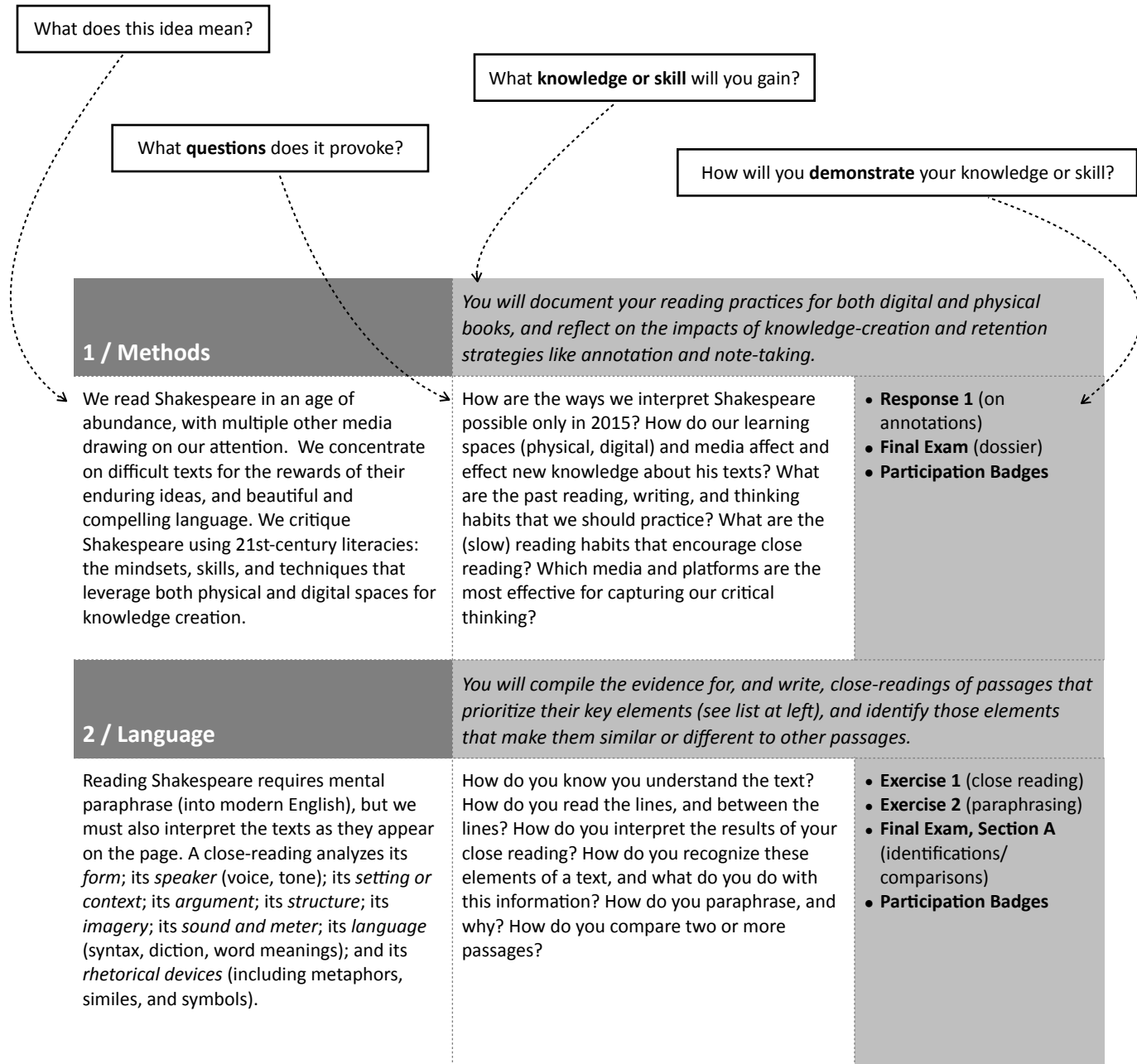


BIG IDEAS

These are the **seven big ideas** that we will uncover and explore in English 205. Each has four parts: a **definition**; a set of essential **questions**; an **outcome**, or the knowledge and skills you'll gain; and **assessments**, or the ways you'll be graded on that outcome.



3 / Performances	<i>You will analyze performances as a series of interpretive decisions, and critique a performance to illustrate its effect on your own interpretation.</i>	
<p>Whenever we read Shakespeare's plays on the page, we must imagine them in performance. They are stories unfolding in time, turning on the variable motives and knowledge of discrete characters. Every performance, good or bad, provokes new insights into a text's story and language.</p>	<p>How does Shakespeare arrange the action of a text? Where does he start and stop the narrative? How does your knowledge of a play's theatrical/interpersonal elements help you understand motives, and the unfolding narrative? How do productions and performances make interpretive decisions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response 2, Option A (review) or B (dramaturgical advice) • Participation Badges
4 / Questions	<i>You will formulate critical questions about Shakespeare's texts, and write multi-layered responses that provoke new questions.</i>	
<p>Ignorance is the beginning of wisdom. The best questions provoke multi-layered answers, which help us ask new and more complex questions. Our arguments in response to these questions must have a counter-argument. They must also be carefully structured.</p>	<p>What are the kinds of questions we ask of literary texts? How do we formulate them? How can we make logical and clear arguments? How should essays take a position rather than discuss a topic? What is the function of an introduction, a paragraph, a conclusion? How do you outline an argument? Will criticism ever be definitive?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response 2, Option C (exam questions) • Final Exam, Section B (essay) • Participation Badges
5 / Forms	<i>You will identify how Shakespeare's genres influence his plot- and character-level decisions, and how his modes influence elements of style like diction and tone.</i>	
<p>Shakespeare's plays adopt five main <i>genres</i> (tragedy, comedy, history, romance, and problem play) and a range of <i>modes</i> (pastoral, elegiac, lyric). His non-dramatic (lyric and narrative) poetry and his sonnets are in dialogue with his plays.</p>	<p>How do the conventions (genre, mode) of a text inform its internal elements/structure? How do they influence our expectations? Should they? How do the plays and poems reflect each other stylistically? thematically? in other ways?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 3 (on genres and modes) • Response 3, Option A (on sonnets and plays) • Final Exam, Section B (essay) • Participation Badges
6 / Origins	<i>You will demonstrate and explain the impact of Shakespeare's narrative sources and theatre context on his decisions.</i>	
<p>Shakespeare's theatre/audiences and publications/readers were very different from ours. He wrote in and for a specific culture, and adapted his sources and ideas to that culture. Our print and digital editions adapt the material forms (manuscripts, quartos, folios) of their own origins.</p>	<p>How did Shakespeare's material circumstances influence his writing? How did he adapt the sources of his plays and poems? How were his writings first performed and circulated? How do editions affect our readings of him today?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 2 • Response 3, Option B (on contexts/sources) • Participation Badges
7 / Evidence	<i>You will compile and interpret enough textual evidence to make rigorous, multi-dimensional arguments.</i>	
<p>A compelling argument is a resourceful argument: it uses textual evidence to make a nuanced and convincing case. It uses the right formats to quote and cite that evidence.</p>	<p>How do you know what you believe to be true? How do you gather evidence, and how much is enough? How are facts different from opinions? What are the correct ways to quote and cite Shakespeare's texts? How do interpretations construct knowledge?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses 1, 2, and 3 • Final Exam, Section A (identifications/comparisons) • Final Exam, Section B (essay) • Participation Badges