**Workshop # 3 Self in Community  
Reading for Meaning**

**Lesson 1**

Facts about reading:

Reading is not passive. It’s an active process that occurs in stages and takes place gradually. We see things around us and make sense of them by thinking about them in terms of our own experiences. Reading is no different. Research shows that when we see parts of a word, we guess what it is and we do the same when it comes to reading. We make assumptions based on our expectations and only when we are active, do we truly understand the writer’s message. We read text messages, FaceBook messages, emails, newspapers, books – fiction, non-fiction, and textbooks all the time and we learn to read at a young age. How do we make sense of what we read?

Purpose:

· To read actively rather than passively.

· To create meaning from what you read in stages by stopping mid-way to process your understanding.

· To create your own interpretation of the readings without depending on any direct interpretation.

· To share written reactions with others and to see readings through their eyes.

· To see how you and other people’s minds react to the same words, and to see that everyone has different reactions and feelings, even when they agree on the main outlines.

Read *Introduction to Poetry* by Billy Collins and discuss the meaning and how this resonates with your experience with reading poetry or anything else. Ask leading questions such as:

What is the poem compared to? What sounds do you hear? Why a mouse? What do you sense when you see someone waving and waterskiing? etc. Make as much sense of this as you are able.

**Introduction to Poetry Billy Collins**

I ask them to take a poem

and hold it up to the light

like a color slide

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem

and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem's room

and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to waterski

across the surface of a poem

waving at the author's name on the shore.

But all they want to do

is tie the poem to a chair with rope

and torture a confession out of it.

They begin beating it with a hose

to find out what it really means.

Activity 1 –Free-writing: Capturing reactions on the fly / Individual response to reading

Read the first 3 stanzas of the poem “**The Writer” by Richard Wilbur**. When you are finished, free-write for at least 5 minutes. Simply write about the parts that make sense to you. Write down what is going on in your head. It’s your interpretation, so go ahead and write what the poem means to you. Write down words that linger. What feelings, thoughts or memories are you having? Which parts confuse you? Why? Provide support for your interpretations where you can.

Activity 2 –Comparing notes and creating meaning with others / Discussion and process of writing

Now compare notes with your partner/s. Find out what others think the poem means so far. Ask one another questions and try piece together parts that you might have missed on your own. Read the poem several times and with each reading, you will deepen your understanding of it.

Read the next section and repeat the activities until you have finished reading the entire poem.

|  |
| --- |
| The Writer Richard Wilbur |
| In her room at the prow of the house  Where light breaks, and the windows are tossed with linden,  My daughter is writing a story.    I pause in the stairwell, hearing  From her shut door a commotion of typewriter-keys  Like a chain hauled over a gunwale.  \_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_    Young as she is, the stuff  Of her life is a great cargo, and some of it heavy:  I wish her a lucky passage.    But now it is she who pauses,  As if to reject my thought and its easy figure.  A stillness greatens, in which    The whole house seems to be thinking,  And then she is at it again with a bunched clamor  Of strokes, and again is silent.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  I remember the dazed starling  Which was trapped in that very room, two years ago;  How we stole in, lifted a sash    And retreated, not to affright it;  And how for a helpless hour, through the crack of the door,  We watched the sleek, wild, dark    And iridescent creature  Batter against the brilliance, drop like a glove  To the hard floor, or the desk-top,  And wait then, humped and bloody,  For the wits to try it again; and how our spirits  Rose when, suddenly sure,    It lifted off from a chair-back,  Beating a smooth course for the right window  And clearing the sill of the world.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_    It is always a matter, my darling,  Of life or death, as I had forgotten. I wish  What I wished you before, but harder. |
|  |

Activity 3 – Learning about yourself as a reader and writer

Writing Activity:

How does your background, where you were brought up, your life experience, your gender, your sexual orientation, your views all affect how you interpret what you read?

**Lesson 2**

**In Class reading #1** - *What is Poverty?* By Jo Goodwin Parker – Patterns Plus A short Prose Reader with Argumentation Mary Lou Conlin

**Before you read:**

Activity 4: Focused free writing – 10 minutes: When you think of poverty, what places come to mind first? What is your image of poverty? Do you see this community has having impoverished people? If so, give some examples.

