# Semester 1, Unit 1: Close Reading and Writing About One Text

Content Area: **Language Arts**
Course(s): **English 4CP**
Time Period: **Semester 1**
Length: **1 - 2 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

## Standards

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| L | Language |
| L.SS.11–12.1 | Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking. |
| L.SS.11–12.1.A | Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and place, and is sometimes contested. |
| L.SS.11–12.1.B | Observe hyphenation conventions. |
| L.SS.11–12.1.C | Recognize spelling conventions. |
| L.KL.11–12.2 | Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. |
| L.KL.11–12.2.A | Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level. |
| L.KL.11–12.2.B | Vary syntax for effect, apply an understanding of syntax to the study of complex texts. |
| L.KL.11–12.2.C | Demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. |
| L.VL.11–12.3 | Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. |
| L.VL.11–12.3.A | Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. |
| L.VL.11–12.3.B | Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., conceive, conception, conceivable). |
| L.VL.11–12.3.C | Analyze how an author or speaker uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text or discussion. |
| L.VL.11–12.3.D | Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage. |
| L.VL.11–12.3.E | Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary). |
| L.VI.11–12.4 | Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings, including connotative meanings. |
| L.VI.11–12.4.A | Interpret figures of speech (e.g., hyperbole, paradox) in context and analyze their role in the text. |
| L.VI.11–12.4.B | Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations. |
| L.VI.11–12.4.C | Analyze how the meaning of a key term or terms develops or is refined over the course of a text. |

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| L.VI.11–12.4.D | Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. |
| R | Reading |
| RI.CR.11–12.1 | Accurately cite a range of thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to strongly support a comprehensive analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly and inferentially, as well as interpretations of the text. |
| RI.CI.11–12.2 | Determine two or more central ideas of an informational text and analyze how they are developed and refined over the course of a text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex account or analysis; provide an objective summary of the text. |
| RI.IT.11–12.3 | Analyze the impact of an author's choices as they develop ideas throughout the text regarding a complex set of ideas or sequence of events, and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop. |
| RI.TS.11–12.4 | Evaluate the author's choices concerning structure and the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging. |
| RI.PP.11–12.5 | Analyze an author's purpose in a text distinguishing what is directly stated in a text or through rhetoric, analyzing how style and content convey information and advance a point of view. |
| RI.MF.11–12.6 | Synthesize complex information across multiple sources and formats to develop ideas, resolve conflicting information, or develop an interpretation that goes beyond explicit text information (e.g., express a personal point of view, new interpretation of the concept). |
| RI.CT.11–12.8 | Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) documents of historical and scientific significance for their purposes, including primary source documents relevant to U.S. and/or global history and texts proposing scientific or technical advancements. |
| W | Writing |
| W.AW.11–12.1 | Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. |
| W.AW.11–12.1.A | Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. |
| W.AW.11–12.1.B | Develop claim(s) and counterclaims avoiding common logical fallacies and using sound reasoning and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. |
| W.AW.11–12.1.C | Use transitions (e.g., words, phrases, clauses) to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. |
| W.AW.11–12.1.D | Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |
| W.AW.11–12.1.E | Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic). |
| W.IW.11–12.2 | Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes) to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. |
| W.IW.11–12.2.A | Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting |

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| | (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. |
| W.IW.11–12.2.B | Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. |
| W.IW.11–12.2.C | Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. |
| W.IW.11–12.2.D | Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic. |
| W.IW.11–12.2.E | Establish and maintain a style and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose (e.g., formal and objective for academic writing) while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |
| W.IW.11–12.2.F | Provide a concluding paragraph or section that supports the argument presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic). |
| W.WP.11–12.4 | Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, trying a new approach; sustaining effort to complete complex writing tasks; tracking and reflecting on personal writing progress (e.g., using portfolios, journals, conferencing); or consulting a style manual (such as MLA or APA Style), focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. |
| W.WR.11–12.5 | Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. |
| W.SE.11–12.6 | Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation (MLA or APA Style Manuals). |
| W.RW.11–12.7 | Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes. |
| SL | Speaking and Listening |
| SL.PE.11–12.1 | Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with peers on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. |
| SL.PE.11–12.1.A | Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas. |
| SL.PE.11–12.1.B | Collaborate with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and assessments (e.g., student developed rubrics), and establish individual roles as needed. |
| SL.PE.11–12.1.C | Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives. |
| SL.PE.11–12.1.D | Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task. |
| SL.II.11–12.2 | Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among |

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| | the data. |
| SL.ES.11–12.3 | Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used. |
| SL.PI.11–12.4 | Present information, findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically. The content, organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. |
| SL.UM.11–12.5 | Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest. |
| SL.AS.11–12.6 | Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. |

## Enduring Understandings

The following enduring understandings, essential questions, and associated knowledge and skills focus on the texts listed below under "additional resources." When planning for this unit, teachers may focus instruction on these texts and/or other thematically related texts included in the anthology *Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide*, 15th ed. (Kirszner and Mandell).

