in revolutionary Russia)

In the grand tradition of the epic novel, Boris Pasternak's masterpiece brings to life the drama and immensity of the Russian Revolution through the story of the gifted physician-poet, Zhivago; the revolutionary, Strelnikov; and Lara, the passionate woman they both love.

My Antonia by Willa Cather (an old favorite and romance)

First published in 1918, and set in Nebraska in the late 19th century, this tale of the spirited daughter of a Bohemian immigrant family planning to farm on the untamed land ("not a country at all but the material out of which countries are made") comes to us through the romantic eyes of Jim Burden. He is, at the time of their meeting, newly orphaned and arriving at his grandparents' neighboring farm on the same night her family strikes out to make good in their new country.

Hawaii by James Michener (novel)

The story of modern Hawaii, and of this novel, is one of how disparate peoples, struggling to keep their identity yet live with one another in harmony, ultimately joined together to build America's strong and vital fiftieth state.

A Suitable Boy by Vikram Seth (love story)

A love story: Lata and her mother, Mrs. Rupa Mehra, are both trying to find -- through love or through exacting maternal appraisal -- a suitable boy for Lata to marry. Set in the early 1950s, in an India newly independent and struggling through a time of crisis, *A Suitable Boy* takes us into the richly imagined world of four large extended families . . .

Fridman

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou (autobiography)

Sent by their mother to live with their devout, self-sufficient grandmother in a small Southern town, Maya and her brother, Bailey, endure the ache of abandonment and the prejudice of the local “powhitetrash.” At eight years old and back at her mother’s side in St. Louis, Maya is attacked by a man many times her age—and has to live with the consequences for a lifetime. Years later, in San Francisco, Maya learns about love for herself and the kindness of others, her own strong spirit, and the ideas of great authors (“I met and fell in love with William Shakespeare”) will allow her to be free instead of imprisoned.

The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank

One of the most moving and eloquent accounts of the Holocaust, read by tens of millions of people around the world since its publication in 1947. *The Diary of a Young Girl* is the record of two years in the life of a remarkable Jewish girl whose triumphant humanity in the face of unfathomable deprivation and fear has made the book one of the most enduring documents of our time.

The Curve of Binding Energy by John McPhee (non-fiction)

Theodore Taylor was one of the most brilliant engineers of the nuclear age, but in his later years he became concerned with the possibility of an individual being able to construct a weapon of mass destruction on their own. McPhee tours American nuclear institutions with Taylor and shows us how close we are to terrorist attacks employing homemade nuclear weaponry.

Sula by Toni Morrison (novel)

Two girls who grow up to become women. Two friends who become something worse than enemies. In this brilliantly imagined novel, Toni Morrison tells the story of Nel Wright and Sula Peace, who meet as children in the small town of Medallion, Ohio. Their devotion is fierce enough to withstand bullies and the burden of a dreadful secret. It endures even after Nel has grown up to be a pillar of the black community and Sula has become a pariah. But their friendship ends in an unforgivable betrayal—or does it end?

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison (novel)

Pecola Breedlove, a young black girl, prays every day for beauty. Mocked by other children for the dark skin, curly hair, and brown eyes that set her apart, she yearns for normalcy, for the blond hair and blue eyes that she believes will allow her to finally fit in. Yet as her dream grows more fervent, her life slowly starts to disintegrate in the face of adversity and strife. A powerful examination of our obsession with beauty and conformity, Toni Morrison’s virtuosic first novel asks powerful questions about race, class, and gender with the subtlety and grace that have always characterized her writing.

Kristin Laverensdatter by Sigrid Undset (love story)

As a young girl, Kristin is deeply devoted to her father, a kind and courageous man. But when as a student in a convent school she meets the charming and impetuous Erlend Nikulaussøn, she defies her parents in pursuit of her own desires. Her saga continues through her marriage to Erlend, their tumultuous life together raising seven sons as Erlend seeks to strengthen his political influence, and finally their estrangement as the world around them tumbles into uncertainty.

Fridman

Crank by Ellen Hopkins (and her other “poetry” novels *Glass*, *Impulse*, and *Burnout*)

This is a story about a monster. Not a dragon or a mythological beast, but a very real, very destructive monster--crystal meth--that takes hold of seventeen-year-old Kristina Snow and transforms her into her reckless alter-ego Bree. Based on her own daughter's addiction to crystal meth, Ellen Hopkins' novel-in-verse is a vivid, transfixing look into teenage drug use. Told in Kristina's voice, it provides a realistic portrayal of the tortured logic of an addict.

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot (true story) Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor Southern tobacco farmer who worked the same land as her slave ancestors, yet her cells—taken without her knowledge—became one of the most important tools in medicine. The first “immortal” human cells grown in culture, they are still alive today, though she has been dead for more than sixty years. If you could pile all HeLa cells ever grown onto a scale, they'd weigh more than 50 million metric tons—as much as a hundred Empire State Buildings. HeLa cells were vital for developing the polio vaccine; uncovered secrets of cancer, viruses, and the atom bomb's effects; helped lead to important advances like in vitro fertilization, cloning, and gene mapping; and have been bought and sold by the billions. Yet Henrietta Lacks remains virtually unknown, buried in an unmarked grave.

The Giver by Lois Lowry (novel)

The story centers on twelve-year-old Jonas, who lives in a seemingly ideal world. Not until he is given his life assignment as the Receiver does he begin to understand the dark secrets behind this fragile community. *The Giver* is the first in the trilogy of books that includes *Gathering Blue* and *The Messenger*.

Anne of Green Gables by L. M. Montgomery (novel, an old favorite) Anne starts out as a mistake. The elderly Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert had planned on adopting a boy to help Matthew with the chores on their Prince Edward Island farm. What are they to do with the red-haired, high-spirited girl who arrives instead?

My Brother by Jamaica Kincaid

Jamaica Kincaid's incantatory, poetic, and often shockingly frank recounting of her brother Devon Drew's life is also the story of her family on the island of Antigua, a constellation centered on the powerful, sometimes threatening figure of the writer's mother. Kincaid's unblinking record of a life that ended too early speaks volumes about the difficult truths at the heart of all families.

Packing for Mars by Mary Roach (science and humor)

American's most amusing science writer writes to explore the irresistibly strange universe of life without gravity in this bestseller.

The Poet by Michael Connolly (and his other page-turners by **Connolly**) New York Times bestselling author Michael Connelly has written one explosive thriller after another featuring Detective Harry Bosch. A serial killer of unprecedented savagery and cunning is at large. His targets: homicide cops, each haunted by a murder case he couldn't crack. The killer's calling card: a quotation from the works of Edgar Allan Poe. His latest victim is McEvoy's own brother. And his last...may be McEvoy himself.

Fridman**The Terra Cotta Dog by Andrea Camilleri (and her other mysteries set in Sicily)**

Montalbano's latest case begins with a mysterious tête à tête with a Mafioso, some inexplicably abandoned loot from a supermarket heist, and dying words that lead him to an illegal arms cache in a mountain cave. Montalbano is a detective whose earthiness, compassion, and imagination make him totally irresistible.

Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens (an old time favorite classic novel)

Set in Victorian London, this is a tale of a spirited young innocent's unwilling but inevitable recruitment into a scabrous gang of thieves. Masterminded by the loathsome Fagin, the underworld crew features some of Dickens' most memorable characters, including the vicious Bill Sikes, gentle Nancy, and the juvenile pickpocket known as the Artful Dodger.

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley (an old favorite and thriller)

This best selling classic is about a young Swiss student who uncovers the secret of animating lifeless matter and, by assembling body parts, creates a monster that vows revenge on his creator after being rejected from society.

Lea Fridman

I Choose!!!

I have titled this course “I Choose” because it is organized around the reading of three books, two of which will be chosen by you, the student. To have the leisure (much less the “requirement”) to read the books we want to read is a gift that is too rare and infrequent for many of us. For those of you who are not sure as to what genres or writers you enjoy the most, this course will be an adventure and bring you treasures for a lifetime.

In addition, there will be short readings of poetry, short stories and essays, which we will use to learn the skill of close, analytic reading. We will read for pleasure, but we will also learn to read for accuracy.

We will write for fluency, for discovery, to express thoughts and feelings, to think through and explore ideas, to argue and persuade. We will write informally (class journals and logs) as well as formally (in – class and at- home essays). We will experiment in our writing. We will learn to write in drafts. I will use three terms in talking about your writing.

1. The first is fluency – your ability to write and think on paper, to get it down, to say what you mean, to write at length!

2. I will talk about clarity. Well, the word is clear enough! This has to do with finding the words that say what you mean and the organization of your “talking points” or ideas in a way that is easy to grasp and “clear” to a reader.

3. Correctness has to do with good grammar and syntax.

There will be one required night out. I hope to be able to arrange a night at the theater.

Text and Course Requirements

1. *The Glass Castle* by Jeanette Walls
2. *Fences* by August Wilson
3. *Writing Down the Bones* by Natalie Goldberg
4. The selection of *two* books (pleasure books) that you are dying to read!
If the book is not terrific, you must drop it and find something that is.
5. Loose leaf notebook
 - Sections: Assignments
 - Class Journal
 - Logs
 - Drafts and Compositions
 - All Other Work
6. One Night Out
7. Logs: This is reflective, critical, and sometimes creative writing done at home in response to your reading. Please number your logs!

Lea Fridman

Pleasure Book Sheet

The purpose of this "Pleasure Book Sheet" is to have a record of the books you have read over the course of this semester.

