The Common Core Reading Book

Lessons for Increasingly Complex Literature, Informational Texts, and Content-Area Reading

6–8

Gretchen Owocki

Heinemann
361 Hanover Street
Portsmouth, NH 03801–3912
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Overview

Everywhere we turn, conversations about the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are at hand. Conferences are providing sessions; state departments are holding meetings; legislators are talking; books and journal articles are being published; blogs are buzzing; websites are being developed; and school teams are planning and sharing ideas. For the first time ever, schools across the United States are using a common set of literacy standards to guide assessment and instruction—and educators and school leaders are grappling with the implications.

Many have examined their existing practices in light of the new standards and are making curricular and instructional overhauls in areas they believe need their attention first. Others are thinking maybe it is enough to simply be aware of the new standards—and for the most part to continue with or gently tweak existing practices. Others, admittedly, have never paid much attention to state standards and are wondering if there is a reason to pay attention now.

Some educators are of the mind that new standards offer a sound new platform for schools to examine practices and improve in areas of need. They believe the changes could lead to better instruction and learning. Some contend that new standards—regardless of how they are used—may not have much impact on student learning; after all, good teaching is good teaching regardless of the standards we have. And there are others who fear that because the standards are closely linked with high-stakes standardized testing, teachers will feel compelled to place an emphasis on test preparation rather than on fostering broadly meaningful literacy in ways that are responsive to the needs of all learners. Clearly, the issues are complex.

Some Options

Within such complexity, we could approach the standards in a number of ways. We could sit tight until we have more information about how the new assessments will play out, or until our district and state offices make recommendations regarding curriculum and instruction. But this suggests that the most important professional knowledge lies outside the school and that we should make changes only as guided by outside powers. And in fact, many educators across the country have studied the standards, noting some key areas they think might be worth attending to in the interest of the learners in their schools. These educators have been busy making decisions about how to use the standards as a new starting point to make instruction better: more engaging, more challenging, and more in tune with students' needs.

So another possible response is for everyone in the school to get focused and quickly start teaching and assessing in light of the new standards. School districts could scramble to provide professional learning experiences for teachers: right now, right away. They could make quick switches to new types of lesson planning and new report cards, and teachers could change their practices, now. But such efforts don't necessarily involve a system for nurturing a balanced or manageable approach to improvement, and they often are not based on solid evidence.

So another option is for educators to come together and start looking for curricular programs that advertise "comprehensive" and "research-based" ways to meet the new standards. There has been a steep rise in the publication of programs and materials touting a strong alignment with the CCSS. But we are teaching in an era in which research evidence has confirmed that the *teaching*—not the program or set of materials—is the most important variable affecting student achievement (Cunningham and Allington 2011).

The Places We Could Go

At the crossroads created by the Common Core State Standards, there are many paths we could take. Because effective teaching does not emerge from a set of standards, a mandate, a state office, or a manual, we must avoid paths that cast educators as secondary decision makers or that offer quick solutions or static packages. Effective teaching results from the skillful weaving of curriculum, carefully selected instructional practices, and thoughtful responses to students' daily demonstrations of knowledge. Therefore, we must use this crossroads as an opportunity for educators to focus on *teaching*—and on *improving teaching*—in light of this new set of standards that has raised the expectations for student learning higher than ever. But we cannot let the standards control or manipulate our teaching into something awkward or feeling like it's only for the test. Good teaching always feels like it's *for the student*, and *for engaged learning*.

School and district teams can gain positive momentum by implementing the most promising practices known to date, and this book is designed to support this effort. The practices you will find on the following pages have been used effectively by many teachers; here they are altered and redesigned with special attention to the CCSS in a way that maintains the potential for teacher control and decision making in the best interest of learners. Of course, it would make little sense to implement these practices without also watching your students. Along with teaching practices, you will find support for observing students to improve and fine-tune your instruction. Effective

teaching is about taking note of learners' knowledge, engagement, and responses to instruction and actively responding in light of all.

As we shape the new system and work within it, we must take care to not lose sight of *meaningful* teaching and learning. In working toward the new standards, kids are going to be doing hard things. Among many other competencies, they are expected to cite textual evidence to support analysis of text, trace and evaluate arguments, and analyze conflicting evidence in texts. They are to read very challenging primary and secondary documents and to respond with depth and thoughtfulness. Aiming for students to perform well with such tasks doesn't mean that we must abandon our work toward a meaningful curriculum. Within the new system, teachers who have always managed to "get it right" with reading instruction can still allow students to read texts they choose and want to read; they can still allow for exploration of multiple genres; they can still teach strategies that support deep understanding of complex texts; and they can still allow for collaboration in which students share interpretations, personal connections, challenges, and points of agreement and disagreement. Students can and should still read for reasons that matter. These goals are not inconsistent with the goals of the Common Core State Standards—and in fact having them in place will strengthen our work with the standards.

But as we consider the new standards, the time *is* ripe for improvement. The time is ripe to consider ways to shift and alter our practices in light of contemporary knowledge and to weed out practices that are not conducive to meaningful learning. As educators, we are accustomed to regularly transforming our practices as we gain knowledge and experience. This year, perhaps your team will try out new practices for working with students who haven't yet developed fluency; perhaps you will expand your repertoire of strategies for supporting readers who struggle to comprehend grade-level material; perhaps you will explore some new practices for supporting English learners; or perhaps you will try differentiating your instruction for the first time. Perhaps you currently offer little time for actual supported reading and will now expand that time; perhaps you will find an alternative to having students taking turns reading aloud in class; or perhaps you will begin a move away from worksheets and toward having students engage in more authentic responses to reading. Where there is work to be done, this book can help.

Organization of the Book

The goal of *The Common Core Reading Book* is to support teachers across all content areas as they provide differentiated instruction in relation to the ten Common Core reading standards (Table A). The book is organized into

Table A

Category	Anchor Standards for Reading: Literature and Informational Text	Page
Key Ideas and Details	**1.** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	**1**
	2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	**25**
	3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.	**47**
Craft and Structure	**4.** Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	**72**
	5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.	**103**
	6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.	**126**
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	**7.** Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.	**149**
	8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence. (Not applicable to the Literature category.)	**178**
	9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.	**193**
Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity	**10.** Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	**213**

ten sections, one for each standard. The ten "anchor" standards provide overarching goals for K–12 students, and more specific sets of standards (outlined at the beginning of each section of the book) define the specific grade-level competencies students are expected to develop by each year's end.

