

PART 2

QUESTIONING TEXTS

“Families have been divided...”

OBJECTIVE:

Students learn to use questions to guide their approach to, reading, and deeper analysis of texts. Students read and analyze informational texts.



ACTIVITIES

1- HOW SKILLFUL READERS APPROACH TEXTS

The teacher models how to use the Questioning Texts Tool to guide a process for close reading, and then pairs practice on a text they have read.

2- APPROACHING A NEW TEXT

Students listen to a new text and use the Questioning Texts Tool to guide their reading.

3- ANALYZING TEXT WITH TEXT-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

The teacher guides the class through an analysis of the text using the Analyzing Details Tool.

4- POSING TEXT-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Students develop their own text-specific questions with which to analyze the text.

5- INDEPENDENT WRITING ACTIVITY

Students write 1-3 sentences explaining their analysis of the text and list supporting textual details.

ESTIMATED TIME: 3 days

MATERIALS:

Texts #1-5
Questioning Texts Tool
Analyzing Details Tool
Reading Closely Checklist
Guiding Questions Handout



ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S): RI.8.1 RI.8.2

RI.8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.8.2: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RI.8.4

RI.8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

ACTIVITY 1: HOW SKILLFUL READERS APPROACH TEXTS

The teacher models how to use the Questioning Texts Tool to guide a process for close reading, and then pairs practice on a text they have read.

QUESTIONING TEXTS TOOL

The **QUESTIONING TEXTS TOOL** supports students in a process for close reading. The tool prompts students to record and organize basic information about a text and to focus on their reading purposes. It provides a place for recording guiding questions to help them read closely for details and text-specific questions they have come to in their reading.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

MODEL THE TOOL

Begin by modeling the Questioning Texts Tool, using Text #2:

- Think-aloud and talk through what you record in each Approaching the Text box.
- Select one or two questions to focus on from the Guiding Questions Handout.
- Re-read through the text, searching for details related to your guiding question. Model marking and annotating the text.
- Frame a new, text-specific question that the guiding question draws out of the passage.

TOOL PRACTICE IN PAIRS

- Student pairs continue examining Text #2 with the Questioning Text Tool.
- Have student pairs use a *different* guiding question as a lens for examination and come up with related text-specific questions.
- The key skill to work on is having students frame a good, text-specific question that emerges after students have used the guiding question to identify important information in the text.



ACTIVITY 2: APPROACHING A NEW TEXT

Students listen to a new text and use the Questioning Texts Tool to guide their reading.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

INTRODUCE AND READ TEXT #5 ALOUD

Text #5 is a related but more challenging text. Provide minimal context about the passage before students encounter it. First have them listen to a reading of the text, asking them to concentrate on the author's message, tone, and use of language.

TEXTUAL NOTES

The text is by Edward Steiner, a Grinnell (Iowa) college professor who researched the experiences of immigrants coming to and moving through America; he even traveled with immigrants in steerage to better understand and describe their experiences (as depicted in this text excerpt). The passage is from Chapter 5 of his 1906 book *On the Trail of the Immigrant*. Because of its longer sentences, it measures above grade level (at 1550L), but its rich description and narration should be accessible to most students with some scaffolding. For this activity, have students read and analyze descriptive details in the first four paragraphs.

STUDENTS USE THE QUESTIONING TEXTS TOOL

- Students independently complete a Questioning Texts Tool – but do not yet record a text-specific question in the last row.
- Provide the guiding questions students will use, or have them select questions from the handout
- Emphasize questions related to language use and meaning, having students pay attention to and highlight words and phrases that are critical for understanding the passage and may also be less familiar to them.
- Focus on academic vocabulary – and its relationship to textual meaning.

READ TEXT #5 IN PAIRS

- Students look for details related to their guiding question.
- Students work in pairs to come up with text-specific questions to put in the final row of the Questioning Texts Tool.
- Students share their text-specific questions with the class, discussing and refining them as a class.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):

- 1-What words or phrases are powerful or unique?
- 2-What do the author's words cause me to see or feel?
- 3- What words do I need to know to better understand the text?

ACTIVITY 3: ANALYZING TEXT WITH TEXT-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

The teacher guides the class through an analysis of the text using the Analyzing Details Tool.

