



Getting Students to Write and Analyze: Close Reading Strategy

Joseph Moneymaker, South Livingston Elementary
5th grade/ 3 days

Introduction:

Students will use Lincoln's "House Divided" speech to gain a better understanding of close reading historical texts. By annotating and discussing the contents of a complex historical speech, students will begin to gain vital analytical skills. This is a complex speech and a teacher would be wise to give the students some background information about WHY Lincoln was giving this speech. For example, that this was not a speech given while he was president and it references division in the country.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will analyze a primary source/speech to develop a sense of historical perspective.
- Students will use a graphic organizer to interpret a primary source/speech.
- Students will use annotation to help develop their own understanding of a primary source/speech.
- Students will identify elements of an argument in a speech.

Guiding Questions:

- Why does a speaker use emotion when conveying his or her own written words?
- How does a speaker's own experience influence his or her argument when giving a speech? (Explain)
- Do speeches from the past still influence our values, beliefs and ideas today? (Explain)
- Socratic Seminar questions: Are we a house divided today? What are some examples of things our country is still divided on? Do you agree or disagree with these examples?

Common Core Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.1

Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.6

Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.

Materials:

- Close Reading Graphic Organizer
- Pencils
- Annotation Guide
- House Divided speech – abridged
- Chart paper
- Colored pencils/Crayons

Procedures:

- **Lesson Activity One: Annotating a speech**
 - o Students will be given a shortened version of Lincoln’s “House Divided” speech to read and annotate as a class (or groups depending on level).
- **Lesson Activity Two: Organizing your thoughts**
 - o Students will use their annotated speeches to fill out the Graphic Organizer and brainstorm the answer to the Socratic Seminar Questions.
- **Lesson Activity Three: Socratic Seminar**
 - o Students will use their speeches and graphic organizer to engage in a Socratic seminar answering the proposed questions.

Lesson Activity One: Annotating a speech

Hand out the abridged version of Lincoln’s “House Divided” speech. In small groups or as a class, students will read the speech. While they read they will utilize the “Annotation Guide” provided by Ford’s Theatre to help organize what the speech is saying. Teachers should be actively monitoring and providing students with assistance during analyzing and annotating, especially if annotating is a new skill.

Lesson Activity Two: Organizing your thoughts

Using the Graphic Organizer, students will process what they read and begin forming their argument for the Socratic seminar. This can be achieved individually or as small groups. The teacher should make sure students are fully aware of the questions they are answering and that they must provide evidence from the text to support their opinions. If using small groups, students can debate their ideas and arguments within their groups in preparation for the class Socratic seminar the following day.

Lesson Activity Three: Socratic Seminar

At the beginning of the activity the teacher should ensure that students are familiar with how to properly participate in a Socratic seminar and how to be respectful of varying opinions. Give students the first 10-15 minutes to look over their annotations and graphic

organizer before beginning the Socratic seminar. The teacher should pick a student to begin the discussion, ideally this will be a student with a well-organized graphic organizer who is willing to begin the discussion. The questions should be visible to students throughout the entire activity.

While students are voicing their ideas, the teacher should be recording their thoughts on chart paper at the front of the class. Student responses should be limited to :30 seconds to 1:00 minute in length to ensure all students have the chance to participate. The selected student will begin by answering the question and explaining their reasoning. Students then have the chance to raise their hand to be selected for the next response. The teacher will then select the next student to respond to the first student's argument using the phrase "I respectfully agree (or disagree)" and state their reasoning. The responder then has a chance to add anything to make their argument stronger. The activity will continue in this manner until all students have participated. (To save time, small group responses can be utilized.)

At the end of the activity, the chart paper at the front will have a variety of student responses and current events. This can be used for the classes choosing to do the written assessment at the end of the activity. Following the Socratic seminar, the teacher should reconvene and summarize for students that may be lost or confused after the seminar.

Assessment:

Assessment can be based off student participation and their annotated speeches. Or, teachers can have students do a short writing assignment about their thoughts during the Socratic seminar.



Lincoln's House Divided Speech - Abridged

June 16, 1858
Springfield, IL

Mr. President, Gentlemen of the Convention:

If we could just know where we are and whither we appear to be tending, we could all better judge of what to do, and how to do it. We are now well into our fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident purpose of putting an end to slavery agitation.

However, under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. "A house divided against itself cannot stand."







I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved -- I do not expect the house to fall -- but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest this further spread and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is on a course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates shall press it forward, until it shall become alike lawful in all of the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.

Have we no tendency to this latter condition?

Our cause, then, must be entrusted to, and conducted by, its own undoubted friends -- those whose hands are free and whose hearts are in the work -- who do care for the result. Two years ago the Republicans of this nation mustered some thirteen hundred thousand strong. We did this under a single impulse of resistance to a common danger, with every external circumstance against us. Of strange, discordant, even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds; we fought the battle through under the constant hot fire of a pampered, proud, disciplined army. Did we brave all then only to falter now? -- now, when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent? The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail -- if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate, or mistakes delay, but sooner or later the victory is sure to come.



Annotation Guide

	Use emoticons to show how certain parts of the text make you feel
	Sketch an illustration to convey meaning of important sentences or phrases,
	Circle parts of the speech that help you answer the questions
	Underline words that are unfamiliar
	Evidence that supports the author's claim or your claim for the Socratic seminar
	Important or surprising moment (Try to write down why it was important or surprising)
Feel free to use the margins to jot down connections, definitions and questions!	



Graphic Organizer

Summarize the speech: What is Lincoln saying about the government of the United States?

List important phrases that support your response. (Evidence)

Socratic Seminar Preparation

Are we still a “house divided” today?

Explain WHY you feel this way.

What are some things in the United States we are still divided about?

Explain WHY you feel this way.

Use these boxes during the Socratic seminar to help organize your thoughts. Write down ideas from your classmates that you agree or disagree with. Be sure to explain WHY you agree or disagree.

Agree

Disagree