

## Honors English 9 Summer Reading 2018

Welcome to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade at Sussex Academy! We are looking forward to spending the next year with you. This will be your first summer reading assignment for high school. A report written for the US Department of Education examines independent reading. Researchers found that the amount of reading done outside of school was consistently related to gains in reading achievement.<sup>1</sup> Research shows that students lose an average of one month of school learning over summer vacation.<sup>2</sup>

This summer reading assignment is required of *every student* enrolled in this course and failure to do this assignment on time *will* indeed affect your grade.

### **REQUIRED READING 1: "How to Mark a Book" Article by Mortimer Adler**

The essay attached by Mortimer Adler provides a brief, non-academic introduction to the nature and value of annotation. Written in 1940, the wording and references are somewhat dated, but the ideas are quite relevant. We suggest you read this article before reading the required summer readings. Our hope is that you will begin to understand the importance of "marking" a text. It is our personal belief that in order for you to grow as a critical thinker, you must take ownership of your thinking. The best way to begin to do that is to write your thoughts directly on the text.

### **REQUIRED READING 2: *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck (No E-Books or used copies)**

1. Following the reading of "How to Mark a Book", you will READ and ANNOTATE the novella, *Of Mice and Men*. You must actively read and annotate this text, applying the skills and strategies learned from your reading of "How to Mark a Book".

#### **ANNOTATIONS: *Of Mice and Men***

As you read *Of Mice and Men*, you are REQUIRED to annotate the text (refer to *Annotation Tips below*). Pay close attention to *themes, characterization, imagery, figurative language, diction, detail, symbolism, etc.*

**Don't mark too much.** If you mark everything, nothing will stand out. Use your own words--don't try to be fancy. Remember, ~~your annotations are for you!~~

**REQUIRED READING 3: A novel of your choice that is an appropriate reading level for an incoming freshman in high school. (No E-Books) Annotate this novel as well following the directions on how to annotate from "How to Mark a Book" and tips in this handout.**

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<sup>1</sup> Anderson, R. C., Hebert E. H., Scott J. A., & Wilkinson I. A. G. (1985). *Becoming a Nation of Readers : The Report of the Commission on Reading*. [ ERIC]. Washington D.C.:US Department of Education, National Institute on Education.

<sup>2</sup> Cooper, H., Nye B., Linsey J., et al. (1996). *The Effects of Summer Vacation on Achievement Test Scores: A*  
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## Annotation Tips for Fiction

- Make brief notes at the top of the page or on a sticky note to mark important plot events.
- Circle or highlight words that are unfamiliar or unusual. Try to figure out what the words mean through the way they are used; supplement your guesses by consulting a dictionary.
- When new characters are introduced, highlight phrases that describe them. (Try not to highlight whole sentences).
- Highlight words, images, and details that seem to form a pattern throughout the text.
  - For example, if a large clock appears in the story, and then you notice the author using the words "timely" or "ticking" in the text, and then an incident occurs in which a character breaks a watch or is late for an appointment, you may have uncovered a pattern of imagery which will lead the close reader to discover a thematic idea.
  - Highlight these related strands and observe the rest of the text closely to see if the author uses other linked words, images, or details.
- Highlight passages you think might be symbolic.
- Mark key ideas and note briefly your reflections about them in the margins.
- When you get an idea while reading the text, note it in brief form in the margin. You may never think of this idea again unless you write it down.
- If you have a question about something in the text, write it on the page when it first occurred to you.

## BASIC ELEMENTS OF STYLE AND STRUCTURE TO NOTE WHILE ANNOTATING

**SETTING** - make notes about the time, place, etc. **CHARACTERS**- make note of each character's name the first time you see it. Also mark the passages that describe the characters:

- Physical appearance
- Motivations behind his/her actions
- Relationships to other characters
- Personality (especially changes in personality)

**PLOT** - events of rising action, climax, falling action and resolution

**IDENTIFY CONFLICT TYPES.** (Man vs. Man, Man vs. Self, Man vs. Nature, etc.)

Make notes periodically at the tops of pages to help you remember

**VOCABULARY**-Look up words you do not understand.

**TONE** -**Tone** is the attitude implied in a literary work toward the subject and the audience. The following figures of speech may help when identifying tone in literature.