Listing - group:

Create a list of needs and services you know or believe our community has.

Activity 4B:  
**After you read:**

Use context clues to help you provide meaning for each of the following words . Word from text – meaning and strategy - compare your definition with a partner (see card for reading appendix strategies)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Example:**  **Querulous** |  | Guess: dissatisfied, frustrated, angry.  Actual | “People who work in the complaint department of a store must get used to dealing with lots of *querulous* customers.”  I used the word complaint in the context to infer that the customers were disgruntled, unhappy, and dissatisfied, otherwise they would not visit the complaint department. |
| 1 | stench | 230 |  |  |
| 2 | privy |  |  |  |
| 3 | devour |  |  |  |
|  | illegitimate | 231 |  |  |
|  | despair |  |  |  |

Activity 5:

Questions: Definitions and paraphrasing

How does the writer define poverty? You may use sentences from the text, but aim to rephrase and use your own words as much as possible.

Activity 6: In class research: **Causes**

* You have 30 minutes to research the following. Use computers in the computer lab or the library**.**
* Cite your sources
* Work in pairs.

1. What constitutes the “poverty level” according to the federal government? Create a complex or compound sentence.

2. Find the unemployment rate of the U.S. and any two other countries.

Regroup to share your research and discuss :   
3. What are the *causes* of poverty in U.S and in the countries that you researched?

**Homework:**

Activity 7: Research

Each *pair* researches 2 agencies in our community – find out who they are, where they are, what they offer, and how people can access them. Be ready to share your information with the whole group.

**Lesson 3**

**Reading #2** -*On Being Unemployed* by Nelliejean Smith (student)

Activity 8: ***Effects*:** Focused free write – 10 minutes: What do you think are the *effects* of unemployment? Activity 9: Listing

Group 1.  
Discuss and then list some of the *social* *effects* of unemployment and the effects unemployment has on the American people as a whole.

Group 2:

Discuss and then list some of the *economic* *effects* of unemployment and the effects unemployment has on the American people as a whole.

Group 3:

Discuss and then list some of the *psychological effects* of unemployment and the effects unemployment has on the American people as a whole.

Whole Group: Create one comprehensive list of effects of social and economic effects of unemployment

**After you read:**

Activity 10: Writing Assignment - main idea

1. What is the main idea of this paragraph?

2. What psychological effects do you think the writer’s unsuccessful job interviews have on her?

Activity 7B: Sharing research: Create a chart listing all the agencies in this community.

Activity 11 Free writing assignment – 10 minutes: What agencies could you be part of to support people in your community? What can you do to make a positive change?

**Homework:**

Activity 12

**Reading #3**: *Nickel and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich and highlight the following words while you read.

Vocabulary in Context - Worksheet

Word from text Meaning and Strategy

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Word from text | pg. | Meaning Guess  Actual  Part of Speech | Strategy used |
| 1 | prosperity | 225 |  |  |
| 2 | dispossessed |  |  |  |
| 3 | borne |  |  |  |
| 4 | fettered |  |  |  |
| 5 | sanctity | 226 |  |  |
| 6 | genocide |  |  |  |
| 7 | ethnic cleansing |  |  |  |
| 8 | calamity |  |  |  |
| 9 | sovereignty |  |  |  |
| 10 | eradicating | 227 |  |  |
| 11 | pantheon |  |  |  |
| 12 | resonance | 228 |  |  |
| 13 | amidst |  |  |  |
| 14 | injunction |  |  |  |
| 15 | facet |  |  |  |
| 16 | enmity |  |  |  |
| 17 | comprises | 229 |  |  |
| 18 | proclaim |  |  |  |
| 19 | undermine |  |  |  |
| 20 | sustain |  |  |  |

**Lesson 4**

Activity 13 – Summarizing via a web

Create an *elaborate* web to provide a summary of the reading: Group the circles into would-be paragraphs and then decide the order of the paragraphs and number those . Create a *thesis statement.*

Activity 14

* Create a list of all the EFFECTS of being a low-wage worker.
* Create a thesis statement for this list.