In general, students are expected to work with their grade-level standards and develop the capacity to read increasingly complex text as they move through the middle school years. This is with the understanding that some students will need extra support mastering certain competencies from earlier grades before they can demonstrate full competency with their own grade-level standards. In turn, others may be ready to move forward and explore concepts beyond the range recommended. When planning instruction, it is helpful to look both below and beyond your grade level to understand the full context for what students are being asked to do.

The Types of Instruction

Within each section, you will find a set of instructional practices involving demonstration, collaborative engagement, and independent application. These three types of experience used in sequence serve as a frame for supporting students in gradually taking control of complex thinking and activity in relation to each standard. Rather than providing a curriculum with built-in reading materials and timelines, *The Common Core Reading Book* provides you with a comprehensive framework of strategies for enhancing a curriculum that is already in place or for developing your own curriculum around any given standard.

To support differentiation, each section begins with a decision tree to help you determine whether to pursue the lesson sequence for the anchor at hand. You may decide to use the sequence with all of your students or only a subset—or you may determine that your students are already performing well in the area and you can place your focus elsewhere. The decision tree will also help you consider whether intensified instruction may be warranted for some or all of your students in the focus area. Suggested possibilities for differentiation include using different texts with different students; bringing small groups together for varied types of intensified reading support; strategic grouping; and offering students choices in specific topics to pursue or in ways of expressing their learning.

Demonstration

Teacher guidance is high during the *demonstration* phase, with the teacher laying out explicit strategies and expectations for reading, interpreting, and analyzing text. Demonstration is a time to work with challenging texts that you want all of the students to explore. In this phase, you may use parts of a text that students are reading or choose a text that is similar in either structure or content. Demonstration generally takes just fifteen or twenty minutes on any given day, but then may be used repeatedly as students show the need for further support.

Each demonstration section includes a general lesson that can be used with the whole class or small groups throughout the year and a lesson designed for intensifying the instruction. These "intensifying" lessons are set up to support students to use the strategies with heavy teacher guidance.

The lessons for Anchors 1–10 may be taught in any order, with two recommended exceptions. It is recommended that you teach the lessons in Section 1 (close reading) first, as close reading supports all of the subsequent anchors; and it is recommended that you teach the lessons in Section 9 (comparing and contrasting) after some of the earlier lessons have been taught, to accustom students to grade-level skills for analyzing one text before asking them to analyze and compare two texts.

Collaborative Engagement

Guidance is still high in the *collaborative engagement* phase, but with more allowance and encouragement for students to take responsibility for their own learning and discussion. In this phase, students engage in group activity and conversation related to the concepts taught in the demonstration phase. Students may work with a part of the text you used for demonstration, or a text that is similar in some way. Typically one or two days are planned for collaborative engagement, with the teacher returning to this phase as students demonstrate a need.

Collaborative engagements involve students not only in reading and talk, but also in using other forms of activity (such as viewing, drawing, labeling, mapping, modeling, and problem solving) to complete an assignment together. At any time during this phase of instruction, you may come back to the demonstration phase to provide further support.

Independent Application

In the *independent application* phase, students work independently or with peers with much less teacher guidance. The expectations are that the strategies and concepts are being internalized, and students need time to explore them and try them out. It is during this phase that students will individually or collaboratively demonstrate their knowledge in relation to the standards, and you will find numerous opportunities for assessment as well as for providing over-the-shoulder support. At any time during the independent application phase, you may cycle back to demonstration and collaborative engagement to provide further guidance. This may be needed with a few students, a small group, or the entire class.

While the independent application phase requires less teacher guidance than the other phases, your role in ensuring engagement remains critical. Practices known to support engagement are: allowing for student choice; ensuring the material is accessible; arranging for collaboration with peers; and developing an overarching context that gives the assignments meaning (McRae and Guthrie 2009). Keep kidwatching to ensure these practices come to life and remember that good teaching always feels like it's *for the student* and *for engaged learning*.

The Role of the Teacher

Working effectively with the standards requires the critical understanding that the teacher—not the standard or the program—is the most important variable affecting student achievement (Cunningham and Allington 2011; Wong and Wong 2012). A set of goals or materials is only as good as the instruction associated with it. The teacher makes the decisions that create the effective classroom; the teacher knows the students, their strengths, their experiences, and their needs; and the teacher can use this knowledge to create the climate, culture, and curriculum for meaningful learning.

Over the past two decades, our field has accumulated a wide body of knowledge that helps teachers and teaching teams make effective decisions, and we are just beginning to consider the implications in terms of Common Core instruction. Table B shows eight research-based principles to guide programming and instruction for adolescents, presented with implications for informing Common Core instruction. The principles were published by the International Reading Association in 2012.

Table B

Position of the International Reading Association*	**Implications for Common Core Instruction**	**Current Status** 1 = well developed 2 = adequately developed 3 = partially developed 4 = minimally developed
Adolescents benefit from "content area teachers who provide instruction in the multiple literacy strategies needed to meet the demands of the specific discipline."	The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) call on students to read, analyze, and interpret a range of narrative and informational text, including texts in history, social studies, science, and technical subjects. Plan to provide reading instruction across content areas with an emphasis on *general comprehension and study strategies* (such as activating prior knowledge, predicting and questioning, making connections, summarizing, synthesizing, identifying and understanding vocabulary, using text structure, organizing key ideas, searching for related information in other texts, monitoring understanding, and evaluating authors' ideas) (IRA 2012) *as well as discipline-specific strategies* (such as determining "what kinds of information are important, what kinds of questions need to be asked, how texts specific to the discipline are structured, and how to evaluate the accuracy, credibility, and quality of an author's ideas") (IRA 2012, 6).	**1** **2** **3** **4**
Adolescents benefit from "a culture of literacy in their schools with a systematic and comprehensive programmatic approach to increasing literacy achievement for all."	Work schoolwide to support *all* students' development as readers, regardless of their starting points. Students reading above and below grade level, students receiving special services, and English learners should all be part of the plan. Use the Common Core literacy standards as a unifying frame for planning and collaborating across disciplines.	**1** **2** **3** **4**
Adolescents benefit from "access to and instruction with multimodal, multiple texts."	The CCSS emphasize the importance of students learning to integrate and evaluate knowledge and ideas presented in diverse media and formats. To meet this goal, develop a plan for students to have regular and sustained access to technology across content areas and identify appropriate multimodal materials for them to use in each discipline. Use Anchor 7 to guide specific instructional emphases.	**1** **2** **3** **4**
Adolescents benefit from "differentiated literacy instruction specific to their individual needs."	Use formative assessments to determine individual students' strengths and challenges in light of the CCSS, and plan instruction accordingly. Plan times for whole-class, small-group, and individual conferences/instruction as appropriate. Provide extra support or accommodations for students who are progressing slowly or need extra attention in relation to a particular strategy or skill.	**1** **2** **3** **4**

