



## Did You Know?

### We have changed our community name...

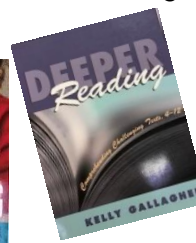
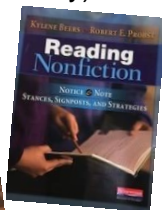
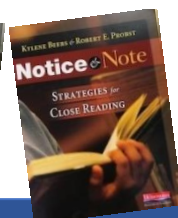
Our new name is ELA CAI (Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction). This more accurately reflects the focus of our community.

### Choosing Text for the PSSA and Keystone Tests

PDE uses an approach that combines expert judgment, data, readability measures, and publication target audiences to define appropriate passages for the tests at each grade level. PDE uses numerous methods to calculate readability levels including Flesch, Dale-Chall, Lexile, Fry, Spache, and Text Complexity Analysis. All passages are reviewed again for any possible bias, fairness, and sensitivity issues. The litmus test for the appropriateness of a passage at a given grade level is its review by Pennsylvania educator committees who have grade level experience. The committee members must approve each passage used for a given grade level. Judgment by Pennsylvania classroom teachers with grade-level experience is the most important criterion during passage review.

## Professional Learning

Close reading is not a new instructional practice, in fact, close reading has roots dating back to the 1920s. In the movement, New Criticism, close reading demanded a tight, clear, analytical reading of text. In the June and December eBLASTs, we discussed close reading and that teachers should purposefully select sections to reread that will lead students to gain a deeper understanding of the reading elements or structure they will need to analyze. The teacher should provide open-ended text dependent questions to promote discussion and to help students gain a better understanding of the nuances of the text. What is your understanding of close reading? Join us in the forum titled Close Reading in our SAS community (ELA CAI Community).



## Resources

Close Reading power point <https://www.fisherandfrey.com/resources/>

The Importance of Close Reading <https://www.youtube.com/BeersandProbst>

Dr. Timothy Shanahan Explains 'Close Reading'  
<https://www.youtube.com/Shanahan>

A Primer on "Close Reading of Text" <http://www.aspendri.org>

**VOL 2 ISSUE 1**  
**JANUARY 2018**

Our monthly ELA Assessment eBlast will focus on providing the following: insight around standardized assessment, professional learning for ELA classroom instruction and assessment, professional opportunities, and a question/answer section.

### Email questions to:

[dsimaska@pa.gov](mailto:dsimaska@pa.gov)

[rbaumleama@pa.gov](mailto:rbaumleama@pa.gov)

New look for the PDE Website--Check it out!!

<http://www.education.pa.gov>



### Welcome to ESL Portal PA!

An online resource of professional learning opportunities and instructional materials that supports Pennsylvania educators and community organizations as they strive to provide equitable, high quality educational programs for English learners and their families. The portal also links to updated federal and state guidance, current educational research, instructional practice and more.

<http://www.eslportalpa.info/>