



ERASMUS+
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UNIT 2
CRITICAL READING



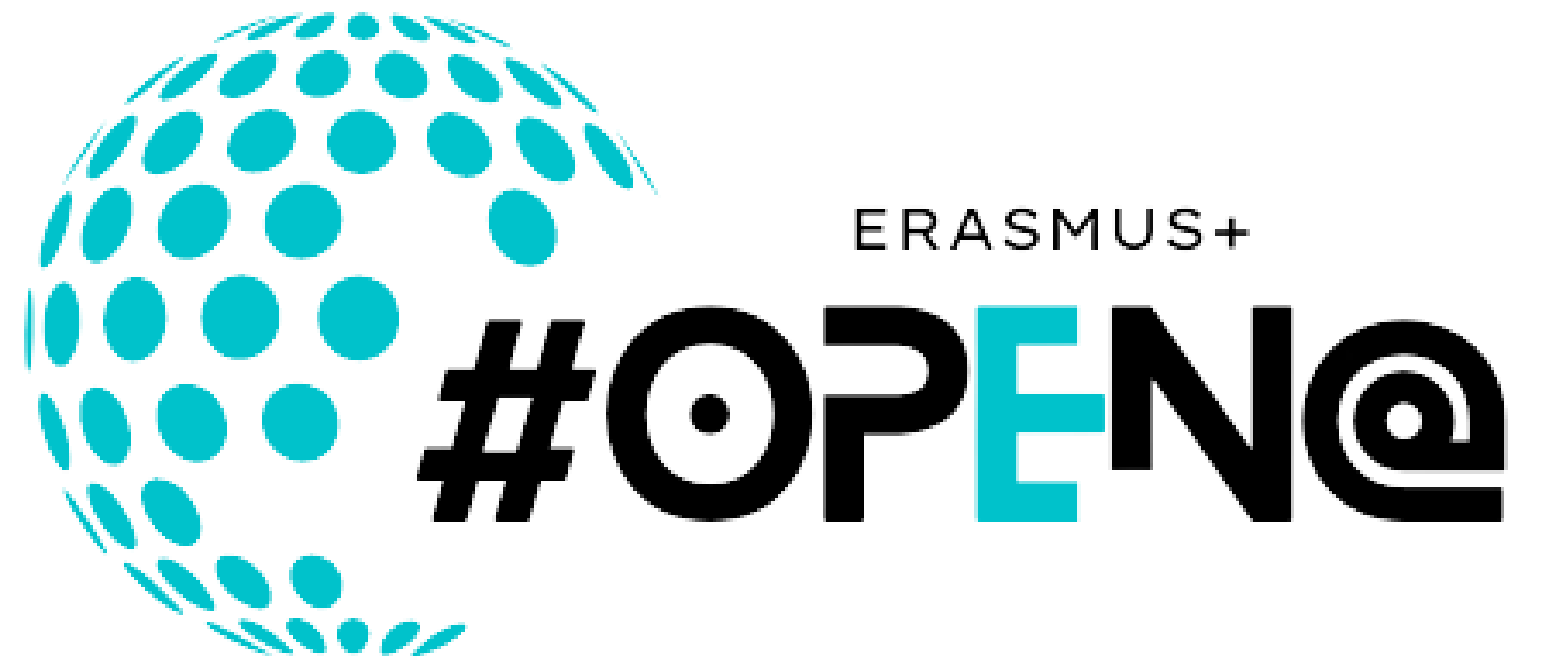
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Goals of the Unit

- *Introduction to Critical Reading*
- *The Elements of Critical Reading*
- *Strategies for Critical Reading*
- *Critical Reading and Journalism*
- *Using Critical Reading in Classroom-Activities*



Introduction

Critical reading is the active, analytical reading of texts with the goal of understanding deep meaning and forming a thoughtful response. It involves asking questions, making connections, and analyzing arguments to deepen your engagement with the text.

