Annotating Text with a Purpose

Annotating text well requires that you think critically and read actively rather than passively. Annotating a piece of text (either an article, a novel, a textbook, etc.), ensures you will remember more of the material, stay more engaged with the reading, and most importantly, eliminate rereading due to lack of understanding the first time.

Procedures
- ❖ Define the **purpose** for annotation based on learning target(s) and goals. Some examples include:
  - ➢ Analyzing the validity of an argument or counter-argument
  - ➢ Locating evidence in support of a claim
  - ➢ Identifying main idea and supporting details
  - ➢ Determining author's purpose
  - ➢ Giving an opinion, reacting, or reflecting
  - ➢ Identifying character traits/motivations
  - ➢ Summarizing and synthesizing
  - ➢ Basic Comprehension and Recall
  - ➢ Making connections
  - ➢ Making predictions

Strategies – Techniques
- ❖ Start at the beginning . . .
  - ➢ Analyze the title, the author (for credibility) AND the date for reliability
    - ▪ Make comments regarding each of these
    - ▪ Consider turning the title into your guiding question
  - ➢ Analyze the structure of the text
    - ♦ How does the author structure the piece? How and why are these significant? What purpose do the structural choices serve?
      - ➢ Titles? Subtitles? Bold Headings? Bold/Italicized Vocabulary?
      - ➢ Abstracts? Summaries? Conclusions?
      - ➢ Graphics? Tables? Figures? Images?
- ❖ Create strategies that work for you and honestly help with your understanding of the main body of text.
  - ➢ Being "Highlighter Happy" as you read only creates a "pretty pink page" for you to reread.
    - ▪ **Highlight – subject/verb/object of sentences only!**
    - ▪ **Do NOT highlight numerous sentences.** If you feel as if a chunk of text is important ***BOX it and summarize in margin*** so you don't have to reread entire chunk later.
    - ▪ **Write in the margins!**
      - o Make critical comments rather than "LOL"; "that's cool"; "I can relate to that"; "That relates to "The Great Gatsby"; "Sounds like Trump's speech last week". **This is wasted time as it won't transfer to your purpose.**

- o **Your comments need to serve a purpose . . . your purpose for reading.**
  - "author's claim"; "supporting detail"; "concession/refutation"; "ethos, pathos, logos, - purpose"; "author's message"; etc.
  - **details you can use for your purpose**
- o Don't just underline, write question marks, asterisks, etc. Annotate the text as you also mark it.
  - Write the questions you have and seek answers as you read.
  - When you find the answer to a question, label it as such.
  - Important facts, data, details, evidence, etc. (label them as such)
  - Author's crafting choices and why (rhetorical devices that used for ethos, pathos, logos and the impact on audience)
- ❖ Develop a personalized marking and abbreviation system that matches your PURPOSE for reading. Example below is for **ARGUMENTATIVE PURPOSES ONLY!**

Symbol	Purpose – To analyze author's argument and find supporting evidence for my paper!
A/C	Author's claim
C/R	Concession/Refutation
??	Confusing and needs clarification
ANS	Answer to question
‼	Main idea/Theme/Author's purpose
☺	Evidence/Support for YOUR claim
#	Author's craft to mimic (i.e. repetition, allusion, syntax, etc.)

Don't just finish . . . End with a purpose
- ❖ Write a summary of main points at the end of the reading.
  - ➢ If reading for author's purpose, write the purpose at the end of the reading.
  - ➢ If reading for support for your own writing, summarize selections, why you chose them and how you might use them.
  - ➢ If reading for testing purposes, summarize key points and/or ideas.