

ACES Learning Center Course Syllabus CR106: Introduction to Critical Reading

Course Description

ACES Introduction to Critical Reading enhances student's reading comprehension through readings in various subjects. Students will not only acquire reading and speed reading techniques, but more importantly, learn to read critically and analytically. Developing these skills early on provides ample preparation for the SAT and ACT verbal sections and boosts the efficiency of students' reading and study habits.

This class takes a step-by-step approach to teaching students how to find the important information in sentences, paragraphs and entire articles. All readings are carefully sequenced with the Lexile Framework for Reading (<https://lexile.com/>), a scientific way to match readers with appropriate-level texts. For example, the classic children's book *The Cat in the Hat* has a Lexile level of 260L and is well-suited for students in 1st grade-and-younger, whereas Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring* has a Lexile level of 860L and is suitable for academically-advanced 4th-and-5th graders and typical middle-school students. CR106 is organized thematically, featuring readings in the Lexile Range 970L – 1120L. Successful completion of CR106 prepares students to enter CR107A, where they will master readings up to Lexile level 1150L.

Course Objectives and Student Competencies

- enhance student's reading comprehension
- master advanced readings in various subjects: literature, science, health, plays, poetry, opinion papers, philosophy, fiction, social science, satire
- learn effective note-taking and text-marking

Class Structure:

- Words-Of-The-Day & Vocabulary Quiz: Begin with words of the day (taken from previous reading) with sentence where it was found
- Major Feature of the day and/or Major Rhetorical Device of the day: Lecture on a major feature or rhetorical device with examples from SAT readings or other passages
- Reading and group work:
 - o Provide a longer passage for students to read
 - o Identify unknown words with context cues
 - o Group work on ideas presented based on Feature/Rhetorical Device
- Study technique/ Vocabulary Game

Homework will consist of producing concise notes and text marking, writing explanatory paragraphs and answering critical thinking questions mirroring those on the SAT (1.5 – 2 hours per week).

Course Schedule:

Date	Topics	Reading Passages	Lexile	Homework
Week 1	Identifying Main Idea; Underlining and Highlighting	Heavy Metal	1080	Reading Questions
Week 2	Scope and Point of View	Biochar	1020	Reading Questions
Week 3	Fact vs. Opinion Persuasive Essays	A Constitution For Kids; New Debates Tough Cell	970 1060	Reading Questions
Week 4	Motif & Repetition	Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land"	Non-prose	Writing Assignment
Week 5	Identifying Theme; Metaphor & Personification	April Fool's Day; Rudyard Kipling's "If"	Non-prose	Writing Assignment
Week 6	Identifying Voice and Tone; Rhetorical Questions	Slavery in the North	1000	Reading Questions
Week 7	Assumptions, & Inferences	Paradise Lost	1060	Reading Questions
Week 8	Cause and Effect Drawing Conclusions	Crisis in Africa Great Wall Jump Green Machines	1000 1010 1040	Take-home Reading
Week 9	Imagery and Figurative Language	Return of The Cube; Up To Speed; Practice Makes Pain	1070 1110 1120	Take-home Reading
Week 10	Satire & Hyperbole	Selections from <i>The Onion</i>	N/A	Writing Assignment
Week 11	Final Project	Mission Pluto	1110	Course Evaluation