

30-Minute Grade 2 ELA Close Reading Lesson Plan (Classical Approach)

Generated on April 5, 2026 at 07:48 AM

Lesson Overview

- Grade: 2
- Subject: English Language Arts – Close Reading (literature focus)
- Approach: Classical (I-do, We-do, You-do; explicit instruction, shared reading, annotation, co-construction, reflection)
- Time: 30 minutes
- Materials (low): one short teacher-created text (printed or projected), pencils, optional sticky notes or highlighters, student response paper

Standards Alignment (California Common Core ELA, Grade 2)

- RL.2.1: Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
- RL.2.2: Recount stories, determine central message, and explain how it is conveyed through key details.
- RL.2.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text.

Learning Objectives (measurable)

- Students will use a close reading strategy to identify the main idea and two supporting details from a short text (RL.2.1, RL.2.2).
- Students will explain the meaning of one vocabulary word from the text using context clues (RL.2.4).
- Students will reflect on one real-world situation where close reading helps them understand information.

Success Criteria (student-facing)

- Identify the main idea and at least two supporting details from the text (2/2 details).
- Correctly answer who/what/where/when/why questions about the text (4/5 correct).
- Define one target word using context clues and use it in a sentence (1/1).
- Explain how close reading helps in at least one real-world example (1/1).

Text for Close Reading (teacher-provided short passage)

Title: The Park Picnic

"Sam packed a yellow blanket and a basket of sandwiches. He walked to the park on a sunny Saturday. At the park, Sam spread the blanket under a tall oak tree. A small cloud passed by, and a cool breeze made the leaves whisper. Sam shared sandwiches with his friend Mia, and they laughed as squirrels danced nearby. When the picnic ended, Sam folded the blanket and put his trash in a bin."

(Use this short passage for all reading and questions. Project or distribute a copy.)

Lesson Timeline and Procedures

0–3 minutes — Activate and Set Purpose (Whole class)

- Teacher briefly states the lesson purpose: "Today you will learn how to do a close reading to find the main idea, supporting details, and an important word meaning."
- Quickly preview the text title and ask one prediction question: "What might this text be about?" (1–2 brief student responses, teacher records one predicted idea.)

3–9 minutes — I-do: Model Close Reading (Explicit Instruction; teacher models)

- Teacher reads the passage aloud once fluently.
- Teacher re-reads the first two sentences, thinking aloud and demonstrating annotation (underline subject/verb, circle key nouns like Sam, blanket, park).
- Teacher models identifying a possible main idea and first supporting detail aloud: "I think the main idea might be that Sam had a picnic at the park. One detail that shows this is 'Sam packed a yellow blanket and a basket of sandwiches.'"
- Teacher models identifying one vocabulary word ("whisper") and uses context to explain meaning: "Leaves 'whisper' — they do not actually talk; it means the leaves make a soft sound."

Pulse Check 1 (after modeling)

- Formative check: Ask 2 students to explain the close reading strategy steps in their own words.
- Success criterion: Each student correctly names at least two steps from the modeled routine (for example: "Read, underline important words, find main idea") OR explains the strategy correctly in 2 out of 3 real-world examples presented by teacher (teacher gives three tiny scenarios; student identifies which ones need close reading).
- Teacher records quick yes/no per student.

9–17 minutes — We-do: Guided Close Reading (Shared practice)

- Teacher guides whole-class through sentences 3–5. Teacher prompts students to annotate: underline setting words (park, oak tree), circle action words (spread, shared, laughed), and mark evidence of main idea using a simple symbol (star).

- Co-construct a sentence that states the main idea on the board: teacher writes first draft, asks students for one supporting detail to add. Example co-constructed main idea: "Sam had a picnic in the park and shared food with his friend."
- Teacher directs students to find a second supporting detail: students point to sentence "Sam shared sandwiches with his friend Mia..."
- Teacher leads a brief vocabulary check: ask class what "squirrels danced nearby" suggests about the squirrels' movement; guide students to interpret "danced" as lively movement, not literal dancing.

Pulse Check 2 (after guided practice)

- Formative check: Quick exit-style prompt – each student writes two supporting details and circles the main idea sentence.
- Success criterion: At least 80% of students list two accurate supporting details and mark the main idea (teacher scans responses in 1–2 minutes).

17–26 minutes – You-do: Independent Close Reading and Short Response (Individual practice)

- Students independently re-read the passage silently (or whisper read) and annotate on their copy: underline main idea, circle two details, box the vocabulary word "whisper" and write its meaning in margin.
- Independent written task (student response paper):
 1. Write the main idea in one sentence.
 2. List two supporting details (copy short phrases).
 3. Define "whisper" using words from the text and write a sentence using "whisper."
 4. Short metacognition prompt (1–2 sentences): "Where could you use this close reading strategy outside school?"