Name _____

Title _____

Place of Publication _____

Publisher _____

Date of Publication _____

Name _____

Title _____

Place of Publication _____

Publisher _____

Date of Publication _____

Name _____

Title _____

Place of Publication _____

Publisher _____

Date of Publication _____

Lea Fridman

Pleasure Books Essay Questions

1. *Some books interest us because they bring us a world that is different from the one we know. Other books interest us because they explore a world that is familiar to us* and even give us a new perspective or handle on that world. Which is the case for you in reading your book? Discuss, explore, explain with quotes and examples.
2. Is there a character who changes significantly in the course of your book. Wrote about the change that your character has undergone. What precipitated this change? In what ways does the character change? Has there been a lesson learned? Use lots of specific detail and quotes.
3. *Write about and describe a favorite character.* What attracts you to that character? Does the attraction issue from something in your own life, a situation you struggle with? How is this character important to this book? Explore and comment on your very favorite character using details and lots of small quotes.
4. *Some books attract us because of an idea or theme.* What is that idea or theme in your pleasure book. Using lots of examples and specifics, explore this theme. How does the writer develop this theme in the characters, in the plot or in any other ways? Why is this theme important? Explore and explain using details and lots of small quotes.
5. *Write about the style of your writer!* Write about strategies your writer uses, and what he or she accomplishes with those he or she uses in this book to make you turn the pages and want to read. Find quotes and examples to help me understand how your writer operates (as a writer, that is).
6. Literature is intended to entertain and to instruct., to be fun and to teach at the same time. Is this true of your book? How does it entertain? How does it instruct? Make sure to ground your own writing in great examples.
7. Locate, quote, discuss and explain with care a passage that you regard as the key (or “open sesame”) to this book. Your discussion must connect the passage to important events and ideas and characters in this book. Make good use of small quote and detail in your discussion.
8. Final departmental exam: and portfolio.
9. Your creative engagement and commitment!
10. Individual conferencing: We will schedule a conference for each student to reflect on your work, your goals and your experience in the class.

Michelle Gabay

Reading Meetings

Independent Reading Activity: Reading Communities

Rationale: Reading communities remove the teacher from the center of the classroom and redirects the process of engagement, critical thinking, close and active reading, comprehension and interpretation, onto the students. The purpose is to evoke a communal and supportive reading environment where students can feel comfortable to struggle and agonize over a reading in order to excavate meaning from it. The reading communities are situated around projects that serve as assessments in gauging how well students have engaged with the text, understood the text, understood the function of specific features within a text, produced meaning and identified voices, implications and intentions.

Implementation: Based on an initial diagnostic, students will be arranged into units to form weekly reading communities. The reading communities would gather for two hours a week, during class time, and collaborate on a weekly reading based project. Although the specific projects would change each week, they would derive from the course text (thematically, conceptually, ideologically, etc.). In a week 3 “Reading Meeting” communities would scout the NY Times for a relevant article that reflects ideas, implications, suggestions or intentions that pertain to the course text. As a community, students would have to collaborate on research, read together, share thoughts, explain confusing ideas, statistics, studies, etc. Communities would also prepare a short written response that includes a summary of the text and prepare a meaningful presentation that discusses and explains the reason for the community’s supplemental selection. The project would also require students to construct three reading based questions to present to the class and discuss briefly.

Objectives and outcomes: The reading communities would foster an environment where students could collaborate on closely reading texts together and discussing difficult, complex or abstract ideas. The communities, in addition, would serve as a small forum for basic discussion of text or supplemental texts, create an atmosphere conducive to active reading and engaging/participating with the text, suggest new methods for understanding textual information and ideas, enhance vocabulary, stimulate interpretations in context and help each other identify different characteristics and features within a text, identify important components in a text, activate curiosity, evoke critical discussion, debate and thought, and increase students ability to present and articulate their ideas in conjunction with the author’s ideas/discussions.

Cohort Activity: Reviewing the Text

Rationale: Using a common text, the cohort will assign weekly reading reviews based on the chapters assigned in class. When students read texts the challenge most often is that it is “boring.” The various reasons a text are found to be “boring” can be addressed and assessed. In order to counter this claim and bring to this process an element of concentration, personal interest and engagement, students will prepare weekly reading responses that review a feature or a complete chapter from the chapters assigned for the week. Reviewing these features or chapters would suggest that students have a voice and a location to place their thoughts, criticisms, questions and frustration, while simultaneously assessing (weekly) progress.

Gabay

Implementation: Teachers will assign chapters to read for homework or to read in class. The reading reviews would require some information indicating which feature the student is reviewing. The reviews may consist of many different types of critiques. All they will require is honesty, constructive criticism, and an explanation that can defend, support, illustrate or clarify, any claims made by the student. Each week teachers will collect the reading reviews and note whether the student has demonstrated an understanding of the text, discussed the text in context, paraphrased the text clearly enough to convey meaning, interpreted moments in the text appropriately and criticized the text constructively in which the student provide relevant defense and support for their claims.

End of term assessment: When looking at the reviews each week teachers should keep track of each student's position within assessment criteria. By the end of the semester, reviews, viewed in sequence will show whether a student's reading comprehension increased weekly, increased monthly or remained stagnant. In addition to the weekly reviews, students will have been given monthly assessments probing general questions pertaining to reading strategies utilized while reading. The assessment questions will provide responses that illustrate if students started using new reading strategies, changed their old strategies or continued using strategies they have always used.

Objectives and Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

- Identify singular ideas
- Identify complex ideas
- Differentiate voices
- Read closely and actively
- Read with a purpose and interest
- Engage in the text
- React and respond in context

Gene McQuillan

An Option for Teaching Non-Fiction in ENG 92

==Assign a series of non-fiction articles (NOT just a series of related articles, but a series of articles by the same author).

EXAMPLES: The DNA Age by Amy Harmon (NY Times)--18 articles

Muslims in America by Andrea Elliott (NY Times)--over 30 articles

==I assign 3 or 4 of the articles and start with lots of low-stakes writing (casual reading journals, drafts, fictions, revised essays, etc...).

==I ask them to select a certain theme (DNA and disability, Muslims in the US military, etc...) and then find one or two more articles by the SAME author. We review a few in class, but this is really a chance for them to work more independently.

==The students then need to find at least 3 more articles by other authors. They also need to look for other types of discourses (poll data, interviews, studies, legal cases, pop culture references, blogs, editorials, etc...)

See the attachment on "Finding Other Readings."

==The students need to hand in more formal "Reading Journals" about any 2 or 3 readings.

See the attachment on "Reading Journals."

==Then we begin writing a more formal paper.

Gene McQuillan

FINDING READINGS FOR YOUR READING JOURNALS

As you begin your “Reading Journals” about This I Believe, I will expect that YOU find most of the readings that you’ll review. However, I also expect that you’ll do more than just “look on-line” for sources. Here are a few basic techniques for starting a search:

==Start with **a name**: Some of the people that we will read about--Geoffrey Canada, Cecilia Munoz, Anthony Fauci, Tony Hawk, Temple Grandin, and so on--are well-known people whose names appear often in articles.

==Start with **an issue**: Many of the readings from This I Believe will discuss topics that may cause controversy or confusion: illegal immigration, drug addiction, hip-hop, autism, AIDS, high school drop-outs, mental illness, and so on.

==Look for **a link**: Most of the readings in This I Believe will end with a list of a few Related Readings--try a few! Many on-line articles will already have links in them.

==Look for a **legal case or law**: You don’t need to be a legal expert to notice that issues such as gay marriage, immigration, airport security, or disability rights often become the subject of legal decisions. Simply type in a search phrase such as “legal cases about _____” as a way to start.

==Look for a **poll or survey**: What do “we” believe? Look up surveys or polls about matters such as public education, profiling Muslims, gay marriage, illegal immigration, and so on. How are certain beliefs changing? Once again, just use a search phrase such as “poll data about _____.”

==Look for a **study or experiment**: Quite a few of the essays from This I Believe feature some reference to medical or mental health conditions, such as autism, depression, addiction, and Down Syndrome. Try a search phrase such as “recent studies on _____.”

==Look for **the economic impact** of certain actions or conditions: These essays are obviously about personal decisions and beliefs, but they also mention money quite often. How can personal actions influence our economy--and how can economic realities influence our personal decisions? Try a search phrase such as “economic impact of _____.”

==Look **within each source you find** for other search terms: You don’t always need to come up with your own search terms. If you’ve found a helpful reading, it may often provide you with the means to keep learning more about a topic. So as you review a reading, see if it introduces you to new names, issues, links, legal cases or law, polls or surveys, studies or experiments.

Gene McQuillan

ENGLISH 92: READING JOURNALS

One main part of this class is to learn how to use *writing* as a means of developing your *reading* skills. In simple terms, writing notes about a reading requires you to:

- == Be more patient and attentive
- == Note exactly what an author has--or has not--written
- == Decide which sections of a reading are most significant
- == Comprehend any difficult sections of a reading
- == Analyze how a reading has been constructed
- == Organize your notes so that you (and others) can easily access them

Each READING JOURNAL will require you to do a few basic things. You may vary the order in which you write them down, but your work must always be neat *and* complete. (You may, of course, show me drafts of your notes before you hand them in...) Here's a simple checklist to start with:

=== Take notes for a summary by listing at least 10 SPECIFIC DETAILS from the reading. Start with the name of the author and the title of the reading. It often helps to ask "reporter's questions": Who? What? Where? When? How? Why?

For these journals, I'm asking only for the details, not a full summary. Of course, you may write one if you wish!

=== List and define at least FIVE VOCABULARY WORDS. Make sure to indicate the part of speech: is this word a verb, noun, adjective, adverb?

=== Select a significant statement from the reading--and QUOTE it. Make sure to present it in the format that we will learn.

=== Select another significant statement from the reading. QUOTE it--and then PARAPHRASE it. (That is, use your own words to explain what it means.)