Table B (*continued*)

Position of the International Reading Association*	**Implications for Common Core Instruction**	**Current Status** 1 = well developed 2 = adequately developed 3 = partially developed 4 = minimally developed
Adolescents benefit from "opportunities to participate in oral communication when they engage in literacy activities."	Plan for students to spend time, across the disciplines, engaging in authentic conversations, collaborative assignments and projects, and informal and formal sharing of their knowledge developed through reading.	**1** **2** **3** **4**
Adolescents benefit from "opportunities to use literacy in the pursuit of civic engagement."	Plan for students to develop and use competencies related to the CCSS as they engage in authentic learning experiences. Rather than teaching a skill or strategy "just" so students will learn to demonstrate competency with it, teach so that students can actually use the skill or strategy to support meaningful activity related to wider aspects of their worlds. Keep in mind that different students bring different experiences and values. What is considered *meaningful* varies across students, classrooms, and communities.	**1** **2** **3** **4**
Adolescents benefit from "assessments that highlight their strengths and challenges."	Use formative assessments to determine individual students' strengths and challenges in light of the standards. The standards provide guidance for determining which competencies to assess and teach, but teachers' professional knowledge as well as their knowledge about the particular students and their sociocultural contexts for living and growing help inform the specifics. Standards and curricular materials are most useful when teachers understand that they have the authority to teach beyond them; to spend lots of time with some and explore others to a lesser extent; and to determine which are most appropriate for emphasis at any given time.	**1** **2** **3** **4**
Adolescents benefit from "access to a wide variety of print and nonprint materials."	Ensure that students have access to a wide range of print and nonprint materials that are connected to the curriculum; that are plentiful and varied enough to capture interests and allow for choice; and that are accessible for all students.	**1** **2** **3** **4**

* International Reading Association. (2012). *Adolescent Literacy: A Position Statement of the International Reading Association—revised 2012*. Newark, DE. Used with permission of the International Reading Association.

Transforming Your Teaching

I created this book because of my desire to participate in the national conversation about teaching practices that has emerged in relation to the Common Core. I wanted to offer encouragement to stay grounded in meaningful instruction, as well as offer a set of strategies to be implemented in the interest of meaningful reading.

But along the way, I really hoped for something more. I really hoped that through reading and exploring the ideas in this book, you would see with more certainty than ever that creating and adapting your *own* effective lessons and instructional designs, with standards as a guide, is within your reach. To create this book, I matched strategies with standards in a way that offers choices and possibilities for differentiation. I adapted and fine-tuned in ways that I thought would honor the intent of the standards, and at the same time respect the fact that students are eleven, twelve, and thirteen years old only once in their lives. In this short but precious period, they should experience deep satisfaction and pleasure in reading. I wanted to create opportunities that students would *want* to engage in, putting meaningful reading, writing, and collaboration at the core.

You can do the same. You can use and adjust the structure offered here to create your own lasting lessons and to continually add and adapt teaching strategies you know will have meaning to your students. To do this, you do not need to turn your attention away from your existing curriculum but don't be afraid to steer yourself, to step beyond scripts and programs, and to use your professional knowledge. Collaborate with your colleagues; talk about connections between your teaching and your objectives; and most important, talk about what keeps your students engaged with learning. Our most important task is, and always will be, to set the school-based learning process in motion through their interests and experiences.

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

ANCHOR 1

Reading Standards for Literature and Informational Text

Reading Anchor 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Grade 6: Literature	Grade 7: Literature	Grade 8: Literature
Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
Grade 6: Informational Text	**Grade 7: Informational Text**	**Grade 8: Informational Text**
Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Grades 6–8: Specifics for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

History/Social Studies: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Science and Technical Subjects: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.

Demonstration 3
Collaborative Engagement. 14
Independent Application 16

Decision Tree for **Reading ANCHOR 1**

Do my students need focused instruction in relation to Reading Anchor 1?

Anchor 1 requires that students *read closely* and *cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.* (Refer to your grade-level standards for specific details.)

When your students could use support in this area, it is recommended that you start the process with demonstration and then provide opportunities for collaborative engagement and independent application.

Demonstration	**Collaborative Engagement**	**Independent Application**
page 3	**page 14**	**page 16**

The initial *demonstration* requires just one session (to be repeated as often as needed) followed by students doing their own reading and exploration of the demonstrated strategies. *Collaborative engagements* are for continued exploration of the strategies within a small-group setting and generally take one to two days. *Independent applications* require less teacher support and offer a variety of options for continued use of the strategies.

If you find during any phase of the instruction that some or all of your students could use intensified support, it is recommended that you move to the lesson for intensifying the instruction.

INTENSIFYING THE INSTRUCTION

Do my students need intensified support with reading closely and citing textual evidence?

Students who can benefit from intensified support with close reading and citing are those who often come away from their reading with an incomplete understanding of the text or an incomplete vision of the types of evidence that may be used to support a position or a conclusion drawn from text. See lesson on page 13.

Demonstration

Anchor 1 requires that K–12 students *read closely. Close reading* is the practice of carefully and thoroughly attending to what an author is saying and of working to uncover the layers of meaning that are so often embedded within complex text. The specific expectation at the middle school level is that students will *cite evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text*. To achieve this goal, students must develop the capacity for constructing a thorough understanding or interpretation of what they are reading and for extracting key information for use in writing and speaking. Students are expected to cite from both literary and informational texts.

Citing evidence from *literature* has its most widespread use in the language arts classroom, where on any given day students may be engaged in activity such as discussing or writing about a theme from a novel; comparing a written story with its film counterpart; or reasoning through a character's decisions in light of their own worldviews and experiences. Citing evidence within such contexts involves students in using details and examples from text to back their analyses, ultimately supporting their engagement not only with the text but with the myriad social, cultural, and moral aspects of human experience that literature authors take up.