WARM-UP

Start with asking students what they understand when they hear *critical reading*?



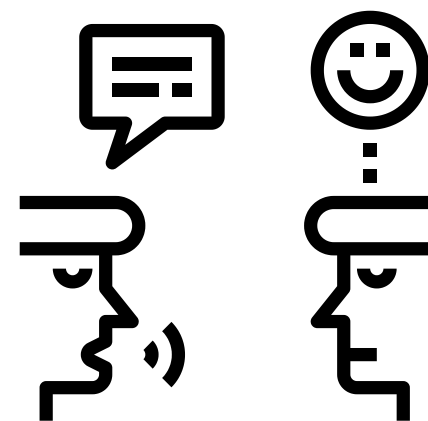
By honing students critical reading skills, you can unlock a world of knowledge and insight, assisting them to become more engaged and thoughtful readers while developing their interpretive skills.

Why Critical Reading Matters?



Informed Decisions

Developing critical reading skills enables to make informed decisions based on accurate, thoughtful analysis of information.



Effective Communication

Critical reading skills pave the way for effective communication, improving interpretive skills and ensuring ideas to be well-supported and well-articulated.



Lifelong Learning

By honing critical reading skills, students can become a lifelong learner, constantly seeking to deepen their understanding and broaden their horizons.



The Elements of Critical Reading

Questioning

Effective critical readers ask questions before, during, and after they read to extract the most meaning.

Analyzing

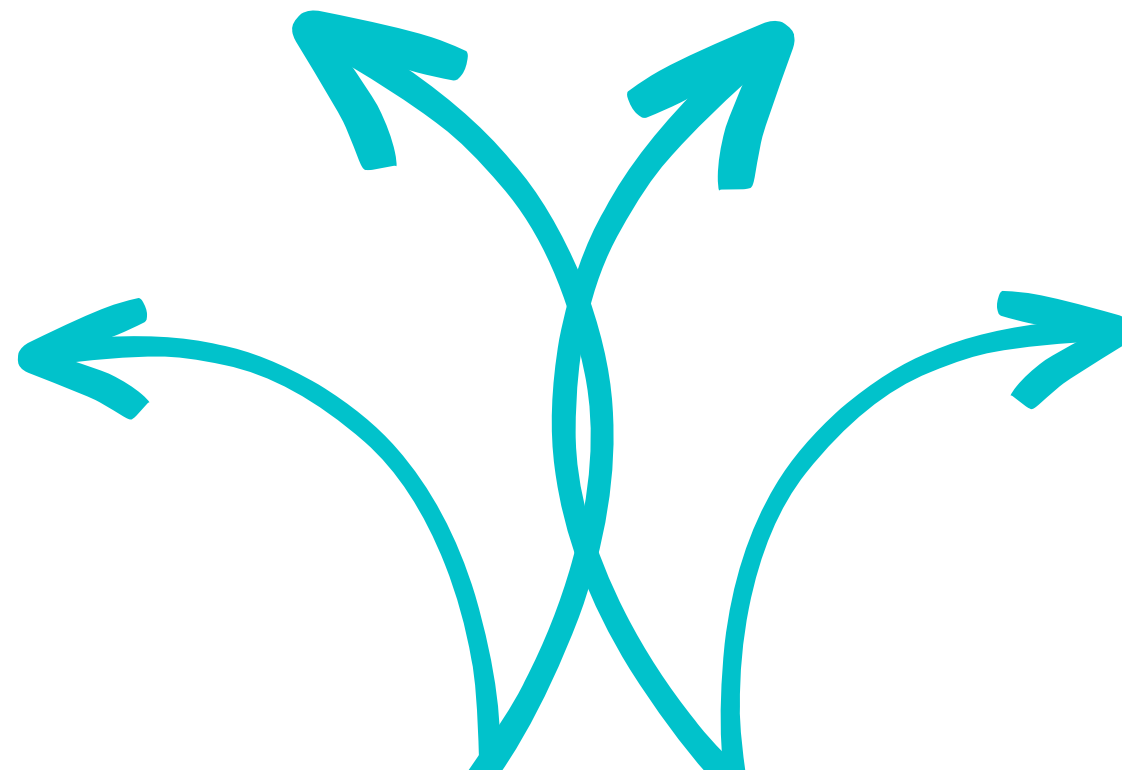
Critical readers analyze arguments, break down complex ideas, and pay attention to rhetorical devices and persuasive techniques.

