

## PART 3

# ANALYZING DETAILS

## "the bitter wind searching every opening in the clothing"

### OBJECTIVE:

Students learn to analyze textual detail as a key to discovering meaning.  
Students read, analyze, and compare texts.



## ACTIVITIES

### 1- ANALYZING TEXTUAL DETAIL

Students listen to and then closely read and analyze a new text.

### 2- ANALYZING DETAILS ACROSS TEXTS

The teacher guides and supports students in a comparative discussion of the texts.

### 3- EXPLAINING AND COMPARING TEXTS

Student groups develop a comparative question and individually write a paragraph using their question.

### 4- INDEPENDENT READING ACTIVITY

Students independently read texts using a guiding question.

**ESTIMATED TIME:** 3 days

### MATERIALS:

Texts #1-6  
Questioning Texts Tool  
Analyzing Details Tool  
Reading Closely Checklist  
Guiding Questions Handout



## ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

### TARGETED STANDARD(S): RI.7.1 RI.7.2 RI.7.6 RI.7.9

RI.7.1: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.7.2: Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.7.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.

RI.7.9: Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.

### SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RI.7.4

RI.7.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.



# ACTIVITY 1: ANALYZING TEXTUAL DETAIL

Students listen to and then closely read and analyze a new text.

## INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

### INTRODUCE AND READ TEXT #6 ALOUD

Students now engage a new text that presents a different point of view on the topic. As before, students listen to the text with no initial context provided other than what they have already learned from their study of previous, related texts.

### INDEPENDENT READING

- Students complete the first parts of the Questioning Texts Tool, selecting Guiding Questions that relate to the *author's perspective*.
- Students read the text using their Guiding Questions to focus them on relevant details they can question further.

### CLASS DISCUSSION

- Lead a discussion of the text focusing on difficult sections and key academic vocabulary.
- Students should draw on details they found related to their Guiding Questions in discussion.
- Have students develop text-specific questions about key details that emerge in discussion.

### RE-READING TO ANALYZE DETAILS

- Students work in groups to hone text-specific questions.
- Students use their question to analyze the text with the Analyzing Details Tool.

### CLASS DISCUSSION

- Discuss the connections students have made in a final class discussion of Text #6.

## TEXTUAL NOTES

The comparison text [#6] is a nonfiction excerpt from Arctic explorer Robert Peary's "The North Pole," in which he explains what it is like to cross an Arctic "lead," the constant fear of falling into the frigid water, and the "difficulties and hardships of a journey to the North Pole." His observational and instructive tone, in a piece written after his successful finding of the Pole, may be contrasted both with London's dramatic, fictionalized account of building a fire to survive in a frigid land and the narrative journal entries of Scott, recorded while in the midst of his journey and ordeal. Students may make connections between what happens to "the man" in "To Build a Fire" and what Peary suggests might happen if a lead had "opened right through our camp, or through one of the snow igloos, when we were sleeping on the surface of the polar sea" in paragraphs 5-7. Paragraphs 8-9 also provide opportunities for close reading focused on descriptive details.

## MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):

- 1- What information/ideas are described in detail?
- 2- How are the details I find related in ways that build ideas and themes?

Text-specific Question(s):

- 1- What key words and phrases does Peary use to describe the dangers of the "leads" that arctic travellers are likely to encounter?
- 2- In paragraph 8, what does Peary suggest are the "worst" of the "difficulties and hardships of a journey to the North Pole"?
- 3 - In the final paragraph, what does Peary suggest are the differences between his readers' experiences with blizzards and the challenges of surviving an intense storm in an arctic environment?

## ACTIVITY 2: ANALYZING DETAILS ACROSS TEXTS

The teacher guides and supports students in a comparative discussion of the texts.

### INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

#### CLASS DISCUSSION

- Students use their notes and tools from texts #5 and #6 to discuss how each author's use of language reflects his or her perspective on the subject.
- Ask students to present evidence from the text to support their assertions, and to connect their comments to the ideas that others have shared.
- Have students take notes and annotate their text during the conversation, capturing what peers say, how their ideas are changing, or connections/ differences between texts.

