



# Planning & Facilitating a Close Reading

ON-DEMAND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ROOTED IN BEST-PRACTICE STRATEGIES

## Course Overview

There has been much talk about raising the complexity of the texts students are reading. However, rigorous reading isn't just about the text selection. It's also about targeting multi-faceted, deep thinking during reading. This online course will help teachers plan and facilitate a meaningful close reading in five steps.



## Topics:

- Dissect the reading standards for the close-reading expectations.
- Identify how and when close reading should be incorporated into the curriculum.
- Learn how to assess a text's complexity beyond simply looking at its reading level.
- Plan text-dependent questions that keep students rooted in the text.
- Recognize the role of pre-reading/background-building in close-reading experiences.
- Examine a variety of reader tools and technology that allows students to annotate print and digital texts.
- Acquire prompts and cues to help students address their own confusions and misunderstandings about the reading.

## When you complete the course, you'll be able to:

- ▶ Determine if a text is complex and worthy of a close reading.
- ▶ Introduce close reading to students in a variety of kid-friendly ways.
- ▶ Prepare a set of text-dependent questions that keep students rooted in the text and follow the same sequence as standardized reading assessments.
- ▶ Teach students ways to track and annotate the journey of their thinking.
- ▶ Facilitate text-based conversations that require textual evidence.

"Been at this education for over a quarter of a century... NEVER been in a (training) with such action-packed, fun-filled USEFULNESS!"

**Tim Perry •**  
*Teacher, Seymour High School, Seymour, IN*

"I am excited to go back to my classroom and implement what I learned with my 5th graders. Bumping up the complexity of my text is a must. Your enthusiasm is contagious!"

**Amy McIlhargey •**  
*Teacher, Grove City Christian School, Grove City, OH*

## COURSE OUTLINE

### Define close reading

Experience a close reading  
Utilize the 3-phase framework

### Integrate close reading

Introduce framework to students  
Weave in close-reading experiences

### Plan a close reading

STEP 1: Select a complex text  
STEP 2: Draft text-dependent questions

### Facilitate a close reading

STEP 3: Establish reading purposes  
STEP 4: Support discussion

### Total time to complete course:

5-6 hours  
(Allotted time to complete course: 30 days)

## Instructor:

**Kristina Smekens**  
*President & Lead Consultant for Smekens Education Solutions, Inc.*

# “Thank you for being a **reliable & current** source of best practice!”

Angela Decker • Teacher, Delta Middle School, Muncie, IN

## Who would benefit from this course?

Teachers Grades 2-12  
Literacy Coaches  
Literacy Coordinators  
Title I Teachers & Coordinators  
ELL Teachers & Coordinators  
High-Ability Teachers  
Principals & Assistant Principals  
Curriculum Directors

## Direct Ties to Standards

The strategies shared during this webAcademy course mirror the grade-level expectations outlined within the reading and writing portions of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Indiana Academic Standards.



## Continuing Education Credit

With prior approval from the registrant's school district, participants may receive credit for 5 hours of professional development for this webAcademy course. At the conclusion of the course, registrants may download a Certificate of Completion which can be used to verify participation.

## Graduate Credit

Thanks to a partnership with the Midwest Teachers Institute, registrants may elect to pursue three university-level graduate credits after completing this course and the Writing After a Close Reading course. These are non-degree credits designed for professional certification renewals and salary step increases. (Check with your district or employers to determine their policies for pay increases.) The cost of graduate credit is \$300 and is separate from the cost of each web course.

## Why learn more about close reading?

### 1. Close reading is key to college and career readiness.

Research shows that even our brightest students are struggling with college-level courses because they lack the skills to read and understand complex text. Kristina will provide practical ways to engage students in close reading so that they have the skills to ultimately tackle any complex text independently.

### 2. Planning and facilitating a close reading needs to be intentional.

Achieving a close reading of complex text is largely about asking the right questions at the right time. Kristina will guide teachers to first generate questions that determine what the text says and culminate with questions that determine why the text matters.

### 3. Writing in response to text improves comprehension.

Writing a brief constructed response or a coherent extended response to complex text is an important facet of the close-reading process. Kristina will share dozens of after-reading writing prompts that require students to demonstrate a deep understanding of the text.

## Top questions teachers ask about . . .

## Planning & facilitating a close reading

- ▶ What is close reading and how is it different than what I've always done?
- ▶ How do I go about selecting appropriate texts for a close reading?
- ▶ How can I introduce complex text into my curriculum when I have so many struggling readers?
- ▶ How long does close reading take and how often do I plan for it?
- ▶ What's a text-dependent question? Is there a list of such questions? How are these questions different than QAR (question-answer relationship)?

**Kristina provides the answers to these questions and many more!**



## Secret site Digital Resources

Registrants receive lifetime access to a password-protected web page that contains a treasure trove of lessons, videos, and other resources for implementation.

## ABOUT THE PRESENTER

# Kristina Smekens

Kristina Smekens is a full-time literacy consultant who has built a reputation for using enthusiasm, humor, and common sense to equip K-12 educators with practical, demystifying strategies for teaching reading and writing.

As president and lead consultant for Smekens Education, Kristina is constantly developing new strategies for helping teachers to meet the demands of today's College and Career-Ready Standards. She and her two full-time associates share those strategies with teachers across the United States and beyond through on-site school trainings, regional seminars, and an always-growing pool of print, digital, and video resources.

