What are some typical reading strategies we teach?
academic reading circles

- intensive independent reading approach
- discrete practice with multiple strategies
- collaborative construction of meaning
- deeper and thorough engagement with texts
acacademic reading circles

Developed by Tyson Seburn, University of Toronto

Inspired by “Literature Circles”

• k-12 reading activity
• in-depth discussion of literature based on different student roles (Daniels, 2002)
• improves comprehension, even in struggling readers (Williams, 2015)
• supports reading strategy use (Daniels and Steineke, 2004)
• increase oral and writing proficiency (Elhess and Egbert, 2015)

Adapted for Academic Purposes
**academic reading circles**

**context:** university intensive English program (IEP)

- 8 level program
- levels 6, 7, 8
- upper-intermediate to advanced students
- 8-15 students per class
- 5 x 50 mins
- 8 weeks
How do you do Academic Reading Circles?
each role focuses on different aspect of text

each role engages different reading strategies

learners produce handouts for discussion based on role
Academic Reading Circles

Name: [ ] Role: [ ] Date: [ ]

Article Citation: 

Role Specific Information Here

can be distributed via paper, Google Classroom, Blackboard, Canvas, etc.
Leader

Purpose
• Facilitates general comprehension
• Leads discussion
• Manages student contributions

Preparation
• 3-5 Conceptual Questions
• Bullet-point Section Summaries
• 3-5 Discussion Questions

Question Types
• Detail Questions
  • answers easily found in text
• Conceptual Questions
  • answers demonstrate comprehension of meaning and critical thinking
• Discussion Questions
  • answers require students to evaluate or go beyond text
### Question Types

- **Detail Questions**
  - answers easily found in text
- **Conceptual Questions**
  - answers demonstrates comprehension of meaning and critical thinking
- **Discussion Questions**
  - answers require students to evaluate or go beyond text
1. Think of 1 conceptual/critical thinking question about the article.

2. Think of 1 discussion question that evaluates or goes beyond the text.

3. How would you divide this text into sections? What are the most important points of the first section?
• conceptual questions
How is “Birth of a Nation” related to the movements against racism?

• section summary
Section 1 (1-17)
• “Birth of a Nation” by Nat Turner has become very popular
• Fox Searchlight – Chance for an Oscar
• Comes during issues of racism in America
Section 2 (18-)

• discussion questions
Why do you think the filmmakers chose Fox Searchlight (for $17.5 million over the Weinstein) Company and Netflix (for $20 million)?
Conceptual Questions
1. How is “Birth of a Nation” related to the movements against racism?

Summary
Section 1 (1-17)
• “Birth of a Nation” by Nat Turner has become very popular
• Fox Searchlight – Chance for an Oscar
• Comes during issues of racism in America

Section 2 (18-)

Discussion Questions
1. Why do you think the filmmakers chose Fox Searchlight (for $17.5 million over the Weinstein) Company and Netflix (for $20 million)?
Highlighter
vocabulary and language usage

Purpose
• Identify important words, phrases, and usage of language

Preparation
• 5 topical vocabulary words – related to the article’s topic(s)
• 3-5 key vocabulary words – repeated or common words
• 3-5 examples of interesting language usage or questions about language usage
  • grammar, phrases, collocations, phrasal verbs
  • Word choice? Purpose of quotes? Inferences?
1. What is the topic of this text? Find two words related to the topic.

2. What are some repeated words or words that you consider important?

3. What questions could you ask about language usage? Think of a close-reading question: a question about word choice, tone, or purpose.
Highlighter
vocabulary and language usage

- **topical words**
  - Slavery
    - slave, rebellion, take on,
  - Film
  - screening, actor-director, acquisition, entry, mainstream

- **keywords**
  - festival, push, response

- **language use**
  - charged-up, players, heat, “seven years of sweat”
Topical Vocabulary: Film
• screening (l. 3)
• actor-director (l. 4)
• acquisition (l. 10)
• entry (l. 12)
• mainstream (l. 17)

Language Usage
1. Why did the author use the word “heat” on line 14?
2. What does “seven years of sweat” (line 18) mean?

During discussion, students would discuss language in context by examining sentences.
Purpose
• Identify important contextual references (things the author thinks you already know):
  • significant people, places, and events
  • unexplained cultural references

Preparation
• Identify and research 3-5 important contextual references
• Provide bulleted, key information about the references that helps add to understanding
• Explain why the author is using these references
1. Does the author reference any people, places, events, or concepts not fully explained in the text?

2. Does the author refer to thing that they think you (or your students) already know about?
Contextualizer
researching, questioning, understanding purpose

• Sundance film festival
  • to understand what type of film this is

• Nat Turner slave rebellion
  • to understand the topic of the film

• “multiple discussions about race in America”
• #OscarsSoWhite
  • to understand the context of the film
Contextualizer
researching, questioning, understanding purpose

• #OscarsSoWhite
  • to understand the context of the film
  • Twitter hashtag used to talk about the Oscars
  • Online protest against lack of blacks in nominations

• Explanation: Nat Turner’s movie could break this trend
See the handout for a real student example!

