

Close Reading/Critical Thinking About Reading



Teach students to make inferences as they read.
Teach students how to turn lengthy sentences into shorter ones as they read.
Teach students how to figure out vocabulary in context.
Teach students how to recognize figurative vs. literal meaning.
Teach students how to form open-ended questions.
Teach students to put their confusion over complex passages into question form.

Pull model sentences, then longer passages and put them on the document camera or screen and analyze them aloud with first teacher, then student modeling.
Model, then give student practice in composing statements of opinion, then citing textual evidence from multiple places as support.
Model for students your own confusion and process at arriving at a conclusion when confronted with ambiguous passages.

Teach students to underline significant words and phrases and question their impact on the whole piece.
Teach students to question motives of the writer, characters, etc.

Analyze organizational impact on the passage, e.g. cause and effect, comparison, spatial, and see if confusion is because of the way the passage is organized.
If so, teach students to reorganize, rearrange, or add or delete to provide clarity.

Teach students to make charts of characters and their roles or relationships when there are lots of them or maps or pictures of locations when spatial detail is difficult.
Teach students to connect what they're reading with other contexts or provide pictures, titles, charts, or personal experience, etc.
Teach students that not all reading problems are their fault. Sometimes authors leave out vital pieces of information and count on the reader to supply the vacancies.
Show them a piece you create as an example.

Help students see themes by helping them understand human needs, faults, reformation, reconciliation, and redemption.
Provide background when allusions are important to understanding the text.

Teach students to summarize a passage, then share with a partner for revision purposes.
Teach students to differentiate between complex passages to determine why each is difficult. If they know the reason why, they can apply the strategy to comprehend it.
Teach students to identify techniques of style, syntax, structure, and tone.

Teach students to identify the positive and negative connotations, viewpoints, opinions, interests, and agendas in the text.
Teach students to identify the biases, contradictions, and inconsistencies in a passage.
Teach students to articulate what they anticipate will occur, not just as prereading but throughout the text.

Make explicit for struggling readers what may be implicit for accomplished readers.