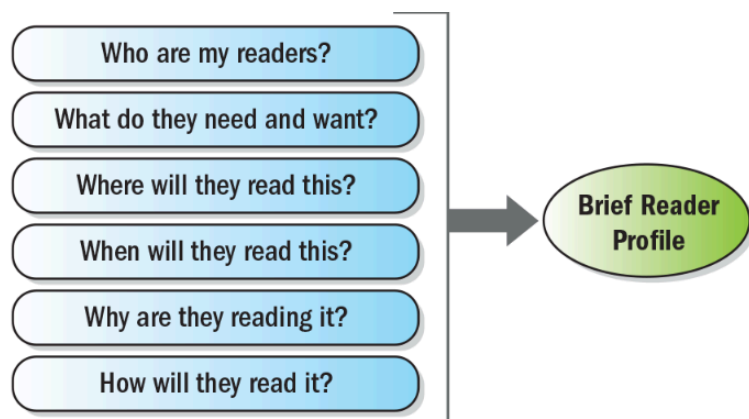


✓ Done

4.1 “look through” and “look at” texts.

4.2 use seven strategies for analyzing and responding to texts at a deeper level.

4.3 use critical reading to strengthen your writing.



A Brief Reader Profile

Who are your Readers?

What are their personal characteristics? How young or old are they? What cultures do they come from? Are they familiar with your topic already, or are they completely new to it?

What do they Need and want?

What information do they need from you to make a decision? What ideas excite them, and what bores them? What information do they need to accomplish their personal and professional goals?

Where will they Read this?

Will your readers be sitting on the couch, at their desks, in a meeting, or on an airplane? Will they be reading from their phone, a printed page, a computer screen, or a tablet computer?

When will they Read this?

Does the time of day affect how they will read your document? Will they be reading when the issue is hot and under discussion?

Why will they Read this?

Why will they pick up your document? Do they want to be informed, or do they need to be persuaded? Are they reading to learn something? Are they expecting to be entertained or excited by your ideas?

How will they Read it?

Will they read slowly and carefully? Will they skip and skim? Will they read some parts of your document carefully and other parts quickly or not at all?

You should do some research on the beliefs and values of your target readers. Don't assume that your readers see the world as you do. Even people who seem similar to you in background and upbringing may have different perspectives on what is happening around them.

What is their Attitude Toward you and the Issue?

Your readers will also have a particular attitude about your topic and even opinions about you. Will they be excited about your topic, or will they find it boring? Are they concerned, upset, apathetic, happy, or excited about your topic? Do you think they generally accept your views before they start reading, or are they deeply skeptical? What are their positive or negative feelings about you and the issue?

If your readers are positive and welcoming toward you and your views, you will want to encourage their goodwill by giving them compelling reasons to agree with you. If they are negative or resistant, you will want to use solid reasoning, sufficient examples, and good style to counter their resistance and help them understand your point of view.

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Analyzing the Context

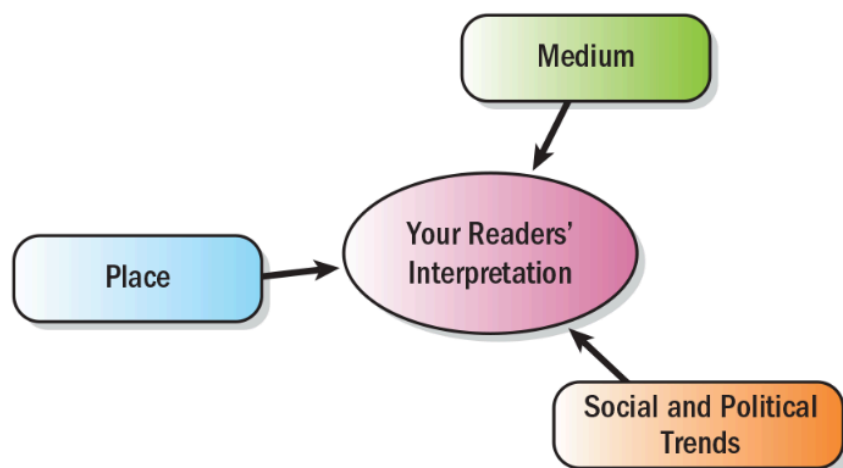
The context of your document involves the external influences that will shape how your readers interpret and react to your writing. Keep in mind that readers react to a text moment by moment, so the happenings around them can influence their understanding of your document.

