

Picture

# Annotating Text to Deepen Understanding

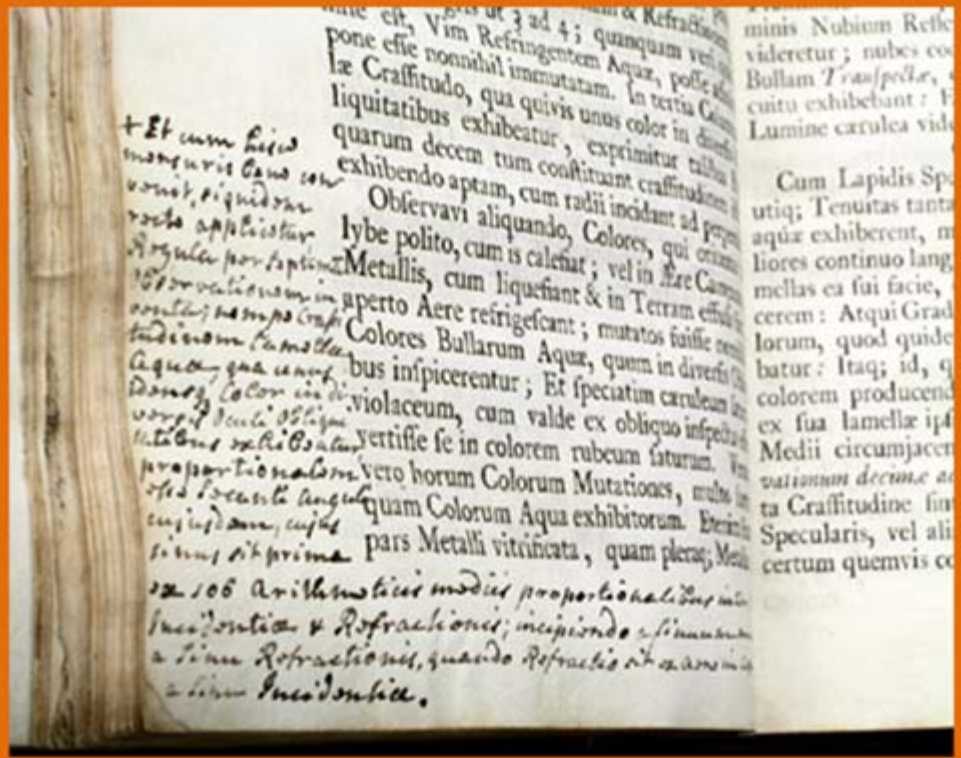
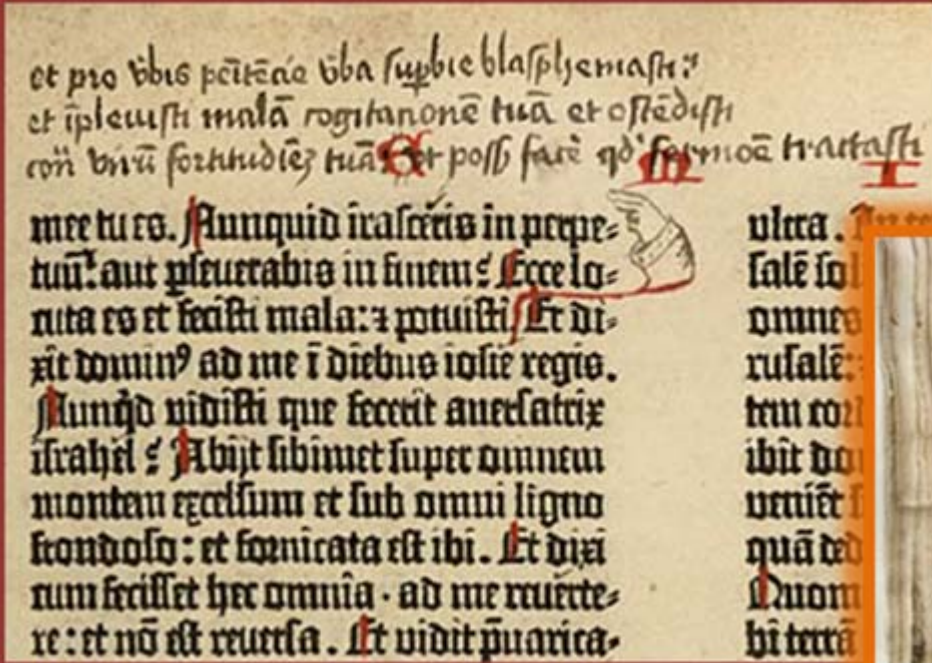
Doug Fisher  
and  
Nancy Frey

Annotation is a note of  
any form made while  
reading text.



