

CHAPTER 2

Close Reading, Textual Evidence, and Source Analysis

By **Meredith Liben**

Meredith Liben is a longtime teacher and currently a senior fellow at Student Achievement Partners (SAP). She led literacy efforts at SAP until 2018 and coordinated the Race to the Text Project, a research project designed to provide educators with the best information and tools around questions of defining the text complexity and range of reading called for by the Common Core State Standards. That work resulted in "Supplemental Information for Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy: New Research on Text Complexity" (www.corestandards.org/assets/E0813_Appendix_A_New_Research_on_Text_Complexity.pdf).

Introduction

With the advent of college and career readiness standards, a movement that started with the release of the Common Core State Standards in 2010, the complexity of the texts K–12 students are routinely asked to read in school has increased substantially (Chall, Conard, and Harris 1977; Stenner, Sanford-Moore, and Williamson 2012; Nelson et al. 2012). This emphasis on complexity represents a radical departure from what came before, when the normal practice of giving readers texts that they could readily read (Mesmer 2008; Gunning 2003) meant that only some students—those already reading at or above grade level—were being regularly exposed to texts of a complexity that would adequately prepare

them for eventually meeting the demands of postsecondary education and career preparation, subsequent occupations, and civic life. This resulted in success for the students already on pace to attain college- and career-ready reading proficiency levels but left many other students reading below grade level without the help they needed to join their ranks.

The driving question for K–12 educators about increased text complexity is what to do to provide access to it for all their students, not just the students performing well enough to be in traditional college preparatory tracks in high school. Chapter 1 focuses on text complexity as a general concept. Here we focus more narrowly on the issue of access to complex text for secondary students, for whom postsecondary options and requirements are of immediate concern.

This chapter centers on two means of access: employing close reading techniques and making regular use of textual evidence. (How to elicit textual evidence from students by posing text-focused questions will also be explored.) As we'll see, these capacities are interwoven with successful reading comprehension. Becoming proficient with close reading and learning to glean and marshal evidence from text can then be connected to specific applications, such as forms of source-based analytical writing, including rhetorical analysis.

Using close reading techniques and identifying and discussing textual evidence are the chosen foci for this chapter because they're highly efficient means of attaining competencies in literacy closely linked to readiness for and success in college, workforce training, and civic engagement in a democratic republic. In particular, the ability to identify and deploy textual evidence when reading and writing analytically is consistently highly ranked in polls of employers and college faculty (Hart Research Associates 2018; ACT 2016, 2018; College Board 2019; ICAS 2002). Facility with textual evidence is also considered essential to attaining the academic literacies that enable students from a variety of minority cultural and linguistic backgrounds to integrate successfully into postsecondary academic and technical settings (Preto-Bay 2004; Papashane and Hlalele 2014).

Close Reading

For our purposes here, *close reading* is defined as sustained, purposeful intellectual work that centers on carefully reading a brief rich, complex text (or excerpts from a longer work) in order to understand what the text says and how it says it. Since the emergence of college and career readiness standards, many people have developed resources and systems designed to support teachers in integrating close reading into their classrooms (e.g., Beers and Probst 2012; Fisher et al. 2014; Shanahan, n.d.; Lapp et al. 2015). Though there are many different

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approaches to engaging students in close reading, those who have studied the matter generally agree on the following features:

- Reading the text selection multiple times, with each reading having a different focus (e.g., reading for the gist, for critical vocabulary or word choice, to deepen understanding of the author’s purpose, to examine text structure)

The initial reading is always for gist; during this reading, the text is oftentimes read aloud by the teacher (or another skilled reader) in order to provide students of differing reading achievement levels with equal access to the text’s content.

- Asking questions about the text as a whole, its structure (e.g., paragraphs), its sentences, and its individual words and phrases in a way that requires the use of textual evidence, with the questions coming from the teacher, the students, or both
- Possibly engaging in annotating or summarizing of the text as a way to turn over responsibility for understanding to the student
- Producing some form of individual written response to the text

In sum, close reading involves multiple “passes” through a text as well as questions that require evidence to answer. (Though one can also “closely read” various nonprint media—say, a photograph, painting, or piece of music—this chapter will confine itself to close reading of the written word.)

