

## Selecting and Planning for Cognitively Demanding Instruction

**Session and Description of Lesson Task:** This lesson is designed to encourage independent thinking and critical analysis through close reading as students make meaning of text to determine theme. Students will practice analysis and inquiry through the activity of creating a living “theme wall” as a pre-reading activator. Students will make their thinking visible as they interact with text through annotation, responding in writing with probing questions, and developing reasoning to support analysis and claims. Students will engage in a “silent dialogue” to explore discourse with all students in the classroom community through writing. This lesson is designed as an anticipatory pre-reading activator prior to beginning a text or unit. As a result of the silent conversation, students will produce a large, wall-size mural as a document of each student’s independent and cooperative critical thinking. This “wall” will serve as a living centerpiece throughout our reading of the text; students will return to the wall to expand on the class’ comments/analysis as they read the book. This lesson is adapted from and inspired by both the [School Reform Initiative Chalk Talk](#) activity and [Facing History’s Big Paper Silent Conversation](#) activity.

### **Identify Standards aligned to learning experience**

1. ELA.11-12.SLCA.1.01.c Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
2. ELA.11-12.SLCA.1.03 Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

**DOK Level:** Level 3 Strategic Thinking - Requires reasoning, developing a plan or a sequence of steps, some complexity. Refer to [DOK + Verb Chart for Objectives and Learning Targets](#).

<p><b>Content Goal(s)/Learning Target</b>  <i>What are the core ideas and essential questions for this learning experience? What do you intend all students to know and be able to do by the end of this experience?</i></p> <p>Essential Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do others hear you when you are silent?</li> <li>2. How do we connect prior experience to text to make inferences and develop reasoning?</li> <li>3. How can we use academic language to develop thought-tested reasoning that “digs deep” and “zooms out” in critical perspective?</li> </ol> <p>Based on the lesson’s <a href="#">Criteria for Success (CFS)</a>, students will...</p>	<p><b>Language Objectives/Target</b>  (iincludes academic discourse, phrases, and vocabulary aligned with content target):  <i>What content-related language will you use during the learning experience? What content-related language do you expect to hear during student discourse?</i></p> <p><i>Students will not be speaking out loud; rather, students will engage in discourse through writing a silent dialogue that relies on making thinking visible through documenting and questioning reasoning, reading, and inference making.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● tone</li> <li>● diction</li> <li>● syntax</li> <li>● inference/infer</li> <li>● impact/result</li> <li>● thought testing through probing questions</li> <li>● theme</li> <li>● prior knowledge</li> <li>● critical perspective</li> <li>● mindset</li> <li>● probing questions; clarifying questions</li> <li>● emotions</li> <li>● point of view/perspective/lens</li> <li>● reason/reasoning</li> <li>● evidence</li> <li>● text/textual</li> <li>● reflection</li> <li>● recognition</li> </ul>
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### **Social Emotional Target**

Consider cultural and linguistic relevance to students

[SA 4.2 SELF-AWARENESS, PERSPECTIVE TAKING](#): Recognize personal beliefs, judgments and biases.

[SM 1.1 SELF-MANAGEMENT](#): Manage thoughts, feelings, actions: Recognize ways to self-regulate and manage thoughts and behaviors in an effort to join or engage in an activity or task.

[SR 2.2 SOCIAL RELATIONS- SOCIAL AND ETHICAL NORMS OF BEHAVIOR](#): Demonstrate an understanding of thoughts, feelings, behavior and perspectives of oneself and others.

**Anticipating:****What are the different ways the task can be approached?**

- Visual thinking, “silent” discourse, synthesis of ideas, independent work time and reflection, kinesthetic movement, chunking text, creative and critical thinking, cooperative learning for support.

**What strategies and tools might students use in this activity?**

- [Sign Post close reading strategy](#), silent dialogue to encourage equity of voice through writing, annotating text, visual thinking, clarifying and probing questions. [ladder of influence](#), thought testing. [Open circle share-out](#) to promote equity of voice and community in debrief.