Activity 15: Discussion – responding to quotes

Small group to large group discussion (World Café style):

Café Style:

Groups discuss the quote – what it means, what it means to them, have they benefited from others, have they benefited others….

Each group is stationed at a table and discusses. One member writes the report. The entire group splits up, each going to a different table where he/she provides the summary of their group discussion to a new group leader. The leader adds to the report. Rotate until you have visited each table and provided a summary unless someone else in your group has already visited the table. Instructor records the entire group work.

“When someone works for less pay than she can live on — when, for example, she goes hungry so that you can eat more cheaply and conveniently — then she has made a great sacrifice for you, she has made you a gift of some part of her abilities, her health, and her life. The 'working poor,' as they are approvingly termed, are in fact the major philanthropists of our society. They neglect their own children so that the children of others will be cared for; they live in substandard housing so that other homes will be shiny and perfect; they endure privation so that inflation will be low and stock prices high. To be a member of the working poor is to be an anonymous donor, a nameless benefactor, to everyone else.”

― [Barbara Ehrenreich](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1257.Barbara_Ehrenreich), [*Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*](http://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/1840613)

Activity 16: Responding to quotes in writing: **3** paragraphs.

Begin by explaining what this means to you; then supply examples that help support your explanation. Next, relate this to your own life. Last, embed this quote into your piece. You may decide to use it at the beginning, the end, or in the middle.

“What you don't necessarily realize when you start selling your time by the hour is that what you're really selling is your life.”

― [Barbara Ehrenreich](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1257.Barbara_Ehrenreich), [*Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*](http://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/1840613)

* Provide a title for your writing
* Add transitions
* Edit it for grammar, punctuation.

**Homework:**

Activity 17

**Reading #4**: *Crossing with the Virgin - From the Migrant Trail -Story Twenty-four*  by Kathryn Ferguson, Norma Price and Ted Parks

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Word from text | pg. | Meaning Guess  Actual  Part of Speech | Strategy used |
|  | scores | 133 |  |  |
|  | environs |  |  |  |
|  | beckon |  |  |  |
|  | Tito |  |  |  |
|  | bane |  |  |  |
|  | succumb |  |  |  |
|  | apathy |  |  |  |
|  | forlorn | 134 |  |  |
|  | horde | 135 |  |  |
|  | paradigm |  |  |  |

Lesson 5

Activity 18

Responding to quotes - focused free-write

Respond to the following quote:

*“There were the unknown, never to be discovered, who lost their lives looking for a job.”* from Crossing with the Virgin from the Migrant Trail - Story Twenty-four

Questions on reading:

Does the word “alien” feel positive or negative to you? Explain what you think of when you think of an “alien”.

Define the groups the writer refers to. What are his feelings towards each group.

Activity 19: Listing

Why do you think people cross the border illegally? What do they stand to lose? What do they stand to gain?

Create a list of the causes and the effects of entering a country illegally. Think of the effects not mentioned in the story such as the effects on the families.

**Lesson 6**

**In class reading:** *Family Planning* (Agnes) and *Working Joe*

Activity 20: Writing assignment – Dialogue / Punctuation

Replace the dialogue in each of the readings with your own – use the *same punctuation*; you can keep the same tone and just change the words *or* you can change the words and tone completely. Experiment and have fun!

Step 1: Use “Reading Strategies” card to determine the meanings of the following.