What does close reading look like in practice? Though teacher-facilitated close reading can take many forms, below is a common sequence of classroom activities that might take place over a few days.

Let’s imagine that a tenth-grade English class is studying the woman suffrage movement and that the teacher wants her students to closely read the Declaration of Sentiments (1848) from the Seneca Falls Convention, a central text of the movement.¹ The teacher might initially read the text aloud to the students as they follow along. The oral reading would provide universal access to the text and give students a chance to read for the gist. Some words and phrases in the text are particularly important to understanding (e.g., *impel* in line 6 and *secure* in line 11), so next the teacher might have students read the text themselves with a focus on that key vocabulary. The language and structure of the Seneca Falls declaration closely parallel those of the Declaration of Independence (which these students had already read as part of their high school history course work), and the teacher would certainly want the students to understand this and think about why Elizabeth Cady Stanton and her coauthors would have co-opted the structure and cadence of that earlier document. The teacher might, therefore,

¹ The full text is appended to this chapter for reference.

next ask the students to examine the opening lines of the Declaration of Sentiments and, working in pairs, compare them to those of the Declaration of Independence (1776).²

<p>1 When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for 2 one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of 3 the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto 4 occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God 5 entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires 6 that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a 7 course.</p>	<p>When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.</p>
<p>8 We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are 9 created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain 10 inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit 11 of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, 12 deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.</p>	<p>We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. —That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.</p>

As part of the paired activity, the teacher might ask students to identify points at which the wording of the two documents diverges (e.g., “all men and women are created equal” versus “all men are created equal”) and to infer both why the authors of the Declaration of Sentiments chose to hew so closely to the Declaration of Independence in most respects and why they elected to deviate selectively from the earlier text.

² In this chapter's excerpts from the Declaration of Sentiments, boldface emphasis has been added in select places to help readers locate words and phrases called out in the body of the chapter.

A subsequent approach might be to attend closely to the following section of the Declaration of Sentiments:

30 The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and
 31 usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct
 32 object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove
 33 this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

34 He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the
 35 **elective franchise**.

36 He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which
 37 she had no voice.

38 He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most
 39 ignorant and **degraded** men—both natives and foreigners.

40 Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the **elective**
 41 **franchise**, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of
 42 legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

The teacher might have the students work together to paraphrase this excerpt since it lays out the authors' grievances directly. As before, the teacher would've scanned this excerpt for vocabulary that might baffle some students (e.g., *elective franchise*, used in lines 35 and 40–41, and *degraded*, used in line 39) and would now make sure everyone understood what those words and phrases meant. The teacher might also ask the students to trace all the pronouns from lines 34–42 ("he," "she," and "her," in the lines containing the facts that will prove tyranny) back to their antecedents in line 31 ("man" and "woman," used in the general sense). This tracing of anaphoric references is an important practice that good readers regularly engage in to make sure they're clear about what's what. The teacher might also ask the students to be prepared to discuss what "this first right of a citizen" (line 40) refers to and to use the text to guide thinking about the consequence of depriving half the population of this right.

After having the students investigate the Declaration of Sentiments in order to gain an understanding of its power and purpose, the teacher might end the close reading by asking them to write an essay or prepare discussion notes in response to a prompt such as the following:

Explain why you think the authors of the Declaration of Sentiments chose to adopt and adapt the language and structure of the Declaration of Independence. Be sure to describe specific parallels in language and structure and to discuss specific points at which the language of the Declaration of Sentiments diverges from that of the

Declaration of Independence. How do the parallels contribute to the persuasive power and effectiveness of the Declaration of Sentiments? What rhetorical purpose or effect do the divergences achieve? Use at least three pieces of evidence from the documents to support your explanation.