=== Briefly RESPOND to some specific part of the reading. What is a particular word, statement, situation or idea that you think is significant or controversial?

Karen Niles

Independent Classroom Activity
Active Reading Strategies: Day 1 (Reflective Reading)

Rationale: Reading reflectively and actively is of critical importance to the success of a student across the disciplines. However, many students lack the ability and confidence to master these skills. By engaging students in reflective and active reading practices, and encouraging their use, they will become more involved in their reading, which will increase reading confidence and comprehension.

Learning Objectives: Students will become reflective and active readers. Students will be able to use annotation/markings/questioning a text to aid in comprehension. Students will use strategies with greater consistency and efficiency.

Plan for Implementation:

1. Before Reading Activity: Reflection on current reading practices.
 Before reading a text, students will be asked to complete a survey about current reading practices. They will briefly outline what they do when they read.
2. Students will be given a short, but challenging reading passage and asked to read it silently. I will observe what students are doing, and take some notes.
3. After students have completed their reading, they will reflect on some questions concerning their experience with reading the passage. The focus for these questions is not about comprehension, but about their experience with reading. Questions will include:
 - As you were reading, what were you looking for?
 - What do you feel is an important point in the reading?
 - How do you know this is important?
 - As you read, what questions came to mind?
 - As you read, did any images come to mind? If so, what were they?
 - As you read, did you connect any ideas to your life? If so, what? Why?
 - As you read, did you feel that you agreed with the ideas in the text, or did you disagree with the ideas? Why?
 - Were there any parts of the text that you found difficult to understand? What were they?
 - What actions did you take to address the problems you experienced?
 - Did you write anything or make any marks on the reading paper? If so, what did you write and why?
 - If not, why didn't you write anything on the paper?
4. After students have completed all the above steps, we will engage in a whole class discussion to discuss their experiences with the reading. Using the questions they answered, we will determine what strategy is being used to answer the question, and I will list them on the board. I will make a printed chart, which will list all the reflective reading strategies discussed. Students will staple the chart inside their reading folders.

Niles

Final reflection: Students will be asked to write about today's learning experience. They can choose one of the following:

- Select one strategy we discussed today that you either use or don't use, and discuss why it is important to use it regularly when you read.
- Choose one particular problem you feel you are experiencing with understanding texts and discuss what you can do to address it. In other words, identify a problem you are experiencing in reading, and come up with a plan for a solution for that problem.

Follow Up: Model think aloud and annotation. Students will engage daily in reflective and active reading strategies to encourage their continued use. Effectiveness will be assessed through daily/weekly readings, reflections, annotations, discussions and comprehension questions.

Cohort Activity

Objectives: Students will be able to demonstrate their ability to effectively utilize reading strategies. Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of a text in reading comprehension questions and in written response form.

Plan for Implementation:

1. Cohort will decide on a common reading for cross-reading.
2. Students will be given the reading to read and annotate on the first day, and will answer several comprehension questions.
3. On the second day, students will reread the text and will write an extended response to a question.
4. Cohorts will read and write a response to the 3 parts of the assignment: annotation, comprehension questions and written responses. Their responses will identify what students have done well, and what areas the student needs to improve.
5. Students will write a response to teacher comments.

Tina Orsini

**Independent Reading Activity Spanning Module I and
Assessed by the Instructor at Midterm**

All semester activities will build toward critical reading on the part of students. Module I (the first six weeks of the course) will navigate through reading spaces to produce a proficiency in:

- Summarizing
- Paraphrasing
- Vocabulary in context
- Driving point/intentions
- Effects on the reader
- Rhetorical strategies (predicting, interpreting, solving)
- Student connection to other areas and disciplines

Readings:

- will be varied, from various genres, and from different disciplines
- will allow students to read in multiple ways/through the lenses of different arenas in the academy
- will be chosen by the instructor as well as the students

Rationale:

Varied readings will be used to produce low stakes writing. Students should ask questions, provide multiple answers and be encouraged to reflect. Their purposeful and metacognitive readings (reflections on their own processes) will help them establish forms of *awakenedness* to the importance/implementation of critical thinking.

Implementation:

As the six weeks move forward, students will tackle focal strategies from summary to connection with other disciplines. Each strategy will loop back on the one before and build to a critical jumping off point whereby students can engage in higher stakes writing and more in-depth work at a quicker more agile pace.

Learning objective:

Students will discover the multilayered nature of a text, unpack implications, engage in critical reading/thinking/writing/verbalizing, and move inward through/in reflection of reading/learning processes.

Orsini**Activities:**

- **Logging---** low stakes writing of engagement with reading as they move from summary, etc.
- **Group Conversation (prepared both in class and at home/collaborative, informal)--**
- a conversation among group members, embodying the authors they have read (asking questions, imagining answers, making statements, using dialogue, etc.)

Assessment at Midterm:

- **Writing a panel discussion** with a central focus---how/where readings intersect and depart
- **Presentations/performance/forum---**each student represents different author

Christine Rudisel

Independent Reading-Based Activities I (Annotation) and Independent Reading-Based Activity II (Figurative Language)

Independent Reading-Based Activity I

Activity: I would like to develop annotation activities that invite students to create their own images and notes for their class readings. This enables students to move beyond the traditional ways of marking texts (highlighting, underlining, etc.) and to create their own methods of annotation and explanation (e.g. drawing pictures and the using text messaging).

Implementation: Students will be asked to annotate the same portions of assigned texts, and the entire class will review and discuss each student’s annotation. This will be a weekly assignment.

Assessment: An oral exam at midterm that requires students to explain selected passages from any text the class discussed during module one. All questions will be based on the annotation work the class completed during the first six weeks of the course.

Rationale: These activities “build [students’] stamina with the unfamiliar” (Charlton 5) and address their various learning styles. The annotation activities would encourage students to create the images and notes they need to make sense of assigned texts, and the oral exam would allow students whose writing is weak to demonstrate their understanding of the text.

Independent Reading-Based Activity II

Activity: I would also like to spend more time on figurative language activities. This would make it possible for students to benefit from the language that is supposed to illuminate and enrich their understanding of an author’s idea(s).

Implementation: During the first three weeks of the course, students will be asked to explain the figurative language identified by the instructor. During the second three weeks of the course, students will be asked to identify and explain the figurative language they find in their class readings. Students will discuss their findings and their ideas with the entire class. This will be a weekly assignment.

Assessment: An oral exam at midterm that requires students to explain selected passages from any text the class discussed during module one. All questions will be based on the figurative language work the class completed during the first six weeks of the course.

Rationale: Students are often confused by figurative language. In addition to helping them with comprehension, these exercises will help them to express their own thoughts in original ways (this will also be useful when they begin writing their essays during module two). The oral exam allows students whose writing is weak to demonstrate their understanding of the text.

Rudisel

Common Reading-Based Activity for the Cohort

Activity: Our “cohort” (Sheryl, Michelle, Lea, and Christine) decided to work on annotation exercises for the entire semester. Students will participate in various activities that encourage them to use non-traditional and traditional methods of annotation. Our goal is for students to create the images and notes they need to make sense of their assigned texts.

Year-End Assessment: Students will be asked to read and annotate a text. Once they have completed these steps, they will be asked to select three points they have annotated and explain how their images and notes helped them to understand the text. Cohort members will be able to see the text and the student’s annotations, making it possible to identify what strengthened and/or weakened his/her comprehension.

Rationale: These activities “build [students’] stamina with the unfamiliar” (Charlton 5) and address their various learning styles. The annotation activities would encourage students to create the images and notes they need to make sense of assigned texts, and the oral exam would allow students whose writing is weak to demonstrate their understanding of the text.

Common Course Criteria

1. **Final Exam:** A two-day final exam that requires students to answer questions (day one) and to write an essay (day two). *Rationale:* Day one of the final gives us information about the student’s comprehension, his/her ability to paraphrase and summarize, his/her ability to make inferences, and his/her use of contextual clues to figure out the meanings of words they do not know. Day two of the final shows us what the student is capable of producing on his or her own. It reveals the student’s ability to organize, develop, analyze, quote, and proofread under time restraints and without help.

2. **Multiple-Draft, Teacher-Guided, Reading-Based Essay:** This is the only essay assigned during the module and it must be based on the full-length text assigned by the instructor. *Rationale:* Requiring students to submit this essay prevents them from ignoring the assigned text and from rushing through or dismissing the essays that “don’t count.” It also shows us what students can produce with time and with revision.

3. **Oral Midterm Examination:** The score from the midterm oral exam should be part of the year-end assessment. *Rationale:* This allows students whose writing is weak to demonstrate their understanding of an assigned text, it shows improvement (or the lack thereof) during the second module, and it is a signal to students that the work done during module one is important.

Red Washburn

Independent Reading Activity

Informal Writing - Reading Logs (Nonfiction)

Rationale: Students need to comprehend nonfiction texts in a range of (inter) disciplines, yet make intellectual decisions on their own terms. Intensive reading and reflecting in accordance with the R-ACT measures will prepare them both for the test itself and ENG 93 or ENG 12.

Implementation: Students will read newspaper or magazine articles of their choice from mainstream media (i.e., *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and/or *The Irish Times*, etc.), or alternative media (i.e., *The Nation*, *Common Dreams*, and/or *The Global Report*, etc.). Students will keep a reading log. It will include five informal writings of approximately a page or two. In it, they should include a brief summary (with main ideas and paraphrasing), a brief critique (with quotes and inferences), unfamiliar vocabulary (with definitions), types of tone (with categories), and organizational patterns (with styles).

Learning Objectives: Students will learn to comprehend, summarize, paraphrase, and synthesize texts. In addition, they will learn to reflect on the content and style of texts through personal engagement.