**In what ways does the lesson build on students' previous knowledge?**

- Utilizing knowledge of [theme](#), inference, reasoning, [tone, syntax, diction](#).
- Synthesizing connections between [tone, diction, and syntax](#) and [theme](#)/big idea/message.
- Applying reading comprehension to form analysis via making inferences.
- Utilizing [probing questions](#) to develop inference-making evidence-based reasoning.

**What misconceptions and barriers might students have? \*\***

- Willingness to work most of the class in silence.
- Differences between [tone, syntax, diction](#); how they work together and independently to inform theme.
- Understanding rationale of silence during this activity and how writing is discourse.
- Internalizing the process of “thought testing” assumptions, beliefs, and claims through recognizing biases and questioning personal truths.
- Ability to build and extend reasoning/analysis by using prior knowledge from a variety of sources as a reasoning “instigator”; ability to “connect the dots” between different ideas and describe the “so what” of those connections.
- Ability to participate and “jump” into the work given various points of reading/understanding the text (i.e., reluctant readers, students who have not read/prepared, absent students, etc.).
- Mindset with approaching a new/different task that stretches a students’ comfort zone (i.e., visual thinking, thinking like the character, sharing in open circle).

**Means of Expressing Proficiency\*\***

What accommodations and modifications might you employ to support your students with IEPs?

What accommodations and modifications might you employ to support your ELL students?

Barriers (Language, Learning Needs, Social/Emotional, etc.)	Strategies for Access
<p><b>Barrier:</b> Limited Vocabulary and Language and <b>Students with IEPs.</b></p> <p><i>Strategies at right are designed for all students and for specific students via support and scaffolding based on demonstrated need.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1:1 teacher-student pre-conference to establish a student’s personal goals for participation in discussion across multiple verbal and nonverbal communication modalities (i.e., writing, listening, speaking, reflecting).</li> <li>Discussion post-conference, where student reflects on provided or self-generated debrief questions to self-assess comfort and efficacy in discussion participation.</li> <li>1:1 partner conference prior to, during (break out session), or after small group or whole class discussion.</li> <li>Modeling reasoning and thought testing strategies through mini lessons and in-class peer modeling.</li> <li>Exemplar video analysis/observation using “what do you see/hear” T-chart to record observation of “what works” when thought testing reasoning.</li> <li>Teacher refers students to screencasted mini lessons, where students can view thought testing reasoning think-aloud’s and visualizations in a slide deck and hear teachers model accountable self-talk to extend,</li> </ul>

	<p>question, and develop reasoning in response to text (refer to <a href="http://Screencast-o-Matic.com">Screencast-o-Matic.com</a>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learning targets/<a href="#">Criteria for Success (CFS)</a> for each lesson/task that are clearly communicated (visual, oral), and that are referenced throughout the lesson as a foundational point for students' self-assessment and benchmarking towards success.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Barrier: Social-emotional</b></p> <p><i>Some students may exhibit hesitation or resistance towards accountable talk discussion, which may result in defiant or disruptive behaviors.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Model strengths-based talk, reinforcing individual and group assets in accountable talk for every student before, during, and after group discussion.</li> <li>● Utilize “pause-and-push” moments during discussion, interrupting discussion to point out individual and group assets with accountable talk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ I like how Jay used [strategy] in order to ____ (impact statement).</li> <li>○ Let’s notice how Jay used [strategy], which ____ (impact statement).</li> <li>○ What if we try Jay’s strategy of [strategy] in order to ____ (impact statement).</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Provide non-verbal cues for students to acknowledge assets, rather than deficits, such as “snaps” or “desk knocks” or other pre-taught/used non-verbal cues that students would recognize as positive feedback. Other non-verbal cues may be a praise slip (short note of strengths-based praise) shared with student as a reinforcement of positive behavior/mindset.</li> <li>● 1:1 conversations before or after class to reinforce positive behavior, rather than call-out negative behavior.</li> <li>● Reframe behavior management intervention strategies by focusing on the student, rather than the behavior (i.e., What does this student need in this moment to be a productive member in this class? (Refer to <a href="#">Teaching with Strengths in Trauma-affected Students</a> and <a href="#">Using a Strengths-Based Approach with ELs: Supporting Students Living with Trauma, Violence and Chronic Stress</a>.)</li> <li>● Provide <a href="#">descriptive feedback</a> that is clear and actionable to reinforce positive behavior/mindset.</li> <li>● Provide clear directions with regard to writing to mitigate student misconception or confusion with writing expectation and with the steps in the writing process as a whole. Remind students of these directions in multiple formats (oral, printed, projected) frequently throughout lesson. (Refer to <a href="#">Giving Clear Directions</a>, published by Teaching as Leadership).</li> </ul>

