Close Reading Workshop 4 • Close Reading of Shakespeare

Learning Targets
• Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
• Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
• Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
• Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.
• By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
• Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 9–10 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies
• Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Close Reading for Meaning
As readers, we should not only consider what information is explicitly conveyed by a persuasive text; we should also consider why it is conveyed, as well as what it may be implying. We must recognize the speaker’s rhetorical purpose for speaking, and realize that this purpose will inform both what is explicitly stated and what is implied in the text. Along with analyzing the speaker’s tone, understanding the implications beyond what is explicitly stated can help the reader determine the author’s purpose.

In this workshop, you will read three different texts and practice close reading using strategies that will help you make meaning and draw out inferences. Your teacher will guide you through the first activity as a class. In Activity 2, you will work in a collaborative group to examine and respond to a visual text. For the third activity, you will work independently to apply close-reading strategies to determine meaning in a new text.

Introducing the Strategy: Chunking the Text
Chunking the Text is a strategy for close reading of text. Using this strategy, the reader breaks a passage into smaller, more manageable units to work with. The reader looks for shifts in topic or tone to indicate where one chunk ends and another begins. Writing notes in the margins about the content of each chunk helps the reader increase comprehension of the text.
ACTIVITY 1

Guided Practice

You will read the text in this activity at least three times, focusing on a different purpose for each reading.

First Reading: First Impressions
Read the following passage silently. Your focus for this first reading is on understanding the meaning and purpose of the passage. As you read, mark places where you identify a shift in the topic of discussion, or in the tone that Brutus is expressing. When you finish reading, chunk the text by drawing brackets or boxes around each individual chunk. Then number each chunk and use space in the margins to identify or explain the content of each chunk.

From Act III, Scene 2

Julius Caesar

by William Shakespeare

Brutus: Be patient till the last. Romans, countrymen, and lovers, hear me for my cause, and be silent, that you may hear. Believe me for mine honor, and have respect to mine honor, that you may believe. Censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Caesar’s, to him I say, that Brutus’ love to Caesar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: Not that I lov’d Caesar less, but that I lov’d Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living, and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all freemen? As Caesar lov’d me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honor him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honor for his valor; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak for him I have offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak, for him I have offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak for him I have offended. I pause for a reply.

All: None, Brutus, none.
Brutus: Then none I have offended. I have done no more to Caesar than you shall do to Brutus. The question of his death is enroll’d in the Capitol: his glory not extenuated, wherein he was worthy; nor his offenses enforc’d, for which he suffer’d death.

Enter MARK ANTONY and others, with Caesar’s body.

Brutus: Here comes his body, mourn’d by Mark Antony, who, though he had no hand in his death, shall receive the benefit of his dying, a place in the commonwealth, as which of you shall not? With this I depart, that, as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself, when it shall please my country to need my death.

Check Your Understanding
Discuss your approach to chunking the text with a partner, and prepare to share your ideas with the class. Working with your teacher and classmates, come to a shared understanding of how to chunk this text, and make adjustments to your individual passage if necessary.

Second Reading: Vocabulary in Context
Now that you have read the passage silently and divided the passage into meaningful chunks, listen and follow along as the passage is read aloud. As you read along, circle words and/or phrases (other than the underlined words) that you do not completely understand or that you feel are important to the meaning of the passage. Pay particular attention to those words and phrases you might recognize but do not completely understand in this particular context.

Check Your Understanding
1. Pair with another student and, using context clues and reference resources, determine the meaning of any words or phrases you do not yet fully understand. Using space in the margins, paraphrase or define these words/phrases for comprehension. With your partner, discuss how the definitions help you understand the meaning of the passage as a whole.

2. Choose three sentences or independent clauses that include one or more terms that were either underlined, bolded, or circled. Paraphrase each complete sentence or independent clause, making its meaning explicit.
Third Reading: Text-Dependent Questioning

Now read the passage again, this time reading to respond to the Key Ideas and Details interpretive questions. Write your responses to each question in the space below it and highlight or underline the textual evidence that supports your answer. During class discussion, you may also want to annotate the passage to record new or different meanings.

Background Information: This short speech is taken from Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare. In this speech, Brutus, a supporter of the Roman republic, is addressing the Roman citizens at Caesar’s funeral, prior to the arrival of Caesar’s body. Caesar was stabbed to death in the Senate by his own countrymen. Brutus, once Caesar’s strong ally and close friend, participated in the assassination of Caesar along with a number of other Roman officials.

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Julius Caesar
by William Shakespeare

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Brutus: Then none I have offended. I have done no more to Caesar than you shall do to Brutus. The question of his death is enroll’d in the Capitol: his glory not extenuated, wherein he was worthy; nor his offenses enforc’d, for which he suffer’d death.
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Brutus: Here comes his body, mourn’d by Mark Antony, who, though
he had no hand in his death, shall receive the benefit of his dying, a
place in the commonwealth, as which of you shall not? With this I
depart, that, as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the
same dagger for myself, when it shall please my country to need
my death.