**MOOD**- The feeling a piece of literature is intended to create in a reader.

**SYMBOL** -Person, place, or thing that represents something beyond itself, most often something concrete or tangible that represents an abstract idea **ALLUSION**- A reference to a well-known person, place, event, literary work, or work of art to enrich the reading experience by adding meaning

**THEME**- The message about life or human nature that is "the focus" in the story that the writer tells.

**IRONY**- A technique that involves surprising, interesting, or amusing contradictions or contrasts.

Verbal irony occurs when words are used to suggest the opposite of their usual meaning. An irony of situation is when an event occurs that directly contradicts expectations.

**FORESHADOWING**- Important hints that an author drops to prepare the reader for what is to come, and help the reader anticipate the outcome.

**METAPHOR** -Comparison between two otherwise unlike things (i.e. *Love is a Rose, Life is a Roller Coaster, All the World's a Stage*, etc.)

**SIMILE** -Comparison of two things often using "like" or "as"(i.e. *Brave as a lion, fits like a glove, moves like a snail*, etc.)

**DICTION** – words with significant connotation (beyond the literal meaning)

**IMAGERY** -appeals to any one of the five senses (taste, touch, smell, sight, and hearing)

**DETAILS** -important and noteworthy facts **LANGUAGE** -the sound of the text (formal, informal, colloquial/particular geographical location, etc.)

**SYNTAX** -basic sentence structure, punctuation, arrangement of words in a sentence, etc.

**POINT OF VIEW** - The way the events of a story are communicated from the author to the reader. For further details look up the definitions for 1st, 2nd and 3rd person POV

On the second day of class, you will need to bring the following items to class:

1. *Of Mice and Men* – annotated
2. Your novel of choice - annotated
3. Print-out of Mortimer's article - annotated

If you have questions, please feel free to email Mrs. Hete at [mindy.hete@saas.k12.de.us](mailto:mindy.hete@saas.k12.de.us). Until then, I wish you a safe, happy, and productive summer break!

excerpt from *How to Read a Book* (1940)

## How to Mark a Book

by Mortimer J. Adler

(adapted & edited by Roy Speed)

You know you have to read "between the lines" to get the most out of anything. I want to persuade you to do something equally important in the course of your reading. I want to persuade you to *write* between the lines. — Unless you do, you are not likely to do the most effective kind of reading.

Marking up a book is not an act of mutilation but of love. Of course you shouldn't mark up a book which isn't yours. Anyone who lends you a book expects you to keep it clean, and you should. So if you agree with me about the usefulness of marking books, you must buy them.

### "Owning" books

There are two ways you can own a book. The first is the property right you establish by paying for it, just as you pay for clothes and furniture. But this act of purchase is only the prelude to real possession. Full ownership comes only when you have made it a part of yourself, and the best way to make yourself a part of it is by writing in it. You may buy a beefsteak and put it in your freezer, but you do not own it in any important sense until you consume it and get it into your bloodstream. Books, too, must be absorbed into your bloodstream.

Confusion about what it means to "own" a book leads people to a false reverence for paper, binding, and type — the physical thing. But this is respect for the craft of the printer rather than the genius of the author. Having a fine library doesn't prove that its owner has a mind enriched by books; it proves only that he was rich enough to buy them.

There are three kinds of book owners. The first has all the standard sets and best sellers — unread, untouched. (This deluded individual owns woodpulp and ink, not books.) The second has a great many books — a few of them read through, most of them dipped into, but all of them as clean and shiny as the day they were bought. (This person would probably like to make books his own, but is restrained by a false respect for their physical appearance.) The third has a few books or many — every one of them dog-eared and dilapidated, shaken and loosened by continual use, marked and scribbled in from front to back. (This man owns books.)

Is it false respect, you may ask, to preserve intact and unblemished a beautifully printed book, an elegantly bound edition? Of course not; I'd no more scribble all over a first edition of *Paradise Lost* than give my baby an original Rembrandt and a set of crayons. There's no point in marking up a painting or a statue; its soul is inseparable from its body. And the beauty of a rare edition or of a richly manufactured volume is like that of a painting or a statue.

But the soul of a book can be separate from its body: a book is more like a musical score than a painting. Arturo Toscanini reveres Brahms, but Toscanini's score of the G minor Symphony is so thoroughly marked up that no one but the maestro himself can read it.

