

# **STEP: 2019 Critical Reading Workshops**

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# Lesson Plan 1: STEP Introduction to Critical Reading

## Analyzing Sources

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### Learning Objectives

- Practice active listening skills
- Develop close reading skills

### Preparation

**Students and Mentors:** should read p7-48 of *We Should All Be Feminists*

**Room:** group students in groups of 5-8, as the room allows

### Materials

- Handout: [Preflection/reflection and assignments handout](#) (Todd has printed these)
- White board markers (Todd has these)

### Lesson

#### Before class/beginning of class

- Ask, by show of hands, who has read at least the first 15 pages of the book
- If  $\geq 50\%$  continue to Part 0.
- If  $< 50\%$ , give students silent reading time for 15 minutes at beginning of session. Encourage them not to focus on “getting it done” but on really trying to understand what is in the passage they are able to read in this time.
- During this time, instructors can gather in hallway for last minute coordination.

#### Part 0: Introductory Comments - Maoria (5 Min)

- When you are asked to “read” something in college, the expectations might be different than what you have experienced in the past.
- Simply passing your eyes over the words is not enough
- You are expected to actively engage with the reading and read critically
- Often you will need to prepare something written -- some kind of notes, write some kind of reaction or reflection, or otherwise keep track of your engagement -- because you will be juggling four to seven classes with different things going on.
- So, over the next few weeks we are going to work on developing and practicing some of these skills using the Mason Read: *We Should All Be Feminists*
- Self-introduce instructors

#### Part 1: Learning to listen -- framing the following activities - Todd (5 Min)

- Today, we are going to focus on two dimensions of critical reading: close-reading a text and actively listening to others’ understanding of a text.
- First: open conversation -- what is a “text”? What are some of the kinds of “texts” you might be encountering in your classes so far?
- Explain to them that learning to critically read is closely related to learning to listen carefully: we need to be able to “hear” what the book is saying to us and then explain it to others.

- Many times in college reading itself is social -- we are expected to discuss readings with our classmates or even do assignments together based on them --
- so learning to “hear” what our colleagues have to say about a book is also an important skill.
- Your goal is to move beyond your individual perspective and consider multiple perspectives
- Explain that we are about to “model” an activity that they will undertake in their small groups next

## Part 2: Analyzing sources: Modeling (20 min)

- Todd: First, we will select a time keeper for the group. Then we are going to read a passage of 1-4 paragraphs from the book together. Whoever selected the passage will read aloud while we all read along. It is important that you read it without offering any interpretation or commentary.
  - Maoria: I’ll volunteer to go first. I’ve selected a paragraph on page 33. Reads the passage aloud.
- Todd: Now, we’ll spend about 2 minutes jotting down some reactions you have to the passage that we have read. First, write down which passage you are reacting to, then spend the entire two minutes writing.
- Todd, then the time keeper will give each member of the group 1 minute to respond to a section of the text. Verbalize your reaction and thoughts, share questions that the passage raises for you, connections to yourself or society, etc. When you are doing this, the time keeper will politely stop each person at 1 minute, if necessary. So, now we are going to go around and give you some examples of what we see when we take the time to closely read this passage.
- **Katara:** Reaction that covering up isn’t always a bad thing. For Muslim women, covering up with a hijab might be a form of dignity. For many black women, it’s a form of dignity, protection, and control--a way to feel that you still have your modesty and that your body is your own, not at anyone else’s disposal.
- Todd: Reaction concerning the ways that “girl” (a gender category) and “woman” (a biological sex category) relate to each other, how the way that this is described in the passage likely resonates with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, but as someone in a very cosmopolitan north American metropolitan area, there are many trans and genderqueer people in my community who have a very different experience of the relationships between these categories.
- Kayla: Reaction that emphasizes the ways that “desire” in the passage ends up coding a very specific way of engaging with the idea of feminism (priming for Beyonce activity later on). Reaction also might speak to what it is like to read this as a Catholic woman (e.g. in relation to the theme of “guilt” as discussed.)
- Todd: Once everyone else in the group has offered a reaction, thoughts, or raised a question about the passage from the text, then the person who selected the passage gets to have the last word.
- Maoria: summarizes why they chose it (connection to internalizing thoughts based on gender), connects it with one of the major ideas from the text that resonates with them, and builds on or responds to some of the ideas shared by others.
- Todd: Okay, so that’s how this activity works:

- You will have 5 minutes to locate a passage pre-write about the passage, why you selected it, and what specific features of the passage stand out to you.
- You need to pick someone to keep time.
- Then, someone in the group selects a passage that they particularly liked, found provocative, or want to talk about it.
- Then, the person who selected the passage will read it aloud while everyone else reads silently. Remember not to offer commentary or interpretation at this stage: just read it.
- Everyone should spend two minutes writing down their reaction to the passage that has just been read..
- The time keeper should tell the group when the two minutes is up.
- Then, everyone in the group talks about their reaction and thoughts about this passage for 1 minute each. You don't have to read from what you wrote. The purpose is just to get you thinking. It can be very productive to raise questions about the passage, draw attention to questions the passage raises for you, or make connections between the passage and your experiences or to our society.
- The time keeper politely stops anyone who goes more than a few seconds over their allotted 1 minute.
- At the end, the person who selected the passage summarizes why they chose it, connects it to some bigger idea from the text that resonates with them, and builds on or responds to other people's response.
- We'll then repeat this activity until we call time. Make sure a new person selects the passage each time.
- Any questions?

### **Part 3: Analyzing Sources in Small groups (20 min, or longer as time allows)**

As small groups, students will undertake this activity

### **Part 4: Reflect -- Todd (5 min)**

At the bottom of the piece of paper where you've been jotting down your reactions, we are going to write a short reflection. First, stop and think about which of the passages you just analyzed produced the most interesting conversation and why. (Give a minute to think about this)

Now, I want you to write for about 3 minutes about this experience:

- How did listening carefully to other people's understanding of a passage you've just read together helped you develop your own understanding of that passage.
- Were there things you hadn't noticed or thought about?
- Were there things that you heard that you disagreed with or had another interpretation?
- Were there connections you were able to make by taking other people's perspective seriously?

- What did you learn by reading this passage more slowly and taking time to think about it together?

**Part 4: Report-out -- Maoria (10 min)**

Students report-out what they noticed undertaking this activity.

- Can some describe a time when they heard an interpretation they disagreed with or which differed from their own?
- How did your groups manage these differences of perspective?

Collect writing.

**Part 5: Follow-up and Reminders -- Kayla & Katara (5 min)**

Next week, we're going to talk about the different ways that people might think about or understand the word 'feminism'" and how that might inform our understanding of this book...

Before our next Critical Reading Workshop on Friday 19 July:

- If you have not already done so, read all of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *We Should All Be Feminists*.
- View Beyoncé's video for the song "Flawless" on YouTube.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyuUWOnS9BY>

Think about the sample from Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "We Should All Be Feminists" talk that Beyoncé used in this song.

- Why do you imagine that Beyoncé chose to use this particular part of the "We Should All Be Feminists" talk?
- What does the Adichie's message add to Beyoncé's song?
- In what ways do you think that Beyoncé's song and the visuals that have been selected to accompany it represent or advance the vision of feminism promoted by Adichie?
- In what ways might Beyoncé's song and the visuals that have been selected to accompany it be in tension with the vision of feminism promoted by Adichie?





## Homework Assignments

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Think about the sample from Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "We Should All Be Feminists" talk that Beyoncé used in this song.

- Why do you imagine that Beyoncé chose to use this particular part of the "We Should All Be Feminists" talk?
- What does Adichie's message add to Beyoncé's song?
- In what ways do you think that Beyoncé's song and the visuals that have been selected to accompany it represent or advance the vision of feminism promoted by Adichie?
- In what ways might Beyoncé's song and the visuals that have been selected to accompany it be in tension with the vision of feminism promoted by Adichie?



## Lesson Plan 2: STEP Introduction to Critical Reading

### Reading in context using tertiary sources + finding sources/Definitions JigSaw Activity

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#### Learning objectives

- Put readings in a broader text
- Ask “Who is speaking?” and “To whom?”
- Develop skills for finding sources

#### Preparation

**Students and Mentors:** Ask students to take a couple or 3 minutes to think about what feminism means to them. How they define it and ask them to write down their definition before beginning jigsaw activity.

