READING CLOSELY
FOR TEXTUAL DETAILS

DEVELOPING CORE PROFICIENCIES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS / LITERACY UNIT

GRADE 12

"And Life steps almost straight."

DEVELOPING CORE PROFICIENCIES SERIES

This unit is part of the Odell Education Literacy Instruction: Developing Core Proficiencies program, an integrated set of ELA units spanning grades 6-12. Funded by USNY Regents Research Fund, the program is comprised of a series of four units at each grade level that provide direct instruction on a set of literacy proficiencies at the heart of the CCSS.

Unit 1: Reading Closely for Textual Details
Unit 2: Making Evidence-Based Claims
Unit 3: Researching to Deepen Understanding
Unit 4: Building Evidence-Based Arguments

The Core Proficiencies units have been designed to be used in a variety of ways. They can be taught as short stand-alone units to introduce or develop key student proficiencies. Teachers can also integrate them into larger modules that build up to and around these proficiencies. Teachers can also apply the activity sequences and unit materials to different texts and topics. The materials have been intentionally designed for easy adaptation to new texts.

Unit materials available at
www.odelleducation.com

READING CLOSELY FOR TEXTUAL DETAILS

Becoming literate involves developing habits and proficiencies associated with many reading purposes, from reading for pleasure to preparing for high-stakes business meetings. This unit develops students' abilities to read closely for textual details—a proficiency essential for a variety of reading purposes and contexts. Attending to and analyzing details are essential skills for accessing meaning, allowing texts to inform our understanding and enrich our lives.

Rather than simply ask students to read closely, this unit instructs them in a process for doing so. The activities lay out a process for approaching, questioning and analyzing texts that helps readers focus on key textual characteristics and ideas. Just as experts in any field access deep understanding by knowing what to look for in their particular fields, expert readers know the questions to ask of texts in order to guide them to deep meaning. The framework of questioning presented in this unit takes the invisible process expert readers have internalized and makes it explicit – to support teachers and students as they develop proficiency in reading text closely.

Proficient readers can also explain and share the discoveries they have made through reading and analyzing a text. Developing evidence-based explanations is essential for clarifying and deepening one's own understanding as well as the foundation for participation in academic and civic life. This unit integrates the development of explanatory communication skills into the close reading process. Students learn to explain their thinking and link it with textual evidence both in discussion and writing. The unit culminates in a structured text-centered discussion in which students examine discoveries they have made about an important topic, by explaining and comparing their textual analyses with their peers.

HOW THIS UNIT IS STRUCTURED

The unit activities are organized into five parts, each associated with short texts. The parts build on each other and can each span a range of instructional time depending on scheduling and student ability.

Part 1 introduces students to the idea of reading closely for details through an examination of a range of text types. Part 2 introduces students to a particular process for close reading that involves questioning the text—at first generally and then in text-specific ways—to help them focus on important textual ideas and characteristics. Part 3 develops student proficiency by analyzing textual details for making comparisons across texts. Parts 4 and 5 develop students' abilities to express their analysis, first through writing text-based explanations in Part 4 and then, in Part 5, through facilitating and participating in text-centered discussions.

This organization is designed to strengthen the precision of instruction and assessment, as well as to give teachers flexibility in their use of the unit.

The final activities in Parts 1-4 are designed as independent student tasks that can be done either in class or as homework.

Part 5 includes an optional extended assessment activity involving the creating of a student portfolio of work and a reflective essay on their experience throughout the unit.

HOW THIS UNIT MIGHT BE EMBEDDED IN CONTENT-BASED CURRICULUM

The unit is explicitly and intentionally framed as skills-based instruction. It is critical for students to understand that they are developing core literacy proficiencies that will enrich their academic and civic lives. The unit and activities should be framed for them as such. Nonetheless, the texts have been chosen, in part, for their rich content and cultural significance. They contain many important historical and contemporary ideas and themes. Teachers are encouraged to sequence the unit strategically within their

curriculum and instructional plans, and to establish content connections that will be meaningful for students. This might involve connecting the unit to the study of topics or eras in social studies, related genres or voices in literature, or themes and guiding questions. Whatever the curricular context established by the teacher, the central emphasis of the unit should, however, be on evidence-based, text-focused instruction.

HOW THIS UNIT TEACHES WRITING

Communicating understanding effectively is an essential part of the close reading process. And while this unit focuses primarily on reading proficiencies, writing from textual evidence plays an important role in most of the activities. The nature of the writing instruction at this stage in the Developing Core Proficiencies Series is rooted in some core principles. First, strong writing flows from deep comprehension of a text or topic. Many deficiencies in writing are the result of shallow or uniformed critical thinking. The unit writing activities are linked closely to student reading in ways that help them both develop and express their emerging understanding of the evidence at hand. Students are continually asked to explain their thinking about texts in their writing. Developing this ability is fundamental to supporting students as they craft extended pieces of writing in later contexts.

The writing activities—including the writing students complete on the tools—are all very limited in scope. In most cases students write only one or two sentences and at most a few short paragraphs. This in NO way suggests that they are limited in importance. The limited scope intentionally allows teachers and students to focus on building the ability to accurately incorporate textual evidence into their communication, and include effective word choice, punctuation, and syntax that are appropriate to the audience and task.

HOW THIS UNIT TEACHES VOCABULARY

This unit draws on a variety of strategies for teaching academic and disciplinary vocabulary. The primary strategy is the way critical disciplinary vocabulary and concepts are built into the instruction. Students are taught words like "analyze," "perspective," "questioning," and "criteria" through their explicit use in the activities. Students come to understand and use these words as they think about and evaluate their textual analysis and that of their peers. The handouts and tools play a key role in this process. By the end of the unit, students will have developed deep conceptual knowledge of key vocabulary that they can transfer to a variety of academic and public contexts.

