
**Critical Reading Strategies of First-Year Composition
Students: A Reading-Writing Connections Study**

**Master's Thesis in English
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by

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CSUN & Glendale Survey Demographics

<u>Freshman or 1st Year Composition</u>	(N = 691) <u>Beginning-of- Semester 2005</u>	(N = 534) <u>End-of- Semester 2005</u>
Full-time (4+ courses)	651 (94.2%)	483 (90.4%)
19 or younger	585 (84.7%)	418 (78.3%)
20 – 23 years old	88 (12.7%)	72 (13.5%)
Male	286 (41.4%)	226 (42.3%)
Female	387 (56.0%)	292 (54.7%)

Critical Reading Strategies of First-Year Composition Students: A Reading-Writing Connections Study

CSUN & Glendale Survey Demographics

	(N = 691) <u>Beginning-of-Semester 2005</u>	(N = 534) <u>End-of-Semester 2005</u>
English – 1 st /Native Language	374 (54.1%)	237 (44.4%)
English – 2 nd or 3 rd Language (ESL students)	308 (44.5%)	282 (52.8%)

Critical Reading Strategies of First-Year Composition Students: A Reading-Writing Connections Study

Examples – Two Types of Reading Strategies

Commonly Used K-12 Reading Strategies

Look for the **main idea** in the text

Summarize (identify the main idea and restate it in your own words)

Determine the **text's purpose**

Read, Review, and Recite the text

Draw on **prior knowledge**

Advanced Critical Reading Strategies

Determine/identify **counter-arguments**

Meta-cognition (conscious control & awareness of one's own learning)

Mine texts (examine the text's situation or context; examine the writer's choice in language & source selection; impose a structure based on informed guesses about content)

Critical Reading Strategies of First-Year Composition Students: A Reading-Writing Connections Study

10 Advanced Critical Reading Strategies

	<u>English/1st lang. New Use</u>	<u>ESL/2nd-3rd lang. New Use</u>
Compare and contrast related readings	-1.5%	10.9% ↑
Determine if text has a counter-argument	9.5% ↑	10.1% ↑
Mine texts	3.8% ↑	7.9% ↑
Symptomatic reading and analysis of texts	1.3% ↑	7.1% ↑
Preview the headnotes, introductory material, table of contents, and organization	-3.6%	7.1% ↑
Meta-cognition	-5.1%	6.9% ↑
Distinguish between old and new publications	1.0% ↑	5.6% ↑
Contextualize text	-2.4%	5.6% ↑
Draw inferences important to the meaning	-6.9%	4.6% ↑
Evaluate the text's argument	0.7% ↑	1.9% ↑

Critical Reading Strategies of First-Year Composition Students: A Reading-Writing Connections Study

Critical Reading Strategies & Instruction

CRS Instruction		(N=534) <u>End-of-Semester</u>
Did your professor or instructor devote any class time solely on the topic of critical reading strategies during this semester—in a specific class lesson?	Yes	396 (74.2)
	No	22 (4.1)
	Don't Know	1 (0.2)
	Don't Recall	100 (18.7)
	No Response	<u>15 (2.8)</u>
		<u>534 (100.)</u>

74.2% of student respondents received CRS instruction in the Spring 2005 semester

Critical Reading Strategies of First-Year Composition Students: A Reading-Writing Connections Study

Critical Reading Strategies & Instruction

Amount of Instruction	(N=534)	<u>End-of-Semester</u>
About how much time did your instructor spend on discussing critical reading strategies?	Brief Mention	19 (3.6)
	¼ class period	34 (6.4)
	½ class period	70 (13.1)
	1 class period	82 (15.4)
	2 class periods	55 (10.3)
	2+ class periods	132 (24.7)
	Not Applicable	106 (19.9)
	No Response	36 (6.7)
	<u>534 (100.)</u>	

50.4% of student respondents received 1-2+ class periods of CRS instruction

Critical Reading Strategies of First-Year Composition Students: A Reading-Writing Connections Study

Key Study Finding

		(N=534)
CRS – Better Writers?		<u>End-of-Semester</u>
Has learning critical reading strategies helped you become a better, more proficient writer?	Yes	305 (57.1)
	Somewhat	198 (37.1)
	No	11 (2.1)
	Not Applicable	7 (1.3)
	No Response	13 (2.4)
		<u>534 (100.)</u>

94.2% of student respondents believe that CRS have helped them become better, more proficient writers

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Key Study Finding

		(N=534)
		<u>End-of-Semester</u>
Would a five-week, 1-credit critical reading strategies class (that runs concurrently with the first part of a first-year college composition class) be beneficial to students?	Yes	226 (42.3)
	Maybe	225 (42.1)
	No	64 (12.0)
	No Response	19 (3.6)
		<u>534 (100.)</u>

84.4% of student respondents – split between “yes” and “maybe” on a 5-week, 1-credit CRS class

Only 12% of students think a CRS class would NOT be beneficial

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Key Study Finding

Pearson Statistical Correlation

		ESL	ComStrat	AdvStrat
ESL	Pearson Correlation	1	-.108**	-.124**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005	.001
	N	691	691	691
ComStrat	Pearson Correlation	-.108**	1	.735**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005		.000
	N	691	691	691
AdvStrat	Pearson Correlation	-.124**	.735**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	
	N	691	691	691

Critical Reading Strategies of First-Year Composition Students: A Reading-Writing Connections Study

Key Study Finding – CRS & Computer Experience