For students to learn to work at unveiling meaning from complex text—and to gain the confidence that they *can* do so—they need to recognize which aspects of the text are particularly rich and/or dense and learn to pay particular attention to them. They need to learn to notice and focus on, rather than skip over, places in the reading that confuse them. Sources of text difficulty aren't infinite, and, over time, students can learn what to do when they encounter those sources. Regular practice with close reading can develop such recognition and provide the means for meeting the challenges associated with unpacking rich text. In the group setting of a classroom, as teachers and/or peers model strategic responses to difficulties, students who don't initially understand a given section of a text will better understand it via observing their teacher's or classmates' efforts and will come to see how to assimilate useful reading comprehension strategies into their own reading.

These high-value strategies are the tools that good readers enlist when they're stumped by something they've read (Shanahan 2018; Willingham 2012; National Reading Panel 2000). Comprehension strategies are best practiced—and learned—in context, right when and where the demands of the text cause understanding to break down.

What are these powerful strategies for building comprehension? They begin with *comprehension monitoring*, or tracking one's own understanding in order to recognize breakdowns in comprehension and to find ways to address them. Among the repair strategies are *questioning the text*, or actively asking questions of the text and oneself to verify understanding or identify areas of confusion; *rereading* confusing sections more carefully; and *reflecting* on the author's intent. During rereading, readers should focus on specifics, such as identifying unfamiliar words and phrases and learning what they mean from context (if possible) or out of context (e.g., by checking a dictionary) and parsing complex sentences, which could mean determining the contribution of subordinate clauses to meaning. They should also check to see whether there might be important anaphoric references in a given sentence that they might not have understood in the earlier reading. Finally, good readers frequently stop and *summarize* sections of text for themselves, particularly sections they found opaque on first encounter. It's vital that teachers and students alike understand there are *multiple* purposes for going back into a text and working from these (and potentially other) angles to comprehend it completely.

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Close reading of complex text in a whole-class setting, as in the Declaration of Sentiments example above, makes each of these strategic approaches to reading transparent for students who may not yet know them or how to activate them in certain cases. Comprehension monitoring, in particular, is fostered by the focus that close reading requires. Returning to the text repeatedly to check understanding or in pursuit of the answer to a question is the essence of monitoring for comprehension. With close reading, the teacher or the task is prompting behaviors that ideally become habitual for students. The result of these regular opportunities to engage in close reading with peers is that students get stronger together while building a collective understanding of rich, complex texts that in the teacher's view are well worth investing some time in. Every participant can accrue the advantages of and ultimately adopt the strong reading practices initially possessed only by some students.

For that reason, and because it's time intensive, close reading is best done with the class as a whole and as interactively as possible. A summative assessment can be used as a wrap-up to evaluate each student's individual understanding, but the learning along the way is best done in as social a manner as the teacher can manage so that everyone in the class stays involved and gets the benefit. Students who confidently volunteer to answer questions posed during class discussions and who, spontaneously or when prompted, can substantiate their answers with textual evidence and explain their process for uncovering that evidence demonstrate prowess everyone else in that class needs to attain if they haven't already. Students want to have these skills and may prefer to learn (or do better learning) from peers rather than the teacher how to find pertinent textual evidence to better understand a challenging section of a text. When classrooms engage in this kind of text-centered discussion routinely, the community benefits from having explanatory thinking rendered manifest through frequent discussions and widespread student participation.

Another positive aspect of close reading is that it makes explicit what it means to have a *standard of coherence* at the same time that it helps inculcate one. A high standard of coherence—a strong internal disposition that assumes every text can be comprehended—makes readers stubborn in ways that bear fruit for comprehension. They approach the text assuming it will yield its offerings and are then driven to do something about it if they don't fully understand. Research has found that a high standard of coherence is one of the hallmarks that distinguish excellent readers from adequate ones (Pearson and Liben 2013; van den Broek et al. 2011).

