

Aligning the Videos in *Lessons and Units for Closer Reading, 3-6* with *Lessons and Units for Closer Reading, K-2*

The video segments created to accompany *Lessons and Units for Closer Reading, 3-6* will be useful for *Lessons and Units for Closer Reading, K-2* as well. Although the intermediate book focused on fourth grade for the implementation of the lessons, many of the principles and practices described and demonstrated in the videos may be applied with little or no tweaking, even if you teach kindergarten or first grade. In a few instances, you'll want to make some adjustments to make the close reading instruction more user-friendly for your youngest learners. Both the similarities and the differences are noted in the points below.

Video 1: Interview

This is an interview with Nancy Boyles about why close reading matters. The same principles prevail for primary grade close reading:

- Even at the primary grade level the goal for readers is to understand the complexities of the text as a *whole*, rather than simply mastering isolated objectives.
- Focus on the *text itself*, minimizing inconsequential personal connections.

Video 2: Before Reading, Preview

Watch Nancy and colleagues introduce the anchor text and preview the Before Reading phase of an initial close reading lesson.

- At any grade level it is important to consider the complexities of the text when planning your lesson. One difference at the primary level is that you will not focus as heavily on the quantitative complexity, such as Lexile. Lexile is not very reliable before about grade three. What *is* important, however, will be the qualitative complexities of the text: How much background knowledge is required? How abstract is the meaning? Is the language complex? Will the structure of the text be challenging for young children? These are factors that teachers of *all* grades should consider.
- Because most early primary grade students are not yet capable of reading complex text themselves, the way the teacher reads the text aloud will be a critical factor. However, the process will be about the same as for older students: chunk your text and plan to ask questions while you read, not just after reading.
- Many primary teachers are initially skeptical about the omission of some of the scaffolds we've typically provided to students *before* reading. Notice what was missing here that has often been a part of our pre-reading instruction in the past. Even at the primary level we want students to get their information from the text rather than from the teacher—as much as possible.
- Note the points to keep in mind when observing any lesson: What did you see? How did it go? Why did it go that way? What might you change next time?

Video 3: Before Reading, Lesson

Watch Nancy teach the Before Reading part of the initial close reading lesson to fourth graders.

- Even primary students can understand the concept of *close reading*. It's fine to use this label with them.
- The length (brevity) of this part of the lesson would also prevail for primary students, with a quick perusal of the cover (both title and illustration, and the author when it might be helpful).

Video 4: Before Reading, Debrief

Watch Nancy and colleagues debrief the Before Reading part of the lesson.

- Discuss the possible omission of some of the typical pre-reading components: picture walk, building prior knowledge, vocabulary, predictions. Think about how this would work at your grade level. Try introducing a book in this way to your class and see if your students can be successful with this quicker kind of a preview. Primary students may need a bit more support, but this part of the lesson should still be shorter than in the past.

Video 5: During Reading, Preview

Watch Nancy and colleagues preview the During Reading portion of an initial close reading lesson.

- There are various ways we could approach close reading. The approach here is to use text dependent questions, which is also appropriate at the primary level.
- As with the upper grades, the purpose of text dependent questions during reading is to tap into multiple aspects of a text. But for younger students lots of the questions during a first read will focus on text basics: finding evidence, identifying story parts if the text is literary, paraphrasing key passages to clarify meaning, and attending to important words.
- Always ask yourself: Did my questions help students construct meaning?

Video 6: During Reading, Lesson

Watch Nancy demonstrate attention to different standards through text dependent questions during reading.

- You will note that this portion of the lesson took about 30 minutes. Especially in kindergarten and first grade, you will want a briefer lesson. The best option is a shorter book that can be completed in about 20 minutes. If you choose a longer text, consider stopping midway and finishing it the following day.
- Even these “bigger kids” are gathered together in a group. This is the way you will want to do your close reading lessons in the primary grades, too—great for building a sense of community as well as providing a better view of the illustrations.
- Turn and talk can be effective for younger students, as well. Establish some routines for this, and use the technique sparingly as it does extend the length of a lesson.
- If you can see that your young students are losing focus, ask fewer questions as you proceed through the book so that everyone stays engaged.

