

### Lifting a Line

*Developed by Sheridan Blau, Southcoast Writing Project*

This protocol is designed to support students in tackling tough texts more independently. The teacher's role is to monitor students' use of the protocol, supporting them through good questions instead of supplying "the" interpretation.

**Materials needed: 1 short text (up to one page) or a longer one that can be chunked.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Students read the text 2-3 times independently, underlining lines they have questions about. *If a longer text is used, the class can cycle through this protocol for each chunk OR stop to talk after each chunk, then write about a selected line (see next step) from the entire text.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Students are asked to pick a line that they think is important—more important than most of the other lines—and copy it at the top of a sheet of paper. They then are asked to write a paragraph about why they think it was most important line.

\_\_\_\_\_ In groups of 3-4, students share which lines they underlined/had questions about. Together they try to clear up problems they had with the text. Then they each read their important line and paragraph of explanation. Finally they note the similarities and differences in what they wrote, capturing these on a T-chart.

\_\_\_\_\_ Groups share their T-charts. The teacher encourages students to voice divergent opinions or disagreements. The class discusses these differences of opinions. *Is there textual evidence to support these ideas? If so, where?*

\_\_\_\_\_ To culminate the discussion, the teacher reflects and summarizes the ideas of the group rather than trying to provide a definitive interpretation.