Cohort Activity

Narrative Grading

Rationale: Cohort members should meet to establish a critical friendship with one another. In addition to sharing scholarly projects and pedagogical practices, collaborative grading aids in professional development. It also fulfills state requirements for student assessment. Narrative grading (i.e., writing students feedback) allows for a deeper level of engagement between cohort members, and provides students with individualized feedback.

Implementation: Cohort members will write a letter to each student at the end of the term. In this letter, cohort members will assess the major benchmarks of English 92, weighing areas of strength and areas needed for improvement. The cohort members also will address placement in it.

Learning Objectives: Cohort members will practice collaboration. They also will accommodate students' intellectual needs for personalization through writing.

Washburn**Community Benchmarks*****Multiple-Draft Essay (Fiction)***
In-Class Essay - Department Final Exam (Nonfiction)

Rationale: After devoting the first half of the semester to intensive reading and informal writing, students must begin work on critical thinking and intensive writing. Students need to write well-developed, well-supported, and well-organized essays, both in and out of class. They need to be able to write in-class essays to prepare for the CATW and other classes they make take that have such requirements. In addition, students must learn the art of revision; they must be able to produce polished drafts for English 12, 24, other literature electives—not to mention in other (inter) disciplines. These benchmarks balance product- and process-based forms of college writing.

Implementation: Instead of the short-answer- and multiple-choice- based English Department exam, the Department will write an in-class exam that requires students to compose an essay. Like the aforementioned Independent Reading Activity, students will be given an article from a newspaper or magazine. Similar to the CATW, students will be asked to summarize and discuss the article, drawing both from references in the text and their personal experiences.

The multiple-draft essay will remain the same. Students will write a well-developed, well-supported, and well-organized essay about a theme, character, symbol, or motif in longer work of fiction (i.e., novella or novel). After much in-class workshopping with peers and their professor, students will revise this essay at least three times.

Learning Objectives: Students will do close readings of literary texts. They will create central arguments that include a clear topic, a solid stance, and provide support for their main ideas by quoting, paraphrasing, and analyzing passages from texts. They will recognize their writing processes, receive feedback from their professor and peers, and revise their major writing assignment. They will write grammatically and mechanically correct papers and cite in MLA format.

Donna-lyn Washington

Independent Classroom Activity

Once a week the students will read an article in class. The article will be the instructor's choice and no longer than a page. Students will have no more than 20 minutes to read the article. As they are reading the article, they are to work on the following:

- Finding the main idea of the article.
- Find supporting ideas for the main idea of the article
- Finding three words that are not familiar to the student

The students are then divided into small groups (no more than three students, or they can work in pairs) and compare notes based on the attached form.

The class would then come together where the instructor, acting as facilitator writes down the main idea, supporting ideas and the unfamiliar vocabulary. Follow-up would be a take home assignment in which students choose one article, and do the same as the in-class assignment (with the exception of the time constraint and group work). The home assignment will also consist of a summary of the article

Learning objectives – vocabulary building, utilizing time efficiently, working on several strategies for reading comprehension that can be used for several types of readings.

Cohort Activity

- Instructors would share one reading based assignment for the first three weeks of the semester. For example Elie Wiesel's *Night* would be the shared required reading for each class in the cohort. After reading the novel, students would create questions based on the reading for the other class in the cohort to answer. The student created questions can be answered through traditional written responses, artwork (collages, drawings, photography), or multimedia (where the cohort could create a youtube channel or another forum to showcase non-printable work). At the end of the three week period there would be a compilation of printable work done by the classes in the cohort based on *Night*. In essence students would be creating a toolbox that would aid them in strategies for reading comprehension through a myriad of pieces that could be multisensory based.

English 92 Community Benchmarks

- Students would take a midterm exam which would consist of five (5) multiple-choice questions, in which none of the questions would ask the student to define specific words, and two mini-essays (roughly 4-5 paragraphs for each essay). The exam would be based on an article independent of the material being worked on in class, texts read and home assignments, but meant to reinforce the skill set they are learning thus far. Reading the article and taking the exam should be done within a two-hour period.

Kingsborough Community College
City University of New York
D. Washington

Now that you have annotated the article, in groups you will do the following:

List all the main ideas in the group/with your partner (even if they are the same)	
List all the supporting ideas in the group/with your partner (even if they are the same)	
List all the unfamiliar words (even if they are the same words)	

D. Washington

Home Assignment

Due May 15, 2012 at the beginning of class

Read an article from The New York Times (It can be from any part of the newspaper) and fill in the sheet below. You are to also write a summary for the article you've read. Your summary should include the title of the article and the name of the author (if one is provided).

List all the main ideas from the article	
List all the supporting ideas from the article	
List all the unfamiliar words from the article	

Summary:

Sheryl Williams

Navigating my World through Reading
An Independent Classroom Reading Activity

Abstract:

After eight years of teaching English Developmental, I have recognized that many of my students do not possess a passion for reading. They view reading as the chore no one wants to do; it is tedious, time-consuming, and outdated. The objective of my assignment is to ignite a passion for textual information and to help students understand that reading is a necessity in every aspect of their lives. Maybe, if students can recognize the value of reading and obtaining new information as an asset, then their approach to text will be more open-minded. Hopefully, reading will no longer be symbolized as an obstacle in learning.

Module One (First six weeks of the course)

Step One

Students need to select and explore three (3) of the following areas throughout the first six weeks of the semester. These areas represent familiar topics that students encounter everyday. Students should circle the three areas they have selected to show commitment to their topics of choice. The student will focus on one topic per week. Make sure the student assigns a topic to a specific week (see table below).

Week #	Topic	Title of Article
1	Sports	“NBA All Day and Night” by Tom Jones. Jan. 14 th 1999.
2	Politics	“Obama Nation” by Harold Lloyd. Sep. 13, 2010.
3	Art	“A Painting Awaken” by Sue Tso. Jun. 20 th , 2012.

Sports	Health
Tourism	Politics
Art	Business

Step Two

The student is responsible for locating a *New York Times* article that connects to the topic they have decided to work with that given week. If possible, take the time to group those students who have selected similar topics. This allows the instructor to form reading groups within the class. Articles should be located before reading groups are formed.

Step Three

Students should be encouraged to annotate the article, as a part of this reading process for each week. A general Reading Comprehension Question worksheet should be distributed to each

student at the beginning of each week. Questions should be applicable to any text, but must also challenge the student's ability to think critically.

Williams

The following is a pool of questions that can be asked about any article.

Example of General Questions

- What is the main idea of the article?
- Where is the thesis located? Explain why you think this is the thesis of the article.
- How is the writer proving his/her point?
- What type of information does the writer provide?
- What kind of tone does the writer use?

Example of Critical Thinking Questions

- Select a quote from the reading and explain what the writer means.
- What lesson does the writer teach to his/her readers?
- Explain how this lesson can be valuable to anyone?
- Why do you think this topic is important?
- What does this article remind you of?
- What other information is this article connected to?
- **If this article was the first half of a movie, how do you think the movie would end?**
- **If this article was the last half of a movie, what information would have been stated in the first half of the movie?**

Low Stakes In-Class Writing

The final two critical thinking questions are great prompts for low stakes writing. Pretend the article is a movie and let the student write about how the movie would have started or ended. A summary of the article can also be included within this assignment.

Module Two (After the first 3 weeks)

Student is required to select and move ahead with one topic—from the three areas explored within the first 3 weeks of the semester. Before moving ahead, the student needs to attend an event that is related to the information they read about or connected to their topic of choice. This part of the assignment will allow students to explore their topic area in the real world. For example, if a student selected an article within the area of "tourism", then maybe the student can visit a travel agency and understand a few of the challenges this business face. This kind of information can be incorporated into the student's essay.

Design essay questions that will allow your students the freedom to explore their own ideas about the topic area they have chosen to work with. Information from Module A and B must be included in the essay.

Williams

Overall, the goal of this reading assignment is to take our students on a journey that will bring them to a point of realization where they can view their in-class readings as information that they need to make sense of the world. The topics we read are not the enemy of education!

Assessment Questions

1. What is the main idea of the reading?
2. Select one point you annotated and explain what the writer means.
3. Select a paragraph and paraphrase the writer's ideas.
4. Explain the title of the reading.
5. Select an idea from the reading and give your own opinion about this idea.

Minimum Requirement

Students should be able to:

- a. Write a summary
- b. Comprehend the main idea
- c. Understand the main point of each paragraph
- d. Paraphrase the writer's idea(s)
- e. Comprehend sentence structure and paragraphing

**ENGLISH R
SUMMER 2012
WORKSHOP**

ELIZABETH DILL

ENGLISH BR/R/04 UNIT: THE ACT QUESTION TYPES

The unit below will cover the ACT question types. The original assignment was “Stop and Go Reading,” in which I present a text to students that is interrupted at fairly regular intervals with ACT questions (and the multiple choice set of answers). These interruptions always refer to the text directly “above” them. In this way, I hope to show students how slowing down can mean giving your brain time to formulate questions. In addition, I hope students will see that to practiced readers, the text *suggests* the question. In the “chicken and egg” structure of reader and text, that is, I hope to show that the text anticipates questions in its very assertions; a good reader does not need to be provided with an exam. A good reader always has the “exam” in his head, since he is always asking questions, slowing down, thinking through the meaning of the assertions he faces.

In order to provide a full unit that contextualizes this assignment, I set up a series of activities. First, students will be introduced to the five question types and there will be some work getting students to engage with these question types. I want students to really think about these questions and what they mean. Students will be using the dictionary to define words within the common phrasings of questions, and they will determine and explain what each question type is asking them to do (what sort of intellectual work they must do in order to answer the question successfully). Students will also “match the question to the text” and annotate a text with ACT questions only.

