Close reading is unpacking the meaning of the text. Close reading takes in the choices of the author, and the effects those choices have on the reader's experience (i.e. how does it make us interpret a character). It connects individual words to greater themes. Close reading is a creative and imaginative art.

A method of formulating close reading is "How does the author use x to do y?" where x is a literary technique and y a theme or point. One example would be to say Dante uses metaphor to give ominous physical form to ambient sound. *SIDENOTE: Close reading is everywhere, even music videos.*