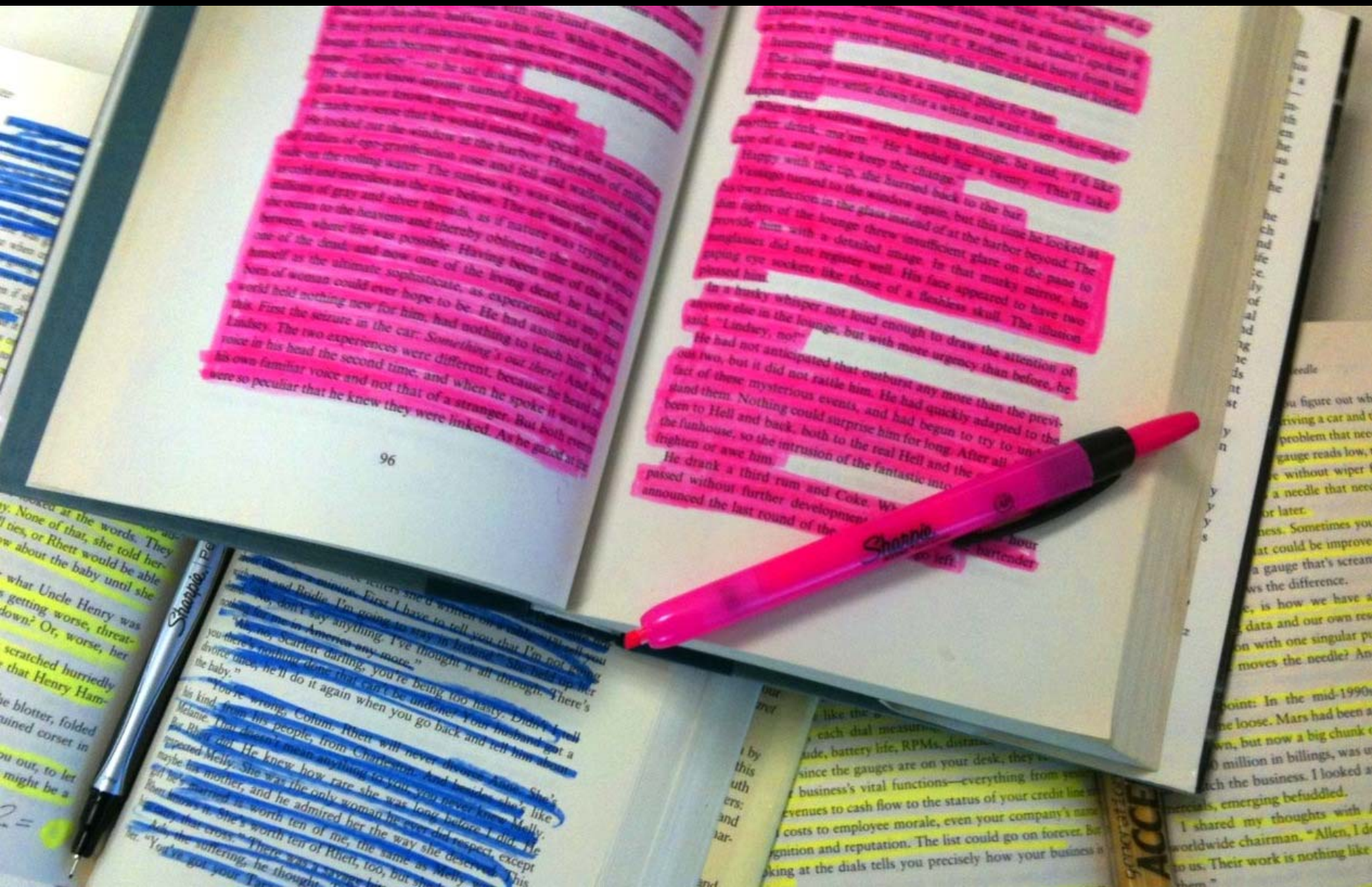
“Reading with a pencil.”

People have been annotating texts since there have been texts to annotate.





# Annotation is not highlighting.



...with one hand outstretched  
...the pattern of independence, the  
...birth became of low stature  
...Lindsey -- so he sat down  
...he did not know anyone named Lindsey  
...he had never known anyone named Lindsey  
...he made no sense that he would suddenly speak the name  
...he looked out the window at the harbor. Hundreds of millions  
...of million-of-egg-graniticous rose and fall and wallowed  
...side on the rolling water. The sunless sky was another sea  
...and merciless as the sea below. The air was full of  
...the ocean to the heavens and thereby obliterate the narrow  
...between, where life was possible. Having been one of the  
...one of the dead, and now one of the living dead, he had  
...himself as the ultimate sophisticate, as experienced as any  
...Nom of woman could ever hope to be. He had assumed that  
...this. First the seizure in the car. *Something's out there!* And  
...Lindsey. The two experiences were different, because he  
...rose in his head the second time, and when he spoke it was  
...his own familiar voice and not that of a stranger. But both  
...were so peculiar that he knew they were linked. As he gazed at