Students will understand the following:

Writing is a vehicle for active participation in society.

We have valuable and evolving ideas regarding family, race and culture, and language and we can engage in a larger exploration of these topics through reading, writing, and discussion with the classroom learning community.

We have the power to affect positive change in our lives by carefully and thoughtfully understanding ourselves and others.

Reading, writing, and thinking develop over time and require much practice.

Writers strengthen their work by responding to authentic, individualized feedback from peers and from the instructor.

## Essential Questions

What is Standard English and where does it come from?

Why are there so many variations of English?

How does language affect perception of ourselves and others?

How do we write with a reader in mind? Whom do we envision when we write?

How does writing capture our intent, passion, rhythm of speech and nature of thoughts?

How can I engage complicated ideas from the assigned text(s) through close reading, exploratory writing, and discussion?

How can I develop a complex, original thesis to focus my writing?

How can I use transitions, topic sentences, and other structural signposts to maintain a progressive development of ideas throughout the paragraphs of my essay?

How can I use multiple forms of feedback from my peers and from my instructor to strengthen the overall quality of my writing in terms of focus, organization, development, quality of thought, and overall presentation?

How can I proofread and revise my writing to strengthen sentence precision and clarity?

## Knowledge and Skills

Students will reflect on how they read and why they read.

Students will develop facility grappling with challenging texts.

Students will conduct close readings, and this kind of work with text requires engaged textual analysis that can help build independent and original claims.

Students will to do some of the basic things that well-practiced readers of complex texts always do, such as reading with a pen or pencil in hand and making comments in

the margins or on post-it notes.
Students should attend to how parts of an essay speak to one another, contradict one another, or complicate one another.
Students will differentiate between the Englishes they participate in and encounter.
Students will examine what opportunities their Englishes present.
Students will examine any limitations their Englishes present.
Students will examine how language relates to access to power and opportunity.
Students will consider how language can be used as a roadblock, isolating power and limiting opportunity.
Students will consider how to view language as a pathway to an enlightened, equitable, and inclusive society.
Students will engage complicated ideas from the assigned text(s) through close reading, exploratory writing, and discussion.
Students will formulate complex, original thesis sentences to focus their writing.
Students will establish and maintain a progressive development of ideas throughout the paragraphs of their essay by using transitions, topic sentences, and other structural signposts.
Students will provide and receive feedback focused on improving the overall quality of their writing through revision.
Students will develop techniques for making sentence-level revisions that strengthen the overall precision and clarity of their writing.

(adapted from: Rutgers Almanac 2016)

## Additional Resources

"Mother Tongue" by Amy Tan

*Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide*, 15th ed. (Kirszner and Mandell)

## Transfer Goals

Students will be able to analyze the nature of Englishes and apply that understanding to other texts and to their own lives.

Students will be able to understand Tan's use of language and rhetorical conventions and apply that understanding to "What's in a Name?" by Henry Louis Gates Jr. and other works.

Students will be able to write an essay that conveys their close reading of a single text.

## Assessment

SGO Design

English teachers' SGO pre and post-assessments follow the design of the AP Literature and Composition prose analysis prompt. These assessments are scored using the department's shared scoring rubric.

Research Writing

As part of the District's schedule for research writing across the content areas, students write an extended literary research paper during junior year in all levels of English: English 3 OCR, English 3CP, English 3A, and AP language and Composition.

Uses of Assessment

Formative:

- Exit tickets

- Openings and Closings
- Strategic Questioning--higher order thinking/Philosophical thinking skills
- Think-pair-share
- Jigsaws
- Socratic Seminars
- Discussion
- Participation
- Four Corners
- Quick Writes
- Dialectical Notebook
- Walk and Talks

Benchmark Assessments:

- Research Simulation Exercises
- Vocabulary in context and analysis necessary for tracing the argument
- Synthesis Essays
- Evidence Based Selected Response Exercises
- Various Literary Analysis Tasks
- Grammar and Language Conventions

Summative:

- Formal Writing
- Game Design
- Socratic Defense
- Presentations
- Vocabulary
- Participation
- Four Corners

- Quick Writes
- Dialectical Notebook
- Walk and Talks

Each unit of study in English includes assessments that are used formatively as well as assessments that are used as summative, culminating experiences.

