How to Annotate a Book

Annotating a text will help you, as a student, with text analysis and allow you a deeper connection with the text. It will also help you find key information in the text that will be needed at a later time, such as preparing for class discussions, writing assignments, and assessments on each novel. By practicing annotating texts during the summer reading process, it will give you a sense of how to read deeply for meaning, and this is a skill that can be applied to all areas of the curriculum.

It helps if you own your own copies of the books, but even if you do not have a hard copy of the texts, you can still annotate with a pen and post-it notes.

Tools: The book(s), highlighter, pen/pencil, post-it notes

Technique(s):
- As you read, have your tools in hand (or close by). If you read something that you find important, highlight it. Use your pen/pencil and make a note in the margin about why you think the passage you highlighted was significant or important.
- In the inside front cover of your text, make a legible list of key information, along with page references.
- If you do not own your book or are reading off an e-reader, keep a pad of paper with you and note page numbers and passages. You may create a double-entry journal of sorts, where you write the quotation (or passage) from the text in one column and then write your thoughts about the passage and its significance in the second column.

Your key information may include some of the following elements:
- Character development
- Themes or motifs
- Passages that relate to the title of the word
- Quotes from the text that you deem important or special
- Important scenes
- Key words or vocabulary
- Setting development
- Stylistic devices used by the author (could include figurative language but should also include particular sentence structures frequently used by the author)
- Symbolism
- Imagery

Summer Reading Novels
The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan
The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway

Both texts for Honors English 10 are fiction, and you will find all of the key elements above. You are required to annotate BOTH of these texts. You will find that the annotations will be helpful when you are preparing for class discussions, writing assignments, and the assessments on each novel.

Assessments on each novel will be given during the first week of school.