**Room:** Art and Design Building, L008

**Instructor:** Writing handout:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QlSn2yK6G2qMnzsJTHl0oARaGrM2yUYy2anxVfWxkx0/edit>

#### Lesson

##### Part 0: Discussion about Previous Session and Overview of This Lesson- Todd (5 minutes)

- Overview of first lesson
- Ask about homework
- Overview of today’s lesson
- Opening self-reflection related to homework
  - How do you define feminism?

##### Part 1: *Beyonce!*- Tahmina (? minutes)

Tahmina will introduce her self.

Tahmina will ask 2-3 questions about how Beyonce and Adichie’s ideas of feminism connect and differ from each other using the pair-share method of facilitating conversation:

Questions:

1. How does Beyonce’s Flawless video define or represent feminism?
2. How does Beyonce’s idea of feminism related to Adichie’s?
3. How might they differ?

Pair-share method

1. Tahmina asks the question out loud while one of the other instructors writes it on the board.
2. Tahmina instructs each student to turn to the person next to them (group of 3 if absolutely necessary) and discuss their perspectives

on this. Remind them to let both people talk. This should be about 2-3 minutes.

3. Tahmina invites students to share *what their paired peer* had to say in response to this question. Take answers from 3-4 pairs. Feel encouraged to wait 20 seconds if no one volunteers immediately.
4. If no one volunteers for 20-30 seconds, invite students to share *what they personally* had to say in response to this question.

### **Part 2: Jigsaw Activity - Maoria (45 minutes)**

- Students are given one of the eight entries to read. These will be on different colored paper to easily identify which students have which entry.
- Students read their entries. Encourage students to write on their copies if they want. Questions to think about when reading:
  - Who do you think the audience is that this encyclopedia entry is written for? Why do you think this?
  - What specific concerns is the entry focused on and why? What does the article put in the foreground and the background? What does it choose to include and exclude?
- Pair up with a classmate who has the same color entry. If there is an odd number, there can be a group of 3. Each pair discusses what they read and their reactions to the questions above.
  - Students write down a 2-3 sentence summary of how their entry defines or interprets feminism.
- Students will then get into groups of 4 based on the letter written in the top right corner on their paper.
  - This requires some pre-work from the instructors to group each of the four sources and write A on a set, then B on a set, then C, and so on.
  - In this group of 4, each student talks about the 2-3 sentences they wrote and how those differ from one another.
  - Then students should address these questions as a group:
    - How do the encyclopedia entries differ from Adichie's version of feminism?
    - How do they differ from Beyonce's?
    - Are there any places of agreement? Be specific.

### **Part 3: Finding Sources Using the Library - Kayla - 15 minutes**

- Something about sources at the end of the entries and using encyclopedias to find background information on the topic. In college you'll often need to find other sources to cite--like scholarly, peer reviewed articles and books.
  - Ask students what a scholarly, peer reviewed article is, and be sure to explain if they don't know
- Using Primo to find known items cited in encyclopedia entries
  - Walk students through how to find a scholarly article
  - Have students verbally walk you through finding a book

- Be sure to highlight the major limiters on the right side, even if they aren't needed with this type of demonstration - Resource Type, Peer Reviewed, Available Online, etc.
- Give students handout on searching Primo
- Task before next workshop - All of this is outlined on a handout, including the social media tweets.
  - View
    - Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. Interview with *Channel 4 News* (UK) on March 11, 2017, 2:05-3:11. <https://youtu.be/KP1C7VXUfZQ?t=125>
  - Read (we should print these)
    - Raquel Willis thread in response to this: <https://twitter.com/RaquelWillis/status/840369626487783425> (whole thread)
    - Laverne Cox thread in response to this: <https://twitter.com/Lavernecox/status/840711779948740608> (whole thread)
    - Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. Facebook post clarifying appearance on Channel 4 news. March 12, 2017. <https://www.facebook.com/chimamandaadichie/photos/a.469824145943/10154893542340944/>
    - @TrulyTG user response to this: <https://twitter.com/TrulyTG/status/840701732787216384>
  - View
    - Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi with Audie Cornish. Interview at the Politics and Prose bookstore (Washington DC) on March 24, 2017, 6:45-19:00. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PaCRkyKJar4&feature=youtu.be&t=405>
  - Think
    - One issue Adichie speaks to very directly in the book is who can be a feminist: “a man or a woman who says ‘Yes, there’s a problem with gender as it is today and we must fix it, we must do better.’”
    - How might we think about the different ways that cis-gender men, cis-gender women, trans-gender men, trans-gender women, and other ways that people experience the relationships between biological sex and gender identity in relation to this statement?