Video 7: During Reading, Debrief

- Always be sure to focus on the *particular* complexities of a text—like the noteworthy elements of the author’s craft in this book: the flashback, attention to bolded words or larger fonts.
- In the primary grades you may find that there are elements of craft that you don’t have time to address during the initial close reading lesson. Instead, return to the text to address these points.
- Carefully consider the length of the text chunks you read before monitoring understanding. This will be really important in the primary grades.
- When you reflect on your lesson, mentally inventory the standards you have addressed. Are there any standards that you omitted that would have fit naturally into your text discussion?
- Hot tip: Make sure you guide students to observe as many details as possible on the first page or the first couple of pages, as the author provides so much information early in the text. This will be especially important for primary students who are just learning to attend carefully to text.
- Think about how your students answered your questions: Where were they strong? Where were they weak? The weaker responses might lead you back to the text for a follow-up lesson with focus on a particular skill.

Video 8: After Reading, Preview

Watch Nancy and colleagues preview the After Reading goals of an initial close reading lesson.

- What will closure include for your primary students? For young children consider focusing on the key words in the text they will need to summarize the text. Talk about the lesson or central idea, and begin to build an understanding of different genres.

Video 9: After Reading, Lesson

Watch Nancy address the four After Reading tasks with students.

- This lesson focused a lot on theme, summary, and important words. There is a mention of genre, but this would be a good skill focus for a follow-up lesson because students need to *build* this understanding.
- When you identify important words, try to select words students will need for their summary and theme statement. Try to get kids to identify words in the text, but you may want to also let them suggest words *about* the text.
- The more you repeat these tasks with subsequent books, the more independent student will become in completing these tasks—with less teacher input.
- When you talk about genre after reading, try to be more specific than fiction or nonfiction, even in the primary grades.

Video 10: After Reading, Debrief

Watch Nancy and colleagues debrief the After Reading tasks with a focus on construction of meaning.

- Reflect on the order of your after-reading tasks. There is no absolute order for these tasks. Do what makes sense for your text.
- For primary students you will often want to begin with the important words in the text. The guidelines mentioned in this video for key words would be helpful to keep in mind for all primary lessons.

Video 11: Moving to Independence, Preview

Watch Nancy and colleagues preview moving to independence in close reading and conferring with students.

- Even at the primary level we will want students to become more independent in their close reading. The strategy discussed here suggests four “good reader” questions with which intermediate grade students can be successful.
- For the primary level, use the Active Reader Cards for Noticing Key Details. These are more user-friendly for young children and are explained in Chapter Three of *Lessons & Units, K-2*.

Video 12: Moving to Independence, Lesson

Watch Nancy teach a small group lesson and confer with students about the four “good reader” questions.

- Although the four questions identified in this video may not be as useful for primary students as the Cards for Noticing Key Details, you may want to consider these explanations of the four questions if you do decide to use them.
- Notice the use of highlighters to build independence. You may want to teach your young students have to mark their text *selectively*—so they don’t underline *everything*!
- Use the Card for Noticing Key Details to help students monitor their thinking during independent reading. It’s a good tool to use when conferring with students, too.

Video 13: Moving to Independence, Debrief

Watch Nancy and colleagues debrief about moving students to independence.

- These teachers pointed out the value of talking with students about “How do you learn to read closely when your teacher isn’t around to help you?” This establishes a sense of purpose—which even young students should develop.
- Be sure to help students distinguish between the kinds of observations they will probably make in literary text, different from the close reading observations they’ll likely obtain from informational sources.
- Use your conferring to inform future small group instruction: Who needs what?

Video 14: Follow-up Lesson, Preview

Watch Nancy and colleagues preview the follow-up lesson focusing on understanding theme.

- Coming back to a text will often emphasize a particular complexity with attention to a related *skill*. The follow-up lessons in this book will address a repertoire of twelve skills that are foundational to good comprehension at the primary level. The lessons on Days 3 and 4 of each week specify the skill lessons to be taught.

Video 15: Follow-up Lesson, Lesson

Watch Nancy lead a follow-up lesson with a text, deepening students' understanding of theme.

- For your follow-up lessons at the primary level you will also want to have multiple copies of your text available so students can retrieve textual evidence themselves.
- Notice the elements of explicit instruction here: a brief explanation, quick model, and opportunity for student practice. The explanation is so important; students need to know *how* to find the evidence they need for a particular skill application.
- Notice the attention to *complete sentences*. Students should always respond using full sentences, not individual words or brief phrases.
- Notice the accountability—another feature you'll want to incorporate with your young learners.

Video 16: Follow-Up Lesson, Debrief

Watch Nancy and colleagues debrief and identify key takeaways from the follow-up theme lesson.

