

# Syracuse University



## WRT 105: Practices of Academic Writing Fall 2009

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Course Credits: 3

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### Summer Reading Assignment – Summer 2009 - SUPA

You will read and annotate Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and *The Kite Runner*. During annotation, please consider looking at the texts from a cultural perspective; how does the information that is presented in the text compare or contrast to what you know about American culture? How does the information about Afghan culture in the text compare to what you already know, or do not know, about Afghan culture? If you cannot purchase your own copies of the books, you may write extensively on post-its inside of the books. Bring both of your annotated texts to class the first day. Approach the works with an open mind. Let them inspire you and stretch your imagination. If you have questions before school starts, feel free to e-mail me at [j.gaylor@wi.k12.ny.us](mailto:j.gaylor@wi.k12.ny.us).

**Please read the following information carefully and completely!**

#### Annotating a Text:

Annotation is a key component of close reading. Since we will annotate texts all year, you need to develop a system that works for you (within the following guidelines). The techniques are almost limitless. Use any combination of the following:

- Make brief comments in the margins. Use any white space available - inside cover, random blank pages.
- Make brief comments between or within lines of the text. Do not be afraid to mark within the text itself. In fact, you must.
- Circle or put boxes, triangles, or clouds around words or phrases.
- Use abbreviations or symbols - brackets, stars, exclamation points, question marks, numbers, etc. Create your own code.
- Connect words, phrases, ideas, circles, boxes, etc. with lines or arrows.
- \*Underline – CAUTION: Use this method sparingly. Underline only a few words. **Always combine** with another method such as comment. Never underline an entire passage. Doing so takes too much time and loses effectiveness. If you wish to mark an entire paragraph or passage, draw a line down the margin or use brackets.
- \*Highlight – See *underline*. You cannot write with a highlighter anyway.

### **Close Reading:**

What should you annotate? Again, the possibilities are limitless. Keep in mind the reasons we annotate. Your annotations **must** include comments. I want to see evidence of thinking.

- Have a conversation with the text. Talk back to it.
- **Ask questions (essential to active reading).**
- Comment on the actions or development of a character. Does the character change? Why? How? the result?
- Comment on something that intrigues, impresses, amuses, shocks, puzzles, disturbs, repulses, aggravates, etc.
- Comment on lines / quotations you think are especially significant, powerful, or meaningful.
- Express agreement or disagreement.
- Summarize key events. Make predictions.
- Connect ideas to each other or to other texts. Connect the texts to one another.
- Note if you experience an epiphany.
- Note anything you would like to discuss or do not understand.
- Note how the author uses language. Note the significance if you can.
  - effects of word choice (diction) or sentence structure or type (syntax)
  - point of view / effect reliability of narrator
  - repetition of words, phrases, actions, events - patterns motifs or cluster ideas
  - narrative pace / time / order of sequence of events tone / mood
  - contrasts / contradictions / juxtapositions / shifts themes
  - allusions setting / historical period

The most common complaint about annotating is that it slows down your reading. Yes, it does.

That's the point. If annotating as you read annoys you, read a chapter, then go back and annotate.

Reading a text a second time is preferable anyway.

<http://www.spx.org/departments/english/summerreading/documents/SummerReading-Annotating.pdf>