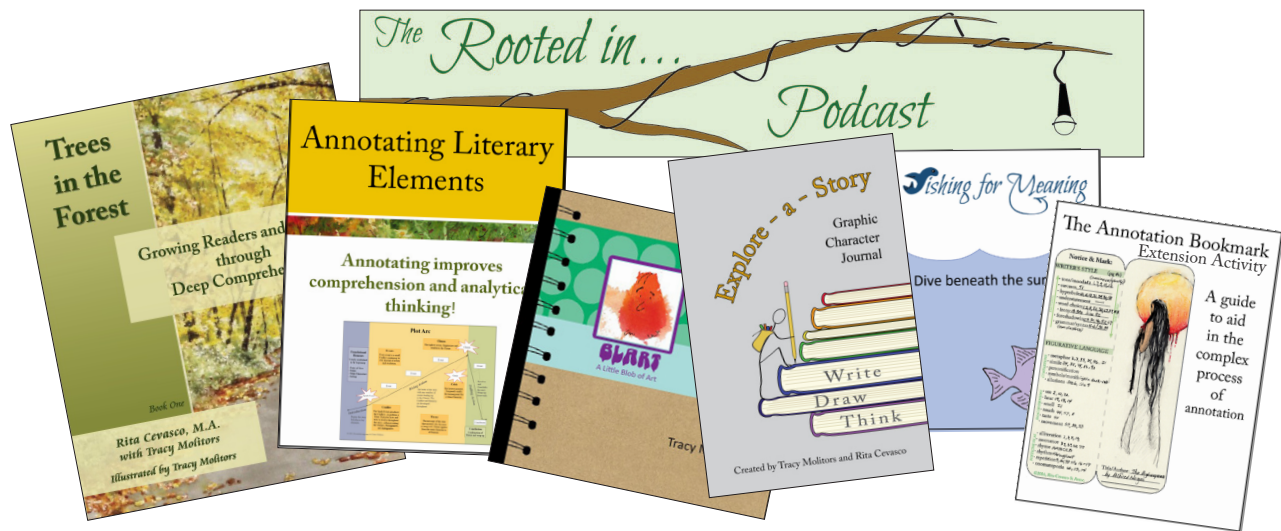




Instruction Plan: Close Reading ~ Analysis ~ Comprehension



At Rooted in Language many of our books, curricula, activities, and other materials are designed to build deeper comprehension. Each resource explores specific strategies, but they typically overlap one another. Consequently, it is possible to get even more from our content by overlapping and interweaving the use of various materials.

We recommend educators use our resources in the following order:



Begin reading *Trees in the Forest* from Introduction through the First Tree (the first activity). Try the exercise for yourself, but don't yet teach it to students.



Teach the Second Tree to your students of any age, and do the activity together. Fully engage in conversation, discussing what it means to “converse with a story,” and how one’s own internal conversation changes the story. This exercise can be repeated with other picture books throughout the year, or across multiple years.



Teach the Third Tree, providing opportunities for students to connect with characters, both “On the Floor” and “On the Stage.” To support writing about characters, use *Explore-a-Story*— a Write-Draw-Think, multi-sensory approach. All these strategies should promote discussion on a character’s conflict and possible story themes. Encourage character connections with other books, throughout the year and across multiple years.



Engage in the Fourth Tree with your students, exploring the use of selective copywork to create poetry. Discuss the writer’s word choice and evaluate how chosen phrases create a new picture. This exercise can be repeated with other literary passages throughout the year, or across multiple years.



Listens to our podcast on the Sixth Tree, called “Rooted in Place.” Then do the “Feeling of Place” writing activity with your students using *Blart—A Little Blob of Art*. Notice how the exercise helps kids elaborate on ideas, as well as discovering theme. Discuss how writers use story to comment on the human experience. Use this method of writing throughout the year on various genres, including movies, poems, short stories, and novels. Use this method to help older writers develop a thesis and write introductory and conclusion paragraphs in literary analysis papers.



Listen to our podcast called “Rooted in Annotation.” Then teach Lesson One from *Annotating Literary Elements (ALE)*. Do not be afraid to spend many months on this lesson, building plot structures using various pieces of literature. Create a plot arc with younger students to familiarize them with basic plot elements. Create a plot arc with older students to promote deeper literary analysis. The bits and pieces of writing in this exercise are important warm-ups for both discussion and additional writing. Repeat this strategy for any piece of literature that will be analyzed in a formal paper. Use this method throughout the year on various genres—movies, poetry, short stories, and novels.



Teach Lesson Two from ALE. Be sure to revisit this lesson when discussing or analyzing poetry, songs, or lyrical prose in the future. Practice using the vocabulary of Musical Elements across multiple years.



Teach Lesson Three from ALE. You will notice that the exercise in this lesson is the same as the Fifth Tree in the *Trees in the Forest* book, coming full circle in using Rooted in Language comprehension resources. Be sure to discuss how the writer uses images and figurative language to enhance literary work. Revisit the “Colors of the Canopy” lesson in the future, using copywork passages, lyrical prose, or poetry.



Teach Lesson Four from ALE. Give kids time. Students are integrating many ideas, learning new vocabulary, noticing literary elements, and practicing annotation. Feel free to use a more simple short story, based on students’ reading levels. Keep the Annotation Bookmark available for future literary analysis and to encourage deep reading. Annotation skills will need to be practiced over time and for years to come.



Teach the *Annotation Bookmarks Extension Activity*. This lesson will give students another opportunity to synthesize all of the literary elements they are learning. Students are guided to analyze literary elements while annotating a ballad poem. Remember to keep the Annotation Bookmark available for future literary analysis and to encourage deep reading.



Teach younger children how to track literary elements using the *Fishing for Meaning* activity, rather than using the more advanced Bookmarks strategy. *Fishing for Meaning* helps kids uncover and write what is hidden within the depths of a story. Choose any short story or novel for this exercise. Even older students enjoy *Fishing for Meaning*, so it can be used over time and for years to come.



Finally, read the Seventh Tree from *Trees in the Forest* and have students engage in the “On the Page/In My Head” exercise from the First Tree. By now students have gained the tools to analyze text, and have learned how to capture their thoughts in Bits and Pieces of writing. Repeat this exercise throughout the years using various literary passages.

At Rooted in Language we teach strategies that work—using lessons that are Visible and Enjoyable, that include Write–Draw–Think strategies, and encourage Bits and Pieces of Writing. We start simple, give kids time, and help them apply new learning to more advanced literature as they mature. Remember: Analyzing poetry, videos, movies, commercials, magazine articles, short stories, and non-fiction is all part of creating a comprehensive language arts program, helping kids learn how to learn!