...Lindsey  
...before, a bit more hesitantly this time and somewhat  
...Lindsey  
...The average seemed to be a magical place for him  
...he decided to write down for a while and wait to see what  
...When the waitress arrived with his change, he said, "I'd like  
...either drink, no um." He handed her a twenty. "This'll take  
...Happy with the tip, the waitress  
...Vassago turned to the window again, but this time he looked at  
...his own reflection in the glass instead of at the harbor beyond. The  
...sun lights of the lounge threw insufficient glare on the pane to  
...provide him with a detailed image. In that dusky mirror, his  
...sunglasses did not register well. His face appeared to have two  
...gaping eye sockets like those of a fleshless skull. The situation  
...pleased him.  
...In a husky whisper not loud enough to draw the attention of  
...anyone else in the lounge, but with more urgency than before, he  
...said, "Lindsey, no!"  
...He had not anticipated that outburst any more than the previ-  
...ous two, but it did not rattle him. He had quickly adapted to the  
...fact of these mysterious events, and had begun to try to un-  
...derstand them. Nothing could surprise him for long. After all,  
...he had been to Hell and back, both to the real Hell and the  
...the lunhouse, so the intrusion of the fantastic into  
...frighten or awe him.  
...He drank a third rum and Coke. When the bartender  
...passed without further developments  
...announced the last round of the



...what Uncle Henry was  
...getting worse, threat-  
...down? Or, worse, her  
...scratched hurriedly  
...that Henry Ham-  
...the blotter, folded  
...ruined corset in  
...you out, to let  
...might be a

...letters me to write on a  
...and Riddle. I'm going to stay in Ireland. She held up her  
...I don't say anything. I've thought it all through. There's  
...for me in America any more."  
...Melanie, Scarlett darling, you're being too hasty. Didn't I tell  
...you there's nothing done that can be undone. Your husband got a  
...divorce decree, he'll do it again when you go back and tell him about  
...the baby."  
...You're wrong, Colum. Rhett will never divorce Anne. She's  
...his kind, from his people, from Charleston. And besides, she's like  
...Melanie. You doesn't mean anything to you, you never knew Melly,  
...the Rhett girl. He knew how rare she was long before I did. He  
...loved Melly. She was the only woman he ever did respect, except  
...maybe his mother, and he admired her the way she deserved.  
...I'll bet he married it worth ten of me, the same as Melly was.  
...And she's worth ten of me, the same as Melly was. This  
...isn't that cross. There was a cross in  
...her. You're got your T

...the  
...ch  
...nd  
...life  
...ly  
...of  
...ad  
...ing  
...be  
...ds  
...nt  
...st  
...y  
...n  
...y  
...y  
...y  
...s  
...figure out wh  
...driving a car and  
...problem that nee  
...gauge reads low,  
...e without wiper f  
...a needle that nee  
...or later.  
...ness. Sometimes yo  
...at could be improv  
...a gauge that's scream  
...ws the difference.  
...e, is how we have a  
...data and our own res  
...on with one singular pu  
...moves the needle? An  
...point: In the mid-1990  
...ne loose. Mars had been a  
...own, but now a big chunk  
...0 million in billings, was u  
...atch the business. I looked a  
...ournals, emerging befuddled.  
...I shared my thoughts with  
...worldwide chairman. "Allen, I d  
...to us. Their work is nothing like  
...them."

Annotation slows  
down the  
reader in order to  
deepen  
understanding.





# 1. Before Breakfast

alliteration

WHERE'S Papa going with that ax?" said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast.

"Out to the hoghouse," replied

Mrs. Arable "Some pigs were born last night."

"I don't see why he needs an ax," continued Fern, who was only eight.

"Well," said her mother, "one of the pigs is a runt. It's very small and weak, and it will never amount to anything. So your father has decided to do away with it."

"Do away with it?" shrieked Fern. "You mean kill it? Just because it's smaller than the others?"

Mrs. Arable put a pitcher of cream on the table. "Don't yell, Fern!" she said. "Your father is right. The pig would probably die anyway."

Fern pushed a chair out of the way and ran outdoors. The grass was wet and the earth smelled of springtime. Fern's sneakers were sopping by the time she caught up with her father.