### A PRESENTER

Kristina has a gift for making the complex seem simple—for showing teachers how to meet the needs of readers and writers by bridging the gap between education research and practical, classroom-tested strategies that work. When she presents at state and national conferences, teachers flock to her sessions because they know Kristina will share strategies they can use in their own classrooms the very next day.

But beyond providing teachers with practical classroom techniques, Kristina is also a master at giving educators an injection of motivation and encouragement to help them return to their classrooms with the confidence and excitement they need to execute change. In fact, more than 17,000 educators rely on a monthly “shot in the arm” from Kristina as subscribers to her monthly email newsletter, “Big Ideas.”

### AN AUTHOR

Well known for offering innovative ideas, Kristina has created more than 50 “Smekens Originals,” a compilation of books, guides, and classroom tools designed to help teachers implement best-practice literacy strategies. Among the most popular of these resources are her best-selling books, *Launching the Writer's Workshop: Grades K-2* and *Grades 3-12*. Other popular publications include *The Trait Mate: 6-Traits Starter Lessons*, *Connecting Comprehension & Composition*, *Sing & Comprehend*, *Close Reading Questions for Literature*, *Close Reading Questions for Informational Text*, *Trait Trackers*, and *Serving Up Synthesis*. Additionally, Kristina is the author of *Trait-Based Writing: Lessons and Activities* (Scholastic, 2009).



### A CRAFTER

Beyond books and physical teacher tools, Kristina has also created a library of more than 50 on-demand training videos that are utilized by teachers around the world. With topics ranging from “Building Kid-Friendly Writing Rubrics” to “Achieving a Close Reading,” each of Kristina’s “webPD” videos uses a seminar-style format to capture her energy and enthusiasm while conveying her teacher-friendly ideas.

### BACKGROUND

Kristina earned her BA in English and education at Michigan State University. Prior to her full-time consulting career, she was an accomplished high school English and journalism teacher in Michigan and Indiana. A leader in state and national scholastic journalism endeavors, Kristina authored a journalism textbook and teachers’ guide for Walsworth Publishing in 2002.

Over the past 12 years, she has been blessed to work and learn with hundreds of schools and thousands of teachers throughout the Midwest. She was awarded the Excellence in Reading Award by the Indiana State Reading Association in 2013 for her contributions to literacy in Indiana.

Kristina lives in Warren, Indiana with her husband and business partner Brady, their three teenage children, and a rambunctious family dog named Buddy.

“Kristina just takes the guess work out of everything to make it ALL make sense!”

**Nicki King** • Teacher,  
Union Furnace  
Elementary, Logan, OH

“Kristina was fantastic! She was very intentional in her approach to teaching the 6 Traits and making it interesting for all learners! I learned new and exciting strategies to improve student writing.”

**Jenae McKnight** •  
Instructional Coach, Lake  
Ridge New Tech Schools,  
Gary, IN

“I love the way Kristina presents the information with so much enthusiasm. I love how she builds on what she’s taught before.”

**Kristen Smith** • Teacher,  
Gilmer County High  
School, Glenville, WV

“After 33 years of teaching, I still am drawn back into Kristina’s workshops because they are research-based, standards-focused, and very interactive.”

**Katie Cadle** • Teacher,  
Paoli Community  
Schools, Paoli, IN

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## TWO WAYS TO ENROLL:

**1. Online - with a credit card** *(Perfect for individuals!)*

**Visit:** [www.webAcademy.SmekensEducation.com](http://www.webAcademy.SmekensEducation.com)

**2. FAX THIS FORM - with a school purchase order to 888-376-0489**

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

School address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

School phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**COURSE FEE:** Course sharing not allowed.

☐ One person

**\$140**

☐ Team of 3+

**\$126**  
per person

**More than 10?**

Call us at (888) 376-0448  
for custom pricing.

### PAYMENT:

☐ Purchase Order attached (# \_\_\_\_\_ )

TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTRANTS: \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE ACTIVATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL PURCHASE AMOUNT:**

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## TERMS OF USE

We encourage enrolled participants to take advantage of all the features webAcademy has to offer. In doing so, participants agree to the following terms of use:

- 1 Login information and video access may NOT be shared with any individual who is not enrolled in the course.
- 2 Unauthorized sharing of login access will result in a non-refundable cancellation of any and all active courses.
- 3 Subscribers are not permitted to reprint, republish, repost or otherwise distribute any content or images from a course.

## MUST AGREE & SIGN

☐ \_\_\_\_\_  
By checking & signing, you agree with the **Terms of Use**.

## Group Registration Process

To register a group of teachers, complete the form on this page and fax it with a purchase order to webAcademy at 888-376-0489. After a purchase order is received, a professional development specialist will email each registrant with instructions for accessing the course.

**webAcademy**  
BY SMEKENS EDUCATION

Each webAcademy course features engaging online professional development led by Smekens Education President and Lead Consultant, Kristina Smekens. Designed for individual or group use, every self-paced course consists of video footage from one of Kristina's full-day workshops.

In addition to delivering 5+ hours of professional development, webAcademy courses also include opportunities for educators to reflect and comment on what they are learning. Registrants are granted 30 days to complete the course but receive lifetime access to a password-protected web page that contains a treasure trove of lessons, videos, and other resources for implementation.