

How to Annotate (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muZcJXlfCWs>)

Published by Studyign – September 27, 2016

00:01 [Introductory Music as Studyign Logo Appears]

00:07 Young Female Speaker: [Excited] Hey guys! Ever since I mentioned it in a previous video, [Faint Background Music Begins] a ton of you wanted to know how I annotate books.

00:13 I am currently enrolled in AP English Literature, and for that class I have to read a ton of books and we've already gone through three separate novels, so I've kind of had time to fine tune my system and see what really works for me while I annotate.

00:29 For those who don't know, annotating is just when you're reading a novel or an article or any short story, or anything like that and you're just adding in your own comments and notes in the margins of that text – It's just supposed to sort of enhance the experience as you read.

00:47 If your teacher has a specific system, or guidelines that they want you to follow for annotating, definitely make sure you follow those first. My English teacher doesn't really have a specific system that we should follow she just wants us to annotate, period.

01:03 Annotating is a great way to actively read and it really helps you avoid passively staring at a novel as you read passed each page, and you don't absorb as much as you would if you did annotate, just because annotating really opens up a conversation with the text. You're able to comment, jot down all of your thoughts, ideas, keep track of themes – really anything you choose to do as you read, and it's just a better way to read, especially for a literature heavy class.

01:30 So, when I first started annotating The Secret History, which was the first book I was assigned to annotate, I decided try to use another person's system – because I just really didn't know where to start at all – and I made these two little flip outs using scrapbook paper and Washi Tape, just to remind myself of what I was looking for just to get used to it, and so I decided that for the left margins I would use those for comments, questions, arguments, and connections, and the right margins to summarize any interesting things, quotable phrases, adding like diction, syntax, figurative language – things like that – and I also wrote down any themes I wanted to keep track of as well. And for the inside cover at the front I also decided to put in a bunch of sticky notes of like vocabulary words I wanted to look up, uh, major plot points, when characters were introduced, and things like that. I found this system worked pretty well for me, but it was very, very, um, detail-oriented, and took a lot of time to complete efficiently, and so I decided to try to simplify my system the next time I read a book.

02:38 For the next book I read – which was The Kite Runner – I decided to really solidify my color coding system with my highlighters: So Pink stands for literary devices or figurative language, Yellow stands for plot points, Green stands for character development, and Blue stands for thematic ideas, motifs, and symbols.

02:58 In these longer novels I found it was really, really useful to add a little summary of the plot for each chapter, and also writing a little dialectical – just a couple sentences about certain literary devices that stuck out to me during each chapter – because I think that really helped me keep track of the development of certain themes throughout the book, and that became really, really useful for class discussions and Socratic Seminars that we'd have later on.

03:26 I think that annotating has really shown me how much I can get out of reading literature because I just write down like my thoughts as I read, whether it's just like [elevated voice] a smiley face, or, you know, just a direct reaction to something that happened in the book, or even just like commenting on a certain theme, or a thing that I find reoccurring throughout the novel, and I found that I just got more out of the book than I would if I didn't annotate, so I would definitely recommend trying to annotate literature even if you aren't required to do so.

03:58 [Elevated Voice] If you like this video please give it a thumbs up! Subscribe to my YouTube channel because I post videos every Wednesday and Sunday! You can add me on Snapchat and follow me on Instagram and my Tumblr account. [Elevated Voice] Bye Guys!

04:12 [Music Ends]