

Nancy Sommers Videos

Reading and Responding

00:05

["Nancy Sommers, Author" onscreen] SOMMERS: When we write about another text, what we show is who we are as a reader.

00:12

[TITLE] Reading and Responding

00:14

[Sommers onscreen] SOMMERS: Who we are as a writer is really who we are as a reader. We can't write engaged and engaging prose about another text if we haven't engaged with that text, and we can't critique that text if we haven't gone through that process of critiquing it and taking it apart and seeing how it works and seeing how this text was put together so that we can take it apart and write about it.

00:41

["Kristy Seele, Nursing Major" onscreen] SEELE: Responding is showing that you understand that material and make sure that you understand not only what you're reading but even past that. Look into it even further. You know, what are they really saying? What's the subtext? And so we always respond to things that we've read, just to make sure that the understanding is there and that you can explore and think critically about what you're reading.

01:02

[Shots of SANCHEZ annotating her book] SANCHEZ: When I read a book, even if it's a book for fun, when I read a book, I really try to engage with the author as much as I can, engage with the text as much as I can. I annotate all over the place. If I don't agree with what they're saying, I'll write on there,

01:18

["Shaundel Sanchez, Anthropology Major" onscreen] SANCHEZ: "Check on this. It sounds like it might not be true." Or, you know, "This doesn't make any sense."

01:22

["Alex Rankin, English Major" onscreen] RANKIN: Usually if I'm reading I'll do an outline on it and go back over it, so I just don't have to read the chapter over and over. I can just read my outline over and over, and it's much less writing and it's simpler. It's more simple to understand because it's mine.

01:37

[Sanchez onscreen] SANCHEZ: And then usually it helps me to go back because if I'm reading something that somebody wrote, I like to go back and check their facts. So I go back and I annotate between books. So then I'll often have a middle paper that has extra annotations as well.

01:53

[Sommers onscreen] My students' experience with reading is one of passivity, which is here's this text,

Hacker Handbooks (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's).

I'm reading it, and now I have to write about it. But what I want my students to see is, no, it's not just reading it and reporting or summarizing, but it's engaging with it.

02:11

["Ismah Jawed, Biology Major" onscreen] JAWED: When I read textbooks, specifically maybe history textbooks, I think I disagree with more, only not of the facts that happened but the way that the analysis is afterwards.

02:22

[Sommers onscreen] SOMMERS: What did this person just say? Do I agree with that? What did this person say that doesn't make any sense? And actually learning to argue with what it is that you've read.

02:33

[Jawed onscreen] JAWED: A lot of times I feel like it's one-sided or we're only learning about one point of view or one group of people or whatever that context may be.

02:41

[Sommers onscreen] SOMMERS: Well, wait! X has seen it this way and Y has seen it this way, but I, in fact, see it another way.