

Annotating Strategies

Annotating is a skill that is used by both students and teachers, used outside as well as within college classes. Knowing and using helpful annotating strategies can help you understand your text.

Marking the Text

- Marking your text will help you understanding the text. Make sure when starting to mark your text that you have already read the text you are marking. Think of the Acronym **READ** when you start marking the text.
 - **R**ecognize and number the paragraphs, which gives you a feel of the length of the text and allows you to identify any headings. Reading the headings in a text allows a quick understanding of what the section will be discussing.
 - **E**xplore: Underline or highlight key terms and important information, which helps you to understand the topic of each paragraph and grasp an understanding of what is important within sections.
 - **A**uthor's claims: Circle the author's claims, which helps you to see what the author is trying to explain or argue, allowing a larger understanding of the purpose of the text.
 - **D**raw a box around new or unfamiliar words, which allows these words to stand out. You can then ask questions in class later or you can search definitions on your own.
- Be careful not to highlight or underline too much, only significant information. Otherwise, you are merely changing the color of each page.

Write in the Margins

Another way to mark the text is writing in the margins. There are many different types of annotating styles you can take into consideration. For instance, creating images and drawing can also be a helpful way of writing in the margin if it helps you understand the text better. Furthermore, writing in the margins does not mean it needs to be written specifically on the sides of the text. It can be written anywhere that is beneficial for you. Consider the following questions when annotating your text:

- Visualize
 - How can I draw this concept or idea?
 - What visual and/or symbol best represents this idea?
- Summarize
 - How can I restate the idea in my own words?
 - Can I explain the key terms and/or ideas?
- Clarify
 - Can I define key terms?
 - Do I need to reread any section of the text?
 - How can I analyze or connect ideas within the text?

- Connect
 - How does this relate to me?
 - How does this idea relate to other ideas in the text?
 - How does this relate to the world?
- Respond
 - Can I identify the key arguments?
 - Do I agree or disagree with author's claims?
 - Does anything confuse me?
 - What are the facts, data, and other supporting details?
 - Is there anything worth quoting in my own written work?