

## Reading Guide Format

The following steps are a process for critical reading of assigned material for class. It is designed to help you read in a way that will improve your ability to integrate complex material, and should, if used properly, assist you in a fuller understanding of course readings. This is the format you use to write your reaction paper assignments, and it may also be used as a preparation guide for group presentations.

### Step One: Definition of terms and concepts.

1. When reading the article, underline or mark words and/or concepts that are not clear to you. If you are a speed reader this may require some slowing down and analysis but, often times serious academic work may incorporate subtle differences and nuances of meaning that may be important to establishing the context of it's use.
2. Highlight unfamiliar uses of words and phrases. Once again, even familiar words can be used in unfamiliar ways. It is important that you are able to recognize this.
3. Define these situations, perhaps with a dictionary, perhaps not. In many texts there are glossaries in the back that may help you create better context for what you are trying to do. Often times in anthropology, as well as other disciplines, dictionaries are a start but too generic for a sophisticated understanding.

### Step Two: General statement of the authors message.

State in your own words the author's main point or thesis. Do this clearly, concisely, and in as few sentences as possible. Part of this statement should reflect how or what the author expects you to see differently after you have read this article.

### Step Three: Identification of major themes and subtopics.

1. State in your own words the themes the author uses to get the point(s) across that you identified in step 2.
2. What reasons does the author give (or imply) for you to buy the ideas that he or she is trying to sell. In other words what makes this reading persuasive (or not)?

### Step Four: Integration of this material with other knowledge. **This is where I really expect you to think and write because this is where most of your points are for this paper!**

1. Why is this particular piece of reading assigned now? What ideas and topics are addressed that we are studying at this time. What is the context for it here.
2. How does it substantiate, validate, or contradict other materials assigned for this class.
3. What does it complement or disagree with that you learned in other places? Draw on anything and everything here. Outside stuff like books magazines, television, and other courses; try to remember sources and include them here.

### Step Five: Application and opinion. (opinion is not for grading)

1. How is this material applicable to what we are doing?
2. How is it applicable to other course work or your personal life?
3. What's your straight out opinion of this reading?

### Step Six: (optional) Presentation.

If you are asked to present this paper either individually or as a group, You will be given 5-10 minutes to prepare. You should do the following.

1. Ascertain how much time you have for the presentation and prioritize the elements of the reading.
2. Assign a timekeeper and delegate the various parts of the paper to individuals. If there are varying opinions within your group concerning the nature of the reading every effort should be made to allow each individual to state his/her opinion.
3. Allow adequate time for questions at the end of your presentation.

## Film Guide

Film is an everyday part of the modern classroom but not all the film we see is what it seems. Therefore it is necessary to critically evaluate the content and context of what we see and hear in film. It is also necessary to have a working knowledge of this guide before you try to use it in the classroom evaluation of film material.

**Step One:** Identify all the elements of this film as though you were a reporter creating a news report. State the “who, what, where, why, and how” Be especially conscious of context or, to state it more succinctly; why is this being used in this class at this time? You don’t have to answer the last part thoroughly now, you’ll come back to it in step 5; Just be aware of it.

**Step Two:** Whose point of view does this film represent? The following questions can help you answer this.

1. How much are the people’s own views represented?
2. Whose voice is on the soundtrack. (or point of view)
3. What is the influence of the film crew.
4. What is the balance of art and science.

**Step Three:** What is the main point or message of this film? Without going through a step by step rehash of what we all have seen, explain how the author/director makes the central point of this work and what themes are used to illustrate it. Does the film follow through on important themes?

**Step Four:** Are there things in this film you have personally seen or can identify with; intellectually and academically also? In what ways does the director create an emotional bond with the audience. You may need to look at the following questions in conjunction with this.

1. How visual or how wordy is the film?
2. How much distortion of time and space is present?
3. How did you feel during the showing of this film and immediately after?

**Step Five:**

1. What did you learn from this film?
2. Why did we view this film when we did? (context)

**Optional presentation guide:**

1. Create a concise statement of the film’s theme.
2. Assign presentation segments (if done as a group)
3. Assign a timekeeper, and leave adequate time for class questions.