Citing evidence from *informational text* is useful to middle school learners as well, as they engage in activity such as reasoning through concepts in science, math, and history; using text-based information to solve problems or justify answers; or evaluating an author's point of view or argument. The requirement to cite evidence within such contexts encourages students to attend closely and critically to content and builds in them a knowledge base for making thoughtful and substantive contributions to the many different conversations of their lives.

How is evidence defined within the Common Core State Standards?

Evidence: Facts, figures, details, quotations, or other sources of data and information that provide support for claims or an analysis and that can be evaluated by others; should appear in a form and be derived from a source widely accepted as appropriate to a particular discipline, as in details or quotations from a text in the study of literature and experimental results in the study of science

—*Common Core State Standards Glossary of Key Terms, Appendix A, page 42*

Teachers across all content areas can be responsible for supporting students in developing an all-purpose set of literacy strategies to support these goals. Common strategies taught across content areas include activating prior knowledge, questioning, summarizing, synthesizing, and evaluating an author's ideas. But all-purpose strategies are not enough. Because each discipline has unique ways of creating, organizing, using, and evaluating textual

evidence, each teacher has a unique role in making explicit the nuances of such activity within the field at hand. Consider some of the differences in knowledge structures across disciplines:

- **Science.** Evidence in science is derived from systematic observation or hypothesis testing. When considering scientific evidence, experts take into account the purpose of the investigation; the data; how the data were analyzed; the links between the data and findings; possible biases; and any links to previous research (Lee and Spratley 2010).
- **History.** Historians view texts in their discipline as "interpretations" rather than as "truth." When considering evidence, they generally start by taking note of the author and his or her potential biases and motives; as they read, they focus on the particular "story" being told and how that story might be influenced by the positioning and point of view of the author. Historians are also aware that they as *readers* of history might have biases that color their interpretations. An important part of the historian's work is to examine evidence across sources, looking for corroborating or conflicting viewpoints (Shanahan and Shanahan 2008; Lee and Spratley 2010).
- **Mathematics.** Mathematicians are concerned with truth. They closely examine theoretical and real-world problems that apply mathematical reasoning not only to understand and evaluate their accuracy but also to comment on how such reasoning is used or misused to support claims. Mathematicians evaluate evidence across subject areas (Shanahan and Shanahan 2008; Lee and Spratley 2010).
- **Literature.** Evidence in literature is derived from the details of the text. Experts in this discipline study the author's craft, identify literary elements, and examine texts through a particular interpretive lens to make claims about aspects such as theme, characterization, and point of view. They use details from the text as evidence to support their claims. They also make comparisons across texts, with their ability to do so depending on aspects such as their knowledge of the author, other authors, other texts, character types, and archetypal themes (International Reading Association [IRA] 2012; Lee and Spratley 2010).

Interwoven with the necessity to teach content is the necessity to support students in becoming familiar with the norms for reading, reasoning, and citing

within the discipline (Lee and Spratley 2010). As you teach Anchor 1 lessons and support your students in reading closely, emphasize the knowledge structures unique to your field. Focus on how such knowledge is created, how it is organized, how it is used, and how it is evaluated. Understanding knowledge structures "will equip adolescents to be more engaged and involved with the content, deepen comprehension, and enhance recall" (IRA 2012, 6).

DEMONSTRATION

PREPARATION

- ❏ **Select a short text or section to use for demonstration.** Choose something that will capture your students' interests and make them want to read closely. You will need to project the text and write on it.
- ❏ **Identify a purpose for reading and a plan for noting evidence.** The purpose will depend on the text, and on how you want your students to consider it. Some examples appear in Figure 1.1.
- ❏ **Have a plan in place for students to explore the demonstrated processes in groups or independently.**

PROCEDURES

- ❏ **Introduce the concept.** Let students know that you will be demonstrating a process of *close reading*, a type of careful reading that you use when you want to deeply consider a text and use evidence from it for a specific purpose. State the purpose (as in Figure 1.1).
- ❏ **Demonstrate and discuss the concept.**
  - ◗ ***Initial reading.*** Read the text aloud, pausing at key points to verbally think through what the author is saying in your own words. Demonstrate a careful, thorough reading focused on *the story being told* or the *key ideas and details. Note:* As students become familiar with close reading, have them silently read the text for this phase of the lesson.
  - ◗ ***Noting textual evidence.*** Return to the text to demonstrate how you reread in relation to your selected purpose. As you reread, either mark evidence from the text (as in Figure 1.1) or take notes on a separate page (see Figures 1.2 and 1.3).
  - ◗ ***Citing textual evidence.*** Demonstrate how to use the evidence you have noted in light of your purpose.
- ❏ **Support student exploration of the concept.** Assign students to closely read and mark another text or section. Allow time for discussion and comparison of notes. As appropriate, assign a writing or speaking experience that requires citing the evidence. (See the Collaborative Engagement and Independent Application sections.)

Figure 1.1

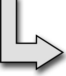
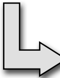
Close Reading and Citing Textual Evidence		
Standard	**Some Questions We Ask**	**Examples of Purpose**
Grade 6: Literature Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Now that we have read with a focus on the story being told/the key ideas and details, let's read again with our specific purpose in mind. What is our purpose? What will our evidence look like in light of this? How could I mark/highlight/take notes to help focus on the information we need? Let's articulate what we have found in relation to our purpose.	**Purpose:** Make a claim about certain aspects of a character and any changes over time. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue and incidents reveal these aspects. Cite evidence to support your claims. **Plan for Noting Evidence:** Code in the margin the *best* locations for capturing: how the character responds to key events; include dialogue.
Grade 7: Literature Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Now that we have read with a focus on the story being told/the key ideas and details, let's read again with our specific purpose in mind. What is our purpose? What will our evidence look like in light of this? How could I mark/highlight/take notes to help focus on the information we need? We need to cite several pieces of evidence to support our analysis. What other angles could we examine/information could we look at in relation to our purpose? Let's articulate what we have found in relation to our purpose.	**Purpose:** Infer a central idea or theme. Cite evidence to show how it is conveyed. **Plan for Noting Evidence:** Jot in the margin a message or lesson you think the author might have wanted you to consider. Underline the events/experiences/author observations that help to develop this message.
Grade 8: Literature Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Now that we have read with a focus on the story being told/the key ideas and details, let's read again with our specific purpose in mind. What is our purpose? What will our evidence look like in light of this? How could I mark/highlight/take notes to help focus on the information we need? Which evidence seems to most strongly support our analysis? What makes it strong? Let's articulate what we have found in relation to our purpose.	**Purpose:** Make a statement in response to "What is this poem about?" Cite evidence to show why you think so. **Plan for Noting Evidence:** Jot in the margin what you think the poem is about. Underline the lines that led you to this conclusion.

