

The third key to close reading involves the post-reading tasks. Unfortunately, too many after reading tasks can be completed based on personal experiences and not actual reading of a text. The range of post reading tasks is fairly wide, including debates, Socratic Seminars, and writing prompts. We are especially interested in the role that writing from sources plays in close reading. For example, using informational task template 12 from the Literacy Design Collaborative (www.literacydesigncollaborative.org), the teacher constructed the following writing prompt related to Chief Joseph's speech:

What is the role of courage in surrender? After reading and discussing Chief Joseph's speech "I Will Fight No More Forever," write an essay that defines courage and explains the courageousness of Chief Joseph's decision. Support your discussion with evidence from the text. What conclusions can you draw?

This closed the loop on the close reading students had completed. They used their annotations from the text, the information they gleaned from their collaborative conversations, and the feedback they received from their teacher as they constructed their responses. That's the power of close reading.

Reference

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards for English language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects*. Washington, DC: Authors.

Douglas Fisher is a professor of education at San Diego State University and a teacher leader at Health Sciences High & Middle College, and he serves on the board of the International Reading Association, dfisher@reading.org.



Nancy Frey is a professor of literacy at San Diego State University and dean of academic affairs at Health Sciences High and Middle College, nfrey@mail.sdsu.edu.



Framing Text Dependent Questions That Drive Close Reading Skills

As Tim Shanahan (2013) noted, early readings of a text focus on "What does the text say?" whereas later readings of the text focus on "How does the text work?" and even later in the process the questions focus on "What does the text mean?" Using these prompts, we have created this example of text dependent questions that can be used to drive students' close reading of the following selections dealing with Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce.

I Will Fight No More Forever

by Chief Joseph

I am tired of fighting.
Our chiefs are killed.
Looking Glass is dead.
Toohulhulsoote is dead.
The old men are all dead.
It is the young men who
say no and yes.
He who led the young
men is dead.
It is cold and we have no blankets.
The little children are freezing to death.
My people, some of them, have run away to the hills and
have no blankets, no food.
No one knows where they are.
Perhaps they are freezing to death.
I want to have time to look for my children and see how
many of them I can find.
Maybe I shall find them among the dead.
Hear me, my chiefs, I am tired.
My heart is sad and sick.
From where the sun now stands,
I will fight no more forever.
—1877



Chief Joseph

Before his death, Chief Joseph's father said to his son:

My son, my body is returning to my mother earth, and my spirit is going very soon to see the Great Spirit Chief. When I am gone, think of your country. You are the chief of these people. They look to you to guide them. Always remember that your father never sold his country. You must stop your ears whenever you are asked to sign a treaty selling your home. A few years more and white men will be all around you. They have their eyes on this land. My son, never forget my dying words. This country holds your father's body. Never sell the bones of your father and your mother.

Questions for students to focus on and respond to:

What does the text say?

- What happened?
- Who delivered this speech?
- Without yet knowing who Looking Glass and Toohulhulsoote are, what can we say about their roles in this decision?
- What concerns does Chief Joseph have about the health and welfare of his people? How do you know?

How does the text work?

- What does Chief Joseph mean when he says, "From where the sun now stands?"
- What is the tone of this speech? What words and phrases support your claim?

- How does the structure convey Chief Joseph's mood?
- What is it about the inclusion of the word *forever* in the last line, "I will fight no more *forever*" that makes this statement so memorable?

What does the text mean?

- Who is Chief Joseph referring to when he says, "I want to have time to look for my *children*"? What other parts of the speech support your claim?
- How does the second passage help you to understand the surrender speech? What inner conflict would Chief Joseph have experienced? Where do you see evidence of this conflict in the speech?