

Sonnets Close Reading Kit

Post your work on Canvas as directed below.

Due Dates

Sunday, 7/29, at 11:59 pm	Draft— <i>Sonnets</i> Close Reading Kit: Glossing & Analysis
Wednesday, 8/1, at 11:59 pm	Peer Review of Group Members' drafts
Sunday, 8/5, at 11:59 pm	Final— <i>Sonnets</i> Close Reading Kit: Reflection, Glossing, Analysis, & Essay

What is Close Reading?

Close reading is an activity of whereby you examine a text to ascertain as much information and meaning from it as possible. It is at once sympathetic—reading the text on its own terms—and critical—engaging the text on a deeper level to analyze and interpret it.

Close reading requires understanding **what** the text says, but more importantly, **how** the text says it. We get to the **how** of a text by looking below the surface content to the deeper structures of its language, syntax (i.e. sentence structure), and how it connects to itself as a whole as well as to other texts and concepts.

Close reading is the basis for all critical writing produced in response to a text because it is the chief method for supporting analytical and interpretive claims. Close reading involves describing specifically how texts employ various formal and rhetorical devices to generate effects and meanings in order to show what makes a text distinctive.

Close readings deploy some or all of the following strategies:

- Quotation of the text to serve as direct evidence for an interpretive claim
- Simple paraphrase, or translation, of a segment of text that clarifies basic meaning
- Glossing words that are unfamiliar, especially words that our editor has glossed
- Identification of editorial bias in glossing, punctuation, exegesis, etc.
- Identification of ambiguities that may be created by syntax and grammar, or that may be created by content through vocabulary, puns, euphemisms, etc.
- Identification of repetitive sounds, words, images, actions, themes
- Identification of lexicons or registers, classifications of words and images
- Identification of figurative language (metaphor, catachresis, irony, etc.)

For this assignment, you will use glossing and analysis as the basis for an essay of 1000-1200 words.

Final—Sonnet Close Reading Kit: Reflection, Glossing, Analysis, & Essay

Revising: Glossing & Analysis

- 1 Read your peer feedback.

- 2 At the top of your Final—Sonnet Close Reading document, write two or more paragraphs explaining
 - how your readers' responses were similar
 - how they were different
 - how they contradict

- 3 Think about the contradictions, and write at least two more paragraphs explaining
 - What these contradictions mean for you as a writer.
 - How they problematize your data
 - How you will respond in your revision to account for your readers' needs

- 4 With all of this in mind, revise your Glosses, Paraphrase, and Analysis

Include your Reflection and Revisions in the same document as your Essay (directions to follow).

Directions: Essay

All of the data you collected in your glosses, paraphrase, and analysis constitute the “What” and the “How” of your passage—that is, what the text says (meaning) and how it says it (form). Use this data to pose and develop an argument about the effect(s) of your primary word on the play.

- 5 Use these questions to help brain-storm your argumentative response:
 - Where is the word located within the sentence, speech, scene, or act?
 - For example, “If” is the word that begins *Twelfth Night* and inaugurates the uncertainty that plagues the entire play.
 - How might your word be significant
 - insofar as it is spoken by a particular character?
 - in its particular the context of the poem?
 - If the word appears more than once, does its meaning change over the course of the poem?
 - Does it become clearer, more concrete, more ambiguous, more abstract?
 - Do the complexities the word’s meanings relate to the poem’s thematic concerns?
 - Does the word have a compelling, contradictory, or otherwise ambiguous relationship to the other words you chose to gloss?
- 6 In relation to the questions above, your thesis should directly answer
 - Why is the word you selected significant? and
 - How does the play call attention to this significance?

- 7 Using the data you've collected in your glosses, paraphrase, and analysis as well as your answers to the questions in part 12, develop your thesis into an essay of 750 to 1000 words, keeping the following tips in mind:
- Analyze rather than summarize or describe. If your writing drifts into description or summary for more than two sentences, ask yourself why that information matters for your argument and build your answer(s) into those sentences themselves.
 - Use specific textual evidence—with parenthetical citations—to support every claim you make.
 - Avoid generalizations and assumptions for which you have no evidence. If you want or need to discuss historical and cultural issues, use the supplemental course material as sources to back up your claims.
- 8 Your essay should include a title. Titles should be provocative and encode your essay's main argument. Titles such as "Time in *Hamlet*" or "An Analysis of *Richard III*" or "Close Reading Project One" do nothing to foreground your central point or compel your readers to want to know what you have to say.
- Aim for a title that piques interest and alludes to your argument. For example, "Beneath the Madness: Insanity as Social Commentary in *Hamlet*"

Ensure that your final document includes:

- ✓ Your Revision/Reflection paragraphs
- ✓ Your revised Glossing & Analysis
- ✓ Your Essay
- ✓ A Works Cited list that includes the poem, each of the words you glossed or reference, and any other resource you consulted (whether you cite it or not)

Submit your Final—Sonnet Close Reading Kit on Canvas by Sunday, 5 August, at 11:59 pm.