For the many students who arrive at high school reading below (sometimes well below) grade level, gaining insight into the strategic

SAT Suite Connections

Close reading, use of textual evidence, and source analysis are foundational to the SAT Suite Reading Tests and the optional SAT Essay.

On the SAT Suite Reading Tests, students are expected to read closely a range of appropriately challenging passages (sources) drawn from a variety of subject areas and to determine what the authors of these passages say directly and imply. Numerous questions on the Reading Tests also ask students to determine the best textual evidence either for the answer to another question or for an inference supplied by the evidence question itself; these questions are collectively a major contributor to the Command of Evidence subscore.

The SAT Essay is a rich and authentic source analysis task. Students must read an appropriately challenging argumentative passage, analyze the passage to ascertain how the author builds the argument to persuade the audience, and write a clear and cogent response demonstrating their reading comprehension, presenting their analysis of the passage, and exhibiting their writing and language skills and knowledge. Students taking the Essay receive separate Reading, Analysis, and Writing scores, which help them more easily identify strengths and weaknesses in their capabilities.

thinking of more accomplished readers is priceless. Close reading, done with positive energy in an instructive and collaborative way, is thus a lever for increasing equitable access to complex text.

If students are to benefit from close reading, they must feel safe and be willing to engage. Teachers working with secondary students need to create an environment that promotes engagement, especially among students who might be reluctant to admit to reading shortcomings or to engage with texts that might expose those shortcomings to their peers. This environment should be accepting of false starts and partial successes but demand improvement on them, as well as make clear that students who undertake the risk of participation gain the significant benefit of becoming independent readers better able and more disposed to learn about topics of importance to them through text.

When teachers provide all students with high-quality, appropriately challenging texts worthy of their time and energy, ask them worthwhile questions, and support their efforts to succeed, they're laying the groundwork for every student to become a proficient reader equipped for the demands of life after high school. Teaching secondary students what a standard of coherence is and challenging them to develop their own promotes students' agency. Gaining that awareness makes students more likely to engage in close reading, which, in turn, strengthens that standard and develops the cognitive muscles associated with reading comprehension itself. Engaging in close reading also broadens and deepens students' word awareness, sharpens their sense that they need to understand each word and phrase they read, and increases their stocks of knowledge. Opportunities for vocabulary study and knowledge acquisition arise when students carefully consider authors' word choices and how ideas are developed within and across sentences—activities that close reading promotes. Broadened and deepened vocabularies and expanded knowledge bases, in turn, strengthen reading comprehension, as students have more and more touchstones for the new information and ideas they encounter while reading. (Chapter 3 discusses in more detail the contributions of vocabulary and knowledge to comprehension.)

Another important skill that improves with regular close reading opportunities is the gathering and use of textual evidence. Students need to collect and deploy textual evidence in the service of supporting what they've asserted to be true about what they've read when they're engaged in close reading and other text-centered discussions and when they're writing analytically about sources. Close reading cultivates a disciplined approach to identifying and presenting this evidence, the subject to which we now turn.

Textual Evidence

Textual evidence is support within a text itself, in such forms as direct quotations, paraphrases, and quantitative data, for a reader's interpretive claim regarding the text. Textual evidence is marshaled in support of an answer to a question—either the reader's own or one posed to the reader—regarding the information, ideas, or events the text is communicating. Textual evidence needs to be identified, gathered, and organized so that it can be communicated effectively. There are important connections between close reading, textual evidence, and reading comprehension. The more disciplined students get about finding textual evidence through such activities as close reading, the better they'll understand what they've read. Moreover, presenting that evidence effectively, whether by summarizing the essence of it for oneself, responding to questions posed during close reading, or developing a well-reasoned formal argument based on the collected evidence, cements understanding.