Each “step” in the unit below might take half of a class or one class (or even more).

STEP ONE: THE ACT QUESTION TYPES

Review the five question types with students:

- ❖ Main Idea
- ❖ Reference
- ❖ Inference
- ❖ Vocabulary
- ❖ Author’s Tone/Purpose

STEP TWO: REVIEW COMMON PHRASINGS

- ❖ The best title of the passage would be...
- ❖ According to the passage...
- ❖ The passage suggests that...
- ❖ The most likely meaning of “x” is...
- ❖ The author’s goal is to...

→ *With dictionaries, students will look up key words that belong to each question type, like “according” and “suggest” and in groups will discuss the significance of these definitions.*

DILL

STEP THREE: DEFINE THE READER’S RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE DIFFERENT QUESTION TYPES

- ❖ In order to answer Main Idea questions, I must be able to...
- ❖ In order to answer Reference questions, I must be able to...
- ❖ In order to answer Inference questions, I must be able to...
- ❖ In order to answer Vocabulary questions, I must be able to...
- ❖ In order to answer Author’s Tone/Purpose questions, I must be able to...

→ *Then ask students to consider what each type of question asks them to do as readers.*

STEP FOUR: WHAT QUESTION TYPE DOES THIS LINE ANTICIPATE AND WHY?

Identify the “tough” sentences in a reading. Make a list of them on the board. Discuss why they are tough, and what sorts of questions they might expect to focus on these sentences and why.

STEP FIVE: STOP AND GO READING

(See Handout)

STEP SIX: ANNOTATION WITH QUESTION TYPES

- ❖ Students read an ACT passage.
- ❖ Then I show students “my” copy of this text that I have annotated WITH ACT TYPE QUESTIONS ONLY. (No other type of annotation is used.)
- ❖ I do a “think aloud” about why I matched the question types to different parts of the text. Why did I use a “main idea” question to annotate the first sentence, for example? Why did I use a reference question in the middle of the paragraph? Etc....
- ❖ In groups, students are given a new reading. They annotate with ACT Questions Only. 1 Question Type Each (no answers required!).
- ❖ Students should discuss why they are asking that question type with that piece of text. That is, students need to explain why the text “suggested” that type of question.

Elroy Esdaille

Vocabulary and its Purpose in Helping to Understand a Text

Objectives:

- Students will learn to use vocabulary to help them understand a text.
- Students will use words to help them formulate questions to help them gain a better understanding of the text.
- Students will use words to help them to ascertain meaning.
- Students will practice word analysis and meaning formulation.
- Students will work cooperatively and individually
- Teacher facilitated/individual work/ group work-/class discussion.

Strategies: Teacher facilitated/individual work/ group work-/class discussion.

Aim: How can we learn the importance of vocabulary as it relates to the understanding of a text?

Motivation: Respond to Now:

If you were to choose four words to describe the text, what would they be? Make a list below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Medial Summary: (Somewhere in the midst of the lesson or otherwise if needed)

Development/procedure:

- A) Explain why you choose each of these words and how they would be useful to help you to understand the text.
- B) In groups of threes or fours, discuss your list with each other.
- C) Each group will choose four words and share their finding with the class.
- D) The teacher will use the findings of each group to facilitate a group discussion about how to ascertain meaning by using vocabulary words.
- E) Each group will find four words from the reading that will enable them to understand the text better.
- F) Compare and contrast the words from the text with the words they choose earlier.
- G) How they relate to being able to understand the text?
- H) Each group will share a response with the class.

Activity: Write a response in which you show how vocabulary can be useful in helping students understand a text. Pick one word from both lists and discuss how each of them relate to each other and how they both work individually and collectively to help you understand the text.

Final Summary: Share out—students will individually share answers.

Home Work: Write a journal response or a letter to a friend explaining how understanding the purpose of vocabulary can help you understand a text.

Elroy Esdaille

Discovering Meaning in a Text: 2-4 SESSIONS

Objectives:

Students will:

- ask general questions about a text.
- learn meaning through asking questions about a reading/text.
- question the author and publisher's motives.
- formulate questions to ask the author to help them gain a better understanding of the text.
- attempt to answer each other's questions that were posed to the author to help with the clarification of meaning.
- formulate questions to ask the publisher to help them gain a better understanding of the text.
- attempt to gather meaning from questions posed to the publisher by questioning the teacher and each other as to the reason why the publisher chose to publish this text.
- write a summary of the meaning they discovered through this lesson.

Aim: How can we learn to construct meaning from a text?

Motivation: Respond to Now:

1) Did you understand the reading? Why or why not?

2) Make a list of questions to ask the author that would help you better understand the reading.

Development/procedure: Teacher facilitated/individual work/ group work-/class discussion.

- Briefly discuss with the class as a whole why the text was or was not understood. Have about two to three students say why they did or did not understand the text.
- Divide the students into pairs and have each student person take turns to act as the author and answer the questions his/her classmate posed to the author.
- The teacher will circulate from group to group listening and facilitating accordingly.
- The teacher will elicit responses from each group and use this as the basis of a general class discussion

Part 2

- In groups of 2 (Here, there can be flexibility in the grouping), Imagine the teacher is the publisher of this text.
- Make a list of questions to ask the publisher why he or she chose to publish this text.
- The teacher will circulate from group to group listening and facilitating accordingly.
- Each group should choose two questions to ask the publisher.
- The publisher will respond and he/she would also elicit responses from the other students. He/she will use this as the basis for a general class discussion.

Homework: Write a summary of the meaning (s) of the text you were able to discover from the classroom activities.

Optional essay assignment: (This can be used a further means of reading assessment.)

How might the story be different from the perspective of the main character?

Optional further work: *Homework or project*

Write a letter to the actual author and/or publisher of the text.

Laura Nadel

**Activity that highlights the reading comprehension competencies needed for the
CUNY ACT Reading Exam**

Students read the following passage and answer the subsequent questions.
Competencies are in bold.

Studies show that prolonged stress may damage memory. When experiencing severe, chronic stress, for example, a chaotic work environment, an overload of responsibilities, or the death or illness of a loved one—the brain releases a hormone called Cortisol. Cortisol triggers the body’s fight- or- flight response, which increases the heart rate and causes adrenaline to pump throughout the body. Too much Cortisol seems to interfere with cells in the hippocampus, the part of the brain responsible for practical, everyday memory. When the cells of the hippocampus are damaged, an individual has more difficulty recalling even basic information, like a friend’s telephone number. Not surprisingly, people who do not handle stress well seem to be more likely to show significant memory loss with age.

In your own words, what do you think this passage is about?

(Recognizing the explicitly stated main idea of a passage)

Which sentence in the passage supports that idea?

(Recognizing explicit evidence presented in support of a claim)

What does the narrator say is a potential cause of memory loss?

(Recognizing cause-and-effect relationships)

How do you know this?

(Drawing conclusions from the facts given)

What does the author say about what might happen to a person who doesn’t handle stress well?

(Inferring unstated assumptions)

Based on the information in this passage, find an article that illustrates this cause even further and explain it.

(Recognizing various points of view)

Nadel

A lesson reflecting the integration of a meta-cognitive and multiple-choice approach to reading pedagogy.

Objective

At the end of this lesson students will be able to reason and connect logical answers—via thinking out loud and inferring—based on pondering the content of a passage.

Motivation

Students take a few moments to answer in writing:

- What do you know about the *Guinness Book of World Records*?
- What do you want to know about the *Guinness Book of World Records*?

Procedure

- Distribute reading (provided below). Passage is read aloud twice (once by instructor, once by student). Students individually annotate.
- In groups, students discuss the passage by doing a RA TA TA (Read Aloud, Think Aloud, Talk Aloud)

RA

- o Passage is read in the group. Students discuss:
- o What are the main points of this passage? How do you know?

TA

- o Groups agree on a main idea by inferencing information.
- o They must explain if their claims are inferences or not. Justify why these inferences are true using support from the text. In other words, where in the passage are the clues that lead you to think this?

TA

- o What did we learn from this passage?
- o What does the author convey?
- o Groups make a final prediction; how does this passage apply/affect human behavior? What do you think will happen next?
- o Vocabulary- Students use context clues to ask a few questions about words they do not understand. Groups think/argue to determine word meaning and to enhance article's purpose.

Final Summary:

Responses are elicited on board and class argues validity of points presented.

Nadel

The biggest house of cards, the longest tongue, and of course, the tallest man: these are among the thousands of records logged in the famous *Guinness Book of Records*. Created in 1955 after a debate concerning Europe's fastest game bird, what began as a marketing tool sold to pub landlords to promote Guinness, an Irish drink, became the bestselling copyright title of all time (a category that excludes books such as the Bible and the Koran). In time, the book would sell 120 million copies in over 100 countries— quite a leap from its humble beginnings.

In its early years, the book set its sights on satisfying man's innate curiosity about the natural world around him. Its two principal fact finders, twins Norris and Ross McWhirter, scoured the globe to collect empirical facts. It was their task to find and document aspects of life that can be sensed or observed, things that can be quantified or measured. But not just any things. They were only interested in superlatives: the biggest and the best. It was during this period that some of the hallmark Guinness Records were documented, answering such questions as "What is the brightest star?" and "What is the biggest spider?"

Once aware of the public's thirst for such knowledge, the book's authors began to branch out to cover increasingly obscure, little-known facts. They started documenting human achievements as well. A forerunner for reality television, the Guinness Book gave people a chance to become famous for accomplishing eccentric, often pointless tasks. Records were set in 1955 for consuming 24 raw eggs in 14 minutes and in 1981 for the fastest solving of a Rubik's Cube (which took a mere 38 seconds). In 1979 a man yodeled non-stop for ten and a quarter hours.