The texts and activities also provide many opportunities for academic vocabulary instruction. Many of the activities focus directly on analyzing the way authors use language and key words to develop ideas and achieve specific purposes.

The sequence of topical texts also builds vocabulary knowledge and connections, supporting both textual comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. The texts are formatted with integrated tools for vocabulary development. Each page includes editable glossaries where teachers and students can choose various words to define. Some words have been pre-selected and glossed. Teachers may choose to differentiate vocabulary support by student.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND STUDENTS READING BELOW GRADE LEVEL

This unit is intentionally designed so that all students engage directly with a series of texts that progress in grade level complexity and activities as the unit unfolds. Appropriate scaffolding is built into the unit design, activity sequence, and tools to make instruction comprehensible to students – especially those who are English Language Learners or are reading well below grade level at the start of the unit – so that they directly experience the complexity of the texts. The unit actively supports these students through explicit instruction of skills and strategies, the building of background knowledge, a progression of increasing text complexity, a focus on student-developed questions, and instructional strategies associated with modeling, grouping, and graphic organizers. Instruction follows a progression that moves from scaffolding and support to independent application.

Among the supports for English Language Learners and below grade-level readers integrated into the units are:

Unit Design and Instructional Sequence: By design, students begin learning to "read closely" by first encountering visual images, which they scan for details, and then multi-media texts that reinforce the skills of identifying details and making text-based observations from those details. Thus, before they ever encounter print texts of grade level complexity, students begin to develop skills and strategies through visual learning experiences. They then learn to transfer these skills to the reading of more complex texts. The text sequences in this Reading Closely unit are also set up as a "staircase of complexity," so that students move from more accessible texts that help them build background knowledge to more challenging texts that they analyze for perspective and use of language. The sequence of texts culminates in a final, three-text set, which presents students with a range of text complexity, based on both quantitative and qualitative

measures. Students are expected to become an "expert" for only one of these texts, providing teachers with an opportunity to differentiate content (text selection) based on students' reading levels or English language mastery.

Short Texts, Focused Reading: Most of the texts in the unit are relatively short in length, allowing students to focus on individual paragraphs and sentences as they learn to read closely and derive meaning. Text-dependent questions included in the instructional notes further focus students' reading to important or more challenging sections of text.

Read Alouds and Modeling: At key parts in the instruction, teachers read text aloud so that students can listen to the cadence and structure of texts while also following along themselves. By listening to a proficient reader, students pick up on natural pauses and pronunciation of words. Teachers also model "think alouds," wherein they discuss what they visualize and think as they read. Teachers thus model reading proficiently, and also model using the skills and graphic organizer tools that help students learn to read closely. Students see the tools and skills modeled before they apply them, first in pairs or small groups, then independently.

Guiding Question Framework: The units break the reading process down into manageable steps that are increasingly complex. For example, rather than simply asking students to paraphrase what they have read, the unit asks students to start by writing down details they have found in the text related to a guiding question like "What words or phrases stand out to me as I read?" Already equipped with details they have written down, students are then asked to discuss these details. Only after having had these two opportunities to interact with the text and peers do students attempt to paraphrase what they have read.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND STUDENTS READING BELOW GRADE LEVEL

Graphic Organizers: The unit's instructional tools provide students with a precise and guided manner for reading texts closely. These tools help break down the complex reading processes - processes that proficient readers automatically use - into clear, visual organizers. The tools, including the Questioning Texts and Analyzing Details tools, guide students to focus specifically on details they identify in the texts. Visually, they help students understand the relationships among those details and the connections and observations they make from the text.

Reading Teams: Students are given chances to read both in groups and individually. Teachers can group students in various ways, sometimes by reading abilities, sometimes by interests or target text, sometimes heterogeneously to pair less able readers with more advanced readers. By reading in teams, students practice talking about texts in a structured supported context.

Academic Vocabulary: While leaving many decisions about the teaching of vocabulary to the teacher, the unit includes glossaries for each text and sets up the learning of vocabulary in a text-based context. More generally, the Guiding Questions Handout utilizes vocabulary related to reading skills that students can apply while both reading and discussing texts. Additionally, many of the Guiding Questions direct students to identify and think about key words in the texts. Teachers of English Language Learners and below grade-level readers are encouraged to use additional vocabulary building strategies such as Word Walls, whereby students can visually reference the meaning of key words in the classroom as they read and discuss texts.

SOURCES OF THIS UNIT INSTRUCTION

The instructional ideas contained in this unit are presented as our contribution to the national effort to prepare all US secondary students for college and career readiness. We intend that these principles, activities, tools, and strategies will be taken up, adapted, and improved upon by the educators who use them. While we take full responsibility for the content of the unit, and recognize that mentioning our key sources in no way implies their endorsement of that content,

we would like to acknowledge some important influences and reference points for this work: the students and colleagues who contributed to the classroom experiences of our development team; the Common Core Standards; the PARCC ELA Curriculum Frameworks; the Tri-State Quality Review ELA Rubric; and the research on text complexity and text-dependent questioning from Student Achievement Partners.

HOW THIS UNIT ALIGNS WITH CCSS FOR ELA/LITERACY

The instructional focus of this unit is on learning to read text closely: attending to details, language, and perspective; posing and responding to text-dependent questions; and analyzing connections and relationships to deepen understanding. The unit also emphasizes informational text, while incorporating literary nonfiction and other literary texts. Accordingly, the primary alignment of the unit – the targeted CCSS – are **RI.1**, **RI.2**, and **RI.6** (*read closely to determine literal and inferential meaning, determine central ideas and supporting details, and assess author's point of view – while attending to and citing specific textual evidence*). Students develop these skills throughout the unit through direct instruction and guided practice, and they are assessed continuously through activities, tools, and written products.