Evaluating

Critical readers evaluate arguments for biases and assumptions, assess the credibility of the author, and judge the overall quality of the text.

Making Connections

Critical readers make connections between what they are reading and what they already know, as well as between different texts.



STRATEGIES FOR CRITICAL READING



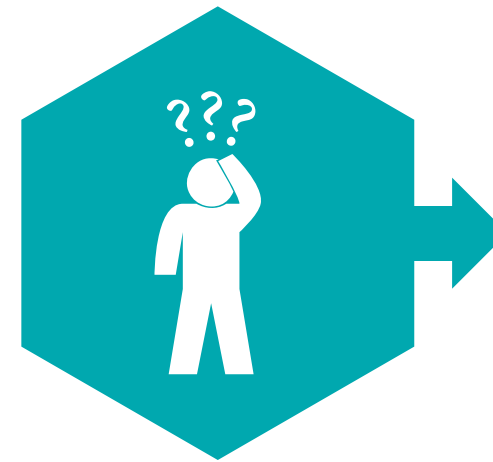
1 - Active Reading

Underline, highlight, and annotate important sections of the text as you read to stay engaged and focused.



2 - Summarizing & Synthesizing

Summarize key points in your own words and synthesize different sources to develop a deeper understanding.



3 - Questioning

Ask thought-provoking questions as you read, such as "What evidence supports this argument?" or "What assumptions is the author making?"

People learn through reading, and reading about interesting new things in one's interest subject, undoubtedly helps motivation.

Paul Sanderson, 2002

Activity

- After giving an introduction about critical reading, implement the activity 'What is critical reading?'
- You should; ask the main differences between non-critical and critical reading, then ask the students to specify the differences with one word.
- Give 15 min for the activity
- Share the results within the classroom
- Start a conversation why they chose these words

EXAMPLE

NON-CRITICAL READING	CRITICAL READING
Passive	Active
Just the facts	What, How, Why
Gullible	Skeptical
Reactive	Purposeful



Unlocking the Power of Critical Reading

- **Critical reading techniques**

Students must grasp the ideas that gave rise to the questions in order to use them in practice effectively. As a result, the first stage in teaching students to read critically is to familiarize them with the sub-skills of critical reading and give them the task of identifying these sub-skills in actual texts.

- Distinguishing Fact from Opinion
- Interpreting Connotations of Words
- Discovering the Author's Point Of View
- Making Inference



Unlocking the Power of Critical Reading

- **Distinguishing Fact from Opinion**

The writings we read typically mix factual and subjective comments. A person's unique reaction to the world around them is expressed in statements of opinion. Contrarily, facts don't analyze the world; they only represent it. Contrary to assertions of opinion, statements of fact may be verified as true by your own personal observation, historical research, and scientific studies.

The ability to distinguish statements of fact from statements of opinion is essential for students to decide whether an author's opinions are justified or unjustified.

An opinion is justified if the author provides a number of convincing facts to support it, and readers may even want to make it their own. However, unjustified opinions should be treated with skepticism and readers should do further reading on the subject.



Unlocking the Power of Critical Reading

- **Interpreting Connotations of Words**

In many texts, especially those aimed for persuasion, authors often use highly connotative language to make their writing persuasive or convincing. This is because it is not always what we say, but how we say it that influences people.

Students should be aware of the connotations of the words used when reading, as they will be less likely to be influenced without being aware of it.