#### TEXTUAL NOTES

The "To Build a Fire" and "North Pole" excerpts offer a variety of opportunities for comparison: between fictional and nonfictional writing, around the common thread of trying to survive a plunge into arctic waters, and/or between the two authors' perspectives on their subjects and use of language to convey those perspectives. In particular, the texts illustrate how two very different writers use details to evoke an experience - one intent on dramatizing its irony in chilling detail, the other committed to a more observational, scientific account.

#### MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):

- 1- What is the author's personal relationship to the topic or themes?
- 2- In what ways do the authors' different purposes and perspectives influence their presentation of details and ideas?

Text-specific Question(s):

- 1- How does Peary's account of "march[ing] all day long facing a blinding snowstorm" [paragraphs 8- 9] compare and contrast with London's description of the man's fateful journey and accident [paragraphs 2-4]? In what ways does each writer cause a reader to imagine the experience of trying to survive in an arctic environment?
- 2- Peary suggests about his readers that they "Probably... also remember how welcome was the warm fireside of home at the end of their journey." In describing the man's experience, what details does London provide that contrast sharply (and ironically) with this familiar and comforting image?

## ACTIVITY 3: EXPLAINING AND COMPARING TEXTS

Student groups develop a comparative question and individually write a paragraph using their question.

### INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

#### SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

- Students work in groups using their analyses of Texts #5 and #6 to come up with a comparative question.
- Support student groups as they develop their questions.

## ACTIVITY 3: EXPLAINING AND COMPARING TEXTS (CONT'D)

### INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

#### WRITING COMPARATIVE ANALYSES

- Students draw from their notes, tools, annotated texts, and sentences from earlier activities to construct a paragraph answering their comparative question. Paragraphs should include:
  - ⇒ The comparative question
  - ⇒ 1-2 sentences explaining their analysis of Text #5 and key supporting details
  - ⇒ 1-2 sentences explaining their analysis of Text #6 and key supporting details
  - ⇒ 1-2 sentences explaining a connection they have made between the two texts that answers their comparative question
- Students construct the paragraph by:
  - ⇒ Introducing the topic, in this case the comparison made between the texts
  - ⇒ Organizing their information to clearly and logically express their ideas
  - ⇒ Developing the topic with appropriate supporting details
  - ⇒ Linking sentences with appropriate transitional words and phrases to clarify relationships and establish coherence
  - ⇒ Using precise language and an academic (formal) style of writing.
- In small groups, students read and peer-review their comparative paragraphs
  - ⇒ Prior to submission, an optional revision may be asked of the students based on peer feedback.
- Students submit paragraphs and their supporting materials.

## ACTIVITY 4: INDEPENDENT READING

Students independently read texts using a guiding question.

### INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

This reading, which sets up Parts 4 and 5 of the unit, can be done as homework or in class, with more or less scaffolding depending on how students have been doing in previous reading experiences. On their own, students read Texts # 7, 8, & 9 - topic-related texts all written in a similar genre/mode, using Guiding Questions to set up a Questioning Texts Tool. At this point, students do not need to study any of the three texts, rather simply be familiar with them, so they can prepare themselves for analyzing one of the texts through close reading in Part 4 and for leading a comparative discussion in Part 5.

## ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

In Part 3, students will have:

- Completed a Questioning Texts Tool for text #6 individually and in groups
- Completed an Analyzing Texts Tool based on their own text-specific questions
- Taken part in a group discussion about connections between texts #5 and #6
- Written a paragraph explaining their analysis of Texts #5 and #6 and making connections between them.

Use these work samples to both assess how the class is doing overall in the skills of close reading, questioning, analyzing details, comparing, and explaining, and to help determine which of the three texts students might be assigned to read and analyze for Parts 4 and 5 of the unit. Thus, their paragraphs potentially serve both as formative and diagnostic assessment. As before, student discussions provide opportunities to “listen in” and informally assess their speaking and listening skills, in anticipation of Part 5.