



Course Introduction

Welcome! This course is all about becoming a better reader. This doesn't mean a faster reader, necessarily, but a more skillful reader. We will specifically focus on the kind of reading you encounter in academic settings, which is sometimes called close reading or analytical reading. You can tell from those phrases that it is a type of reading that is different than skimming a tweet or checking a sports score. Close reading is the type of reading that is meant to make you think deeply and consider carefully. It is the type of reading that develops your intellect and touches your emotions. It is the type of reading that impacts you in very significant ways. When you become more skilled at close reading, your enjoyment of reading will grow.

Course Description

This course focuses on improving reading comprehension and creating passion for reading and thinking. Students will slow down the reading process to ensure fuller comprehension of both implicit and explicit meaning and the correlating underlying assumptions. Students read both nonfiction and fiction, from short essays to full novels. Assignments include summarizing, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating. Students will discuss language, philosophy and ideologies as they relate to specific books.

This is a yearlong course consisting of 10 units. Upon successful completion students will receive 1 credit towards high school graduation.

Purpose of the Course

This course is designed to help students:

- Develop reading skills that enable them to decipher implicit and explicit messages from text
- Build a strong reading vocabulary
- Learn to identify specific ideological viewpoints presented in the text
- Establish a positive attitude about reading

Course Overview

Semester 1

- What Kind of Reader Are You?
- Rethinking Reading
- Pre-Reading Strategies
- Close Reading Skills
- The Touchstone Anthology
- Of Mice and Men

Semester 2

- Wonder
- The Outsiders
- Treasure Island
- Student Choice

Required Course Materials

Please access the list of course materials from the OC Online book ordering system and order your materials as soon as possible. Oftentimes, course materials are on back order and you may experience a delay in receiving them, causing students to fall behind in their online coursework. When ordering used or rented materials, be careful that online access codes are also current.

Methods of Instruction

Because this course is dedicated to developing reading skills, students repeat a specific process meant to develop the habits of intentional reading. This process include annotating texts, creating student-chosen vocabulary lists, providing general summaries, answering reading comprehension questions that focus on both explicit and implicit information, analyzing text for theme, synthesizing texts, and evaluating main ideas through both essays and discussion boards.

Methods of Evaluation

The bulk of evaluation is based upon the successful completion of the assignments associated with each text (i.e., pre-reading work, journal response, annotations, summary, vocabulary, reading comprehension questions, discussion). Through these assignments, students should demonstrate a growing facility with the concepts through more precise language analysis, richer vocabulary choices, more accurate understanding of theme, clearer evaluation of the underlying assumptions of a text, and more vibrant commitment to the value and enjoyment of close reading.

In addition to assignments, students will demonstrate their growth through evaluative essays and live discussions.

The final exam requires students to cold read a text and successfully complete the pre-reading and close-reading steps practiced over the course of the semester.

Grading Policy

Students will demonstrate mastery through the following formative and summative assessments:

- 40% Assignments
- 10% Participation (Discussion Posts, Synchronous Sessions)
- 10% Quizzes
- 25% Final Exam
- 15% Unit Tests

Grading Rubrics

The assignment expectations are clearly delineated in the course and are graded without a rubric. All essays are graded using a rubric that the students will access within the course. This rubric will help students see the level of writing and analysis the teacher is expecting.