Unlocking the Power of Critical Reading

- **Discovering the Author's Point Of View**

Writers sometimes attempt to persuade readers to embrace their opinions in a variety of texts. In order to do this, they might employ a "special" point of view, which is the perspective from which the author thinks, expresses, or conveys his thoughts or ideas, in addition to unfounded opinions and connotative meanings. Some authors are prone to prejudice since someone's vision and consideration are greatly impacted by his or her political preferences, religious beliefs, sex, nationality, or geographic upbringing. Understanding the writer's point of view is essential for readers to do in order to identify his objectives or prejudices.



Unlocking the Power of Critical Reading

- **Making Inference**

Inferencing is a mental process by which we reach a conclusion based on specific evidence. It is essential in reading because readers get much of what they understand through a text indirectly. Readers construct meaning by what they take the words to mean and how they process sentences to find meaning. They draw on their knowledge of the language and conventions of social communication, as well as knowledge of the author, occasion, or audience. They infer unstated meanings based on social conventions, shared knowledge, shared experience, and shared values. They make sense of remarks by recognizing implications and drawing conclusions.

READING ACTIVITY

To promote the students' critical reading

Students may be given two journals that express vastly different points of view on the same subject in order to encourage their use of critical reading in identifying the author's knowledge, intent, attitude, and bias. The texts may then be followed by discussions and debates between the students.

The teacher must consider the texts' substance while choosing them to make sure that it relates to subjects in which the pupils are truly interested. In order for the students to understand themselves from a different perspective, the teacher can also locate works that offer a foreign viewpoint on the students' nation or culture.