#### **Part 4: Reflection - Todd (5 minutes)**

Todd will ask students to write in their reflection for 5 minutes. If time allows, we will follow this with a pair-share activity.

**Part 5: Reminders - Katara (5 minutes)**

**Part 6: As time allows**

**Screen this:** Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. "The danger of a single story." Filmed July 2009. TEDGlobal, 18:43.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)





**End of class reflection:** At the beginning of class, we ask you to think about how your perceptions of the denotation (or literal and primary meaning of a word) and connotation (or feelings and ideas evoked by a word) are shaped by your past experiences and impressions. In the middle of class, we asked you to think about how different ways of approaching a word can encourage different interpretations and emphases. Both activities are about demonstrating that you can select keywords from a reading and deepen your understanding and appreciation of the reading by focusing on them very closely.

Being realistic about the fact that you are often expected to read things on the same night you have other homework or course preparation to do, how might you use this lesson in your courses this Fall?


**Homework Assignment**

Before the next Critical Reading Lesson on **Tuesday, July 23rd**, please complete the following tasks.

1. Watch a portion (2:05-3:11) of the following interview of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie on *Channel 4 News* from March 11, 2017.
  - o Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. Interview with *Channel 4 News* (UK) on March 11, 2017, 2:05-3:11. <https://youtu.be/KP1C7VXuFZQ?t=125>
  
2. Read the series of social media posts reacting to Adichie’s comments in the *Channel 4 News* video. These tweets are attached to these instructions. Please be sure to read them in the order they’re provided.
  - o Raquel Willis thread in response to this: [https://twitter.com/RaquelWillis\\_/status/840369626487783425](https://twitter.com/RaquelWillis_/status/840369626487783425) (whole thread)

- @TrulyTG user response to this:  
<https://twitter.com/TrulyTG/status/840701732787216384>
  - Laverne Cox thread in response to this:  
<https://twitter.com/Lavernecox/status/840711779948740608> (whole thread)
  - Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. Facebook post clarifying appearance on Channel 4 news. March 12, 2017.  
<https://www.facebook.com/chimamandaadichie/photos/a.469824145943/10154893542340944/>
3. Watch a portion (6:45-19:00) of an interview with Adichie and Audie Cornish at the Politics and Prose bookstore in Washington, DC.
- Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi with Audie Cornish. Interview at the Politics and Prose bookstore (Washington DC) on March 24, 2017, 6:45-19:00.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PaCRkyKJar4&feature=youtu.be&t=405>
4. Think about the following two points before attending the next workshop on Tuesday, July 23rd.
- One issue Adichie speaks to very directly in the book is *who* can be a feminist: “a man or a woman who says ‘Yes, there’s a problem with gender as it is today and we must fix it, we must do better.’”
  - How might we think about the different ways that cis-gender men, cis-gender women, trans-gender men, trans-gender women, and other ways that people experience the relationships between biological sex and gender identity in relation to this statement?



## Lesson Plan 3: STEP Introduction to Critical Reading

### Sources in conversation

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#### Learning objectives

- Students will situate readings in relation to broader conversations to which they may contribute or which may react to them
- Students will reflect on different ways of engaging with differences of perspective

#### Preparation

**Students and Mentors:**

**Room:**

**Instructor:**

#### Lesson

##### Part 1: Conversation and the value of multiple stories - Todd (35 minutes)

Working with sources:

Discuss a model for written engagement with sources. Discuss how this is like a conversation. Compare this to engagement on social media.

View and take notes:

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. "The danger of a single story." Filmed July 2009.

TEDGlobal, 18:43.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)

Write

Students write the pre-class writing exercises

Pair

Students pair with a partner for a structured pair activity.

