# Annotation Symbols

## Symbol | Explanation
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1. Underline/Highlight | Underline/Highlight sentences in conjunction with a symbol.
2. [] | Put brackets around key ideas or claims being made in the text. Make sure you explain in the margin what the author is saying or doing.
3. ○ | Circle key terms and words you do not know. If you do not know a word, make sure you define it.
4. → | Draw an arrow to illustrate a link between two parts of the text. Write your own explanation near the arrow or in the margin.
5. ★ | Put a star next to an idea in the text that you find enlightening, interesting, or that taught you something new.
6. 😊 | Draw a smiley face next to something that you like. Explain why in the margin.
7. ? | Put a question mark next to anything you find confusing. Explain why in the margin.
8. ☐ | Put a box around a sentence that you think is the main idea, thesis, or organizing concept of the text. Make sure you explain why you think this is the main idea.
9. ! | Put an exclamation mark next to anything that you find interesting or surprising.
10. X | Put an X next to anything that you think should be cut from the piece. Explain why it isn’t necessary for the reader.
11. △ | Put a triangle next to something you disagree with and write a note in the margin explaining your disagreement.
12. EX | Write EX in the margin when you find a cause/effect in the text.

## Other tasks you can ask students to complete.

| 1 | Write a question or a statement about something that you have read in the margin. Draw a line to the relevant portion of the text. |
| 2 | Paraphrase or summarize part of the text that you find interesting or confusing. |
| 3 | Make a connection to what you have read. |
| 4 | Draw a picture or cartoon to help you understand something that you have read in the margin. Draw an arrow to the section of text that the picture/cartoon relates to. |
| 5 | Your thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the text. |

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Annotating an article, or any passage, requires you to “close read.” In addition to underlining what you consider to be important parts, you should also write notes/commentary in the margins using this key.