Guide to close reading using the Five-S Strategy

1. **Sentences**: Preview by reading the first sentence, last sentence, and skimming the text in between to determine the scope of the work. [Determines an overview to allow for effective pacing.]
2. **Speaker**: Look for number of speakers, narrator’s point-of-view. Unless otherwise directed, analyze from the speaker’s vantage point. Note anything that helps reveal the speaker’s attitude.
3. **Situation**: Discover what is happening. Be sure to examine the title (if given). For non-fiction, look for the rhetorical situation.
4. **Shifts**: Discover any major shifts in structure, diction, or syntax. Look for wording that evokes certain connotations and sudden changes in tone, sentence length, rhythm, punctuation, or patterns of imagery.
5. **Syntax**: Look for obvious concentrations of unusual or otherwise significant syntax. Determine their purpose. Note changes in sentence length, sentence order, use of punctuation, and typographical elements such as italics, sentence inversion that creates rhetorical questions, etc. This type of predominant syntax may guide the reader to the part of the text conveying the most meaning: the crux.