**More Bang for Your Buck!**  
How to Maximize Close Reading Instruction  
November 9, 2015  
New York State Reading Association  
Saratoga Springs, NY  
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### Note Catcher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ahem...</th>
<th>Awesome...</th>
<th>Aha!</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirms what I already knew &amp; affirms what I already do...</td>
<td>I'm surprised to learn...</td>
<td>I plan to do this in my classroom right away!</td>
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Select handout materials attached originally appear in *Close Reading for the Whole Class* by Sandra K. Athans & Denise Ashe Devine, Scholastic.
Close Reading Routine

Close Reading is a method of reading slowly, carefully, and deeply so we can understand the full meaning of a text as the author intended.

During close reading instruction, we read and explore shorter texts that are rich, challenging, and engaging — all are well-written and deserve our thoughtful and attentive reading.

As we read closely, we uncover the meaning of new vocabulary words, break apart complex text structures, and study an author’s use of technique. Rereading a passage several times, building evidence for our thinking, and sharing our ideas in class discussions are highlights of our close-reading routine.

Text Dependent Questions...

- Rely on the Text; ask a question that can only be answered by referring explicitly back to the text being read (even if evidence is inferential).
- Linger; cause readers to consider specific phrases, sentences, or sections to ensure careful comprehension.
- Address Standards; align with the breadth & scope of specific knowledge/skills considered critical.
- Consider the Author; acknowledge that conscious decisions are made about the who, what, when, where, why and how of a text.
- Engage Students; question sets delve systematically into a text and guide students as they extract meaning. They should therefore be inviting.
- Withstand On-Going Review; question sets must be cohesive, current, & meet goals.

Performance Tasks

These are prompted activities that ask students to probe deeper than TDQs or to synthesize ideas and knowledge they construct from TDQs.

- May be completed independently or with teacher support.
- May be completed outside of instructional time (such as morning work or during small group activities).
- Used together with TDQs and enable students to share and demonstrate knowledge.
- Often make efficient, standards-based use of technology.
- Often address writing, speaking & listening, and language standards. May be content-area based.
- May be used to assess student progress.
Close Reading A Dollar Bill

Construct one question about a Dollar Bill:

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<th>I See...</th>
<th>I Notice...</th>
<th>I Wonder...</th>
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Construct a new question:

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Our Flexible Instructional Model

Whole-class, grade-level close reading instruction
(analytical, deep reading and complex texts)

Small-Group Instruction
Group 1

Small-Group Instruction
Group 2

Small-Group Instruction
Group 3

Differentiated Instruction provided in basic reading skills as an intervention (using leveled materials) or an adaptation (assisting with grade-level materials)

Whole-class, grade-level close reading instruction
(analytical, deep reading and complex texts)
The 5S Teacher Read

A process to help guide your text-selection & review process

**Step 1: Skim and Scan**

Take a quick visual inventory of the text. Look for unusual features such as pictures, fonts, quirky spacing, sidebars, and other distinctive visuals that present good opportunity to ignite 'Reader Alert'. Also quickly glean titles, subtitles, call-outs, and other content features that present genre clues.

**Step 2: Scour**

Read the passage and break it down into sections using a very flexible guide. Look for and calculate time to cover dense areas or tricky literary techniques (such as idioms, allusion, or allegory), or other deserving reasons to slow down. Also flag “Areas of Struggle” (AOS) including vocabulary, dense text, figurative language, complex ideas, unusual features, quirky styles, blended genres, and others.

**Step 3: Savor**

Take a close look at the meaning, including the theme or critical ideas. Also gauge the level of evidence used to support these deeper-level concepts. Finally, review the evidence in terms of author intentions. This is a demanding but valuable process. If the passage doesn’t ‘hold-up’ under scrutiny, you may wish to exclude it from your close-reading activities.

**Step 4: Start Over**

After determining the passage holds-up, read it again to ‘square’ your ideas over the course of the entire text. Can you validate your ideas about the passage from the start to the finish? This step is a check on the cohesiveness of your ideas.

**Step 5: Survey Results**

Here, you’ll want to continuously monitor your selection process based on practical classroom experience. As you get to know how students work with the passage, you may want to make adjustments in your lesson plans or in the manner in which you provide close-reading instruction in certain areas of the passage. This on-going process of follow through is critical.

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These are the markings we made on our own first pass of "The Champion of Quiet."
A Master Teacher's 5S Process for "The Champion of Quiet"

**STEP 1: Skim and Scan**
My quick visual inventory reveals these features:
- illustrations of children (some unhappy)
- three-column text
- callouts
- indented text, dialogue—looks student friendly
- ironic title?

There is enough here to suggest genre: fiction or realistic fiction. Title and illustration may hint at conflict.