3 min: One partner shares what they have written, being specific about the passages of the video and/or readings on which they are drawing. The other partner is silent. Instruct the listening partner to take notes that are good enough to be able to repeat what they've heard in their own words.

1 min: The listening partner develops some questions while the speaking partner reflects on what they communicated effectively.

3 min: The listening partner asks questions. (Questions only, no responses) and the speaking partner answers them.

Directive about civil dialogue

3 min: Open dialogue about the speaking partner's perspective

Whole class discussion about what encouraged successful dialogue, especially when you might have a very different perspective.

- Listen to understand, not to formulate a response or rebuttal
- Taking someone else's view seriously, means actually telling them when your view differs.
- Summarize and clarify the other person's viewpoint
- Be curious (carries no judgement) and look for common ground
- Seek the most charitable view of the other person's perspective
- Don't dominate the conversation or interrupt, and back off when needed
- Make it clear that you're discussing, not trying to win an argument

Repeat for the other partner

- Ending question: What do you do now? When you disagree on something and come to a stand-still and have talked it out...what then?
- If you always agree to disagree, you'll never have an opinion about anything. Also, conversation will be stifled.

Share activity

Ask: Who is willing to share what they heard from their partner?

After each person shares, ask their partner for clarifications, elaborations, and/or corrections.

### **Part 2: What's a conversation? Where do they happen? (Katara 10 minutes)**

- Talk about the broad idea of a conversation. Pair-share: when you hear the word "conversation," what comes to mind? (If this gets stuck, ask what a "debate" is? What's a "discussion"? What's a "thread"?) And have them share out
- Ask the class: So we've witnessed a large conversation via interviews & social media, where else may it take place?
- How might we think about the sources we use in college as parts of conversations?
- Can scholarly sources be part of conversations...this one?
- What would that look like?

### **Part 3: Finding a conversation (Kayla - 30 minutes)**

- Quick demo:
  - When something is new, you might not find much.
  - Demo a search for "Adichie transgender"
  - Ask the class: What do you do? How would you look for information on this?
- Create a small group with the two people closest to you.

- Imagine, you've been assigned to write a research paper about the role of trans-women in feminism
- Locate four or five sources that represents different perspectives on some aspect of this topic. (as a whole group, not individually)
- You will need to quickly assess what they are about -- read the title, the abstract, the first paragraph.
- Share your sources with another group and talk about what they found, how they organized them, etc.

#### **Part 4: What is "Critical Reading"? - Todd (25 minutes)**

Students write their final reflection.

We then have them report-out what the main skills they learned are and how they contribute to the practices of "critical" reading.

Some themes we want to draw out in this conversation:

- Analysis: pull a reading apart and see how it works.
  - E.g. what are some of the keywords doing: what does "feminism" mean anyways? What does the word "woman" mean in this text?
- Contextualization: thinking about the reading in relation to multiple different perspectives
  - What is the source? Whose voice is being represented in the source? (author/audience/purpose type questions)
  - The perspectives expressed by your peers
  - Perspectives of other writers or voices
    - Reading "laterally" -- what are other people who might not be explicitly in conversation with this source saying?
    - Reading forward and backwards in a conversation -- who responded to this? What do they say? Who is the source responding to or building off of? What did they say?
  - Imagined perspectives that might be illuminating
- Evaluation: considering perspectives that differ from the reading and from your own and figuring out where you stand and why
- Synthesis: Being able to explain how your evaluation emerges from consideration of the source in context

#### **Part 5: Closing words - Katara (5 minutes)**

Mention Adichie coming to campus on Friday October 11, 2019 to speak as part of Fall for the Book.

- Many offices on campus will be involved included

Mention that there will be other programming related to the common read in Fall.

Pep talk

- You all are well positioned to be leaders around this convo
- You've got a step up!





**During class activity:** Imagine you've been assigned to write a research paper about the role of trans-women in feminism. Locate four or five sources that represents different perspectives on some aspect of this topic.

Group them into categories based on the similarities in perspectives between sources. Then, write the best citation you can manage for each source on the left. On the right, describe what was similar that led you to group them in this way.

<u>Citation to sources</u>	<u>Description of perspective represented by these sources</u>

