Annotating in Five Easy Steps

Grab a textbook for this activity!

Follow the directions below:

1. Find a short phrase that succinctly expresses the MAIN IDEA of the passage. Draw a box around it in the text and write “main idea” in the space in the margin.
2. Find brief definitions. Circle the terms, underline the definitions, and write “def” in the space in the margin. If you find any additional definitions, do the same with them.
3. Write “ex” (for example) in the margin next to any examples or illustrations.
4. Put a (?) in the margin next to anything you do not understand.
5. Put a (!) in the margin next to anything you think is especially important.

NOTE: You do not always have to do ALL of the above. With practice, this will come naturally. It is OK to develop your own “system.” Also, a helpful strategy is to create possible test questions from your text readings.

Now imagine you will be tested on this passage. Write two questions based on the passage.

1. __________________________________________________________________________
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2. __________________________________________________________________________
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