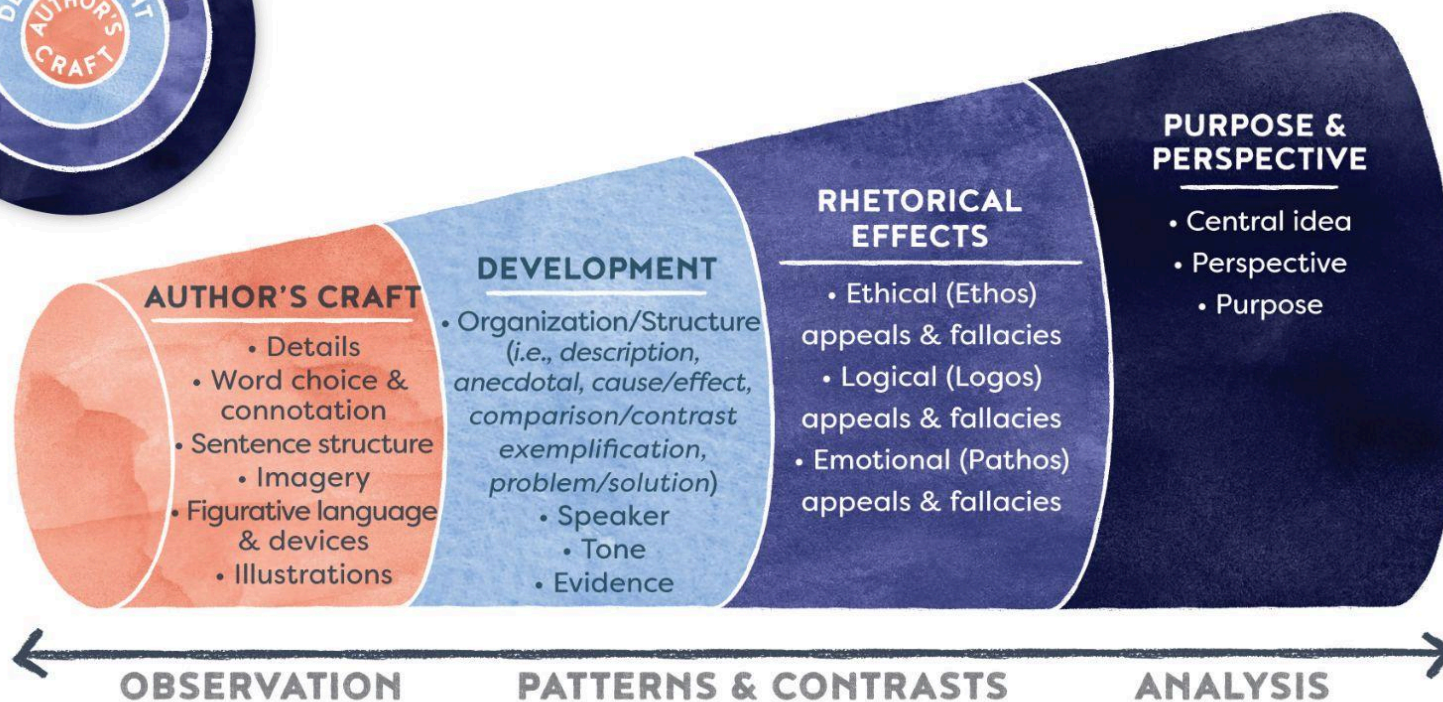


Reader's Circles | LITERARY NONFICTION



Reader's Circles

ELA Guidebooks' Approach to Close Reading



The Basics

Strong readers make connections when they read. They notice when patterns exist and use that information to predict what a character might do or say or how an author might support a claim. They also notice shifts or contrasts in the text, as those signals change in direction for a character or events. They think about how the parts of a text interact with each other and put the parts together to come up with the text's meaning or purpose.

Understanding texts at a deep level is difficult, and, for proficient readers, it is also automatic. Often teachers who are skilled at reading don't know the thinking process they use to make meaning of or understand a text, which makes it hard to teach students who aren't proficient readers.

ELA Guidebook lessons and lessons from other HQIM break down the steps in the reading process using the reader's circles. The lessons engage students in multiple readings of the same text or portions of the same text throughout a section of a unit. For each reading, students have a different focus or purpose based on the grade-level standards that builds on the previous reading and sets students up to be able to accomplish the next reading. This process builds students' understanding of complex texts and provides them with a thinking process they can transfer to new complex texts they may encounter on their own.

Student Outcomes

The Reader's Circle process includes multiple reads (each with a different focus) of a short, complex text. Questions/tasks are text-dependent and designed to lead students to a new and deeper understanding of a highly complex text. The goal is that by revisiting specific lines and stanzas with a purpose and pushing for text evidence, students will have "lightbulb moments" about the meaning of complex texts.