**STEP 2: Scour**
Story is about 750 words.
Areas of Struggle (AOS):

**Vocabulary:**
- champion (unfamiliar)
- tardy (new)
- sandwiched (used as verb)

**Figurative Language:**
- Personification: “basketball skated”
- Metaphor: “noisy chorus”
- Idioms: “Maggie felt blue,” “caught the eye of”

**Punctuation:**
- use of repeated colon at beginning
- use of long dash throughout

**Features:**
- callouts
- italics for character’s thoughts

**Sentence Structure (tricky):**
- introductory and parenthetic clauses in beginning and middle of sentences

**Other:**
- Inferences: “And then there was Maggie’s team.”
- Areas of struggle are moderate. I’ll break into two sections for close reading.

**STEP 3: Savor**
I’ll slowly review story to identify and examine themes and critical ideas, then decide which ideas are best emphasized by text evidence.

Maggie, the main character, accepts her inability to play basketball but becomes a good friend to others. She dares to change the gloomy routine of her Tuesdays. She steps outside of her comfort zone and unites a team of similar basketball underachievers in friendship. In the end, Maggie receives a nickname from her new friends.

Acceptance of self and others is a strong theme; ample evidence supports this theme.

Theme is a common one, but story contains unique and unexpected events.

Examples: Maggie’s team is terrible and still loses, but prize is new friendships. Maggie’s skill in empathizing with others and trying to change the situation is also unique. These twists will pose good challenges for students.

**STEP 4: Start Over**
I’ll review the story to make sure my ideas about the themes are cohesive throughout the story. I’ll use story elements to loosely guide me.

**Problem:** Maggie’s Tuesdays are dreadful, which is compounded by other troubles—she’s a new student, she’s shy, and she doesn’t have any friends.

**Solution:** Solution occurs when Maggie determines, “it was time for the Champion of Quiet to use her voice.” The pivotal event occurs when Maggie volunteers to be team captain.

**STEP 5: Survey the Results**
Step 5 will take place following the delivery of my lesson, but I must plan how to observe it so I can make adjustments as needed.

- Take notes to determine how well students approach the story during close reading. I’ll note their success with jump-start clues (including genre and detection of other features that help them launch their own pre-reading efforts).
- Determine how students progress through the AOSs identified earlier. I’ll note areas I might want to omit and/or others I might add to my list for the following year.
- Gauge my pacing.
- Monitor students’ analysis of theme(s) and determine their success with identifying and using evidence.
Prioritizing the Essentials in “The Champion of Quiet”

These essentials go with the marked copy of “The Champion of Quiet” on page 43. Items considered a priority are starred. The rest of the items are reserved for discussion, taught outside of close reading, or omitted from instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starred</th>
<th>Item</th>
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<td>There must be a question asking why Maggie hates Tuesdays. This launches the problem in the story and is critical in analyzing story structure. Also, it's not hard to uncover. It's a good way to start small.</td>
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<td>I love that “sandwiched” is used as a verb. It doesn't warrant a question, but I think it's deserving of a very brief chat about using context clues when we encounter atypical uses of familiar words.</td>
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<td>The italics signal that Maggie is thinking. Students need to recognize this because it helps uncover the theme of the story. But it's not a pattern they'll recognize on Day 1—the evidence is too weak. I'll save it for a question on Day 2 when more examples appear.</td>
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<td>“Champion” is a rich word that can be used as both a noun and a verb. It tells us that Maggie is a new student and uneasy. She tries to remember classmates by giving out nicknames. At the end of the story, she gets a “real” nickname. This is a critical path of analysis. I think I'll create a question that lingers a bit on the topic of nicknames and their role and importance.</td>
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<td>Maggie felt blue is an idiom. My students have trouble with idioms. A question here will be a good check. Also, grasping that Maggie feels blue adds depth to the problem in the story. Maggie doesn't just “hate” Tuesdays, they make her feel sad because she's picked last. This will resonate with students. There is also an opportunity to extend our understanding of author intention here. We want our students to recognize that our ability to empathize with a character is often what draws us into a story.</td>
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<td>Maggie's decision to use her voice is a critical point in the story. Students need to recognize the importance of this moment as we move through our Day 1 reading. I think it is deserving of a task.</td>
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<td>I'm going to pass on “Tardy” as a vocabulary word. It doesn't contribute to the central meaning, and it can't be determined through context clues.</td>
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<td>Jasmine is also “blue.” I'm going to combine these ideas into a single question.</td>
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Text-dependent questions crafted after prioritizing the essentials and determining a path of analysis.

**Question 1:** What is Maggie's problem with Tuesdays? Use evidence from the passage to support your answer.

**Question 2:** What does the author convey in these sentences: “Maggie felt blue and... Jasmine seemed a little blue, too?” Support your response using evidence from the text.

**Question 3:** Why does Maggie nickname everyone “Champion of” something? Is she being mean? Support your ideas using text-based evidence.