

1. What is annotating?

- a. A summary of a text you write in your own words
- b. Helps you see patterns, notice important words, identify main points
- c. Active strategy to improve comprehension and retention when reading

2. Why?

- a. Find, record, and organize important material
- b. Identify key concepts
- c. Helps check your own learning as you go
- d. Provide yourself with easy-to-understand review materials for tests/quizzes
- e. Generally, it's more efficient than writing a different set of notes

3. How?

- a. Take key points – summarize them in your own words
 - i. Use headings and words in bold to guide you
 - ii. Main ideas, arguments, and points of evidence are your goal
 - iii. Notice how the text is organized – Chronologically? Idea trees? Processes? Big ideas to little ones?
- b. Circle key concepts and phrases
 - i. What words would it be helpful to look up at the end?
 - ii. What terms show up in lectures and readings?
 - iii. What are different words used for similar concepts?
- c. Write brief comments and questions in the margins
 - i. Be as specific or broad as you would like - use these questions to activate your thinking about the content
 - ii. See *Comprehension Tips* for some examples of questions
- d. Use abbreviations and symbols to keep notes short
 - i. Try ? when you have a question or something you need to explore further – also useful for tutoring sessions
 - ii. Try ! when something is interesting, a connection, or otherwise worthy of note
 - iii. Try * for anything that you might use as an example or evidence when you use this information
 - iv. Try → for this lead to that or this is connected to that, ↑ for increase, ↓ for decrease
 - v. Try / for when two ideas are connected or closely related
 - vi. Ask yourself what other symbols make sense to you
- e. Highlight/underline
 - i. Highlight or underline, but mindfully. Check out the *Strategic Highlighting* handout for tips on when and how to highlight

4. What are the most important takeaways?

- a. It's about increasing your engagement with the text making you an active reader
- b. This is how you achieve mastery and true understanding
- c. As you annotate, ask: how would I explain this to a friend?
- d. Put things in your own words and draw connections to what you know and wonder