Close Reading Strategies for Annotation

Adapted from Mr. Court Allam

**1. Number the paragraphs**

When you refer to the text, state which paragraph you are referring to so the rest of the class will be able to quickly find the line to which you are referring.

**2. Chunk the text.**

Breaking up the text into smaller sections (or chunks) makes the reading much more manageable. Do this by drawing a horizontal line between paragraphs to divide the page into smaller sections.

It is important to understand that there is no right or wrong way to chunk the text, as long as you can justify why you grouped certain paragraphs together.

**3. Underline and circle… with a purpose.**

Think about what information you want to take from the text, and look for those elements. What you circle and underline may change depending on the text type. For example, when studying poetry, you may focus on underlining the imagery you find throughout the poem.

Another focus may be circling “Key terms” in the text. Key terms are defined as words that: 1. Are defined. 2. Are repeated throughout the text. 3. If you only circled five key terms in the entire text, you would have a pretty good idea about what the entire text is about.

**4. Left margin: What is the author SAYING?**

In the left margin, summarize each chunk. Try to write your summaries in 10-words or less.

**5. Right margin: Dig deeper into the text**

This may include:

· Use a power verb to describe what the author is DOING. (For example: Describing, illustrating, arguing, etc..) Note: It isn’t enough to write “Comparing” and be done. What is the author comparing? A better answer might be: “Comparing the character of Montag to Captain Beatty”.

· Represent the information with a picture.

· Ask questions.