Formative assessments include low-stakes, exploratory responses written in the form of journal/learning log entries, quick writes, and free writes. Formative assessments also include announced and unannounced reading checks and exercises to determine the depth of students' understanding of key concepts. While formative assessments are often graded assessments, they are typically "lower-stakes" grades, and they help teachers and students develop an informed sense of each student's progress with the knowledge and skills targeted for a particular unit of study. The aim of such assessments and teacher feedback in response is to provide students with an accurate understanding of their performance relative to unit goals as well as actionable feedback to help them strengthen their performance.

Summative assessments include such tasks as essays, extended papers, objective and constructed response tests, Socratic seminar discussions, projects, and debates. While teachers also use these assessments formatively - by providing actionable feedback on written drafts or on Socratic seminar performance to guide student revision and improvement on subsequent tasks - summative assessments typically serve as "higher-stakes" grades.

Modes of writing assessed in English classes

Argumentative

- Literary analysis / argument
- Frame and case documented essay
- Argumentative essay

Explanatory

- Synthesis essay
- Prose analysis
- Rhetorical analysis

- Poetry analysis

Narrative

- Personal essay / creative nonfiction
- Exercises in prose style
- Alternative scenes, endings for fictional narratives

Additional Forms of Performance-Based Assessment

- Socratic seminar
- Debate
- Close-reading annotations, visual note-taking, and other artifacts
- Reading log entries
- Exploratory writing
- Speeches
- Google slide/Canva Presentations
- Podcasts

Alternative Assessment

With the exception of the occasional multiple-choice quiz or test questions, each classroom assessment in English focuses on an authentic, performance-based task.

Below are the listed examples of assessment:

Summative:

- Formal Writing
- Game Design
- Socratic Defense

- Presentations
- Vocabulary Quizzes
- Google Slide Group and Independent presentations
- End of Unit Tests
- Long Essays demonstrating Synthesis of disparate ideas
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## Modifications

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| Student Subgroup | Content, Process, Product & Environmental Modifications |
| Special Education (IEP) | • Content/Process: Chunk writing tasks into step-by-step diagnostic worksheets (e.g., isolating "Blobs," "Skip Buttons," and "Snapshot & So What" exercises).<br>• Process: Provide graphic organizers for the 3-Zone Camera Framework (Zone 1 Plot $\rightarrow$ Zone 2 Scene $\rightarrow$ Zone 3 Internal Mind).<br>• Product: Permit speech-to-text tools during initial brainstorming; offer modified draft checkpoints. |
| Students with 504 Plans | • Environment: Provide extended time for timed, in-class handwritten essay drafts.<br>• Process: Allow use of ergonomic pens/pencils or permit digital typing if handwritten fatigue impacts output.<br>• Process: Frequent teacher check-ins during independent notebook drafting periods.<br>• Environment: Preferential seating near instruction and away from high-traffic distractions. |
| Multilingual Learners (ML / ELL) | • Environment: Permit listening to calming music with wired headphones during independent drafting.<br>• Content: Provide annotated mentor text excerpts (Zauner, Tan, Díaz) featuring |

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| | highlighted structural moves and glossed vocabulary. |
| | • Process: Provide sentence stems for reflection and revision (e.g., "When I looked at [object], I realized..." or "Instead of saying I worked hard, I remember..."). |
| | • Product: Focus early draft assessment on narrative depth, ideas, and structural growth rather than minor syntactical or grammatical errors[cite: 1, 9]. |
| | • Process: Allow use of bilingual translation tools during initial brainstorming and outline phases.<br>• Process: Require structured progress checks in dedicated course notebooks during each workshop phase. |
| | • Process: Utilize Google Calendar to schedule mandatory individual extra help check-ins before major draft deadlines. |
| Students at Risk of Academic Failure | • Content/Product: Leverage the 50/50 grading split by using daily low-stakes practice work (worksheets, peer checks) to build confidence and cushion assessment grades. |
| | • Environment: Post clear, direct assignment checklists and due date reminders on Google Classroom.<br>• Content: Analyze complex mentor texts beyond standard grade level, examining advanced moves like Amy Tan’s "As-If Deconstruction" or Junot Díaz’s "Escalating Fantasy" sequence. |
| Gifted & Talented Students | • Process: Encourage advanced narrative techniques, such as dual-timeline structures, motif framing, or non-linear story arcs. |
| | • Product: Serve as peer editors/coaches during partner check-ins and "essay surgery" workshops. |