Gathering evidence is arguably the primary activity readers engage in when reading closely. All other reading-related activities—for example, monitoring comprehension, questioning the text, rereading, and summarizing while reading—circle back to evidence gathering. Students have to read closely in order to locate the textual evidence needed to answer their own and others' questions about what the author's saying, make an effective point in a discussion, or prepare a formal response to the text. Reading for evidence demands the careful attention that's the hallmark of close reading. In turn, the process of collecting evidence returns the reader, sometimes repeatedly, to the text in a focused way. Seeking evidence provides a purpose and structure for close reading and, in so doing, leads to more careful consideration of the text than does reading with a less clear aim.

The careful attention that evidence collecting requires provides a payoff in the form of deepened comprehension. Whether pursuing their own learning goals or responding to questions or tasks presented to them by a teacher, students need to pay careful attention to the text. The brain activates while reading, and the brains of successful readers activate in ways different than those of less proficient readers (Wolf 2018). Collecting evidence is one means of forcing the kind of attention and careful reading that can achieve deep understanding.

Beyond the advantage of strengthening reading comprehension, what does the process of collecting and presenting textual evidence do for student readers? When all students in a class are working with the same text and examining it closely, there's an acknowledgement that the text is the locus of learning. It's the basis for analysis and the source of evidence for interpretations. During such undertakings, a sort of leveling of the learning playing field occurs. With the text at the center of discussion, all

readers have potentially equal access to the same body of information, and the inevitable variances in students' experiences and prior knowledge are rendered less relevant. Deriving evidence from the text in a disciplined, focused way thus has the potential to be a great equalizer, allowing students to learn together from the text. Everyone, once shown how to do it (as in the sample close reading of the Declaration of Sentiments previously discussed), can marshal textual evidence in the service of a skilled interpretation of what the text says directly or implies. A disciplined approach to gathering and sharing evidence can also lay the groundwork for the successful writing of arguments (to which we turn below). What's more, being able to locate and present evidence in an organized way is a prerequisite for being justifiably confident in one's positions and an ingredient for successful interactions in civil society. In short, being skilled with textual evidence is a valuable competency for college and career readiness and success as well as for life outside the classroom.

A Case Study: Source-Based Analytical Writing

One activity that unites close reading and textual evidence use is source-based analytical writing. In source-based analytical writing, students read closely a source text (or texts) and produce a clear and cohesive response that makes use of evidence from the text(s) to support argumentative claims or informative/explanatory points.

A sharp instructional focus on source-based analytical writing helps integrate reading and writing in authentic ways. Such a focus also helps prepare K–12 students to successfully meet the demands of early postsecondary education. In reviewing the literature on first-year college writing instruction, Bosley notes that “recent studies have demonstrated that [first-year college-level] student writing is often hindered by a shallow understanding of sources and have suggested that students need explicit instruction in active reading in order to construct and express their own arguments” (2016, 77). Studying the expectations for student writing held by college faculty at a regional, Midwestern campus of twenty thousand students, Brockman et al. found that “regardless of genre . . . participating faculty generally agreed that writing assignments are based on reading and designed to help students learn class material,” that “at least at our institution . . . faculty surveyed expect students to be able to read closely and accurately about an unfamiliar topic in an assigned scholarly or professional journal, book chapter, or website,” and that “to do this well, students must be able to figure out an author’s main point, consider how the author uses supporting evidence, and discern ideological bents and biases” (2010, 44–45). Brockman and her colleagues contrast this college-level writing with some kinds of high school assignments,

“which often ask students to brainstorm, freewrite, or otherwise reflect thoughtfully about a familiar topic or past experience, or that ask students to do library or Internet research to support long-established personal beliefs about a given topic” (45).

One form of source-based analytical writing common in postsecondary education is rhetorical analysis (Brockman and Taylor 2016; Graff 2010), and numerous institutions provide extensive resources to students on how to conduct such analyses (e.g., University Writing Center, Texas A&M University, n.d.; Howe Center for Writing Excellence, Miami University, n.d.). When students analyze a source text rhetorically, they pay attention to the information and ideas the author conveys but focus primarily on the hows and whys of the author’s craft: how—and how skillfully—the author uses evidence, reasoning, stylistic and persuasive techniques, and the like to accomplish a purpose, such as to convince, to effect change, or to inform. The student writer’s analysis centers on a detached evaluation of the effectiveness or persuasiveness of the source text rather than on personal reflection or reaction, summary of the source’s informational content, or assertions in support of or opposition to the author’s claims, points, or perspective. Graff succinctly defines rhetorical analysis as “examining not only *what* authors communicate but also *for what purposes* they communicate those messages, what effects they attempt to evoke in readers, and how they accomplish those purposes and effects” (2010, 376; emphasis in original).

