



QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

Read with Purpose

SPRING 2017 KICKOFF

JANUARY 31 & FEBRUARY 1

Suggested Classroom Activities for Critical Reading

If you have 5 minutes . . . *Preview the reading for your next class meeting.*

Students better understand what they are reading when they understand *why* they are reading. At the end of class, take five minutes to draw the class's attention to what they'll be reading for the next class. Give them some context:

- Who wrote it?
- In what publication is it?
- To what parts should they pay most attention?
- What do you want them to do with it, or how will they be held accountable the next time you see them?

If you have 10 minutes . . . *Add KWL to your preview.*

Students better prepare to read when they think about what they already know about a topic and formulate questions about what they want to learn.

- After previewing a text assigned for homework, ask students what they already **Know** about the topic. How does the topic connect to their own experiences or to what they are learning in other classes?
- Ask students what they **Want** to know from the assigned reading. Generate a list of questions that the assigned reading might answer.
- Tell students that they will be asked to reflect on what they **Learned** from the reading at the beginning of the next class (and then be sure to follow through).

If you have 15 minutes . . . *Start the day with "I read this way."*

Students better learn how to read critically in our disciplines when we show them what strategies we use when *we* read as experts. Choose a portion of your course's reading assignment for the day and walk your students through how you read the assignment:

- What words stood out to you as important or potentially confusing?
- How is the piece organized, and what is important about that to you or helps you better read the piece?
- When you read the piece, what did you annotate, underline, question, or comment? You can even show screen shots or handouts of a few pages so they see the work you've put into it.
- To what conclusions did you come that might help your students better understand how to put the different aspects of their reading together in a way that makes sense for your discipline?

If you have the whole class . . . *Develop metacognitive muscle by reflecting.*

Students make better connections between critical reading and metacognition in their own lives when we make the invisible visible. Choose an interesting, relevant, or disciplinarily representative text for the day and work with them to help them build solid habits of mind for reading that require that they *read with purpose* and reflect on their own reading processes. Here's a scaffolded activity we suggest:

1. Have everyone get out the reading material for the day (textbook, article, website, etc.) and give a few minutes to review what they read to themselves. (5-10 minutes)
2. Draw their attention to a particular section of the reading, maybe a page, section, or series of paragraphs (or, if short, use all of it). Set a timer for 2 minutes and have them write a summary of that section. For many students, this may be difficult, not because they haven't done the work but because they're not used to the habits required for critical reading. Ask them if it was easy or difficult to write the summary, and why? (10-20 minutes)
3. Now, walk them through a series of critical reading strategies while they re-read that section. Take your pick of 3, maybe moving from simple to more complex, and give them five minutes of practice for each strategy. (20-30 minutes)
 - a. Ask questions.
 - b. Look up unfamiliar vocabulary.
 - c. Connect ideas to their other classes.
 - d. Connect ideas to their lives.
 - e. Outline the piece's organization.
 - f. Analyze the way the author presents information: is it effective?
 - g. Analyze the author's word choices: are they effective?
 - h. Analyze the author's use of evidence: is it convincing?
 - i. Evaluate the effectiveness of the author's argument.
 - j. Something else experts in *your* field do.
4. Finally, ask them to reflect on whether they now understand that section better than before: Is it clearer? Do they see its relationship to the larger piece better? Do they see its connection to their own lives more tangibly? What strategy, if any, was most effective, and why? This reflection can be done as a full group discussion, as a quiet low-stakes writing assignment turned in to you, or in pairs or small groups, depending on the size and dynamic of your individual class.