Figure 1.1 (*continued*)

Close Reading and Citing Textual Evidence		
Standard	**Some Questions We Ask**	**Examples of Purpose**
Grade 6: Informational Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Now that we have read with a focus on the story being told/the key ideas and details, let's read again with our specific purpose in mind. What is our purpose? What will our evidence look like? How could I mark/highlight/take notes to help focus on the information we need? Let's articulate what we have found in relation to our purpose.	**Purpose:** Determine a central idea and provide a summary of the evidence provided. **Plan for Noting Evidence:** Jot in the margin a key idea you think the author wanted you to consider. Underline the key evidence that is used to develop this idea.
Grade 7: Informational Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Now that we have read with a focus on the story being told/the key ideas and details, let's read again with our specific purpose in mind. What is our purpose? What will our evidence look like? How could I mark/highlight/take notes to help focus on the information we need? We need to cite several pieces of evidence to support our analysis. What other angles could we examine/information could we look at in relation to our purpose? Let's articulate what we have found in relation to our purpose.	**Purpose:** Summarize an argument and its evidence; assess whether the evidence is sufficient and well reasoned. **Plan for Noting Evidence:** Box in the language that best shows the argument (or jot it in the margin if it is not explicitly stated). Underline the evidence.
Grade 8: Informational Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Now that we have read with a focus on the story being told/the key ideas and details, let's read again with our specific purpose in mind. What is our purpose? How could I mark/highlight/take notes to help focus on the information we need? Which evidence seems to most strongly support our analysis? What makes it strong? Let's articulate what we have found in relation to our purpose.	

continues

Figure 1.1 (*continued*)

Close Reading and Citing Textual Evidence		
Standard	**Some Questions We Ask**	**Examples of Purpose**
Grades 6–8: History/ Social Studies Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.	See previous questions, and: • Who is the author? • What particular story is being told? • What is the author's positioning in relation to the story? • What is the author's purpose or point of view? • What evidence is presented to support this? • How was it obtained? • How is it organized? • Who is/was the intended audience? How might this affect the content? • What conflicting information/evidence is presented? • What conflicting information/evidence is presented in other sources? • What biases or opinions of our own might color our ways of thinking about this text?	**Purpose:** Make a statement about the author's point of view (or purpose) and provide evidence for your claim.  **Plan for Noting Evidence:** Jot in the margin a statement about the author's overarching point of view/ purpose and underline the evidence that supports your thinking.
Grades 6–8: Science and Technical Subjects Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.	See previous questions, and: • What is the purpose of the investigation or report? • What are the data like? • How are the data analyzed? • How do the data lead to the findings? • What possible biases or opinions might color the way the data are presented? (For example, how might an individual focused on cleaning up the environment present oil spill data differently than an individual focused on supporting continued oil exploration?) • How was math used as part of the investigation? • What mathematical logic and reasoning were used? • How is math used to support the claims?	**Purpose:** Summarize a problem (as in science or math) and describe the evidence and reasoning used to solve it.  **Plan for Noting Evidence:** Box in the language that best captures the problem. Underline the evidence/ reasoning used to solve it.

Example Texts to Use for Demonstration of Close Reading

- All texts should be preread to determine appropriateness for your students and curriculum.
- The texts on this list, with the exception of the books, are available online.
- Texts with stars are particularly relevant across disciplines. With cross-discipline planning, grade-level teams can use such texts to illustrate similarities and differences in the ways in which historians, mathematicians, literary scholars, and scientists evaluate and cite textual evidence.

Short Stories

- "My Lucy Friend Who Smells Like Corn," Sandra Cisneros
- "Salvador Late or Early," Sandra Cisneros
- "Eleven," Sandra Cisneros
- "The Princess and the Pea," Hans Christian Anderson
- "The Leap-Frog," Hans Christian Anderson
- "The Emperor's New Clothes," Hans Christian Anderson
- "Thank You, M'am," Langston Hughes
- "The Kid," Jacob Riis
- "The Flowers," Alice Walker*
- "Seventh Grade," Gary Soto
- "The Gift of the Magi," O. Henry
- "The Storyteller," H. H. Munro
- "I Used to Live Here Once," Jean Rhys
- "The Tell-Tale Heart," Edgar Allan Poe
- "Bestiary," Stephen Graham Jones

Poetry

- 'We Real Cool," Gwendolyn Brooks
- "The Slave Auction", Frances E. W. Harper*
- "1(a," e. e. cummings
- "me up at does," e. e. cummings
- "The Mending Wall," Robert Frost
- "Ten Years Old," Nikki Giovanni
- "I Ask My Mother to Sing," Li-Young Lee
- "Lemon Tree," Jennifer Clement
- "The Whipping," Robert Hayden
- "Abandoned Farmhouse," Ted Kooser
- "Miracles," Walt Whitman
- "Miss Rosie," Lucille Clifton
- "Mother to Son," Langston Hughes
- "I, Too," Langston Hughes*
- "Birdfoot's Grampa," Joseph Bruchac

Drama

- "To Be or Not to Be," soliloquy in *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare
- *The Princess Bride*, William Golding (Battle of Wits Scene)
- *Les Miserables,* Victor Hugo (Toulon Port Scene)
- *The Diary of Anne Frank* play script*
- *The Monsters on Maple Street* play script, Rod Serling

Picture Books

- *Pink and Say*, Patricia Polacco*
- *Show Way,* Jacqueline Woodson*
- *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt,* Deborah Hopkinson*
- *The Butterfly*, Patricia Polacco*
- *Faithful Elephants*, Yukio Tsuchiya*
- *Rose Blanche*, Roberto Innocenti*

Primary Source Historical Documents

- Preamble to the Constitution
- Declaration of Independence
- George Washington's Resignation as Commander in Chief
- "Gettysburg Address"
- Transcript of President Andrew Jackson's Message to Congress "On Indian Removal" (1830)
- Red Cloud, Speech at Cooper Union, New York, 1870
- Chief Joseph, Lincoln Hall Speech, Washington DC, 1879
- Letter from Jackie Robinson to President Dwight D. Eisenhower
- Letter from Jackie Robinson to President John F. Kennedy

continues

(continued)