Check Your Understanding
Now that you have read this passage three times and worked to understand its
implications as well as its content, reflect on Brutus’s purpose in delivering these
lines. Explain in your own words what Brutus hopes to accomplish in this oration.

Synthesizing Your Understanding

Introducing the Strategy: SMELL
SMELL is an acronym for a reading strategy that can help you analyze a persuasive
speech by focusing on five essential components: the relationship between the
speaker and audience, the message, the emotional and logical strategies used, and
the language of the text.

Working with your peers, read the descriptions of the elements of SMELL and practice
applying this strategy to Brutus’s oration, responding to the questions below.

1. Sender-receiver relationship: Describe the speaker of the text and his
relationship with the audience. How might this affect his words?

2. Message: Summarize the message of the text.
3. Emotional strategies: How does the speaker use emotion to further his message and purpose?

4. Logical strategies: How does the speaker use logic to further his message and purpose?

5. Language: How do selected words affect the meaning and effectiveness of the writing? Consider the tone they evoke, and the purpose of that tone.

Check Your Understanding
When your group has completed your responses to the elements of SMELL, team up with another group and share your work, comparing and contrasting your answers. Add to your own work when you hear ideas shared by the other group that you find interesting or valuable.

Writing Prompt: Based on your current understanding of the passage, write a paragraph that explains how the meaning behind the following line fits into Brutus’s oration as a whole:

“I have done no more to Caesar than you shall do to Brutus.”

Be sure to
• Identify Brutus’s overall purpose in speaking.
• Paraphrase the meaning of Brutus’s words in the sentence above.
• Make connections between this specific sentence and the oration as a whole.
ACTIVITY 2

Collaborative Practice

Look carefully at the image that follows. It is a work of art by Heinrich Spiess that depicts Mark Antony, a friend of Caesar, delivering an oration over the fallen body of Caesar at his funeral. Following your examination of the visual depiction of this scene, you will read an excerpt of Mark Antony’s words, which follow the oration delivered by Brutus.

First Reading: What do you see?

As you look at the image, what catches your eye? What details do you notice? How would you describe the elements in this scene to someone who could not see it? To answer these questions, focus only on what you can see in the image.
Second Reading: What does it mean?
Now that you have examined the image carefully, what inferences can you make? How do you interpret what you see? In other words, what might you say about the individuals depicted or the event taking place that goes beyond what is explicitly shown in the image?

Third Reading: How do you know?
Explain the connection between the details you notice and your interpretation of these details. How might you use the details in the image as textual evidence to support the ideas or inferences you have made?

Writing Prompt: Now that you have carefully examined the content of this image and come to conclusions about what it shows explicitly and what inferences you can make about the meaning, write a paragraph that makes some predictions about what you expect to find in Mark Antony’s oration, which you will read in the next activity. Be sure to:
• Write a topic sentence that connects your view of the image with your predictions for Mark Antony’s oration.
• Include textual details from the image and explain how they support your predictions.
• Write a concluding sentence that follows from these explanations.
ACTIVITY 3

Independent Practice

As you did with the first text, you will read this passage at least three times, focusing on a different purpose for each reading.

First Reading: First Impressions

Read the following passage silently. Your focus for this first reading is on understanding the meaning and purpose of the passage. As you read, mark places where you identify a shift in the topic of discussion or in the tone that Mark Antony is expressing. When you finish reading, chunk the text by drawing brackets or boxes around each individual chunk. Then number each chunk and use space in the margins to identify or explain the content of each chunk.

From Act III, Scene 2

Caesar

by William Shakespeare

Mark Antony: Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears!

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

The evil that men do lives after them,

The good is oft interred with their bones;

So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus

Hath told you Caesar was ambitious;

If it were so, it was a grievous fault.

And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest

(For Brutus is an honorable man,

So are they all, all honorable men),

Come I to speak in Caesar’s funeral.

He was my friend, faithful and just to me;

But Brutus says he was ambitious,

And Brutus is an honorable man.

He hath brought many captives home to Rome,

Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill;

interred: placed in a coffin or grave

coffer: a safe or strongbox for holding money or valuables
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept;

20 Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honorable man.
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,

25 Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honorable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.

30 You all did love him once, not without cause;
What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?
O judgment! Thou [art] fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. Bear with me,
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,

35 And I must pause till it come back to me.

Check Your Understanding
Discuss your approach to chunking the text with a partner, referring to your notes in the margins that explain the content of each chunk. After you listen to the choices made by your partner, make adjustments to your individual chunks if necessary.

