**Read Like a Writer**

**Step 0.5 (Pre Step)- SOAPS**

Identify the speaker, occasion, audience, purpose and subject.

**I.**           **Vocabulary**

To practice learning the meaning of words from context, choose words from the article that you did not know previously. For each of the words:

A.      Quote the sentence from the article (Underline the word in the sentence)

B.      Infer or write what you think the definition is based on context. This is a prediction; you can’t be wrong

C.      Write the context clues that help you determine the definition of the word.

D.      Write the dictionary definition of the word

**II.**            **Paraphrase**

Paraphrase the *entire article*; do this by line numbers (e.g. Lines 1-5: reword, Lines 6-10: reword). This means to **reword** each sentence **in your own words**. This *demonstrates your understanding* of the speaker’s intended meaning. The best way to do this is to read the lines, cover it up or put it away, retell what you read, and then write it. Then reread the original lines; do your words mean the same thing as the original?

**III.**            **Identify Central Argument/Main Idea**

A.  First identify the lines where the speaker states the **central argument (thesis or main idea)** of the article (e.g. *Lines 11-13 is where the author states his/her central argument/main idea*). In other words what is the author’s point? Why is the author writing this article?

B.  Then **write it in your own words** demonstrating your understanding of the author’s central argument or main idea.

**IV.**         **Evidence Supporting the Central Argument/Main Idea**

A.      Identify at least 2 pieces of evidence that support the speaker’s central argument or main idea; there may be more than 2. In other words, how does the author make his/her argument or main idea stronger?

B.      Connect the evidence to the overall claim/main idea. How do they support the author’s argument/main idea?

**V.**            **Tone**

Tone is a reflection of the author’s attitude toward his subject. He/she might be enthusiastic, cynical, nostalgic, humorous, sentimental, satiric, didactic, etc. An author’s tone may change throughout the article; however, for this exercise look for the overall tone and select one adjective which best describes it.

A.      Tone:

B.      Support: “  “ (quote examples of 3 “words and/or phrases which set the tone)

**VI.**            **Inferences**

To infer is to conclude by reasoning from premises or evidence; to predict or surmise. If you say, “I’m going to fail this test,” I can infer that (a) You don’t understand the material; (b) You didn’t study; (c) You think I give unfair tests; (d) You just got in a fight with your best friend and don’t care about the grammar test; (e) Etc.

A.      Fact: “ “ (Quote a fact from the article)

B.      Inference: (Draw an inference from the fact. Be careful that you are not just paraphrasing the fact)

**VII.**        **Analysis (Author’s Moves)**

When engaging in an academic reading, we must make note of the most significant “moves” the author makes so that we can better understand his/her message and, ultimately, so that we may make those moves in our own writing. Good readers know that everything the writer includes is a choice!

1. Argumentative Texts: Rhetorical Analysis. Rhetoric is persuasive speech and writing, and rhetorical strategies are the most noticeable or obvious rhetorical techniques a writer employs.
2. Fiction/Literature: Literary Devices. When reading literature, look for the strategies your teacher tells you are important. When in doubt, just look for DIDLS, which stands for diction (word choice), imagery, details, language, and structure.

How to write about the author’s moves:

1. Find **two examples** and **infer the effect** each has on the passage. The effect is referred to as your reasoning/commentary, and it demonstrates your ability to infer.
2. Identify (label) and Quote: “       “ (Examples of strategies: anecdotes, statistics/research, examples of word choice or diction, syntax, imagery etc)
3. Effect: Infer **the effect or impact** the move has on the audience or how much stronger the argument is because of it (this is the reasoning/commentary). Again, this is another way to practice inference.