Close Reading

Critical reading is **when a reader pays close attention to the most important features of a text**. Becoming an effective reader involves the annotation of relevant information about the text or on the text itself whenever possible **because you are *actively reading*. As an active reader, you are participating in a discussion or dialogue with the author and his/her ideas. If you can, think of the text as the way an author is communicating with you. Similarly, your annotations can be thought of as your way of responding to the author.**

Some features of a text that a critical reader will notice and make note of are:
- *what* the author's topic is
- *what* the author wants readers to know about this topic (the author's purpose)
- *what* the author argues about this topic
- *how* these ideas or arguments develop
- *how*

and then write in the margins next to the paragraphs **where the author expands on this argument**.

Example- You might write the following in the margins of a paragraph in the middle of an article: *author supports her main idea here*

If you underline or highlight more than half of a given paragraph, make sure to make a note about WHY you have so that you don't bury the significance of the information. When we annotate, we should try to only underline the information that is **most important** in the text.

The process of writing in the margins might also help you decide which parts of a paragraph are most important. For example, you might notice an example that the author includes, or a quote that supports the author's points. In this case, you would underline only the example and/or the quote, and write in the margin next to this, *author uses this example to prove her point.* You might then draw a line or an arrow connecting your words in the margin to the author's argument.

Active and experienced readers underline and/or highlight any unfamiliar vocabulary and use a dictionary or thesaurus (or both) to define it. It helps immensely to write synonyms (a word having the same or nearly the same meaning as another) above or beside the unfamiliar word that you have defined.

Overall, annotation is a hands-on process in which readers look closely at each sentence and notice how the author's points or opinions build from sentence to sentence. After annotating, a reader should return to a text and look at each paragraph as a whole. Noticing the theme, topic, purpose or main point of each paragraph can help a reader understand how the author chose to order or sequence the information in the article.

ONCE YOU'VE COMPLETED THE SECOND READING, YOU MIGHT WANT TO READ THE TEXT ONE LAST TIME TO SEE IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU HAVE MISSED. YOU COULD ALSO RETURN TO THE NOTES YOU TOOK ON YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS AND SEE IF THOSE FIRST IMPRESSIONS WERE ACCURATE. IF YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF A TEXT HAS CHANGED, THEN YOU CAN EDIT THESE NOTES AS NEEDED.

Created by Anthony Iantosca
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<u>Practice Makes Better</u>

The article below, by Ian Head ...

(7) This makes it imperative that officers not be allowed to view their own, or fellow officers', videos before writing reports or making statements, especially after situations that result in violence or during investigations into potential misconduct.

(8) That's only one flaw in the policy. Just as significant, the policy is vague on whether and when officers must record street encounters short of an arrest. Instead, officers are told to record "interactions with persons suspected of criminal activity." This ambiguous language gives too much discretion to individual officers, who might have different understandings of when such "interactions" begin and end. Not to mention recent cases in other cities in which officers "forgot" to turn their device on in time to capture a critical moment, or even at all.

(9) For the courts, the court monitor and police oversight agencies such as the Civilian Complaint Review Board to get a more complete picture of what might have led an officer to take action, all officers involved need to begin recording at the start of the encounter.

(10) Street interactions are not neatly planned. Consider an encounter in Queens between our

tool for surveillance and evidence collection. This is especially worrisome alongside advances in facial recognition technology.

(15) We urge the Police Department and others who will analyze the body camera pilot to incorporate additional and broad community input into their evaluations. The department's inspector general, the Civilian Complaint Review Board and other oversight agencies must also examine whether the body camera policy enhances or hinders the cameras' effectiveness as an accountability and transparency tool. Any potential benefits of body cameras are lost if we let the Police Department write the rules.