

Annotation Basics

In classroom texts, you are required to complete **at least five annotations for each day of reading**. These annotations should be your critical responses to the content of the passages you are reading. They should show a **complete thought in reaction to something very specific in the text**. It should be written on a provided **post-it note** and placed next to the passage it is referencing. Remember, this is a way to document your interaction with the text and with the author of the text so that you think critically about the content and so that you will more easily be able to locate key passages when you are reviewing for essays or tests.

As you get more comfortable with annotations, you will start devising systems, symbols, and your own personal structure to annotations. Generally, your annotations will revolve around the basic focuses listed below. You should **practice a mix** of these annotation types to get the most out of your reading.

Summarize: paraphrase main points in the text

- In your own words, re-write authors' important ideas
- In your own words, paraphrase key moments

Infer: note ideas or message the author hints at but doesn't state directly in the text

- Note an author's hints in his or her presentation of the story (word choice, structure, figurative language) and the effects and conclusions you think the author wanted audiences to consider due to these hints
- Note repeated big ideas and topics and what the author includes about them to deduce messages the author was trying to tell readers
- Make a prediction based on a specific passage of text

Connect: note the relationship between a specific passage and something else in the text, your life, or the world.

- Make a connection to a different part of the book
- Make a connection to something else you've read or studied
- Make a connection to something from your life or that you've encountered in the real world

Question: write questions that come up while reading with the intent of trying to answer them as you continue the reading and as the text is discussed in class.

- Question motivations and choices of the characters
- Question motivations and choices of the author

These, of course, are basic guidelines. You may discover new types of annotations that help you remember the key information and ideas that you come across in your reading. That's fine as long as you show complete, critical thoughts about the material. Do be sure, as you invent your own, that you practice your SICQ skills as well.

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