As you read:

**In Class Reading #5**: *Nobel Lecture* – Kofi Annan from Open Questions –Chris Anderson and Lex Runciman and locate these vocabulary words. *Underline or highlight and number each one.*

Activity 21

Word from text Meaning and Strategy

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Word from text | pg. | Meaning Guess  Actual  Part of Speech | Strategy used |
| 1 | bask | 194 |  |  |
| 2 | desisted | 195 |  |  |
| 3 | self-delusion | 195 |  |  |
| 4 | inordinately | 195 |  |  |
| 5 | demerits | 196 |  |  |
| 6 | rhetorical | 196 |  |  |
| 7 | carousing | 196 |  |  |
| 8 | dilapidated | 199 |  |  |
| 9 | complacency | 200 |  |  |
| 10 | arbitrary | 200 |  |  |
| 11 | affluent | 201 |  |  |
| 12 | imperiously | 201 |  |  |
| 13 | mollified | 202 |  |  |
| 14 | summon | 203 |  |  |
| 15 | avowed | 203 |  |  |
| 16 | intractable | 204 |  |  |
| 17 | evading | 204 |  |  |
| 18 | exhort | 207 |  |  |
| 19 | euphemisms | 208 |  |  |
| 20 | heralded | 208 |  |  |
| 21 | unilaterally | 209 |  |  |
| 22 | infractions | 210 |  |  |
| 21 | unremitting | 211 |  |  |
| 22 | meagerly | 212 |  |  |
| 23 | austere | 214 |  |  |
| 24 | stratum | 215 |  |  |
| 25 | scurries | 215 |  |  |
| 26 | sojourn | 216 |  |  |
| 27 | blithely | 217 |  |  |
| 28 | excoriated | 220 |  |  |
| 29 | condescension | 220 |  |  |
| 30 | philanthropists | 221 |  |  |

Activity 22: Listing /Summarizing

As you read, make a list of Kofi Annan’s major assertions. Summarize using your own words or at least some of your own words. If you do use words from the text, make sure you cite correctly. Include at least 5 statements.

**After you read**

How does Annan begin and end his speech? Why does he structure his essay this way?

**Homework**:   
Place all of your activities in order into a binder for your final assignment.

**Lesson 7**

Discussion: The Butterfly Effect.

Introduction to main assignment and workshop

Final Activity: Main Writing Assignment **(100 points)**

First, explain the “Butterfly Effect” Annan mentions on page one of his speech. Then use the work you completed in the following assignments to provide at least two examples of the “Butterfly Effect”. You do not need to make use of all of these activities. You may want to, or you may want to focus on only a few. Create an essay of at least five (5) paragraphs with a Thesis. (hint: use your explanation of the Butterfly Effect as your thesis).

**Lesson 8**

**Sharing and Responding and Editing**

Guidelines for the Writer:

1. Take a moment to look at your listeners before you begin to read. Relax, smile, and breathe. Say a few introductory words if you’d like.
2. Read your piece out loud slowly and clearly. **Own your writing**. Read it with authority even if you don’t feel satisfied with it. Concentrate on the meaning of what you’re reading. Try not to worry about whether listeners like it. If there is something in your piece that you are not comfortable sharing, simply skip over that passage when you are reading. Don’t tell your group you are skipping; try and make your reading seamless.
3. Ask y your listeners for feedback. Make any changes that you feel will improve your piece.

Guidelines for Listeners:

1. Ground yourself in the present moment and really listen to what the writer is saying. Try to give him or her your complete attention. If you feel yourself drifting or getting distracted, take a breath and re-focus on the writer’s words.
2. If the writer is mumbling or reading too fast, kindly interrupt him or her and ask for a slower or clearer read.
3. When the writer has finished his or her piece, provide feedback . Try to help with any grammatical errors, or to strengthen any part of the essay.

Reflection (to be completed once all group members have shared):

What was it like reading your piece out loud to your group? Were you excited to share your writing? Nervous? How did reading out loud change your perspective on your piece? Are there things about your piece that you see now that you didn’t see prior to reading out loud? What feedback did you receive and what changes did you make because of that feedback?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Workshop #3 - 150**  **Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** | Complete? | |
| Y | N |
| Rubric – see Holistic Scoring Chart on reverse for grading |  |  |
| **Activities**  ( out of 40 points) | Y | N |
|  |  |  |
| **Essay**  ( out of 100 points) | Y | N |
|  |  |  |
| **Reflection (bonus points)**  ( out of 10 points) | Y | N |
|  |  |  |