

## Annotating the Text

### *One Page Reference Guide*

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*Annotating a text as you read is key in the process of not only ensuring comprehension of the material, but also in interpreting the meaning of the work for close analysis.*

*Annotating is the process of:*

- carefully **reading** a creative work (it may be a piece of poetry, a short passage, or even an entire text)
- **highlighting** (with either a highlighter or underlining with a pen) any words or phrases that calls your attention (you will learn later how to get more and more proficient at recognizing literary clues) and making notations in the margin, which is annotation
- **making notations** (questions, comments, insights) in the margin directly as you read. If you read and then go back and annotate it later, you have missed the many *first impressions and thoughts and questions* you get when you are first presented with the work. Remember: literature is literature because of the imbedded meaning, and it was meant to be digested slowly
- to avoid summation, **think to yourself** before every notation “I think that...” or “I wonder why (or if...)?”

*Number the Paragraphs:*

- Like page numbers, paragraph numbers will act as reference so you can easily refer to specific sections of the text. Number the stanzas and/or lines of a poem.

*Circle Unfamiliar Vocabulary, Names of People and Places, and Dates, Key terms or ideas*

*What to Annotate:*

- Style (writing tools) such as figurative language; sound devices; imagery; diction; syntax; symbols; poetic devices;
- Predictions: What will happen next? What will this character do? What does the title mean?
- Character analysis and traits
- Recurring motifs, images, themes; any word or phrase that is repeated
- Connections to other works/themes; any allusion to a person, event, place, or piece of literature; personal connections
- Questions that help clarify the story for you. What is going on here? What does it mean?
- Commentary (your opinion of events/characters)