

Delirium:

Reading Strategies for Big Ideas & Dystopian Literature

Summary	This lesson introduces students to reading strategies that help clarify meaning, theme, and content. It is particularly helpful for students who are new to speculative fiction to have an understanding of how to unpack meaning in unfamiliar worlds with unfamiliar norms and values. We also address the early themes in <i>Delirium</i> of government control, regulation, and systems that function to eliminate free-thinkers. The lesson begins to draw connections between <i>Delirium</i> , other texts, and the real world -- a direction carried on and developed to a greater extent in the next lesson.
Objectives	By the end of this lesson, students should be comfortable identifying important passages and searching for clues in dyslit as to setting, world-building, and theme. Students should also begin to think about how a text's big ideas can be connected to ideas, situations, or texts beyond the original piece.
Outcomes Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 reinforce or develop new understanding from what others share during a discussion 1.2 ask questions for clarification, elaboration, to qualify, or question relevance, accuracy 4.2 read a variety of texts including fiction and literature, non-fiction, and media texts from different provinces and countries 4.3 explain how authors use text features to create meaning and achieve different purposes 4.4 use text features to construct meaning and understand the text 4.6 independently use a range of reading strategies (predicting, connecting, questioning, inferring) to make meaning from complex print and media texts 4.7 consistently identify and discuss the kinds of strategies good readers and viewers use 8.4 use various forms of note-making for different purposes and situations
Materials	Chart paper, sticky notes, highlighters, pens/pencils
Pre-Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Photocopy "The Examination" <input type="checkbox"/> Distribute highlighters, sticky notes

Plan

- Warm-Up** (1 class)
1. Read “The Examination” aloud. Re-read, doing verbal annotations and asking students to highlight important parts.
 2. Read the first three chapters of *Delirium*, doing verbal annotations and asking students to mark down important parts with post-it notes. Have students jump in with passages that stick out to them as well.
 3. Have students read Chapter 4 aloud in groups, continuing post-it annotation. Circulate and monitor to check reading skills and strategies.
- Main Act** (2 classes)
1. Split the class into groups. Ask half of the groups to come up with 1-2 sentences summarizing what “The Examination” seems to suggest about government tests; ask the remaining groups to do the same for *Delirium*. Why is there testing in each book? What do they think it means? Is it important?
 2. Reconvene. Have each group share one idea they had, leading into a discussion about exams and tests as methods for control/regulation. What type of society uses exams to determine someone’s entire future? Does our society do this? What about others in the world? Is it necessary, right, wrong, manipulative, organizing?
 3. Return to the text in groups. Ask students to find three passages from the first four chapters that tell them about the world Lena lives in -- setting -- and theme. What passages did they use to help them figure out what’s going on? On chart paper, ask students to write down passages in one column and two or three words that correspond to that passage -- the information they were able to pull (for example, “controlling,” “no freedom,” “lack of individuality”). Model first.
 4. Once each group has written down three important passages and corresponding descriptors, tape the chart paper up and have the class function like a carousel. Every group should move to another group’s paper and add descriptors or comments, generating at least one word per entry.
 5. Reconvene. What ideas did the students notice coming up again and again? What does that tell us about the setting of the novel? The themes? The atmosphere?

- Conclusion** (1 class)
1. Give students time to start reading Chapter 5 in their groups, keeping track of how they're progressing in reading strategies. Chapter 5 is a turning point, so it's important that students are truly grasping the storyworld and themes.
 2. Conversation Journal: *Do you ever feel like you're being judged through testing or exams? Have you ever felt like you were supposed to say one thing, but had a different thing in your heart? Why do you think Lena's answers at the end of her interview are suspicious? What might they tell the examiners about her?*

Assessment *Formative:* Respond to conversation journals.

Monitor student use of reading strategies. Explicit instruction may need to be carried on if students are struggling with comprehension.

Adaptations Reading strategies should help struggling readers, but may need to be made more explicit/tailored to particular learners. Students who have difficulty with visual processing could be given an audio book.

Extensions Any extra time can be filled with group reading, silent reading, or whole-class reading.

**Research/
Resources** Hill Campbell, Kimberly. *Less Is More: Teaching Literature with Short Texts -- Grades 6-12*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse, 2007. (Annotation strategies)