As students develop these primary targeted reading skills, they are also practicing, and eventually demonstrating, their abilities to engage in text-centered discussions. Thus, **SL.1** (*engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively*) is also an emerging targeted CCSS as the unit progresses, and is directly assessed in the final, discussion-based activity of Part 5.

As students develop these primary targeted CCSS skill sets, they also practice and use related reading and writing skills from supporting CCSS. Thus, in Part 2, they begin to focus on **RI.4** (*interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text*) and in Part 3 on **RI.9** (analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics), with **RI.9** formatively assessed in Part 5.

Students focus on crafting effective evidence-based writing, working from titles and paraphrases to summary sentences and explanatory paragraphs. Thus, **W.2** (*write explanatory texts to convey ideas and information clearly and accurately*) and **W.9** (*draw evidence from texts to support analysis*) are also introduced and practiced in the unit, as is **W.4** (*produce clear and coherent writing*).

Finally, because students are expected to read and analyze a grade-level text somewhat independently in Parts 4 and 5, the unit provides initial evidence of how well students can meet the expectations of **RI.10** (*read and comprehend complex texts independently and proficiently*).

HOW TO USE THESE MATERIALS

This unit is in the format of a **Compressed File**. Files are organized so you can easily browse through the materials and find everything you need to print or e-mail for each day.

The materials are organized into three folders:

UNIT PLAN AND TEXTS

- Unit Plan
- Models
- Texts

The **model questions and tools** are meant only to illustrate the process, NOT to shape textual analysis. **It is essential that both teachers and students develop questions based on their own analysis and class discussion**. Teachers are encouraged to develop their own questions in the blank tools to use with students when modeling the process.

TEXTS are formatted with spacing and margins to support **teacher and student annotation**. Students should be encouraged to mark up their texts (electronically or in print) as they search for details. **Paragraphs and lines are numbered** for referencing in writing and discussion. **Editable glossaries** are provided at the bottom of each page. While some words have already been bolded and glossed, teachers are encouraged to use the editable features for choosing words they wish to focus on or gloss, and to differentiate word support for their students.

HANDOUTS

- Guiding Questions Handout
- Reading Closely Checklist
- Text-Centered Discussion Checklist

TOOLS

- Analyzing Details
- Questioning Texts

TOOLS and **CHECKLISTS** have been created as **editable PDF forms.** With the free version of Adobe Reader, students and teachers are able to type in them and save their work for recording and e-mailing. This allows students and teachers to work either with paper and pencil or electronically according to their strengths and needs. It also allows teachers to collect and organize student work for evaluation and formative assessment.

If you decide to **PRINT** materials, please note that you can print them at **actual size**, without enabling the auto-fit function. All materials can be printed either in color or in black and white.

≡ UNIT OUTLINE

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING CLOSE READING

- The teacher presents an overview of the unit, discussing the purposes and elements of close reading.
- Students are oriented to the idea of attending to details through examining images.
- Students use guiding questions to look closely for details in a text.
- Students use guiding questions to look closely for details in a multi-media text and write a few sentences explaining something they have learned.
- Students use guiding questions to independently explore a multi-media website.

PART 2: QUESTIONING 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.
- Students listen to a new text and use the Questioning Texts Tool to guide their reading.
- The teacher guides the class through an analysis of the text using the Analyzing Details Tool.
- Students develop their own text-specific questions with which to analyze the text.
- Students write 1-3 sentences explaining their analysis of the text and list supporting textual details.

PART 3: ANALYZING DETAILS

- Students listen to and then closely read and analyze a new text.
- The teacher guides and supports students in a comparative discussion of the texts.
- Students develop a comparative question in groups and individually write a paragraph answering their question.
- Students independently read texts using a guiding question.

PART 4: EXPLAINING UNDERSTANDING

- The teacher introduces the final culminating text-centered writing and comparative discussion.
- Students listen to three related texts and discuss them as a class.
- Students select (or are assigned) one of the texts to discuss with a small group and then analyze independently.
- Students use their analysis to independently write a detail-based explanation of one of the texts.

PART 5: DISCUSSING IDEAS

- The teacher leads students in a reflective conversation about productive, text-centered discussions.
- Students discuss their analysis in groups and independently prepare for leading a text-centered discussion by crafting a comparative text-dependent question.
- Students lead and participate in text-centered discussions with other students who have analyzed different texts.

