Annotation

Why annotate? Reading actively increases retention, comprehension, and analytical skills. Reading actively is more than just hi-liting. Have a “**CONVERSATION”** with the text; be emotionally and intellectually **ENGAGED**. Practice the **strategies** below.

Literature texts

Core Standards: RL1, 2, 4, 5

1. Use colored pencils or hi-liters to mark different elements of the text, such as vocabulary, dialogue, repeated words, etc.
2. Look up and define new vocabulary words including both figurative and connotative meanings; mark what part of speech it is according to how it’s used in the sentence.
3. Mark descriptive “power words” that have a strong positive or negative connotation with a + or – sign; consider the impact of those word choices on tone and meaning (theme), including words with multiple meanings or language that is especially fresh, unusual, affective, or beautiful.
4. Add your own insights or impressions in the margins. “Talk” to the text.
5. Agree/disagree with the text and jot down why; don’t require a work to mirror your own attitudes & standards to be worthwhile. Jot down your experience or knowledge with other texts that contrast or compare with this text.
6. Identify passages that need clarification with a question mark, and predict events and outcomes as you read
7. Read poetry texts aloud to help you with pacing, phrasing and tone identification.
8. Consider why the author structures his/her story in a certain manner: the beginning/end, whether the resolution is comic/tragic, whether foreshadowing or flashbacks are used, the beginnings/ends of stanzas, chapters or other organizational segments, and so on.
9. Determine two or more themes or central ideas and plot their development and interaction throughout the text.
10. Be open to the author’s purpose and to new responses or perspectives in yourself. Approach a disturbing text as an opportunity to refine and articulate your own ideas and to see what the strengths and weaknesses are. Good literature should challenge you.

Informational texts:

Core Standards: RI 1, 2, 4, 6, 8

1. Use colored pencils for hi-liters to mark different elements of the text, such as purple for statistics, yellow for quotes from experts in the field, or orange for key arguments in a rhetorical text.
2. Hi-lite topic sentences in each paragraph of an information text to plot main ideas/key points.
3. Hi-lite any new vocabulary terms and their definitions, especially any technical vocabulary.
4. Line-out any information that is superfluous or redundant.
5. Circle names, dates, and “numbers” that summarize information or analyze data.
6. Always read the infographics (like bar charts with text) and sidebar texts for clarifications, additional information, or summary information.
7. Mark “power words,” figurative and/or literal, that have a strong positive or negative connotation with a + or – sign
8. Add your own insights, opinions, questions or impressions in the margins.
9. Agree or disagree with the text and jot down why; jot down your experience or knowledge with other texts that contradict or agree with the text.
10. Mark key arguments and the evidence to support them in rhetorical texts; “rate” each argument 1-5 for effectiveness according to your opinion or “rank” each argument 1-5+ for effectiveness, #1 being the strongest argument.
11. Identify passages that need clarification with a question mark.
12. Make “relevance” notes about how this text applies to you personally and to your community, nation, and/or world.