Example Texts to Use for Demonstration of Close Reading

Social Studies/History Texts

Articles and Web-Based Information

- *Scholastic News Online*
- *PBS News Hour*
- *Teaching Kids News*
- *Dogo News*
- *Time for Kids*
- *The Learning Network, New York Times*
- *National Geographic Kids: Stories*

Books

- *1621: A New Look at Thanksgiving*, Catherine O'Neill Grace and Margaret Bruchac
- *Days of Jubilee: The End of Slavery in the United States*, Patricia and Frederick McKissack*
- *The Great Fire*, Jim Murphy*
- *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*, Kadir Nelson
- *Charles and Emma: The Darwins' Leap of Faith*, Deborah Heiligman*
- *What the World Eats*, Faith D'Aluisio*

Science, Math, and Technical Texts

Articles and Web-Based Information

- *Scholastic Math*
- *Scholastic News Online*
- *PBS News Hour*
- *Teaching Kids News*
- *National Geographic Kids: Stories*
- *Dogo News*
- *The Why Files: The Science Behind the News*
- *Articles for Kids*, American Chemical Society
- *Get the Math*
- *Student Society for Science*

Books

- *Titanic: Voices from the Disaster*, Deborah Hopkinson*
- *The Building of Manhattan:* Donald Mackay*
- *Cathedral: The Story of Its Construction*, David Macaulay*
- *Once a Wolf: How Wildlife Biologists Fought to Bring Back the Gray Wolf*, Stephen R. Swinburne
- *Mathematics Textbook* (any author)
- *Math Curse*, Jon Scieszka
- *Go Figure! A Totally Cool Book About Numbers*, Johnny Ball
- *The Number Devil*, Hans Magnus Enzensberger
- *Math Trek*, Ivars Peterson and Nancy Henderson
- *Math Trek 2*, Ivars Peterson and Nancy Henderson

Figure 1.2

Project Notes: Evidence from the Text

Name: ______________________________ Date: ________________

Purpose

Page

Key Information from the Text

Source

Continue on the back.

© 2014 by Gretchen Owocki, from *The Common Core Reading Book, 6–8*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Figure 1.3

Project Notes: Evidence from Two Texts

Name: ______________________________ Date: ________________

Purpose

Page	Key Information from the Text	Page	Key Information from the Text

Source

Continue on the back.

© 2014 by Gretchen Owocki, from *The Common Core Reading Book, 6–8*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Figure 1.4

INTENSIFYING THE INSTRUCTION
Reading Closely and Citing Textual Evidence

Use this lesson with students who will benefit from support getting started with close reading and citing related to an upcoming assignment. Each student needs a copy of the text.

1. Explain the purpose of the reading and use it to create a plan for noting the evidence. (See examples in Figure 1.1.)
2. Ask students to read the text silently. If the text will be too difficult for some students to decode, you may provide support by doing any of the following:
   - Read the text aloud or provide a recording.
   - Provide some context, which might include an explanation of the gist and structure, and quick attention to key words that may be unfamiliar.
   - Pull aside one or two students at a time for an instructional "whisper-read" (see sidebar).
3. Reread the beginning segment of the text to demonstrate specific thinking and notation processes in relation to your purpose. Note at least one piece of evidence.
4. Ask students to read silently to the next stopping point and then discuss any additional evidence worth noting. If the information students identify is sufficient, move on or send them to complete the assignment independently. If not, guide the students to reread and articulate the key pieces they need.

For English Learners

English learners need opportunities to engage in discussions of complex text. Use this lesson to break the text into segments that are discussed in relation to the reading purpose. To support discussion as well as the development of language proficiency, ask questions that require more than one-word answers; allow an extended wait time and avoid jumping in if the student does not respond right away; and provide scaffolding as students form their responses. As students respond, work with them to refer back to the text to identify and cite evidence.

Instructional Whisper-Reads for Students Needing Extra Support

Listen to the student read aloud and support the development of key reading strategies:

- **Monitor meaning.** Periodically state the gist, putting the author's words in your own words.
- **Persevere at difficulty.** Reread confusing parts to try to make sense.
- **Note unfamiliar words and phrases.** Think about or look for possible meanings of unfamiliar words and phrases that seem important.
- **Attempt unknown words.** Cover the prefix and suffix; read the base or middle; then read through the whole word. Reread the sentence or paragraph to recapture meaning.

Collaborative Engagement

After demonstrating processes for close reading and citing, arrange for collaborative engagement as a way for students to explore the processes together.

1. **Select a short text or section for students to read independently.** Or provide a text set from which students may choose, allowing for differentiation in terms of topic and/or text complexity.
2. **Provide time for students to read the text.**

TEACHER DOES THIS:	STUDENTS DO THIS:
Before students read, let them know what they will be doing collaboratively afterward. Figure 1.5 provides a set of starter prompts and activities. During reading, circulate in the classroom to monitor how the students are doing with marking or noting evidence. Meet with a small group of students who may need extra support. The lesson for Intensifying the Instruction may be used at this point. (See Figure 1.4.)	Students read independently, focusing their attention according to the established purpose (as in Figure 1.5) so that they may come to the group with notes/highlights/marks for discussion and comparison.

3. **Hold the meetings.** After students read and mark, arrange for them to come together in groups to discuss the content as assigned.
4. **Arrange a follow-up discussion.** Use this time to discuss the challenges and processes of close reading.

Figure 1.5

READING ANCHOR 1

Prompts to Support Student-Led Collaborative Engagement

Text Interpretation

Draw student attention to a central idea, process, event, or individual in the text (or they may choose the focus) and ask that they mark information that is used to "elaborate" in the focus area. After reading, students collaboratively create an illustration with labels and captions to summarize what the author taught or conveyed in relation to the focus. They may use paraphrasing and/or direct quotation.

Illustration/Graphic Interpretation

Draw student attention to an illustration/graphic from the text (or they may choose one). After reading, students discuss what the illustration/graphic means and write a bulleted list interpretation, citing details and information from the narrative.

Problem Interpretation

Draw student attention to a problem in the text (such as a problem to solve in math or a problem that has been solved in science). Students work together to box in the sentences and phrases that best capture the problem and underline the information needed/used to help solve the problem. They then create a bulleted list articulating in their own words how to read the content to understand the problem and solution process.

