"When I realized that in two different class periods I did not have a single ninth-grade student who could identify the vice president of the United States, I grasped how serious the lack of my students' reading depth had become."

Kelly Gallagher, *Readicide*

The world is an interesting place, with a lot of stuff happening in it. That stuff happens whether we know about it or not. The thing is, if we can collectively be more aware of what is happening, then we stand a better chance of shaping the world in ways that we like. Otherwise, we allow the world to shape us in ways that we sometimes won't like—or worse—simply because we don't know what's going on. The trick is in developing a personal habit of wanting to know what's happening, the good and the bad. That habit should start early and be built upon layers of experience.

1. **Close Read:** Read with a pencil/big/blighter in hand, and annotate the text.  
   Suggestion: Read the article through first, then annotate the second time around. At a glance, your copy of the article should look heavily marked. Up close, your comments and questions should seem sincere and thoughtful. This is the look and sound of "active reading."
   
   a. Annotating means underlining or highlighting key words and phrases—anything that strikes you as surprising or important, or that raises questions or confusions.
   
   b. Annotating includes writing your thoughts and reactions in the margins next to what you have highlighted or underlined. Random underlining or highlighting by itself is coloring, not close reading.
   
   c. Highlight or circle words you don't know, then look 'em up! Write down the definition in the margin next to the word. Many of these articles are written for a broad readership, with the author assuming that the reader has a decent working vocabulary. A wider vocabulary offers you greater access to the world.

2. **Purpose and Audience:** Write ONE sentence containing the author's purpose and intended audience.

3. **Summary Statement:** Write a ONE sentence summary statement for the article in which you include:
   - The author, title, and source.
   - A summary verb (see your verbs list).
   - The sentence completed with the main idea/main point of the article.
   - 25 words or less; the author/title/source counts as 1 word.
   - the number of words written and circled next to the summary statement

4. **Article of the Week Options List:** For some articles, I will pick a particular Option that I want you to take on. For other articles, you will be able to choose an Option from the list. Refer to your list for directions. Keep in mind that the Options are meant to open up a discussion, not restrict it. These are simply springboards to help you dive in deep.