READING CLOSELY GRADE 12 UNIT TEXTS

AUTHOR	DATE	PUBLISHER	L	NOTES
Text #1: *Sorrow Teeming With Light* (Painting), *Calvin and Hobbes* (Comic Strip), and *Construint* (Sculpture)				
Gabriel Shaffer	2012	Gabriel Shaffer	NA	Painting on collage featuring aspects of technology and myth.
Bill Watterson	Mid-20th century	Universal Uclick	NA	Calvin and Hobbes comic strip depicting Calvin and Hobbes pondering their existence on a sidewalk.
Professor Efraïm Rodriguez	2008	epSos.de (Flickr)	NA	Sculpture of a boy using colored building blocks.
Text #2: *A Case for a Tragic Optimism* (Informational Text)				
Viktor Frankl	1946 & 1984	Washington Square Press	1250L	An excerpt in which Frankl discusses human nature in terms of "swine" and "saints".
Text #3: *Search for meaning* (Video)				
Viktor Frankl	1983	Viktor Frankl Insititute	NA	Frankl lectures at a conference in Toronto, extolling the virtues of overestimating man.
Text #4: *Time-Life Photos* (Website)				
NA	NA	Time	NA	Website containing photos and descriptions of human life throughout history.
Text #5: *Thirst - Ch 24: Dhammapada* (Sacred Text)				
The Buddha	c.350 BCE	Produced by Tom Weiss	1190L	24th chapter of a Buddhist scripture explaining the cause of rebirth in terms of thirst.
Text #6: *We Grow Accustomed to the Dark* (Poem)				
Emily Dickinson	1862	Commonweal	NA	Typical Dickinson poem, rich with metaphor & universal themes, describing humanity's adaptability to adversity.
Text #7: *The Examined Life* (Speech)				
Cornel West	July 2, 2011	Zeitgeist Films	1070L	From a documentary, West describes philosophy as preparation for death.
Text #8: *The Genealogy of Morals* (Philosophical Treatise)				
Friedrich Nietzsche	1887	Doubleday	1230L	Selection from the German philosopher's masterpiece in which he exhorts man to reject the impossible "opposite"
Text #9: *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Philosophical Treatise)				
René Descartes	1641	The Liberal Arts Press	1620L	The French philosopher shows that sin is the result of man's will overreaching his understanding.
Extended Reading: *A letter written by Rainer Maria Rilke from Muzot* (Letter)				
Rainer Maria Rilke	August 11, 1924	Harper & Row	1840L	A letter in which the German poet comments on how inner space is bigger than outer space.
Extended Reading: *Emile or On Education* (Philosophical Treatise)				
Jean Jacques Rousseau	1762	J. Néaulme	1130L	Philosophical treatise on nature of human beings and education.

UNDERSTANDING CLOSE READING

"swine and saints"

OBJECTIVE:	Students learn what it means to read a text closely by attending to and analyzing textual details. Students analyze visual-based texts.

ACTIVITIES

ESTIMATED TIME: 3-4 days

MATERIALS:
Texts #1-4
Guiding Questions Handout
Reading Closely Checklist

1- INTRODUCTION TO UNIT
The teacher presents an overview of the unit, discussing the purposes and elements of close reading.

2- LOOKING CLOSELY FOR DETAILS
Students are oriented to the idea of attending to details through examining images.

3- READING CLOSELY FOR DETAILS
Students use guiding questions to look closely for details in a text.

4- ATTENDING TO DETAILS IN MULTI-MEDIA
Students use guiding questions to look closely for details in a multi-media text and write a few sentences explaining something they have learned.

5- INDEPENDENT READING/RESEARCHING ACTIVITY
Students use guiding questions to independently explore a multi-media website.

ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S):   RI.11-12.1   RI.11-12.2
RI.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.
RI.11-12.2: Determine two or more 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 provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RI.11-12.4
RI.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.

ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTION TO UNIT

The teacher presents an overview of the unit, discussing the purposes and elements of close reading.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Introduce the central purpose of the unit – to develop the skills and habits of a close reader:
1) Initially approaching and surveying a text
2) Using questions to examine the text's topic, information, and structure
3) Questioning further to investigate the text
4) Analyzing key details and language to deepen understanding
5) Explaining what one has come to understand as a reader

INTRODUCTORY ANALOGY

To introduce the unit and establish a link between questioning, close examination, and deepening understanding, you might use an analogy from another field that requires careful study and analysis. For example:

- Compare the process of "close reading" to the analytical processes used by other experts, such as musicians, scientists, or detectives;

- Present a CSI video that demonstrates how a detective asks herself questions when first approaching a crime scene.

Use any of these analogies to illustrate how experts in various fields are able to analyze and understand artistic works, phenomena, places, events or situations because their training focuses them on details that the uninitiated do not typically notice. This training often involves a set of *guiding questions* that experts ask themselves to direct their attention to key elements of their fields of study.

A musician might ask herself, "How do the sounds of the various instruments work together?" A crime scene investigator might ask, "What evidence suggests how the perpetrator came and went from the scene?" These more general questions lead the experts to then ask specific questions directly related to the object of investigation. For example, the general question concerning the perpetrator's coming and going might lead the investigator to notice a set of muddy footprints. She then might ask, "What are the size and type of the shoes that left these muddy footprints?" Experts ask these questions so that they clearly understand what they are studying and can clearly communicate their understanding to others.

LINK THE ANALOGY TO QUESTIONING SKILLS

- Using the introductory analogy as a reference point, explain that effective readers also use guiding questions to help them look for evidence in texts.

- Introduce the Guiding Questions (GQ) Handout, orienting students to both the structure of the document and the questions in each row, and explaining that these are a general set of guiding questions that can direct their attention to key evidence in texts as they read.

PREVIEW THE TEXTS AND CHECKLISTS

- Show students the Text Set Table indicating that there are connections among the texts but do not stipulate what those connections are.

- Let them know they will be reading and studying those texts with increasing independence, and will be expected to lead a group discussion about one of the final three texts.

- Introduce the Reading Closely Checklist and the Text-Centered Discussions (TCD) Checklist and explain that they will be working on these skills throughout the unit.

ACTIVITY 2: LOOKING CLOSELY FOR DETAILS

Students are oriented to the idea of attending to details through examining images.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

TEXTUAL NOTES

Introduce students to the images they will study noting that each intends to convey something about human nature. The painting by contemporary American artist Gabriel Shaffer is entitled "Sorrow Teeming with Light." The comic strip is from Bill Watterson's famous series *Calvin and Hobbes*. The untitled photograph by epSos.de (Flickr) is of Barcelona University Professor Efraim Rodgriguez Cobos' untitled sculpture of a boy and his blocks. You may conduct this activity using printed copies of the visual images, a projection in the room, or on computers, allowing students to literally zoom closer and note specific details.