Evaluation of an Argument

Draw student attention to a key argument in the text (or students may locate the argument). During reading, students mark or note the evidence presented. After reading, they prepare a statement about their position on the issue and summarize the evidence (orally or in writing) that supports their position. (See Anchor 8 for additional ideas.) If students prepare oral responses, the content may be shared using audioboo.com.

Response to a Prompt or Question

Give students a prompt or question for discussion (See Figure 1.1 for generic starter examples or you may create a more specific prompt based on the specific text.) Students independently read and mark with the prompt in mind. Then, working in a group, they use a web, map, or notes to develop a response supported by evidence from the text.

We Believe

After reading, ask students to come up with a statement reflecting a specific point of view or perspective in relation to the text, along with a tight synthesis of textual evidence to support their position (for example, one long sentence or three short sentences). For example, students might contend the following: "Circus elephants are treated inhumanely" or "Cigarette butts should not be tossed outside." As an act of civic engagement, students document their statement and support with chalk on the pavement outside the school and sign with a handprint and their names. (As an alternative they may use poster board and paint.)

Independent Application

After demonstrating processes of close reading and citing, arrange for independent application as a way for students to develop and refine their techniques. The following applications bring students back to the text to reread and extract evidence.

Group Discussions Based on Questions

Group discussions based on questions offer a frame for close reading and focused follow-up discussion.

1. After an assigned text has been read, guide the class to articulate one or two questions for rereading and discussion. At least one of the questions should be text-dependent, requiring students to draw information from the text. For example: "What does the author teach about child labor legislation?" Or "What evidence does the author provide for the usefulness of math in daily life?" Text-dependent questions may be followed by text-independent questions, such as "Do you think there are some instances in which child labor is acceptable?" or "Do you find math useful in your daily life?"
2. Ask students to read closely and mark the text or take notes (see Figure 1.2) to prepare for discussion.
3. Ask students to respond to the focus question(s) within a group, using evidence from the text to support their commentary.
4. Bring the class together for a quick review of the findings, holding students accountable for citing textual evidence. Use this opportunity to assess how they are doing with this skill and plan follow-up instruction accordingly.

Group Discussions Based on Highlighting and Marking

Group discussions based on highlighting and marking offer a frame for supporting close reading and focused follow-up discussion.

1. After an assigned text has been read, guide the class to articulate a plan for either highlighting or marking in light of a specific purpose. For example, students reading about a scientific investigation might highlight *key findings and conclusions;* students reading a technical explanation might underline *the reasoning* or *key parts of a process;* students reading an argument might jot down the key *claim* and highlight the *evidence*. The Highlighting and Marking sidebars offer some additional examples.

HIGHLIGHTING

- Highlight the main idea (one color) and supporting details (another color).
- Highlight argument claims (one color) and evidence (another color).
- Highlight key points of an author's reasoning.
- Highlight special uses of craft such as repetition or figurative language. Use a pencil to jot the impact on meaning and tone.
- Highlight information for a project (multiple colors by category such as "effects of pollution on toads," "effects of pollution on salamanders," or "Mandela's political activity," "Mandela's philosophy").
- Highlight information needed to answer a specific question.
- Draw connecting lines between graphics/visuals and highlight text that helps illustrate the meaning.

MARKING

- Underline a central idea; use brackets to mark each related detail or finding.
- Underline the claims in an argument; use a bracket to mark each item of evidence.
- Underline special uses of language such as imagery or connotation; write possible meanings in margin.
- Use words, stars, checks, or other symbols to mark different categories of information for a project (*conditions, battles, leaders, northern perspective, southern perspective*).
- Underline information needed to answer a specific question.
- Draw connecting lines between graphics/visuals and text that helps illustrate the meaning. Underline the key narrative.

2. Give students time to reread and highlight or mark. As they work, circulate in the room to evaluate whether most have the gist of the assignment. If not, pull the class or a subset back to work through the reading together. You may also collect student work to evaluate whether highlighting/marking expectations are being met.

   Note: When working with digital text, look for ways to allow students to use digital highlighting and notation tools (often in the form of digital sticky notes), which generally allow for saving notes from one session to the next and also for sharing the documents electronically. This process may involve conversion to a PDF file. Teachingkidsnews.com is an example of a site that allows for digital notation.

3. After students highlight or mark, allow time for comparison of notes. Highlighted/marked text can be used for a collaborative review and discussion of content and also to help meet assignment goals requiring the citing of evidence.

Stop-and-Chats

*Stop-and-chat*s are a framework for students to read a text and stop at designated points to talk about the content. They may be used any time you want to encourage close reading and have two or more students reading the same text. Each team should have access to small sticky notes, a whiteboard, and a dry-erase marker.

1. Students place a sticky note at an agreed-upon stopping point in the text. Upon reaching this point, they talk through and put into their own words what they have read so far and then place the sticky note at a next stopping point in preparation for another chat. To encourage references to textual evidence, you and the students can brainstorm some generic prompts. For example, in relation to Anchor 1, students might ask:
   - What idea does the author want us to consider? What evidence is used?
   - What is the author claiming or arguing? What is the evidence?
   - What central idea or theme is emerging? What is the evidence?
2. Students write their chosen prompts on their whiteboards, tweaking and reshaping to match the text or developments in the text.
3. Students read and talk in relation to their established purpose. As students gain experience with stop-and-chats, provide follow-up lessons based on observations of their performance.

Daily Reading Warm-Ups

Before they read, ask students to do a quick-write based on a single prompt that relates to the text. For example, "List what you know about the legend of John Henry." "Construct a diagram to show what you know about mitosis." "Map out what you know about European Jewish children's experience with the Holocaust." "Create an illustration showing your understanding of *probability*." After a close reading with the prompt in mind, have students add to their work using a different color to show new learning or new examples. They may quote or paraphrase.

Evidence Sorts

Evidence sorts engage students in the process of considering which language in a text provides evidence and which provides other kinds of information. To prepare, select six to eight statements from a text, with half reflecting evidence and half offering other types of information. Type the statements on a page that can then be cut up for students to sort. Also include a statement representing the key idea, argument, or finding the author is presenting. Have the students organize the cut-up pieces by placing the key idea/argument/finding at the top and placing the remaining ideas into two categories: *evidence* and other *information*. See Figure 1.6 for an example.