Like a few other common college-level writing assignments they studied, Brockman and Taylor found that rhetorical analysis has value because it is an authentic task, forces the student to “recursively and intentionally delay ‘thesis making’” (thereby avoiding the short-circuiting of thinking that happens when students reflexively jump to and defend an assertion they already accept), compels multiple close readings of the source, and draws on analytical tools developed in class (2016, 164). The above features, the researchers note, reflect and encourage the kind of writing and analysis college instructors expect to see from their students:

These initial “academic moves” require intellectual risk taking—far more than starting the writing process by “taking a stance” on making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich or “arguing” that three differences exist between the written and film version of *To Kill a Mockingbird* . . . In turn, the overall shape of the emerging college-level papers is inherently different from that of a five-paragraph essay. Most obviously, content matters. It. Really. Matters. We’ve all heard anecdotes of students being encouraged to “plug in” fictitious facts or imaginary data to demonstrate a generic, all-purpose ability to support claims with concrete evidence, but this approach would never be rewarded in college-level courses in which the substance of the student’s thesis and content wins the day. Further, the supporting

College and Career Readiness

The College Board’s 2019 National Curriculum Survey Report offers clear indications that close reading, textual evidence, and source analysis are important college and career readiness prerequisites.

The sample of 1,377 postsecondary faculty in English, social science, and science gave a grand mean importance rating of 3.77 (on a four-point scale, with 4 being “very important”) to reading closely to identify explicitly stated information in a text and a 3.74 rating to reading closely to draw reasonable inferences and conclusions from a text. They also gave a rating of 3.36 to citing the textual evidence that best supports a given claim or point. Additional skill/knowledge survey items closely associated with source analysis on the SAT Essay also received high ratings: for example, 3.14 to analyzing arguments to determine claims and counterclaims, 2.77 to assessing the influence of point of view or perspective on a text’s content or style, 3.09 to analyzing reasoning in arguments, 3.20 to analyzing evidence in arguments, and 2.65 to analyzing the use of stylistic or persuasive elements in arguments.

For more information on the College Board’s national curriculum survey and its results, see the general introduction to this collection.

evidence is unlikely, in effective essays, to take the shape of three distinct reasons or elements, each one limited to a single paragraph and arranged in ascending or descending order of importance. (164)

Similarly, Graff (2010), after introducing a rhetorical analysis project in an upper-level college composition class intended for prospective teachers, found that the approach tended to subvert formulaic approaches to writing and to promote the sort of meta-awareness of writing strategies that enables students to apply what they've learned about writing in English/composition classes to a range of situations, such as writing in other disciplines.

Implications/Practical Applications for Instruction

CLOSE READING AND TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

Close reading takes time, both to plan and execute—time that secondary teachers, especially teachers working outside of the field of English language arts, may feel they can't spare. On the balance between depth and breadth, close reading is decidedly on the side of depth. Teachers of history/social studies, science, arts, and technical subjects may understandably worry not only that engaging in reading and writing work will take away time from imparting essential content but also that such work lies outside of their domain or expertise; as a consequence, they may default to the position that this kind of careful reading and writing is the ELA teacher's task. That, however, would be a disservice to both their discipline and their students. Close reading can give students access to content in the disciplines that otherwise a teacher may only be able to convey to students via lecture or PowerPoint. Teach students how to read within a discipline, and those students can gain knowledge from substantive works on their own, compounding the work a teacher alone can do and supporting students' independence.