EXAMINE IMAGES IN SMALL GROUPS

- Students examine the image(s) in small groups and answer the question "What stands out to me as I examine this image?"
- In their groups, students find several details that stand out to them, with one group member serving as a recorder of all their details.
- Groups may consult the GQ Handout for further questions to help them focus on details.
- Groups discuss what the details suggest to them and identify any new questions they have after examining and discussing the details.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):
1-What stands out to me as I first examine the images?
Text-specific Question(s):
1-How does the sidewalk influence Calvin's thinking? What change occurs between the third and fourth frame and how does this change relate to Calvin's questions?
 2- What is the significance of the material with which the boy is built?
3-What similarities are there between the two main figures in the painting and what might they mean?

NOTE: Throughout the unit Model text-specific questions associated with Guiding Questions have been provided in the material. These questions are included to illustrate the process and possibilities; teachers are encouraged to develop their own text-specific questions based on their own analysis.

CLASS DISCUSSION & SUMMARIZING ACTIVITY

- Lead a discussion on what the groups noticed about the images and the questions they had
- Discuss how these questions are "text-specific" – questions that:
  ⇒ Emerge from looking closely at the image
  ⇒ Prompt them to look for more details
  ⇒ Lead to a greater understanding of the image.
- Students list three details they think are "key" for them in understanding something that is going on in one of the images.

- Students write a caption that summarizes what they think the image is about and share and compare their captions/titles, noting the details that have led to what they have written.

At this stage, definitive answers do not need to be established for questions students pose. The purpose of the exercise is for students to get a sense of how close examination of texts leads to questions which in turn lead to further examination of textual detail, and an ability to communicate meaning to others.

ACTIVITY 3: READING CLOSELY FOR DETAILS

Students use guiding questions to look closely for details in a text.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

TEXTUAL NOTES

Auschwitz survivor and world-renowned psychotherapist, Dr. Viktor Frankl, is the author of Text #2. The text is the final entry of his 1984 postscript, entitled "A Case for a Tragic Optimism," to his seminal work, "Man's Search for Meaning," originally published in 1946. Beginning with a response to Sigmund Freud, the text describes opposing perspectives on human nature.

READ TEXT #2 ALOUD

- Direct students to the questions listed under "Topic, Information, and Ideas" in the Questioning Texts row of the GQ Handout.
- As you read the passage aloud, students think about the question:
  ⇒ "What information or ideas does this text present?"
- Ask students to record/share their responses to the question, making sure that students refer to the text to support their responses.

INDEPENDENT READING

- Before students re-read the passage independently, direct students to the questions listed under "Language" in the Questioning Texts row of the GQ Handout.
- Students think about the question:
  ⇒ "What words or phrases stand out to me as I read?"
- While reading independently, students mark details they notice (electronically or with a pencil/highlighter).

CLASS REVIEW & PARAPHRASING

- As a class, students:
  ⇒ Compare the details they have noticed and marked.
  ⇒ Discuss what the details suggest to them.
  ⇒ Identify any new questions they have after examining and discussing the details.
- Introduce the concept of a "paraphrase," and model paraphrasing a sentence from the passage.
- Individually, students draft a paraphrase of one of the details that stood out to them.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):

1-What words or phrases stand out to me as I read?
2- What is the author saying about the topic?

Text-specific Question(s):

1-What does the phrase "swine and saints" tell you about Frankl's view of human nature?

ACTIVITY 4: ATTENDING TO DETAILS IN MULTI-MEDIA

Students use guiding questions to look closely for details in a multi-media text and write a few sentences explaining something they have learned.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

TEXTUAL NOTES

Students will examine a brief video excerpt of a lecture on humanity's search for meaning delivered by Viktor Frankl at a conference in Toronto. Based on survey results, Frankl contends that in the "realistic view of man" s/he wants to find meaning and purpose in life. He then illustrates a way to think about what we should expect of a man or woman. It is difficult to see the diagram drawn on the chalkboard, so students will need to pay close attention in order to grasp what Frankl describes as "crabbing."

VIEW THE VIDEO

- Students view the video with no additional context provided, other than what they bring from studying the previous texts.
- Students think about a guiding question (i.e. "What information or ideas does this text present?") as they watch the video.

CLASS DISCUSSION AND RE-VIEW OF VIDEO

- Before re-viewing the video, briefly discuss students' initial observations.
- Use some of students' observations to craft a specific question about the video to guide the re-view. Alternatively, additional guiding questions can be used.
- Students record key details in a two-column notes format.
  ⇒ Note details sequentially in the first column of their notes, then highlight details they see as important, and explain (in the second column) why they see those selected details as important.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):
1-What words or phrases stand out to me as I read?
2- What is the author saying about the topic?

Text-specific Question(s):
1-What does Frankl say that demonstrates how the 'realistic view of man' supports Goethe's maxim?
2- What does the notion of the "spark" tell us about Frankl's view of human nature?

SMALL GROUPS WRITE ABOUT THE VIDEO

- Student small groups discuss the details they have selected, and their thinking about the importance of those details in helping them understand the video.
- Students share their notes and collaboratively write a few sentences explaining something they have learned from the video, referring to key details that have led to their understanding.
- Volunteers from each group read their sentences to the class.

