

How to Annotate



Annotating a text is NOT simply underlining or highlighting important sentences. It means **MAKING NOTES** to yourself. The purpose is to help digest the information you are reading. One of the most common complaints about annotating is that it slows down the reading process. That is the point! Slow down so you can really process the information. By taking the time to underline, question, predict, etc, as you read, you understand the text on a much deeper level! If you

annotate texts as you read, you cannot help but pay attention to what you are reading. Also, it will be easier to find the important information if it is marked. Once you get in the habit of annotating, reading will become a much more **meaningful** and **memorable** experience.

Where should I start?

As you read, view the text as if it were a person talking to you. If you are confused, stop and write a question in the margins about what confuses you. If you passionately agree with a statement (or disagree), tell the author how you feel by writing your opinion next to the passage. Use the margins and white space to make your notes

What should I mark?

- **Characterization:** What are the characters key traits? How do you know this? As you read look for clues in the characters' actions, words, thoughts, and other details. Does the character grow and change? how? **MARK IT!** Highlight key quotes that identify characters.
- **Figurative Language:** Look for examples of imagery, simile, metaphor, personification, symbolism, allusion, hyperbole or any other type of figurative language you notice.
- **Setting:** What do you learn about the time, the place, the culture and the atmosphere?
- **Plot events:** Identify elements of including the (inciting force, rising, action, climax, falling action, resolution).
- **Make connections.** If there are words, phrases, or ideas that connect, draw an arrow to physically connect the two ideas. If a particular part reminds you of something, make note of it next to the passage
- **New Vocabulary:** Circle new words and define them.

It's often helpful to use symbols to mark each of these items; if you do, make a key that identifies your symbols, and use it as a bookmark or copy it into the front cover of your book!

Attached is an example of a well-annotated book.

