

Foreword

Every teacher in Grades 3 to 6 needs a copy of Nancy Boyles's book. *Closer Reading, Grades 3–6* will become teachers' road map for helping their intermediate grade students develop the art of close reading with success and joy, and, at the same time, move students deeper and deeper into powerful texts. Throughout this book, Nancy Boyles uses her strong and passionate teacher's voice to include you in her wise advice and practical examples. Open your door and let Nancy enter your classroom. Why? Because she'll be by your side talking to you, explaining, coaching, cheering you on as you refine and adjust your teaching practices to meet Common Core close reading guidelines—and all in an atmosphere of common sense and sensitivity to teachers' needs. Yes, common sense because Nancy has grounded her book in solid research, in her past and current teaching experiences, and in her knowledge of what deep, analytical comprehension, or close reading, means for teachers who have classes of students at diverse reading levels.

In this outstanding and readable book, Nancy takes teachers on a learning journey. She starts by building a bridge of understanding that connects what teachers know and have done as reading instructors to the Common Core's concept of close reading. Moreover, Nancy has carefully thought about each chapter's topic, positioning information so that it enhances teachers' ability to understand close reading in order to adjust and, at times, change their practice.

After a clear explanation of close reading, Nancy presents the Common Core's take on text complexity, and then she adds top-notch tips that enable teachers to choose complex texts for their students. She shows teachers how to design a close reading lesson, makes the planning clear and accessible, and includes a template to guide you through the process.

The middle chapters show teachers how to design a close reading lesson that supports readers using the tried-and-true three-part model: before, during, and after reading. Like the master teacher she is, Nancy provides teachers with ways to move students to independence with close reading so they can apply what they've learned to texts they read on their own. Finally, she takes you deeper into close reading by showing how rereading, small-group instruction, and independent reading work in concert to enhance students' close reading stamina. These chapters focus on teaching students how to cite textual evidence, make logical inferences, notice text

structure, and pinpoint themes; they also demonstrate the benefits and importance of structuring lessons so that students complete multiple readings of texts. You'll find a detailed chart that provides focus points for planning small-group lessons and for independent reading. This chart helps readers recognize how to apply the strategy and where in the text the strategy will most likely be applied. And always on center stage is the student and what each child requires to become a successful close reader of complex texts.

And there's so much more that Nancy's book offers, all geared to supporting teachers:

- An extensive lesson plan for shared reading with a complex text that Nancy provides.
- A clear and friendly explanation that deepens teachers' understandings of the Common Core anchor standards for informational and literary texts.
- A chart that features the steps of the gradual release of teacher support to students.
- Annotated lists of Nancy's favorite complex texts that include picture and chapter books. She also includes websites for short texts!
- Guidelines that show students how to read like a scientist and historian and evaluate primary sources.
- Tips for reading a photograph, viewing a video, and looking at and learning from words and illustrations all support close reading.
- A detailed chart of open-ended close reading questions for literary and informational texts for each standard. This is a resource that teachers and students will use again and again.

Charts, templates, and graphics in the book can be found at www.corwin.com/closerreading for you to download, print, or use on a whiteboard.

It's a comfort knowing that, at last, there's a book about close reading that honors and respects the needs of teachers in the intermediate grades. You will read, dog-ear pages, study the book with team members, and revisit and reread parts on your own. This book will become a treasured friend and guide, as you will value every tip, model lesson, and complex book recommendation. *Closer Reading, Grades 3–6* is a must-have book for your professional library and for professional learning communities!

—Laura Robb