Second Reading: Vocabulary in Context
Now that you have read the passage silently and divided the passage into meaningful chunks, listen and follow along as the passage is read aloud. As you read along, circle words and/or phrases (other than the underlined words) that you do not completely understand or that you feel are important to the meaning of the passage. Pay particular attention to those words and phrases you might recognize but do not completely understand in this particular context.

Check Your Understanding
1. Using context clues and reference resources, determine the meaning of any words or phrases you do not yet fully understand. Using space in the margins, paraphrase or define these words/phrases for comprehension. Note how the definitions help you understand the meaning of the passage as a whole.
2. Choose three sentences or independent clauses that include one or more terms that was either underlined, bolded, or circled. Paraphrase each complete sentence or independent clause, making its meaning explicit.

Third Reading: Text-Dependent Questioning
Now read the passage again, this time reading to respond to the Key Ideas and Details interpretive questions. Annotate the text with your responses to each question and highlight or underline the textual evidence that supports your answer.

**Background Information:** This excerpt is taken from Mark Antony’s oration at Caesar’s funeral, delivered immediately after the speech by Brutus. Like Brutus, Mark Antony was a close friend of Julius Caesar, but unlike Brutus, he did not participate in Caesar’s assassination.

From Act III, Scene 2
_Julius Caesar_
_by William Shakespeare_

Mark Antony: Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears!
   I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
   The evil that men do lives after them,
   The good is oft interred with their bones;
   So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus
   Hath told you Caesar was ambitious;
   If it were so, it was a grievous fault.
   And grievously hath Caesar answer’d it.
   Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest
   (For Brutus is an honorable man,
   So are they all, all honorable men),
   Come I to speak in Caesar’s funeral.
   He was my friend, faithful and just to me;
   But Brutus says he was ambitious,
   And Brutus is an honorable man.
   He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
   Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill;
   Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
   When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept;

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS
Why does Mark Antony repeat the line “Brutus says he was ambitious, and Brutus is an honorable man”?

KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS
Highlight some examples of rhetorical questions in Mark Antony’s oration. What effect is Mark Antony hoping to have on his audience with these questions?
20 Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honorable man.
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,

25 Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
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Check Your Understanding
Now that you have read this passage three times, and worked to understand its implications as well as its content, reflect on Mark Antony’s purpose in delivering these lines. Explain in your own words what Mark Antony hopes to accomplish in this oration.

Synthesizing Your Understanding
As you have learned, SMELL is an acronym for a reading strategy that can help you analyze a persuasive speech by focusing on five essential components. Practice applying this strategy to Mark Antony’s oration, responding to the questions below.

1. Sender-receiver relationship: Describe the speaker of the text and his relationship with the audience. How might this affect his words?
2. **Message:** Summarize the message of the text.

3. **Emotional strategies:** How does the speaker use emotion to further his message and purpose?

4. **Logical strategies:** How does the speaker use logic to further his message and purpose?

5. **Language:** How do selected words affect the meaning and effectiveness of the writing? List and comment on some of the more powerful examples.

**Writing Prompt:** Based on your current understanding of the passage, write a paragraph that explains how the meaning behind the following line fits into Mark Antony’s oration as a whole:

“I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.”

Be sure to:
- Identify Mark Antony’s overall purpose in speaking.
- Paraphrase the meaning of Mark Antony’s words in the sentence above.
- Make connections between this specific sentence and the oration as a whole.
ACTIVITY 4

Synthesis Questions

Your teacher may choose or ask you to choose one of the following assessments as a way of showing your understanding of the texts you have read.

Writing Prompt: Review the differing perspectives on the death of Caesar, as presented by Mark Antony and Brutus in the texts of this unit. Revisit the work you have done with both texts, and consider how the style and argument of each speaker attempts to persuade the audience. Which man was more successful in persuading you to see Caesar’s death from his point of view? Be sure to reference specifics of both texts to develop your position.

Speaking Opportunity: Working with a partner, restructure the speeches by Brutus and Mark Antony in a mash-up that turns the two independent excerpts into a kind of dialogue or debate to be delivered as a back-and-forth between the two men. Be sure to make your choices deliberately, and reorganize lines as necessary to suit your new vision for these words. Rehearse this restructuring of the script and prepare to perform it in front of the class.

Multimedia Presentation: In Shakespeare’s play, Brutus and Mark Antony had differing opinions about whether Caesar’s ambition was dangerous to Rome. Research the life and times of the real Julius Caesar, and prepare a presentation that establishes and supports your position on Caesar’s ambition and its potential dangers to the Roman republic.

Reflection

Think about what you have learned from your close reading and analysis of the text passages you have read in this workshop.

1. How did Brutus and Mark Antony differ in their purposes for speaking at Caesar’s funeral? How did their different purposes determine the manner in which they approached their orations?

2. In this workshop, you have learned how to make meaning of three different texts. How can you use what you have learned to help you when you encounter challenging texts in the future? What strategies best helped you as a learner during this workshop? When and why would you use these strategies again?