- As a class compare what the groups saw, including how clearly and accurately they are able to communicate their understanding
- Reflect on the "close reading" experience of watching a video, using the Reading Closely Checklist to guide the reflective discussion. This reflective discussion is an opportunity for students to self-assess their ability to read closely and identify areas where they can improve as a reader over the course of this unit.

ODELL EDUCATION

☰ ACTIVITY 5: INDEPENDENT READING/ RESEARCH

Students use guiding questions to independently explore a multi-media website.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

This activity is an optional extension of Part 1 where students can enrich their skills of looking for details with web-based text. It is recommended for students who have access to a computer either as an individual or in groups. Accessing an informational site can not only help students apply close reading skills in the context of Internet research, but also enrich their understanding of the topic and other texts they will encounter in the unit. Students might be expected to develop deeper understanding of a part of the website through close reading and viewing, and to bring details and information they have found back to a small group discussion.

TEXTUAL NOTES

A good website to use is that of the magazine Life. The website includes thousands of photos organized by topics and decades depicting many aspects of human life. Many parts of the site include explanatory text. Students could be directed to explore the site, viewing various photos and reading the accompanying text.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):

1-What do I learn about the topic as I view and read?
2- How do the ideas relate to what I already know?

Text-specific Question(s):

1-What specific information and details can I bring back to my group to help them understand more about the human experience?

☰ ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Students' captions and paraphrases for Texts #1 & 2 can be reviewed to see if they are able to generalize from details, and might provide a pre-assessment of skills before students read and analyze more challenging passages in Parts 2-5. These short, informal writing samples should also be reviewed for evidence that students are able to clearly explain their thinking about the texts they are reading. The reflective conversation using the Reading Closely Checklist is an opportunity for students to self-assess. Student conversations in small groups, particularly in relation to Text #3 (the video), also can provide rich initial evidence of their emerging thinking, and of the skills related to Text-Centered Discussions that they bring into the unit, since they will be demonstrating those discussion skills in Part 5.

PART 2

QUESTIONING
TEXTS

"again and again"

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

ACTIVITIES

ESTIMATED TIME: 3 days

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

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.

ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S):   RL.11-12.1   RL.11-12.2

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.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RL.11-12.4

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.

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

Entitled "Thirst," this text is the complete 24th chapter Buddha's sayings, known as the "Dhammapada." Tradition claims the Buddha spoke these sayings at various times and in response to different circumstances. Likely compiled in the third century BCE and written in a literal and liturgical language "Pali," the Dhammapada is one of the most widely read Buddhist doctrines. The entire collection is 26 chapters, each with a unique title. In text #5 ("Thirst"), students find a series of 25 one- or two-sentence verses. The verses often repeat structures, themes, and words. Using an array of analogies, the author instructs the reader to aspire to a specific end.

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 words or phrases are repeated?
3-What do the author's words cause me to feel?

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

The text contains many analogies to express meaning. The class might choose to highlight them for examination of their significance and the effects they have on the reader.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):

1-What words or phrases are powerful or unique?
2-What words or phrases are repeated?
3-What do the author's words cause me to feel?

Text-specific Question(s):

1-In what ways do the root analogy as well as the other analogies support the purpose and meaning of the text?

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/marking 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

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

Text-specific Question(s):

1-What are the various ways the Buddha describes "thirst" and the effects it has on humans throughout their lives?

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.

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

ESTIMATED TIME: 3 days

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

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.

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?

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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.

PART 4

EXPLAINING UNDERSTANDING

"Whence, then do my errors arrive?"

OBJECTIVE: Students learn how to summarize and explain what they have learned from their reading, questioning, and analysis of texts. Students read and analyze three related texts.

ACTIVITIES

ESTIMATED TIME: 3 days

MATERIALS:
Texts #1-9
Questioning Texts Tool
Analyzing Details Tool
Guiding Questions Handout

1- INTRODUCTION TO CULMINATING ACTIVITY
The teacher introduces the final culminating text-centered writing and comparative discussion.

2- READING AND DISCUSSING RELATED TEXTS
Students listen to three related texts and discuss them as a class.

3- QUESTIONING AND ANALYZING TEXTS INDEPENDENTLY
Students select (or are assigned) one of the texts to discuss with a small group and then analyze independently.

4- INDEPENDENT WRITING ACTIVITY
Students use their analysis to independently write a detail-based explanation of one of the texts.

ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S):   RI.11-12.1   RI.11-12.2   RI.11-12.6

RI.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.
RI.11-12.2: Determine two or more 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 provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
RI.11-12.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RI.11-12.10   RI.11-12.4   W.11-12.2   W.11-12.9

RI.11-12.10: By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the highend of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.
RI.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.
W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
W.11-12.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTION TO CULMINATING ACTIVITY

The teacher introduces the final culminating text-centered writing and comparative discussion.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

The final two parts (4 and 5) of the unit are a two-stage culminating activity in which students first analyze and write about one of three related texts, then lead a comparative discussion about the three texts. In the first stage, students are introduced to the texts and choose one to read closely with a small, "expert" group. Building on their collaborative close reading, students independently analyze and write about their text. In the second stage of the culminating activity, students return to their small groups to discuss their writing and draft a question that compares their text to the other texts in the unit. Students then "jigsaw" to a new group and use their analysis, writing, and comparative question to facilitate and participate in a structured text-centered discussion with students who have analyzed the other two texts.

The culminating text-centered discussions could also lead to an optional in group presentation event. In this event, student groups share what they have learned about the topic to invited community members to simulate real-world and college panel discussions. See the description at the end of Part 5 for more details.