plowable

nature

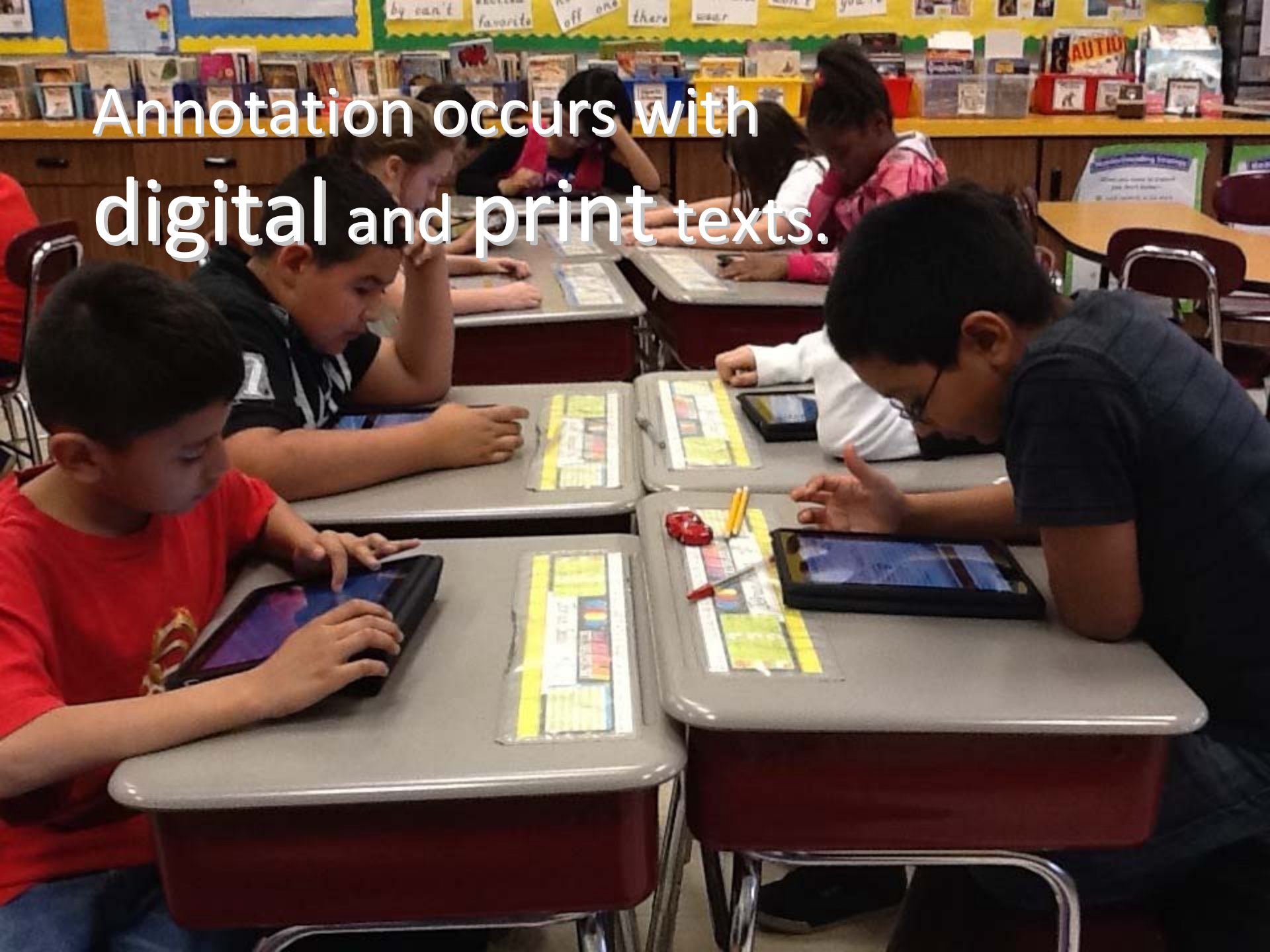
death

plant  
killing  
goes with  
rating in  
spring  
pig  
a farm

sense

Student's annotation of connotative meanings in *Charlotte's Web*

Annotation occurs with  
digital and print texts.