Figure 1.6

Finding: Students' texting habits are related to their ways of thinking.	
Evidence	**Other Information**
"[T]hose who texted more than 100 times a day were more interested in being rich and famous."	"[S]tudents completed one-hour online surveys."
"To heavy texters, an ethical or moral life was not as important."	"[T]he study tested how students felt about different social, racial, and ethnic groups.
"Those who texted rated minority groups more negatively."	"[T]he survey asked about what they thought was important to them."

From the article "Texters Studied in New Research" by Nancy Miller (April 18, 2013) (http://teachingkidsnews.com/2013/04/18/3-heavy-texters-studied-in-new-research/). Used with permission of Teaching Kids News.

Written Essays Based on Close Reading

Assign students to write an essay in response to a text or text set. Students may publish in paper form, or in the form of a web page, blog, or electronic file. For formatting guidelines, you can use the CCSS Writing Anchor Standards 1–3. Also, discuss your expectations for citing sources (see sidebar). Three essay types follow:

1. **Literary.** A literary essay provides an analysis of craft or meaning. Students make a thesis or claim statement and then back their argument using evidence from the text. Sample prompt:
   - Infer a central idea or theme and cite evidence to show how it is conveyed.

CITING SOURCES

Middle school students should learn a standard format for giving appropriate credit to the authors they are citing. Working with one set of formatting guidelines, such as from the Modern Language Association (MLA) or the American Psychological Association (APA), will provide the foundational skills needed to move to other formats as appropriate to the discipline and type of writing. Formats vary across schools and disciplines, so students ultimately need to learn flexibility.

1. Provide students with access to a simple guide or tip sheet, preferably one that is used across classrooms in your school. For an MLA and an APA example, see:

   http://www.andyspinks.com/mla/pdf/MLAguide.pdf
   http://www.andyspinks.com/researchhelp/APA/APAGuide.pdf

2. Demonstrate a process for using the guidelines as you gather ideas from sources, quote and paraphrase the sources, and create a reference page.

3. As students gain experience with the basics of citing sources, provide access to material they can use to solve citation issues on their own. For example, Purdue's online writing lab features a complete set of guidelines for APA and MLA citing:

   https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/ and
   https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/.

   As another option, the Citation Machine prompts students to select a format and fill in key information on a template, and then produces the appropriately formatted reference:

   www.citationmachine.net/index2.php

2. **Informative.** An informative essay provides a portrayal or an account of an event, individual, or idea—and often involves citing information from one or more texts. The topic is developed with details, definitions, facts, figures, quotations, and examples. Informative essays may involve comparing and contrasting information from two texts. Sample prompt:
    - Describe the findings from the research on ____________. Cite the evidence provided.
3. **Argumentative.** An argumentative essay includes a claim statement with evidentiary support (research, statistics, data, information). Students work toward logically sequenced reasoning and attention to opposing perspectives. Sample prompt:
    - Make a claim statement in relation to your own beliefs on the argument presented. Cite textual evidence to support your thinking.

Written essays are an important assessment tool for determining how your students are doing with close reading and citing textual evidence and may be used as a guide for planning follow-up instruction.

Book Reviews

Student-created *book reviews* offer a format for students to publish analyses of books they are reading across the content areas. For online publishing, weebly.com and padlet.com are two examples of free, student-friendly sites that can be set for private access only. Each site contains numerous formatting options, including opportunities for individually created pages, sticky-note postings, photos, sound, video, and links. Audioboo.com is a platform that can be used for public sharing in audible formats—for example, podcasts. See Figure 1.7 for an example assignment.

Figure 1.7

Book Review Assignment
You may use any combination of writing, video, still image, and sound. • Name an excellent book. • Describe the gist. • Make a claim about the book and cite textual evidence to back your point. • Tell who might enjoy this text. • Set your review or part of it to music if the technology is available.

Blogs

Blogs are a forum for students to publically post and invite commentary on particular issues of interest. They can be set up for classroom or school access only. (See edublogs.org for an example of an easy-to-use service designed for schools.) Blog topics will depend on your content area and current curricular focus but should be designed to spark conversation. For example, students in English or history might comment on the traits of a controversial person and cite textual evidence as they describe why they find the person admirable, charismatic, foolish, or sinister. Students in science might present an argument with evidence related to a current "hot topic" they are reading about, such as climate change, stem cell ethics, or Neanderthal extinction. Students in mathematics might discuss the usefulness of a concept such as pi, or comment on difficulties they are having with certain types of problems. (Other students can jump in and provide support.) Allow students structured opportunities to read and respond to others' blogs. As you set up the requirements, include expectations for citing textual evidence.

Talks

Student *talks* (or minipresentations) are a good way to encourage citing textual evidence in formats other than writing. Topics can be similar to those used for essays and blogs (see previous). Encourage students to use at least one visual for short talks of one to two minutes and multiple forms of media for lengthier talks of three to five minutes. Require that students cite evidence from one or more texts as part of the project parameters.

Note Journals

Note journals are notebooks or electronic files in which students record information as they read closely.

1. To get started, provide each student with a notebook or readily accessible electronic file. Figure 1.9 offers a possible format.
2. Assign students to write in the journal during or at the end of reading sessions or as part of reading homework. You may either assign a text-dependent response ("Record the evidence the author provides for global warming" or "List the phases involved with building the cathedral") or create a list of generic response choices appropriate for independent reading in your content area, as in Figure 1.8. Using Figure 8.1 (see pp. 182–183), students can be assigned to complete any number of entries per text or section they read. Demonstrate any unfamiliar procedures before assigning students to use a list.
3. Provide regular opportunities for students to share their journals with you or other students.

Figure 1.8

Note Journal	
Write one sentence indicating a message or lesson you think the author wanted you to consider. Use a bulleted list to describe the evidence the author provides.	Write one sentence indicating the author's perspective or point of view on an issue and list the evidence the author provides.
Record three important words or phrases from your reading today. Describe the context in which each was used and tell how each impacts meaning.	Create a sketch with detailed captions to explain something about an individual, event, or concept from the text. The captions may include direct quotations or paraphrased information.
Write an opinion about the text. Using a bulleted list, cite textual evidence to support your thinking.	Write about something that is challenging you in the text, citing the perplexing details from that section.
Make a timeline or list featuring 4–8 key events or steps in a process. Describe the steps in your own words.	Write about a connection between this and another text. Cite details from each text.

Figure 1.9

Notes

Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________

Assignment

Response

Source Information

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