

General Questions to ask when Annotating a Passage

WHY? Why is the best question that you can ask when annotating! It helps you to create your analysis and develop your explanation.

Setting

- Where in the world is the passage set?
- What do we learn about the place?
- Is it a just or fair world? Why/Why not?
- Does the world reflect the character/s?
- Does the world reflect the ideas?
- How is the world described to us? (What words are used?)

Character

- Is the main character narrating the story/poem? If not, how are they presented to us? If so, how do they present themselves to us?
- How does the main character feel?
- How do they interact with other characters?
- What are the general statistics about the main character (gender, age, nationality)

Action

- How is the story of the passage/poem told to us.
- Is it, in medias res, in ultimas res, chronological order or non-linear
- What are the major events in the passage/poem?
- Are there any turning points in the passage/poem?

Style

- Is the passage told in first, second or third person?
- Is it told in past or present tense?
- Passive or active voice?
- What literary devices has the author/poet used?
- Why are these devices used? What impact do they have on the reader/listener?
- What symbols are used in the passage/poem?
- Is there any interesting use of language (diction)?

Ideas

- What are the main ideas in the passage?
- How are these ideas presented to us?
- How are these ideas reflected in character, setting and style?
- What does the author/narrator want us to think about these ideas?