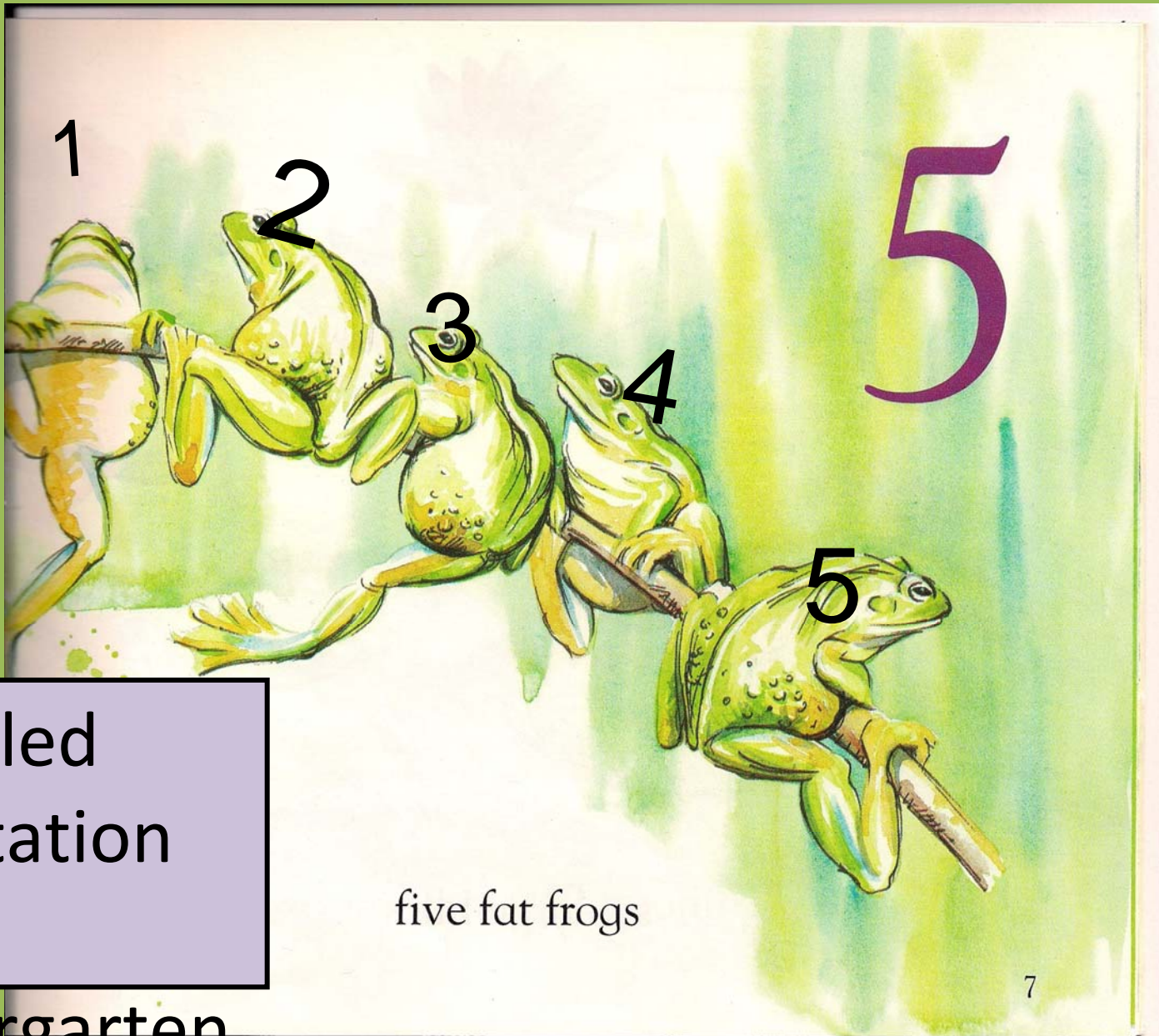


# Annotation in PreK-2



- Language experience approach
- Interactive writing and shared pen activities

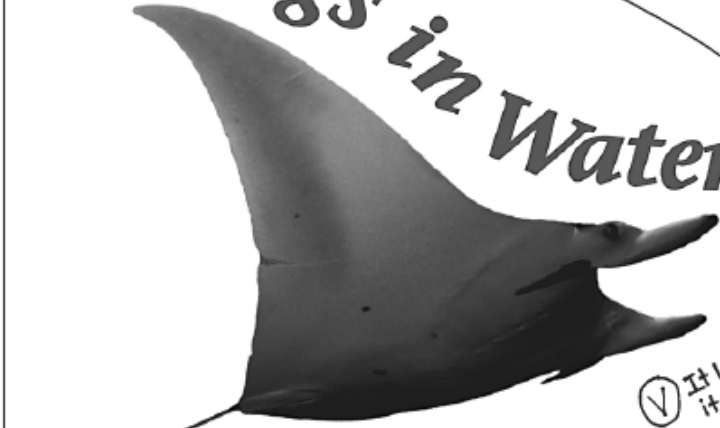




Modeled  
Annotation  
in

Kindergarten

# Wings in Water



✓ It looks like its flying! Maybe that's why they mention wings.

A huge, flat creature leaps out of the sea. It skims over the waves and flips backward with a splash. Could this be a fish? Yes. It is a **manta ray**.

These diamond-shaped giants live in warm oceans. They can be 22 feet wide and weigh as much as a small car—up to 3,000 pounds.

Wow! 22 ft. wide That's huge! Is the manta ray dangerous?

## Speed Swimmer

Their skeletons are made of soft bone called cartilage. This flexible cartilage skeleton helps to make the manta ray a graceful, powerful swimmer.

Slowly flapping their two large fins like wings, mantas 'fly' under the water.

