**Rationales for Annotation:**

* Reading is thinking. Demonstrate your thinking though aesthetic and efferent reading via annotation evidence.
* Annotating is a core, preferred practice for making meaning from text.

**Description of Annotation:**

**Methods of Annotation:**

* At the top of the page or on a post-it, react to the text. You can draw arrows, use emojis, or write a couplet—whatever works. You just need to react to the literature.
* Be sure to figure out any unfamiliar words through context or by using a dictionary. Circle the unfamiliar word and write the definitions in the text for yourself.
* Highlight key evidence for themes and motifs. Use the key you will create in the back of the text.
* Draw a zig-zag under allusions and make notes in the side margins as to what they mean.
* Underline symbols, and note your ideas in the text as to what abstract ideas or concepts these tangible objects may represent.
* Create a list of possible themes, then pick three to five (yes, five will get you a better grade) of the most important thematic statements that your book addresses. Write those themes on an inside cover and create a key with different colored highlighters AND find supporting evidence from the text to support your ideas. Mark those supporting passages with post-its.
  + Example themes:

1. A just individual has obligations toward society.
2. A just society has obligations it owes to an individual.
3. Society must contend with the dichotomies presented by freedom and equality.
4. An individual can experience redemption through \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The accumulation of money and power leads to a loss of spirituality.

**Format of Text Annotation:**

For the sake of standardization of annotating for class and for grading purposes, your book notes should follow this format:

* *Inside Front Cover* Character list with small space for character summary and for page references for key scenes, moments of character development, etc.
* *Inside Back Cover* Themes/Motifs Key.
  + *Allusion* tally. Try to categorize types of allusions (classical, pop culture, biblical, etc)
* *Chapter Beginnings* a summary of the chapter and its importance in the plot of the text. Include any major conflicts.
* *Bottom and Side Page Margins* Interpretive notes, questions, and / or remarks that refer to meaning of the page. Markings or notes to tie in with information on the inside back cover.
* *Top Margins* Reader reactions to the characters, plot, structure, etc. You can ask questions, use emojis, draw, etc. You should have one reaction for every four pages.
* *Additional Markings*
  + *Highlight* Highlight evidence of themes and/or motifs. Use the key in the back cover.
  + *Underline* Underline allusions so that you can locate them. Try to determine why the author is alluding to that particular thing or person.
  + *Zig-Zag* Zig-zag any element of diction or syntax that sticks out.

**Final Considerations:** The most common complaint about annotating is that it slows down your reading. Yes, it does. That’s the point. If annotating as you read annoys you, read a chapter, then go back and annotate. Reading a text a second time is preferable anyway.

Approach the works with an open mind. Let the literature inspire you and stretch your imagination.

If you find annotating while you read to be annoying and awkward, do it after you read. Go back after a chapter or assignment and then mark it carefully. You should be reading assignments twice anyway, so this isn’t any less efficient than marking as you read and then rereading the material.

**Note: All marginalia (comments in the margin) may be written on Post-It Note squares placed on appropriate pages in lieu of writing on the text itself.**

**“Memory is the residue of thought.” Daniel T. Willingham**

**Annotation Rubric**

**A**

* Text is marked throughout.
* Words and phrases are marked, and commentary and notations appear in the margins that indicate a response to the words and phrases marked.
* Marginalia (comments in the margin) reflect application of literary terms, questioning, summarizing, and analysis.
* Annotations accurately identify purpose and themes of the work.
* Reader has identified unfamiliar vocabulary and attempted to define those words.

**B**

* Text is marked throughout.
* Longer passages (entire sentences/entire paragraphs) are the primary element annotated.
* Commentary and notations in margins appear less frequently or do not respond directly to the passage annotated. Marginalia may be primarily summary or paraphrased statement with some attempt at analysis.
* Annotations may not accurately identify purpose or themes of text.
* Reader may have identified unfamiliar vocabulary but did not attempt to define the words.

**C**

* Text is not consistently marked throughout.
* Random passages appear to be marked; passages selected often have no real significance.
* Annotated passages may be very long or very short.
* Annotations include little/no marginalia or marginalia that is characterized by plot level questions or simplistic summary.
* Annotations include little/no attempt to identify themes/purpose of text.
* Annotations include little/no recognition of unfamiliar vocabulary.
* Annotations do not reflect careful reading of the text; annotations do not reflect interaction between the reader and the text.

**F**

1. Annotated text is grossly subpar.