**Primary Strand: Reading 9.4**

**Integrated Strand/s:**

**Essential Understanding:**

* Understand that analysis of a text should be based on text references, not personal opinion

**Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Processes:**

* Analyze an author’s use of diction and syntax to convey ideas and content, including but not limited to, connotation and denotation

**Primary SOL:**

* 9.4i: Analyze how the author’s specific word choices and syntax impact the author’s purpose.

**Reinforced (Related Standard) SOL:**

* 9.3c
* 9.4d and e

**Academic Background/Language:**

* Students should have an understanding of diction, figurative language, syntax, themes, tones, etc.
* Students should have an understanding of the entire passage if excerpted from a longer class text.

## **Materials:**

* Passage that has clear examples of diction and syntax to demonstrate author’s purpose.
* Recommended Excerpt - Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe, Chapter 7

“And at last the locusts did descend. They settled on every tree and on every blade of grass; they settled on the roofs and covered the bare ground. Mighty tree branches broke away under them, and the whole country became the brown-earth color of the vast, hungry swarm.”

* Annotation tools - either for digital or paper annotations
* Close Reading Task Cards or PowerPoint based on close reading questions - example located at the bottom of this document

## **Student/Teacher Actions: What should students be doing? What should teachers be doing?**

* Teacher reviews vocabulary. Consider having students provide examples from prior texts discussed throughout the year and/or provide their own examples.
	+ Diction
	+ Figurative Language - focus on examples/types found in the close reading

passage activity

* + - Anaphora
		- Repetition
		- Imagery
		- Alliteration
	+ Syntax
	+ Tone
* Teacher reviews the purpose and process of close-multiple readings of a short passage.
* Teacher provides the selected short passage via the best mode for the class. Teacher checks for understanding of the context and events around the selected passage.
* Teacher models the way annotation might look through a think-aloud of the first part of the close reading.
* Students will complete a close reading of the passage. Teacher encourages multiple readings of the passage prior to analyzing each feature.

[Note: Consider doing this as a whole group, pausing after each step for clarification and questions. Also, consider incorporating movement by doing this in stations. Or allow students to complete this strategy through self-paced task cards or slides.]

* + Vocabulary - Circle any vocabulary you are unfamiliar with. Try to develop an understanding using context clues. Did you need to know the definition to understand the passage?
	+ Diction Part 1 - Underline any language that attracts your attention. Why do you find it interesting?
	+ Figurative Language - Box any figurative language that attracts your attention. Be sure to identify it. What is the impact? Why did the author use it?
	+ Diction Part 2 - Highlight verbs, adverbs, and adjectives. What do you notice? Are there any patterns?
	+ Syntax - Is there anything unique about the sentences? Put a slash mark at the end of each complete thought. How does that impact the passage?
	+ PREDICTION - What might happen next? Why?
	+ OPINIONS - What do you think of the story/narrators/characters/setting/etc?
	+ CONNECTIONS - Does this passage remind you of another text, personal experience, or world events?
	+ QUESTIONS - What is an open-ended question you still have after reading?
	+ THEMES - What key themes from the novel do you think are reflected in the passage?
	+ TONE - What is the author’s attitude?
	+ PURPOSE - What is the author’s primary purpose for this writing?
* Teacher leads a closing discussion on the author’s choice of words and punctuation. Teacher shares that everyone chooses words, but it is important to note that the best word choice impacts tone, theme, character development, etc.
* Students may share their Diction Part 1 and Syntax findings with the class for closer peer discussion and teacher feedback.

[Note: These are possible discussion points from the suggested reading.]

* + “And at last” - What emotion is created by this opening phrase? How?
	+ “Locust” - What are locusts? What is a Biblical allusion connection to this insect? How is this insect seen as both a positive and negative? What other insect would be similar?
	+ “Settled” - What are other forms of this word? Settlers? What do we know about the connection between African cultures and settlers? How does that impact the reading?
	+ “Mighty” - Why is the tree mighty? What are other words that could have been used to describe the tree? How does that impact the reading?
	+ “Swarm” - What connotation do you have with the word swarm? What other animals/insects swarm? What imagery (auditory and visual) do you have with this word? How does that impact the reading?
	+ What is the purpose of a semicolon? How does the use of it impact the reading?
	+ Does the opening emotion and description of the locust match?
	+ How does the diction, syntax, language contribute to the purpose?

**Assessment (Diagnostic, Formative, Summative):**

* As a diagnostic assessment, the teacher asks questions to check for academic vocabulary at the beginning of the lesson and reviews comprehension.
* As a formative assessment, the teacher assesses students’ understanding of diction, syntax, and connotation by reviewing annotations.
* As a summative assessment, the teacher assesses students’ ability to connect diction to purpose and/or tone by providing textual evidence.

**Writing Connections:**

* Students construct a response to practice targeted syntax structure, semicolon, using the passage as a model.
* Students construct an analytical response discussing the author’s use of diction or syntax.

**Extensions and Connections (for all students)**

* Students research other instances of colonization to compare and contrast the treatment of the topic.
* Students research other types of insects or animals to compare and contrast the effectiveness of the symbol.
* Students read nonfiction articles about locusts in other texts and real-world events.

**Strategies for Differentiation**

* Consider providing the passage prior to class for students to access vocabulary and complete close reading.
* Consider having students create a visual representation of the passage to support comprehension.
* Consider allowing students to complete the close-reading at their own pace through the use of technology or task cards.
* Consider reading the passage aloud throughout the multiple readings.
* Consider providing vocabulary and sentence frames.
* Consider pairing students collaboratively.
* Consider extended deadlines for those in need of extended time.

*Note: The following pages are intended for classroom use for students as a visual aid to learning.*

























