

Materials Checklist:

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Close Reading Workshop – **Script**

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***Introduce yourself, the APAC (location, hours, services), and the workshop:***

This is the Close Reading Workshop. Its aim is to help you understand the importance of reading your texts closely and equipping you with the skills necessary to “sink your teeth into” a reading and really take it apart; this means being able to analyze, synthesize, connect, and understand the text. During the workshop we guide you through several examples as well as let you work on your own, after which we will discuss the activity. We will start with a short reading for you to take apart and then we will discuss strategies and problem areas for close reading before moving on to more difficult readings to take apart.

***The importance of close reading:***

Close reading is really important for several reasons. First of all, it is instrumental to understanding a text. In turn, understanding that text will benefit you when you have to write about it or otherwise synthesize it in class discussion. It can also expand your vocabulary and develop your critical thinking skills.

*(<5 Minutes)*

***Activity #1: Establishing Strategies***

*Handout 1*

Look at the first handout labeled “close reading” at the top.

Tell the students they will be looking at the passage in order to establish what strategies they use already and what strategies they don’t know. Have them read the passage from Ralph Ellison’s *The Invisible Man* for a few minutes.

Let them know that they should keep in mind the strategies they are using while reading. Examples: circling unknown words, underlining important passages, connecting ideas and concepts.

*(10 Minutes)*

After a few minutes, ask them to call out their strategies. Fill in as needed: Annotate, Ask Questions, Context, Take your Time. Go over the reverse side of the paper.

*(10 Minutes)*

***Activity #2: Using Strategies***

On the second handout we have a number of excerpts from Michel Foucault’s chapter “Panopticism” from his book *Discipline and Punish*. This is more difficult than the last example, but this time you’re equipped with strategies with which you may use.

Go through the first two paragraphs, explain that they should be filling out A-E for the next paragraphs then let them read and fill out the last 3.

*(5 Minutes)*

*After 10-15 minutes, ask students what strategies they used: if they annotated the text, asked any questions, did they fill out A-E? What were their answers?*

*(10-15 Minutes)*



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“Bentham’s Panopticon is the architectural figure of this composition. We know the principle on which it was based: at the periphery, an annular building; at the centre, a tower; this tower is pierced with wide windows that open onto the inner side of the ring; the peripheric building is divided into cells, each of which extends the whole width of the building; they have two windows, one on the inside, corresponding to the windows of the tower; the other, on the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other. All that is needed, then is to place a supervisor in the central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker or a schoolboy” (Foucault 200).

A. *List the main points/write a topic sentence for this paragraph*

*Someone named Bentham designed a building called the Panopticon. It is a prison that allows everyone inside to be constantly watched.*

B. *List of unknown words/concepts to look up*

*Panopticon, Periphery, Annular*

C. *How do the ideas of the paragraph connect to broader/modern issues*

*Being watched 24/7, ethics violations, Patriot Act, NSA, etc.*

D. *Evaluate evidence/description: Does the paragraph convince you of a position or are you able to visualize the object/subject?*

*I can really visualize the building. (draw a picture).*

E. *Further questions*

*If this is supposed to be a prison why does it include patient, worker, and schoolboy?*

“This enclosed, segmented space, observed at every point, at which the individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all events are recorded, in which an uninterrupted work of writing links the center in periphery, in which power is exercised without division, according to a continuous hierarchical figure, in which each individual is constantly located, examined and distributed among the living beings, the sick and the dead – all this constitutes a compact model of the disciplinary mechanism” (Foucault 197).

A. *Why the space works as a tool of discipline because of constant surveillance*

B. *Periphery, hierarchical*

C. *Government surveillance, data mining, social media, constantly being watched*

D. *I can imagine the lack of privacy and how that might be used as a punishment*

E. *How does privacy affect a dead person? Why are there dead people among the rest?*