In its latest incarnation, the book has found a new home on the internet. No longer restricted to the confines of physical paper, the *Guinness World Records* website contains seemingly innumerable facts concerning such topics as the most powerful combustion engine, or the world's longest train. What is striking, however, is that such facts are found sharing a page with the record of the heaviest train to be pulled with a beard. While there is no denying that each of these facts has its own, individual allure, the latter represents a significant deviation from the education-oriented facts of earlier editions. Perhaps there is useful knowledge to be gleaned regarding the tensile strength of a beard, but this seems to cater to an audience more interested in seeking entertainment than education.

Originating as a simple bar book, the *Guinness Book of Records* has evolved over decades to provide insight into the full spectrum of modern life. And although one may be more likely now to learn about the widest human mouth than the highest number of casualties in a single battle of the Civil War, the *Guinness World Records* website offers a telling glimpse into the future of fact-finding and record-recording.

A Follow-up Activity

An activity that would logically follow the prior lesson would be one that requires students to write a summary of the author's big ideas of that very same passage to boost their reading comprehension. Immediately, this reinforces the fact that revisiting a text is both common and necessary. And this provides a clear assessment of whether students have reached the goal of

understanding the text. This is not the time to reference past discussions or prior knowledge. They may use the ‘five Ws and one H’ key words to guide their reactions, but the main point is to determine: Can they construct a response? Did they understand what they just read? Students may choose to clarify the author’s intention, highlighting whether the passage was written for the purpose of informing, persuading or entertaining, but it’s expected that the summary will reveal (or measure or gauge) not necessarily their ability to discover meaning, but more so their ability to simply own the material.

Margot DeSalvo (Nasti)

META-COGNITIVE READING SKILLS: *Guiding Metacognitive habits for Test-takers*

OBJECTIVE / RATIONALE:

The intentions behind teaching metacognitive skills are to guide students through a process of innate reading abilities and innate reading practices. It allows students to feel comfortable trusting their own knowledge and allows them to realize their thought process *does* have a place in this exam. At first I had this worksheet titled “Teaching Metacognitive habits” but I had to change it because I felt that would be falsely implying a lesson of something new to the students. Metacognition is not new to our students; however it has been dormant and certainly not applied to their reading tasks or exam tasks. Allowing students to become more comfortable, confident and in control of metacognitive habits will enable them as active, attentive and thoughtful readers.

Hypothetical Lesson Plan

Unit **Discussing & Discovering the Exam –**

1: *Exam style, purpose, practice tests both individually + whole class.*

*New York Times demo, New York Times assignments
+ discussions.*

*[Potentially Insert Donna-Lynn’s Part 1 Lesson: Terms +
Cue Words]*

Unit

2:

Relying on Prior knowledge & Reflective Skills –

*Reading abstract texts to break-down and rebuild vocabulary
and context comprehension.*

(Margot’s Part 1. Approximately 2-4 class sessions)

(I.) USING POETRY FOR READING SKILL

(II.) BREAKING DOWN & DISCUSSING THE POEM

(III.) UNDERSTANDING THE POEM THROUGH

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

(IV.) APPLYING THE POETRY-READING-PROCESS TO THE TEST

(V.) CREATING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

(VI.) STANDARDIZED MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Unit *[Potentially Insert Elroy's Part 1 Lesson: Vocabulary*
3: *+Fiction]*
[Potentially Insert Elizabeth's Part 1 Lesson: Stop + Go
Reading]

Honing and Owning Reading Strategies -

(Margot's Part 2. Approximately 2-4 class sessions)

(VI.) REFLECTION: EVALUATING READING & RE-READING (FICTION)

(VII.) REFLECTION: SELF-POSITIONING READING, PROCESS, + CONTEXT.

(VIII.) MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

(IX.) REFLECTION: OBSERVING AS READING & RE-READING (EXAM TEXT)

XI.) MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

<p>Frightened ↓</p> <p>outside the ↓</p> <p>Range ↓</p> <p>of my campfire ↓ ↓</p> <p>I go to meet it at the ↓</p> <p>Edge ↓</p> <p>of the light ↓</p>	<p>After we break down the words up to “boulders” I re-read the first line with their new words. I read as if I am asking a question, for ex: “So, the poem arrives like a mistake larger than or on top of big rocks?”</p> <p>This continues... “So what do we think those “boulders” or “big rocks” are? We always get around to a variety of answers, and eventually some one will say “writers-block”.</p> <p>This goes on and on for every line. The pattern of word associating, pausing, rephrasing from the beginning, clarifying and questioning is repeated until we hit the end of the poem.</p> <p>Ideally this is modeling a process of metacognitive reading. Students see they are able to break down easy words and then by applying their meaning they are able to make sense of the context.</p> <p>Depending on the students’ and the flow of conversation, this could easily take up to 30 minutes.</p> <p>Some common answers: <i>Night</i> → Scary, death, calm, cold, peace, quiet, moon, wind, sleep, alone</p> <p><i>Campfire</i> → (This one tricks them up the most because most of them have never been camping. Sometimes it turns into 2 words: Camping + Fire) = To stay put, to live, nature, passion, hot, food, heat, cold, lonely</p>
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	<i>Light</i> → Understanding, death, bright, joy, God,
<p>(III.) UNDERSTANDING THE POEM THROUGH COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS</p> <p><i>Multiple Choice</i></p> <p>1. The word blunder means: a) clumsy b) intricate c) mistake d) loud</p> <p>2. The author’s tone is: a) b) c) d)</p> <p>3. The use of the phrase “over the boulders” implies to: a) b) c) d)</p> <p>4. The author’s poem is about: a) The author feels excited to write next to his campfire. b) The author is afraid while he sleeps because of loud blunders. c) The author describes how he wants writing to remain away from him. d) The author describes how he resists ideas but they come to him anyway.</p> <p>5. All of the following words imply a sense of boundary instead of which one: a) Edge b) Stays c) Campfire d) Outside</p> <p><i>Writing Comprehension</i></p> <p>Summarize the poem in your own words.</p>	<p>Although this may seem easy, you learn a lot about those students who still struggle through it. It also now gives all students that alone time with the “scary exam format” for something they just had fun breaking down and breaking through all together.</p> <p><i>Please note: I am <u>terrible</u> at making up mock multiple choice answers.</i></p>

Choose one line, phrase or word that you think is the most important to the poem and explain why.

(IV.) APPLYING THE POETRY-READING-PROCESS TO THE TEST:

What Methods Do Andean Farmers Use?

Public debate around climate change and its effects on agriculture tends to focus on the large-scale industrial farms of the North. Farmers who work on a small scale and use traditional methods have largely been ignored. However, as the world slowly comes to terms with the threat of climate change, Native farming traditions will warrant greater attention.

In the industrial model of agriculture, one or two crop varieties are grown over vast areas. Instead of trying to use local resources of soil and water optimally and sustainably, the natural environment is all but ignored and uniform growing conditions are fabricated through large-scale irrigation and the intensive use of artificial fertilizers and pesticides. For example, a handful of basically similar potato varieties, all of which require nearly identical soil conditions, temperature, rainfall, and growing seasons, account for almost all global production. When these global crops are no longer suited to the environment in which they are grown, when their resistance to disease and pests begins to fail, or the climate itself changes, the best way to rejuvenate the breeding stock will be to introduce new genetic material from the vast diversity of crop varieties still maintained by indigenous peoples.

In contrast to the industrial model, Andean potatoes and other Andean crops such as squash and beans grown by Quechuan farmers exhibit extraordinary genetic diversity, driven by the need to adapt crops to the extraordinary climatic diversity of the region. Along the two axes of latitude and altitude, the Andes

Disclaimer: The attached reading is and took a popular one from online CUNY Reading practice.

I would begin the process in the same manner as the poem. 1. Ask students, if we read the poem “word by word”, how do you think we will read this passage?

Read out loud once. Read quietly once. Review all together, breaking down key word and phrase at a time.

Many phrases and key words here are suitable for big conversations. I highlighted some of these words already. The list is endless). You can make it a “game” and ask the students to tell you the “Next word” to associate and define

Just like in the poetry activity, I would pause and rephrase the understanding that the class constructed before moving onto new ideas in the passage.

