

Social Studies Whole-Class Instructional Strategy:

Three Close Reads

The Basics

What? A reading strategy that encourages students to consider how a text connects to other texts and the larger ideas and concepts they are studying.

When? At the start of a new unit or topic, before doing any in-depth primary source analysis.

Why? To help students engage productively with secondary texts and to practice reading like a historian.

How to Implement

Before each of the three reads, look at the “Pay Attention to” and “Questions” columns for the reading. Write your answers in the third column on the [organizer](#).

Either as a class, in groups, or individually, have students follow the routine below:

1. Reading 1 — Skimming for Gist (What do we have?)
 - a. The first close read is a quick scan of the text to identify its subjects and layout. Students should look at the title, headings, layout, images, and the people, places, and things contained in them. Look at the worksheet’s “Questions” section for the first close read and see which questions students can answer.
2. Reading 2 — Understanding Content (What do we know?)
 - a. Now, look at the second section of the worksheet. In this read, students are trying to understand the narrative, key ideas, and claims made in the text. Review the “Pay Attention to...” and “Questions” sections of the worksheet and think about them as students begin the second read.
 - b. After the second close read, students will answer questions related to the article's content and claims.
3. Reading 3 — Evaluating and Corroborating (What does this tell us?)
 - a. Now, it's time for the third and final read. This read will help students place this text within the larger narratives in the course.
 - b. At the end of the third read, a class discussion on the topic could follow.

Resources and Additional Information

- [Graphic Organizer](#)
- [Research](#) supporting Three Close Reads
- [Video Model](#) of this strategy
- Example topics in [Bayou Bridges: A Louisiana Social Studies Curriculum](#), in which Three Close Reads strategy would be helpful with secondary text:
 - **Grades 6-8:** The Inca Empire (BB G5 U4, LSSSS 5.13i), Ancient Mesopotamia: Code of Hammurabi (BB G4 U2, LSSSS 4.13.f)