

***Close Reading of Informational Texts***  
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**Explanation of Close Reading of Informational Texts for Central Ideas**

*In Techniques for Close Reading*, Brummett defines close reading as “the mindful, disciplined reading of an object (i.e., text) with a view to deeper understanding of its meaning” (2010, p. 3). When a student engages in “close reading,” he or she analyzes the text at the word or phrase level and the sentence and paragraph levels. By considering the weight of meaning of particular phrases or sentences in a section of text, the student can begin to see how important details fit together to support the author’s central idea in a section of the text or the whole text (in complex texts, there will be more than one central idea). Knowing how to go about engaging in this type of reading and making sure the reader fully attends to the act of reading are both essential.

When a student is finished reading closely, he can identify the author’s central ideas and describe why any particular idea is central. He or she can also find supporting details in the text and explain how these serve as evidence substantiating the central ideas. This creates a basis for critiquing the author’s central ideas, thereby moving into deeper thinking about the text as a whole. The development of these skills is essential not only to students’ ultimate academic success but also to their long-term ability to comprehend new information and use it for effective decision making as adults.

*From Close Reading of Informational Text: Assessment-Driven Instruction in Grades 3-8* (Cummins, 2013, p. 8)

**Definition of Synthesis in Close Reading**

The reader identifies a central idea (theme) that emerges while reading the text and considers how the important details in that text fit together to convey that central idea. The reader reflects on how the knowledge conveyed in the central idea resonates with his or her prior knowledge and articulates how his or her thinking evolved while reading.

(Cummins, p. 10)

Initial Anchor Chart for Close Reading can be viewed at -

<http://sundaycummins.wordpress.com/2013/07/11/close-reading-anchor-chart-but-remember/>

**Suggestions for Teaching Close Reading**

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**Some Theme/Main Idea/Central Idea Vocabulary for Informational Texts**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to overcome obstacles</li> <li>• Capacity</li> <li>• Change, Process, Metamorphosis, Innovation, Transformation</li> <li>• Circle of life</li> <li>• Collective wisdom</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Compassion, Benevolence, Empathy</li> <li>• Cooperation</li> <li>• Courage, Endurance, Determination, Enterprise</li> <li>• Curiosity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dangers of ignorance</li> <li>• Destruction</li> <li>• Displacement</li> <li>• Discovery</li> <li>• Diversity, Complexity</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Empowerment</li> <li>• Essentiality</li> <li>• Fear, Trepidation, Reverence</li> <li>• Friendship, Alliance, Harmony, Solidarity</li> <li>• Global citizenship</li> <li>• Hope</li> <li>• Humanitarianism</li> <li>• Injustice, Tyranny</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instigation, Agitation, Disturbance, Perturbation, Provocation</li> <li>• Invincibility</li> <li>• Knowledge versus ignorance</li> <li>• Nonviolent, Peaceful, Placid, Amicable</li> <li>• Oppression</li> <li>• Perseverance, Tenacity</li> <li>• Power</li> <li>• Progress, Breakthrough, Momentum</li> <li>• Rebirth, Renewal, Restoration</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Survival</li> <li>• Vulnerability</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complexity and diversity of living organisms</li> <li>• Essential role of ___X___ in the system of ___X___</li> <li>• Similarities/differences between concept A and concept B (and why it is important to understand how they contrast)</li> <li>• Making the unfamiliar (or the feared) more familiar (and less feared)</li> <li>• Information or details about X presented in such a way as to transform our thinking</li> </ul>		

**Link to IRA Paper** – “Close Reading and Far-Reaching Classroom Discussion: A Vital Connection” by Snow & O’Connor (2013)

<http://www.reading.org/Libraries/lrp/ira-lrp-policy-brief--close-reading--13sept2013.pdf>