Pulse Check 3 (during independent practice)

- Formative check: Teacher circulates and selects 4 students to read their main idea and one supporting detail aloud.
- Success criterion: Each selected student states the main idea and at least one correct supporting detail (teacher marks yes/no).

26–30 minutes – Closure and Reflection (Whole class)

- Teacher collects student response papers or quickly scans them.
- Final reflective prompt (choral or 1–2 students): Teacher asks one student to share the real-world example written.
- Teacher briefly restates success criteria and highlights common strengths or next steps observed.

Differentiation (brief)

- Struggling readers: Provide sentence starters for main idea ("The story is mostly about...") and highlight candidate supporting sentences for them to choose from.
- Advanced readers: Ask for an additional detail inference (Why might Sam put trash in a bin? What does that tell us about him?) and require three supporting details.
- ELLs: Pre-teach target vocabulary ("whisper", "picnic", "blanket") with simple gestures; allow bilingual responses.

Assessment and Evidence of Learning

- Collected student response papers (main idea, two details, vocabulary definition, metacognitive response) serve as primary assessment.
- Teacher observational notes from pulse checks and guided practice.

10 Quiz-Style Checkpoints (aligned to standards) – teacher-use quick quiz from the same passage

Provide the short quiz to students after the lesson or use as exit ticket. Each item includes clear success criteria and correct answer for teacher scoring.

1. Question: Who packed the yellow blanket and basket of sandwiches?
 - Success criterion: Student answers correctly (1/1).
 - Correct answer: Sam.
2. Question: Where did Sam go for the picnic?
 - Success criterion: Student answers correctly (1/1).
 - Correct answer: The park.
3. Question (multiple choice): What did Sam spread under a tall oak tree?
 - A) A towel
 - B) A yellow blanket
 - C) A book
 - Success criterion: Student chooses B (1/1).
 - Correct answer: B.
4. Question: Give two supporting details that show Sam had a picnic. (short answer)

- Success criterion: Student lists two correct details (2/2).
 - Correct answers (any two): "Sam packed a yellow blanket," "a basket of sandwiches," "Sam shared sandwiches with his friend Mia," "he spread the blanket under a tall oak tree."
5. Question: What does the word "whisper" most likely mean in this sentence: "a cool breeze made the leaves whisper"?
- Success criterion: Student gives a meaning using context (1/1).
 - Correct answer: Make a soft sound; rustle softly.
6. Question (true/false): The squirrels spoke words during the picnic.
- Success criterion: Student marks correctly (1/1).
 - Correct answer: False.
7. Question: Why did Sam put his trash in a bin at the end? (short answer inference)
- Success criterion: Student gives a reasonable explanation (1/1).
 - Correct answers: He cleaned up after the picnic; he wanted to keep the park clean.
8. Question: Which sentence best states the main idea of the passage? (student selects or writes)
- Success criterion: Student selects/writes a correct main idea (1/1).
 - Correct answer: Sam had a picnic at the park and shared food with his friend.
9. Question: Find one sentence that shows the setting is daytime. (short answer)
- Success criterion: Student copies a correct sentence (1/1).
 - Correct answer: "He walked to the park on a sunny Saturday."
10. Question: Metacognition — Name one place outside school where close reading helps you understand something and explain in one sentence.
- Success criterion: Student names a location and explains in 1 sentence (1/1).
 - Example correct answer: "When reading a recipe at home, close reading helps me follow steps so the food turns out right."

Scoring guidance: Total points = 11 (items weighted as shown). Recommended mastery threshold: 9/11 (82%) or higher to indicate strong understanding.

Metacognition Prompts (to connect strategy to real-world applications)

- Primary metacognition prompt in independent task: "Where could you use this close reading strategy outside school? Write one place and how it helps."
- Additional in-class prompts:
 - "How would close reading help you follow the steps of a board game you get at home?"
 - "How can you use close reading when you read a sign or instruction to keep safe?"
- Success criterion: Student provides at least one clear real-world example and a brief explanation of how close reading helps (1/1).

Teacher Notes and Tips (Classroom management and efficiency)

- Keep annotations simple and consistent: underline for main nouns, star for main idea, circle for vocabulary.
- Timebox each segment strictly to keep the 30-minute structure.
- Use quick visual checks (thumbs up/down) only during guided parts to maintain pace.
- For quick grading, look first for main idea and two supporting details; these indicate core mastery.

Materials Checklist (low)

- One printed/projected copy of "The Park Picnic" per student or visible for whole class
- Pencil for each student
- Student response paper (short worksheet with the four independent prompts)
- Optional: 1–2 sticky notes per student for quick annotations