ANALYZING DETAILS TOOL

The **ANALYZING DETAILS TOOL** also supports students in a process for close reading. The tool begins with a place to record their self-generated (or teacher-provided) text-specific question that they have come to through a guiding question. The tool prompts students to re-read the text marking and annotating details related to their question. Students then review their details and select those most relevant to their question. Students then analyze and make connections among those details to answer their question and deepen their understanding.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

MODEL THE TOOL

- Guide the class through the tool identifying your reading purpose and using a text-specific question that emerged from class discussion. The tool can also be used with guiding questions or with text-specific questions you provide to students.
- Read and annotate the text actively, marking, highlighting, or flagging details that are related to the reading purpose and question.
- Review the details you have marked, looking for “key” details, words, and phrases that relate to your reading purpose and question, and that convey or support a central idea.
- Record 3 of these key details/phrases from the text in the “Selecting Details” section of the tool, indicating the source/location in the “reference” section.
- Analyze each detail and record your thinking.
- Connect the details by writing a sentence based on your analysis.
- Have students all fill in their own tool with the information developed as a class. This allows students to get a feel for using the tool and provides them with analysis and models in their personal notebooks.

TEXTUAL NOTES

Have students re-read the entire Steiner text, focusing on the last two paragraphs, noting descriptive and narrative details, and making connections among them.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):

- 1-What words or phrases are powerful or unique?
- 2- What do the author’s words cause me to see or feel?

Text-specific Question(s):

- 1-In paragraph 5, what specific details, words and images does Steiner use to describe the “shifting process” that “has taken place”?
- 2-In paragraph 6, what details does Steiner provide about the Polish woman he encounters, and how do those details evoke feelings in us as readers?

ACTIVITY 4: POSING TEXT-DEPENDENT QUESTIONS

Students develop their own text-specific questions with which to analyze the text.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

STUDENTS USE THE ANALYZING DETAILS TOOL

- Students begin by confirming or revising their text-specific question at the bottom of the Questioning Texts Tool for Text #5. (This might be done in small groups.)
⇒ Some questions may be literal –scaffold students’ efforts to pose a question that causes them to re-examine textual details and discover something new about the text.
- Students transfer their question to the Analyzing Details Tool.
- Students annotate their texts by highlighting/marketing all the details they feel are relevant to their question.
- Students select three details to analyze, copying them and referencing them in their tool.
- Students analyze the details, recording their thinking.
- Students connect the details, writing a sentence or two explaining their thinking.
- Students share their findings in a group discussion, using their tools to guide their conversations, and reflect as a group on their process of reading closely, using the Reading Closely Checklist as a framework for reflection.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

For the Steiner passage, students might be coached to try to frame a question that looks into the passage as a whole, and that causes them to identify and connect details from across the six paragraphs. For students who are having trouble framing their own questions, text-dependent question models such as the following might be used as a starter:

Text-specific Question(s):

- 1- What does the passage overall depict about the process of entering Ellis Island?
- 2- What textual details seem most important in helping us visualize what the immigrants and Steiner experienced?



ACTIVITY 5: INDEPENDENT WRITING

Students write 1-3 sentences explaining their analysis of the text and list supporting textual details.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

In Part 4 of the unit, students will be developing and practicing the skills of writing a detail-based explanation of a text they have read. In this activity, introduce the idea of what a text-based explanation entails, possibly modeling one for Text #2. Ask students to work from their Analyzing Details Tool completed in Activity 4 and to write several clear, coherent, and complete sentences that explain something from their analysis of Text #5, making sure to reference key details they have identified. Connect this writing activity to skills students have been working on with their earlier paraphrasing activities.



ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

At the end of Part 2, students will have:

- Completed a Questioning Texts Tool for Text #2
- Completed a Questioning Texts Tool for Text #5
- Annotated their texts to highlight details related to their text questioning
- Completed an Analyzing Texts Tool for Text #5 both as a class and independently
- Written an explanation of their analysis of the text, including supporting details
- Engaged in group and class discussions

The primary focus of evaluation at this stage should be on student ability to use questioning to focus their annotation and selection of details. Examine student Questioning Texts Tool to evaluate the formation of their text-specific questions and their relationship to the guiding questions. Examine their annotated texts and Analyzing Details Tool to evaluate the relevance of their selected details and their recorded thinking and connections. Evaluate the tools for evidence of students' reading and thinking; examine the short written explanations for their developing writing skills, paying attention to use of evidence and to word choice, punctuation, and grammar.