

HOW TO ANNOTATE

What Not to Do

1. Don't use a fat-tipped highlighter to highlight large amounts of text. You need to write notes about what you read. If you need color, use some color pens.
2. Don't mark large volumes of text; you want important points to stand out. You should only be highlighting about 20% of the text.
3. Don't mark the obvious. Don't waste time marking things you already know.

What to Do

1. Mark the text with pen, pencil, or colored pens.
2. Underline the topic sentence in a passage, then it will be easier to find the supporting evidence and explanations.
3. Use codes. For example, use question marks for places of disagreement, exclamation points for agreement or a strong statement, triangles to indicate a change in thinking, a star for the topic sentence.
4. Write the passage topic in the margin
5. Write questions in the margins. When you don't understand something, write the question in the margin, so you can remember to come back to answer it.
6. Circle new and unfamiliar words; look them up as soon as possible.
7. Add your or other author's perspectives in the margins. Do they agree or disagree?
8. Add cross-reference notes
9. Draw arrows to related ideas
10. Summarize. Add your own summary after the last paragraph. It will help clarify your thinking about the subject.