Close Reading for Literary Analysis
UNLOCKING PROSE
"The text is a lazy machine that needs to be activated" (Eco).
"Good prose is like a windowpane" (Orwell).

Prose is lazy. To activate it, you must read closely with intent! You have to read and reread sentences to garner their meaning. Close reading involves interacting with the text as you read. Small details can suggest larger ideas and pinpoint your focus on HOW meaning is revealed. Become a close reader by marking and annotating your interactions with text as you read. Until you unlock the written codes, the text is not activated. You should think of prose as a window— there is something to see beyond the windowpane itself. Happy Viewing!

1.   **QCC**: Write **q**uestions, **c**omments, and **c**onnections in the margins. When you have a question or need clarification, write down your uncertainty. When you discover something surprising, fun, or exciting that makes you say wow, cool, awesome, yuck, no way, whoa, etc., put a comment in the margin. When you discover something new, a knowledge you did not have before or a knowledge that can connect or add to something previously learned, write down your new knowledge and its connection to what you already know, to your own experiences, or to other texts.

2.   Δ **Triangle** characters' names ʘ they are easy to locate on each page; label protagonist/antagonist; note direct and indirect characterizations.

3.   □ **Box** each word you do not know. Write brief definitions beside them if you do not figure them out from context clues.

4.   ⍟ **Circle and label** literary elements. (Here are some of the literary elements that you may find: allusion, ambiguity, antithesis, apostrophe, archetype, asyndeton, colloquialism, conceit, ethos, flashback, foreshadowing, hyperbole, imagery, irony, litotes, logos, metaphor, metonymy, motif, paradox, parallelism, pathos, personification, polysyndeton, rhetorical question, satire, simile, symbol, synecdoche, theme, etc. You do not have to find all of them; you may find some that are not listed. If you need definitions for any literary terms, use the following link: https://literarydevices.net.)

5.   ≈ **Put wavy lines** under patterns or repetitions. If the patterns or repetitions are literary or syntactical elements, label them with alliteration, anadiplosis, anaphora, assonance, epistrophe, epanalepsis, sibilance, parallelism, theme, etc.

6.   /**Mark off** sentences with backward slashes (pay attention to semicolons and colons, parentheses, italics, compound-complex sentences, etc.) This can help with archaic language, compound-complex sentences, periodic sentences, etc.

7.   **Rewrite** inverted phrases/sentences or longer, periodic sentence beside the original.

8.   ★**Star** shifts or turns in the text resulting from a realization, insight, style choice, etc.

9.   **Determine point of view and type/level of diction**. Write them near the title.

10.   **Write the type of prose** at the end [nonfiction (essay, letter, journal, etc.) or fiction (novel, novella, short story, etc.)]

11.   **Make a dramatic situation chart.**

Who is speaking or narrating?	
To whom?	
About what/subject?	
When/Where?	
Why/Purpose?	
Tone?	

Need More Help?
-paraphrase the piece
-do a partner think aloud
-read literary criticisms