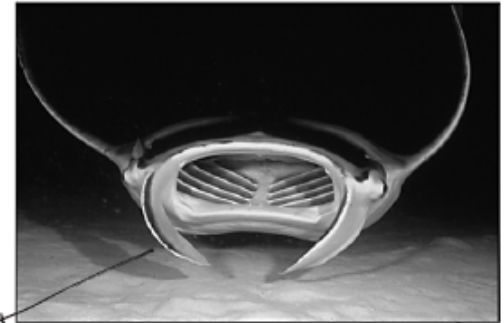
They do fly (sort of)

Modeled Annotation in Second

## Eating on the Run

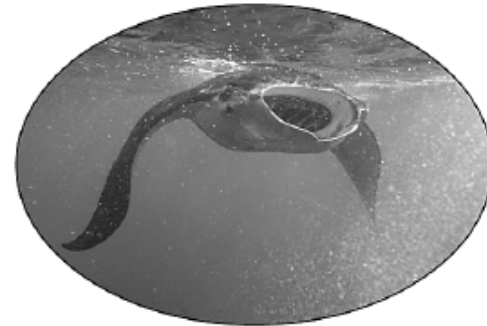
Mantas eat tiny plants and animals called **plankton**. The manta uses fins on the sides of its mouth to guide plankton into its big mouth while it swims.

✓ That's a big mouth!



Mantas swim with their mouths wide open when they feed.

✓ They're not dangerous at all!



## Friendly Giants

Mantas may be big, but they are gentle. They are curious. They will sometimes swim near human divers, and even let the divers reach out and touch them. A manta's tail looks scary, but it is harmless and will not sting a diver.

Wow! You can touch them!

## Big Babies

When a female manta mates, her baby is in an egg that hatches inside her. When the baby is born, rolled up in its fins. The baby unrolls these fins, then swims away. At first, the baby stays close to shore. But soon it swims far through the ocean and leap and land on a beach. ✓

? Does the mother manta ray take care of the baby?



Even young students can annotate.



# Annotations in Grades 3-5

- Underline the major points.
- **Circle** keywords or phrases that are confusing or unknown to you.
- Use a question mark (?) for questions that you have during the reading. Be sure to write your question.



Nature photography can be a fun and interesting hobby. In this article, [unclear] describes his experiences and provides tips for beginning photographers. Answer the questions that follow.

# Taking His Best

by Claudia Cangilla McAdam

Using Questioning in Fifth Grade

1 John Fielder could have drowned on his way to work. His raft bumped over rocks and pitched through rapids on the Dolores River in southwestern Colorado. The spring runoff of melting snow from the mountains sent chilly water crashing down the river.

2 Fielder's rubber raft rushed toward "Snaggletooth," the largest rapid on this stretch of the Dolores. The raft smacked into a big rock in the middle of the

100-foot-wide river. Thousands of

5 ① Dur...  
recorde...  
camera...  
driving...  
done, ...  
in Col...

6 ②  
want t...  
on fil...  
65 po...  
hikes...

Place  
Islands?

Work  
-on  
Islands?

Non-fiction?

North Carolina?

old copper  
didn't have  
cars?



Same text,  
different student,  
different strategy:  
Inferring.

# Taking His Boat

by Claudia Cangilla

1 John Fielder could have drowned on his way to work. His raft bumped over rocks and pitched through rapids on the Dolores River in southwestern Colorado. The spring runoff of melting snow from the mountains sent chilly water crashing down the river.

2 Fielder's rubber raft rushed toward "Snaggletooth," the largest rapid on this stretch of the Dolores. The raft smacked into a big rock in the middle of the 100-foot-wide river. Thousands of pounds of water poured over the edge of the boat.

infer:  
is very  
dangerous

infer:  
is  
more  
experim



# Annotation in Grades 6-8

- *Underline* the major points.
- *Circle keywords or phrases* that are confusing or unknown to you.
- *Use a question mark (?)* for questions that you have during the reading. Be sure to write your question.
- ***Use an exclamation mark (!)*** for things that surprise you, and briefly note what it was that caught your attention.
- ***Draw an arrow (↵)*** when you make a connection to something inside the text, or to an idea or experience outside the text. Briefly note your connections.

# Modeled annotation in Seventh Grade

## I Spy

*Sense of secrecy* Charlie Stowe waited until he heard his mother snore before he got out of bed. Even then he moved with caution and tiptoed to the window. The front of the house was irregular, so that it was possible to see a light burning in his mother's room. But now all the windows were dark. A searchlight passed across the sky, lighting the banks of cloud and probing the dark deep spaces between, seeking enemy airships. The wind blew from the sea, and Charlie Stowe could hear behind his mother's snore the beating of the waves. A draught through the cracks in the window-frame stirred his nightshirt. Charlie Stowe was frightened.