<p>encompasses fully two-thirds of all possible combinations of climate and geography found on Earth. The Andean potato has been adapted to every environment except the depth of the rainforest or the frozen peaks of the mountains. Today, facing the likelihood of major disruptions to the climatic conditions for agriculture worldwide, indigenous farmers provide a dramatic example of crop adaptation in an increasingly extreme environment. More importantly, Native farmers have also safeguarded the crop diversity essential for the future adaptations.</p> <p>(Adapted from Craig Benjamin, "The Machu Picchu Model: Climate Change and Agricultural Diversity." © 1999 by Craig Benjamin.)</p>	<p>Anticipated words + comments: <u>Debate</u> → argument, disagreement, issue <u>Effects</u> → results <u>Tends</u> → leans <u>Traditional</u> → Old, correct, the norm, outdated., common, valued <u>Come to terms with</u> → accept <u>Threat</u> → danger, risk, ... <u>Industrial</u> → Modern, machine, fast <u>Fabricated</u> → false, <u>Suited</u> --> fitted, accept, match ... <u>Disruptions</u> → interruptions, negative, <u>Contrast</u> → opposite, against, different</p>
<p>(V.) CREATING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS</p> <p>A. By this point you have reviewed the type of questions anticipated on the CUNY Reading exam, you have experienced practice exams and questions, you have read the above passage at least two-three times and have discussed and annotated it. Be sure you feel comfortable not only with the passage above, but with the type and style of questions typically given on the Reading exam.</p> <p>B. In groups of 2-3 create the comprehension questions that you think could possibly be on the exam. Create questions and 4 multiple choice answers for each.</p> <p>C. Your “test” will be given to another group and you will receive the text questions created by your classmates. You may answer the questions as a group.</p>	<p>By creating the questions students are using metacognitive skills and a practice of re-reading the text to decipher what would be important enough for questions. By doing so they become more confident as the authority over a test. If they can guess what types of questions there would be, surely they can believe they can answer them.</p> <p>For them to create correct and incorrect answers would be a greater challenge, but would also allow them to really hone those skills and admit to themselves what they understand and don't understand.</p> <p>They are not off the hook. Answering their peers'</p>

	<p>questions further drives home this test taking validates the overall activity.</p> <p>And lastly, after all of that practice, they should complete formally designed, potential test questions.</p>
<p>(VI.) STANDARDIZED MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS</p> <p>In the second paragraph, the information about potato-growing practices in the industrial model of agriculture serves to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> a. give an example of a potential problem that Native farming practices could help to alleviate. <input type="checkbox"/> b. show the likely global consequences of a possible food shortage caused by industrial farming practices. <input type="checkbox"/> c. show how pests and disease are less effectively resisted by crops grown in the industrial farming model. <input type="checkbox"/> d. give an example of how public debate has had little effect on the agricultural practices of the North. <input type="checkbox"/> e. give an example of how Native farming practices and industrial farming practices derive from different climatic conditions. <hr/> <p>The passage states that which of the following is true of the small number of potato varieties that account for most of the potatoes produced on Earth currently?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> a. They are grown in the Andean region. <input type="checkbox"/> b. They all require very similar soil and climate conditions. <input type="checkbox"/> c. They are no longer suited to their environment. <input type="checkbox"/> d. They are based on genetic material from crops developed by indigenous peoples. <input type="checkbox"/> e. They make optimal use of available soil and water resources. <hr/> <p>What is the main idea of the first paragraph?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> a. Attention to Native farming practices will lead to greater awareness of the threat of climate change. 	

<p><input type="checkbox"/> b. Popularity of small-scale farming in the North will lead to greater attention to Native farming practices.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> c. Global demand for food will lead to increasing efficiency of large-scale farming in the North.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> d. It will be worthwhile to include a greater focus on Native farming practices in public discussions concerning the threat of climate change.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> e. Despite potential climate change, public debate will have little effect on industrial farming practices.</p> <hr/> <p>As it is used in the passage, the underlined word fabricated most nearly means:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> a. woven</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> b. falsely stated.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> c. fully clothed.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> d. manufactured.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> e. unwrapped.</p>	
<p>(VII.) REFLECTION: OBSERVING AS READING & RE-READING (FICTION)</p> <p>1. Read +Observe. Pretend reading was like taking a walk in a new place. Instead of critically staring at every new object, you merely observe the new sights. Your eyes and attention are drawn to different objects and sounds and you take mental note of the. Regard reading in the same manner – as conducting an observation.</p> <p>Read the following passage and pay extra attention to what you are observing while you read. Annotate what you find interesting. What caught your attention? What do you like about this passage? What don't you like about it? Annotate what you find troubling. What questions do you have while reading this piece? These questions could be about what you find confusing.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Four Skinny Trees”</p> <p><i>An excerpt from <u>The House on Mango Street</u>, by Sandra Cisneros</i></p> <p>They are the only ones who understand me. I am the only one who understands them. Four skinny trees with skinny necks and</p>	<p>I cannot take full credit for this portion of the lesson. I chose the texts to the left, however, the following scaffolded activity comes from Sheridan Blau's <i>The Literature Workshop: Teaching Texts and Their Readers</i>. The directions and the process are at times word for word from his book.</p> <p>We all know how resistant and passive our students can be. It is absolutely essential</p>

<p>pointy elbows like mine. Four who do not belong here but are here. Four raggedy excuses planted by the city. From our room we can hear them, but Nenny just sleeps and doesn't appreciate these things.</p> <p>Their strength is secret. They send ferocious roots beneath the ground. They grow up and they grow down and grab the earth between their hairy toes and bite the sky with violent teeth and never quit their anger. This is how they keep.</p> <p>Let one forget his reason for being, they'd all droop like tulips in a glass, each with their arms around the other. Keep, keep, keep, trees say when I sleep. They teach.</p> <p>When I am too sad and too skinny to keep keeping, when I am a tiny thing against so many bricks, then it is I look at trees. When there is nothing left to look at on this street. Four who grew despite concrete. Four who reach and do not forget to reach. Four whose only reason is to be and be.</p> <p>2. Rate your understanding of the passage after your first reading. Place how you would evaluate your comprehension on a scale of 0-10, zero being "I didn't understand this at all".</p> <p>3. Re-read this passage. Re-observe it. Re-annotate it. Do you have the same opinions, reactions, and questions? Have any of your initial annotations changed?</p>	<p>that they are writing down their observations as they read. They will need to evaluate their reflections and share them. Students need to learn from their natural observations and recording them properly is very important.</p> <p>I really wanted to choose a text more literary and more complex. But for time-sake, this was all I had already typed and saved and it does present the reader with essential abstract obstacles. I also wanted something slightly longer, although this ½ page length would work best for the repetition of the activity to follow.</p> <p>Often wait to be told how they did. The relationship with a test is a right or wrong answer or way. And this often can take away from the authority the student has in his or her own process or thoughts. Have students rate their own understanding after their first</p>
<p>(VIII.) REFLECTION: SELF-POSITIONING READING, PROCESS, & CONTEXT.</p> <p>4. Re-read the distributed passage for a third time. Continue to</p>	<p>This process can become a bit extensive and I can</p>

<p>observe and annotate what you find interesting, intriguing, curious, and confusing.</p> <p>5. After having read and annotated this piece and your thoughts <u>three times</u>, re-rate your understanding of it once again on a scale of 0-10.</p> <p>6. “Write a brief account of what happened to you as a reader and to your understanding of the passage over the course of your three readings.” Think about how the observations you made and questions you had may have shifted or changed. Did you begin to understand some things better as you re-read it? Etc. Describe your process or your reading method. Did that change each time you read it? If so, how? If not, why?</p> <p>7. Write out any questions you still have about this passage.</p> <p>8. Now rate two things. Rate your comprehension of the overall piece and rate your reading process. Do you think you read effectively each time you read?</p> <p>[Optional: Whole class discussion / Share out.]</p> <p>9. In groups of 2-3 people, discuss your individual reading process. “What happened to you or to your understanding of this [piece] over the course of your three readings. Read your accounts out loud to one another.</p> <p>10. Discuss important reflection commentary. Discuss the unresolved questions that students still had.</p>	<p>completely understand how students may be frustrated or confused and perhaps resistant to this repetition. However, I think a reading course is the best place for students to engage in this constant reflection on their reflections.</p> <p>The idea is that what they observe can’t be wrong but that each time we observe something it brings new things into vision.</p>
<p>(IX.) MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS</p> <p>1. The word ferocious means:</p> <p>a) b) c) d)</p> <p>2. What is the strength of the trees that the author writes about:</p> <p>a) b) c) d)</p> <p>3. The trees are compared to the author as:</p> <p>a) b)</p>	

<p>c) d)</p> <p>4. What does the author mean by “keep keeping”: a) b) c) d)</p> <p>5. The author’s passage is about: a) b) c) d)</p>	
<p>(X.) REFLECTION: EVALUATING READING & RE-READING (EXAM TEXT)</p> <p>1. Read the following passage and pay extra attention to what you are observing while you read. Annotate what you find interesting. What caught your attention? What do you like about this passage? What don’t you like about it? Annotate what you find troubling. What questions do you have while reading this piece? These questions could be about what you find confusing.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Earth Day” <i>The full text of this article was published in New York Times / April 2010</i></p> <p>Nearly 20 million Americans attended the first Earth Day celebration on April 22, 1970, to this day among the most participatory political actions in the nation's history. In the decades since, Earth Day has spread across the globe with thousands of events in more than 180 countries.</p> <p>In the beginning, the event influenced environmental politics, triggering such national legislation as the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act. "Earth Day is a commitment to make life better, not just bigger and faster," the organizers of the first celebration wrote in their manifesto. "It is a day to re-examine the ethic of individual progress at mankind's expense."</p> <p>So strong was the antibusiness sentiment for the first Earth Day in 1970 that organizers took no money from corporations” While the 40th anniversary of Earth Day was widely marked with events in</p>	

<p>April 2010, including a climate rally on the Mall in Washington, the movement does not appear to have the same kind of support it had four decades ago.</p> <p>The day has turned into a premier marketing platform for selling a variety of goods and services, like office products, Greek yogurt and eco-dentistry. The environmental movement's tolerance of corporate America is an admission of its need to take money from corporations or at the least become partners with them if it is to change social behavior.</p> <p>Many corporations say that it is often the business community that now leads the way in environmental innovation — and they want to get their customers interested. In an era when the population is more divided on the importance of environmental issues than it was four decades ago, the April event offers a rare window, they say, when customers are game to learn about the environmentally friendly changes the companies have made.</p> <p>2. Rate your understanding of the passage after your first reading. Place how you would evaluate your comprehension on a scale of 0-10, zero being “I didn’t understand this at all”.</p> <p>3. Re-read this passage. Re-observe it. Re-annotate it. Do you have the same opinions, reactions, and questions? Have any of your initial annotations changed?</p>	
<p>(XI.) REFLECTION: SELF-POSITIONING READING, PROCESS, & CONTEXT.</p> <p>[Re-do that entire process once more. The step-by-step has been copied and pasted below.]</p> <p>4. Re-read the distributed passage for a third time. Continue to observe and annotate what you find interesting, intriguing, curious, and confusing.</p> <p>5. After having read and annotated this piece and your thoughts <u>three times</u>, re-rate your understanding of it once again on a scale of 0-10.</p> <p>6. “Write a brief account of what happened to you as a reader and to your understanding of the passage over the course of your three readings.” Think about how the observations you made and</p>	

questions you had may have shifted or changed. Did you begin to understand some things better as you re-read it? Etc. Describe your process or your reading method. Did that change each time you read it? If so, how? If not, why?

