

# ACT Series

## Part One: The Reading Test Basics



April 2024

# Session Objectives

1. Develop an understanding of the basics of the ACT Reading test.
2. Develop and understanding of the purpose and implications of the ACT Reading test on student achievement.
3. Draw correlations between the skills needed to succeed on the ACT Reading Test and the skills needed to be a good reader.

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# ACT Reading Test Basics:

- 40 Questions; 35 minutes
- Always the third subtest; follows English and Math
- Benchmark Score = 22
- 4 reading passages with 10 questions each
  - Prose Fiction, Social Studies, Humanities and Natural Sciences
  - One passage will be a paired (A/B) passage
  - Coming: paired passage with a visual (graph, chart etc).
  - Most passages are around 800 words each

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# Research from ACT

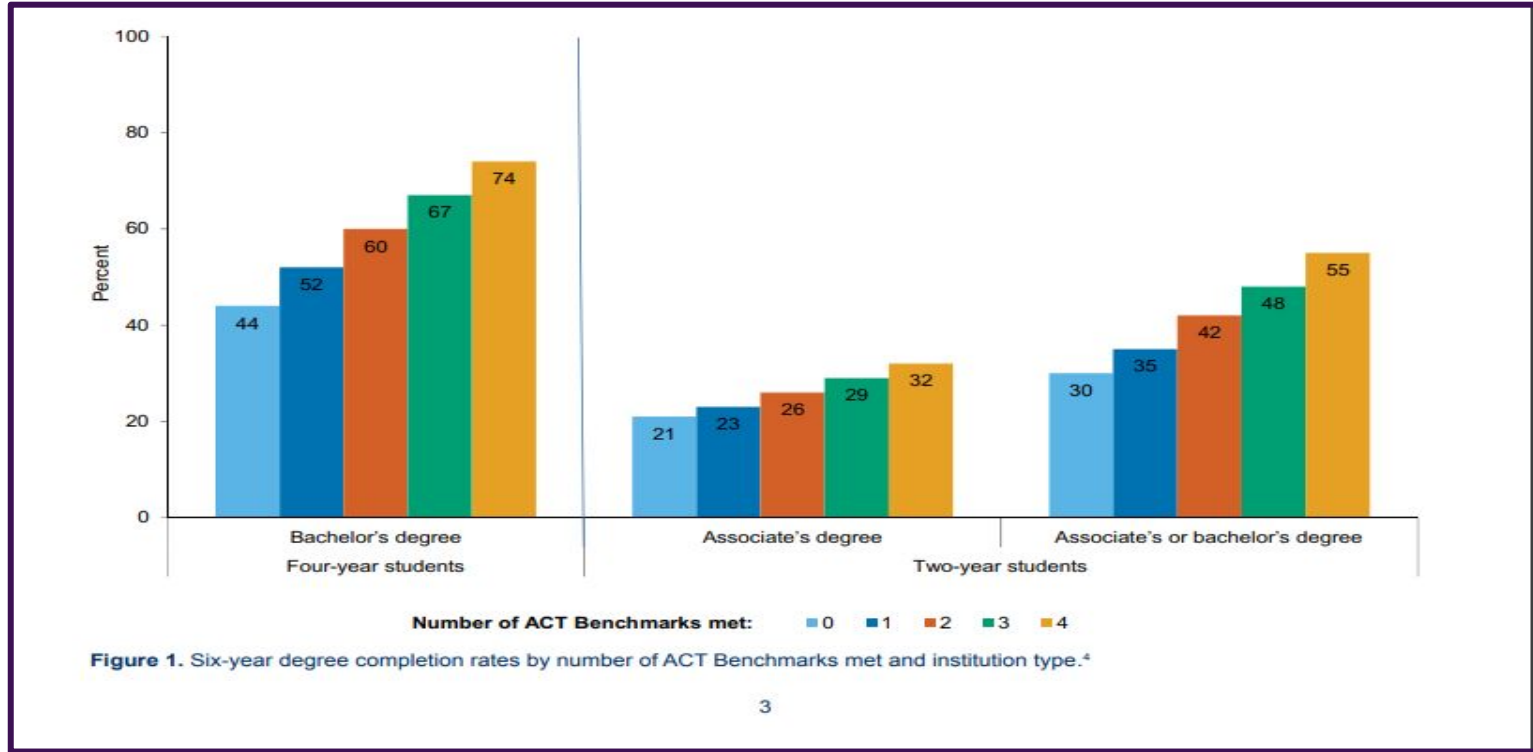
Table 1. ACT College Readiness Benchmarks

ACT Test Score	College Courses	Benchmark
English	English Composition I	18
Mathematics	College Algebra	22
Reading	American History, Other History, Psychology, Sociology, Political Science, Economics	22
Science	Biology	23
STEM	Calculus, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Engineering	26
ELA	English Composition I, American History, Other History, Psychology, Sociology, Political Science, Economics	20

“What are the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks”  
By Jeff Allen PHD & Justine Radunzel PHD



# Research from ACT



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# A note about scores

Scale Score	Raw Scores				Scale Score
	Test 1 English	Test 2 Mathematics	Test 3 Reading	Test 4 Science	
36	74-75	59-60	40	40	36
35	72-73	56-58	39	39	35
34	71	54-55	38	—	34
33	70	53	37	38	33
32	69	52	—	37	32
31	68	51	36	—	31
30	67	49-50	35	36	30
29	65-66	47-48	34	35	29
28	64	44-46	33	34	28
27	62-63	41-43	32	33	27
26	60-61	38-40	31	32	26
25	57-59	35-37	30	30-31	25
24	53-56	32-34	28-29	28-29	24
23	50-52	30-31	26-27	26-27	23
22	47-49	29	24-25	24-25	22
21	44-46	27-28	23	22-23	21
20	41-43	26	22	21	20
19	38-40	24-25	20-21	19-20	19
18	36-37	22-23	19	18	18
17	34-35	18-21	17-18	16-17	17
16	32-33	15-17	16	15	16
15	29-31	12-14	15	13-14	15
14	26-28	10-11	13-14	12	14
13	25	8-9	12	11	13
12	22-24	7	10-11	9-10	12
11	19-21	5-6	9	8	11
10	16-18	4	8	7	10
9	14-15	—	7	6	9
8	12-13	3	6	5	8
7	10-11	—	5	4	7
6	8-9	2	4	3	6
5	6-7	—	3	—	5
4	5	1	—	2	4
3	3-4	—	2	1	3
2	2	—	1	—	2
1	0-1	0	0	0	1

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# Reporting Categories

## Test 3: Reading—Scoring Key

Key	Reporting Category*		
	KID	CS	IKI
1. C			
2. J	___		
3. B	___		
4. J	___		
5. A	___		
6. H	___		
7. D	___		
8. G	___	___	
9. A	___		
10. H	___		
11. B	___	___	
12. J	___	___	
13. A	___	___	
14. H	___	___	
15. B	___	___	
16. J	___	___	
17. C	___		
18. F	___		
19. B	___		
20. J	___		

Key	Reporting Category*		
	KID	CS	IKI
21. C	___		
22. F	___	___	
23. D	___		___
24. H	___		
25. D	___	___	
26. G	___		
27. C	___		
28. J	___		___
29. B	___		___
30. F	___		___
31. A	___		
32. H	___	___	
33. D	___	___	
34. J	___		
35. C	___		
36. G	___		
37. A	___		
38. J	___		
39. B	___	___	
40. H	___		

### \*Reporting Categories

**KID** = Key Ideas & Details

**CS** = Craft & Structure

**IKI** = Integration of Knowledge & Ideas

### Number Correct (Raw Score) for:

Key Ideas & Details (KID) \_\_\_\_\_  
(24)

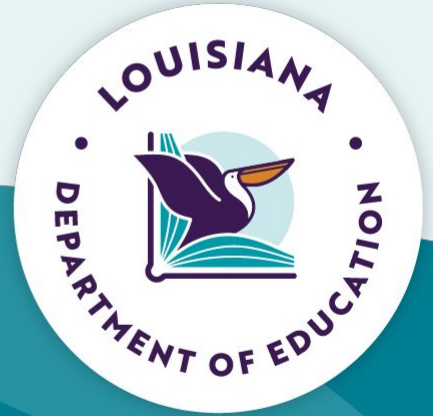
Craft & Structure (CS) \_\_\_\_\_  
(12)

Integration of Knowledge & Ideas (IKI) \_\_\_\_\_  
(4)

Total Number Correct for Reading Test  
(KID + CS + IKI) \_\_\_\_\_  
(40)

