

## Speed Dating Activity - Close Reading Strategy

### Set Up:

- Before class I made copies of the passage. I also typed out directions for each of the lenses and cut them into small strips of paper.
- Before students arrived, I planned out which lens I wanted each student to have and which row I wanted them to be in for the activity. (You wouldn't have to do this step. For my class this helped me to differentiate for the higher and lower kids. It also helped me to make sure several of the personalities in this classroom would not be paired together in the speed dating activity.)
- Once I had selected lenses and grouping, I wrote out students' assigned lens on their desk in dry erase marker. I also color-coded this by writing in black for side A and blue for side B. (I waited until students were doing the close reading individually to pass out the slips of paper with directions because I knew they would get lost by the time we started if they were on students' desks at the beginning of class.)

### Procedure:

- Students read and annotate the passage individually. (put lens directions upside-down on their desk while they are doing this)
  - In our classroom, we talk about leaving "breadcrumb annotations." This means the type of annotations that help you to understand while reading and would allow you to quickly remember what was happening in the passage if you were revisiting it. We also always ask them to circle and look up words that they do not know.
  - I did not explain the procedure for annotating during this activity because we annotate so frequently. But in a different classroom you might want to review expectations for annotations.
- At the bottom of the passage students write one to two sentences about what they think the passage is trying to say. (You could change this to central idea since you are using primary source documents)
- Then students reread the passage through their assigned lens. We asked them to annotate for this focus using a different color.
  - Look for patterns in the annotations. What details fit together? How?
  - Go back to the sentence about the passage's significance and revise or add to the statement.
- I gave students a time limit for this so everyone would end at the same time. This worked well for my honors class.
- When students are finished, we moved into the speed dating activity. I told students that they should sit on side A if their lens was written in black and side B if their lens was written in blue. I also told them to make sure they were not sitting next to or across from someone with the same lens as them. I gave them all of these directions while they were still sitting in their original seats and then asked them to move the desks to the outside of the room and their chairs into two lines in the center. (This worked well with honors juniors but you might want to have more structure/assigned seating with other groups)

- My classroom is really small so the spacing was tight and the room became really loud once we started. If I was doing this again, I would move them to a different location that gave them more room.
- Once students are settled in their two rows I gave them the directions for the speed dating activity (which are also displayed on the google slides on the Smartboard).
- Before giving students directions on what they will be discussing with their peers, I explained to them how the activity itself will work. Students will talk with the person sitting directly across from them. Side A will start first and this student will talk for 2 minutes, then the student on side B will talk for 2 minutes. (The goal of this is that every student is held accountable for talking for the same amount of time.) I also told them that once they are done talking to their first partner, side A will shift down one seat and we will do this again with their new partner.
  - Students in side A complained about always being the ones to move (because they are juniors). If you wanted to avoid this you could have side A move in one direction and then side B move in a different direction the next round.
- Directions: Talk through your annotations with the person sitting across from you. Focus on what you noticed when close reading through your assigned lens. What patterns did you see? How did certain details fit together? (This is a Trends in American Literature course so we talk a lot about patterns and connections. You could change this for your focus.) What conclusions did you draw about the significance of this passage? As you hear from your peers, make sure to add to your annotations and your statement about the passage's significance.
- After the first run through, I gave students feedback (my class largely forgot to add to their annotations while they were listening to their peers) and reminded them of the directions. I also told them that now that we are switching partners they may get a partner with the same lens. We talked about what they could discuss. (I also checked in on the partners who had the same lens and fed them some additional questions to discuss based on what they were talking about)
- I had the two minute timer set up on the Google Slides but teachers could use a regular timer if they don't have this technology.
- We ran through this 3 times which worked well for our class and the time we have.
- Once we ran through this 3 times, students stayed in these seats and I asked for several volunteers to share their thoughts on the passage's significance. Then I asked them to connect this significance to the essential questions for the book which we have posted on the wall throughout the unit. (This was a very effective discussion for this group of students. But with our other honors class that needs more structure I asked them to share the passage's significance and then I asked them to discuss the connection to the EQs with their partner before discussing as a whole class. Teachers could either skip the concluding discussion or adapt it based on their class.)
- After this was finished, I asked students to turn in their passages. It was interesting to see how their thinking/understanding evolved throughout the course of this activity. The students put the desks back, and returned to their original seats.
- Overall students really liked this activity and it went well! It could also be easily adapted for other purposes/other subjects.