ACTIVITY 2: READING AND DISCUSSING RELATED TEXTS

Students listen to three related texts and discuss them as a class.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

- Read aloud the texts #7, #8, and #9. Alternatively, strong readers can be asked to read aloud.
- Lead a discussion of the students' first impressions of the texts, using the Guiding Questions to help facilitate discussion.

TEXTUAL NOTES

The three texts used for this section represent diverse but connected perspectives on human nature. Each is a personal narrative from a renowned, modern western philosopher – a 21st century African-American (Cornel West), a 19th century German (Friedrich Nietzsche), and a 17th century Frenchman (Rene Descartes). Humanity's quest for meaning, purpose, and virtue is complicated not only because of our limited understanding of truth, but also because of the inadequate, incomplete, and ultimately unverifiable paradigms and systems we deploy to describe and pursue it. In addition to dealing with profoundly challenging philosophical questions from an array of viewpoints, each text uses diverse literary styles.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

TEXTUAL NOTES

"The Examined Life:"

Situating his monologue within an historically and philosophically diverse context, Cornel West argues that the discipline of philosophy requires the courage to look at our finitude and fallibility; ultimately asserting that Philosophy, itself, is learning how to die. Our finite and fallible existence, if it is to attain some sense of truth, must give a voice to our human suffering. This does not exclude the existence of an absolute truth, however; it is just that our systems for drawing conclusions about it are diverse (science vs. religion) and certainly incomplete and therefore in need of revision and mystery.

"Genealogy of Morals:"

Nietzsche denies moral duality (good and evil) and contends that humanity's struggle for truth is misguided because we have created a false goal, namely, a perfect God. We have rejected our true nature – the "inveterate animal instincts" – as faulty and unredeemable, aspiring instead to a complete, albeit false, opposite construction of Self in God.

"Meditations on First Philosophy:"

After arguing for and identifying that God is the source of absolute truth (and does not desire to deceive humanity), Descartes explains that humanity is indifferent to what is good because we do not understand it, and therefore make mistakes (sins). If we truly understood the truth about what is good, we would choose to do it.

ACTIVITY 3: QUESTIONING AND ANALYZING TEXTS INDEPENDENTLY

Students select (or are assigned) one of the texts to discuss with a small group and then analyze independently.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Students may be assigned a text based on their reading comprehension levels, interests, or developing skills (as demonstrated earlier in the unit), or they may be allowed to choose a text following their initial reading and small group discussion of the three. Either way, each student will be responsible for doing a close reading, questioning, analysis, and summary of one of the three related texts.

SMALL GROUP CLOSE READING USING THE QUESTIONING TEXTS TOOL

- Small "expert" groups read one of the texts collaboratively using the Questioning Texts Tool.
- Each group member fills in his/her own Questioning Texts Tool for their assigned text, and each develops a separate text-specific question through their discussion.

INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS USING THE ANALYZING DETAILS TOOL

- Students independently complete an Analyzing Texts Tool using a text-specific question (his/her own or one from another group member).
- Students might optionally return to their expert groups to discuss their analysis.

MODEL TEXT QUESTIONING SEQUENCE

Guiding Question(s):
1- What words or phrases are critical for my understanding of the text?
2- What words and phrases are powerful or unique
3- What is the author saying about the topic?
4- How does the author's language show his perspective?

Text-specific Question(s):

"The Examined Life:"
1- According to West, what is the relationship between "death," "finitude," and "fallibility?"
2- Why is mystery an important concept for West?

"Genealogy of Morals:"
1- What does Nietzsche mean by God as the "last of the opposites."
2- How does the phrase "cry love ring out, the cry of rapt longing, of redemption in love" express Nietzsche's view of human nature?

"Meditations on First Philosophy:"
1- According to Descartes, in what ways does indifference diminish our liberty?
2- According to Descartes, if our will and understanding are equally perfect (from God), why does the will have greater capacity?

ACTIVITY 4: INDEPENDENT WRITING

Students use their analysis to independently write a detail-based explanation of one of the texts.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

This final activity of Part 4 serves both as a more formal assessment of each student's demonstration of the skills focused on in the unit, and as a foundation for their planning in Part 5, where they will lead a discussion comparing their text to others read in the unit. Students will submit this writing exercise as part of their assessment in Part 5.

Students write a multi-paragraph explanation, using textual evidence that explains:
- ⇒ A central idea of the text and how it is developed across it
- ⇒ What the central idea demonstrates about the author's perspective on the topic
- ⇒ What they have come to understand about the topic from the text.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The multi-paragraph explanations students draft in Part 4 should be reviewed closely as evidence of their close reading skills (and, to a lesser extent, as a formative assessment of their explanatory writing skills). At this point, students should be able to:

- Describe accurately central ideas of a text
- Explain observations about the author's perspective
- Identify something they have learned from their reading that is clearly text-related
- Reference details related to each of these writing purposes.

Students who can do so are ready to lead discussions in Part 5. Students who have not yet been able to read and explain their understanding of their text successfully may need additional support before moving on to Part 5.

PART 5

DISCUSSING IDEAS

"Source of self"

OBJECTIVE:	Students learn the characteristics of an effective text-based discussion and demonstrate skills in leading and participating in one.

≡ ACTIVITIES

ESTIMATED TIME: 3 days

MATERIALS:
Texts #1-9
Questioning Texts Tool
Analyzing Details Tool
TCD Checklist

1- UNDERSTANDING TEXT-CENTERED DISCUSSIONS
The teacher leads students in a reflective conversation about productive, text-centered discussions.

2- IDENTIFYING AND ORGANIZING IDEAS
Students discuss their analysis in groups and independently prepare for leading a text-centered discussion by crafting a comparative text-dependent question.