Here's why you should mark your books:

- **It keeps you awake** — and I don't mean merely conscious; I mean *awake*.
- **Reading, if it is active, is *thinking*** — and thinking tends to express itself in words, spoken or written. The *marked* book is the *thought-through* book.
- **Writing helps you remember** — remember the thoughts you had, or the thoughts the author expressed.

### A closer look

If reading is to accomplish anything more than passing time, it must be active. You can't let your eyes glide across the lines of a book and come up with an understanding of what you have read. Now an ordinary piece of light fiction, like, say, *Gone With the Wind*, doesn't require the most active kind of reading. The books you read for pleasure can be read in a state of relaxation, and nothing is lost. But a great book, rich in ideas and beauty, a book that raises and tries to answer great fundamental questions, demands the most active reading of which you are capable.

If, when you finish reading a book, the pages are filled with your notes, you know that you read actively. The most famous "active" reader of great books I know is the University of Chicago's President Hutchins. He has the hardest schedule of business activities of any man I know, but when he reads, he invariably does so with a pencil.

And why is writing necessary? — Because the physical act of writing, with your own hand, brings words and sentences more sharply before your mind and preserves them better in your memory. To set down your reactions to what you have read and the questions raised in your mind is to *preserve* those reactions and *sharpen* those questions.

Even if you wrote on a scratch pad, and threw the paper away when you had finished writing, your grasp of the book would be surer. But you don't have to throw the paper away. The margins (top and bottom, as well as the side margins), even the end-papers, the very space between the lines, are all available. *They aren't sacred*. Best of all, your marks and notes become an integral part of the book and stay there forever: you can pick up the book the following week or year, and there are all your points of agreement, disagreement, doubt, and inquiry. It's like resuming an interrupted conversation; you pick up right where you left off.

When you're reading to acquire information and understanding, note in the margins your *understanding* of the points being made or the topics being covered. Capture in just a few words the essential idea. Upon a return visit, you can flip through the book and, by skimming your notes, quickly review the book's substance, quickly locate a particular point or topic. And don't let anybody tell you that a reader is supposed to be a passive recipient: your job is to *seize* the information, savor it, digest it the same way you would that juicy steak. At the same time, you must question yourself and question the writer — even argue with the writer, once he understands what he or she is saying. And marking a book is literally an expression of your understanding, your agreement with, or your differences with the author.

### Useful marking devices

There are all kinds of devices for marking a book intelligently and fruitfully. Here's how I do it:

- **Underlining, circling, or highlighting key words or phrases** — for major points or important or forceful statements.

- **Vertical lines at the margin** — to emphasize an important passage.
- **Star, asterisk, or other doo-dad at the margin** — to be used sparingly, to emphasize the ten or twenty most important statements in the book. You may want to fold the bottom or top corner of every page on which you use such marks.
- **Writing in the margin, or at the top or bottom of the page** — for summarizing key points or recording questions a passage raises in your mind; reducing a complicated discussion to a simple statement; recording the sequence of major points right through the books. I use the end-papers at the back of the book to make a personal index of the author's points in the order of their appearance.
- **Numbers in the margin or within the text** — to indicate a sequence of points the author makes in developing a single argument.
- **Numbers of other pages in the margin** — to indicate where else in the book the author made points relevant to the point marked; to tie up the ideas in a book, which, though they may be separated by many pages, belong together.

The front end-papers are to me the most important. Some people reserve them for a fancy bookplate. I reserve them for fancy thinking. After I have finished reading the book and making my personal index on the back end-papers, I turn to the front and try to outline the book, not page by page or point by point (I've already done that at the back), but as an integrated structure, with a basic unity and an order of parts. This outline is, to me, the measure of my understanding of the work.

You may say that this business of marking books is going to slow up your reading. Yes, exactly — that's one of the reasons for doing it. Most of us have been taken in by the notion that speed of reading is a measure of our intelligence. But for intelligent reading, there is no such thing as the right speed. Some things should be read quickly and effortlessly; some should be read slowly, even laboriously. The sign of intelligence in reading is the ability to read different things differently according to their worth. In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many of them you can get through, but rather *how many can get through you* -- how many you can make your own.

With books, a few friends are better than a thousand acquaintances.