

Active Reading and Annotation Methods

Here are some ways you can show that you are engaging with the text. Do not rely on highlighting only. Remember to show me that you are thinking about the text.

1. Highlight key information, including vocabulary you don't understand, significant quotes, or anything that makes you wonder. Close reading means that you are thinking while reading. Have a conversation with the text. Talk back to it.
2. While you read, use your pencil to make notes in the margins about key material. You can use punctuation marks such as stars, arrows, question marks, check marks, and brackets to mark the text that you may want to come back to. You should come up with your own unique system to mark what you think is important or questionable. You should comment on things that you think are significant, powerful, meaningful – things you agree/disagree with in the text.
3. At the end of each chapter, summarize the main ideas/events in the chapter in one or two sentences. Make note of where plot events occur (exposition to rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, conclusion).
4. Use the inside front cover of the book to keep a list of important information with page number references in the book. Some examples of what you could list here are themes, text that connects to the book's title, important names of characters & character development, memorable quotes, or key questions you may have about the text. Consider literary elements such as symbolism, mood, tone, setting, etc. If you don't own the book, do this on a separate piece of paper.
5. Use the inside back cover to make a list of key vocabulary words and definitions from the text. (At least one per chapter)