### Academic Reading Circles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Anthony</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Contextualizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>10/28/2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Article Citation**


- **Sundance Film Festival (line 2, 12)**
  - Annual film festival for new people in the film industry
  - Nate Parker is an independent actor-director participating in this festival.

- **Nat Turner Slave Rebellion (line 4)**
  - August 1831, Virginia
  - 55-65 people killed
  - Highest number of fatalities of any slave rebellion
  - This is the subject of Nate Parker’s film.

- **“multiple discussions about race in America” (line 14-15)**
  - Black Lives Matter – protests against police violence
  - Donald Trump – anti-immigrant discussions
  - Syrian refugees
  - Race is a major issue in American society and this movie is connected to these issues.
Visualizer
visualizing, organizing, questioning

Purpose
• Provide visual representation of important concepts, facts, data to build understanding

Preparation
• 2 - 3 different visuals (found or made)
  • photos
  • charts
  • graphs
  • maps
  • graphic organizer
1. What visuals could you use to help build understanding for this article?
1. What visuals could you use to help build understanding for this article?

Visualizing, organizing, questioning.
See the handout for a real student example!

"WHAT COLOUR DO I HAVE TO BE TO GET AN OSCAR?"

Ethnic breakdown of Oscar judges, nominees, actors and US population

- 94% white (Academy Judges 2014)
- 93% white (All Oscar Nominations EVER)
- 74.1% white (All Film Roles 2007-2013)
- 63% white (United States General Population)

This chart shows some of the complaints about the #OscarsSoWhite movement

Purpose
• Provide connections to events, ideas, and experiences outside of the text

Preparation
• Bulleted information about 2-3 connections that can increase understanding
  • other class readings
  • other courses
  • current events
  • personal experiences
See the handout for a real student example!
Discussion

• students distribute handouts to each other
• roles work together to discuss text
• teacher monitors and facilitates discussion
• 45-60 minutes
Finds connections between text concepts and other domains.

Connects group work, leads discussion.

Focuses on language to facilitate comprehension and engage with topic.

Discuss key contextual references to facilitate understanding.

Makes important concepts visual to see text differently.
1. Leader: conceptual questions
2. Discuss text section by section
   1. Leader: section 1 summary
   2. Highlighter: relevant vocabulary
   3. Contextualizer: relevant references
   4. Visualizer: relevant visuals
   5. Connector: relevant information
   6. Leader: section 2 summary...
3. Leader: discussion questions
participation during discussion

quality of information on handout

ASSESSMENT

follow-up assignment
IMPLEMENTATION

• ARC must be scaffolded for the first discussion
  1. use an easy or familiar text to begin with
  2. use questions to introduce roles
  3. build abbreviated handouts together
  4. assign students to role to complete full handout
  5. group roles together for feedback

• review different subskills throughout course
  • note-taking / summary skills
  • identifying topical vocabulary / close reading
  • researching contextual references
  • finding visual data
### Unit 5 Reading 1

#### ARC Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Race</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are several topical themes in this article. What vocabulary is used that is related to the themes of economics and identity?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What words are repeated often?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some interesting or difficult sentences? Write the line numbers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is this article related to the textbook article “Gimmicks”?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have any experiences with anything related to this topic?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What references does the author make to people, places, ideas, or events?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there any other information mentioned in the article that would be useful to learn more about? Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What pictures would help you understand this article more?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the movie “Birth of a Nation” related to the movement against racism?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What differences exist between “Birth of a Nation” and “Django Unchained”?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you think a movie like this can create change? Explain your answer</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M</strong> Introduce ARC, complete questions sheet, begin abbreviated handouts</td>
<td><strong>M</strong> In-class discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong> Continue abbreviated handouts</td>
<td><strong>T</strong> Assign text and roles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W</strong></td>
<td><strong>W</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F</strong> Rough draft of handouts due Pair roles together for sharing and feedback</td>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M</strong> In-class discussion</td>
<td><strong>M</strong> In-class discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## What ARC IS and IS NOT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Academic reading circles are...</strong></th>
<th><strong>Academic reading circles are not...</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structured for student independence, responsibility, and ownership</td>
<td>Unstructured, uncontrolled &quot;talk time&quot; without accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided primarily by student insights and questions</td>
<td>Guided primarily by teacher- or curriculum-based questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intended as a context in which to <em>apply</em> reading skills</td>
<td>Intended to just practice reading strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(adapted from Schlick Noe, 2004)*
“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”
— Dr. Seuss

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areadingcircle.wordpress.com
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