

Core B: Guide to Annotating

Annotation can be understood as entering into a conversation with the literature you read. It involves critically thinking about and commenting upon the text. It forces you to **SLOW DOWN** and analyze the author's words as you read. Here are some helpful tips when annotating:

1. **Prepare Materials:** Gather your supplies such as **colored** pencils, highlighters, and post-it notes.
2. **Plan Your Time & Space:** Preview how many pages you need to annotate and plan your time accordingly. Annotating is a marathon, not a sprint. Plan on reading the text twice. First, read for overall meaning and impressions. The second time, read more carefully making note of important text features. For longer readings, you may need to take breaks or spread your annotating across multiple days. Finally, find a distraction-free location where you can remain focused.
3. **Annotate with Variety:** Use these guidelines to get you started, but do not be limited by them! As you become more comfortable with the process, your annotations will take on greater variety.
 - Title and Author: Write comments, questions, or other initial observations.
 - Define: unfamiliar words in the margins. Definitions should include both marking the word and writing the meaning.
 - Setting: note any elements such as time, place, climate, culture, etc.
 - Summarize: important ideas in your own words. Summaries may include what each chapter of a book contains or significant events in the story.
 - Plot Structure and Devices: see lists on next page.
 - Characters Traits/Development: Use descriptive adjectives to define characters (Ex: Mickey Mouse = cheerful) and trace character development that reveals additional information about each character.
 - New Characters: Underline new characters and make notes about their introduction.
 - Literary Devices: see list on next page.
 - Ask & Answer Questions: Remember, every question you ask must eventually be answered in your annotations. If you ask a question and do not later find an obvious answer from the text, ask for help or look up the answer and jot it down near your question.
 - Repetition: Note repeated words, phrases, objects, events, etc. Try to guess their significance.
 - Theme: Note the deeper messages that develop throughout the story.
 - Worldview: Infer or guess the author's beliefs.
 - Predict: note your best guess about where you think the story is headed next and why.
 - Personal Reactions: Comment on things that surprise, impress, intrigue, or disturb you. Then, make notes on what causes you to have this reaction.
 - Discussion Topics: Make note of topics you would like to consider during class discussions.
4. **Find Your Personal Style:** Avoid standard pencil and write neatly. Otherwise, how you mark in the book is up to you. You may like highlights, underlines, circles, brackets, or boxes. You may enjoy adding post-its. You may prefer a rainbow of colors or all one ink. Experiment and develop a marking system that's personal and easy and effective for you.

5. **Avoid** the following:

- Nonsense exclamations such as: Eww. Wow. Ha! LOL.
- Undefined vocabulary.
- Highlighting, bracketing, or underlining only. You must add a notation.
- Highlighting or underlining excessively. Remember, only call out the *important* parts of the text.
- Acronyms or abbreviations without explanation. Anyone should be able to pick up your book and reasonably understand your notes.
- Messy handwriting.
- Fulfilling only the minimum requirement.

The table below includes many of the different types of text features we'll be examining, discussing, and applying throughout the year. As we learn these concepts, you will be asked to begin adding these ideas to your annotations. Other than setting features, all of the terms below are defined on the Core B Literary Terms Index.

Characterization	Setting	Plot Structure
Protagonist	Clothing	Exposition
Antagonist	Colors	Rising Action
Anti-hero	Customs/beliefs/values	Climax
Foil	Furnishings	Falling Action
Stock	Indoor/outdoor	Resolution
Round	Lighting	Conflict
Flat	Season/weather/climate	Theme
Static	Sounds/smells	Point of View
Dynamic	Speech/dialect	
Character Traits	Time of day	
Character Development	Universal symbols	
Direct vs. Indirect Characterization		

Literary Devices		Plot Devices
Allegory	Onomatopoeia	Chekov's Gun
Alliteration	Oxymoron	Cliffhanger
Allusion	Paradox	Deus ex machina
Diction	Parallelism	Flashback
Hyperbole	Personification	Foreshadowing
Idiom	Repetition	Irony (3 kinds)
Imagery (6 senses)	Simile	Suspense
Juxtaposition	Symbol	Twist Ending
Metaphor	Tone	
Mood	Understatement	