

quoted and adapted from "Reading to Write," Nancy Koppelman & Sandy Yanonne

Concepts

"As students continue to read and explore a book, they will benefit from learning how to bring structure to the experience of reading. This means learning how to **analyze** and **reflect** upon what they read."

"When students are done with a text, they will often say 'Whew! I'm finally done,' and put the book aside. Few students go back to reexamine what they read, or analyze and reflect on it with future communications about it in mind."

This continuation of the reading process, analysis and reflection, is the purpose of your intellectual journal.

"Reading is not a linear, lock-step process. It is a dialogue between reader and text."

"Obtaining an accurate understanding of what you read stems from knowing how the parts of the book, chapter, passage, endnotes, forward, conclusion, etc., relate to the whole, and how the main points of the whole bear on larger issues under study in your program."

"'Analyze' means 'to examine critically so as to bring out the essential elements, or give the essence of (a treatise or any part of it),' or 'to separate into parts or basic principles so as to determine the nature of the whole.'"

"Books are complex, often large wholes (larger still when you consider that they are interconnected with other books). It takes a lot of work beyond reading words on pages to understand a book. As you read, you may discern what an author is telling you, you may be confused or puzzled, or you may be completely in the dark. You can't figure out what confuses you, however, if you don't know how to analyze as you read."

"All books have a structure. Understanding structure is crucial to analyzing its meaning."

Analysis is difficult to accomplish without being clear about where it fits into the stages of our reflection. We can separate our apprehension of meaning into three stages: Observation...Analysis...& Interpretation (the meaning). When we **observe** something, we are perceiving only the concrete, the obvious, the easily describable aspects of our experience: in a sense, only those aspects of our reading about which we can all agree. (This is sometimes harder than it sounds. Coming to agreement about what we have read can take up a whole seminar). The process continues much like the solving of a mystery...

Analysis takes all of those little observed pieces and begins chunking them together and describing their interrelationships as we have experienced them. Analysis therefore shows the relationship between a concrete observation and its effect on us. It begins to build meaning by describing discrete relationships between observable elements or parts of the whole. **Interpretation** is the leap to meaning, the A-Ha! that occurs, again, by piecing together your analysis, adding it up.

¶ Notice that each stage builds on the former in essentially the same way, but with an increasing degree of subjectivity. Clearly, then, an observation of a table could begin with a molecular analysis of its parts —if that's all we could agree upon. Or it could begin with the table's symbolic meaning —if we can all agree on that. ¶ The process works both ways: if you begin with some degree of confusion about what a thing (text, image, what-have you) means, you can slow your thinking down and arrive through observation and analysis at some kind of interpretation. Similarly, you can begin with something about which you already have an interpretation, and use the process to figure out why you have come to that interpretation, to construct a defense for your view, or to see if your interpretation can stand up to careful analysis.



WORKSHOP # 3

PART ONE:

OBSERVATION ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

O **A** **I**
c o n c r e t e a b s t r a c t
d e t a i l s i d e a s
o b j e c t i v e s u b j e c t i v e

1. Word for Word

hejinian game...

pass..connect, compose with given words

discuss meaning, implications

2. Fragments of a whole

Next, in small groups, you will receive fragmented lines from a piece of writing that you have to assemble into a meaningful whole. By doing so you assert a governing structure to the writing that carries through from beginning to middle to end.

3. OAI

The first thing we will OAI we will study as a group to come up with a final interpretation and clarify the subtle distinctions between each step of the process.

- a) Image... from book cover: Immediatism, Hakim Bey

- b) passage from part 2
passage from bachelard