What's more, ELA teachers have their own content to teach and standards they need to have their students meet. They, too, have a corpus of works and ideas they want and need to teach. And they themselves aren't necessarily equipped to address close reading and the underpinnings of how to read for evidence in disciplines outside of ELA. Each domain has its own ways of building knowledge and making arguments, and while each discipline values evidence, the nature of what counts as evidence and how evidence is used can vary from discipline to discipline. (For a detailed treatment of disciplinary literacy, see chapter 5.)

It makes considerable sense, therefore, for teachers to share this work, both for the sake of student learning and to ensure the transmittal of core ideas in each subject. One solution is to systematize sharing, making the burden of close reading lighter for each teacher while ensuring that all

students receive a steady diet of close reading activities. After all, it's the students, and presumably not the adults teaching them, who need lots of exposure to the skills, knowledge, and habits of mind close reading fosters. Further lightening the burden is the fact that close reading is work to be done in a focused way, not engaged in constantly. No text of any significant length is equally complex or demanding throughout, nor is all content worthy of deep analysis. If all teachers in, say, a high school devised a schedule in which each classroom would engage in close reading for a few days a month (e.g., history/social studies during the first week of a month, English the second and fourth, history/social studies the third, and technical subjects or arts electives on occasion), all students would continually engage in close reading. They'd also learn how skilled close reading and evidence gathering differ across disciplines while being exposed to the types of texts used in postsecondary classrooms. Moreover, these students would encounter some of the seminal writings of each corpus in a way that would deepen their understanding of the subjects they're studying, standing them in good stead for their post-high school lives, a time when the vast majority of what people read is informational text, not literary works (e.g., Ha 2016).

Leading students successfully through close reading takes training, particularly for those secondary teachers faced with students who don't yet have grade-level reading and writing abilities and may even be lagging in the areas of productive speaking and listening. In many settings, teachers may have more students who aren't yet at grade level than students who are. Regular close reading is a great remedy, but providing access to it for students who might be coming to English from another language base or supporting students who are reading years behind grade level requires focused work from teachers.

A number of excellent free resources for teacher self-study and classroom close reading activities are available. The following are some solid sources, all free for downloading and use without restriction:

- Sample close reading lessons focused on complex texts at a variety of grade levels can be downloaded from Achieve the Core (https://achievethecore.org/category/411/ela-literacy-lessons?filter_cat=700).
- A collection of "mini assessments" to test students' ability to read closely with grade-level complex texts is also available at Achieve the Core (<https://achievethecore.org/category/415/ela-literacy-assessments>). Several of the mini assessments use the same texts as the close reading lessons.

- Achieve the Core also provides a framework with guidance for teachers on how to introduce close reading into their classrooms and develop their own close reading lessons (<https://achievethecore.org/page/2539/framework-for-preparing-implementing-and-assessing-close-reading-lessons>).
- Teaching Tolerance has an open-access library of texts and accompanying lesson frames on a wide variety of civil rights topics (<https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources>). Materials are available for all grades.
- A group of Kentucky teachers has developed text sets to build student background knowledge on frequently taught works (<https://kentuckytextsets.weebly.com/high-school.html>).
- CommonLit offers literary passages for close reading as well as accompanying resources (<https://commonlit.org>; free registration required). The site is unusual in that it has excerpts from well-known works of literature.

While these resources provide a starting place, self-study is optimally supplemented by professional development with instructors experienced with close reading who can model the technique and help teachers implement it in their classrooms.

SOURCE ANALYSIS

History/social studies, science, and ELA teachers, in particular, need to think through how to help their students become skilled at analyzing text sources for rhetorical and argumentative features such as author's intent, reasoning, evidence, and stylistic and persuasive elements. Although regularly engaging in close reading will help students develop some of this discernment, specialized skills by discipline still need to be directly taught to students who may never have been exposed to these concepts.