3- LEADING A TEXT-CENTERED DISCUSSION
Students lead and participate in text-centered discussions with other students who have analyzed different texts.

≡ ALIGNMENT TO CCSS

TARGETED STANDARD(S): SL.11-12.1

SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on- one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

SUPPORTING STANDARD(S): RI.11-12.10   W.11-12.2   W.11-12.4   W.11-12.9

RI.11-12.10: By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the highend of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W.11-12.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.11-12.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

ACTIVITY 1: UNDERSTANDING TEXT-CENTERED DISCUSSIONS

The teacher leads students in a reflective conversation about productive, text-centered discussions.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Throughout the unit, students have informally practiced the skills and behaviors used in text-centered discussions without formal instruction related to Speaking and Listening CCSS SL.1. Now present students with the TCD Checklist, a framework that outlines those skills.

- Read through the Checklist asking students to reflect on their performance for each criterion in the small group discussions throughout the unit.
- Have students refer to specific moments (or evidence) from previous small group discussions as examples of when they demonstrated – or didn't demonstrate – the criteria.
- Students fill out the checklist, indicating which skills they have demonstrated in small-group and class activities, noting specific examples in the "Comments" section.
- Students identify skills/behaviors they want to work on in this last part of the unit, as they prepare for and participate in their culminating text-centered discussions.

ACTIVITY 2: IDENTIFYING AND ORGANIZING IDEAS

Students discuss their text explanations in groups and independently prepare for leading a text-centered discussion by crafting a comparative text-dependent question.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Students prepare for their culminating demonstration of the unit where they will explain a central idea of their text, identify something they have learned from reading their text (in the context of the other texts of the unit), and pose a comparative text-dependent question to facilitate a text-based discussion. The key to this activity is that each student is encouraged to come up with an individual insight or observation that has sprung from reading and studying texts throughout the unit. For some students, this could be a more literal discovery or comparison, for others an inference supported by the texts, and for others still, an evidence-based claim. Students' discoveries need to be text-based and connected to a text-dependent question, but do not need to be too carefully structured around a particular theme, idea, or detail.

EXPERT GROUP DISCUSSIONS

- Students review each other's explanations in text-based expert groups for accuracy and use of details and compare the observations/discoveries they have made about their common text.
- Students discuss their text in relationship to texts #5 & #6, and to the other texts of the unit.
- Use the Text-Centered Discussion Checklist to help guide their discussion.

DEVELOP A COMPARITIVE QUESTION INDEPENDENTLY

- Students independently develop a text-dependent question that is based in their text but connects it to other texts.
- This question will be used to set up discussion when they join a new group in Activity 3.
- Depending on student ability, teachers might choose to model a comparative question and/or work individually with some students to help them develop their own.

ACTIVITY 3: LEADING A TEXT-CENTERED DISCUSSION

Students lead and participate in a text-centered discussion with two other students who have analyzed different texts.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

In this activity, students "jigsaw" to groups of three (or alternately six depending on class size) so that each of the final three texts is represented in the group by at least one text "expert".
In the discussion, each student (or student pair):

- Shares their explanations of a central idea of the text:
  ⇒ Pointing out key details to the other students in their group
  ⇒ Explaining their analysis of the author's perspective
  ⇒ Pointing out key words that indicate the author's perspective

- Once each student has shared his/her analysis, they each take turns posing their comparative question and facilitating the discussion. As they facilitate, they should:
  ⇒ Ask the other participants to reference the texts in their comments
  ⇒ Share the understanding that has emerged for them, connecting it to and deepening it with comments from the others
  ⇒ Direct the group to re-read key portions of the texts to support discussion

- Finally, each triad group summarizes its discussion for the class, sharing questions, observations, and key textual details that they have identified and discussed.

OPTIONAL CLASS PRESENTATION OF LEARNING

One way to make the final small group discussions lead to more of a real-world and college-level task is to use them as preparation for a class presentation of learning. In this exercise, students would develop a presentation to other teachers, community members and parents to share what they have learned about the topic, drawing on their analysis and fielding questions from the audience. This approach simulates the types of experiences students will have in college by requiring them to experience a public speaking scenario. Inviting real observers into your classroom will lead to an increase in the depth of student preparation in Parts 4 and 5. It also enhances the focus students give to their text-centered discussion skills as well as work on their formal presentation skills.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The culminating assessment activity of the unit involves participating in and leading a text-centered discussion, through which students can demonstrate both their developing skills of close reading, analysis, and questioning as well as their emerging discussion skills. As such, the activity provides both summative assessment for learning within the unit and pre-/formative assessment to inform instruction in future units. To capture evidence, listen in on group conversations and have students self and peer assess using the TCD Checklist. If more formal evidence is needed, students can compile an optional collection of evidence that includes a reflective narrative (see below), or you can record video of student conversations and review them later.

OPTIONAL – COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE

To extend assessment within this final activity, students could compile a collection of evidence that reflects what they have learned in the unit. The collection could include a:

- written explanation of their final focus text with the tools that have informed and supported that analysis

- comparative text-dependent question for their discussion group, and some reflection about what happened when the group discussed their question

- self-assessment of skills they have demonstrated as close readers and as group members, using the Reading Closely and TCD Checklists to identify and explain their strengths as well as areas they intend to focus on in further work

- personal narrative in which they "tell the story" of what they have experienced, discovered, and learned within the unit, including a reflective summary of their reading experience for one or more of the texts

The student collection of evidence can be used for evaluation of learning in the unit, but will probably be most valuable as a formative assessment to help the teacher, and student, know what to work on in future units.