

THREE CLOSE READS - INTRODUCTION

Preparation

- Download “Unit 1 Introduction: The Global Tapestry 1200 to 1450”

Purpose

This activity introduces you to the WHP AP Three Close Reads process. You will use this process when approaching all readings in the course because it will help you practice historical inquiry by teaching you how to analyze historical accounts and interpretations using a variety of reading strategies. Instead of simply learning about historical concepts, you’ll learn to evaluate different perspectives on historical issues so you can take an active role in constructing and deconstructing history, rather than taking things at face value.

Process

At the beginning of each unit of this course, you will be provided with an introductory reading that will help you get a sense of what’s to come. By looking at a zoomed-out view of a unit, you’ll be able to think about the patterns and themes that exist within it, something that’s often more difficult to figure out when you study history in smaller time periods or segments.

Before digging into the article, take out the Three Close Reads worksheet, and with your class, quickly review the process as well as how to fill out the organizer section. Reading everything in the course three times might seem insane, but it’s actually a really helpful tool for getting all the information you need from the articles. Don’t worry—the process gets faster and faster with each reading. Somewhere in the middle of the course, you’ll probably notice that the three reads take the same amount of time one used to take.

Framing Question or Idea

Before you start to read, it’s usually a good idea to have a question to help focus your reading. For this article, think about the following question, which you will revisit again at the end of the third read: *What are the similarities and differences in how states were organized in the period from 1200 to 1450 CE?*

Read 1—Skimming for Gist

The first close read is really meant to be a skim of the article. It should be very quick and give you the gist (general idea) of what the article is about. You should be looking at the title, author, headings, pictures, and opening sentences of paragraphs for the gist. On the Three Close Reads worksheet, look at the “Questions” section for the first close read and see which questions you can answer quickly.

Read 2—Understanding Content

Now that you’ve completed the first close read, look at the second section of the worksheet. This read is probably closest to the kind of reading you usually do. Basically, you’re trying to get a better understanding of the concepts and arguments that are presented in the article. Review the “Pay Attention to…” and “Questions” sections of the worksheet so you know what to think about when reading and to be sure you understand the information from the article. Also, this is where you will write down any vocab you see in the article that is unfamiliar to you. Your teacher will suggest ways to keep track of these words.

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By the end of the second close read, you should be able to answer the following questions:

1. What is the difference between “world-systems” with a hyphen and “world system” without a hyphen?
2. Why does the author say that the world from 1200 to 1450 seemed like “worlds apart”?
3. How does the author characterize different regions of Afro-Eurasia? What were some characteristics of each region?
4. Why did distant, seemingly separate parts of the world nevertheless share many similarities? What are the two possibilities the author provides?

Read 3—Evaluating and Corroborating

Now it's time for the third and final read. For this read, focus on why this article matters, how it connects to other content you've studied. Since this is the first reading assignment of the course, you may not connect it to much, other than the knowledge you already have.

At the end of the third read, discuss the following questions with your class:

1. What are the similarities and differences in how states were organized in the period from 1200 to 1450 CE?
2. The author explains a seemingly silly debate about the use of a hyphen in world-systems. But he also mentions that this is a meaningful debate. Do you agree that it's meaningful? Why or why not?
3. The author outlines two different lenses for examining the world from 1200 to 1450: as a world of similarities and connections, or as a world of differences and separations. How do you think our understanding of the world changes depending on which of these lenses you use?

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Name: Date:

Directions: Before you read, look at the “Pay Attention to” and “Questions” columns. Write your answers in the third column.

Article Title: _____ Unit #: _____

Article Author: _____ Lesson #: _____

Overall question or idea to think about as you read:

Read 1: Skimming for Gist

This will be your quickest read. It should help you get the general idea of what the article or essay will be about.

Pay attention to ...	Questions	Your answers
Title and headings	What is this article going to be about?	
Images, image captions, graphs, tables	How do these add to your idea of what the article is going to be about?	

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Read 2: Understanding Content

In this read, you will pay attention to the information that most helps you understand the article.

Pay attention to ...	Questions	Your answers
Vocab	Are there words you don't understand or recognize? Write those words here, and then annotate the text with a definition or synonym of each word. Or, as an alternative, add them to your vocab tracker.	
Main idea and key details	What is the main idea of this article (note, it might be the major claim or thesis statement)? In addition to the main idea, what do you think are the three most important details from this article? Explain these key points on the right. Alternatively, your teacher may give you a more specific set of questions to answer about the main details.	
Analysis and evidence	What evidence does the author use to support and extend the main idea or major claim? Provide two to three examples.	

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Read 3: Evaluating and Connecting

The third reading is really about understanding how the article relates to the idea or question you thought about as you read, as well as connecting the content to the AP themes.

Pay attention to ...	Questions	Your answers
Logic and credibility	In what ways are the arguments or explanations reliable and effective?	
AP Themes	Which of the AP themes are included in the article and how? Provide an explanation of how the theme is being addressed. Cite specific evidence in your response. PIECES is a helpful reminder for the AP themes.	