

Annotating Text in the Social Studies Classroom

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World History

Annotations: An Overview

“Good Reading Makes Good Writing”

- **Annotate: taking notes as you read**
- **There’s no “right” way**
- **General principles for good annotating to keep in mind**
 - **Write notes about the text in the margins**
 - **Annotating is not just summarizing. Ask questions and write comments**
 - **Taking time as you read will save you time and anxiety later as you discuss & write about the text**

Previewing: Before You Annotate

- **Look at the title**
 - Usually includes author's subject or method
- **Who is the author?**
 - What you already know helps you guess something about the writing
 - If biographical sketch is provided, read it
- **In what was it published?**
 - Would you be more likely to believe “Living Mermaids: An Amazing Discovery” if it were published in *Scientific American* or *The National Enquirer*?
 - Indicates for whom it was written
- **When was it published?**
 - If it's about mermaids, will you find it more reliable if written in 1988 or 1788?

During Reading:

What does “annotation” look like?

1. Number the paragraphs
2. **Circle** academic vocabulary (history words)
 - ✓ These are words you must know to understand the article.
 - ✓ Label with “AV”. Only circle/label the word one time.
3. **Circle** words you don’t know.
 - Try to determine meaning from the context.
 - If you still don’t understand it, LOOK IT UP.
 - Write a synonym or short definition close to the word.
 - A strong vocabulary comes from *reading*, not from memorizing lists.
4. **Highlight** the main idea of each paragraph. ONE sentence.
5. Underline author’s purpose or author’s point of view whenever you see it.
6. Make notes in the margin – summaries, comments, opinions, predictions, connections, questions, reflections, reactions, patterns, literary devices, etc.

Helpful Tips

- ❑ **Read with a pen or pencil in hand.**
 - ✓ Helps you focus and stay alert.
- ❑ **Look for patterns**
 - ✓ What ideas do you see repeated?
 - ✓ What connections can you draw between different concepts?
- ❑ **Have a CONVERSATION with the text. Talk back to it.**
 - ✓ Take your time as you begin a new text.
 - ✓ Ask yourself questions as you begin:
 - Are there any fallacies in the text?
 - How does this relate to your everyday experience?
 - What formula will help me solve this problem?
 - ✓ Try to make a quick note on the top of each page indicating the most important point there.
 - ✓ Ask questions (essential to active reading).
 - Use question marks.
 - Be alert to what puzzles you.
 - Good readers do not zip along without stopping to monitor their comprehension. They stop to think and to note what they don't understand.
 - Write down questions you would like to discuss.
 - ✓ Your annotations must include comments as evidence of thinking.

After Reading:

(You may do these while reading, too)

- Take Notes in the Cornell Style
 - ✓ left side: paragraph # (or topic heading if it's a big article with multiple pages)
 - ✓ right side: author's purpose
(Why did the author write that paragraph? What does he/she want you to know or think?)
 - ✓ Summary at the end: complete summary of article, at least 4-5 sentences.
 - ✓ Annotated Bibliography: 2-3 sentence summary of article, what you learned, and why it is important. Try not to be too general.

After Reading continued

- Reread annotations—draw conclusions
 - Reread introduction and conclusion—try to figure out something new
 - Examine patterns/repetitions—determine possible meanings
 - Determine what the title might mean
- **Use this info in your Cornell Notes**

World History F.Y.I.

For longer articles, organize notes by sub-topics

Numbers: Roman and Arabic Numerals

Author's purpose: 1-3 sentences
You may include your opinion

Primary and Secondary Sources

Author's purpose: 1-3 sentences
You may include your opinion

For shorter articles with no sub-topics, organize by paragraph #

Paragraph #1

Author's purpose: 1-3 sentences
You may include your opinion

Paragraph #2

Author's purpose: 1-3 sentences
You may include your opinion

Summary: 4-6 sentences explaining what the article (start to finish) was about. Break the article down to one solid paragraph. Summary ONLY, not your opinion of the article.

Summary and AB go at the END, after all the notes.

Annotated Bibliography: 2-3 sentences. Identify what type of source it is, provide a quick summary, and explain what you learned or understand better now, how it was helpful, why it is important. You may provide your opinion here.