

## 2013 Summer Reading Annotation Guide Grand Prairie ISD Pre-AP and AP English

### **DUE THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS Fall Semester, 2013**

As part of your summer reading assignment, you will annotate your **required** text as you read. Below are definitions and examples of annotations. *Though encouraged, annotations are not required for your independent selection.*

Annotating keeps the reader engaged with the text. While you are reading, use one or more of these strategies to mark the book and include your thoughts and questions. If you prefer, you may use sticky notes to make your annotations instead of writing in the margins.

#### **Requirements for annotations:**

1. Write comments to ask questions, relate to characters, make connections to your own life, etc.
2. Write comments about the author's style, word choice, or graphic elements.

#### **Suggested annotation strategies:**

1. Star any passages that are very important: events, decisions, or cause and effect relationships.
2. Underline any sentences that made you think or appealed to you and describe your thinking.
3. Circle/highlight words that are unfamiliar or make a list of them in the back of the book.
4. Put a question mark by areas that you were confused about or did not fully understand.
5. Bracket any sentences that exemplify the author's style, word choice, or where the author includes graphic elements. Write your thoughts about the language.

#### **Suggested sentence stems for annotation:**

- Why did...  
• This part about \_\_\_\_\_ makes me wonder...
- How are these similar...  
• How are these different...  
• What would happen if...  
• This section about \_\_\_\_\_ means...  
• The way the author says \_\_\_\_\_ makes me think...  
• The word \_\_\_\_\_ in this paragraph means \_\_\_\_\_  
• What does the author mean by \_\_\_\_\_  
• The words \_\_\_\_\_ in this paragraph help me understand the meaning of the word \_\_\_\_\_  
• After reading this paragraph, I can now predict that...  
• After reading this paragraph, I can now understand why...
- The author included this graphic element in order to...  
• The character is like...  
• This is similar to...  
• The differences are...  
• This character makes me think of...  
• This setting reminds me of...  
• This is good because...  
• This is hard because...  
• This is confusing because...  
• Now I understand...  
• This character did \_\_\_\_\_ because...  
• This character is connected to...  
• The conflict in this scene...  
• The author develops this character by...  
• The author uses repetition in order to...  
• The author's use of description...  
• The author organizes this text by...

## Example of an Annotated Text

### Four Skinny Trees

repetition in  
this section

isolated  
don't fit in  
misunderstood

They are the only ones who understand me. I am the only one who understands them. Four skinny trees with skinny necks and pointy elbows like mine. Four who do not belong here but are here. Four raggedy excuses planted by the city. From our room we can hear them, but Nenny just sleeps and doesn't appreciate these things.)? Why is Nenny mentioned here?

fierce  
angry  
determined

Their strength is secret. They send ferocious roots beneath the ground. They grow up and they grow down and grab the earth between their hairy toes and bite the sky with violent teeth and never quit their anger. This is how they keep.

Simple

Let one forget his reason for being, they'd all droop like tulips in a glass, each with their arms around the other. Keep, keep, keep, trees say when I sleep. They teach. Pow!

Here's  
the  
what  
I can  
picture that  
wall!

When I am too sad and too skinny to keep keeping, when I am a tiny thing against so many bricks, then it is I look at trees. When there is nothing left to look at on this street. Four who grew to despise concrete. Four who reach and do not forget to reach. Four whose only reason is to be and be.

Excerpt taken from *The House on Mango Street* (1983)

concrete = barriers, limits,  
all the things that box us in.

"Four" repeated 3x  
The trees are  
• skinny  
• don't belong where they are  
• raggedy excuses put there by someone

Very visual!  
First and last sentence are simple and direct.  
Strong adjectives and strong verbs.

"Four" repeated 3x  
The trees  
• grow to despise concrete  
• reach  
• know their reason

The trees are a symbol to the author.

### **Annotation Rubric**

Excellent:

- Text has been thoroughly annotated with questions, observations, and reflections of the content as well as the writing; variety of topics marked for discussion; variety of stylistic devices marked.
- Comments demonstrate analysis and interpretation – thinking beyond the surface level of the text. Thoughtful connections made to other texts, life experiences, or other events throughout the text.
- Comments accomplish a great variety of purposes.
- Consistent markings throughout text (not bunched).
- Each chapter has several annotations.
- **Turned in on the first day of class Fall Semester, 2013**

Proficient:

- Text has been annotated reasonably well with questions, observations, and/or reflections of the content as well as the writing style.
- Comments demonstrate some analysis and interpretation – thinking somewhat beyond the surface level of the text. Attempts at making connections.
- Comments accomplish a variety of purposes.
- Some lapses in entries exist or entries may be bunched.
- Each chapter has at least two annotations.

Adequate:

- Text has been briefly annotated with questions, comments, observations, and/or reflections of the content **or** writing style.
- Commentary remains mostly at the surface level. The commentary suggests thought in specific sections of the text rather than throughout.
- Entries may be sporadic.
- Each chapter has at least one annotation.

Inadequate:

- Text has been briefly annotated.
- Commentary is perfunctory. Little or no attempt to make connections.
- Not all chapters are annotated.