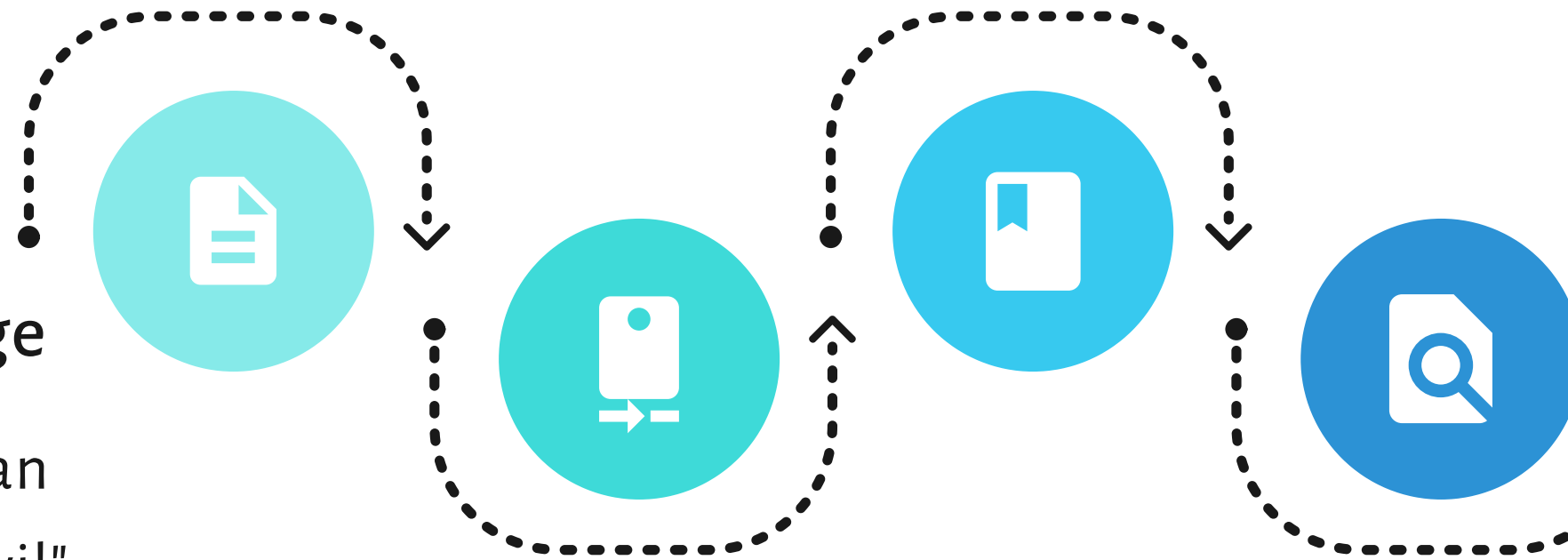




Critical Reading and Journalism

- The basic objective of English education via journalism is to help students become more fluent in both spoken and written English.
 - In journalism, there is a significant amount of reading and writing required which makes it a potential tool for language development. Additionally, English spelling, grammar, and vocabulary corrections are significantly simpler in journalism.
 - It covers some of the more technical components of writing and reading that enhances critical engagement. For instance, how paragraphs are put together, what a topic sentence is, and how news pieces are put together.
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IDENTIFYING BIAS AND ASSUMPTIONS



1 - Look for Loaded Language

Words that are meant to elicit an emotional response, such as "evil" or "heartwarming," can be a clue to the author's biases.

2 - Consider the Source

Think critically about the author's background, experience, and motivations, which can influence their perspective.

3 - Spot the Assumptions

Assumptions are unspoken beliefs that support an argument. Look for clues to assumptions in the author's choice of words and evidence.

4 - Seek Alternate Perspectives

Reading texts that challenge your own beliefs and opinions can help you identify biases and assumptions in your own thinking.

Activity

- Choose a local journal
- Give different parts of the journal for students to read
- In the end they should answer the question 'Am I reading critically?' through the diagram

PURPOSE

Why am I reading this?

CONTEXT

What connects this work to others?

AM I READING CRITICALLY?

IDENTITY

What is the author's main idea?

ANALYSIS

What is my opinion on the main idea(s)?

Critical reading strategies that can be used in classroom teaching:

01

Pre-reading:

Learning about a text before really reading it. The teacher asks students to prepare for the class by giving them printed material to read a few minutes before class. Previewing enables students to get an idea of what the material is about and how it is organized before reading it more carefully. This involves scanning the text to find specific information, skimming to get a general idea of the content and organization of the text, and identifying the purpose of the writing. This usually takes a short period of time and both the students and the teacher get a brief understanding of what they are going to deal with in the class.

02

Reading in context:

When we read, it is wise to place a text in its historical, biographical, and cultural contexts. Why is this necessary? Critical reading is a type of reading that involves not only getting the basic understanding of the reading material, but also understanding the author's thoughts and ideas. It requires not only the readers' participation, but also the background knowledge of the material. Non-critical readers mainly read to learn the facts of a certain situation, while critical readers read more deeply and carefully to try to work out how this situation exists and the possible reasons hidden.

Critical reading strategies that can be used in classroom teaching are clearly stated as the following:

02

Reading in context:

When students read in classroom, they use their own experience to discover unique perspectives and employ different techniques to get better comprehension of the reading material. Pre-reading helps them gain a general idea and dig into the text to have detailed reading. Additionally, wide background knowledge and contextualization help them achieve a better understanding of the material they read. In classroom teaching, students need to use all effective methods to achieve their reading goals.

03

Further the understanding by asking questions and answering them:

Asking questions about the content. The most important details in this text are that students are accustomed to teachers asking them questions about the text they read. This is a normal way in reading teaching and often works. In critical reading, students are asked to design questions themselves to help them understand the material and respond to it more fully. Each question should focus on a main idea, not on illustrations or details, and should be expressed in their own words. This strategy helps students understand the material better and remember it longer, especially in difficult academic readings.

Critical reading strategies that can be used in classroom teaching are clearly stated as the following:

04

Further thinking and reflections after reading.