7. Write out any questions you still have about this passage.

8. Now rate two things. Rate your comprehension of the overall piece and rate your reading process. Do you think you read effectively each time you read?

[Optional: Whole class discussion / Share out.]

9. In groups of 2-3 people, discuss your individual reading process. “What happened to you or to your understanding of this [piece] over the course of your three readings. Read your accounts out loud to one another.

10. Discuss important reflection commentary. Discuss the unresolved questions that students still had.

(XII.) MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Earth day is a political act in what way?:

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

2. “Antibusiness sentiments” means:

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

3. The statement “re-examine the ethic of individual progress at mankind's expense” can be restated as:

- a)
- b)
- c)

<p>d)</p> <p>4. The overall tone of this passage is:</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b) .</p> <p>c)</p> <p>d)</p> <p>5. The main idea of this passage is:</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>c)</p> <p>d)</p>	
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Donna-lyn Washington

Prepping students for the English 91 department reading exam usually occurs at approximately the six-week point of the semester. At this time students are familiar with each other and are aware of what they need to do in order to complete the course. More importantly, this gives me a clear assessment of their critical reading abilities. After they have worked on the first drafts of their essays, reading journals and in-class writing, focusing on an intensive reading based assignment helps me see how students make connections to what they write. Too often students in English 91 do not see the relevance of what they are doing until the end of the semester. By introducing one of the required exams early, students work on incorporating skill sets learned for writing and work on applying those skills to what they read. Once this activity is done the students and I work on incorporating reading techniques to assign and in-class readings.

The objective for students creating multiple-choice questions for the English 91 department reading exam is to have them become familiar with applying critical reading techniques for inferred readings. I have found that students struggle the most with inference questions, since they have to draw their own conclusions from an author's text. Group work gives them permission to question the intentions of the writer and formulate their own opinions. As the semester goes on, for the most part students are able to correctly interpret implicit type questions. They see that in the beginning a passage may be a mystery, however recognizing the patterns of writing and questioning the author empowers them to use techniques they should be utilizing all semester.

Once students have familiarized themselves with the pattern of multiple choice questions they can work on translating different strategies in formulating questions. This in turn helps them have a conversation with any type of text, regardless of genre or length. Essentially the goal is to help students work on interpreting multiple-layered texts while actively questioning the passage.

Note: I have modified this activity for the CUNY-Act reading exam. This exercise is often done as prep-work for students' first drafted essay. The questions below are student generated from my fall 2011 English 91 course.

Objective:

The following exercise is the second part of a two-part exercise based on the first 70 lines of Euripides' *Medea*. The intention is for students to use a variety of strategies when dealing with short passage, multiple choice questions. Having the students choose the most appropriate passage to match another groups' questions forces them to engage with the other students. More importantly this stratagem automatically has them read the questions before approaching the passage which I find is one of the more successful multiple-choice tactics. Then they are to come up with a set of possible responses and only one correct answer.

Washington

Procedure:

- Group A would choose group D's set of questions. From there students would confer on which passage best fits the set of questions. As part of their investigation, group A would question group D on how they came about making up the questions and from which lines they used from the play. Anything exceeding line 70 would be ruled out and not used for this exercise.
- After using the best passage for the questions and fettering out the best questions to use, group A would then come up with a series of possible answers along with the one correct answer.
- This exercise takes approximately two class sessions. Each class is two hours long.

English 91

The following questions that were generated from your group work will give you the opportunity to work on strategies for comprehending inference questions based on the CUNY-ACT reading exam. You are going to choose two (2) out of the five (5) questions generated by a group that you **ARE NOT** a part of. This means that if you see your name, then you cannot use those set of questions. Instead you are going to choose another group's set of questions. Once you have settled on a group of questions, decide which passage from the play *Medea* you're going to use as the passage that best answers the questions. Then you're going to come up with four (4) to Five (5) choices. Since these are multiple choice questions, there can only be one definitive answer. Be sure to help each other in this endeavor and always refer back to the text. Remember it is there for support.

Group A: Kimberly, Ivan, Wilfredo, Edwin, Limaury

1. Is the chorus male or female?
2. Is Medea's family as devious as her?
3. Does Jason have an ulterior motive when in the process of marrying the princess?
4. How far did she go when mastering techniques of harm and manipulation?
5. How far would Medea go to see Jason suffer?

Group B: Joe, Laila, Fritz, Abigail

1. Why are things going the opposite way?
2. Does Medea feel that she can trust Aegeus?
3. Why does Medea still feel the need for revenge after Aegeus offers her a new life?
4. Instead of planning on killing everyone around her why doesn't Medea just kill Jason?

Washington

Group C: Brittany, Fadie, Dzessika, Jeremy

1. How is Medea going to poison Jason, the king, and the princess?
2. Why is the chorus on Medea's side?
3. How can Aegeus trust Medea knowing her actions?
4. Is the riddle that Aegeus told Medea foreshadowing future events in the book?
5. How can Jason just act all okay like he did everything for "his family"?

Group D: Preston, Wedance, Latasha, Hanna, Kevin

1. What does she mean when she says "There is no justice in a man eye"?
2. Who is Aegeus?
3. Why does Aegeus believe and want to help to help Medea?
4. Why, in this period of time do women have more problems than men?
5. Why does Medea still want to get revenge on Jason after he tried to help her?
6. How does the nurse know that Medea is violent?
7. Why doesn't the nurse tell the king about Medea?
8. Does Jason have a dark side?
9. Why does everybody fall for Medea's guilt?
10. What are some reasons Creon is banishing her?
11. Why does she think women have mastered the art of manipulation?
12. What does a complicated riddle have to do with fathering children?
13. Does Jason try to apologize to Medea even though he broke his oath?
14. Which path will Medea choose?
15. What happened to Medea to make her "crazy"?
16. Why doesn't Medea take the easy way out?
17. If Medea believes god, why does she seek revenge?
18. Why couldn't the princess take Medea's and Jason's kids to raise them?
19. In the end of the story will Medea go back home?

Group E: Iqra, Tina, Lesya, Valha, Anam

1. How does Jason’s actions effect his sons? Do they hate their father as well as Medea does?
2. Would the sons be willing to be a part of Medea’s plan?
3. Will Medea follow through on her plan and kill her sons?
4. Will Jason actually, willingly support Medea and his sons when they leave?
5. Would Aegeus betray Medea and go against her after he gets his children?
6. What does it mean when Aegus says “Do not untie the wineskin’s neck. . . “?
7. What’s Ageus’ purpose of being a part of this play?
8. Does Medea love her sons even though she’s willing to kill them for their benefit so they are not laughed at?
9. Does Medea still love Jason?
10. Is Jason telling Medea the truth when he tells her excuse to marrying the princess is for her fortune?
11. Is one day enough for Medea’s plan to succeed?
12. Is Jason in love with the princess’ money or does he really love her?

Donna-lyn Washington

**English 91
Reading Departmental Final Work Shop**

Group Members: _____

Questions Chosen: _____

Passage Line Numbers: _____

Possible Answers:

Correct Answer:

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The following classroom activities are used to prepare students for the department reading exam by introducing its structure. It is prepared to be used for a two-hour class session. Besides becoming familiar with the structure of the exam, students will be able to apply critical reading techniques that will enable them to gather a deeper understanding of the text. Having students formulate both the question and answer as a team helps increase their understanding of the book (in this case *The Dew Breaker*), and interaction with their peers clarifies ideas that were not understood during class discussion. This can be adapted to show examples of different types of multiple-choice questions that contain explicit and implicit ideas. This exercise can be further modified by focusing on the types of questions that give students the most difficulty such as inferences where students have to read between the lines in order to get the correct answer.

English 91
Reading Departmental Final Work Shop

Based on the chapter “The Book of Miracles” from *The Dew Breaker* we are now going to create in groups a reading department final.

Each group will formulate a different type of departmental reading question that will be on your final:

- Multiple choice based on information in the chapter.
- Multiple choice based on word definitions
- Short answer
- Summary

The terms below are to aid you in this task.

Cue words/phrases for inferences include:

- Infer	Derive	- Most likely
- Conclude	Imply	- Likely
- Assume	Suggests	- Probably
	Implication	

Context Clues: Context clues enable the reader to directly relate what needs to be answered. They include:

- Define	- Emphasize	- Compare
- Elaborate	- Corroborates	- Explain
- Enumerate	- Analyze	- Describe
- Evaluate	- Contrast	- Summarize/In summary

Washington

There are also context words/phrases that help indicate the tone of the passage. These clues may sometimes help with the overall meaning of the passage you are reading. They also occur in most of the courses you will be taking.

- Ambivalent	- Judicious	- Skeptical
- Biased	- Objective	- Subjective
- Cynical	- Negative	- Pessimism
- Defensive	- Sarcastic	- Resigned
	- Incredulous	- Indifference

Tone type questions:

The author's attitude...

Which of the following best describes the author's tone?

Donna-lyn Washington

**English 91
Reading Departmental Final Work Shop**

Group Members: _____

Question Type: _____

Question:

Answer:
