

PART 3

ANALYZING DETAILS

“Those evenings of the brain”

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): RL.11-12.1 RL.11-12.2 RL.11-12.6

RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RL.11-12.2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.11-12.6: Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.4 RL.11-12.9

RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

RL.11-12.9: Demonstrate knowledge of eighteenth-, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century foundational works of American literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.



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

Emily Dickinson wrote the poem, "We Grow Accustomed to the Dark," around 1862. With permission of the trustees of Amherst College, the *Commonweal* (XXIII), an American journal of opinion regarding religion, politics, and culture, first published the poem on November 29, 1935, more than fifty years after her death. The vast majority of the reclusive and prolific poet's nearly eighteen hundred poems were unpublished in her lifetime. Dickinson's poems dealt with death and immortality; themes consistent with her experiences with education, grief, melancholia, religion, and unrequited affection. The poem's structure contains five four-verse stanzas--the first four employing different scenarios related to seeing in the dark.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):

- 1-How is the text organized?
- 2- What is the author saying about the topic?

Text-specific Question(s):

- 1- How does each scenario support the premise of the final stanza? In what ways can the darkness(es) Dickinson describe be categorized?
- 2- Is growing accustomed to or normalizing the dark, from the author's perspective, good, bad, or neither?

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 two passages provide many points of comparison in their view of humanity and their use of images. "Thirst" uses natural phenomena such as fruit, grass, trees, water, roots, reeds, streams to contextualize the reader to more anthropocentric realities (conditions of human nature) such as affection, desire, passion, suffering, and temptation. Similarly, Dickinson applies symbols such as a lamp, a road, the moon and stars, and a tree in order to place humanity ("We") in various contexts where a distilled concept emerges. In terms of theme and purpose, "Thirst" draws upon the common human predicament of attachment, making use of both the literal and figurative meanings of "thirst." Dickinson, on the other hand, focuses on "darkness" to make claims about human nature.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):

1-How does the author's use of language show his or her perspective?

Text-specific Question(s):

1- What examples demonstrate how both authors require physical and mental participation in accepting, constructing, or improving the human condition?

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.