

## Why Annotate?

Annotation is an active reading strategy that involves marking up and interacting with your course materials. It goes beyond passive consumption and transforms you into an active participant in the learning process. By annotating, you:

- **Enhance comprehension:** Annotation helps you identify key concepts, track arguments, and make connections within the text.
- **Improve recall:** The act of marking and interacting with the text strengthens your memory and facilitates retrieval of information later on.
- **Engage critically:** Annotation encourages you to question, analyze, and evaluate the author's ideas, fostering a deeper level of engagement with the material.
- **Prepare for discussion and assignments:** Your annotations serve as a valuable study tool, aiding in class discussions, essay writing, and exam preparation.

## Annotation Strategies:

- **Highlighting:** Use different colors to highlight key terms, definitions, main ideas, supporting details, or examples.
- **Underlining:** Underline important sentences or phrases that capture the essence of a paragraph or section.
- **Marginal notes:** Jot down questions, comments, connections to other readings, or personal reflections in the margins.
- **Symbols and codes:** Develop a system of symbols or codes to mark recurring themes, arguments, or literary devices.
- **Summarizing:** Write brief summaries at the end of each chapter or section to consolidate your understanding.

## Tips for Effective Annotation:

- **Read with a purpose:** Before you start annotating, consider what you hope to gain from the reading and tailor your annotations accordingly.
- **Be selective:** Avoid highlighting or underlining excessive amounts of text. Focus on the most significant passages and ideas.
- **Use your own words:** Paraphrase complex ideas or summarize key points in your own words to solidify understanding.
- **Connect and question:** Draw connections between different parts of the text or other readings. Ask questions to clarify points or challenge assumptions.
- **Review your annotations:** Periodically revisit your annotations to refresh your memory and deepen your understanding.

**Remember:**

- There is no single "right" way to annotate. Experiment with different strategies and find what works best for you.
- The quality of your annotations is more important than the quantity. Focus on capturing the essence of the text and your own critical engagement with it.
- Annotation is a personal process. Feel free to express your thoughts, questions, and reactions in your own unique way.

**Annotation Examples:**

- [UNC - The Learning Center - A Guide to Annotating](#)
- [EWU - Writers' Center - What is Annotating and Why do it?](#)

**By actively annotating your readings, you'll transform your learning experience and cultivate a deeper understanding of the course material.**