The following resources are among the many useful starting points for teachers wanting to learn more about how to teach source analysis to their students:

- Among the resources Carleton College's history department maintains for students is a detailed examination of how to analyze primary sources (<https://www.carleton.edu/history/resources/history-study-guides/primary/>). The document contains a number of good filtering questions intended to help students examine such sources rhetorically and historically.
- "What Do Students Need to Know About Rhetoric?" is an article authored by Hepzibah Roskelly and hosted by the College Board (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap06-englang-roskelly-50098.pdf?course=ap-english-language-and-composition>).

While centered on the demands of the AP Language and Composition exam, the article provides an overview that's broadly useful for English or history/social studies teachers.

- Cornell University Library's "Critically Analyzing Information Sources: Critical Appraisal and Analysis" takes students through a set of considerations and questions designed to promote examination first of an information source itself and second of the content of the source (http://guides.library.cornell.edu/critically_analyzing). It's practical and straightforward.
- The previously cited resources from Texas A&M University (<http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/Students/Writing-Speaking-Guides/Alphabetical-List-of-Guides/Academic-Writing/Analysis/Rhetorical-Analysis>) and Miami University (<https://miamioh.edu/hcwe/handouts/rhetorical-analyses/index.html>) offer student-friendly guides to rhetorical analysis.

Conclusion

The topics in this chapter overlap considerably, and regular practice with each promotes the development of the others. Close reading is both a valuable skill and a process. If done consistently in the social learning way outlined here, it's also a tool to address the matter of equitable access to rich, grade-level text for all students. That learning process consists largely of asking and answering questions about what the text says, how it says it, and why the author says it. Asking and answering these questions requires collecting evidence that resides within the text. The ability to present that collected evidence in thoughtful ways, such as through source-based analytical writing, is one trait that distinguishes better readers from those who only know how to read superficially. Source analysis in the service of developing a solid argument is a skill that translates well to academic, career, and civic applications across a lifetime.

Appendix

THE DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS (SENECA FALLS CONVENTION)

1 When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for
2 one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of
3 the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto
4 occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God
5 entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires
6 that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a
7 course.

8 We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are
9 created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain
10 inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit
11 of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted,
12 deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

13 Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these
14 ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance
15 to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying
16 its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in
17 such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety
18 and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments
19 long established should not be changed for light and transient
20 causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind
21 are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right
22 themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.
23 But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing
24 invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under
25 absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government,
26 and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been
27 the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and
28 such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the
29 equal station to which they are entitled.

30 The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and
31 usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct
32 object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove
33 this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

34 He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the
35 elective franchise.

36 He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which
37 she had no voice.

38 He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most
39 ignorant and degraded men—both natives and foreigners.

Appendix (continued)

40 Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective
41 franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of
42 legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

43 He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

44 He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she
45 earns.

46 He has made her, morally, an irresponsible being, as she can
47 commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in
48 the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she is
49 compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to
50 all intents and purposes, her master—the law giving him power to
51 deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.

52 He has so framed the laws of divorce, as to what shall be the proper
53 causes, and in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the
54 children shall be given, as to be wholly regardless of the happiness
55 of women—the law, in all cases, going upon a false supposition of
56 the supremacy of man, and giving all power into his hands.

57 After depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single, and
58 the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government
59 which recognizes her only when her property can be made
60 profitable to it.

61 He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and
62 from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty
63 remuneration. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and
64 distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a
65 teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

66 He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education,
67 all colleges being closed against her.

68 He allows her in church, as well as state, but a subordinate position,
69 claiming apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry,
70 and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the
71 affairs of the church.

72 He has created a false public sentiment by giving to the world a
73 different code of morals for men and women, by which moral
74 delinquencies which exclude women from society, are not only
75 tolerated, but deemed of little account in man.

Appendix (continued)

76 He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as
77 his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to
78 her conscience and to her God.

79 He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her
80 confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to
81 make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

82 Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people
83 of this country, their social and religious degradation—in view
84 of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel
85 themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their
86 most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to
87 all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the
88 United States.

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