- The technique demonstrated in the follow-up lesson for holding students accountable to specific textual knowledge also works well with primary grade students.
- The goal of explicit instruction, even at the primary level, is to help every student get to success. This requires the gradual release of responsibility.
- Make sure students know what the “end game” will involve: What will they need to share orally? What will they need to write? This promotes a higher degree of engagement and interaction.

Video 17: Small Group Strategy Lesson, Preview

Watch Nancy and colleagues preview a small group strategy lesson on visualizing.

- Strategy instruction will be important to primary students, too. Just as this video segment indicates, try to focus on aspects of the crafting of the text for the application of strategies. Strategy use should not be *random*, but rather, inspired by the author: Where does the author want readers to visualize, predict, and so forth?
- Make a genuine effort to minimize low-level personal connections as these seldom lead to deeper understanding.

Video 18: Small Group Strategy Lesson, Lesson

Watch Gina demonstrate a small group strategy lesson on visualizing.

- Visualizing is a great strategy for primary students to work on. Use texts with plenty of description. Just as the teacher in this lesson demonstrates, we want students to “see” the text with all of their senses.
- Visualizing is particularly important for English Language Learners: Do they have the language to describe their visual image?

Video 19: Small Group Strategy Lesson, Debrief

Watch Nancy and colleagues debrief and identify key takeaways from the strategy lesson.

- As teachers pointed out in this debrief, relating this lesson to what students already knew is a great place to begin for a skill lesson—even for primaries. And again, this is a good example of explicit instruction.
- Although you may be working on a particular skill, a secondary outcome of a specific skill or strategy lesson will be deeper understanding of the text as a whole.

Video 20: Curriculum Development

Watch Nancy discuss with teachers the process of curriculum development.

- This video segment describes the process of building close reading units and learning pathways. Although this discussion focuses on *Lessons and Units, 3-6*, the same principles prevail at the primary level.
- All districts need to customize this process not just according to grade level, but also based on their population of students and the curriculum requirements.

Bonus Video 1: The Complete Initial Close Reading Lesson

This is the “play-all” version of the lesson covering before and during reading.

- See reflection points for Videos 3 and 6, which address the “Before” and “During” parts of the initial close reading lesson, combined into this bonus video.

Bonus Video 2: The Role of the Teacher in Close Reading

Teacher modeling differs in the initial lesson versus the follow-up lesson: what are those differences and how should teachers consider the need of students?

- Just as this video segment suggests, try to limit the modeling in primary grade close reading. Recognize the kinds of things your students will need to see you do in order to do them themselves.
- Also recognize that in an initial lesson, the modeling will occur on an “as needed” basis. In an explicit follow-up lesson, the modeling will be a more intentional component of the gradual release model.

Bonus Video 3: The Purpose of the Follow-Up Lesson

When it comes to the follow-up lesson, the focus should be on fine tuning and understanding the benefit of explicit instruction.

- One difference between intermediate and primary grade follow-up lessons will be that in the lower grades you will more frequently return to the text for something other than comprehension. For example, you may want to focus on fluency, reading pages that beg for lots of expression. You may even want to reread for word solving skills. Your follow-up lessons should always reflect both the complexities of the text and your students' needs.

Bonus Video 4: What Success Looks Like

Nancy introduces the four things good readers do after reading that will lead to a successful close read.

- Success *during* reading will be measured for primary students as it is measured for intermediate students: Identifying as much meaning as possible during the initial close reading. Yes, students *can* go back to the text. But the more they can retrieve through careful observation of the text the first time around, the more efficient their reading will be.
- Success *after* reading is generally the same for primary students, too: Can they identify important words from the text? Can they summarize it and identify the central idea? Can they tap into genre elements? However, you will need to do more scaffolding to *build* competence with these after reading tasks.

Bonus Video 5: Looking at Student Work

Nancy and colleagues discuss student work, specifically focusing on a task highlighting the use of sticky notes to identify a theme throughout a book before completing a worksheet on evidence.

- Regardless of whether students are explaining answers orally or in writing, the most important evaluative criterion is the inclusion of specific evidence. Even at the primary level, don't allow students to squeak by with evidence that is too general. For example, students should not get full credit for saying "Little Red Riding Hood disobeyed her mother." A more specific response would be, "Little Red Riding Hood disobeyed her mother by talking to a stranger on the way to her grandma's house." Often, it's just a matter of adding an additional phrase.
- The rubric in *Lessons and Units for Closer Reading, K-2* would be just right for evaluating student responses.
- The Reader Response Frames also in *Lessons and Units for Closer Reading, K-2* would be great scaffolds for helping students organize their written responses.