Guiding Students towards a Close Reading of a Short Story

Lesson Guidelines & Writing Prompts
What do you think are the most common conflicts that occur between men and women? Also explore how these conflicts are resolved and what tends to happen when they aren’t resolved.

You can make a list or chart, describe conflicts you’ve encountered personally, or write a short fictional piece related to the topic.
Small Group – Short Discussion  
(3 – 4 minutes)

• In your small group, share the large ideas, themes, or any epiphanies you developed in your Writer’s Notebook.
Reading and Writing Part 2
1st response to story (10 minutes)

• Silently read the short story by Raymond Carver.

• When you finish reading the story, write a personal reaction to it.
  ➢ What do you like or dislike about the story? Why?
  ➢ Compare this story to your initial response.
  ➢ Without looking back, what do you remember?
Triad verbal fluency (2 minutes):

• Form Groups of 3 – Decide who will speak 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2\textsuperscript{nd}, and 3\textsuperscript{rd}

• Each person takes 45 seconds to comment on or review the story.

• The person speaking is the only person talking; the other two group members should listen closely.
Whole Group – Read Aloud
(5 Minutes)

• Before continuing with your writing, we’re going to read the text aloud.
• If you have a highlighted copy of the story, you’re a reader 😊
• If you do not have an active role in the reading, pay attention to the sound of Carver’s writing. Also listen to the inflection and pauses readers use. If you were reading, how might you do this differently?
Reading & Writing Part 3
10 Minutes

• Read the story a 3rd time. As you read the story, keep track of one or more of the following:
  ➢ What do you notice? Make a list of details that stand out. These can be details that you find most interesting, strange.
  ➢ Write out a list of questions that you have about the story. These can be questions you would like to ask the author or ones that you would like to discuss with someone; you may also want to use some of Steve’s questioning techniques.

  ▪ In either case, develop a list of at least 10 items and include at least 5 passages copied from the text.
Small Group Discussion and Synthesis (20 minutes)

- Each person reads his/her list aloud.
- After everyone takes a turn, prioritize your observations: What are the 4 most interesting questions or observations identified by your group members?
- Write out these points in the left hand column of your butcher paper.
- In the right and column, explain why these items are the most important.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idea / Quote</th>
<th>Reason for selecting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“She would have it, this baby.”</td>
<td>This is the 4th time “it” is used in the story; before this pronoun was used to establish the mood; then it is used to refer to the photograph of the baby. It is normally refers to an object. Using it to refer to the baby makes the child sound like a thing instead of a person.</td>
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Whole Group – Report (10 minutes)

• Each small group will report their list and rationale to the whole group.
• If a group mentions a detail that is included on your chart, do not repeat it; you can either extend the idea mentioned (add to what has been said) or skip reading it off your list.
Small Group – Writing (10 minutes)

• In your small group, write a paragraph to support a claim that you can make about the story or a position you could take about the story. If you have room, write your response on the bottom of your butcher paper; if not, write it out on a separate sheet of paper.