Social, Economic, and Political Influences

Social Trends

Economic Trends

Political Trends



The context which includes place, medium, and social and political trends—will shape how your readers interpret your document as well as their reactions to it.

Formal and Informal Discourse Communities

Formal discourse communities communicate in ways that are more constrained by rules and conventions. Lawyers, engineers, scientists, medical doctors, and other professionals are members of discourse communities that share specialized knowledge, practices, and standards. If you want to join one of these discourse communities, you need to learn what they know, how they communicate, how they do things, and what rules they follow.

Why is knowing about discourse communities important? Learning to write in college requires much more than figuring out how to put together good sentences, paragraphs, and essays. Writing involves learning how to gain entrance into the informal and formal discourse communities that you want to join.

Using a Reader Analysis Worksheet 3.

Looking Through a Text Chapter 4

Most of the time, you are looking through a text, interpreting what the author is saying. You are primarily paying attention to the content of each text rather than its organization, style, design, or medium. Your goal is to understand the text's main points while gathering the information it provides.

Reading critically is a process of toggling back and forth between "looking through" and "looking at" to understand both what a text says and why it says it that way

Reading Critically: Seven Strategies

Strategy 1: Preview the Text, What is the Purpose of this Text? What is the Genre of the Text? What is your First Response?

Strategy 2: Play the Believing and Doubting Game The Believing Game, The Doubting Game

Strategy 3: Annotate the Text Highlight and Annotate, Take Notes

Strategy 4: Analyze the Proofs in the Text logos, ethos, pathos

Strategy 5: Contextualize the Text Cultural Context, Ethical Context, Political Context

Strategy 6: Analyze Your Own Assumptions and Beliefs first reaction, personal beliefs, personal values, views changed

Strategy 7: Respond to the Text Was your Initial Response to the Text Accurate? How Does this Text Meet Your Own Purposes? How Well did the Text Follow the Genre? How Should you Reread the Text?

Using Critical Reading to Strengthen Your Writing

Responding to a Text: Evaluating What Others Have Written

Responding with Other Authors' Positions, Terms, and Ideas: Using What Others Have Written

Play the Believing and Doubting Game

Peter Elbow, a scholar of rhetoric and writing, invented a close reading strategy called the "Believing and Doubting Game" that will help you analyze a text from different points of view.

The Believing Game—Imagine you are someone who believes (1) what the author says is completely sound, interesting, and important and (2) how the author has expressed these ideas is amazing or brilliant. You want to play the role of someone who is completely convinced by the argument in the text, whether you personally agree with it or not.

The Doubting Game—Now pretend you are a harsh critic, someone who is deeply skeptical or even negative about the author's main points and methods for expressing them. Search out and highlight the argument's factual shortcomings and logical flaws. Look for ideas and assumptions that a skeptical reader would reject. Repeatedly ask, "So what?" or "Who cares?" or "Why would the author do that?" as you read and reread.

Contextualize the Text

All authors are influenced by the cultural, ethical, and political events that were happening around them when they were writing the text. To better understand these contextual influences, consider what was happening when the text was being written.

Analyze Your Own Assumptions and Beliefs

Examining your own assumptions and beliefs is probably the toughest part of critical reading. No matter how unbiased or impartial we try to be, all of us still rely on our own preexisting assumptions and beliefs to decide whether we agree with the text. Here are a few questions you can ask yourself after reading:

- How did my first reaction influence my overall interpretation of the text?
- How did my personal beliefs influence how I interpreted and reacted to the author's claims and proofs?
- How did my personal values cause me to react favorably to some parts of the text and unfavorably to other parts?
- Why exactly was I pleased with or irritated by some parts of this text?
- Have my views changed now that I have finished reading and analyzing the text?

If an author's text challenges your assumptions and beliefs, that's a good thing. As a writer yourself, you too will be trying to challenge, influence, inform, and entertain your readers. Treat other authors and their ideas with the same respect and open-mindedness that you would like from your own readers.

Respond to the Text

Was your Initial Response to the Text Accurate?

How Does this Text Meet Your Own Purposes?

How Well did the Text Follow the Genre?

How Should you Reread the Text?