The reading material that the pupils read may question their attitudes, their unconsciously held beliefs, or their positions on current topics. That's why a lot of students might feel bewildered or even anxious when reading. They require more time to think and reorganize the thoughts they gain from the reading material; then it is feasible for them to obtain further knowledge of the text after reading.

05

Outlining and summarizing:

Identifying the main ideas and restating them in their own words. Outlining and summarizing are important strategies for understanding the content and structure of a reading selection. English teachers often use these methods to help students understand the text. When teaching students to practice outlining and summarizing, they are taught to recognize the basic structure of the text and try to recognize the main ideas, supporting ideas, and examples the author uses. The main ideas form the backbone of a text.

Critical reading strategies that can be used in classroom teaching are clearly stated as the following:

05

Outlining and summarizing:

Summarizing a text is different from outlining, which involves listing all the important facts and examples together. Outlining requires a close analysis of the material, while summarizing requires creative synthesis.

The students are required to put ideas together in their own words and in a more condensed form, which shows how reading critically can lead to a deeper understanding. Critical reading involves thinking while reading, which is the primary purpose of critical read.

Critical reading strategies encourage readers to have an active engagement with the text and provide them with a useful record of their reading. They should have a clear focus for reading and set their reading goals clearly.

Once they read critically, they obtain a deeper and better understanding of the reading material.

ACTIVITY

This activity, will stimulate critical and English skills of the students through questions that ask to read and do a critical review of the various resources provided. Here are some detailed questions that you can apply the activity within the classroom.

- Who is speaking or writing?
- What is their point of view or perspective?
- What ideas and information are presented and how were they obtained?
- Are there unsupported assertions?
- Are relevant reasons or evidence provided?
- Is the method used to find the evidence sound?
- Is the evidence correct or valid?

- What assumptions have been made?
- What is fact and what is opinion?
- What are the implicit and explicit values?
- Are there unreasonable generalisations?
- What has been omitted?
- How was the conclusion reached?
- Is the conclusion reasonable?
- What other perspectives or points of view could there be?

ANALYZING ARGUMENTS



1 - Identify the Issue

Determine the central issue or question that the author is addressing.



2 - Examine the Evidence

Assess the quality and relevance of the evidence used to support the author's argument.



3 - Consider Counterarguments

Think critically about opposing views and arguments in order to better evaluate the author's position.



4 - Evaluate the Argument

Use critical reading skills to evaluate the overall quality and effectiveness of the author's argument.

ESSENTIALS

Another crucial part of the critical reading is knowing how to read. Reading skills are essential for students to fully understand the journal especially in English. But also, taking notes, teachers or students probably will think 'Why talk about taking notes' when this section's called "**Critical reading techniques**"? Well, it's because making notes is an essential part of the reading process.

It helps people to internalise difficult ideas by putting them into their own words and can help them to be more focused during exam revision.

Taking notes is a skill that students will develop with practice. There is no right or wrong way.

They just need to find a method that suits them, such as using bullet points, mind maps and diagrams, highlighting, annotating or underlining significant words.

Students are more likely to remember material they have thought about and made notes on than material they have read passively.

READING SKILLS

Forming an opinion by bringing extra information.



EVALUATION

Understanding based on clues direct in the text.



LITERAL

Understanding when clues are separated in the text.



REORGANISATION

Understanding when clues are implied rather than literal.



INFERRING

Understanding the meaning of a word in a sentence.



VOCABULARY

Expressing an opinion based the info in the text.



REACTION

Knowing the words we read.



DECODING

FLUENCY
AND
EXPRESSION

How to Take Notes



Many students find it effective to take notes in two stages.