**Resources Needed / Materials needed:**

- Colorful markers
- Bulletin board paper, or larger reams of paper (white)
- Sticky Notes
- 5 texts (Excerpted quotations). These quotations should be from outside sources and not the text of study in

order to help students build multiple access points to the book they will begin reading shortly. Quotes can be selected by theme according to the text the class is about to begin reading. The quotes can be printed and taped to paper with enough room between quotes to create work stations for a lot of writing. Paper can be taped to the wall. With each class, a new paper can be posted with quotes. Alternatively, the paper can be placed on a large table with stations around the table for students to read and write on the paper. The

- [Living Wall Cards](#)
- [Living Wall Directions](#)
- [Living Wall Criteria for Success](#)

**Student Grouping Decisions: *How many and which students will be grouped together?***

Students are grouped at tables of 4-5 to accomodate 5 total stations. A 6th station may need to be added.

After students complete the [Living Wall activity](#), they will debrief as a team aloud, and then they will convene in an [open circle](#) with the teacher.

**Launching the Task**

**Recommended Time: 5-15 minutes**

**CONNECT: Be succinct & engaging.**

**Communicate learning target.**

**Activate schema and connect to previous learning.**

**3 C's and I**

Do Now projected as students enter (5 min).

1. Write an open letter to silence. Consider any one or more of the following if you wish:
  - a. What does silence hold for you?
  - b. What would your loudest voice say to your quietest voice?
  - c. How do others hear you when you are silent?

**PRESENT TASK: How will you introduce students to the task to provide access to all students, while maintaining the cognitive demand of the task?**

**How will you ensure that students understand the context of the task?**

**Consider how to use more than one way to represent the information.**

Mini Lesson (8 min): (Use a visual aid, such as a Slide Deck)

1. Reasoning:
  - a. Focus: Probing Questions, Accountable Talk, and Reasoning stems to build reasoning.
  - b. Reminder: How to connect prior knowledge from many areas to build reasoning.
  - c. Reminder: Theme and relationship between theme, syntax, tone, and diction. (i.e., how do we “get” the message/main idea from how a person says something?...language choices, relationship of words to create images, attitude and point of view...)
2. Directions to Living Wall (refer to cards for each student)
  - a. Why, How, (i.e., importance of silence to create silent dialogue and deepen thought process by making thought process visible.)
3. Criteria for Success:
  - a. Explicitly teach lesson [Criteria for Success \(CFS\)](#) as reflective of [objectives](#) and [standards](#).

**Explore: Independent and Small Group Work****Recommended Time: 25--45 minutes**

During the explore phase, you may use the "Share Out" template to monitor and prepare for summary discussion.

Engagement Strategies might include: *Strategic groups or pairings, Use of technology like Google Read & Write, Graphic organizers, Sentence starters, Word banks, Language frames/structure, Representations.*

**Give students at least 5 minutes of independent think time, and then have them work with partners or in small groups.**

**What questions will you ask to help them get started on or make progress on the task?**

1. 35 min: Students will complete the Living Wall activity after forming groups of 4-5.

**What questions will you ask to assess students' understanding of key ideas, skills and strategies?**

- How did you come up with that connection?
- What specific language, or words, from the text can you use as a jumping off point for your thinking? Why did you choose these words? How do the words you chose help you to see what's going on in this text?
- Where have you seen this idea repeated in your own life? In the other quotes on this wall today? What do you think this idea represents to [society/you/men/women/etc.].
- Explain why you chose that particular probing question to respond to that particular statement. What are you trying to get your colleague to think about differently?

**Planned check-ins:**

- I will rotate to each team at least two times, initiating an open-ended question with each student.
- I will encourage students to refer to the text and incorporate text into their reasoning and questions.
- I will pause at midpoint through the activity to ask students to quickly reflect on their [Criteria for Success](#) for a "thumbs up/down" check as to how they are doing with the learning targets on an individual basis.

