


Common Core Instruction for ELA & Literacy Text-Dependent Questions, K-5 Teachers

 Area V Regional Superintendents of Schools
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Module 1:
**Common Core Instruction
for ELA & Literacy**

Text-Dependent Questions
K-5 Teachers

Expected Outcomes

- ▶ Become familiar with the emphasis on reading instruction that stays closely connected to text.
- ▶ Understand the importance of *argument* and *evidence* in the Common Core State Standards.
- ▶ Identify some examples and non-examples of classroom practices that encourage students to return to the text for text-based answers and evidence.

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Emphasis on citing textual evidence

Reading Anchor Standard 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.

Writing Anchor Standard 9

- ▶ Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

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Emphasis on argument & evidence

- ▶ **Writing Anchor Standard 1**
 - Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- ▶ **Speaking & Listening Anchor Standard 3**
 - Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, use of evidence and rhetoric.
- ▶ **Speaking & Listening Anchor Standard 5**
 - Present information, findings, and supporting evidence....

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Emphasizing text-based answers

- ▶ Model close reading.
- ▶ Create interesting sequences that draw students into the texts.
- ▶ Pre-teach vocabulary and/or background and scaffold the texts to make them accessible to students without pre-teaching the *content* of the texts.
- ▶ "Step back" and allow the readers space and time to experience the texts unmediated.
- ▶ Students have rich and rigorous conversations which are dependent on students reading a central text.
- ▶ Set up questions so each student has an opportunity to draw their own conclusions and back them up with evidence from the text.

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Modeling close reading

From *Bats: Creatures of the Night* by Joyce Milton (1993)

No one has lived on this farm for years.
The barn looks empty.
But it isn't!
Strange creatures are sleeping in the loft.
As the sun goes down, they take to the air.

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Nurturing close reading

Examples

- ▶ Scaffolding supports the text.
- ▶ Pre-reading activities allow the text to unfold itself to the reader, preserving the reading experience.
- ▶ Questions lead students deeper into the text and cause them to pay closer attention to it.
- ▶ The classroom experiences stay deeply connected to the text.

Non-examples

- ▶ Scaffolding supplants the text.
- ▶ Pre-reading activities pre-empt or deflate the reading experience
- ▶ “Connection” questions and discussions lead away from the text.
- ▶ Activities are not text-based.

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Differentiate between

- ▶ Classroom activities that support content standards (e.g., language, literature, social studies, science) aimed at building students’ knowledge base.
- ▶ Classroom activities that support reading standards aimed at enabling students to enlarge their knowledge base through unassisted reading.

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Nelson, Kadir. *We are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball* (2008) from “4th Inning: Racket Ball: Negro League Owners”

Most of the owners didn’t make much money from their teams. Baseball was just a hobby for them, a way to make their illegal money look good. To save money, each team would only carry fifteen or sixteen players. The major league teams each carried about twenty-five. Average salary for each player started at roughly \$125 per month back in ’34, and went up to \$500-\$800 during the forties, though there were some who made much more than that, like Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson. The average major league player’s salary back then was \$7,000 per month. We also got around fifty cents to a dollar per day for food allowance. Back then you could get a decent meal for about twenty-five cents to seventy-five cents.

Some of the owners didn’t treat their players very well. Didn’t pay them enough or on time. That’s why we would jump from team to team. Other owners would offer us more money, and we would leave our teams and go play for them. We were some of the first unrestricted free agents.

There were, however, a few owners who did know how to treat their ballplayers. Cum Posey was one of them. He always took care of his ballplayers, put them in the best hotels, and paid them well and on time. Buck Leonard said Posey never missed a payday in the seventeen years he played for the Grays.

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Non-examples

- ▶ Scaffolding that supplants the text, essentially replacing the need to read it.
 - Read about how the owners of the teams in the Negro Baseball League didn't treat the players very well or give them equal pay.
- ▶ Pre-reading activities that pre-empt or deflate the reading experience.
 - Though paid less than white players, black players were able to become some of the first free agents.
- ▶ Questions that lead the reader away from the text to other trains of connections, never to return.
 - What other examples of unequal treatment for African Americans have you heard or read about?
- ▶ "Reading" activities that are not text based.
 - Write a story about a girl or boy who learns to succeed in a sport.

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Examples of pre-reading activities that support the text, allowing it to unfold to the reader

- Pre-teach selected academic vocabulary (e.g., *racket*, *salary*, *unrestricted*, *free agent*); clarify other terms (e.g., *forties*, '34); remind students to use context (e.g., *decent*)
- Clarify the segregation situation in the United States in the thirties and forties, setting the stage for students to "discover" the author's point and point of view.
- Offer advance organizers and other scaffolding that enable the students to experience the complexity of the text (rather than avoid it).

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Example of scaffolding, advance organizer

Paragraph 1	Negro Leagues	Major Leagues
<i>owners</i>		
<i>players</i>		
Main idea of paragraph 1		

[same boxes for paragraphs 2 & 3]

Main idea of the piece as a whole?

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Text-dependent Reading Anchor Standards

For instance, address these Reading Anchor Standards

- ▶ 2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development....
- ▶ 3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of the text.
- ▶ 5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text ... relate to each other and the whole.
- ▶ 8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning....

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Questions encourage a closer read

- ▶ What are the main points in each paragraph, and what evidence did you draw upon in the text to determine these main points?
- ▶ What is the main overall idea of the passage, and what does each paragraph contribute?
- ▶ What is the narrator's attitude toward the subject? What details made you think this?

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Reading Anchor Standard 7 Showing the film



- ▶ Students read the text first, then view film or listen to audio.
- ▶ Then, come back to the text.
 - 4.RL.7 Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.

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Activity: Planning for close reading

- ▶ Read one of the other passages on the handout. With a partner or two, identify a few classroom practices that would nurture close reading and elicit text-dependent questions. Refer to the lists on Slide 7.
- ▶ Identify 2 – 3 non-examples, as well.



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How did we do?

- ▶ *What is meant by the shift toward greater emphasis on text-based answers?*
- ▶ *What are a couple of classroom practices that inadvertently deflect students from close reading?*
- ▶ *What are a couple of classroom practices that nurture close reading and a focus on text-dependent questions?*

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Suggested follow-up activities

- ▶ In grade level teams, develop lesson(s) focused on a text selection that
 - Incorporates an interesting sequence as a “hook” that derives from the text itself (rather than extraneous experiences, etc.)
 - Presents pre-reading activities and scaffolding that make the text more accessible to students who might find it very challenging – and still preserve the reading experience for them.
 - Uses journal or discussion prompts that cause students to return to the text for a close reading.
 - Poses questions that prompt students to respond with evidence-based answers.

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