

**Annotating** goes beyond underlining, highlighting, or drawing symbols in a text. Annotation includes adding **purposeful notes**, **key words and phrases**, **definitions**, and **connections** tied to specific sections of text.









If you have purchased your own copy of a text, you can annotate right on the printed pages. The chart to the right provides one example of how some people like to annotate text. **Truth is, annotation is a very personal system of note taking, and you can annotate in any way that makes sense to you!**

#### MODIFICATIONS:

**POST-ITS** If you are using a library book or a borrowed text, you might choose to annotate with post-it notes. Remember to write down the page numbers on your post its and remove them before you give back the book, then, keep your post-its in a safe place so you can refer to your notes whenever you need to.

**DIGITAL** If you are using an eReader such as a Kindle, you can actually take notes right in the program. [Check out this web resource](#) for more instructions on annotating with a Kindle eReader. If you're using another eReader, check your user manual for more information.



-  **Circle** powerful words or phrases
-  **Underline** words or phrases you do not understand
-  **?** Raises a question
-  **!** Something that surprises you
-  **→** Draw an arrow when you make a connection to text, ideas, or experiences
-  **EX** When author provides example
-  **1, 2, 3,...** Numerate arguments, important ideas, or key details
-  **Write important thoughts in the margin**

*Write question in margin*  
*Note what caught your attention*

*Write words or phrases that restates them*

SCENE VII. Macbeth's castle.

Hautboys and torches. Enter a Sewer, and divers Servants with dishes and service, and pass over the stage. Then enter MACBETH

MACBETH

business (the killing)

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well

he would rather do it quickly

It were done quickly: if the assassination

Could trammel up the consequence

he hopes there will be no consequences

and catch With his surcease success; that but this blow

Might be the be-all and the end-all here,

But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,

We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases

there are still consequences that a murderer has to live with. committing a murder only teach others to kill, which eventually comes back to the teacher.

We still have judgment here; that we but teach

Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return

To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice

Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice

To our own lips. He's here in double trust; King

trusts him in 2 ways.

First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,

he "should" always try to protect him

Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,

Who should against his murderer shut the door,

Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan

he is a good leader, free of care

Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been

So clear in his great office, that his virtues

his legacy will speak for himself

Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against

The deep damnation of his taking-off;

And pity, like a naked new-born babe,

Trailing the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed

Upon the sightless couriers of the air,

Will blow the horrid deed in every eye,

the news of his death will spread quickly

That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur

To prick the sides of my intent, but only

his ambition is motivating him

My vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself

And falls on the other.

If you decide that you want to annotate a text, you should probably make a list of things that you want to look for as you go along. Here are some suggestions:

- Locating evidence in support of a claim
- Identifying main idea and supporting details,
- Analyzing the validity of an argument or counter-argument
- Determining author's purpose
- Giving an opinion, reacting, or reflecting
- Identifying character traits/motivations
- Summarizing and synthesizing
- Defining key vocabulary
- Identifying patterns and repetitions
- Making connections
- Making predictions

The image on this page contains a student's annotations of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. In this example, the annotations provide summaries of what is happening in the scene.