

How to Start Reading

You now know the type of reading that is needed, but reading methods take practice. If you're having trouble getting started on your close reading, look over this list of questions. They can help you to start engaging with a story on an evaluative level.

Character

- Are the characters unique?
- Are they well developed? Are they flat and two-dimensional?
- Could you relate to any of the characters?

Setting

- Is it immediately clear where and when the story takes place?
- Are there vibrant descriptions that make the setting come alive? Is that area underdeveloped?
- Does the setting play a part in the story and contribute to the action?

Style

- Does the language stand out? Are there words that were unfamiliar, surprisingly formal, or informal?
- Are sentences long and rambling or short and to the point?

Approach

- What critical approach seems best suited to this work?
- Are they well developed? Are they flat and two-dimensional?
- As a foundation for this question, you might ask yourself what you see emerging as the predominant conflict. Is it internal or external? Is it a sign of the times?