

Annotating Your Texts

Annotating texts means marking them in a way that isolates key information. It makes what you read your own. It takes time and intention, but that's well-invested when those texts become resources you can more easily rely on when studying exams, preparing projects and writing papers.

Benefits of Annotating

- Isolate and organize material
- Monitor your learning
- Streamline exam prep
- Make personal connections
- Increase engagement in material
- Provide a record of reading and responses
- Prepare to enter in scholarly conversations

What Annotating Could Look Like

Double-underline compelling passages and note how you could use them.



Marginalia: writing in the margins

Definitions of words you looked up
Summaries in your own words
Questions that arose
Connections to you, other texts and the world

Highlighting

Draw a block around dense, complicated passages and then, on a separate sheet of paper, paraphrase them until you could teach them to someone else.

Circle important words.

Add a synonym or 2-3 word explanation in the margin.

!* Mark new and/or big ideas.

Summarize the idea in 2-3 words within the margin.

Draw arrows to show related ideas.

Label the connection in 2-3 words noted in the margin.

Number 1. steps
 2. lists
 3. details

Note in 2-3 words what all the numbers represent.

LOL Mark humorous ideas.

? Jot questions and confusions in the margin.

+ Identify additional information learned about a previously-mentioned idea.

↔ Mark ideas/opinions that contradict what was previously read or learned.

Summarize the alternative viewpoint within the margin.

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