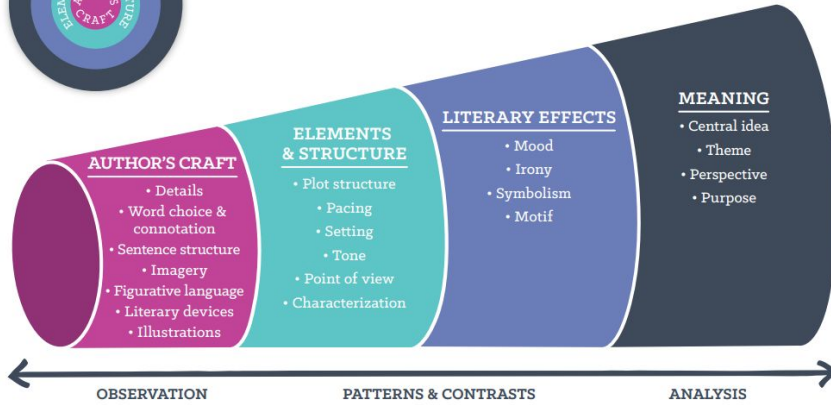


# Apply ACT Reading Skills to Instructional Practices



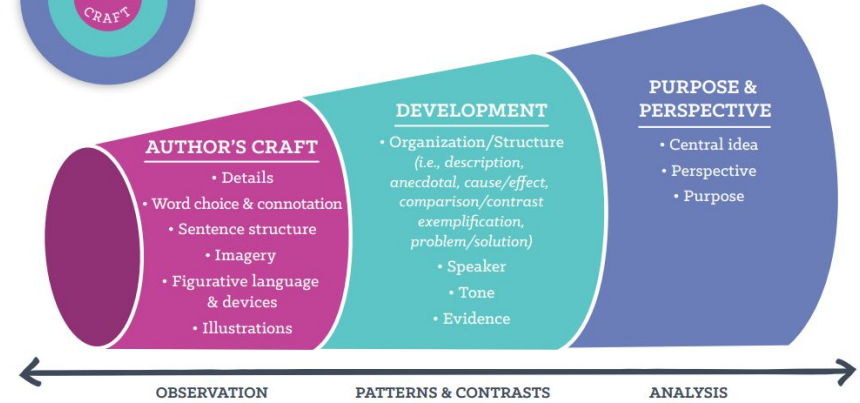


# READER'S CIRCLES | LITERARY TEXTS



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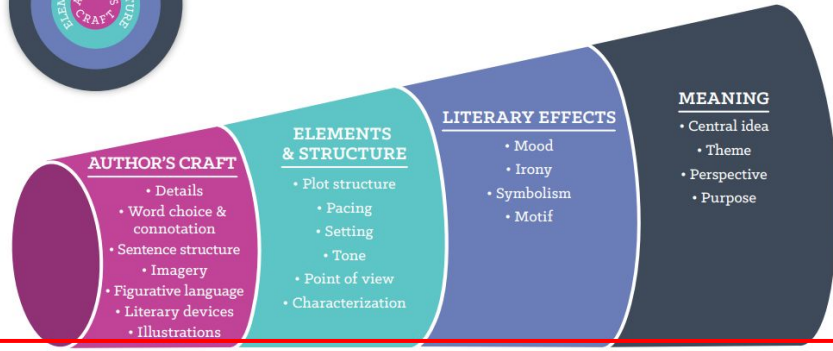
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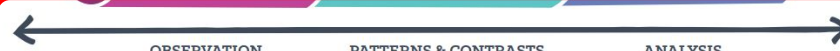
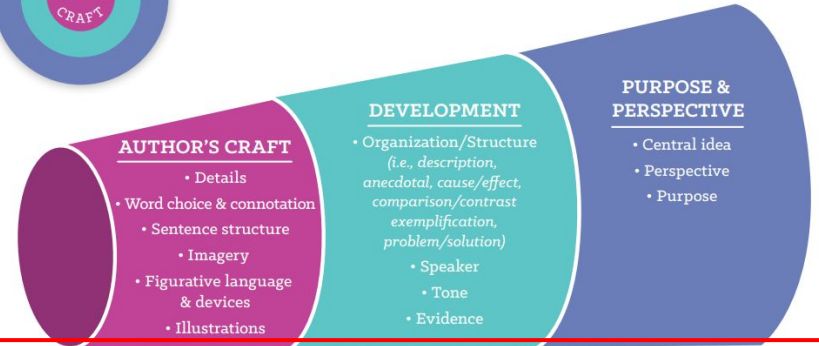
## The Reader's Circles

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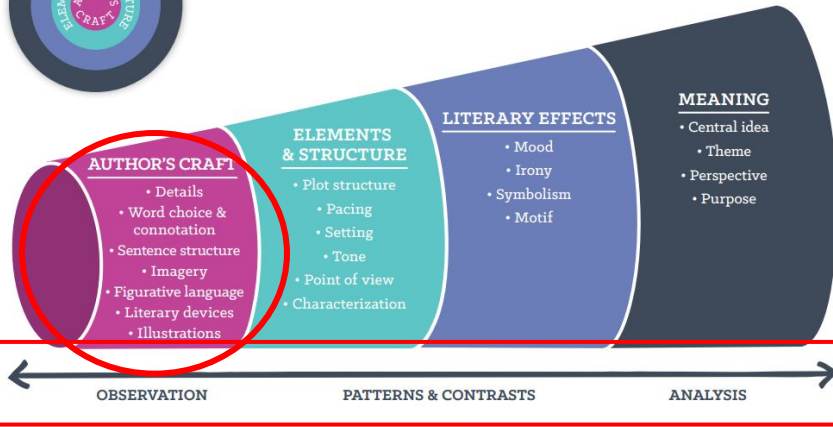
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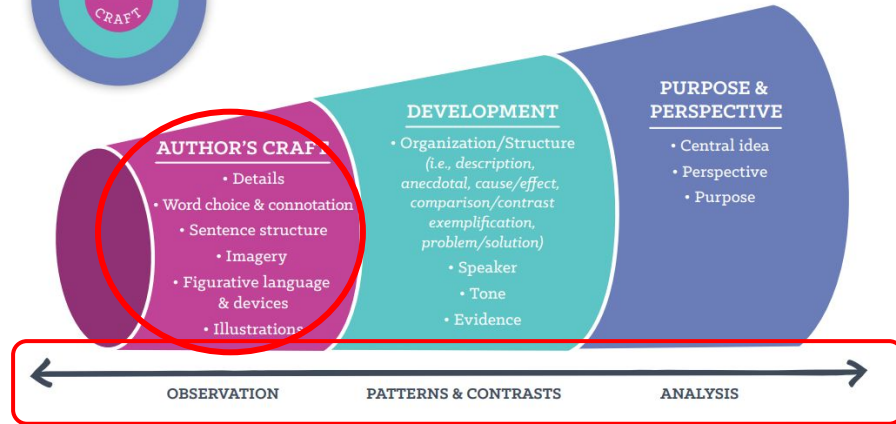
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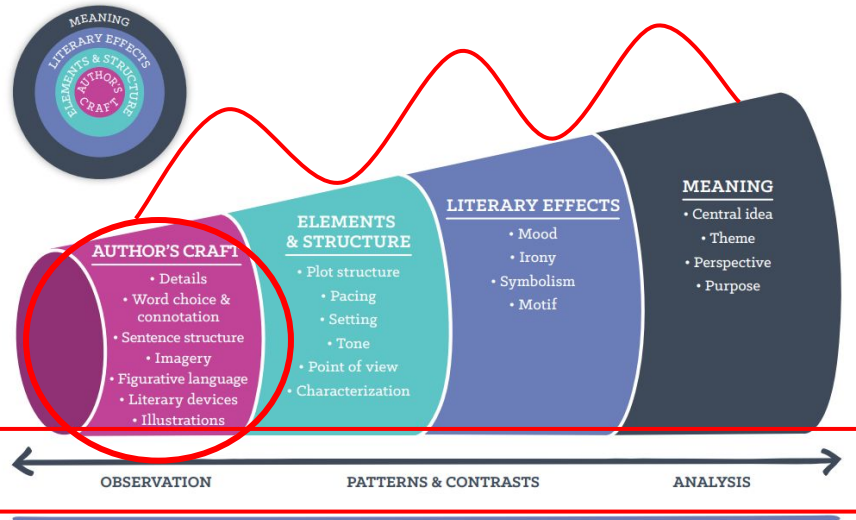
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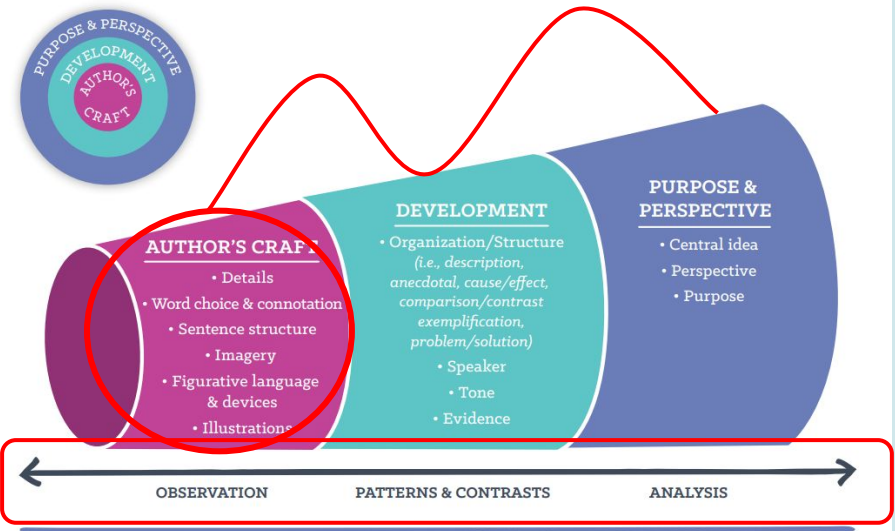
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# The Reader's Circles

# Question Categories: Key Ideas and Details

## Explicit Details:

Answer is explicitly in the text or paraphrased similarly.

- The passage states/indicates/reveals...
- According to the passage...
- The narrator/author states/describes/refers to...

## Inferences:

Answer is implied; not directly stated. If asked, the answer could be supported by evidence in the text.

- It can be reasonably inferred
- The passage most strongly suggests
- Based on the passage
- Which of the following is best supported

## Main Idea/Summary:

Answer is about a paragraph or passage as a whole; not specific details.

- The main point of the passage
- The main idea of the passage
- One theme of the passage
- Which of the following best summarizes/paraphrases lines x-x

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# KID Questions

When reading in class, have students regularly practice annotating texts for the skills KID questions will ask about main idea, theme, key details, etc.

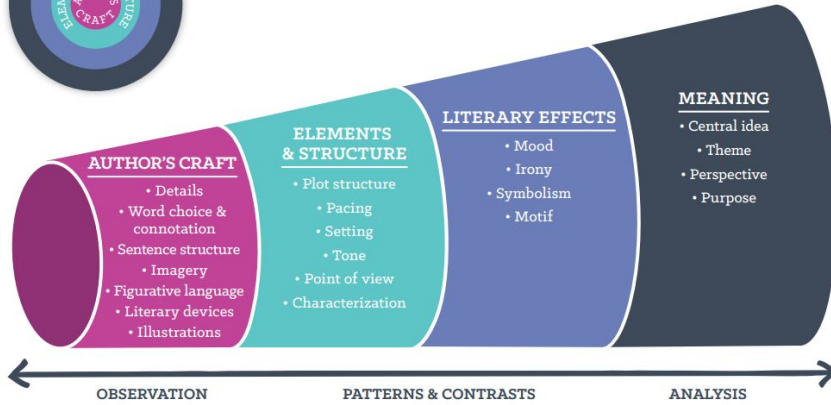
- Practice circling or underlining parts of the text that indicate main idea
- Making note of key details
- Identifying major claims in a text
- Writing short summary sentences at the end of paragraphs or sections of texts
- GIST statements
- Determining main ideas vs. supporting details
- Discuss sequence and chronology when necessary
- Draw conclusions from the text

17. It can most reasonably be inferred from the last paragraph that the nobles who traveled from Mantua to England took olive oil with them primarily to:
- A. trade for butter.
  - B. sell to the local chefs.
  - C. consume during their stay.
  - D. offer as a gift to their hosts.
18. The passage refers to which of the following as making fats dangerous?
- F. Hydrogenation
  - G. A gradual loosening of Rome's grip on food
  - H. Ever-present cold
  - J. Modifications in canon law
19. The passage indicates that northern Europeans' attitudes toward olive oil were shaped in part by:
- A. temperatures that fueled appetites for rich foods.
  - B. a climate that is not conducive to growing olives.
  - C. a growing belief that fatty foods are not healthy.
  - D. royalty who disdained olive oil.
20. According to the passage, one reason southern Europeans preferred olive oil to butter is that they viewed olive oil as:
- F. consistently cheaper.
  - G. easier to store.
  - H. milder tasting.
  - J. more natural.

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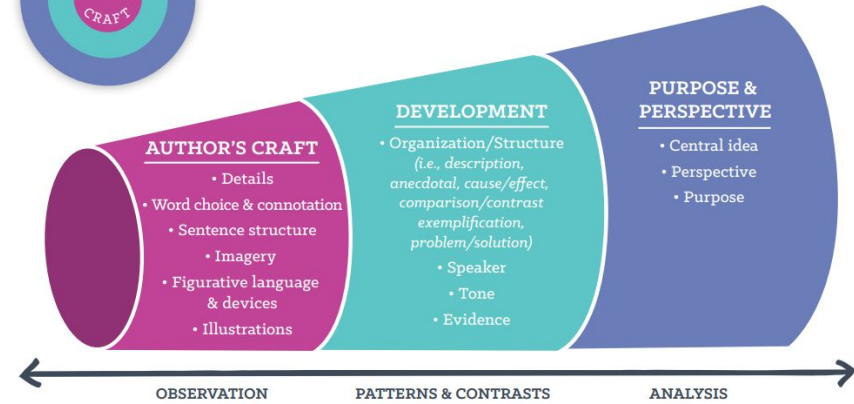


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# The Reader's Circles

# Question Categories: Craft and Structure

## Vocabulary:

Vocabulary in context; deciphering figurative language.

- As it is used in line X the word/phrase... most nearly means...

## Text Structure/Purpose & POV:

Overall text structure: functions of paragraphs, sentences, rhetorical devices, words, and phrases. Overall purpose of the text, POV in narrative texts, perspective & biases.

- The primary purpose of the passage...
- The author includes the quotation from...
- In the context of the passage, the main function of the 3rd paragraph is to

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# C&S Questions

Leverage the texts you're using in class to teach vocabulary in context strategies and how text structure impacts meaning.

- ➔ Teach explicit strategies for defining vocabulary in context when students encounter unfamiliar words.
- ➔ Utilize skimming, pre-reading, and discussion to analyze the structure of a text and how that contributes to the students' understanding of a text in class discussions.

Teach students about transitional phrases that may be key indicators of an author using text structure to make a point

- ◆ words or phrases indicating comparison or contrast
- ◆ words or phrases indicating a continuation of an idea
- ◆ words or phrases that indicate a conclusion
- ◆ words or phrases that indicate an example of a concept.

11. The passage as a whole can best be described as:

- A. an argument that olive oil is a better source of nutrition than is butter, as evidenced by the health of Europeans from France to southern Italy.
- B. an examination of where, when, and to what degree butter replaced olive oil as a prized ingredient in the European diet.
- C. an overview of the role religion has played in determining the diet of Europeans since the seventeenth century.
- D. a comparison of olive oil and other types of cooking oils in terms of their culinary merits and health benefits.

12. Which of the following words is used in the passage in a way that is more figurative than literal?

- F. Lamps (line 7)
- G. Seed (line 8)
- H. Mouths (line 31)
- J. Door (line 51)

13. Within the passage, the quotation in line 1 serves which of the following functions?

- I. It sets up a discussion of a historical food trend by starting with a related hyperbole.
- II. It establishes the passage's tone of sarcasm.
- III. It expresses the passage author's attitude toward the misuse of political power.

- A. I only
- B. I and II only
- C. II and III only
- D. I and III only

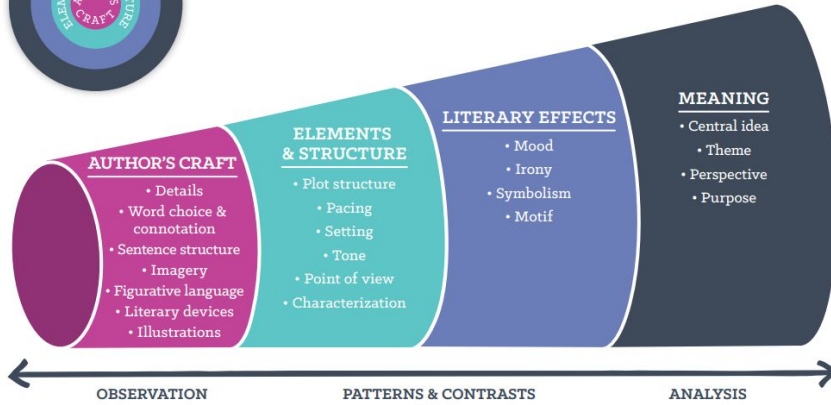
14. In the context of the passage, what is the significance of Hildegard of Bingen?

- F. She played a role in changing official church policy toward the consumption of butter.
- G. She advanced the popularity of olive oil by writing poems in praise of olives.
- H. Her mixed reaction to olive oil was typical of many northern Europeans of her time.
- J. Her recipes are typical of those that turned Europeans away from butter.

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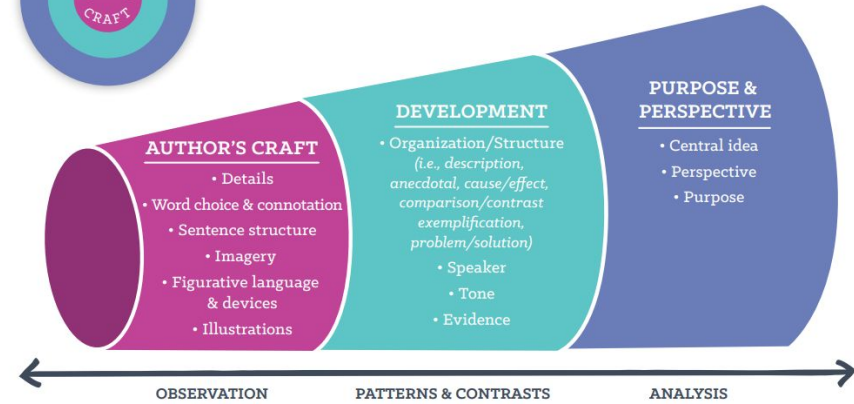


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# The Reader's Circles

# Question Categories: Integration of Ideas & Knowledge

## Synthesizing:

Paired passages items that ask about both passages.

- Questions specifically referring to both passage A and B

## Arguments:

Understanding claims made in a text.

- Analyzing/identifying evidence used to support claims

## Visual/Quantitative Information:

Determine the purpose of a graphic in relation to a text.

- Ask students to synthesize info in graphic with a passage
- According to the graphic vs. passage or passage and the graphic

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Questions 28–30 ask about both passages.

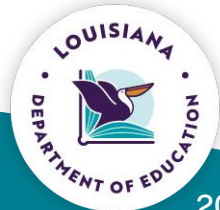
28. Both passages suggest that a key component of Peterson's musical talent is his:
- F. innovative, self-taught technique.
  - G. rigorous study of legendary jazz musicians.
  - H. perseverance in overcoming life's obstacles.
  - J. attainment of a recognizable personal sound.
29. Both passages most strongly suggest that Peterson viewed the piano as an instrument that:
- A. sounds best when accompanied by other instruments.
  - B. accommodates a range of different musical styles.
  - C. has a history of merging cultural traditions.
  - D. can be mastered without learning classical techniques.
30. Of the musical training experiences described in Passage A, which experience does Passage B seem to suggest Peterson considered important to require of his own students?
- F. Practicing for many hours a day
  - G. Taking lessons from a number of teachers
  - H. Listening to recordings of great jazz musicians
  - J. Studying the musical traditions of several nations

## IKI Questions

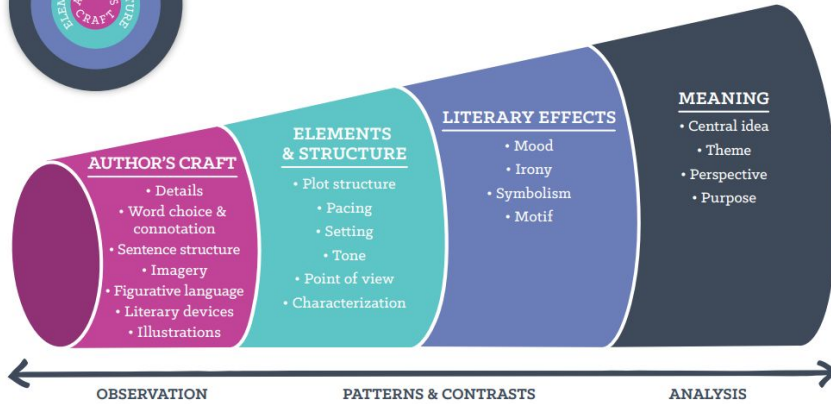
Use the texts you are reading in class to have students analyze the information presented to support inferences. This is often embedded within our curriculums, but explicit discussions about these types of questions that will show up on the ACT are important.

Utilize specific pages, paragraphs, or quotes to have students explain how they support an inference or to determine an inference that can be made from the text. This is a fantastic place to have students practice some speaking and listening skills, as well as writing claims, evidence, and reasoning.

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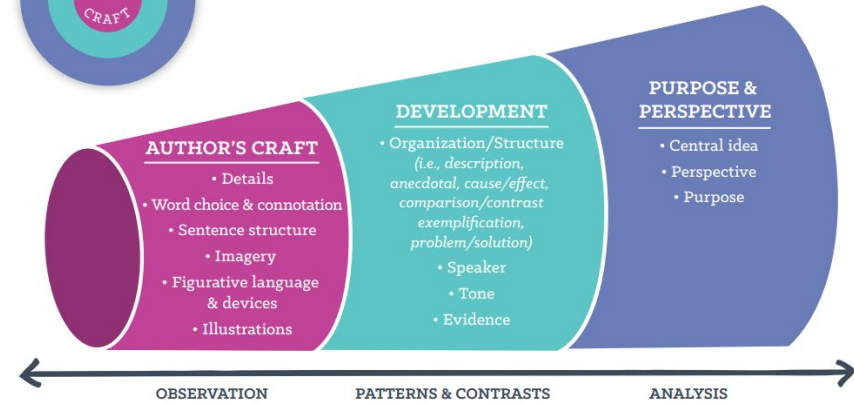


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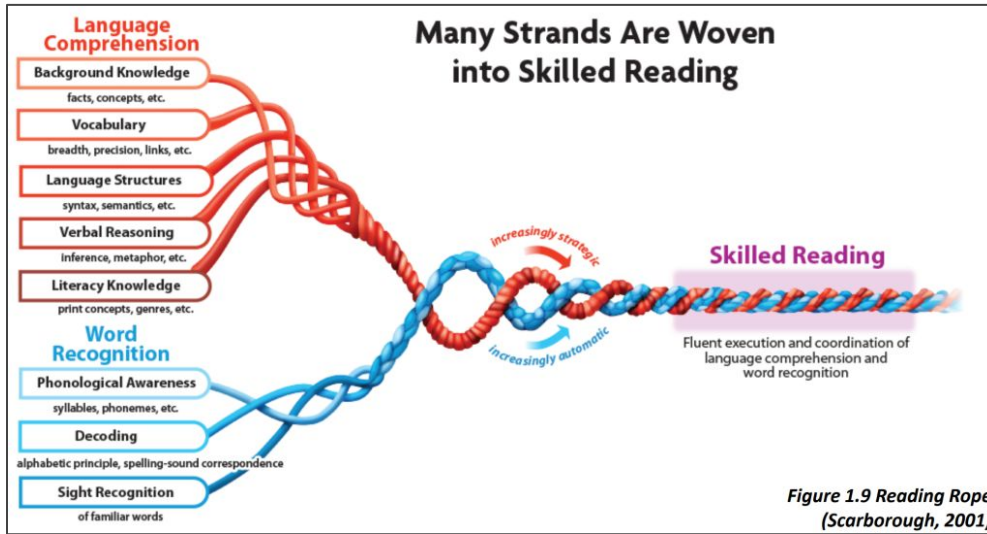
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# The Reader's Circles



There are clear connections between most strands of the Reading Rope and the skills needed to do well on the ACT.

- KID Questions: Lang. Structures, Verbal Reasoning, Literacy Knowledge
- C&S Questions: Vocabulary, Lang. Structure, Literacy Knowledge
- IKI Questions: Verbal Reasoning, Language Structures.

# Scarborough's Reading Rope Connection

# Looking Ahead

- ACT Series: Part 2 - Applying ACT Reading Skills to HQIM
- ACT Series: Part 3 - ACT English Test basics
- ACT Series: Part 4 - Application of ACT English Skills through HQIM
- All 4 parts will be housed as interactive courses on our new Canopy platform.

Questions regarding the content of this series can be directed to:

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