*Searchlight - airships - wartime*  
*1st World War*  
*Cold - out of bed! - darkness emphasized*  
*Not modern*

*Sense of mystery, menace, potential danger, etc*  
*Sleeping mother - repetition of snore*  
*What is Charlie up to?*  
*Mention of father*

But the thought of the tobacconist's shop which his father kept down a dozen wooden stairs drew him on. He was twelve years old, and already boys at the County School mocked him because he had never smoked a cigarette. The packets were piled twelve deep below, Gold Flake and Players, De Reszke, Abdulla, Woodbines, and the little shop lay under a thin haze of stale smoke which would completely disguise his crime. That it was a crime to steal some of his father's stock Charlie Stowe had no doubt, but he did not love his father his father was unreal to him, a wraith, pale, thin, indefinite, who noticed him only spasmodically and left even punishment to his mother. For his mother he felt a passionate demonstrative love; her large boisterous presence and her noisy charity filled the world for him; from her speech he judged her the friend of everyone, from the rector's wife to the 'dear Queen', except the 'Huns', the monsters who lurked in Zeppelins in the clouds. But his father's affection and dislike were as indefinite as his movements. Tonight he had said he would be in Norwich, and yet you never knew. Charlie Stowe had no sense of safety as he crept down the wooden stairs. When they creaked he clenched his fingers on the collar of his nightshirt. — *A sign of fear!*

*'Manly' to smoke - grown up*  
*Brands of cigarettes*  
*Why?*  
*Father does not seem to bother with him - different to mum*  
*Zeppelins - bombing raids*

*More info about Charlie*  
*Pressure from peers*  
*A 'crime' stealing, guilty conscience*  
*What does all this mean?*  
*Contrast with father*  
*Something mysterious about father*

At the bottom of the stairs he came out quite suddenly into the little shop. It was too dark to see his way, and he did not dare touch the switch. For half a minute he sat in despair on the bottom step with

*A sense almost of surprise*  
*What to do next!*

# Annotation in Grades 9-12

- *Underline* the major points.
- *Circle keywords or phrases* that are confusing or unknown to you.
- *Use a question mark (?)* for questions that you have during the reading. Be sure to write your question.
- *Use an exclamation mark (!)* for things that surprise you, and briefly note what it was that caught your attention.
- *Draw an arrow (↵)* when you make a connection to something inside the text, or to an idea or experience outside the text. Briefly note your connections.
- **Mark EX** when the author provides an example.
- **Numerate arguments, important ideas, or key details** and write words or phrases that restate them.



Tone = Whistful?  
Nostalgic?



Who is the speaker?

Why not taken?

# The Road Not Taken

Where does the road go?

↓ Is it autumn?

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both **regretful**  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Hmm...

shows takes time to think!

Literal Level:

A person is walking in the woods. + comes to a fork in the road. Tries to look down one road, but can't see where it leads. Both roads same - picks one but knows he'll never know what was down the other road. Thinks he will always wonder.

Modeling in 9th Grade English

Can't know

So, are the roads the same?

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that, the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same.

What's down there

at that point - but still, similar.

↕ not so different

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!

No to one show the way

? means stepped on

Yet knowing how way leads onto to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.  
I shall be telling this with a sigh

That won't happen

He knows once he picks, he'll never get the chance again

will always wonder what might have been

- Figurative -  
In life, there are choices where neither one is so great that it jumps at you. You have to pick, so you do. And then that choice leads to people, experiences and you don't get to

# Student annotation in 11<sup>th</sup> grade English

**Tone:** Celebratory  
**Admiration**

**Language:** technical  
 Colloquial  
 Conversational  
 monosyllables

**Digging**  
 Pen fat with what?  
 Between my finger and my thumb  
 The squat pen rests; as snug as a gun.

**Form:** Heroic  
 Broken down resembles Sonnet  
 manual labor or digging with the mind?

Digging = extended metaphor of digging and roots.  
 Heaney digs into his roots, his heritage

Opening - coming to terms with self? home  
 - violence? protection? A natural extension?  
 rasping connotes a living thing

**Memory #1**  
 Under my window a clean rasping sound  
 When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:  
 My father, digging. I look down - remembering / to look down on has negative con. but the poem is positive + celebratory

his window - ownership threshold to his heritage  
 connections with the past, former generations, traditions

In rhythm =  
 In touch with  
 In agreement with

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds  
 Bends low, comes up twenty years away  
 Stooping in rhythm through potato drills  
 Where he was digging.

homely  
 - in control, precise

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft  
 Against the inside knee was levered firmly.  
 He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep  
 To scatter new potatoes that we picked  
 Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

Symbol: peat  
 living roots  
 digging  
 Squat pen  
 Why squat? crouching ownership  
 survival  
 nourishment  
 warmth potatoes

**Transition**  
 By God, the old man could handle a spade,  
 Just like his old man.

Admiration  
 Colloquial language

**Memory #2**  
 My grandfather could cut more turf in a day  
 Than any other man on Toner's bog.  
 Once I carried him milk in a bottle  
 Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up  
 To drink it, then fell to right away  
 Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods  
 Over his shoulder, digging down and down  
 For the good turf. Digging.

skill, pride, dignity  
 - bragging rights  
 worked hard - work ethics  
 Strength - technique

**Turning Point**  
 heritage  
 The cold smell of potato mold, the squelch and slap  
 Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge  
 Through living roots awaken in my head.  
 But I've no spade to follow men like them.