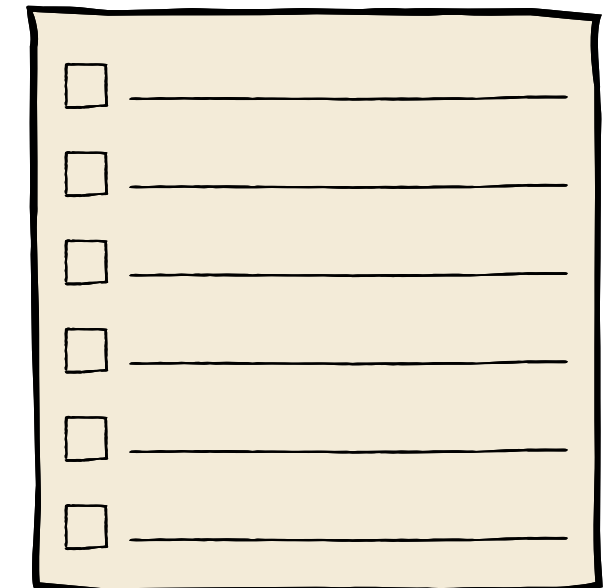
1. First writing down the main points.
2. Then summarising, condensing and organising the notes so that they can be used when writing assignments or revising for exams.



In general, notes should be brief and to the point. Students should take time to think about

- what is expected of them,
- what each journal refers to
- how you learn best, so you can choose the most effective techniques.

Revisiting notes will help them understand the material.





Students should avoid these mistakes when taking notes

- Don't write everything down, aim to get the gist of the topic or the main points.
 - Use a question mark to highlight the point you do not understand in your notes and come back to it later. This can be an English vocabulary students do not know. Encourage them to check the dictionary and write the translation on the top of the word.
 - Don't lose track of the purpose in making the notes in the first place - keep focused.
 - Don't try to remember everything you read on journal, it can't be done.
 - Don't forget to revisit and organise your notes and get them systematically arranged so that you can find the information you need when you want it.
 - Don't be afraid of trying different ways of taking notes - try lists, colours, bullet points, underlining, highlighting and mind-mapping. Experimenting with various methods helps students discover the technique that suits them.
 - Don't take notes all the time - spend some time thinking and critising the content of the Journal
-

WRITING ACTIVITY: ANALYZING YOUR READING HABITS

- Give students a task about reading English journals for two weeks using their new critical skills.
- Ask them to list all their reading in the last two weeks.
- Ask them to try listing as many texts as they can think of, no matter how short and unimportant they might seem.



*The activity will boost interpretive skills
while stimulating critical thinking*



WRITING ACTIVITY: ANALYZING YOUR READING HABITS

The news, in contrast to textbooks, is frequently uncertain and even challenged. It may include complex social difficulties. Reading and providing thoughtful commentary on news are common "literacy" descriptors. Teachers are prompted to reevaluate their expertise and instructional strategies by the difficulty of using English-based news successfully.

Teachers can encourage basic literacy and critical reading skills by making systematic and creative use of media reports with an English component in order to spark students' interest in English and establish connections outside of the classroom. News media can also be used to introduce students to language inquiry components.

By giving students the tools to interact with and respond critically to issues that directly impact them, you may advance civic education by helping kids develop their critical reading abilities.

*The activity will boost interpretive skills
while stimulating critical thinking*

Now, they should answer the following questions.

- What was their purpose in reading each of those texts? Did they read for information, to pass a test, for enjoyment, to decide on a product they wanted to buy, and so on? Or, did they read to figure out some complex problem that keeps them awake at night?,
- They have probably come up with a list of different purposes. How did each of those purposes influence their reading strategies? Did they take notes or try to memorize what they read? How long did it take them to read different texts? Did they begin at the beginning and read till they reached the end, or did they browse some texts?
- Ask them to consider the time of day that they were reading. Consider even whether some texts tired them out or whether they thought it was “boring.” Why?
- What did they do with the results of their reading? Did they use them for some practical purpose, such as buying a new product or finding directions, or did they use them for a less practical purpose, such as understanding some topic better or learning something about themselves and others?

When they finish, they should share the results with the rest of the class and the teacher.

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