**What questions will you ask to advance students' understanding of the ideas and related skills?**

- What is your first step?
- What is your next step?
- How can you use the text to make this point stronger?
- What can you do differently next time?
- What's the best way to choose a probing question; can you explain your process to your team?
- Explain how you see this connect to \_\_\_\_\_. What can we infer about this connection?
- How would someone oppose your point?

**How will you engage students who complete the task early?**

- Students who complete the task early will reflect on their work as aligned to the lesson [Criteria for Success](#). Students can also extend their Do Now prompt.

**Summary: Sharing and Discussing the Task****Recommended Time: 5-15 minutes**

How will you orchestrate the class discussion so that you accomplish your goals?

Students will complete the [Criteria for Success](#) for this lesson during the last 5 minutes of class.

**What follow-up questions will you ask the group to guide students to clarify, justify and extend their thinking and consolidate learning?**

I will facilitate follow-up questions in a whole-class debrief in an open circle at the end of the lesson. Students will share out one of the three debrief questions from their team debrief. I will also add my own probing questions on the living wall with sticky notes by the next class meeting. Students will view these comments and respond throughout the next few class meetings. As this lesson is meant to be an activator to predict and eventually track the development of themes

in the text of study (*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*), I will use this activity and the work of the Living Wall to begin discussion of themes in the book. In this way, students have begun to internalize themes in the book we are about to read, but from outside sources and multiple vantage points through different lines of thinking across the class community. This activity will also launch analysis of silence in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* as well as our other texts in ELA 12.

**Which ideas, strategies, or solution paths might you share during the class discussion? In what order will these be presented?**

I will elicit solution paths from students, so that students can model strategies that worked, focused specifically on how to build reasoning and connect ideas across multiple (and differing) lines of thinking. During the follow-up lesson (Day 2), I will have students reflect on making connections not only between the different texts used in the silent dialogue, but also the different responses. I will focus on utilizing probing questions as a strategy to not only create entry points for discourse in talk, but reasoning in writing (and that rich reasoning offers an entry point for rich talking).

**Evidence of Learning/Formative Assessment:**

**How will you know what all students understand? What evidence will you collect? For example: exit task, annotated data collection, collecting student work. How will this data be used to inform your instructional next steps?**

This lesson is a foundational building block to our focus of evidence-based reasoning and student-centered learning from an inquiry stance. With this lesson, I am specifically interested in building students' resilience with close reading and evidence-based reasoning through helping students to envision that reasoning is talking through ideas and problem solving, but on paper. By providing students the structure of a silent dialogue with multiple dialogue entry points and threads of questioning/reasoning, I aim to help students see that writing is also a form of discourse, and that talking and writing can be used hand-in-hand when developing their own writing. I have also structured this lesson to scaffold and build student autonomy with independent work. Each student has a set of cards to guide them through the logistical steps of the activity, as well as the thinking steps of the activity (how to develop reasoning, probing questions, and participate in accountable talk). This activity is intended to provide students with multiple points of access to the text and to the skill of analytical thinking by helping students to make their thought process visible. Students will be able to "thought test," or question statements with more confidence in their thinking and writing processes after having completed this activity. I am also looking for evidence of questioning and reasoning when I circulate amongst teams to ask students open-ended questions on an individual basis. Students will write their initials next to what they write, so I can track their writing and thinking across all texts on the living wall. Through reflection and clear learning targets, students will build comfort with self-assessment. By using the [Criteria for Success with this lesson](#), I am to provide a learning arc to help students clearly understand how they can be successful at different points in the lesson and to help students internalize self-assessment and agency in the learning process.

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**Target grade:** 12

**Content area:** English Language Arts

**Brief description:** This lesson is designed to encourage independent thinking and critical analysis through close reading as students make meaning of text to determine theme. Students will practice analysis and inquiry through the activity of creating a living "theme wall" as a pre-reading activator. Students will make their thinking visible as they interact with text through annotation, responding in writing with probing questions, and developing reasoning to support analysis and claims.