- negative images traditions / livelihoods destroyed  
 no longer available  
 an awakening of what? Follow in what way?

**Closure - Acceptance**  
 Between my finger and my thumb  
 The squat pen rests.  
 I'll dig with it.

- weapon - tool  
 Follows tradition of fathers using the tools available to him.

**Seamus Heaney**  
 Reminders of home + hearth  
 rests, snug, nestled

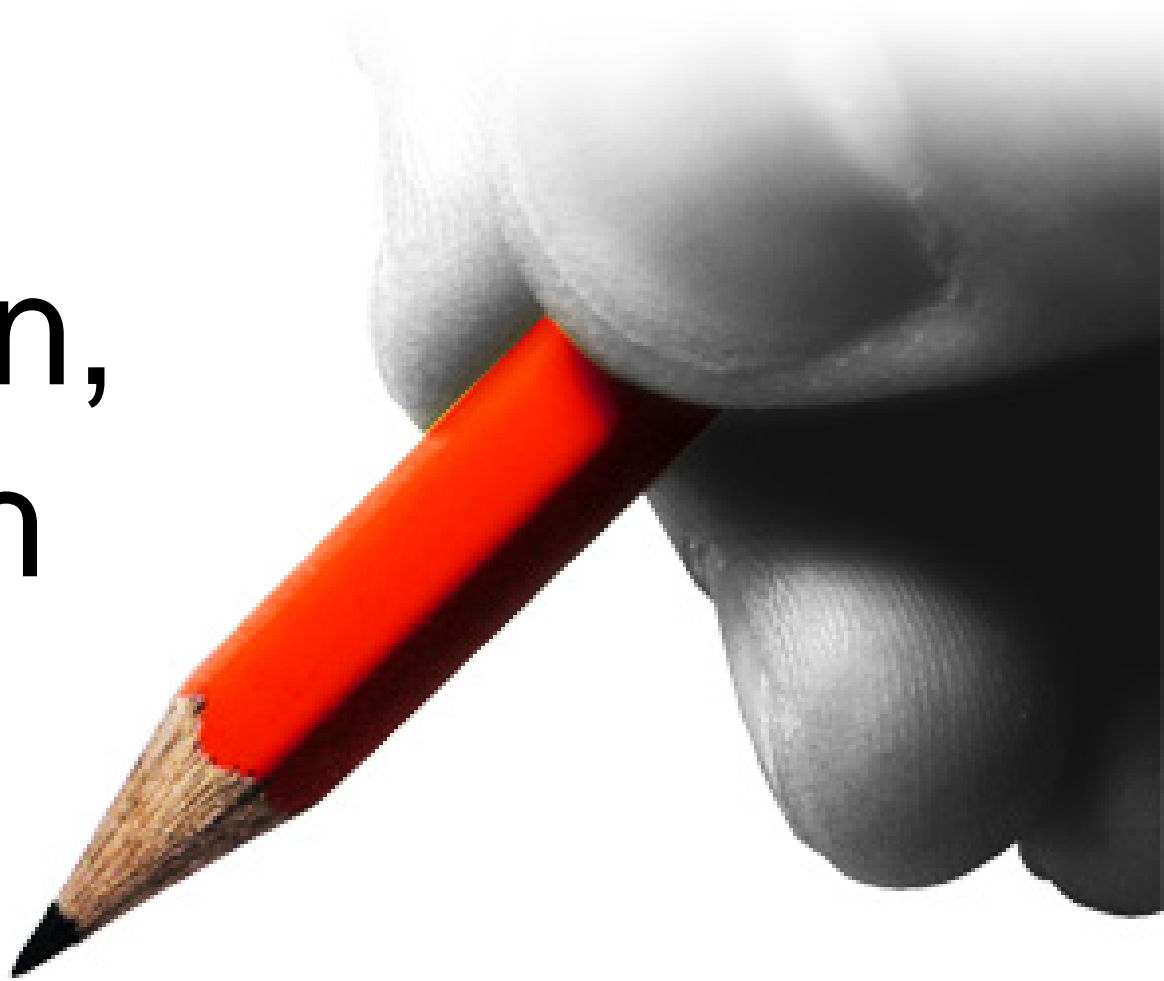
2 separate memories:  
 Father digging potatoes  
 Grandfather digging turf - peat bogs

The pen is mightier than the sword.

Chiasmata  
 rasping gravelly  
 squelch slap

If you want  
to teach  
effective  
annotation,  
begin with  
the  
purpose.

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/student-annotated-reading-strategy>





## Reader's Notations

Use these marks to make  
your notations easier to write  
and read!



→	connection, leads to
↔	cause and effect
re	in reference to
i.e.	that is
e.g.	for example
=	equal; is
≈	approximately equal
≠	not equal; not
← pg. #	connects to another page
Def.?	unknown word to look up
W/	with
W/O	without
&	and

**Teach them a  
notation  
system appropriate  
for your content area**